



# Monthly Newsletter

YOUR SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY INFORMATION

If you want a printed copy in English, please call us at 5 505-246-1627

## El CENTRO's Members Hold City Councilors Accountable and Encourage Them to Pass R-18-7: The Resolution that Would Strengthen ABQ's Immigrant Friendly Status

Resource constraints can limit and mitigate the damage that the Trump administration can inflict through its draconian immigration policies. If ABQ refuses to comply with Trump's vision, then ICE will have fewer resources to enforce Trump's deportation machine. Local governments are not obligated to collaborate with immigration enforcement. And, the Trump's administration cannot intimidate local governments by threatening them with cuts in federal grants. As our families keep being targeted, we keep fighting to implement policies that would make ABQ safer and healthier for all.

### ABQ's recent history as sanctuary city:

There is no legal definition of "sanctuary city" or sanctuary policy. It is generally understood to be a range of policies that protect the immigration status of residents, deny the use of local government resources in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, and that seek to integrate mixed-status immigrant families into the civic, economic, and cultural life of a community (information compiled by Somos un Pueblo Unido, Santa Fe.)

In 2000, El CENTRO worked to pass a bipartisan resolution- R-00-151 introduced by Councilor Hess Yntema (R, District Six, 1987-1991). This resolution declared ABQ an "Immigrant-Friendly City", recognized the vast contributions of immigrant communities to the economic, social, and cultural fiber of the City, and made a commitment that the city will not use municipal resources to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws. Unfortunately, this resolution was undermined by the Mayor Berry's administration who welcomed Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to check the immigration status of suspects at the Prisoner Transport Center. Federal deportation programs, like the one in question, have been found to foster racial profiling, result in family separation, undermine community policing and have a chilling impact on public safety.

Last February 22th, in the wake of the immigration executive orders issued by the Trump administration at the beginning of 2017, over forty immigrant and refugee-based organizations, faith-based institutions, victims and civil rights advocates, and business leaders and approximately 375 community

members turned out to urge the ABQ City Council to vote in favor of ABQ reaffirming its status once again as an Immigrant-Friendly City. The memorial passed on a 6:1 vote with Councilors Peña, Benton, Sanchez, Davis, Gibson (Democrats), and Winter (Republican) voting in favor and Councilor Jones (Republican) voting against. Councilors Lewis and Harris were absent.

Building upon last year's victory of re-affirming ABQ as an immigrant-friendly city, today we seek to pass Resolution 18-7 which will strengthen that status with clear and concrete provisions to ensure our families' safety.

### New Provisions in Resolution 18-7:

Even though, ABQ has had immigrant-friendly policies since 2000, Resolution 18-7 would allow us to achieve additional protections by:

- \*ensuring that the City is not using any resources to enforce federal immigration laws.
- \*safeguarding personal and identifying information so that the federal government can't use this information to target our families.
- \*limiting ICE's access to nonpublic City facilities if they don't have a judicial warrant and ensuring that the City will not enforce any federal program requiring the registration of individuals on the basis of religious affiliation or ethnic or national origin.

Immigrant and refugee-friendly policies such as Resolution 18-7 recognize the vital contributions that our immigrant and refugee communities. Sanctuary policies make our cities safer and healthier for ALL. We urge you to support the R-18-7 Resolution. In the coming weeks, we will be attending City Council meetings and we encourage our members are allies to turn out to these meetings and have their voices heard Please, follow us on Facebook at @ElCentrodelaIgualdadDerechos or give us a call at 505-246-1627 to learn how you can get involved.



**El CENTRO and the NM Faith Coalition Hold Action to Demand ICE Out of ABQ**

On Wednesday 24th, El CENTRO along with the NM Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice joined forces for a vigil to demand "ICE out of ABQ" and to fight back against the deportation of the husband and father of one of ABQ's immigrant leaders, Hilaria Martinez. At this action, we stressed that the collaboration between local government institutions and ICE jeopardizes the safety of all communities in ABQ. Juan Martinez is the father of four girls, ages 17, 12, 11 and 7. He is an auto mechanic and has his own business. He is a hard-working man and the sole breadwinner of his family. His wife, Hilaria, has worked nearly as a full-time volunteer in her daughter's school up until Juan's detention. Juan has been involved in fundraisers for APS, where his daughters attend.

Hilaria, who was also the primary organizer of this event, explains "Our community provides the support of this economy, we work under the sun, we work overtime, we do the jobs that nobody else wants to do. However, the Trump administration is targeting our families. I urge the community not to be afraid, to keep fighting together, supporting each other. United we cannot be defeated." Fabiola Bawden, immigrant mother and civil rights organizer with El CENTRO

de Igualdad y Derechos, speaks to the organizing power of immigrant communities showcased at our action "we will not allow our families to continue to be criminalized. Our families are being attacked, and we are fighting back!"

On Wednesday 31st, thanks to the excellent legal representation from the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, Juan's Judge allowed him to post a bond and the opportunity to be reunited with his family while Juan pursues possible immigration relief. Hilaria Martinez thanks our communities and allies for their support "I am incredibly grateful to El CENTRO and the NM Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice for standing side by side with my family. This is a clear example of how our community is stronger when we fight together. This wasn't just my family's battle but a battle for our entire community. We will continue fighting because this is just our first step to assure that no more families are separated, it is hard but not impossible!"

The greatest win of this fight has been that today we have a family of luchadores in our community.

In order to fundraise for Juan's bond, Hilaria will be selling chicken, pork, and green chile tamales during the rest of the week, \$12 per dozen. If you wish to place an order, please contact Hilaria directly by texting her at 505-322-7375.



**El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos Condemns the Department of Justice's Most Recent Attack on Sanctuary Cities**

On January 24th, the U.S. Justice Department targeted Bernalillo County and other "sanctuary jurisdictions" in its latest effort to coerce local governments into cooperating with federal immigration agencies and implementing Trump's deportation machine by threatening to deny federal funding. This would only erode immigrant communities' trust with local law enforcement and would be detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of Bernalillo residents.

We have the law and justice on our side. The federal government cannot coerce and bully local governments into enforcing federal immigration law, which is under the sole purview of the federal government.

When the Trump administration threatened to withhold federal funding from sanctuary cities last November, multiple courts ruled that the Constitution and federal law prohibit this.

Our message stands clear: our communities will not be intimidated! We will continue to use every tool at our disposal and will work with local elected officials and decision makers to resist Trump's bullying tactics and to defend our local policies which promote public safety, uphold civil rights, and are conducive to keeping our families together.



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING: SANCTUARY POLICIES**

WHEN: Thursday, Feb 22nd, 6-8:30 pm  
 WHERE: 714 4th St SW 87102  
 DESCRIPTION: Join us to learn how we are going to use sanctuary policies to keep our families together and fight against Trump's attacks. Childcare and light dinner provided. Our membership meetings are in Spanish.

**WORKERS' RIGHTS ORIENTATIONS**

WHEN: Feb 5 & 19, and Marzo 5 & 19, 5:30 to 7 pm  
 WHERE: 714 4th St SW 87102  
 DESCRIPTION: Come to our orientations if you think you've been a victim of wage theft and/or discrimination, and want to learn about your rights and options. Call in advance to reserve your spot, 505-247-1023

**CIVIL RIGHTS WORKSHOPS**

WHEN: Contact us to schedule and sign up  
 DESCRIPTION: Learn about your civil rights with ICE/police, and how to make a family emergency plan and how to join the movement to fight back! Contact us at 505-246-1627 or sign up on line at [www.elcentronm.org](http://www.elcentronm.org)

**LEGAL CONSULTATIONS -THE NM IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER**

WHEN: Every Wednesday, 1 to 5 pm  
 WHERE: 714 4th St. SW 87102  
 DESCRIPTION: Do you need help with any immigration related issues or obtaining a background check? Come on Wednesdays to sign up for a free consultation with an immigration attorney.

**NM IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER PHONE CONSULTATIONS**

WHEN: Every Friday, 11 am to 1 pm  
 DESCRIPTION: Free legal consults!  
 Call 505-247-1023

**For more information about events and to check out our complete Know Your Rights with ICE and Law Enforcement Toolkit at our Website!**



**El CENTRO invites workers with closed and unclaimed wage theft cases to come forward, as a result of a recent settlement of a lawsuit against the Department of Workforce Solutions**

After years of the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS, under the leadership of Governor Susana Martinez,) refusing to enforce New Mexico's wage enforcement laws properly, El CENTRO and other workers' justice organizations from across the state filed a lawsuit last January demanding that DWS do its job. In a landmark victory for low-wage workers, we reached a settlement agreement last month.

The class action settlement agreement details new rules and obligations the Labor Relations Division (LRD) of DWS must follow in its investigation and enforcement of wage claims. It will also enable some workers with prior, unresolved wage claims to seek a new investigation.

**What does this mean for victims of wage theft?**

This agreement covers all employees who have experienced a violation of the New Mexico wage payment laws. It requires LRD to take specific measures to strengthen its investigations of claims for unpaid wages and to enforce the law more uniformly. Additionally, the agreement allows for a 'look-back' period of cases that LRD may not have investigated the first time or closed unlawfully.



**Our Members in Action! Starting 2018 Strong in La Lucha**

El CENTRO's members participated in the March / Parade of the Martin Luther King Holiday to show our solidarity with African American communities and communities of color and to honor the legacy of the civil rights movements, in which we continue to build upon today in our fight for immigrants' rights. We also had the honor to be part of ABQ's Women's March 2018 where one of our organizers, Marian Méndez, gave a speech highlighting the contributions of immigrant workers and families and immigrant communities' efforts to fight back against the Trump administration's continuous attacks.



**What if I had a problem with a LRD wage claim in the past?**

Individuals may be able to ask LRD to reopen their wage claims since the settlement agreement also applies to previously closed cases. We encourage workers who previous cases were closed, to check with LRD or El CENTRO if they can re-open their cases. If you contact El CENTRO, we can also refer you to other workers' justice orgs in the state.

**How can I figure out if I can re-open my case? Or, who can I contact to present a wage theft claim?**

You have the right to a free consultation from the Labor Relation Divisions by contacting them at 121 Tijeras NE, Suite 3000, Albuquerque, NM 87102. Phone Number: (505) 841-4400. In addition, El CENTRO provides bi-weekly wage theft orientations to workers; helps workers file wage claims; works with a team of pro-bono attorneys to give legal advice and when appropriate; and engages workers to seek other means of resolution through community-oriented approaches including direct-action against unscrupulous employers.. For more information contact Marco Nuñez at [mnunez@yahoo.com](mailto:mnunez@yahoo.com),



On January 27th, El CENTRO stood in solidarity with Muslim and Jewish communities at an event organized by the Islamic Center of NM, Congregation Nahalat Shalom and People Against Bigotry to denounce the attacks on our Muslim and Jewish communities and the travel bans imposed by the Trump's administration. And on January 29th, we participated in the Immigrant Day or Action rally organized by Somos Un Pueblo Unido in Santa Fe where we fought back against the President's attacks on our communities.



**Luchadora del Mes: Mirna Lazcano, activist, student, immigrant mother, and a Defensora de Familia**

Every month we highlight the work and the story of one of our active members. This month we highlight Mirna Lazcano. She is a proud immigrant mother of four and an advocate for fighting to protect our immigrant families and communities. She is also a student at Encuentro. She has already graduated from Encuentro’s High School Equivalency and Computer classes, and she is currently taking ESL classes. She aspires to open her own daycare in the near future.

As part of Defensores de Familia (Family Defenders), Mirna has facilitated many Know-Your-Rights workshops throughout ABQ and participated in a Theater of the Oppressed inspired theater performance with Working Classrooms. At the performance, Mirna, along with the rest of the civil rights “promotoras”, wrote and performed a play about the oppression of immigrants and low-wage workers and about our rights and ways in which to fight back. In 2013, she traveled to Washington along with other members from El CENTRO to participate in the Keeping Families Together campaign in demand of a comprehensive immigration reform. She has also been actively involved in assuring that APS improves its Safe Haven policies and she has participated in multiple meetings with the City Council to ensure that ABQ remains an immigrant-friendly city.

Mirna found out about El CENTRO after she attended a Know-Your-Rights workshop at her children’s school. She gave her contact information to El CENTRO’s organizers who later recruited her for the group of Defensores de Familia. Mirna decided to become participate because “as part of the immigrant community, it is our imperative to educate ourselves, educate others and continue organizing to defend all of our families.”

Mirna shares her hopes and dreams for 2018 “For 2018, I dream that our immigrant communities continue to organize so that we have the same rights as everyone else. We, immigrant working families, are here to fight for our families and our communities.”

We, at El CENTRO, recognize that our strength has always come and will continue to come directly from our members. Thank you! If you would like to get involved or learn more about our Defensores de Familia group or our civil rights workshops, contact Fabiola Bawden at fbawden\_@yahoo.com, Marian Méndez at mmendez\_elcentro@yahoo.com, or call 505-246-1627.



# JUNTA DE MEMBRESIA



**EL CENTRO TE INVITA A DIALOGAR E INFORMARTE SOBRE LA LUCHA PARA PASAR LA RESOLUCION PARA CIUDAD SANTUARIO**

- **¿Quieres saber qué es una ciudad santuario?**
- **¿Quieres saber cómo vamos a usar políticas de santuario para mantener a nuestras familias unidas y luchar contra los ataques de Trump?**
- **¿Quieres saber más sobre cómo tú puedes formar parte de la lucha para pasar la nueva Resolución de Ciudad Santuario R-18-7?**

**¡Entonces participa en nuestra Junta de Membresía!**

**DONDE: 714 4th St SW 87102**

**CUANDO: JUEVES 22 DE FEBRERO, 2018 6-8:30 PM**

**Habrà cuidado de niños y cena ligera**

**\*Our membership meetings are always in Spanish\***

**PARA MAS INFORMACION : [elcentronm.org](http://elcentronm.org) (505)246-1627**