

Still Undefeated



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Valley Courier

Cupcakes for Veterans



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VALLEY — The Food Bank Network of the San Luis Valley is assisting families in need this Thanksgiving with turkey meals complete with all of the fixings. To sponsor a family for just \$23.96 please send a check to 513 Sixth St., Alamosa 81101 or donate online at www.lapunte.net/programs/foodbank. Contact 589-4567.

ASU hosts governor

ALAMOSA — Community members are invited to attend a town hall with Governor John Hickenlooper, and cabinet members on Tuesday, Nov. 15, in Adams State's Richardson Hall Auditorium at 1:30 p.m.

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SLV WEATHER



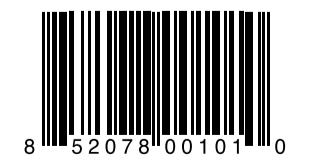
Sunny today and tomorrow, but it will turn cold on Thursday and Friday

63/23

Wed: Sunny 61/27
Thurs: Cloudy 48/12

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ASU hosts diverse Think Tank



Courier photos by Ruth Heide

Shirlethia Franklin, Deputy Chief of Staff and Counselor to the Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice, encourages listeners to be positive and hopeful.

By RUTH HEIDE
Courier Editor
ALAMOSA — Pioneer educational and social activists and their protégés encouraged yet another generation to listen, learn and make their own voices heard during a Think Tank forum Monday as part of Adams State University's establishment of the National Center for Historically-Underserved Students.

ASU VP for Academic Affairs Dr. Chris Gilmer moderated the forum, which included some of his mentors and those he had mentored through the years.

The group includes those already recognized nationally for their work with underserved populations who will lend their expertise, energy, leadership and vision to the National Center for Historically-Underserved Students' goals of identifying and breaking through barriers to educational equity and success for historically-underserved students.

"This is the beginning of a conversation," Gilmer said. He thanked ASU President Dr. Beverlee McClure and the board of trustees, chaired

by Arnold Salazar, who was present on Monday, for fostering this new initiative in education.

Gilmer said America's students have not failed, but America's education system has failed them.

"We are going to model for the nation that no student should ever be left behind," he added. "Let the dialogue

continue."

McClure recognized the group who had come together to help ASU establish this national center because they believe in what ASU believes in: "regardless of where our students live, regardless of who a student is, regardless of their color, they have a

■ See ASU page 3



Civil rights pioneer and long-time attorney Constance Slaughter-Harvey encourages generations to listen to each other.



Courier photo by Keith R. Cerny

Sargent victorious again

Sargent junior quarterback Ryan Davis pitches the ball to senior Esteban Aguilar in Saturday's big victory over West Grand in the playoff quarterfinals. See story and more photos on page 6.

Antonito school sale still pending

By SYLVIA LOBATO
ANTONITO — With sale of the old high school complex under contract, contingent upon an agreement for community access, proponents of a community center have again made their feelings known.

With an estimated 50 persons attending a recent special work session of the South Conejos Board of Education (BOE), proponents of both the sale and the community center made their positions perfectly clear.

Darrick J. Garcia, under the corporate name of DCCKG Ltd., had already paid \$187,000 to the school district, and copies of an undated quitclaim deed from the

South Conejos School District provided for members of the audience to study.

Earlier, Garcia said part of it would be used for food manufacturing and production, while the gymnasium could remain open to the community for events.

This is a significant drop in price from the \$400,000 and \$500,000 bids submitted earlier by Alfonso Abeyta, seeking to use the building for hemp processing, and Guillermo DeHerrera, proposing a community center.

Abeyta won the bid, but couldn't come up with the funds by a set deadline, so the buildings were offered to

■ See SALE page 3

Tax credit program benefits Valley organizations



Courtesy photo

Tom DeVore stocks canned goods at the Food Bank Network of the San Luis Valley in Alamosa, one of the programs of La Puente.

By HEW HALLOCK
ALAMOSA — Some of the Valley's largest community organizations rely on a state income tax credit administered by San Luis Valley Development Resources Group to enhance financial support for their programs.

"The Enterprise Zone tax credit program is a fantastic, valuable resource and the primary reason that La Puente can provide service to over 16,000 people with less than nine percent government funding," said Lance Cheslock, executive director of La Puente, a nonprofit organization that serves the Valley by providing food, shelter, and advocacy for the homeless and community.

And financial support is not the only way the tax program benefits La Puente, according to Cheslock. "The Enterprise Zone inspires donors to give more than they would otherwise," he said. "It engages many donors into learning more about our programs

and that results in their volunteering over 72,000 hours — a state high. These donors are able to hold us accountable to doing our jobs. It's natural, government-free accountability. It is a win-win for community donors and state government."

Through San Luis Valley Development Resources Group, 34 community projects and organizations in the San Luis Valley that are eligible to receive financial or in-kind donations through the San Luis Valley Enterprise Zone and its Contribution Tax Credit program. Donors to these approved organizations may earn a 25 percent tax credit on their Colorado income taxes.

Another very visible organization that uses the contribution tax credit is SLV Health, which over the years has used the program to encourage donors to make larger donations. "Having the Enterprise

■ See TAX page 3

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Valley News

ASU

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right to a quality education and quality life.”

During the forum with students, faculty and community members on Monday afternoon, panel members addressed the impact of the presidential election; how generations can interact, relate and learn from each other; and ways to encourage and relate to first-generation students.

Post-election impact

Shirlethia Franklin, Deputy Chief of Staff and Counselor to the Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice in the Obama Administration, quoted President Barack Obama who campaigned on one simple four-letter word that is still appropriate today, hope.

“Now is the time when we need hope more than we ever have,” she said. “When you are afraid, when you don’t know what’s next, you need to tap into that hope and have faith.”

She said when things are

going well, it is sometimes easy to be complacent, and she encouraged those attending the forum to be “the voice and the advocate” that is needed for historically underserved students.

“Your voice is needed,” she said.

Marta Youngblood, development officer with Texas Tech University, added, “Continue to be active, to be that voice.”

Long-time civil rights attorney Constance Slaughter-Harvey said when she thought of what might happen under the Trump presi-

dency, her response was “I have been there before, and this too shall pass.”

She said she has gone through difficult times before and seen programs she had worked on dismantled, and she is not fearful because she is confident there is a higher power at work. However, she said the younger generation does not know what it is like to ride in the back of the bus or to have the “n” word used against them like she and those in her generation have.

“They have no idea what this country can be like,” she said. “I fear for them but

I am not afraid to see them walk this path. It can only strengthen you.”

She added, “It’s a time for right thinking people to stand up and do the right thing.”

Dr. Doreen Larson, president of Edison State Community College, said the recent vote went along the lines of the educated versus the uneducated, and institutions of higher education like ASU will come under scrutiny for the values and power that education offers.

“Every educational institution is going to have to stand up for what we teach and what our values are,” she said. “This is an issue for all of us to be vigilant for.”

Connecting generations

Slaughter-Harvey told the young students in the audience that everyone on the Think Tank panel was concerned about they had to say and how they felt.

“It’s a two way process,” she said. “You tell us what you need and we tell you what we can give you.”

She said she looked forward to the younger generation taking up the reigns.

Dr. Shelley Billig, RMC Research Corporation, said those in her generation who had been socially active sometimes did not understand how the younger generation could be so complacent, taking for granted the rights her generation worked so hard for.

Franklin encouraged young people with the fact that it was young people who changed the fabric of this country. She said Martin Luther King, for example, was only in his 20’s when he began preaching a message of hope and tolerance, and Congressman John Lewis was only 19 when he was nearly beaten to death during civil rights demonstrations.

She encouraged young people to “keep marching.”

She said, “We need the energy of the young.”

She added that young people need to find what works for them.

“Don’t fit into the mold of the 60’s... Make your own mark ... Your voice is needed now more than ever ... Keep speaking and speak loud.”

Dr. Keith Gaskin, vice president for advancement at Memphis Theological Seminary, said learning together breaks generational barriers. For example, Memphis Theological Seminary, students range in age from 25 to 85, and in learning together they learn from each other.

Clinical psychologist Luisa Pollard encouraged young people to be proud of who they are and the people who came before them were, be proud of their heritage and not be ashamed of it and to get an education.

She added that those who arrive have a responsibility to those who are coming behind them, just as those who crossed over the borders

extended their hands to those coming behind them.

Youngblood said it is important to establish relationships between the generations. She recalled when she was 14 being taken to visit the home of Daisy Bates who was instrumental in the Little Rock, Arkansas desegregation movement and planned strategies with Dr. King at her kitchen table.

“At 14 I understand it’s important to establish relationships with the elders who went before you.”

Tribal leader Bertha Garcia also encouraged the young people to respect the elders. She said she only had a sixth grade education and never went to high school but has taken in as much information as she could and has done her part to share wisdom as well. She said she prayed for all races to get along, because she viewed them all as her children.

First generation

Educator Dr. Estela Lopez said the families are key in this. She said Latinos value education but also value helping their families, so if it came to a choice between going to college or helping mother and dad, a young person would choose to help his or her parents. It is important to give families the tools to make both goals work.

Youngblood added that it is important to understand and respect the people who had to make the choice to take care of their families and were not able to go on to college, because they have much to offer.

Kevin Christian, American Association of Community Colleges, recommended bringing first-generation students who have gone on to be successful in to talk to the current first-generation students, to tell their stories.



Photo courtesy of ASU

A diverse and talented group of recognized leaders gather to help establish the National Center for Historically-Underserved Students at Adams State University.

TAX

Continued from Page 1

Zone status has been vital in serving the San Luis Valley Health Foundation in its fund raising efforts,” said Kelly Gurule, director of the foundation. “The additional 25 percent tax credit has assisted us with growing our donor base and has helped us maintain donor trust and loyalty.”

San Luis Valley Development Resources Group itself receives donations through the program and uses the funding to administer and promote the Enterprise Zone program in the Valley.

So far, cash contributions made to certified enterprise zone projects in 2016 total \$1.3 million. In-kind contributions for 2016 to date are valued at over \$14,300. These totals reflect 903 individual contributions. The average cash contribution this year has been \$1,532. Contributions must be at \$100 to qualify for the tax credit. A flurry of year-end donations is expected between now and Jan. 1 and should boost the number and total amount of contributions.

In 2015, \$1.95 million was contributed by individuals and businesses, which represented 1,527 donors. A large majority of the contributions

received were under \$1,000, indicating that most were small and from individuals. The average contribution was \$1,285 and the average credit received was \$327.

The full list of the 34 projects and organizations eligible to receive donations through the San Luis Valley Enterprise Zone Contribution Tax Credit program includes several familiar groups from across the region:

- Adams State University Job Training
- Alamosa County Revitalization
- Alamosa Downtown Revitalization
- Alamosa Senior Center
- Astronaut Rominger Airport Improvements
- Blanca Downtown Revitalization
- Creede Repertory Theatre
- Creede/Mineral County Information and Education Resources Center
- Crestone Revitalization
- Del Norte Commercial Development
- La Puente Home Homeless Services
- Mineral County Fairgrounds
- Mineral County Public Health Clinic
- Monte Vista Downtown Revitalization
- Monte Vista Ski Hi Park
- Potato Industry Promotion
- Rio Grande County Museum
- Rio Grande Revitalization

- Rio Grande Hospital S.E.E.D. Park
- Saguache Downtown Revitalization
- San Luis Valley Housing Coalition
- San Luis Valley Food & Farm Incubator
- San Luis Valley Regional Airport Improvements
- San Luis Valley SBDC
- Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
- SLV Health
- SLV Health - Conejos County Hospital
- SLV Zone Marketing/Administration (San Luis Valley Development Resources Group)
- Society Hall Foundation
- TSJC Valley Campus Job Training
- Tu Casa Domestic Violence Victims Shelter
- Valley-Wide Health, Inc.
- Ventero Open Press

Enterprise zones are designed to encourage job creation and business investment in regions of the state with high unemployment, low income and slow population growth. Businesses in the designated zones can take advantage of a slate of tax credits as incentives to invest and improve their operations. All six counties of the San Luis Valley — Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache — and 18 communities are within the San Luis Valley Enterprise Zone, meaning any business located in the

region is eligible for the available tax credits.

Other tax credits available through the enterprise zone are the Job Training Tax Credit; the New Business Facility Tax Credit, which includes credits for new jobs created, an additional credit for new jobs created by ag processors, and an additional credit for health insurance for each new job; the R&D Increase Tax Credit; the Vacant Building Rehabilitation Tax Credit; and the Manufacturing and Mining Sales and Use Tax.

More information on the San Luis Valley Enterprise Zone is available by calling the zone administrator, Kevin Wilkins, at (719) 589-6099; e-mail kwilkins@slv-drg.org<mailto:kwilkins@slv-drg.org>.

Those interested in taking advantage of the tax credits available through the San Luis Valley Enterprise Zone should speak with their accountant. Eligible investments and contributions must be made before January 1, 2017 to qualify for the credit in the 2016 tax year.

For information about Colorado’s Enterprise Zone program, visit the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade online at www.advancecolorado.com/ez<<http://www.advancecolorado.com/ez>>.

SALE

Continued from Page 1

DeHerrera, who claimed federal funds were forthcoming for the purchase.

DeHerrera’s group was not able to secure the funds, so the buildings went on the bidding block again.

The quit claim deed offered by the BOE specifically states that none of the property will be used to store, display, transfer, distribute, sell of grow marijuana or hemp.

Adam Sandoval, a representative of DCKG, reminded the audience that the school district was on a legal, binding contract to sell the property to Garcia, who remains committed to making portions of the property available to the community and the district for school-sponsored activities.

Sandoval said this would be through a cost-sharing agreement which would grant the school district the right to use the gymnasium, locker rooms and restrooms, as well as other portions of the facility as reasonably necessary for access to school-sponsored activities, including extra-curricular activities.

Sandoval said Garcia is committed to serving the best interests of the community, while the commercial activities planned there would create jobs and other benefits for the residents.

The deal hasn’t closed, however, the board said.

Community comments
Crystal Mares, a member of the Antonito Class of 2001, pointed out that the gymnasium in the new high school didn’t adequately house this year’s commencement and she would like to see the old gym made available for that ceremony in the future.

Former board member Phil Trujillo then outlined the process by which the BOE had made the decision to sell the complex. When the new school was built, the BOE began having conversations about the use of the old buildings. He said the district wanted to form a partnership with another entity to share part of the expenses, but could find no one, so it was decided selling the facility would be best.

Theresa Cisneros said when Antonito voters backed a \$5.5 million bond issue for the new school building, they understood that a community center would be built. The bond issue added the

district’s match to Colorado’s Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program. The program, which draws revenue from grazing and oil and gas production on state lands, contributed \$14 million toward the new building.

Since the complex was being sold and the community would have to pay for its use, she said those costs need to be feasible and the costs set forth by the buyer are not feasible for the people of Antonito.

Antonito Mayor Aaron Abeyta said the town has made a number of efforts to date and considered entering the bidding process, but was frightened away by the utility costs. Abeyta said using the buildings for marijuana won’t happen, because the community limit has been reached.

Retiree Martin Gonzales said he is concerned about the taxes and liability. “The monthly utilities are taking money from our children. We’d be better off paying that (the outlines fees) than the \$4,000 a month taxes and utilities.”

DeHerrera again spoke about a community center and said it wouldn’t be run by the school and would serve many sectors of the commu-

nity. He suggested forming a not for profit corporation to pursue grants.

County Commissioner John Sandoval said the Board of County Commissioners could help as a grantee for something such as a Great Outdoors Colorado (GoCo) grant.

“We didn’t know it was going to sell for \$180,000 or we would have worked with the community on it.”

In the same vein, Wanda Sandoval Patterson with the Colorado Trust said that group is committed to improving the well being of any community affected by such an issue.

Abeyta said billions of dollars are available for low interest and reasonable monthly payments.

“A community center is the most noble idea this community has had in a long time.”

Matthew Lobato reminded the board that the new school has been open for two years and the old buildings are still costing thousands of dollars per month. “Drain the boiler — you have spent \$70,000 to \$90,000 just to heat it. For what?”

He noted, “We need to do something with the building. You’re taking money out of our kids’ pockets.”

SKI-HI 6 SHOWTIMES
West of Alamosa
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Tues - Thurs: 5:45, 8:20
SHUT IN
Naomi Watts PG-13

Tues - Thurs: 5:20, 8:10
DOCTOR STRANGE
Benedict Cumberbatch PG-13

Tues - Thurs: 5:30, 8:00
TROIS
Anna Kendrick, Justin Timberlake PG

Tues - Thurs: 5:40, 8:15
BOO!
A MADEIRA HALLOWEEN
Tyler Perry PG-13

Tues - Thurs: 5:30, 8:15
INFERNO
Tom Hanks, Felicity Jones PG-13

Tues - Thurs: 5:15, 8:10
JACK REACHER
NEVER GO BACK
Tom Cruise, Cobie Smulders PG-13

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