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# IMPACT REPORT





# STRENGTH FROM OUR ROOTS

Like a stand of aspens, **we stand tall and connected**, growing toward a future of healing and hope.

The Mountain Center draws strength from its roots. These roots are the connections that nourish resilience, growth, and community. In our 46th year, we have seen those roots deepen and spread as we completed our Capital Campaign and opened a new Ropes Course and Yurt. Our Harm Reduction Program engaged in more than 15,800 encounters. Youth found year-round adventure through Teen Adventure. Transitional Living expanded its pathways of recovery. Together, these programs form a living network, like the aspens, where healing is nurtured, hope takes root, and communities grow stronger side by side.





# DEAR FRIENDS



The National Forest Foundation reminds us that a single aspen tree is only part of a larger whole. Its true life force lies in the roots that connect the grove. Before a trunk appears above ground, those roots may lie dormant for years, waiting for the right conditions to grow.

That image reflects not only this past fiscal year but also The Mountain Center's 46 years. Our strength has always come from our roots, the connections, history, and community that sustain us. From this deep foundation, new growth continues to emerge.

This year we saw that growth in many ways. Most notably, we completed our Capital Campaign, with the new Ropes Course opening in August 2024 and the Yurt completed in June 2025. These spaces are more than physical structures; they are places where resilience is tested, boundaries stretched, and the seeds for healing are planted.

We also strengthened our clinical foundation by beginning the accreditation process with the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), underscoring our commitment to best practices and quality care.

Our Harm Reduction Program in Española served 15,844 client encounters — more than ever before. With new funding, we are remodeling our garage for on-site storage, creating a staff patio, and expanding outreach to Native American communities.

Youth programming also grew stronger. The Teen Adventure Program became year-round with support from the New Mexico Outdoor Equity Grant, while the Transitional Living Program expanded to six days of therapy each week, blending traditional counseling, experiential work, and equine therapy.

Behind each of these milestones are the people who make The Mountain Center what it is — our staff, Board of Directors, and the 60 individuals who carry forward our mission each day. They embody the deep roots that sustain us.

As we reflect on 46 years, I am reminded again of the aspen. Each tree stands on its own, yet its true strength lies in the unseen roots it shares with others. They teach us what it means to stand tall and remain deeply connected. The Mountain Center is like that stand of aspens — one organism, many trunks, nourished by the same source. With your support, we continue to deepen our roots, reach for the light, and grow toward a future of resilience, healing, and hope.

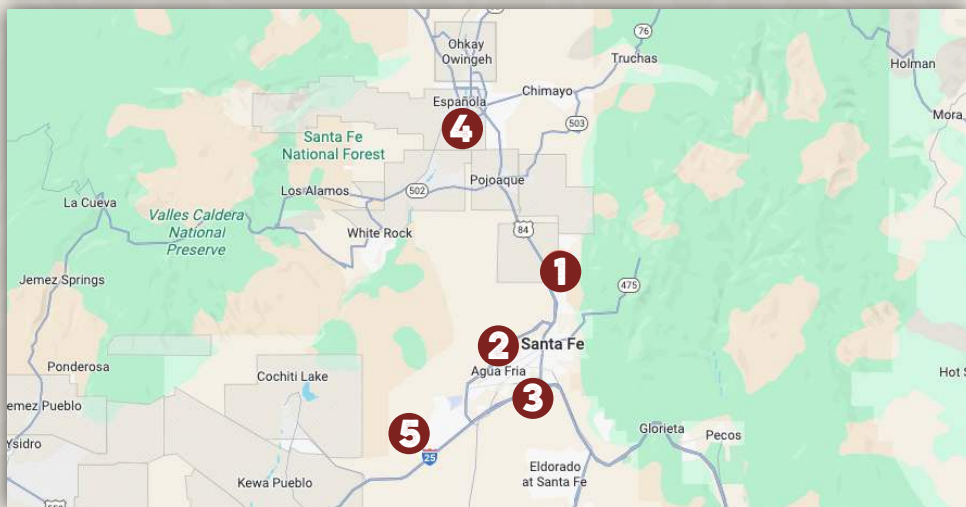
With gratitude,

Juan Antonio Dixon  
Executive Director



# ROOTED IN NEW MEXICO

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The Mountain Center serves as a safety net for New Mexicans, offering tools for healing, growth, and resilience. Across five locations, we create spaces where individuals and families can access harm reduction, transitional living, gender and sexuality support, and adventure-based education. Each program is designed with the understanding that when people engage directly, reflect deeply, and connect with others, transform their own lives while strengthening the fabric of their communities.

We are proud to partner with Native American communities, government agencies, schools, and nonprofits to extend our reach to those most in need. Through these collaborations, The Mountain Center acts as a hub for collective resilience, ensuring that the tools for growth and healing are accessible across New Mexico.

- 1 TESUQUE | HEADQUARTERS**  
Provides office space, and group facilitation space including, yurt, challenges courses, and land along Tesuque Creek.
- 2 SANTA FE | URBAN ADVENTURE & TRAINING CENTER**  
Climbing gym and training center with flat-screen TV, projectors, laptop computers, and space to accommodate up to 70 people.
- 3 SANTA FE | COUNSELING SERVICES**  
Long term care for recovery from substance use disorder, PTSD, anxiety, and/or depression.
- 4 ESPAÑOLA | INTEGRATED CARE CENTER**  
Harm Reduction Program and Healthy Transitions including syringe exchange, overdose-prevention education, and Naloxone, plus food, rapid HIV/HCV counseling, and testing and auricular acupuncture.
- 5 PEÑA BLANCA | ASPEN HOUSE WOMEN'S RECOVERY**  
Formerly Transitional Living Program (TLP), Trauma-informed, substance-free space for women recovering from substance use disorders with the goal of long-term recovery.



# THERAPEUTIC ADVENTURE PROGRAM

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The Therapeutic Adventure Program (TAP) is a nature- and adventure-based behavioral health program that fosters healing and personal growth for clients from across New Mexico. Through activities such as high and low ropes courses, hiking, rock climbing, rafting, and camping, participants, youth and adults connect with themselves, each other, and the natural world. Each experience is framed through principles of trauma-informed care, harm reduction, and strength-based practice.

This year, TAP extended its reach by expanding open enrollment programs, including the Summer Youth Program (ages 7–12) and Teen Adventure Program (ages 13–17). Historically, TAP served primarily intact groups and partner agencies, but new funding has allowed us to offer pathways to nature for all New Mexicans, from youth to adults. Many young people who began in Summer Youth have now grown into the Teen Adventure Program, where some are stepping into mentorship roles. This continuity illustrates the program's ability to nurture both technical skills and a lifelong love of the outdoors.

TAP also re-engaged a collaboration with the Academy for Technology and the Classics (ATC), a Santa Fe charter school. After pandemic interruptions, a group of students completed a month of nature-based programming culminating in a four-day backpacking trip. Previous outcomes showed strong connections between participation and improved school performance, and we are excited to deepen this work.

The program has also experienced remarkable growth in scope and stability. The construction of a 35-foot yurt and cultivation of garden plots at the Tesuque campus reflect our investment in creating spaces of resilience and renewal. Meanwhile, staff development initiatives are building knowledge, capacity, and sustainability for years to come.

What has remained constant is TAP's dedication to creating transformative experiences in nature. This year affirmed our potential: a strong, capable team, thriving collaborations, and expanded opportunities for youth, adults, and families across the state. Together, we are cultivating a foundation robust enough to sustain transformation through adventure for generations.



“The magic of our work lives in those moments—a metaphoric connection on a climb or a perfectly timed question in a debrief. — TAP Program Director



**8523**  
Client Services Days

**4,000**  
Hours of Direct Services



# EMERGENCE

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The Mountain Center's Emergence Program nurtures an "ecosystem of health" that honors the interconnectedness of all life forms and natural elements. Rooted in Indigenous philosophies and cultural strengths, Emergence weaves traditional knowledge into health promotion, disease and substance use prevention, and recovery. By centering cultural identity and language, the program reinforces that healing begins when people are deeply connected to their heritage, their community, and the land.

Clients learn to approach the natural world with respect and reciprocity. For example, before climbing, participants offer gratitude to the rock, seeking its support and guidance rather than attempting to conquer it. This relationship becomes a metaphor for recovery, acknowledging fear, asking for help, and discovering new strengths. In the same way, fire is honored as a living spirit that brings warmth, ceremony, protection, and renewal. Through hand-drill and bow-drill fire-making, clients learn patience, care, and the importance of tending what sustains life.

This year, the Emergence Program also cultivated The Garden of Metaphors, a collaborative space where staff and clients plant, nurture, and harvest heirloom seeds. The garden offers more than food; it is a place where participants practice reciprocal relationships with the land, speaking kindly to plants, and witnessing their own growth mirrored in blossoming flowers and vegetables. These practices keep traditions alive while providing grounding, healing, and nourishment.

The work of Emergence is measured in the depth of connection it fosters: to culture, to self, and to the natural world. By blending Indigenous wisdom with therapeutic practice, the program provides participants with tools not only for recovery but for living in balance—standing tall, rooted, and connected, like the ecosystems that sustain us all.



**Fire teaches us warmth,  
ceremony, protection, and  
renewal. It reminds us that  
transformation is possible. —**

Daniel Hena,  
Emergence Lead Facilitator



# NM GENDER + SEXUALITIES PROGRAM

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The New Mexico Gender and Sexualities Program (NMGSAN) serves LGBTQ+ youth and adults in Santa Fe and across the state through partnerships with Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) clubs, support groups, training, and special events. At its heart, NMGSAN is about creating affirming spaces where queer and trans people can connect, learn, and thrive.

This year was one of growth and momentum. Weekly support groups increased attendance by 300%, becoming vibrant communities where young people asked thoughtful questions, supported each other, and shaped safe spaces together. We also launched a new Trans Allyship training that was enthusiastically received by schools, organizations, and community partners.

Our transition to a full-time, in-person team allowed us to meet this growing demand with consistency and care. GSAs across the state reached out for adventure programming, which we were able to host or help them design. We introduced youth to “zine-making” and mindfulness, created a steady rhythm of events for queer young people and families, and began working with very young trans children and their parents. Alongside direct services, we partnered with statewide organizations to build coalitions and gathered data on the experiences of trans youth in schools.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to offering spaces where LGBTQ+ people feel safe, supported, and celebrated. In a time when many feel uncertain, NMGSAN remains a place to learn queer history, connect with affirming peers and adults, and access resources for healing and resilience.



Our group became a place where we could have fun, ask real questions, and know we weren't alone. — NMGSAN Program Participant

**4,403**

Community Members Served

**59**

Events

**1,324**

Service Hours of Programming

**300%**

Weekly Support Groups Increased Attendance

**51**

Trainings

**53**

Groups Supported Statewide



# HARM REDUCTION

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The Harm Reduction Program is the heart and soul of our Española office, serving as a lifeline for people navigating some of life's hardest challenges. Each month, an average of 1,500 individuals come through our doors or meet us at our mobile unit. Open five days a week at our brick-and-mortar site and four days on the road, we provide food, hygiene and menstrual supplies, safer sex and safe use kits, and wound care essentials.

This year, we also worked to make our physical space as healing as the services we provide—beautifying and upgrading the environment so it feels comfortable and welcoming for everyone who walks in.

What makes this work extraordinary is not just the numbers, but the spirit of the people behind it. Our team, many of them Gen Z, serve with kindness, compassion, and sincerity. Watching them meet people from all walks of life with dignity and care offers hope in a world where stigma too often overshadows humanity.

Through syringe exchange, overdose prevention, and everyday acts of care, our Harm Reduction Program remains a place of safety, respect, and connection—a place where lives are not only saved, but valued.

**11,185**

Doses of Naloxone

**1357**

Overdose Reversals

**15,844**

Encounters

**538**

Lives Saves

“

It gives me peace to know  
that the last faces she saw  
were those of kindness.

Thank you for making her  
feel like a person.

— Grieving Mother

”



# ASPEN HOUSE WOMEN'S RECOVERY

Formerly known as the Transitional Living Program (TLP), Aspen House Women's Recovery—often called Aspen House—offers a safe, supportive, and healing environment for women in recovery. Rooted in The Mountain Center's values of resilience, compassion, and community, Aspen House provides structured, trauma-informed care where women can build stability, strengthen their recovery, and prepare for independent living.

Weekly programming integrates therapy, case management, and experiential learning. Clients participate in Seeking Safety groups, individual counseling, equine therapy, and adventure-based activities through TAP, where each challenge becomes a metaphor for resilience. For mothers, the program emphasizes family connection, offering regular video and phone calls with children, partnerships with Kewa Head Start, and parenting support through Circle of Security. These moments of reconnection often become powerful motivators in the recovery journey.

This year, Aspen House introduced a computer lab and art room, expanding opportunities for creativity, self-reflection, and healthy coping. A stabilizing RTA team has deepened consistency and reinforced TMC's core values, helping clients engage more fully in treatment. Clients now practice daily living routines—nutrition, financial planning, chores, and wellness—while reflecting on how these skills prepare them for life after Aspen House.

The impact is measured in moments of transformation: a client who chose to stay after nearly walking away; another who discovered the root of her substance use while completing homework; women laughing together over a shared meal. Each client leaves with tools for recovery, carrying the lived experience of belonging, respect, and hope. For staff and clients, healing here feels like family: equal parts laughter, tears, and the courage to begin again.



**It was adventurous,  
turbulent, ocean deep,  
eye-opening, and a  
once-in-a-lifetime experience.**

— TLP Program Participant

**57**

Women's Lives Changed in FY25



# COUNSELING SERVICES

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**276**

Youth + Adult Outpatients

**117**

Used Comprehensive Community  
Support Services

This year, The Mountain Center brought all of its clinical services together under the Counseling Services Program, creating a stronger, more coordinated approach to care. Guided by our Clinical Director and Program Manager, the program integrates trauma-informed practices with Harm Reduction methodologies to provide individual and group counseling for youth and adults across New Mexico. Services include outpatient therapy, family therapy, case navigation, and specialized offerings such as Circle of Security Parenting Classes, EMDR, art and music therapy, equine therapy, and trauma-informed yoga.

“There is no place like The Mountain Center. It has so much heart and soul. I have been proud to be part of this work and to witness the extraordinary impact it has had on New Mexicans for generations.

— Program Manager

Counseling Services also supports clients through the Transformative Justice Initiative, a pre-prosecution diversion program for people struggling with substance use, as well as through intensive outpatient groups for residents in the Transitional Living Program. Partnerships with Santa Fe County's Uplift Youth, the DWI programs of both county and city, and Rio Arriba County's Drug Court extend this reach further into communities most in need.

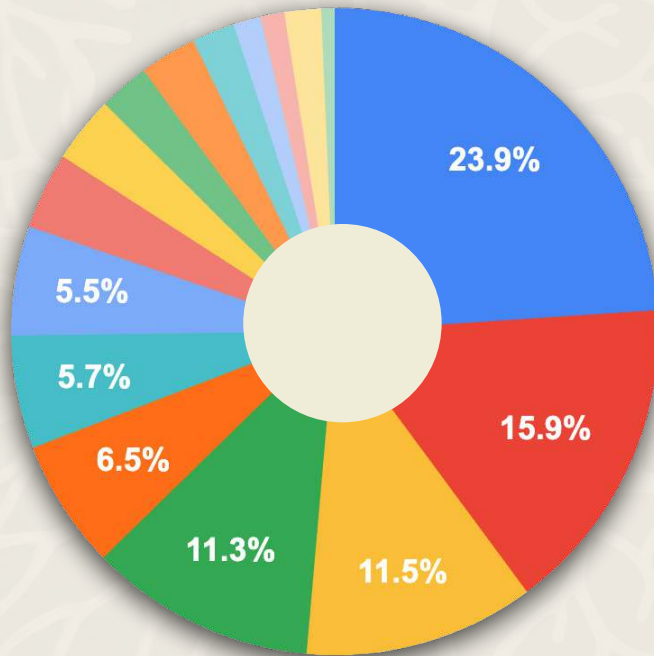
This year stood out for the growth and dedication of our staff. We welcomed a Admissions Manager, who contributed over 2,000 volunteer hours to the VA; two new Case Navigators, who have been instrumental in securing housing, education, and employment for clients; and our first Art Therapist. Veteran staff deepened their skills, earning new certifications in EMDR, DBT, Equine Therapy, and other evidence-based approaches. We also mentored two MSW students from NM Highlands University, strengthening the pipeline of future clinicians.

What has remained constant is the extraordinary care, enthusiasm, and expertise that define this team. With 276 youth and adults served in outpatient therapy, 117 comprehensive community support services, and dozens more through justice and community partnerships, Counseling Services has expanded to fill every corner of its new office space—and beyond.



# FINANCIALS / INCOME

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|             |                                                                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| \$1,266,350 | Medicaid and Private Insurance                                                   |
| \$842,685   | CYFD - Children Youth and Families - Therapeutic Adventure Program               |
| \$609,042   | NM Behavioral Health Services Division - Transitional Living Program             |
| \$597,261   | Other Funding Sources                                                            |
| \$341,774   | Behavioral Health Services Division - Therapeutic Adventure Program              |
| \$299,510   | Department of Health - Harm Reduction Program                                    |
| \$289,000   | BHSD Prescription Drug Overdose Grant                                            |
| \$202,904   | SF County Santa Fe County                                                        |
| \$175,000   | NM Department of Health - Office of School and Adolescent Health                 |
| \$133,968   | NM Behavioral Health Services Division - NM Genders & Sexuality Alliance Network |
| \$150,825   | NM Corrections Department                                                        |
| \$113,252   | UNM State Opioid Response Grant                                                  |
| \$72,300    | Rio Arriba County                                                                |
| \$63,000    | NM Department of Health - Therapeutic Adventure Program                          |
| \$96,750    | Bernalillo County                                                                |
| \$35,558    | Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)                                                      |



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\*Capital Campaign Donations for Ropes Course and Yurt



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# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN APPRECIATION

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In FY2025, The Mountain Center completed construction of our new state-of-the-art ropes course and 35' yurt at our Tesuque facility—thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community. What began as a capital campaign to raise \$220,000 in 2022 inspired such continued support that we surpassed our goal, allowing us to bring this vision fully to life.

For decades, the ropes course has stood at the heart of our Therapeutic Adventure programming, supporting youth, adults, and families as they build trust, overcome challenges, and discover their own strength. The new course, built to serve our community for the next 25 years, ensures that tens of thousands more participants will have the opportunity to experience its transformative power.

The addition of the new yurt provides a welcoming, restorative space for reflection, learning, and connection—completing a setting where resilience and self-discovery can truly flourish.

This achievement represents the collective belief of our donors, partners, and friends in the impact of The Mountain Center's work. With heartfelt gratitude, we celebrate this milestone and look forward to the next generation of transformational experiences it will inspire.





# STAFF

Christie Aguilar  
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Gabi Baird  
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## MISSION

We promote wellness, personal discovery, and social change through innovative learning experiences in nature, community and cultural environments.

## VISION

To be a global leader in unique wellness and behavioral health approaches.



THE MOUNTAIN CENTER

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