

Hello and happy Fall to our partners and friends across the state! It's been a busy time of transitions for ONAPA as we moved our office, bid farewell to dear members of our team, and welcomed new health educator, **Danella Hall**, a Santa Fe native and mom to 2-year-old Seven.



Danella has her bachelor's in psychology from the University of Denver and her master's in public health from the University of Arizona. Before joining ONAPA, she was a substitute teacher at the Santa Fe Indian School. She looks forward to her career with ONAPA, and we are happy she's on board!

Siobhan Hancock retired this spring for more traveling time with her partner. She visits Italy every year, and they host rock art tours in places like Africa. Siobhan spent 10 years at the Department of Health, first in the WIC program and later as program manager for SNAP-Ed. We are inspired by the professional development training program she started for senior center food service workers.

We also said goodbye to **Kori Vandergeest**, who brought substantive epidemiological and evaluation experience to our program operations as well as excellence, enthusiasm, dedication, innovative ideas, and professionalism to all our work. We wish her well in her work with the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center.



And finally, **Katharine Von Rueden** stepped away from her role as HKHC program manager to spend more time with her son, **Sebastian Louis Clemens**, born Sept. 7, 2022. For a decade, Katharine has been a reliable, calm presence, right hand to Rita Condon, and supportive friend and colleague. She believes in HKHC's vision for a healthy life and expresses those values throughout her life. We miss her!

A note from Katharine: *In reflecting on my long tenure with ONAPA and HKHC, the one thing I return to again and again is ... can you guess? Relationships. Yes, it's the nature of our work. But the relationships are also what have sustained me through a very formative time in my life, both professionally and personally. I feel incredibly fortunate to be among such passionate, committed, and genuine people who care deeply about the health of their communities. I am inspired by you. I am humbled by you. And I am forever grateful our paths crossed. Take good care, continue doing excellent work, and be well!*

News & Events

Check out the new website for NM Grown: newmexicogrown.org



NEW MEXICO GROWN
FOOD FROM THE LAND, NOURISHMENT FOR THE PEOPLE

You'll find everything you want to know about NM Grown, including trainings, program deadlines, links to applications, and participating agencies.

Welcome to our new HKHP Northern Coordinator!

Houston native **Madelyn DeYoung** joined the Healthy Kids Healthy Preschool team as the northern



coordinator based in Albuquerque. Previously, Madelyn worked as program manager for an after-school program for refugee and immigrant children. She studied ecology, evolution, and animal behavior at the University of Texas-Austin. We are happy to have Madelyn on board!

Upcoming edition: BMI surveillance, Healthy Schools grant, healthy fundraisers, Farm to Preschool program in Socorro & Curry County gardens



NEW MEXICO GROWN

*Strengthening community food systems
& increasing access to locally grown food*



Celebrating Golden Chile Recipients

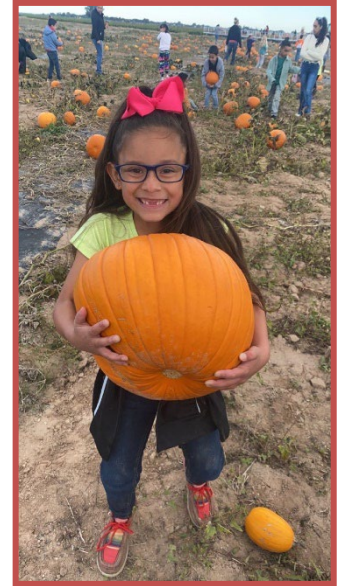
We had a wonderful time joining other members of the New Mexico Grown Coalition to honor 10 senior centers, 17 school districts, 18 preschools and 22 food producers -- the largest number of recipients in the Golden Chile Awards Program since it began three years ago. The awards recognize everyone's efforts to support good nutrition and New Mexico's farming economy.

We are so proud and happy to see the number of awardees steadily grow; state officials honored 19 organizations in the first year and 31 last year, the first year food producers were included in the recognition program. Bravo to every participant who is connecting students and seniors to fresh NM Grown food! A special shout out to school officials in our Healthy Kids communities and at our Farm to Preschool pilot sites who work hard to engage students in healthy meals and nutrition education -- Roswell, Farmington, Elida, Dexter, Bloomfield, Clovis and Silver City.



And finally, we are grateful to all the food producers that make the NM Grown program possible. We can't do this important work expanding access to healthy, fresh food without you!

Representatives from the Governor's Office as well as the Departments of Agriculture, Health, Public Education, Early Childhood Education & Care, and Aging and Long-Term Services honored all 67 participants in a virtual ceremony in September.



A student at Dexter Consolidated Schools, which earned a Blossom, the second highest award for participating in NM Grown.

Food Systems

*Expanding access to healthy,
affordable food in schools &
communities*



Food & Farm Day honors NM Grown supporters

We were happy to join Healthy Kids Healthy Communities coordinators, Patience Williams and Alberto Zavala, at an inspiring New Mexico Food and Farms Day and Awards at the Capitol. We are proud to have creative, hardworking growers and educators in our state who engage in sustainable land practices and expand access to locally grown food.

State legislators and agencies, Farm to Table NM and the NM Food and Agriculture Policy Council recognized people's NM Grown efforts, and Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham honored everyone who is making a difference in the local food movement.

Roswell's Food Service Director Kim Meeks (pictured left with Agriculture Secretary Jeff Witte) and Bidii Baby Foods, a family farm and agricultural cooperative on the Navajo Nation, were among those honored for their work expanding access to healthy food.

Congrats to all!



Bettering the Built Environment

Creating environments & neighborhoods that promote health



Hidalgo County Promotes Trail

Healthy Kids Hidalgo County Coordinator Beth Cox is connecting with bikers, hikers, and local organizations as she works with partners to put signage on a trail locals call the Grinders Trail, create trail maps, and establish kiosks with trail maps and plant identification information.

The Continental Divide Trail goes down Lordsburg's Main Street and continues along the Grinders Trail. This spring, Cox and partners organized a celebratory kick-off to launch Lordsburg as a Continental Divide Trail community and raise awareness about local recreational opportunities.

The entire process brought the community together to put on a fun celebration and promote the Grinders Trail. The Spirit of Hidalgo received a \$95,000, two-year grant to help promote the trail, and multiple organizations offered donations during "Explore Lordsburg Hidalgo County Outdoor Days."



People camped at Veteran's Park during Lordsburg's celebratory kick-off.



Activities at the celebratory kick-off included cornhole, horseshoes, disc golf, a walking tour, and bike rides as well as drawings for a free drone and bikes!

Enhancing the trail and increasing awareness of the Continental Divide Trail could be a great boon for the Lordsburg area, which is located 20 miles east of the Arizona border. Cox has already talked to bicycling organizations from Tucson and Las Cruces that are ready to ride there.

Hidalgo County's Participating Partners:

Spirit of Hidalgo

NMSU's ICAN program

Youth Conservation Corps

Bootheel Youth Association

Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Border Patrol

City of Lordsburg

Walking booklet promotes safe Portales paths

Sometimes it takes more than motivation to get outside and get moving; you need location ideas, too. Healthy Kids Roosevelt County Coordinator Caron Powers is giving her community both – encouragement to explore walking paths throughout Portales as well as details about the area, including rules, distance and pictures.

In 2018, Powers and her Department of Health partner, Debbie Gentry, walked seven indoor and outdoor paths around town, taking pictures and measuring routes to create a booklet, "Walking Opportunities Around Portales." Now she's offering an updated, expanded version with a mileage log, an added bike trail and more pictures.

Roosevelt County's Health Council printed both editions. The Chamber of Commerce provides the booklet to new residents and in the *Welcome to Portales* magazine. Powers hears from community members who are happy to learn about safe walking paths.

"We felt there was a need for it, and it's a nice resource to have as an HKHC coordinator," she said.

Powers receives a lot of positive comments when she promotes a path on her Healthy Kids Roosevelt County Facebook page. The best is when she notices people tagging each other and planning walks together. Success!

Farmington Preschool Connects Students to Local Food

Preschoolers in Farmington are eating and growing locally grown food, visiting farms and connecting with local growers. Barb Tedrow says the Farm to Preschool pilot program is one of the most rewarding programs in 22 years of operating early childhood programs.

Tedrow's center, A Gold Star Academy & Child Development Center, is one of eight pilot sites that Healthy Kids Healthy Communities supports with funding and resources. Each site implements a comprehensive, culturally relevant program with four core strategies: buy NM grown produce for meals and snacks, grow edible gardens, offer nutrition education, and encourage family and community engagement.



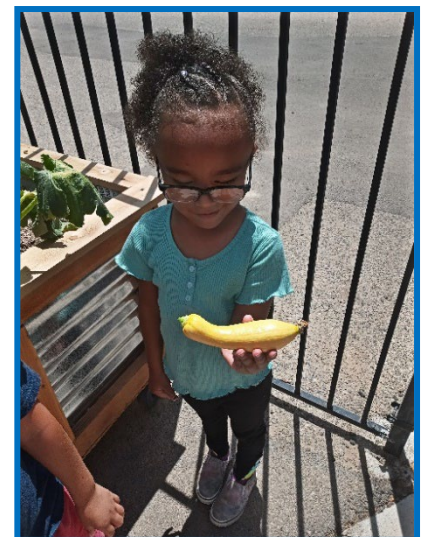
Supportive partners drive the pilot program's success. Healthy Kids San Juan County Coordinator Patience Williams helped Tedrow establish connections with local farmers as well as the San Juan Harvest Food Hub, which provides growers an additional, consistent marketplace.

Townsend Farms owner Cheryl Townsend Woods invited the pre-kindergarten class to her farm for a field trip. San Juan Nurseries Owners Donnie and Myra Pigford donated fertilizer and assisted with watering, growing and navigating weather issues the school experienced.

A Gold Star serves freshly picked vegetables like potatoes and beans from Townsend Farms in Aztec and NAPI

(Navajo Agricultural Products Industry). With Farm to Preschool funding, the school built retro-looking, mobile garden beds out of aluminum siding.

"It's exciting to see the kids pick food and bring it into their classroom," Tedrow said. "We do monthly food activities, so kids get to taste the food they are growing."



Tedrow has added a fourth preschool location in Farmington, where Williams is helping to map out a drip garden where the kids will grow corn, zucchini, tomatoes and lettuce. Ultimately the site will have an in-ground full-size garden, fruit trees and a greenhouse for year-round growing and learning.

"I am looking forward to seeing the garden grow and expand at the new site while encouraging family engagement to educate the entire family on the benefits of fresh, local food," Williams said.

Congrats to A Gold Star Academy for helping children grow healthy habits and for earning the Golden Chile award, the state's highest award for supporting NM Grown, in 2022 and 2023!



Physical Activity

Increasing opportunities for physical activity in schools & communities



Zuni encourages physical activity through traditional dances

The power of the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities program is how each community works toward the same goal of increasing physical activity and healthy eating in a way that best fits that community’s culture. That’s what Zuni Youth Enrichment Project is doing with a performing arts class that reaches almost 600 kids annually.

“You can make kids do jumping jacks all day, but this is relevant. It’s fun. You don’t think about exercise when you are dancing,” said Tara Wolfe, ZYEP’s program manager who teaches classes and supports Healthy Kids Zuni Pueblo’s healthy eating and physical activities.



This is the second year, ZYEP – through the Healthy Kids Zuni Pueblo program – is offering a performing arts elective class at Shiwi Ts’ana Elementary School and Zuni Middle School. The class addresses all aspects of health and wellness, including physical activity and dance, University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center’s Eat Smart to Play Hard Challenge, and conversations about nutrition, water intake and gardening.

“Learning traditional dances in our class may be some kids’ first opportunity to connect with their culture in a safe, positive way,” said Tahlia Natachu, ZYEP’s executive director who grew up in Zuni.

Students who attend ZYEP’s class dance in a school district-wide Indigenous Day performance in April. Families and community members help dancers put together their traditional regalia. “I think that social dancing holds to the core values of what Zuni people are,” said Wolfe. “It’s a special opportunity to feel really connected.”

The Indigenous Day performance prompted students to request additional dance opportunities, said Principal Janis Bowekaty at Shiwi Ts’ana Elementary School. “If it wasn’t for the performing arts class with ZYEP, we wouldn’t have that overwhelming need,” she said.



Being allowed to craft a curriculum around healthy eating, physical activity and performing arts, and teach a year-long class is no easy feat in any Healthy Kids community. It took years of building trust and fostering relationships with school officials and later with the students, according to Natachu.

“We have been persistent and positive, constantly offering services, asking about their needs,” Natachu said.