

“RURAL” underserved population in a touristic town

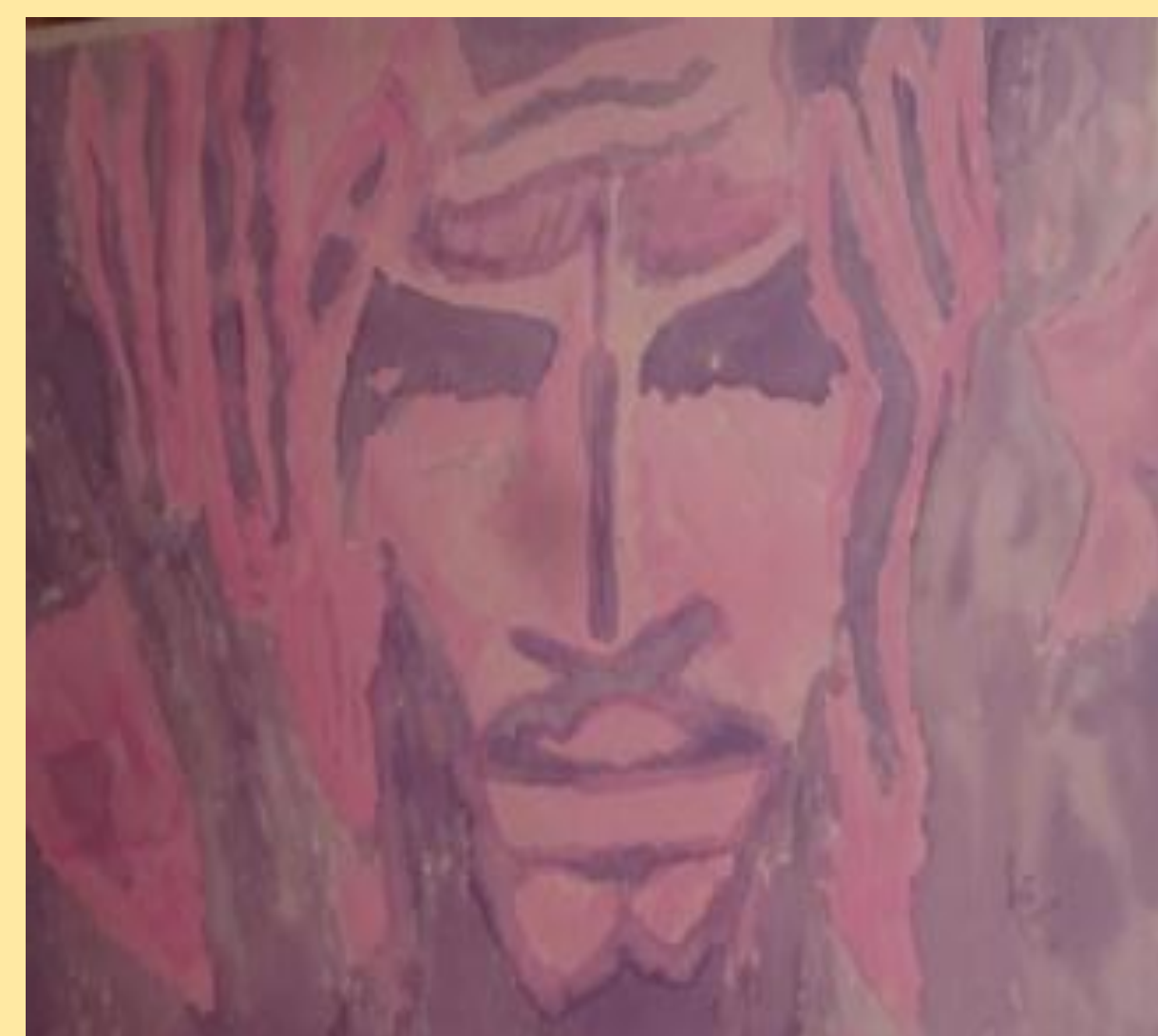
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It is hard to imagine that a beautiful touristic town has such a strong socioeconomically challenged population.

Santa Fe, New Mexico was rated as the #2 US destination in the Relaxation & Spa category, #9 in the US for Great Food & Wine, and #10 for Culture and Sightseeing in the US . (4) and #5 destination in the US by another travel guide (6). Santa Fe is 207 among the national rank for highest income counties in the United States.

The City of Santa Fe is located at 7,199 ft feet above sea level, making it the highest state capital in the United States. Day temperatures reach an average high of 45 °F during the winter months and an average high of 84 °F during the summer. The population estimate for July 1, 2009 was 73,720.

Poverty, hunger and homelessness as a strong public health concern: “In Santa Fe County, 12.3 percent of the population lives below the federal poverty line, or \$22,050 for a family of four. That translates into about 18,000 people”. “About 40,000 New Mexicans - half of them children and the elderly - find themselves in need of some kind of food assistance from a shelter or pantry every week”. (1)

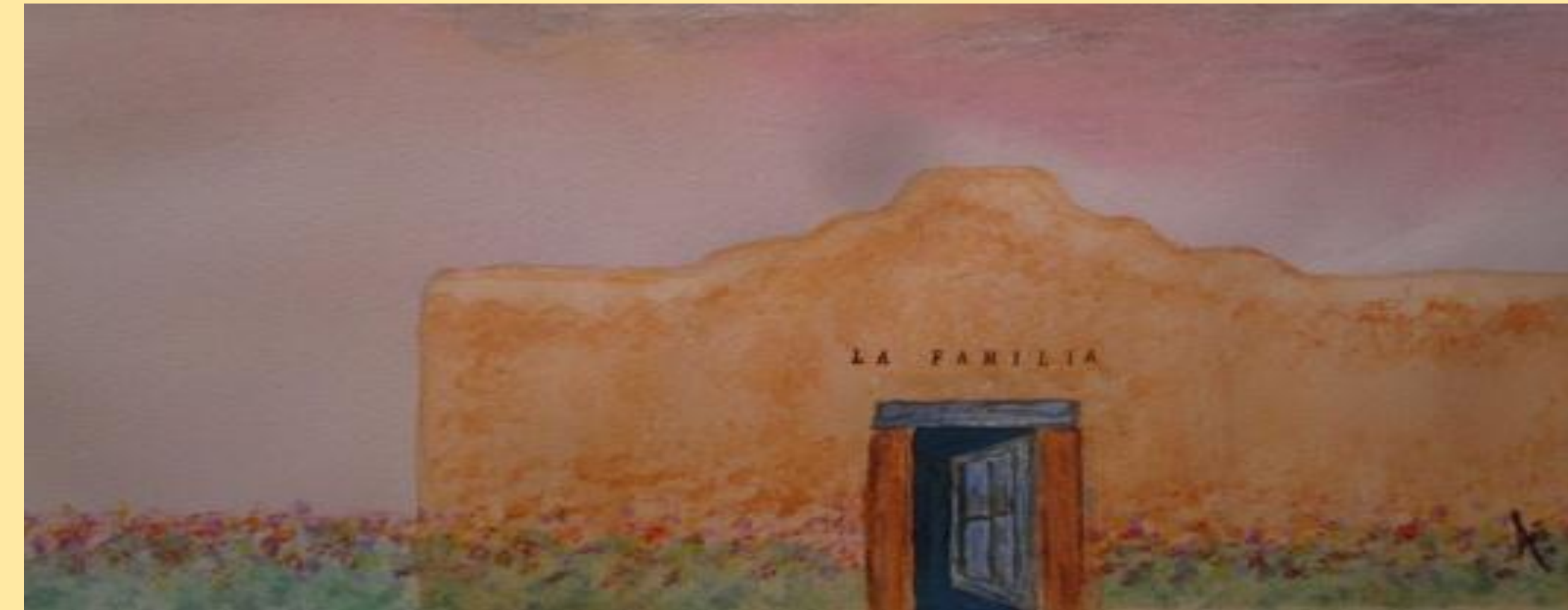


"Some people say that 12 people living in three rooms is simply cultural. That's not cultural - that's poverty". (2)

“There are 1,220 homeless students in the district, about 9 percent of the total population”. (3)

“In 2005 there were at least 17,000 people who experience homelessness in New Mexico over the course of a year” (5).

Another problem is limited English proficiency. In 2000, the share of the population aged 5+ who reported speaking a language other than English at home was 39.9%.



La Familia Medical Center (LFMC) was established in 1972 as a not-for-profit organization devoted to providing high quality, culturally sensitive medical and dental services to the whole community. In 1987 LFMC first began receiving federal financial support under Section 330 of the Public Health Act, Department of Health and Human Services.

The mission of La Familia Medical Center as a community health center is to provide high-quality comprehensive medical, dental, mental and health-education services to everyone, with special emphasis on the underserved. These services are affordable and culturally sensitive and are delivered in a respectful, warm, comfortable, beautiful, artistic and welcoming environment that protects patient’s privacy, rights and dignity, regardless of their financial resources. **The focus is the individual as well as the family. The services are provided in a bilingual English Spanish environment, with an open door policy.**

La Familia’s Behavioral Health Department was implemented and developed in May of 2002 by Beth Holland and Anna Rayne-Levi, licensed psychotherapists to integrate Behavioral Health with Primary Care for all three La Familia clinics. This Department won a highly competitive federal stimulus grant and now has four full-time staff, two part-time consulting psychiatrists, a part-time psychiatry resident and a part-time consulting pediatrician.

LFMC receives funding support from the Health and Human Services Department, the City of Santa Fe, the Santa Fe County Indigent Fund, the New Mexico Department of Health, numerous foundations, and contributions from the Santa Fe community.

UNM partners with LFMC



UNM partners with LFMC, which is currently a training site for Psychiatry and Family Practice residency training programs. Other partnering institutions are LFMC’s Health Care for the Homeless, Santa Fe area homeless shelters, Casa Familia Shelter, St. Elizabeth’s Shelter, Las Cumbres’ Community Infant Mental Health Program, UNM, Santa Fe Community College and Southwest College.

The unique fully integrated model used in LFMC offers our clients the mental health clinicians who provide services at the same site as primary care. Our behavioral health offices are just steps away from the family practice physicians and we constantly interact on behalf of our patients' needs. **This approach is likely to be more effective and less stigmatizing** for patients who may benefit from an earlier identification, greater acceptance of referral, improved care coordination and quality of care, prevention of duplication of services and reduction of risks of adverse events.

“This approach is likely to be more effective and less stigmatizing...”



Artistic environment: The Alto Street Clinic is home to numerous great pieces of art from contemporary abstracts to realistic renditions. Some works have come through the Art In Public Places Program of New Mexico Arts’ Department of Cultural Affairs; most are private donations.

Future directions:

The behavioral Department has initiated some new services in the community: As offering a variety of psycho education, psychotherapy and support groups for people with mood disorders, post partum depression, chronic pain; groups to empower clients living in local Shelters and groups for parents and school aged children.

We anticipate reforms to improve the medical care system nationwide and we consider La Familia Medical Center as an outstanding model that provides comprehensive medical, behavioral and dental care to the underserved.

(1) Said Sherry Hooper, executive director of the Santa Fe Food depot.
(2) Israel Haros, interim coordinator of Santa Fe Public Schools' Adelante Program.(3) Adelante estimates. (4) According to TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards for 2010. (5) Based on the NM Coalition to End Homelessness.
(6) By Travel + Leisure magazine's World's Best Awards 2010.