



PROJECT STATUS REPORT

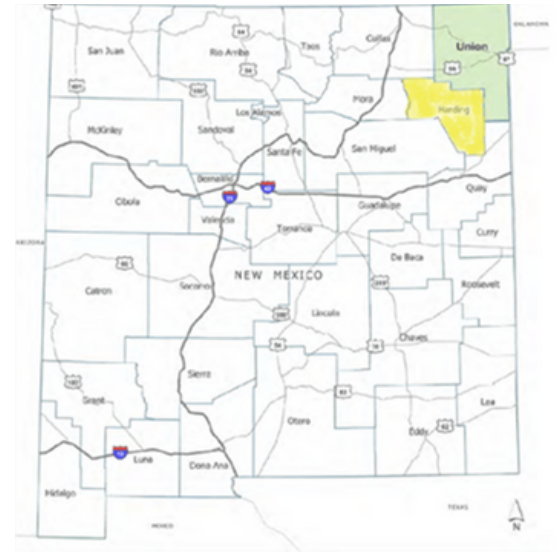
May 2022



**Community Solutions for
Eldercare and Economic Development**

CSEED PILOT COMMUNITIES: UNION AND HARDING COUNTIES

The populations of Union and Harding Counties are very rural and lie in some of the least populated space in New Mexico, if not the United States. Between the 2 counties, there are 5,957 square miles. There is just one grocery store. Life in this part of New Mexico is not dominated by technology and complex programming. Business is still done with a phone call and a handshake. Word of mouth is still the primary tool for marketing.



Demographically, the Census of 2020 revealed that:

Union County

- 1.1 persons per square mile
- 25% of residents are 60+ years old
- 10% of older adults experience poverty
- 21% of all residents live with a disability

Harding County

- 0.38 persons per square mile
- 40% of residents are 60+ years old
- 14 % of older adults experience poverty
- 23.5% of all residents live with a disability

Both counties

- 52% of older adults in both counties are living alone and may suffer from isolation. In addition to isolation, many of Union and Harding Counties' older adults are raising grandchildren. (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/union-county-nm#about>)
- Ethnically, both counties primarily identify as White or Hispanic.

The belief that New Mexico's older adults, with or without disabilities, have the right to remain in their homes as active participants in their families and communities is at the heart of the Aging and Long-Term Services Department's mission. To enhance this participation, older adults must be encouraged and enabled to age with respect and dignity, to be protected from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and to have equal access to health care. Focusing on New Mexico's rural and tribal communities, the mission of ALTSD's Community Solutions for Eldercare and Economic Development (CSEED) project is to work alongside communities to identify needed eldercare services and to build the accompanying workforce that is necessary to provide such services.

Aging and Long-Term Services Department Announces New Initiative for Aging-Related Services and Workforce Development in Harding and Union Counties



The New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD) is excited to announce a new program for aging-related services and workforce development in New Mexico. Recognizing that New Mexico is one of the fastest growing aging states in the country, the team, composed of administrators from the ALTSD, consultants experienced in aging services and policies, and four newly hired AmeriCorps VISTAS, has developed an initiative, Community Solutions for Eldercare and Economic Development (CSEED), to address health disparities in New Mexico's rural and tribal communities.



The CSEED team will focus its attention on identifying aging-related services and other essential needs in the pilot communities of Harding and Union counties, while working with state and local government, not-for-profit institutions, community members, and other key stakeholders to help expand economic development and eldercare employment opportunities, with the goal of stimulating new and expanded eldercare services.

Asset mapping and gap analysis work, which is to be conducted in consultation with Community Advisory Groups, is scheduled to begin later this Spring. For more information on this project, please contact Rebecca Baca, Director of Indian Elder Affairs at the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department and CSEED Project Director, by telephone at 505-690-4263 or via email at Rebecca.Baca@state.nm.us.

VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA

HOW AMERICORPS VISTAS ARE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CSEED PROJECT



AmeriCorps VISTA has a long history of success in serving the nation. President Kennedy envisioned a domestic version of the Peace Corps and established a commission to implement a national service project. In 1964, President Johnson signed the legislation that created VISTA, Volunteers in Service to America. In 1994, VISTA became part of the national service organization, AmeriCorps, which was created by President Clinton as a means to promote volunteerism and community service.

There are four main principles of AmeriCorps VISTA:

01

ENDING POVERTY

The goal of VISTA is to move people out of poverty and not to provide short-term solutions to make poverty more tolerable.

02

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

VISTA members do not view themselves as solutions to issues. Rather, community members are engaged to plan, develop, and implement projects.

03

BUILDING CAPACITY

AmeriCorps defines capacity building as the activities that “enhance the mission, strategy, skills, and culture, as well as systems, infrastructure, and human resources of an organization that is meeting unmet community needs.” Instead of providing direct service to clients, such as serving meals or helping someone build a resume, VISTAs work behind the scenes to strengthen the systems and resources for their host organizations. Examples of capacity building include developing a system of volunteers to sustain the organization moving forward or, as is being done in the CSEED project, creating and participating in asset mapping and gap analysis activities to identify the strengths of the community and the potential needs of the community.

04

CREATING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

As the project name reflects, CSEED VISTAs develop “systems, relationships, and knowledge which they transfer to the organization and the community to sustain over the long-term.”

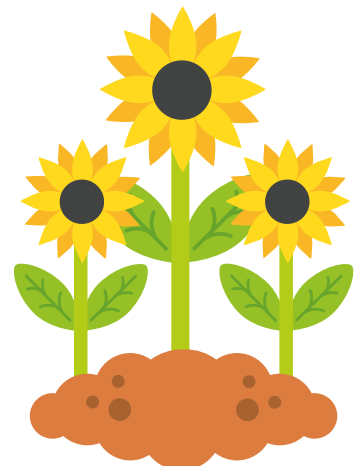


VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA

HOW AMERICORPS VISTAS ARE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE CSEED PROJECT, PART II

With the four AmeriCorps principles in mind, VISTA members, during their one year of service, help their organizations gain greater independence and sustainability. The CSEED project is being supported by three AmeriCorps VISTA members, Nancy Kastning, Emma Lynch, and Becca Godfrey-Poe. Since January, the CSEED VISTAs have been hard at work developing an initiative that supports the belief that New Mexico's older adults have the right to remain in their homes as active participants in their families and communities. The focus of the CSEED project is on assisting older adults in New Mexico's rural and tribal communities, who often do not get the types of services that are found more commonly in urban areas of the state. The lack of these services often prevents older New Mexicans from living independently and from contributing economically to their local economies.

To date, the CSEED team has accomplished a great deal in its effort to support this initiative. The team has selected the target communities of Harding and Union Counties to serve as the pilot communities for the project. A gap analysis tool has been developed, and the team will soon have a website and social media sites to promote the project. The CSEED Team is looking forward to the next step of the project, which is to create a Community Advisory Group. By the end of the year, the CSEED team will be able to provide recommendations for the target communities, and the Aging and Long-Term Services Department will be able to use this structure for future endeavors. In this way, the CSEED team members are fulfilling the mission of AmeriCorps VISTA to fight poverty, empower communities, build capacity, and to help to create sustainable solutions to the problems that face communities with an increasing population of older adults.





Community Solutions for Eldercare and Economic Development

ADMINISTRATION:

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STAFF:

Nancy Joan Brigid Kastning, VISTA, Rural Older Adult Independence Coordinator

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