

Gunnison County Multicultural Resource Office

2010 Annual Report

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Thoughts from Ellen Pedersen, MRO Coordinator

The economic downturn is affecting our community. There are fewer jobs and fewer resources. The Multicultural Resource Office is not the exception. Selenia Rascón (Health Navigator) and I have become very active in writing grants to keep our office running. While writing our current grants, we sat down and did an inventory of the services we provide, our services are for all stages and ages of the population. Our main focus is health, but our help is needed in all aspects of the daily life of our clients.

One of our activities is to manage the "Access to Health Care Program". This program assures competency in cultural and ethnic service delivery, and assures that anyone entering any door in the organization can receive the variety of services provided if they qualify. We help enrolling eligible clients in Medicaid and the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+), we provide "Light Program" vouchers that allow uninsured or underinsured adult residents of Gunnison County who are ineligible for public health insurance to see a family physician and establish a medical home and the "Light Program for Children" which allows qualifying minors to get medical, vision, dental, prescriptions, and behavioral health care at a nominal cost.

Children without health insurance can apply for the Dental Initiative Program; pregnant women without insurance can get prenatal care. We help people with chronic diseases, substance abuse prevention, mental health, traffic tickets, work related issues,... the list goes on. We assist with appointments, interpretation, education, and health navigation.

Our office is very successful because we have good relationships with our clients, they feel safe when they come to our office and they trust us. We collaborate with many organizations, businesses, and residents in the community.

The 2010 census indicates that the Hispanic population in Gunnison has increased to 8.1%. We will continue to work hard to reduce health disparities, increase awareness, and promote immigrant integration in our community.

Clients of the Multicultural Resource Office

The Multicultural Resource Office (MRO) is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. We act as a single entry point for non-English speakers in the community. Here people can get information, education, referrals, resources, and any type of assistance that is culturally and linguistically appropriate.

The MRO opened in December 2001. In 2010, we served 190 unduplicated families, 49.5% more than in 2002. By helping those 190 families, we had a direct impact on 552 people, of those, 258 were children. On average, the MRO served 101 clients per month. The peak month for clients served was December, we served 128 clients. The majority of the clients that used the office were women between the ages of 31 to 35 (25.3%). We worked with a large number of families, only 33.7% of the families we serve do not have children, 3.6% less than last year.

Gunnison's minority population is growing. This population includes a considerable number of people who have limited English language skills. The majority of the clients we serve are from Spanish-speaking countries. The majority, 88%, of the clients that use the MRO are from Mexico. Of those, 40.2% are Cora Indians and 49.2% are immigrants from various Mexican states. Our clients from Central and South America include people from Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru. Other clients that use the office are from countries such as Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

The current economic climate continues to affect our clients. We saw fewer clients in 2010. This is due to several factors: some people have returned to their native county, others have moved away in search of jobs, and several agencies in town have hired Spanish-speaking personnel. However we still provide a valuable service to the clients we see.

In 2010, we made 4,037 contacts on behalf of our clients, up from 3,182 contacts in 2009. A contact consists of a call or any type of communication with office staff or other persons on behalf of clients or vice versa. Follow up calls were made when they were required. The following is a description of the typical contacts we make for our clients.

Education: Contacts for this category were made with all of the schools and they were about transportation, free or reduced lunch, sick children, and parent questions of any nature. Contacts in this category also include those made on behalf of clients for the Family Literacy Action Program, Even Start, and GED.

Health: some examples of these contacts include Public Health (appointments for immunizations, family planning services, cardiovascular program and other preventative programs offered through that office); appointments at local clinics; prenatal care coordination; hospitals in Gunnison, Montrose, Grand Junction, and Denver; local and out of town dentists; pharmacies; and mental health providers. We helped schedule appointments, interpreted during appointments or found volunteers to interpret during the visits, made calls regarding medical bills, and phone calls to the pharmacies to refill prescriptions or to ask questions about prescriptions. Because of the Health Navigator's work, the City Market Pharmacy now has a Spanish option for clients who need to refill prescriptions.

Department of Human Services: Contacts in this category are made through the Department of Human Services for food assistance, Medicaid or CHP+, child abuse or neglect, LEAP, rental assistance, and other available programs through that office.

Legal: refers to contacts with Colorado Legal Services and local and out of town law enforcement and lawyers. We contacted the local police department, sheriff's department, public defender's office, the courts, the jail, and victim's services. When necessary, we provide interpreters for these interactions. We help answer immigration questions.

Miscellaneous: these are contacts made with the Gunnison Arts Center, banks, Department of Motor Vehicles, Partners, telephone companies, the Post Office, the Social Security Office, tax preparers, and utility companies. We provide interpreters for some of these contacts when necessary. We also try to help our clients understand and navigate through many of the complex systems that exist in the U.S.

Work: The MRO does not help clients with job placement, however, we do help with communication with existing or prospective employers and local businesses. These contacts are made directly with employers. We had several cases where we helped establish contact with the Colorado Department of Labor when employers refused to pay their employees.

Interesting client statistics for 2010

Table 1. Contacts made on behalf of clients

| Type of contact | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Education | 198 | 112 | 148 | 157 | 215 | 154 | 143 |
| Health | 1,165 | 1,447 | 1,258 | 1,441 | 1,736 | 1,518 | 1,996 |
| Human Services | 269 | 230 | 159 | 178 | 240 | 243 | 373 |
| Legal | 274 | 257 | 280 | 387 | 450 | 308 | 370 |
| Miscellaneous | 640 | 519 | 511 | 618 | 819 | 759 | 669 |
| Work | 240 | 207 | 104 | 217 | 206 | 200 | 486 |
| Total contacts | 2,786 | 2,772 | 2,460 | 2,998 | 3,666 | 3,182 | 4,037 |

Table 2. Number of families, people, and children

| Year | # Families | # people | # children |
|------|------------|----------|------------|
| 2002 | 94 | n/a | n/a |
| 2003 | 137 | 420 | 173 |
| 2004 | 147 | 420 | 189 |
| 2005 | 173 | 466 | 196 |
| 2006 | 196 | 523 | 215 |
| 2007 | 248 | 638 | 271 |
| 2008 | 253 | 623 | 264 |
| 2009 | 215 | 574 | 250 |
| 2010 | 190 | 552 | 258 |

Table 3. Number of unduplicated families per month

| Month | Families |
|-------|----------|
| Jan | 88 |
| Feb | 98 |
| Mar | 93 |
| Apr | 101 |
| May | 113 |
| Jun | 95 |
| Jul | 107 |
| Aug | 94 |
| Sept | 84 |
| Oct | 91 |
| Nov | 118 |
| Dec | 128 |

Table 4. Mean Number of clients per month

| Year | # of clients/month |
|------|--------------------|
| 2004 | 67 |
| 2005 | 81 |
| 2006 | 94 |
| 2007 | 109 |
| 2008 | 116 |
| 2009 | 104 |
| 2010 | 101 |

Table 5. Country of Origin / Ethnicity of Families

| Country /Region | % |
|--------------------------|------|
| Mexico | 88.4 |
| Mexico (other than Cora) | 49.2 |
| Cora | 40.2 |
| South/Central America | 5.8 |
| Europe/Asia/Africa | 1.1 |
| Unknown | 3.7 |

Table 6. Age range of women. N=145

| Age | % |
|---------|------|
| < 19 | 4.5 |
| 20-25 | 15.6 |
| 26-30 | 21.4 |
| 31-35 | 25.3 |
| 36-40 | 13.6 |
| 41-45 | 8.4 |
| 46-50 | 4.5 |
| ≥50 | 4.5 |
| Unknown | 1.9 |

Table 7. Number of Children per family

| Children | % |
|----------|------|
| 0 | 33.7 |
| 1 | 20.5 |
| 2 | 20.5 |
| 3 | 15.8 |
| 4 | 4.2 |
| 5 | 2.1 |
| unknown | 3.2 |

Table 8. Age of children N=262

| age | # children | % |
|-----|------------|-----|
| 0 | 13 | 5.0 |
| 1 | 17 | 6.5 |
| 2 | 25 | 9.5 |
| 3 | 18 | 6.9 |
| 4 | 18 | 6.9 |
| 5 | 20 | 7.6 |
| 6 | 18 | 6.9 |
| 7 | 18 | 6.9 |
| 8 | 10 | 3.8 |
| 9 | 15 | 5.7 |
| 10 | 11 | 4.2 |
| 11 | 15 | 5.7 |
| 12 | 10 | 3.8 |
| 13 | 11 | 4.2 |
| 14 | 12 | 4.6 |
| 15 | 15 | 5.7 |
| 16 | 11 | 4.2 |
| 17 | 5 | 1.9 |

Table 9. Hours worked by volunteers

| year | hours |
|------|-------|
| 2002 | 431.5 |
| 2003 | 192.6 |
| 2004 | 617.5 |
| 2005 | 626.6 |
| 2006 | 517 |
| 2007 | 521 |
| 2008 | 460 |
| 2009 | 263 |
| 2010 | 208 |

Programs Coordinated Through the MRO

Client Surveys

As part of the grants that support the MRO we are conducting a health survey of users of the office (Light program users and regular clients). We ask questions about high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, exercise/ healthy habits, depression, use of Public Health (for flu vaccine, HIV tests, annual exams, immunizations and any other services that Public Health offers).

The data are still being analyzed, but a preview tells us that of the first 165 people surveyed, 100% responded that they were low income and 96.4% stated that they do not have health insurance. Of the 165 clients that were surveyed 89.1% received Health Navigator services; 80% received a Light Program Voucher; 87.9% were referred to a physician or a health care provider; 62.4% were referred to public health; 43% were referred to the Community Health Fair; 64.2% were referred to other general service; 12.7% were referred to the Center for Mental Health; 9.1% were referred to the Department of Human Services; and 4.8% were referred to prenatal care.

We will continue gathering and analyzing data. The information gathered from these surveys is important because it helps us track the number of referrals that come from our office and it also helps us identify areas of need.

Early Childhood Council Health Integration Grant through The Colorado Trust

The Gunnison County Early Childhood Council received a grant from the Colorado Trust. This grant offers childcare provider, preschool, and kindergarten based preventative dental health services for children ages 3 to 5 in Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties. Parents have to fill out a permission slip for their child to receive these services. As a part of this program, we also hosted a training for the Cavity Free by Three program.

Seven day care centers were visited. A total of 143 Children ages 3 to 5 received dental screenings, education, and fluoride varnishes. Leslie LeFevre, RDH served as the dental hygienist that performed dental health screenings, oral health and education for children and their parents, and fluoride varnish treatments. This was all free of charge for the children who participated.

About 20% of the children screened needed some kind of follow up. All children are encouraged to visit a dentist for routine care and/or a follow up.

Gunnison Dental Initiative

The Dental Initiative has been up and running for over 9 years. The program serves low income children who are uninsured and who do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+. In 2010, 34 children participated in the program. This program has helped many children achieve a healthy smile.

Dr. Anderson and the staff from Gentle Dental have generously donated their time and services to the children who are on this program. In 2010, Gentle Dental donated over \$22,000 of services to the 34 children on this program. We cannot thank everyone at Gentle Dental enough for their participation in this program.

The families pay the MRO 10% of the total cost of their visit. With that money, the MRO purchases toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss, and educational materials for children of all ages and adults. The money collected also serves to pay for services for participants of the program who need to be seen outside of Gunnison for their dental work.

Gunnison Community Health Fair

2010 saw another extraordinary collaboration with the Health Fair. We had fewer free vouchers available for our clients, nonetheless their participation was high. Private donations, vouchers provided by the Gunnison Valley Hospital, and the participation of immigrants as interpreters made the Gunnison Community Health Fair a success.

The Multicultural Resource Office organized a night where clients who obtained their Health Fair results could come get their results read/interpreted by Dr. Marie Matthews. Clients who participated were able to have a better understanding of their results.

Light Program—For Children

The children's portion of the Light Program was expanded. We received a generous donation from the Van Tuyl estate and a grant from the El Pomar Foundation that allowed us to expand the services that the Light Program offers. Children of low income families who are uninsured or underinsured and who do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+ can apply for a voucher. This voucher allows them to receive medical, dental, behavioral health, prescription, and vision services through a participating provider. In 2010, 8 vouchers were issued to children.

Programs continued...

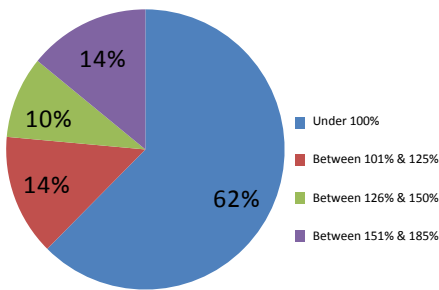
The Light Program

The Light Program is a sliding fee scale medical voucher program that allows low income, uninsured individuals who qualify to see a primary care physician. To qualify, the person needs to fill out an application, provide proof of income, proof of Gunnison County residency, and a driver's license or identification. The client pays \$20 to \$35 for the voucher depending on their income.

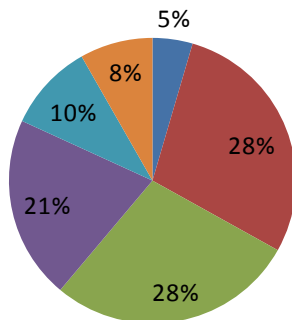
The Light Program is in its fifth year. In 2010, 252 vouchers were used. The Light Program has several benefits to the community. This program allows people to have access to health care that they would not otherwise have because of an economic barrier. It also allows users to establish a medical home.

The following charts show some interesting statistics about Light Program Clients.

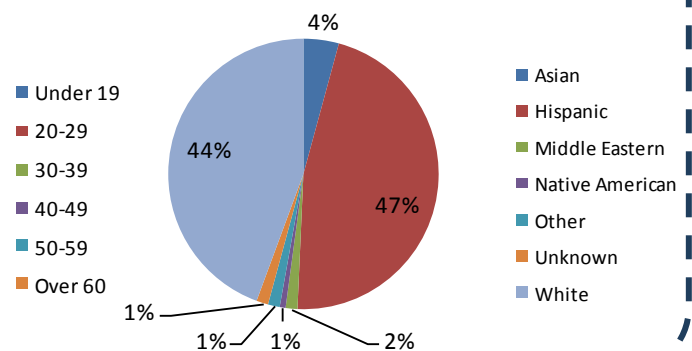
Poverty Level



Age



Ethnicity



Multicultural Resource Office Hospital Charity Program

The MRO Charity Program began in 2006 as part of the collaboration with the Gunnison Valley Hospital and the MRO. This program serves those that do not qualify for the hospital's charity Program. Clients who qualify pay a certain percentage of their total hospital bill based on a sliding fee scale.

The hospital has given us \$25,000 each year for us to use with our charity Program. We have the same guidelines that the hospital has for their charity program. Applicants must fill out a form, provide proof of income for their household, proof of Gunnison county residency, and identification. In 2010, we were able to help 9 families with this program. We have been able to help 51 families since 2006.

The Prenatal Program

The prenatal program is available to low income uninsured women who do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+. Program participants pay a fee that allows them to visit a participating provider for prenatal care during their entire pregnancy. Selenia Rascón, the Health Navigator, served as the interpreter for most of the appointments when the provider did not speak Spanish.

Dr. Bonney, Dr. Garren, Dr. Matthews, Dr. McMurren, and Dr. Niccoli were the participating providers for this program. We cannot thank these providers and their staff (everyone from nurses to receptionists) enough for all of their hard work. We would also like to thank the Gunnison Valley Hospital, interpreters, and anybody else involved in the process.

Thirteen healthy babies were delivered by women who participated in this program. They were all born with an adequate birth weight. Some of the women experienced some complications during their pregnancy but because of their participation in the program they were able to address those issues in a timely manner and there was a plan set in place before the delivery.

Toys for Tots

This county-wide program gives Christmas gifts to children under 12 years of age. The Multicultural Resource Office participates in this program by enrolling children in the program and by advertising it in Spanish. Thank you JoAnne Stone for your never ending energy and for your dedication to bring smiles to the faces of children during the holidays. Also, thank you to the people who donate toys and to the volunteers who make this program possible.

Programs continued...

Walk Your Way to Health!

This was a 6 week bilingual exercising and healthy eating program. Like the title of the program states, this was a program that consisted of walking. There was a total of 30 participants in the program, each one received a free pedometer and nutrition education. This program gave its participants the opportunity to exercise and to practice their language skills with other participants. Thank you to Margaret Wacker and all of the participants for making this program a success. This program was funded by the CCPD grant. Look for the program in 2011!

Funding for the Multicultural Office

CANCER, CARDIOVASCULAR, AND PULMONARY DISEASE PREVENTION PROGRAM:

CARING FOR COLORADO:

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE GUNNISON VALLEY

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

DONATIONS

EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL HEALTH INTEGRATION GRANT (THROUGH THE COLORADO TRUST)

EL POMAR FOUNDATION

FAMILY PLANNING

GUNNISON COUNTY

GUNNISON VALLEY HOSPITAL

IN KIND VOLUNTEER HOURS

THE OFFICE OF HEALTH DISPARITIES

THE VAN TUYL ESTATE

Activities and Collaborations 2010

2010 was another year filled with great collaborations with other organizations in the community. The following is a list with a brief description of our work with other agencies (listed alphabetically).

Clients and community members: donate money, time, clothes, furniture, strollers, etc. to the Multicultural Resource Office; **Colorado Legal Services (Gunnison, Denver, and Frisco):** collaborate on cases and cosponsor workshops. **Colorado State University Cooperative Extension/Extension Nutrition Programs Family & Consumer Science Agent:** Parenting classes, announcements, and activities; **Community Church:** Assist families who are facing difficult circumstances in paying their rent; **Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley:** Dolly Parton's Imagination Library; **Department of Human Services:** Ellen, the MRO Coordinator is a member of Child Protection Team, Health and Human Services Commission, Family Advocacy and Support Team (FAST), and the Early Childhood Council (ECC); **Dr. Marie Matthews:** interprets health fair results on one night (coordinated by the MRO); **Early Childhood Council (ECC):** Presentation at ECC Conference. Held a workshop titled "Involving Parents from Different Cultures" Over 20 early childhood professionals attended this workshop to learn different strategies to engage immigrants in their respective programs. Cultural competency was highlighted in this presentation by Mary Burt and Ellen Pedersen; **Gunnison County Substance Abuse Prevention Project (GCSAPP):** Member; **Gentle Dental:** Provider for Gunnison Dental Initiative, Selenia coordinates appointments; **Gunnison Area Restorative Practices (GARP)** used Multicultural Resource Office interpreters for meetings; **Gunnison Arts Center:** "Book Talk" every March we discuss a book related to immigrant lives in English or Spanish and have a bilingual discussion; **Gunnison Community Health Fair:** Free vouchers for the Health Fair were donated by GVH and private donors; **Gunnison Congregational Church:** Social Justice Program involved in immigrant issues; **Gunnison County Parks and Recreation:** scholarships for activities; **Gunnison Shopper:** Publishes ads and announcements in Spanish; **Gunnison Valley Community Alliance** involved in immigrant issues; **Gunnison Valley Hospital:** Worked to improve the quality of services for the non-English speaking community members: Language Barrier Program providing Medical Interpreters and substantial monetary support for the Charity Program. Bilingual volunteers worked at the Health Fair; **Jubilee House,** collaboration on cases; **Law Enforcement:** List of interpreters to call 24/7; **Light Program Providers (Children's Portion):** ABBA Eye Care, City Market Pharmacy, Dr. Harvey, Dr. Zirker, Family Vision Center, Gunnison Family Medical Center, Gunnison Valley Family Physicians, Main Street Clinic, Smiles for Kids (Montrose), The Center for Mental Health; **Light Program Providers:** Dr. Huntington, Gunnison Family Medical Center, Gunnison Valley Family Physicians, Main Street Clinic; **Parenting Class:** Monica Billow taught the STEPP program in Spanish; **Partners:** Promotion of Summer Youth Program, after school program, and all Partners programs; **Saint Peter's Church:** Assist families facing difficult circumstances in paying their rent; **Schools:** Career Fair, Interpreter Program; **Toys for Tots:** Distribution of Christmas presents for children; **Translation of materials for organizations such as:** Gunnison Valley Hospital, Gunnison Schools, Gunnison County Library and the Literacy Action Program, Local Businesses, Partners, and Public Health.

Volunteers

The Multicultural Resource Office has a list of 17 bilingual or multilingual volunteers. Together, these volunteers speak seven different languages (Czech, Danish, English, Hebrew, Spanish, Sign Language (ASL &PSE)).

In 2010 the volunteers worked a total of 208 hours. These hours include work in translation and interpretation services at events or appointments that were set up through the MRO.

A big thank you goes out to our volunteers for the incredible work they do. Thank you to: Elba Alarcon, Arden Anderson, Erika Backstorm, Timothy Bakken, Monica Billow, Sylvia Bonham, Lupita Contreras, Luke Danielson, Xavier Fane, Marjie Foster, Joan Grant, Karen Immerso, Laurie Lakin, Verónica Méndez, Dalia Molina, Carrie O'Neil, Jocelyn Panales, Charlie Remy, Annie Romero, Daniela Runge, Cynthia Saenz, Susan Searle, Dorcas Taveras, Clara Valdez, Janet Welsh Crossley, Marketa Zubkova.

We would like to extend a thank you to our volunteers on behalf of our clients for all your help. Your services are needed and very much appreciated by our clients.

The MRO relies heavily on interpreters to help facilitate communication between our non English speaking clients and the various agencies we work with. If you would like to volunteer please contact Ellen at (970) 641-7999.

Volunteer of the Year

For the sixth year in a row Marketa Zubkova is the Multicultural Office's volunteer of the year! We cannot thank Marketa enough for being so generous with her time. She is always willing to help our clients.

How to obtain an interpreter

In most cases the MRO interpreters are volunteers. The going rate to pay an interpreter is \$15 to \$30 per hour or more. Many agencies, organizations and businesses in town pay the going rate. Many of our interpreters volunteer to practice and broaden their language and interpretation skills. Many of our interpreters are trained in specific areas such as medical interpretation or legal interpretation.

The MRO can help you with your specific needs, please call (970) 641-7999 for more information or to arrange for an interpreter. The hours volunteers work are documented and they are used to obtain grants that sustain the MRO. The hours volunteers work and report to the office are important.

Please call the MRO when you need an interpreter, please do not call the interpreter directly.

How to work with an interpreter:

What does an interpreter do? Interpreters facilitate communication between two people that speak two different languages.

Why use trained interpreters? Sometimes providers use a person the patient brings with them. If the provider does not speak the other language, they have no way to know if the person that is being used as an interpreter is fluent or if they are interpreting everything that is being said. It is possible that the most convenient thing to do is use a family member or a friend of the patient, or even a child. This is not good for either the patient or the doctor because (1) Confidentiality or sensitive information is shared with a person that does not necessarily understands those concepts (2) The provider does not know if the information is being interpreted accurately in either direction. (3) The person interpreting may be embarrassed or worried about some of the questions or terms used, and may omit important details and therefore mislead the interpretation. (4) There may be a lack of professionalism.

What to consider when working with an interpreter

- Plan ahead to arrange an appropriate interpreter (Call the MRO 641-7999).
- *Plan for longer than normal sessions.*

How to work with an interpreter

Let the interpreter meet the patient, explain their role, talk about confidentiality, and arrange the seating. Use simple language, using short phrases, so the interpreter doesn't have to remember long complicated paragraphs. Know that the interpreter may interrupt to clarify or to explain cultural differences if needed. The interpreter will interpret everything that is said (even if it is not relevant to the visit, therefore, there should not be small talk with the interpreter). Speak directly to and make eye contact with the patient rather than to the interpreter, Use 'Do you....?' Instead of 'Does he.....?' Remember the interpreter is just the "voice." And please thank the interpreter. If you have any questions about working with interpreters or if you would like more information please contact Ellen.

Translation / interpretation what's the difference?

The Key difference between translation and interpretation is in the communication channel. Translation deals with written communication and interpretation is all about the spoken word.

To inquire about translations please call 970-641-7999.

Gunnison County
Multicultural Resource Office
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Please distribute to all interested people and organizations.
Please contact us if you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Multicultural Resources Office is to provide client services, access to health care, and cultural competency development to residents, businesses, organizations and county departments so they can receive and provide culturally appropriate services and responses.

MRO Advisory Board:

We are currently reorganizing our advisory board.

Please contact Ellen if you would like to be part of the Multicultural Resource Office Advisory Board.