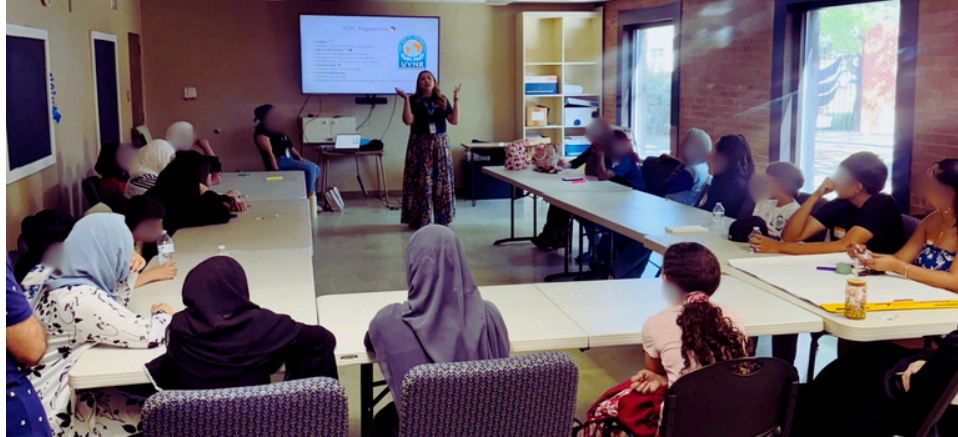


UVNR NEWSLETTER

As summer winds down, our commitment to uplifting newcomer communities remains as strong as ever. Last month, we were busy making a meaningful impact. From launching our first session of the Youth Community Advisory Council (YCAC) Cohort 3 and holding another Tea Circle, to celebrating the long-awaited opening of APS International High School, we have seen many great things happening despite the challenging times we are all living in. We are focusing now on strengthening partnerships with other vital community organizations to bolster our work, and we have some exciting events that are coming up this month.

Be sure to check them out!



Donate
today and
make a
difference!





September 2025 REFRAME Coalition Meeting



Join our REFRAME coalition meeting where we will share evaluation updates on our federal SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) grant.

We will be reviewing Year 3 evaluation findings from our REFRAME programs centered on community healing and resilience. We will cover an overview of evaluation and survey data, discuss survey results, and plan next steps with group recommendations based on our findings.

This meeting is open to both returning and new coalition members, as well as youth!

Check out the flyer below for more information!



REFRAME COALITION MEETING: OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION & SURVEY DATA

**THURSDAY, 09/18/25
4 : 00 PM - 5 : 30 PM**

**@ INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT LIBRARY
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
(7601 CENTRAL AVE NE,)**

Agenda Highlights:

- **Overview of REFRAME Evaluation & Survey Data**
- **Discussion of Survey Results**
- **Group Recommendations & Next Steps**

Let's reflect and plan together as we review the evaluation of our REFRAME programs from Year 3. We welcome both returning and new coalition members!



**UNITED
VOICES FOR
NEWCOMER
RIGHTS.**

**SAMHSA RECAST GRANT# :
H79SM087568**

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Participant Stories from the Field of this Month

New Feature: Participant Stories from the Field

Starting in September, we will highlight Participant Stories from the Field to showcase the impact of our Community Advocates' mentoring (case management) work. These stories will share how our programs have improved participants' lives while also driving broader systemic change.

An Afghan Participant's Journey



Tasawer Yosufzai, Afghan Community Advocate, shares her story working with one of the participants in her community:

Noor (name changed for confidentiality) is an Afghan refugee woman who arrived in the U.S. in 2023. From the very beginning, she faced enormous challenges. Her health was fragile, she lived in constant pain, every trip outside the home was a struggle, and even the simplest tasks felt overwhelming.

When I first assessed Noor's needs, it was clear that access to healthcare was her greatest priority. Our journey began at the Human Services Department, where she was told she did not qualify for Medicaid. We were redirected to the Social Security office for Medicare, only to learn she would need to wait seven months until open enrollment. When that wait ended, she was denied again for not having lived in the U.S. for five years. In total, we went to Human Services three times and Social Security twice — each visit ending in rejection.

These trips were grueling. Noor could not climb into my SUV, so I borrowed my sister's car each time. Even then, every visit pushed her fragile body to its limits. Waiting, answering questions, and hearing "no" again and again broke her spirit. I promised her each time would be the last, yet we often returned home with only disappointment and tears.

Finally, we turned to Supplemental Security Income (SSI). After a year of paperwork, interviews, and waiting, Noor was approved. With that, she gained access to doctors, specialists, and home healthcare. Today, her devoted sister provides daily care, and Noor's life is no longer defined by denials but by relief and gratitude.

Noor's story is not only her own — it is a reminder of the barriers many refugees face, and the persistence and advocacy required to help them live with dignity in their new home.

Youth Community Advisory Council (YCAC) and Tea Circles

On August 16th, we kicked off our first YCAC and Tea Circle of the season! YCAC empowers newcomer youth to build community and explore mental health, culture, and resources. Tea Circle brings newcomer adults together to connect, share experiences, and support one another over culturally diverse teas, while receiving helpful info on housing, taxes, education, and more.

In August, YCAC had a fun and interactive introduction to the program with lots of team-building games. Tea Circle engaged in a discussion on healthcare access in the community.

Keep an eye out for our next YCAC and Tea Circle session coming up this month on Sept 20 from 3-5 pm at St. Tim's Church!



Indica's Goodbye!

Hello everyone,

I wanted to let you know that I have resigned from my position at UVNR and my final day will be September 20th. I will be transitioning to the State of New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions in the Office of New Americans. In this new position, I still expect to work closely with UVNR/the UNM Refugee and Immigrant Well-being Project, and the newcomer community as a whole!

I have been working the UVNR team in some capacity or another for the last five years, and I can honestly say that it has been the opportunity of a lifetime. I would like to thank you, our dedicated volunteers and supporters, wholeheartedly for the kindness, respect, and friendship you have shown to me and the organization.

I hope to maintain professional and personal relationships with you all! I have nothing but love for the organization and the amazing team! Additionally, should you all ever need anything from me, please do not hesitate to reach out! Thank you all for making Albuquerque a better place, please keep in touch!



Best Wishes,
Indica Simpson

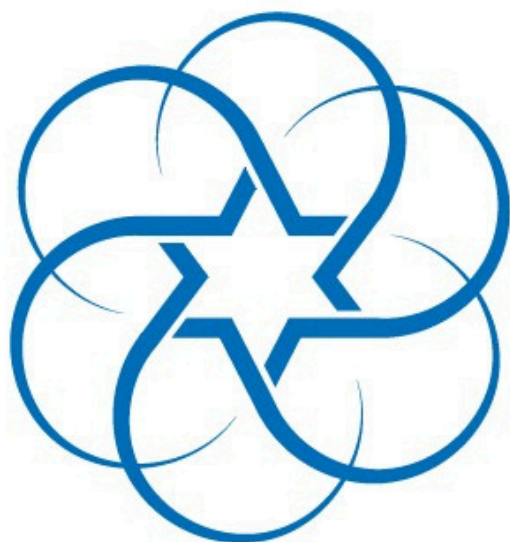
*Indica
Simpson*

The Jewish Community Foundation of New Mexico

We want to extend a special shout-out to the Jewish Community Foundation (JCF) of NM for their continued support of UVNR and the newcomer communities we serve.

Thanks to their generous contributions, through The Immigrant and Refugee Assistance Fund, we're able to continue providing vital services to refugees and immigrants in our city, work that is more important now than ever.

Their partnership helps us build stronger, more inclusive communities for newcomers and all people. Thank you JCF for standing with us! Click the button below to visit their website and learn more!



JEWISH
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
OF NEW MEXICO SM

Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15 – October 15

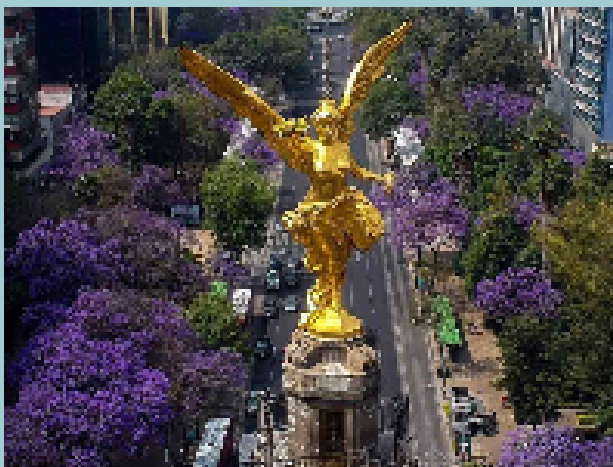
Written by our Spanish Community Advocate,
Mariana Santos Lezama

The celebration begins on September 15, marking the independence of El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras, with Chile following on September 18. Festivities include parades, civic ceremonies, traditional food, and music.

In Mexico, the celebration spans September 15–16, beginning with “El Grito” at midnight. The President addresses the nation from Mexico City’s Zócalo, honoring heroes and shouting “¡Viva México!” Families gather to enjoy music, dance, and traditional dishes like Pozole and Chiles en Nogada.

On October 12, once known as El Día de la Raza, many now recognize it as Día de la Resistencia Indígena (Day of Indigenous Resistance). Indigenous groups like the Zapatistas, Mayas, and Quechuas remind us the continent—originally called Abya Yala—was colonized, not discovered.

This month is a time to celebrate Latinx heritage, history, food, music, and traditions.



The Angel of Independence
in Mexico City



Chiles en Nogada is a traditional dish
with the colors of the Mexican flag.

¡Globalquerque!

UVNR is excited to table at the 20th annual ¡Globalquerque! Festival. This free, vibrant celebration of world music and culture takes place on Saturday, Sept 20, 2025, at 5 pm at Civic Plaza in Albuquerque.

Stop by our table to connect, learn about our work with newcomer communities, and celebrate the rich cultural diversity that makes New Mexico so special.
We'd love to see you there!

More info: globalquerque.org



APS International High School

After years of hard work, dedication, and collaboration, APS International High School is officially open as of August 2025!

This new school was created to support recently arrived multilingual English Learners from across Albuquerque, offering a welcoming and inclusive space where newcomer students can grow academically and personally.

With smaller class sizes, supportive teachers, and a hands-on, community-based learning model, the school helps students build their English skills while preparing for college, careers, and life beyond high school.

Check out the recruitment flyer below.





APS International High School

Opening August, 2025

Now enrolling 9th & 10th Grade students for the 25-26 school year.

Our goal is for students to understand, speak, read and write English to be successful in college and careers.

Small School

Small Classes

Supportive Teachers

Multilingual Staff

Students Served: Recently-arrived Multilingual English Learners (ELs) from across the city.

Location: APS International is located in Downtown Albuquerque at 601 4th St. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Buses: The school will provide regional buses with a few super stops in high enrollment neighborhoods.

Sports/Extracurricular: Students can participate in teams and activities at their local high school.

We have high expectations for ALL students with high levels of student support.

School Model

English Language Development Everyone learns English while learning math, science, social studies, and in other classes.	Hands-on Learning Classes are taught through hands-on projects that focus on solving real world problems.
Positive Community Culture A safe and caring space rooted in the strengths of multilingual cultures for students to be celebrated to grow and learn.	Community Based Learning Students learn in partnership with the community including community service, job shadows, internships and community change projects.
College and Career Guidance ALL students will be exposed to college and career options and guided through the process to meet their individual goals for life after high school.	Family Engagement and Services The APS International Welcome Center , co-located with the school, will have multilingual staff dedicated to assisting families with registration, resources and referrals while supporting family engagement.

To start student registration process, complete this form:

<https://bit.ly/APSInternationalHS>

For more information contact: Newcomer.Program@aps.edu





Escuela preparatoria internacional de APS

Abriendo agosto 2025

Inscribiendo estudiantes de 9º y 10º grados para el año escolar 25-26

Nuestro objetivo es que los estudiantes comprendan, hablen, lean y escriban inglés para tener éxito en la universidad y en sus carreras.

Escuela pequeña Clases pequeñas Maestros de apoyo Personal multilingüe

Estudiantes atendidos: Estudiantes multilingües recién llegados de toda la ciudad.

Ubicación: APS International está ubicado en el centro de Albuquerque, 601 4th St. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Autobuses: La escuela proporcionará autobuses/camiones regionales.

Deportes/Extracurriculares: Los estudiantes pueden participar en equipos y actividades en su escuela preparatoria local.

Tenemos altas expectativas para TODOS los estudiantes con altos niveles de apoyo estudiantil.

Modelo de escuela

Desarrollo del idioma inglés Todos aprenden inglés mientras aprenden matemáticas, ciencias, estudios sociales y en otras clases.	Aprendizaje práctico Las clases se imparten a través de proyectos prácticos que se centran en resolver problemas del mundo real.
Cultura comunitaria positiva Un espacio seguro y solidario arraigado en las fortalezas de las culturas multilingües para que los estudiantes sean celebrados para crecer y aprender.	Aprendizaje basado en la comunidad Los estudiantes aprenden en asociación con la comunidad, incluido el servicio comunitario, observación laboral, pasantías y proyectos de cambio comunitario.
Orientación universitaria y profesional TODOS los estudiantes estarán expuestos a opciones universitarias y profesionales y serán guiados a través del proceso para alcanzar sus metas individuales para la vida después de la escuela secundaria.	Servicios y participación familiar El Centro de Bienvenida Internacional de APS, ubicado junto a la escuela, contará con personal multilingüe dedicado a ayudar a las familias con la inscripción, los recursos y las referencias, al mismo tiempo que apoya la participación familiar.

Para iniciar el proceso de inscripción de estudiantes, complete este formulario:

<https://bit.ly/APSInternationalHS>

Para más información contacte: Newcomer.Program@aps.edu

