



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dolores Gonzales, NCNMEEDD, New Mexico Cares Foundation, Inc.

1-(866)-699-4927, (505) 395-2678

Sept. 20, 2017

## **Fourth Annual End Hunger in New Mexico Summit to Implement the New Mexico Action Plan to End Hunger**

*Santa Fe* – Organizers of the Fourth Annual End Hunger in New Mexico Summit are rolling out the New Mexico Cares Foundation, Inc. New Mexico Action Plan to End Hunger at the summit this year. The Plan was driven by last year’s Summit of afternoon discussions of what were the most important issues surrounding hunger in New Mexico. The summit will take place this year Tuesday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>, from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Embassy Suites, 1000 Woodward Pl. NE, in Albuquerque.

**Governor Susana Martinez has proclaimed, September 25<sup>th</sup> Through the 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017, as “END HUNGER IN NEW MEXICO WEEK”.**

“For the past three years we’ve really concentrated on raising awareness about the hunger problem New Mexico has,” said Dolores Gonzales, Special Projects Manager for the North Central New Mexico Economic Development District’s Non-Metro New Mexico Area Agency on Aging. “This year we want to focus on the four initiatives of our Plan.” Gonzales also serves as the chairwoman of the Summit’s planning committee.

Currently New Mexico is No.2 in the country for childhood hunger and the State is one of the top 10 for seniors facing food insecurity.

According to a study by the New Mexico Association of Food Banks and Feeding America, the state’s hunger statistics are sobering – 70,000 people seek food assistance each week; 89 percent of hungry households have an annual income of less than \$20,000, 75 percent report purchasing inexpensive, unhealthy food as the most common way to have at least some food at home to eat. The Missing Meals study revealed that low-income people in our state miss 117,140,870 meals per year.

While many people associate hunger with homelessness, many are the working poor. Low-income New Mexicans provide 42 percent of their meals out of their own pockets—that’s more than 367 million meals per year. Nearly 371 million meals per year come through government safety net programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and free and reduced cost breakfasts and lunches in schools. Three percent of meals—29 million—come through hundreds of faith and community based charitable programs. A full 13 percent of meals for low-income New Mexicans are unaccounted for!

While the Summit’s morning session will feature keynote presentations looking at the hunger issue in the state, the afternoon session will be a series of panel discussions looking at the four initiatives.

Those include; Pair Data and Resources, Intergenerational Feeding Programs, Conventional Transportation, and Collaboration with Schools.

“While the Summit has done an excellent job of building awareness and bringing together all the different organizations, government agencies and community partners, that deal with hunger, we’re excited about taking those conversations to a level where we can see results and measure those results,” said Tim Armer, Executive Director of the North Central New Mexico Economic Development District.

Gonzales said, “Food Insecurity within our children and seniors rank at the top of our nation’s statistics. Without collaboration, discussion and being results oriented, New Mexico will continue to be ranked at the top as one of the more insecure states. Something we cannot have.”

“As Parke Wilde, an associate professor in the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University stated, “Food alone cannot eliminate the spectrum of food-related worries and shortfalls- and reducing poverty is not really beyond the capacity of the American people, their government, and their economy”, she said.

Once the panel discussions are complete the groups will report out to the main audience the issues that are raised and moving forward with these initiatives within the next 5-years.

The general public is invited to attend the Summit. There is a registration fee of \$25 for seniors 60+ and non-seniors \$35.00, and \$45 for walk-ins the day of the summit.

For more information visit [www.endnmhunger.com](http://www.endnmhunger.com) or call 1-866-699-4927. The main sponsors of the event are North Central, the Non-Metro Area Agency on Aging and the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department.