

# **The Santa Fe New Mexican**

## **Editorial, 11/23/2005 — United Way needs your help**

By THE NEW MEXICAN  
November 23, 2005

With the approach of the winter holidays, the fundraising campaign of United Way of Santa Fe County takes on a bit of urgency. Cold weather can make life even more difficult than usual for many of the families served by the agencies the community-wide agency helps support; at the same time, there's a seasonal surge of generosity in so many people ...

So even though the organization's campaign has become a year-long effort, now's the time for Santa Feans to ease up on the procrastination — and contribute to United Way, with a lump sum check or through a series of payroll deductions.

Your donations are the shot in the arm needed by so many of our local charities: Agua Fría Preschool; Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Northern New Mexico; New Mexico Suicide Intervention Project; New Vistas; Santa Fe Boys and Girls Clubs; Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families; La Familia Medical Center; Presbyterian Medical Services; The Santa Fe Rape Crisis Center; Villa Therese Catholic Clinic; Catholic Charities of Santa Fe; Chimayó Youth Conservation Corps; The Food Depot; Homewise; Open Hands; Saint Elizabeth Shelter; Youth Shelters & Family Services; Girl Scouts-Sangre de Cristo Council, and Santa Fe Mountain Center.

There are so many sources of help to Santa Feans who need it — and, so often, confusion about where to go first for such help.

In September, United Way put in a phone line called 2-1-1 Santa Fe. It's like dialing 9-1-1, but for non-emergency help. There, the caller can tell United Way what his or her problem is, in English or Spanish, and be put in contact with the agency best suited to the case.

It's one of many innovations by United Way during recent years. Another is its focus on children's chances for success against the kinds of socio-economic challenge so many face.

The Agua Fría Children's Zone has been developed as a multi-faceted project to direct education, health and family services to one of Santa Fe's most vulnerable neighborhoods. In partnership with The Domanica Family Foundation, Las Campanas and St. Vincent Regional Medical Center, it is providing full day prekindergarten, daycare, and parental education, as well as youth development evaluation and other social services.

The children's zone is an example of the pro-active approach United Way is taking toward resolving some of our community's long-standing problems — so many of which keep families dependent on public and private help.

The project has received a grant of nearly \$800,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, thus United Way will be able to carry out this exciting experiment in confronting root causes of family problems while serving Santa Fe's year-in, year-out needs; or at least it will if you continue helping it. United Way of Santa Fe County's goal for 2005-2006 is \$1.25 million. Since the start of the campaign, which began with the Fourth of July Pancakes on the Plaza fundraiser, about a quarter of that amount has

been raised.

Between now and New Year's Eve, when contributions can serve as tax deductions for 2005, think about all the people you know, or know of, whose lives were made either better or less difficult through those United Way agencies, then put a generous figure on your pledge card at work, or send a contribution to:

United Way of Santa Fe County

440 Cerrillos Road

Santa Fe 87501.

For more information about United Way, and some of its new directions, call 982-2002 .