Lifting Up Immigrant Voices: Education Session for ABQ Mayoral candidates

On September 13th immigrants’ rights organizations—including El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos, NM Dream Team (NMDT), the NM Asian Family Center (NMAFC) and Listo Nuevo México— hosted the ‘Lifting Up Immigrant Voices’ – Education Session for ABQ Mayoral candidates. A space designed to lift up the voices of the ABQ immigrant community to educate mayoral candidates on the issues that impact our immigrant and working families. This was the first session for mayoral candidates organized by and for immigrant communities. This educational session was particularly essential for this upcoming elections because our members had the opportunity to tell their own stories and to influence the candidates’ positions.

The active collaboration of elected officials with immigrant communities has become crucial for the protection and well-being of our immigrant and working families. For this reason, having a well-informed electorate voting in the municipal elections is essential to ensure that future policies are enacted to build communities equipped to fight for local victories that oppose the Trump administration at every turn.

Thank you very much to all our allies and members who participated in this event. It would not have been successful without your participation!!!!

On election day, we saw what happens when corporate interests get involved in ABQ politics. With their scare tactics, and their outright lies—they were able to defeat the Healthy Workforce ABQ initiative to bring earned sick time to all workers. However, we are not giving up, we vow to continue fighting to ensure that all workers have access to paid sick leave, after unofficial election returns showed a narrow margin of 718 votes against the ordinance. Our members support the 107,000 workers in ABQ who aren’t able to earn paid sick time. And our members and allies are not giving up! Together, we will continue work alongside our families to ensure we all have what we need to thrive. Our work will continue in ABQ and across the state.

Through this campaign, our members talked to more than 90,000 people in neighborhoods across the city. Together with our coalition partners, we talked to more than 36,000 people by phone. We found leaders in our community, from small business owners and teachers to healthcare professionals, who shared their support in the media and on the airwaves.

When our coalition of organizations that work with low-wage workers, the Healthy Workforce Coalition ABQ launched our Healthy Workforce ABQ campaign for earned paid sick days in the summer of 2015, our members worked diligently, with the technical assistance of the Center on Law and Poverty on crafting legislation that would protect the health and safety of all Albuquerque families. We launched the campaign on Mother’s Day in 2016 and it was our community members who announced the initiative, and now, it is the voters of our city who can make earned paid sick days a reality for all workers in Albuquerque. Together, we collected over 24,000 signatures to place the Healthy Workforce Act on this year’s ballot.

In days leading up to elections, our members were day and night advocating in favor of the Earned Paid Sick Ordinance. Our members distributed information to educate voters in several ABQ mayoral forums and multiple interviews with English and Spanish speaking media and participating in multiple press conferences on how access to Earned Paid Sick Leave would make our communities safer and healthier.

"I have never had earned paid sick days. I have a child with autism, and many times I have had to choose between taking him to his medical appointments or not receiving a day’s worth of pay,” said Edgar Salinas, a low-wage immigrant worker and an active member of El CENTRO. "It is regrettable that well-funded groups, driven by greed, instead of sound policy, choose to undermine working families’ ability to care for one another rather than strengthen and support the workers who are a cornerstone of the economy. We, ABQ’s working families, will continue to fight for our rights to support our families and strengthen ABQ. La lucha sigue!"

Other election results as known by the time of printing are:

For Mayor: Tim Keller received the majority of votes. The runoff election will be between Tim Keller and Dan Lewis on Nov 14th.

For City Councilors:  Klarissa Peña (D), Ken Sanchez (D), Cynthia Borrego (D), Diane Gibson (D), and Don Harris (GOP), Don Aragon (GOP)

DACA-Community Meeting. Our Fight Continues

On September 5th, in the wake of the Trump administration’s announcement to rescind DACA, El CENTRO, allies, and elected officials denounced Trump’s decision as heartless, cruel, and counter to the cultural, moral, social, and economic interests of the nation. El CENTRO and the immigrants’ rights movement is now pushing for a “clean” DREAM Act that would provide protections for DREAMers that are not linked to increased funding for border militarization, the targeting of and criminalization of immigrant workers, and the expansion of federal detention and deportation programs. That same day, El CENTRO joined students from the South Valley Academy for a walkout and rally organized by the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center (NMILC). In addition, El CENTRO partnered with NMILC to offer free DACA applications to students. A space designed to lift up the voices of the ABQ immigrant community to educate mayoral candidates on the issues that impact our immigrant and working families. This was the first session for mayoral candidates organized by and for immigrant communities. This educational session was particularly essential for this upcoming elections because our members had the opportunity to tell their own stories and to influence the candidates’ positions.

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Luchadora del Mes: Norma Dorado, a mother, low-wage worker, teacher, and a dedicated hard working member

Every month we highlight the work and the story of one without being able to have him in my arms to protect of our active members. This month we highlight Norma and comfort him.” After her son was deported, Norma Dorado. Norma is the proud, hardworking mother of two and her family lead statewide campaigns to bring her adult children and the owner of her own business son, and many other victims of deportations, back to the through which she teaches parenting classes. She country they call home.

Norma’s daughter is a DACA beneficiary. Norma became involved with El CENTRO back in 2002 because she was interested in fighting for better local policies that protect immigrant families. In 2010, Norma’s oldest son, Ramon Dorado, was deported back in 2010. The aviation police stopped him. The officer asked him about his status and immediately contacted ICE. Ramon was deported the next day. Norma explains this traumatizing experience, “As a mother, it’s hard to explain how traumatic it was to experience a deportation within my own family. It is something that I would never want another person. My son was expelled from the country he has called his home, and they destroyed our dreams as a family. It was tough for me to be robbed of my son, we spent four years without seeing him, without being able to hug him,

to take action to ensure that the approximately 800,000 thousand DREAMers don’t lose their work authorization and protection from deportation. We, at El CENTRO, commit to continue fighting and ensuring that our community has all the tools and knowledge available to protect each other.

The deadline to submit paperwork to renew DACA is October 5th. Please, go to Listo Nuevo Mexico’s website for resources on DACA www.listonm.org.
JUNTA DE MEMBRESÍA
Jueves 5 de octubre, 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos
714 4th St. SW

Discutiremos sobre:
- Los resultados de las elecciones locales sobre días pagados por enfermedad
- Resultados en votaciones de alcalde y nuestras próximas estrategias
- Cómo continuar en la lucha para defender a nuestras familias.
¡No te lo pierdas!

Habrá cuidado de niños y una cena ligera.
Para más información, llama a El CENTRO al (505) 246-1627 o danos "LIKE" en nuestra página de Facebook y busca el evento.

Our membership meetings are held in Spanish