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Commentary/Comentario

The Damage from Former President Continues

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

You know those low-budget horror films, where you think you've reached the end and then absurd situations continue to pop up? That's how we feel after the FBI raid into former President Donald Trump's residence in Mar-A-Lago. This operation to recover boxes of classified papers that, for some reason, Trump continued to have in his control, took a surprising turn when we learned that documents with nuclear secrets could be involved.

But in reality, nothing like this is surprising in the life and times of a personality who, even during

his businessman stage, acted like scandal was just part of his style, sweetened by the type of glamour seen in mafia movies.

“It pays to look at how Republican leaders in Congress and nationally have reacted to the raid of Trump's residence.”

The comparison to low-budget films comes because, while we certainly thought Trump would continue to make noise, we didn't expect that an action by the federal

government would put him at the center of the political debate once again. And this, with all the attention that he always seeks and with a platform to continue destabilizing the political process, and even security, from his trench.

In fact, the character that he has created for himself, taking advantage of the deification of the underworld that is made and perpetuated in this country, has a potent and damaging echo, like the ones produced by characters whose evilness has the firm intention of “world domination,” followed by a loud, cackling laugh and a flick of the tail.

Worse still, as was anticipated from Trump, he exploited the event



Photo/Foto: América's Voice



Photo/Foto: América's Voice

for his own benefit through fundraising and inciting violence, which we have already been accustomed to seeing from his followers, with his declarations that he is a “politically persecuted,” poor thing.

In fact, some days ago an individual tried to enter the FBI office in

Cincinnati, Ohio with an assault rifle, and began to fire a nail gun. The incident ended with the man dead. He turned out to be a Navy veteran follower of Trump who, according to various reports, participated in

See [Hastings & Torres](#) on page 21

El Daño del Ex Presidente Sigue en Marcha

Maribel Hastings y David Torres

Como si se tratara de una de esas películas de terror de bajo presupuesto, donde creemos haber llegado al final pero se siguen suscitando situaciones absurdas, algo así sentimos tras la intervención del FBI

en la residencia del expresidente Donald Trump en Mar-a-Lago. Este operativo para recuperar cajas con documentos clasificados que, por alguna razón, Trump seguía teniendo en su poder, dio un giro sorprendente al saberse que podría tratarse de documentos sobre secretos nucleares.

No es de extrañar en realidad

una situación así en la vida y en el entorno de un personaje que, aun en su etapa empresarial, actuaba como si el escándalo fuera parte de su estilo, edulcorado por ese glamour que también rodea siempre la mala filmografía sobre el tema de la mafia y sus alcances.

La comparación con la película de bajo presupuesto se da en el

contexto de que pensábamos que Trump seguiría haciendo ruido, sí, pero no que una acción del gobierno federal lo colocaría una vez más en el centro del debate político. Y esto, con toda la atención que él siempre persigue y con una plataforma para continuar desestabilizando desde su trinchera el proceso político y de paso la seguridad.

De hecho, el personaje que él se ha creado de sí mismo, aprovechando la deificación que se hace y perpetúa en este país sobre el mundo del hampa, tiene un potente eco dañino como el que producen los personajes cuya maldad tiene la firme intención de “dominar al mundo”, seguido de una sonora carcajada de espanto tras un penúltimo coletazo.

Peor todavía, se pensaba que como era de anticiparse tratándose de Trump, él explotara el acontecimiento para su beneficio a través de la recaudación de fondos e incitara a la violencia a la que ya nos tienen acostumbrados sus seguidores con sus declaraciones de que es un pobre “perseguido político”.

De hecho, hace unos días un individuo trató de irrumpir en las oficinas del FBI en Cincinnati, Ohio, con un rifle de asalto y comenzó a disparar con una pistola de clavos. El incidente terminó con el hombre muerto. Resultó ser un veterano de la Marina seguidor de Trump, quien, según diversos reportes, participó en los disturbios del 6 de enero de 2021 en el Capitolio federal, y quien tras el registro de la residencia de Trump, dijo en Truth Social —la plataforma social fundada por Trump— que quería matar agentes del FBI.

Así, tanto el FBI como el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS) han sonado la alarma sobre las crecientes amenazas de violencia contra sus agentes y sus instalaciones, contra otros funcionarios e incluso la publicación en plataformas sociales de direcciones residenciales, nombres de los agentes que participaron en el operativo y de sus familiares.

Lamentablemente ya nada de esto nos sorprende, porque esa violencia de los seguidores de Trump que se promueve en plata-

“Llama la atención cómo han reaccionado los líderes republicanos del Congreso y nacionales al registro de la residencia de Trump.”

formas sociales se ha normalizado, al grado de que para el Partido Republicano no es motivo de preocupación. Su inamovilidad ante esta perturbadora forma de acabar con su propio país es solo equiparable a la igualmente siniestra manera de promover su antiinmigrante retórica de odio y racismo, que se ha convertido ya en una marca registrada republicana imposible de evitar.

Es más, llama la atención cómo han reaccionado los líderes republicanos del Congreso y nacionales al registro de la residencia de Trump. Estos “paladines” de la “ley y el orden” han sido los primeros

Vea [Hastings y Torres/Esp](#), página 17

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Political Misinformation Meant to Forestall Latino Power Threatens All

Cristina Beltrán and Tony Affigne

Researchers and teachers who specialize in Latino politics are increasingly alarmed by the flood of misinformation targeting Hispanic voters — a tsunami of lies that the U.S. government and social media giants are failing to confront.

For example, Spanish-language Twitter and Telegram have in the past four weeks seen new claims that President Biden suffers from "dementia," offering no medical evidence, but pointing to awkward use of teleprompters as proof that Biden suffers a cognitive disorder. The potential political impact of such misinformation is obvious.

It's hardly news that social media has struggled to quell lies and conspiracy theories: Congressional hearings, documentary films, and countless articles have highlighted the damage done by online communities sharing and spreading dangerous misinformation — and the often-halfhearted efforts by Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to fact-check and/or silence false claims.

“The partisan manipulation of Latinos, when they are lied to through their phones, tablets, and computers, is a particularly toxic and insidious form of political violence, perpetrated on the hearts and minds of our people.”

But Latino voters — most notably in Florida and Texas — have been particularly targeted, largely below the radar. Latinos are a much younger population than their white, Black, and Asian peers, and, unsurprisingly, they use mobile apps, social media, and messaging platforms at higher rates. And what users are seeing, on everything from COVID-19 to elections to the January 6 insurrection, is often horrifically false.

During the 2020 election campaign, pro-Trump activists targeted communities of Latino voters with claims ranging from the hyperbolic (Joe Biden is a communist) to the murderous (Biden is

a blood-drinking pedophile). Social media campaigns attacked the Black Lives Matter movement with racist rhetoric and warned of a Democratic plot to have a caravan of Cuban immigrants breach the U.S. Southern border and disrupt the election process. Widely circulated memes claimed that Biden and running mate Kamala Harris endorsed infanticide.

Why have platforms and regulators failed to push back against such destructive lies with the kind of activist intervention mustered to fight COVID-19, QAnon, and election misinformation? Language is a primary reason: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and other platforms, already under the gun for slipshod monitoring, have focused on combating English-language



Photo/Foto: Ethnic Media Services



Photo/Foto: Ethnic Media Services

disinformation, devoting few if any resources to fact-checking other material even as the sites spread more globally. In 2020, several platforms banned the #plandemic hashtag, associated with a viral video espousing false COVID-19 conspiracies. But users continued

spreading misinformation on the platforms using #plandemia — the Spanish version — for many more months.

As college professors, we will continue to publish and educate

See Beltrán & Affigne on page 19

La Desinformación Destinada a Prevenir el Poder Latino

Cristina Beltrán y Tony Affigne

Investigadores y educadores especializados en política de los latinos en Estados Unidos están continuamente alarmados por la inundación de desinformación dirigida hacia votantes hispanos—un maremoto de mentiras que el gobierno estadounidense y gigantes de las redes sociales han fracasado en enfrentar.

Por ejemplo, en las pasadas cuatro semanas Twitter y Telegram en español han visto surgir nuevas declaraciones falsas que sugieren que el presidente Biden sufre de demencia sin evidencia médica alguna. Este tipo de declaraciones afirman que el uso de un monitor durante sus discursos públicos por el presidente sirven como prueba de que Biden sufre de alguna condición cognitiva. El posible impacto político de este tipo de desinformación es obvio.

No es sorprendente que las redes sociales han tenido dificultades en acallar las falsedades y teorías de conspiración. Vistas públicas en el Congreso de los Es-

tados Unidos, documentales, e innumerables reportajes en los medios han resaltado el daño hecho por la diseminación de desinformación nociva compartida a través de comunidades en el internet—además de llamar la atención al poco esfuerzo en la refutar y silenciar datos falsos por parte de Facebook, YouTube y Twitter.

“La manipulación partidista de los latinos, a través de mentiras y falsedades recibidas por sus teléfonos, tabletas, y computadoras, es particularmente tóxica, y una forma de violencia política perpetrada sobre la mente y el corazón de nuestra gente.”

Los votantes latinos—notablemente en Florida y Texas—han sido objetivo particular de la desinformación, hecho al que no se le

OneCO's 2022 LGBTQ+ Equality Legislative Scorecard



How do your state legislators score when it comes to guaranteeing a fair and just state for LGBTQ+ Coloradans and their families?



Commentary / Comentario

Kansas Proved That Abortion Rights Can Win in Red States

Alondra Trevizo

There's no place like home. No statement rang more true as the country recently turned its attention to my home state of Kansas. We're known for three things: The "Wizard of Oz," our amazing barbeque, and our conservative voter base.

But our ballot initiative on abortion shook that last notion up.

In a referendum, Kansas voters decided between protecting abortion rights or passing a constitutional amendment to restrict them. The amendment was supposed to be an easy victory for anti-abortion forces.

Instead, by a vote of 59 percent to 41 percent, the people of Kan-

sas voted no and sent shockwaves across the country.

Clearly, the political analysts and pollsters failed to capture the complexity of our state.

As a first-generation Latina Kansan, issues like abortion, student debt, COVID, housing, and climate change are pressing concerns for me. With the pandemic ongoing and the cost of living rising, I — like many young voters — found myself questioning the point of voting at all.

The Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* changed my mind. I was losing faith in our system, but it was clear that inaction wasn't an option.

Millions of other voters in Kansas, including my sisters, friends,

I saw the power of organizing and the power of youth as hundreds of volunteers turned out weekend after weekend to register folks to vote, canvas, and educate.

and cousins, felt the same way. Vote.org, which helps people register to vote, posted a 1,038 percent increase in voter registrations here on the day of the ruling — more than 10 times the number who registered the prior week.

The result? The biggest voter turnout for a Kansas primary in history.

The end of *Roe* has shifted the electoral priorities of young voters. Gen-Z — those of us born in the late 90s to early 2000s — are in college, looking to buy our first homes, or building our families, and we're trying to ensure there's a healthy planet left for our children.

But now, abortion rights have joined those priorities.

According to research by Advocates for Youth, one in four women will have an abortion in their lifetime. And young women and girls account for over 40 percent of all abortions, which are more common and necessary than we're often led to believe. Young



Photo: OtherWords

women in college are three times more likely to experience sexual violence, and they often lack the resources needed to travel for abortion care.

See [Trevizo](#) on page 19

The Truth About Busing Migrants from the Border to DC

Alexandra Gulden

In April, Governor Abbott of Texas began sending migrants from the US southern border to Washington, DC, with Arizona joining soon after. So far, Texas and Arizona have collectively bused over 7,000 migrants from the bor-

der to DC, and now Texas is beginning to send buses to New York City as well.

The narrative cycling around conservative media outlets is that Governors Abbott and Ducey have "stuck it to the Dems" by "bringing the border crisis" to their front doors. Abbott and Ducey are us-

ing migrant families, who are real people with hopes, dreams, and unimaginable journeys, as political pawns to spin a media narrative about an "immigrant invasion." There are anecdotal reports of migrants being coerced onto the buses, told that they will be taken to their desired destination, and

then sent to DC or New York instead.

At the same time, many migrants have also been able to benefit from the program, because DC or New York are much closer to their final destination than the Texas or Arizona border. Others don't have a final destination in mind. Forced to flee their homes, they are content to board a bus to DC or New York City, where, they are told, there will be resources and jobs waiting for them.

In the case of DC, it is true that the buses have overwhelmed these resources. But this is not the fault of a "migrant crisis," or the migrants themselves, but of a lack of institutional will to act.

From day one, a mutual aid network of volunteers, activists, and immigrants' rights advocates has been mobilizing to welcome and assist migrants arriving in DC despite a vacuum of institutional support from local or federal government. Though FEMA has provided federal funds to SAMU First Response, the main nonprofit officially in charge of coordinating, it has been woefully inadequate to keep up with the needs of receiving, housing, and transporting migrants.

Sanctuary DMV, through the organizing and willpower of its volunteers, has been able to welcome thousands without such support. In New York City, a mutual aid and solidarity network led by Grannies Respond and their affiliate Team TLC-NYC is already assembling volunteers to greet and process migrants.

Both cities' governments have struggled with how to respond,



Photo: Quikote Center

further complicated by a lack of communication and cooperation from Texas regarding the arrivals.

The DC Department of Human Services has been illegally excluding migrant families from the shelter system despite available bed space, denying them critical resources such as a case manager, who could assist in school enrollment, health insurance, and receiving medical treatment.

The DC Department of Human Services has been illegally excluding migrant families from the shelter system despite available bed space.

In DC, neither the city nor the federal government is willing to play a direct role in addressing what immigrant advocates say is a building humanitarian crisis. Indeed, the government's failure to act is causing the humanitarian crisis in the first place. DC's Mayor

See [Gulden](#) on page 25

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Grassroots Work Leads to Vaccination Success in Southern Refugee Community

By Alander Rocha

Naw Mu Chaw had questions about the possible side effects of a covid-19 vaccine.

Chaw, a recent refugee from Myanmar, received medical care at a community health center near her home in Clarkston, Georgia, a city of about 14,000 people. Her English is limited, but the center has an interpreter to translate health information into her native language, Burmese.

Her questions began to fade as a health worker sent her text messages about the vaccine in Burmese. She got the shots and then urged other refugees to get vaccinated, too.

"Some people have underlying diseases, like diabetes, and if they get [the virus], they can die," she said. "If they have diabetes or high blood pressure, they should get vaccination more than other people."

Public health officials and resettlement groups across the U.S.

have used such community strategies to encourage newly arrived refugees and other vulnerable people to get vaccinated against covid. And in places like Clarkston, health officials say these kinds of grassroots efforts are working. The metro Atlanta city — the hub of refugee resettlement in Georgia — has a higher vaccination rate than its county or state.

“

“Some people have underlying diseases, like diabetes, and if they get [the virus], they can die.”

Naw Mu Chaw

Refugees generally have been disproportionately affected by covid.

Those newly resettled may experience living situations or employment conditions that increase their risk of contracting the virus. Some refugees enter the country

with underlying medical conditions that increase their risk of developing severe illness, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). And in multigenerational households, protecting older family members in cramped housing arrangements can be difficult.

Some refugees face other significant hurdles to immunization, including language barriers, a lack of transportation, and irregular work schedules.

"We want to make sure that these pandemics aren't disproportionately affecting folks of color, migrants, refugees, and other folks in vulnerable categories," said Kat Kelley, senior director of migration and refugee services at Virginia-based [Catholic Charities USA](#). "If you have historically underserved communities, they're going to remain underserved in any kind of crisis. You have to create a sustainable infrastructure that addresses those barriers."

To create that infrastructure, the CDC [developed a toolkit](#) for local health departments and commu-



Photo/Photo: AdobeStock

Grassroots groups have hired bilingual, community-based workers to increase vaccination rates among refugees. / Los grupos de base han contratado a trabajadores comunitarios bilingües para aumentar las tasas de vacunación entre los refugiados.

nity organizations that includes covid-related messaging on the disease and vaccines in more than 30 languages. It also [offered guidance](#) for public health professionals, resettlement agencies, and employers on collecting data and work policies. And grassroots groups have hired bilingual, community-based workers to increase vaccination rates among refugees.

Unlike people who move to the U.S. from other countries by choice, refugees bound for the U.S. are [not required](#) to get vaccinations before they travel. Once in the country, all refugees receive a medical examination within 90 days of their arrival, during which providers discuss vaccinations.

See [Vaccination](#) on page 21

La Crisis de Deuda que los Estadounidenses Enfermos No Pueden Evitar

Por Alander Rocha

Naw Mu Chaw tenía preguntas sobre los posibles efectos secundarios de una vacuna contra covid-19.

Chaw es una refugiada que acaba de llegar a Estados Unidos desde Myanmar, y que recibe atención médica en un centro de salud

“

“Algunas personas tienen enfermedades subyacentes, como la diabetes, y si se contagian [del virus], pueden morir”.

Naw Mu Chaw

información sanitaria a su lengua materna, el birmano.

Sus dudas empezaron a disiparse cuando un trabajador de la salud le envió mensajes de texto sobre la vacuna escritos en birmano. Se vacunó y luego instó a otros refugiados a vacunarse también.

"Algunas personas tienen enfermedades subyacentes, como la diabetes, y si se contagian [del virus], pueden morir", dijo. "Si tienen diabetes o presión arterial alta, deberían vacunarse antes que otras personas".

Los funcionarios de salud pública y los grupos de reasentamiento en Estados Unidos han utilizado este tipo de estrategias comunitarias para animar a los refugiados recién llegados, y a otras personas vulnerables, a vacunarse contra covid. Y en lugares como Clarkston, los funcionarios de salud dicen que estas iniciativas de base están funcionando. La ciudad metropolitana de Atlanta —el centro de reasentamiento de refugiados

en Georgia— tiene una tasa de vacunación más alta que la de su condado o el estado.

En general, covid ha afectado a los refugiados de forma desproporcionada.

Los recién reasentados pueden experimentar situaciones de vida o condiciones de trabajo que aumentan el riesgo de contraer el virus. Algunos refugiados llegan al país con condiciones médicas subyacentes que incrementan el riesgo de desarrollar una enfermedad grave, según los [Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades](#) (CDC). Y en los hogares multigeneracionales, puede resultar difícil proteger a los miembros de la familia de más edad que conviven en viviendas reducidas.

Algunos refugiados se enfrentan a otros obstáculos importantes para la inmunización, como las barreras lingüísticas, la falta de transporte y los horarios de trabajo irregulares.

"Queremos asegurarnos de que estas pandemias no afecten de forma desproporcionada a las comunidades de color, a los inmigrantes, a los refugiados y a otras personas vulnerables", señaló Kat Kelley, directora de servicios de migración y refugiados de [Catholic Charities USA](#), con sede en Virginia. "Si hay comunidades históricamente desatendidas, van a seguir estándolo en cualquier tipo de crisis. Hay que crear una infraestructura sostenible que enfrente esas barreras".

Para crear esa infraestructura, los CDC desarrollaron un conjunto de [herramientas](#) para los departamentos de salud locales y las organizaciones comunitarias que incluye mensajes sobre covid y las vacunas en más de 30 idiomas. También se estableció [orientación](#) para los profesionales de la salud pública, las agencias de reasentamiento y los empleadores sobre la recopilación de datos y las políticas de trabajo. Y los grupos

de base han contratado a trabajadores comunitarios bilingües para aumentar las tasas de vacunación entre los refugiados.

A diferencia de las personas que se trasladan a Estados Unidos desde otros países por decisión propia, los refugiados que se dirigen a Estados Unidos [no están obligados a vacunarse](#) antes de viajar. Una vez en el país, todos los refugiados reciben un examen médico en los 90 días siguientes a su llegada. En ese momento, los proveedores hablan de las vacunas.

Entre los grupos que colaboran en la campaña de vacunación contra covid se encuentra el [International Rescue Committee](#), una organización global sin fines de lucro que proporciona ayuda de emergencia a los refugiados y que ha reubicado a más de 28,000 personas en el área de Clarkston en los últimos 40 años.

Vea [Vacunación](#), página 17

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U.S. Facing the 'Worst Overdose Crisis in the History of this Country'

By Matt Watson

Eric Pérez was a success story. He grew up in south Denver in an environment plagued by poverty, gang violence and incarceration, but he pursued higher education at Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU) to better his life and help others do the same.

Pérez spent six years as a youth mentor in MSU Denver's Journey Through Our Heritage program, which pairs its students with local high-schoolers from at-risk pop-

ulations. Pérez showed students with backgrounds similar to his that they could be successful too. At the University, he won student leadership awards and became president of Journey Through Our Heritage. In the community, he led a Bible study group and was active with Conservation Colorado, traveling to Washington, D.C., to testify on conservation legislation.

"He liked to teach others, to show them how you can make progress," said Pérez's grandmother, Patricia Pérez. "He was determined to get into college."



Eric Pérez, the first person in his family to earn a college degree, received his diploma from MSU Denver in May 2021. / Eric Pérez, la primera persona de su familia en obtener un título universitario, recibió su diploma de MSU Denver en mayo de 2021.



In May 2021, Pérez became the first person in his family to graduate from college, reaching that milestone achievement with a degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology and a bright future ahead of him. But less than a year later, he was gone. He died of a fentanyl overdose in April.

"This fentanyl epidemic is devastating the best and brightest people we have," said Renee Fajardo, J.D., coordinator of the Journey Through Our Heritage program, who remembers the positive impact her standout student had on the program and classmates. "He was just so dedicated and motivated," she said. "Even after graduating, he kept coming back to help us."

But Pérez became one of many lost to overdose. In Colorado, deaths involving fentanyl increased 1,200% over a five-year period, with more Coloradans dying of a fentanyl overdose in 2020 than the previous five years combined. The rise in deaths spurred the state legislature this year to pass a contentious law increasing the penalties for fentanyl possession and distribution. Meanwhile, behavioral health experts and educators, such as those at MSU Denver, have advocated for alternative solutions and are engaged in preparing the next generation of mental health professionals for work in an increasingly critical field.

Searching for solutions

Drug overdoses claimed the lives of 108,000 people in the United States in 2021, according to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). That's one death every 4.9 minutes on average.

Overdose deaths in the U.S. have been trending up since the 1990s, starting with increased prescribing of opioids and soaring in recent years due to the proliferation of synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. The CDC says fentanyl is 50 times stronger than heroin, and widespread illicit manufacturing of the drug has made it affordable and accessible to virtually anyone, including many who unknowingly use fentanyl mixed into other substances by sellers looking to enhance the potency of different drugs.

In an attempt to address the drug crisis in Colorado, state legislators passed House Bill 22-1326, which made it a felony to possess more than 1 gram of a substance that contains any amount of fentanyl, reduced from 4 grams under previous law. Individuals who can prove in a trial that they did not knowingly possess fentanyl can have their charge reduced to a misdemeanor. The bill also established mandatory drug treatment for people convicted of fentanyl-related crimes and made investments in overdose-reversing medicine such as naloxone.

"This comprehensive plan cracks down on dealers peddling this poison in our communities and invests in proven public health strategies to prevent overdoses and death," House Speaker Alec Garnett said in a statement after the bill was signed. "For months, we worked with law enforcement, public health experts, Democrats and Republicans to craft this law, and it's a major step forward toward saving lives."

The bill dominated legislator and media attention during the

General Assembly's 2022 session, as everyone agreed something had to be done about the fentanyl crisis but couldn't agree on much beyond that. In total, 75 amendments to the bill were formally proposed, and one of the primary sponsors withdrew his support of the bill on the last day of the session. Proponents wrestled with pressure from all sides, as the governor, attorney general and law enforcement officials advocated for felonizing any amount of fentanyl possession while behavioral health experts pushed back against stiffer penalties.

“This fentanyl epidemic is devastating the best and brightest people we have.”
Renee Fajardo, J.D.,
Journey Through Our
Heritage, MSU Denver

For Sen. Brittany Pettersen, an MSU Denver alumna and one of the bill sponsors, the legislation was personal. Pettersen has spoken publicly many times about her mother's decades-long addiction struggles, which began with an overreliance on prescription painkillers after an injury. During a Senate floor discussion, Pettersen said Colorado has the second-worst access to opioid addiction treatment in the country, with more than 450 people in the state on waitlists for inpatient care.

Estados Unidos se Enfrenta a la 'Peor Crisis de Sobredosis' de la Historia



Foto/Photo: Alyson McClaran for MSU RED

La diputada estatal Leslie Herod, segunda por la izquierda, se unió a los profesores y ex alumnos de la MSU de Denver en una mesa redonda sobre la crisis del fentanilo en el estado en marzo. / State Rep. Leslie Herod, second from left, joined MSU Denver faculty members and alumni for a panel discussion on the state's fentanyl crisis in March.

Por Matt Watson

Eric Pérez era una historia de éxito. Creció en el sur de Denver en un entorno plagado de pobreza, violencia de las bandas y encarcelamiento, pero cursó estudios superiores en la Universidad Estatal Metropolitana de Denver (MSU) para mejorar su vida y ayudar a otros a hacer lo mismo.

Pérez pasó seis años como mentor de jóvenes en el programa *Journey Through Our Heritage* de la MSU de Denver, que empareja a sus estudiantes con alumnos de secundaria locales de poblaciones en riesgo. Pérez demostró a los estudiantes con antecedentes similares a los suyos que ellos también podían tener éxito. En la Universidad, ganó premios de liderazgo estudiantil y se convirtió en presidente de *Journey Through Our Heritage*. En la comunidad, dirigió un grupo de estudio de la Biblia y participó activamente en *Conservation Colorado*, viajando a Washington, D.C., para testificar sobre la legislación de conservación.

"Le gustaba enseñar a los demás, mostrarles cómo se puede progresar", dijo la abuela de Pérez, Patricia Pérez. "Estaba decidido a entrar en la universidad".

En mayo de 2021, Pérez se convirtió en la primera persona de su familia en graduarse en la universidad, alcanzando ese hito con un título en Justicia Penal y Criminología y un brillante futuro por delante. Pero menos de un año después, ya no estaba. Murió de una sobredosis de fentanilo en abril.

"Esta epidemia de fentanilo está devastando a los mejores y más brillantes que tenemos", dijo Renee Fajardo, J.D., coordinadora del programa *Journey Through Our Heritage*, quien recuerda el impacto positivo que su destacado estudiante tuvo en el programa y en sus compañeros. "Era tan dedicado y motivado", dijo. "Incluso después de graduarse, siguió viniendo a ayudarnos".



"Esta epidemia de fentanilo está devastando a los mejores y más brillantes que tenemos".

Renee Fajardo, J.D.,
Journey Through Our Heritage, MSU Denver

Sin embargo, Pérez se convirtió en uno de los muchos fallecidos por sobredosis. En Colorado, las muertes relacionadas con el fentanilo aumentaron un 1.200% en un periodo de cinco años, y en 2020 murieron más coloradenses por sobredosis de fentanilo que en los cinco años anteriores juntos. El aumento de las muertes impulsó a la legislatura estatal este año a aprobar una polémica ley que aumenta las penas por posesión y distribución de fentanilo. Mientras tanto, los expertos en salud mental y los educadores, como los de la MSU de Denver, han abogado por soluciones alternativas y se dedican a preparar a la próxima generación

de profesionales de la salud mental para trabajar en un campo cada vez más crítico.

Búsqueda de soluciones

Las sobredosis de drogas se cobraron la vida de 108.000 personas en Estados Unidos en 2021, según estimaciones de los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC). Eso supone una muerte cada 4,9 minutos de media.

Las muertes por sobredosis en EE.UU. han tenido una tendencia al alza desde la década de 1990, empezando por el aumento de la prescripción de opioides y disparándose en los últimos años debido a la proliferación de opioides sintéticos como el fentanilo. Según los CDC, el fentanilo es 50 veces más potente que la heroína, y su fabricación ilícita generalizada ha hecho que sea asequible y accesible para prácticamente cualquier persona, incluso para muchos que, sin saberlo, utilizan fentanilo mezclado con otras sustancias por vendedores que buscan aumentar la potencia de diferentes drogas.

En un intento de hacer frente a la crisis de las drogas en Colorado, los legisladores estatales aprobaron el proyecto de ley 22-1326 de la Cámara de Representantes, que convirtió en delito grave la posesión de más de un gramo de una sustancia que contenga cualquier cantidad de fentanilo, lo que se redujo de los 4 gramos de la ley anterior. Las personas que puedan demostrar en un juicio que no poseían fentanilo a sabiendas

pueden ver reducida su acusación a un delito menor. El proyecto de ley también establece un tratamiento obligatorio contra las drogas para las personas condenadas por delitos relacionados con el fentanilo y realiza inversiones en medicamentos para revertir las sobredosis, como la naloxona.

"Este plan integral reprime a los traficantes que venden este veneno en nuestras comunidades e invierte en estrategias de salud pública de probada eficacia para prevenir las sobredosis y las muertes", dijo el presidente de la

Cámara de Representantes, Alec Garnett, en un comunicado tras la firma de la ley. "Durante meses, hemos trabajado con las fuerzas del orden, los expertos en salud pública, los demócratas y los republicanos para elaborar esta ley, y es un gran paso adelante para salvar vidas".

El proyecto de ley dominó la atención de los legisladores y de los medios de comunicación durante la sesión de 2022 de la Asamblea General, ya que todos estaban

Vea [Fentanilo](#), página 27

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State News / Noticias del Estado

Greeley School Administrators Push to Get Kids Back in School

COLORADO

By Ann Schimke

The front door of the house was ajar when Domanic Castillo and Julia Madera approached. They were looking for a teenager named Jason who'd missed the first five days of school at Northridge High in Greeley.

The boy wasn't there, but his father was — dusty from working on renovations inside.

After Castillo explained that they hadn't seen Jason at school

yet, the man quickly dialed the boy's mother and handed over his cell phone. Madera took the call and, speaking in Spanish, learned that the family planned to send him to one of the district's alternative schools.

"She said she meant to call," Madera said as she and Castillo returned to her SUV, ready for the next stop on their home visit list.

Castillo and Madera are on the front lines of a push to get kids back in school after a pandemic that compounded many of the problems that contribute to chron-

ic absenteeism, including student disengagement, academic struggle, and financial insecurity. The rationale is simple: Students have to be in class to learn.

The Greeley-Evans district in northern Colorado is one of many districts nationwide using federal COVID dollars to fund attendance-boosting efforts. The 22,000-student district is in the second year of a three-year, \$644,000 contract with the Denver-based consulting company Zero Dropouts to track down missing high schoolers and help them catch up on coursework or credits.

Castillo, the Northridge cheer coach, and Madera, a former secretary at the school, are among 14 Zero Dropouts employees, also known as attendance advocates, embedded in the district's five high schools this year. They have a host of responsibilities, from helping out in classes and monitoring hallways to calling and visiting the homes of absent students.

The job is part detective work, part social work, and part paperwork.

Before the pandemic, 35% of Greeley-Evans students were chronically absent, meaning they missed 10% or more of school days. That number rose to 40% during 2020-21, well above the state rate of 26%.

Lanny Hass, special projects manager at Zero Dropouts, said advocates help intervene quickly when warning signs pop up: an increase in absences, a grade that's fallen to a D or F, or problematic behavior. The team works in tandem with counselors, mental health specialists, and other school staff.

"Attendance and course recovery are probably your two biggest challenges at a high school," said Hass, who formerly served as a high school principal in nearby Loveland.

"The challenges are the same pre- post- and during the pandemic," he said. "They're just more pronounced now."

No falling through the cracks

The four attendance advocates at Northridge High use a small room connected to the main office as their home base. It's rimmed with computer workstations that often display color-coded spreadsheets showing period-by-period absences and other metrics that help them flag kids in danger of slipping away.

Along the wall is a cardboard box of Famous Amos chocolate



Shena López, an attendance advocate at Greeley's Northridge High School, monitors the hallway during a recent passing period. / Shena López, promotora de la asistencia en el instituto Northridge de Greeley, vigila el pasillo durante un reciente periodo de descanso.

chip cookie packs. Students zip into the room occasionally to grab a snack from the box.

On a recent morning, Erin Eckenrode, an advocate who previously worked as a juvenile probation officer, made phone calls looking for 54 students on that day's no-show list. She talked to some parents, left messages for others, and sometimes hit dead ends.

She did solve a few mysteries. She found that two families had moved out of the district — one, refugees from Ukraine, had relocated to California, and another had moved to a nearby district.

Like high schoolers everywhere, Northridge students struggle for many reasons. They may find their classes boring, face chaotic home lives, or hold jobs that leave them too exhausted for school. About two-third of the school's 1,200 students are eligible for federally subsidized meals, a measure of poverty.

"We have students here that work at the meat factory," Eckenrode said. "They come to school and then they go home and sleep from four to eight and then they work the overnight shift cleaning the meat plant."

JBS, the world's largest meat processing company, operates a plant in Greeley.

Attendance advocates say the pandemic has also eroded students' social and self-advocacy skills. Teens are dialed into the digital world, but can be muted when it comes to real-life interactions.

Castillo, who helps monitor a class where students work online to catch up, said he's seen students stare at a locked computer screen rather than raising their hands to ask for help.

"I just stopped going"

Last year, Angel, now a 10th grader at Northridge, missed lots of school — more than 300 class periods last time he checked.

Some of his friends had already dropped out, joining their fathers on construction jobs.

"I started ditching a lot towards the end," he said. "Sometimes, I just feel school ain't for me so I just stopped going."



"We have students here that work at the meat factory. They come to school and then they go home and sleep from four to eight and then they work the overnight shift cleaning the meat plant."

Erin Eckenrode, Attendance Advocate

But Angel eventually came back, and he counts Shena López, one of the school's attendance advocates, as someone he can relate to at Northridge. Often, he'll stop by to see her three times a day.

"We'll just have a good conversation about my day or her day," he said. "She's nice to me, so I really like her."

Connecting with kids in a non-teaching role creates a different relationship, said López.

"It's different work. We're their friends. We're here for them," she said. "I always tell them I'm going to do whatever it takes to help you succeed."

Sometimes, the moments that mean the most aren't what attendance advocates expect.

When a girl named LaWren, a senior cheerleader, recently stopped by, she mentioned how surprised she was when Eckenrode pronounced her name right on the first try during an advisory class.

"Wow, you remembered that?" Eckenrode asked.



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Los Administradores Presionan para que los Niños Vuelvan a la Escuela



Foto/Photo: Ann Schimke / Chalkbeat

Durante una visita a domicilio, Julia Madera, defensora de la asistencia de la escuela secundaria Northridge, habla por teléfono con la madre de un estudiante que no se ha presentado a la escuela, mientras otro defensor, Domanic Castillo, observa. / During a home visit, Julia Madera, an attendance advocates from Northridge High School, talks by phone with the mother of a student who hasn't shown up to school, as another advocate, Domanic Castillo, looks on.

COLORADO

Por Ann Schimke

La puerta principal de la casa estaba entreabierta cuando Domanic Castillo y Julia Madera se acercaron. Buscaban a un adolescente llamado Jason que había faltado a los cinco primeros días de clase en el instituto Northridge de Greeley, Colorado.

“

Tenemos estudiantes que trabajan en la fábrica de carne. Vienen a la escuela, y luego se van a casa y duermen de cuatro a ocho y luego trabajan en el turno de noche limpiando la fábrica de carne".
Erin Eckenrode, Defensora de la Asistencia.

El chico no estaba allí, pero sí su padre, polvoriento por estar trabajando en las reformas del interior.

Después de que Castillo explicara que aún no habían visto a Jason en la escuela, el hombre marcó rápidamente a la madre del chico y le entregó su teléfono móvil. Madera atendió la llamada y, hablando en español, se enteró de que la familia planeaba enviarlo a una de las escuelas alternativas del distrito.

"Dijo que tenía intención de llamar", dijo Madera mientras ella y Castillo volvían a su todoterreno, listas para la siguiente parada en su lista de visitas a domicilio.

Castillo y Madera están en primera línea de un esfuerzo por conseguir que los niños vuelvan a

la escuela después de una pandemia que agravó muchos de los problemas que contribuyen al absentismo crónico, como la falta de compromiso de los estudiantes, la lucha académica y la inseguridad financiera. La justificación es sencilla: Los alumnos tienen que estar en clase para aprender.

El distrito de Greeley-Evans, en el norte de Colorado, es uno de los muchos distritos de todo el país que utilizan los fondos federales de COVID para financiar iniciativas de fomento de la asistencia. El distrito de 22.000 estudiantes está en el segundo año de un contrato de tres años por valor de 644.000 dólares con la empresa de consultoría Zero Dropouts, con sede en Denver, para localizar a los estudiantes de secundaria que faltan y ayudarles a ponerse al día con los cursos o los créditos.

Castillo, la entrenadora de animadoras de Northridge, y Madera, antigua secretaria de la escuela, se encuentran entre los 14 empleados de Zero Dropouts, también conocidos como defensores de la asistencia, integrados en las cinco escuelas secundarias del distrito este año. Tienen una gran cantidad de responsabilidades, desde ayudar en las clases y vigilar los pasillos hasta llamar y visitar las casas de los estudiantes ausentes.

El trabajo es en parte detectivesco, en parte trabajo social y en parte papeleo.

Antes de la pandemia, el 35% de los estudiantes de Greeley-Evans sufrían de absentismo crónico, es decir, faltaban al 10% o más de los días de clase. Esa cifra aumentó al 40% durante 2020-21, muy por encima de la tasa estatal del 26%.

Lanny Hass, gerente de proyectos especiales de Zero Dropouts, dijo que los defensores ayudan a intervenir rápidamente cuando aparecen señales de advertencia: un aumento en las ausencias, una calificación que ha caído a una D o F, o un comportamiento problemático. El equipo trabaja en conjunto con consejeros, especialistas en salud mental y otro personal escolar.

"La asistencia y la recuperación del curso son probablemente los dos mayores retos en un instituto", dijo Hass, que anteriormente fue director de un instituto en la cercana Loveland.

"Los retos son los mismos antes y durante la pandemia", dijo. "Sólo que ahora son más pronunciados".

No caer en las grietas

Los cuatro defensores de la asistencia en el instituto Northridge utilizan una pequeña sala conectada a la oficina principal como base de operaciones. Está rodeada de estaciones de trabajo informáticas que a menudo muestran hojas de cálculo codificadas por colores que muestran las ausencias por período y otras métricas que les

ayudan a señalar a los niños que corren el riesgo de perderse.

En la pared hay una caja de cartón con paquetes de galletas de chocolate Famous Amos. Los alumnos entran en la sala de vez en cuando para coger un bocadillo de la caja.

Una mañana reciente, Erin Eckenrode, una defensora que antes trabajaba como agente de libertad condicional de menores, hizo llamadas telefónicas para buscar a 54 estudiantes que estaban en la lista de ausentes de ese día. Habló con algunos padres, dejó mensajes a otros y a veces llegó a callejones sin salida.

Resolvió algunos misterios. Descubrió que dos familias se habían mudado fuera del distrito: una, refugiada de Ucrania, se había trasladado a California, y otra se había mudado a un distrito cercano.

Al igual que los estudiantes de secundaria de todo el mundo, los alumnos de Northridge tienen dificultades por muchos motivos. Puede que las clases les parezcan aburridas, que tengan una vida familiar caótica o que sus trabajos les dejen demasiado agotados para ir a la escuela. Alrededor de dos tercios de los 1.200 alumnos

de la escuela tienen derecho a recibir comidas subvencionadas por el gobierno federal, una medida de la pobreza.

"Tenemos estudiantes que trabajan en la fábrica de carne", dijo Eckenrode. "Vienen a la escuela y luego se van a casa y duermen de cuatro a ocho y luego trabajan en el turno de noche limpiando la fábrica de carne".

JBS, la mayor empresa de procesamiento de carne del mundo, tiene una planta en Greeley.

Los defensores de la asistencia dicen que la pandemia también ha erosionado las habilidades sociales y de autodefensa de los estudiantes. Los adolescentes están metidos en el mundo digital, pero pueden enmudecer cuando se trata de interacciones en la vida real.

Castillo, que ayuda a supervisar una clase en la que los estudiantes trabajan en línea para ponerse al día, dijo que ha visto a los estudiantes mirar fijamente a una pantalla de ordenador bloqueada en lugar de levantar la mano para pedir ayuda.

Ve [Escuela](#), página 24

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State News / Noticias del Estado

Election Officials Can't Access Federal Funding for Security



Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold, left, with Denver County Clerk Paul López, right, speaks to reporters about Colorado's primary election, at the Denver Elections Division offices on June 28, 2022.

Photo: Quentin Young/Colorado Newswire

COLORADO

By Kira Lerner

Colorado's election officials, like so many across the country, faced a surge of violent threats after the 2020 election.

Federal authorities are prosecuting a man who pled guilty to threatening a Colorado election official on Instagram, where he wrote: "Do you feel safe? You shouldn't." And Colorado police arrested a man accused of calling Secretary of State Jena Griswold and saying that "the angel of death is coming for her."

So when the Colorado secretary of state's office learned early this year that the U.S. Department of Justice would allow funding through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program to be used by state and local election offices to combat threats, they submitted an application in March. The office requested \$396,000 to pay contractors to monitor social media for threats and to enhance physical security for the secretary of state's office staff and county clerks through September 2023.

In May, Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Beall made a presentation to the board that determines grant recipients.

"There is a clear threat to Colorado Department of State (CDOS) staff, including the Secretary of State," Beall wrote in a letter to the Colorado Department of Public Safety, which oversees the grant. "We are, simply stated, facing a threat environment that is unprecedented for election officials and staff."

But in June, the office learned that the advisory board of mostly

law enforcement leaders considered and denied the secretary of state's application for funding for the coming fiscal year. According to the denial email, the board thought the proposal lacked sufficient content and details, and the project duplicated services or research that is already available or being done.



"There is a clear threat to Colorado Department of State (CDOS) staff, including the Secretary of State. We are, simply stated, facing a threat environment that is unprecedented for election officials and staff."

Christopher Beall, Colorado Deputy Secretary of State

The board did award the secretary of state's office \$241,000 in emergency funding to combat threats through the end of September, but the funds will expire before the November election.

With less than three months until the midterm election, many election officials across the United States say a continuing onslaught of violent threats makes them worried about their safety and that of their colleagues. The threats have led to mass resignations, leaving their offices understaffed for future elections.

The officials say they need support from the federal government to help protect themselves and their offices. But publicized efforts by the Justice Department and

See Election on page 20

Who tells a tale adds a tail

Latin America and contemporary art



Discover works from 19 cutting-edge Latin American artists. Now on view

IMAGE: Vitória Cribb, VIGILANTE_EXTENDED (video still detail), 2022. Film and digital installation; duration: 8 minutes, 44 seconds. © and courtesy Vitória Cribb

Who tells a tale adds a tail: Latin America and contemporary art is organized by the Denver Art Museum. It is presented with the generous support of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional support is provided by the Birnbaum Social Discourse Project, donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by 5280 Magazine and CBS4.



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State News / Noticias del Estado

Senator Luján, HHS Secretary Becerra Discuss Youth Mental Health

NEW MEXICO

By Susan Dunlap

Democratic U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra listened to youth behavioral health professionals at a roundtable discussion held on August 17, at Arrowhead Early College High School in Las Cruces, New México.

Luján and Becerra both made general remarks but mostly listened to the local professionals talk about challenges they see facing youth in New México. Dan Green, the state survey epidemiologist supervisor, said that accord-

ing to 2019 data, 40.4 percent of New México children experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. He said that is higher than national trends.

According to the 2019 data, 50.7 percent of girls in New México were likely to experience sadness or hopelessness compared to 30.3 percent of New México boys.

Green said more recent data has not come out yet due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on data gathering and research. But he said preliminary information indicates the trends in New México's high rate of depression among children are "going in the same direction" as before.

"The sadness and hopelessness trend is going up," he said.

Green said one area where money needs to be focused is on children who are marginalized such as those who face homelessness, LGBTQ youth and students with disabilities. He said that of the 5.2 percent of New México children experiencing homelessness or housing instability, the rate of heroin use is 30 times higher than for children living in stable housing.

Rose Ann Vasquez, LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative of Las Cruces coordinator, said the schools need long-term federal funding which would allow schools to hire more social workers.

"We need financial support for School-Based Health Clinics for



U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra at a youth mental health roundtable in Las Cruces, New México. / El senador estadounidense Ben Ray Luján y el secretario del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos de Estados Unidos, Xavier Becerra, en una mesa redonda sobre la salud mental de los jóvenes en Las Cruces, Nuevo México.

See Becerra on page 23

El Senador Luján y el Secretario del HHS Becerra Hablan de la Salud Mental

NEW MEXICO

Por Susan Dunlap

El senador demócrata Ben Ray Luján y el secretario del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS), Xavier Becerra, escucharon a los profesionales de la salud mental de los jóvenes en una mesa redonda celebrada el 17 de agosto, en la escuela secundaria Arrowhead

Early College en Las Cruces, Nuevo México.

Luján y Becerra hicieron comentarios generales, pero sobre todo escucharon a los profesionales locales hablar de los desafíos que ven que enfrentan los jóvenes en Nuevo México. Dan Green, el supervisor de la encuesta estatal de epidemiología, dijo que según los datos de 2019, el 40.4 por ciento de los niños de Nuevo México experimentan sentimientos per-

sistentes de tristeza o desesperanza. Dijo que eso es más alto que las tendencias nacionales.

Según los datos de 2019, el 50.7 por ciento de las niñas de Nuevo México eran propensas a experimentar tristeza o desesperanza en comparación con el 30.3 por ciento de los niños de Nuevo México.

Green dijo que aún no han salido datos más recientes debido a los impactos de la pandemia del

COVID-19 en la recolección de datos y la investigación. Pero dijo que la información preliminar indica que las tendencias de la alta tasa de depresión entre los niños de Nuevo México "van en la misma dirección" que antes.

"La tendencia de tristeza y desesperanza va en aumento", dijo.

Green dijo que un área en la que se debe enfocar el dinero es en los niños marginados, como los que enfrentan la falta de vivienda, los

jóvenes LGBTQ y los estudiantes con discapacidades. Dijo que del 5.2 por ciento de los niños de Nuevo México que experimentan la falta de hogar o la inestabilidad de la vivienda, la tasa de consumo de heroína es 30 veces mayor que la de los niños que viven en una vivienda estable.

Rose Ann Vásquez, coordinadora de LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative of Las Cruces, dijo que las escuelas necesitan financiación federal a largo plazo que permita a las escuelas contratar más trabajadores sociales.

"Necesitamos apoyo financiero para las clínicas de salud basadas en la escuela para las necesidades operativas. Pedimos a nuestros socios sin ánimo de lucro que desarrollen soluciones innovadoras y audaces para la salud del comportamiento sin un compromiso a largo plazo. Los niños necesitan un espacio para crecer y aprender", dijo.

Kristin Oreskovich, gerente de operaciones clínicas del programa SBHC para la Oficina de Salud Escolar y del Adolescente del Departamento de Salud de Nuevo México, dijo que todos los condados de Nuevo México tienen escasez tanto de médicos de atención primaria como de profesionales de la salud conductual. Dijo que los altos índices de pobreza y el bajo porcentaje de acceso a vehículos crean una alta vulnerabilidad social en todos los condados.

Otros problemas para los niños de Nuevo México incluyen el estigma, los problemas relacionados

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Immigration News/ Noticias de Inmigración

Migrants See Health Problems Linger and Worsen While Waiting at the Border

NEW MEXICO

By Renuka Rayasam

Two days after arriving at a temporary migrant shelter at the border with the U.S. in June, Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar's 9-year-old daughter and 1-year-old son fell ill. Most of the kids in the converted gym had stomach issues after being served a meal of sausage and beans, she recalled.

Alpizar's daughter quickly got better, but her son didn't. José had a fever and diarrhea and was throwing up. When the shelter nurses couldn't help, Alpizar sought out a private doctor, who prescribed antibiotics.

In mid-June, Alpizar, her partner, kids, and brother moved to Leona Vicario, a former factory that the Mexican government had converted to house migrants waiting to cross into the U.S. Weeks later, though, a doctor said her son still hadn't improved. "He showed me the chart again and told me it was still the same," Alpizar said in Spanish through an interpreter while at a shopping complex near the shelter. "He is still malnourished."

Three years ago, México had few shelters for migrants making their way to the U.S. People seeking asylum, like Alpizar and her family, presented themselves to U.S. authorities and were usually either detained in American facilities or released on parole while

they awaited their proceedings. In either case, they had potential access to the U.S. health care system.

But a constellation of U.S. immigration policies, a growing number of asylum seekers and refugees, and the covid-19 pandemic have transformed Mexican border towns into holding areas for people who are waiting for policies to change and are hoping to cross and head north. And despite the Biden administration's recent efforts to unwind some of those policies, little seems likely to change in the coming months. Alpizar and her family are now among thousands of people living in dozens of recently built Juárez shelters, just a

See [Migrants](#) on page 22



Soon after Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar and her family — including her brother Angel (far right) and her partner Pablo — arrived at a temporary migrant shelter in Ciudad Juárez, México, in June, her 9-year-old daughter and 1-year-old son got sick. / Poco después de que Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar y su familia, incluyendo a su hermano Ángel (extremo derecho) y a su pareja Pablo, llegaron a un refugio temporal para migrantes en Ciudad Juárez, México, en junio, su hija de 9 años y su hijo de 1 año se enfermaron.

Los Problemas de Salud de los Inmigrantes Persisten y Empeoran Mientras Esperan en la Frontera

NEW MEXICO

Por Renuka Rayasam

La hija de 9 años y el hijo de 1 año de Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar enfermaron dos días después de llegar, en junio, a un albergue temporal para migrantes, en la frontera con Estados Unidos. La mayoría de los niños que estaban en aquel gimnasio tenían problemas estomacales después de que les sirvieran una comida de salchichas y frijoles, recordó.

La hija de Alpizar mejoró rápidamente, pero su hijo no. José tenía fiebre y diarrea, y vomitaba. Cuando las enfermeras del refugio le dijeron que ya no podían hacer más por el niño, Alpizar buscó a un médico privado que le recetó antibióticos.

A mediados de junio, Alpizar, su pareja, sus hijos y su hermano se trasladaron a Leona Vicario, una antigua fábrica que el gobierno mexicano había adaptado para albergar a los migrantes que esperaban cruzar a Estados Unidos. Pero, semanas después, un médico le dijo que su hijo no mejoraba. "Me enseñó de nuevo la gráfica y me dijo que seguía igual", contó Alpizar mientras se encontraba en un centro comercial cercano al albergue. "Sigue desnutrido".

Hace tres años, México contaba con pocos refugios para los migrantes que se dirigían a Estados Unidos. Las personas que solicitaban asilo, como Alpizar y su familia, se presentaban ante las autoridades estadounidenses y,

por lo general, eran detenidas en instalaciones estadounidenses o liberadas bajo palabra mientras esperaban la resolución legal de sus casos. Y contaban con acceso potencial al sistema sanitario estadounidense.

Pero un conjunto de políticas de inmigración estadounidenses, un número creciente de solicitantes de asilo y refugiados, y la pandemia de covid-19 han transformado las ciudades fronterizas mexicanas en zonas de retención para personas que esperan que las políticas cambien para poder cruzar y dirigirse al norte. Sin embargo, a pesar de los recientes esfuerzos del gobierno de Biden por deshacer algunas de esas políticas, parece que poco va a cambiar en los próximos meses. Alpizar y su familia se encuentran ahora entre los miles de personas que viven en docenas de refugios construidos recientemente en Juárez, a pocos kilómetros de El Paso, Texas.

La espera, que puede durar meses, hace que algunos migrantes, como los hijos de Alpizar, desarrollen problemas de salud. Han aumentado las dolencias crónicas, como la hipertensión o la diabetes, personas que viven en condiciones extremas se han quedado sin atención, y se ha agravado el trauma que sufren quienes huyen de sus hogares.

Según el Título 42, una orden de emergencia de salud pública que la administración Trump invocó por primera vez en marzo de 2020 para detener la propagación de covid, Alpizar y su familia no pueden pre-

sentarse en un puesto de control fronterizo y solicitar asilo político: serían inmediatamente expulsados a México sin una revisión.

Esta política, una de las que han mantenido a los migrantes en México, es en realidad "contraproducente" para proteger a las personas de covid, según la investigación del Kaiser Family Foundation.

El albergue Leona Vicario ha sufrido brotes de varicela y sarampión desde su apertura en 2019. Sigue siendo considerado uno de los mejores refugios porque el gobierno mexicano lo administra. Los refugios privados, y sin fines de lucro, operan con poca supervisión, y su calidad varía.

Algunos migrantes duermen en la calle. En general, las condiciones en que viven hacen que las personas enfermen, y la atención médica es limitada, señaló Gabriela Muñoz, gestora del Centro de Defensa del Inmigrante Las Américas, en Juárez.

Alpizar decidió viajar a la frontera desde Cuernavaca, una ciudad al sur de Ciudad de México, tras un intento de secuestro de sus hijos, según contó. Ese mismo día, su hermano Ángel y su pareja, Pablo Sandoval Arce, fueron golpeados cuando volvían a casa después de hacer un trabajo de pintura en un apartamento. Ella le dijo a Pablo, el padre de José, que no era una coincidencia.

Alpizar denunció los incidentes a la policía local, pero le dijeron que no se podía hacer nada. Unos días después, llegaron a Juárez con dinero de la tía de Alpizar que vive



Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar lleva a su familia a hacer la compra. / Rosa Viridiana Cerón Alpizar takes her family grocery shopping.

en Carolina del Sur, y que había ayudado a criar a Alpizar y a su hermano tras la muerte de su madre. Alpizar está tratando de conseguir una exención al Título 42 que permita a su familia presentar una solicitud de asilo y reunirse con su tía hasta que se resuelva su caso.

Las Américas recibe unas 4,000 llamadas al día, según Crystal Sandoval, directora del centro de El Paso. Solo unas 100 obtienen respuesta. Alrededor del 70% de las personas que llaman necesitan atención médica: requieren un tratamiento inmediato contra el cáncer, tienen una enfermedad como la diabetes que está fuera de control o han desarrollado una anemia. Otras han sido agredidas sexualmente o tienen embarazos de alto riesgo. Entre 60 y 90 personas a la semana reciben ayuda de la organización para conseguir exenciones, lo que les permite solicitar asilo y esperar en Estados Unidos a sus citas judiciales.

Los activistas de inmigración afirman que el Título 42 no solo

ha perjudicado a la salud pública, sino que la norma se ha aplicado de forma selectiva. La Oficina de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza de Estados Unidos (CBP) ha detenido a inmigrantes alrededor de 1,7 millones de veces en el actual año fiscal federal, que comenzó el 1 de octubre. Aproximadamente la mitad de esos arrestos dieron lugar a una expulsión en virtud del Título 42, según la agencia.

Un 65% de los expulsados eran personas de México, mientras que la gran mayoría de las otras expulsiones involucraban a personas de El Salvador, Guatemala y Honduras. En abril, sin embargo, las autoridades estadounidenses permitieron temporalmente la entrada en Estados Unidos de ucranianos que se encontraban en centros de acogida mexicanos.

En este contexto, la historia médica de la familia Alpizar no es la más extrema. Otros migrantes tienen necesidades inmediatas

en cuestionar las acciones del FBI y del Departamento de Justicia, algunos incluso tildando el operativo de "abusivo" y "excesivo" y otros diciendo que se "sembró" evidencia, sin prueba alguna. Nada importa que Trump tenga en su casa información clasificada y que pueda tratarse de secretos nucleares, o que incluso en el proceso Trump haya violado la Ley de Espionaje.

No, señor. Nada de eso importa a los republicanos, cuyo único interés es seguir utilizando a Trump como el puente para atraer a esa base recalcitrante y extremista con el fin de mantenerse en el poder o arrebatárselo a los demócratas. Esa misma derecha ahora pide que se le quiten los fondos al FBI, como el movimiento de Black Lives Matter pedía que se le quitaran fondos a la policía en el contexto de los abusos de algunos elementos que han culminado en la muerte de civiles afroamericanos y de otras minorías por el uso excesivo de fuerza. Equiparar las dos instancias de forma burlesca no solo es incorrecto. Es vergonzoso. Y ellos lo saben, pero lo disfrutan en la cara de esta nación, porque han llegado a un grado tal de cinismo e impunidad que no les interesa en realidad el país donde viven, sino imponer una sola, blanca y supremacista visión del mundo a costa de lo que sea. Incluso de la sangre, el sudor y las lágrimas que también se han derramado a lo largo de la historia de Estados Unidos.

Pero a esa conducta vergonzosa nos tienen acostumbrados los republicanos, a quienes no importa lo que haga Trump —así sea como ahora la potencial violación de las leyes de espionaje y utilizando lenguaje que puede incitar a la violencia—, pues ellos siguen empeñando la moral y la decencia para defender a una figura corrupta que aun después de abandonar la presidencia sigue haciendo mucho, mucho daño.

Maribel Hastings es Asesora Ejecutiva de América's Voice.

David Torres es Asesor en Español de América's Voice.

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Clarkston es conocida por su diversidad, con grandes poblaciones de refugiados de Myanmar, la República Democrática del Congo y Siria. Los trabajadores sanitarios de la comunidad y las organizaciones de base de la zona han sido cruciales a la hora de educar sobre la vacuna contra covid, y aseguran que sus esfuerzos han tenido mucho éxito.

Según los datos recopilados por el Centro de Investigación sobre Prevención de la Universidad Estatal de Georgia (GSU), el 70% de los residentes de Clarkston estaban totalmente vacunados en julio. En el condado de DeKalb, donde se encuentra Clarkston, esa cifra era del 62%. El porcentaje de Georgia, 57%, está entre los más bajos del país.

El centro estatal de Georgia comunicó que la tasa de vacunación de Clarkston se sitúa más de 20 puntos porcentuales por encima de la de otras áreas del condado de DeKalb con puntuaciones similares en el Índice de Vulnerabilidad Social, que evalúa a las comunidades en función de factores como el estado socioeconómico, la densidad de vivienda, la disponibilidad de transporte y hogares; y la raza, la etnia y el idioma. Los esfuerzos de alcance comu-

nitario en Clarkston se traducen en tasas de vacunación más altas, según Mary Helen O'Connor, subdirectora del centro.

El Centro de Investigación sobre la Prevención de la GSU contrató a cinco trabajadores comunitarios de la salud, cada uno de los cuales habla con fluidez un idioma diferente, para que promovieran los beneficios de vacunarse contra covid. Kaeden Tun, de Myanmar, y Thomas Roger, de la República Democrática del Congo, son dos de los trabajadores que prestan servicio en la zona de Clarkston.

Roger dijo que la desinformación sobre la vacuna es un gran problema en las comunidades de habla suahili, especialmente entre los refugiados de la República Democrática del Congo. Antes de reasentarse en Clarkston, Roger vivió en un campamento en Tanzania, y contó que el presidente de esa nación, John Magufuli, que murió en marzo de 2021, negó la existencia de covid y que muchas personas estuvieron expuestas a esta desinformación en Facebook. Algunas personas vieron videos de YouTube en suahili en los que se relacionaba la vacuna con prácticas satánicas, explicó Roger.

No le sorprendió que algunas personas en Clarkston no le dejas-

ran entrar en sus casas. Al principio, la gente lo veía como un extraño. Sus amigos lo asociaban con la vacuna y se preguntaban por qué le pagaban por promoverla. Desarrolló estrategias que funcionaban mejor para las personas a las que intentaba llegar. Para demostrar que las vacunas son seguras, utilizó su teléfono para grabar a conocidos miembros de la comunidad mientras se vacunaban.

Tun, que envió un mensaje de texto a Chaw con información sobre la vacuna, se dio cuenta de que era capaz de penetrar en comunidades de difícil acceso cuando una familia de refugiados rohingya —un pueblo que históricamente ha sido víctima de represión— asistió recientemente a una feria de salud y se vacunó.

"Lo que más me ha sorprendido es lo receptivos que han sido todos con nuestro trabajo", expresó Tun. "Porque no puedo ni imaginar, con todo lo que se ha dicho sobre covid desde que empezó, lo confuso que puede ser para la comunidad, especialmente con la barrera del idioma".

Alander Rocha es pasante de verano en Kaiser Health News.

Esta historia fue producida por Kaiser Health News, un programa editorialmente independiente de la Kaiser Family Foundation que no está relacionado con Kaiser Permanente.

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THE WEEKLY ISSUE
El Semanario





Photo/Foto: Anne Schimke / Chalkbeat

Julia Madera and Domanic Castillo, attendance advocates from Northridge High School, approach the home of three high school students who missed the first five days of school. / Julia Madera y Domanic Castillo, defensores de la asistencia de la Escuela Secundaria Northridge, se acercan a la casa de tres estudiantes de secundaria que faltaron a los primeros cinco días de clase.

"That was like a life-changing moment," LaWren said. "That's the first time someone's gotten my name right in my whole life, my whole 17 years."

When calls and visits fail

Even when attendance advocates track students down, it can be difficult to get them back in class. Madera recalled one student she worked with last year who stopped coming to school completely after a couple months, his absences a long red stripe on his attendance chart.

The 10th grader didn't seem to want to go to Northridge or anywhere else. When she dropped off an application for an online program, he threw the papers on the floor. She ended up calling the family more than 20 times, visiting their home four times, and texting the boy's mother a few times.

Nothing changed until she referred the teen to truancy court.

"I didn't want it to be like that," said Madera.

But the move worked, and the teen returned to Northridge last April — at first shy, with his hood pulled over his head. He attended consistently for the last two months and made up some of his missed work. This year, Madera spotted him on the first day of school, Aug. 11.

"Oh my God, he's here," she thought.

Ann Schimke is a senior reporter at Chalkbeat, a nonprofit news organization covering public education. This story was originally published by Chalkbeat.

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ha prestado suficiente atención. Los latinos en Estados Unidos son un población mucho más joven que sus conciudadanos de otros grupos raciales, y tienen más altos índices de uso de aplicaciones móviles, redes sociales, y plataformas de envío de mensajes. Mas aún, lo que estos usuarios observan frecuentemente son horribles falsedades sobre todo tipo de tema incluyendo el COVID-19 y la insurrección del 6 de enero de 2021.

Durante la campaña electoral de 2020, activistas a favor de Trump usaron de blanco a las comunidades de votantes hispanos haciendo declaraciones falsas que iban de lo hiperbólico (tildando a Joe Biden de comunista) a lo criminal (tildando a Biden de pedófilo). Campañas de desinformación en redes sociales atacaron al movimiento de "Black Lives Matter" (Las Vidas Negras Importan) con retórica racista y advertían de un complot por los demócratas en donde una caravana de inmigrantes cubanos atravesarían la frontera e irrumpirían en el proceso electoral. Memes diciendo que Biden y su compañera de papeleta, Kamala Harris, apoyaban el infanticidio circularon a granel.

Entonces, ¿por qué han fallado los reguladores y las plataformas de medios sociales en luchar contra las falsedades destructivas des las cuales los latinos han sido objetivo? ¿Por qué no han intervenido activamente como la han hecho en el caso de la desinformación sobre el COVID-19, QAnon, y las elecciones? La razón principal ha sido el idioma: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, y otras plataformas se han enfocado en combatir desinformación en inglés. En 2020, varias plataformas prohibieron el uso del

"hashtag" #plandemic asociado a un video viral que promovía falsas teorías de conspiración en relación al COVID-19. Sin embargo, usuarios de la redes continuaron regando desinformación relacionada al video usando la versión en español #plandemia muchos meses después.

Como profesores universitarios, continuaremos publicando y educando a nuestros estudiantes y comunidades, pero necesitamos que instituciones apoyen esta labor. En este momento donde nuestra democracia está en peligro—a través de la obstrucción a la participación electoral y los esfuerzos para debilitar los sistemas gubernamentales a nivel local y nacional—los Estados Unidos no pueden darse el lujo de abandonar a millones de votantes afectados por esta catástrofe en curso.

- Comités congresionales deben efectuar vistas públicas lo más pronto posible para investigar y llamar la atención a la desinformación que afecta a las comunidades latinas.

- Reguladores, empezando por la Comisión Federal de Comercio, deben jugar un rol protagónico en la examinación de la disparidad en cómo las plataformas de internet monitorean las desinformación en español y otras fuentes de información no en inglés.

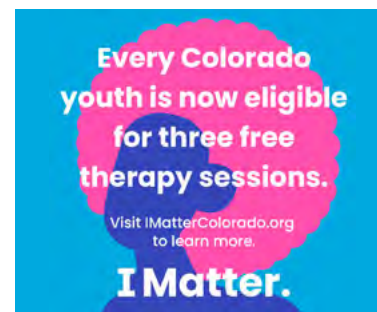
- Meta, Twitter, YouTube, y otros deben redoblar sus esfuerzos y dedicar recursos suficientes para la ejecutar vigilancia sobre el contenido en sus plataforma sin importar el idioma. Esto implica un incremento dramático en el número de empleados con conciencia cultural que tengan la habilidad de identificar y eliminar desinformación en español.

Los ataques a los derechos de los latinos no ocurren solo cuando son migrantes en la frontera, o cuando son trabajadores esenciales mal pagados que este país explota, y de los cuales depende. La manipulación partidista de los latinos, a través de mentiras y falsedades recibidas por sus teléfonos, tabletas, y computadoras, es particularmente tóxica y una forma de violencia política perpetrada sobre la mente y el corazón de nuestra gente.

Nuestros conciudadanos y los votantes del país merecen hacer decisiones sobre sus vidas, sus intereses, y su gobierno que estén basadas en hechos y la realidad, no en grandes falsedades y teorías de conspiración. Cuando éste no es el caso es un ataque a nuestros derechos y libertades como estadounidenses. Los votantes—todos los votantes del país—merecen algo mejor.

Cristina Beltrán es profesora asociada de análisis social y cultural en NYU. Tony Affigne es profesor de ciencias políticas, estudios afroamericanos y estudios latinos en Providence College. Reproducido con permiso de Ethnic Media Services.

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our students and communities. But institutions need to do more. At this perilous moment for democracy — with voter suppression and nullification efforts weakening local and national political systems — the country cannot afford to abandon millions of voters to this ongoing catastrophe.

- Congressional committees need to hold hearings as soon as possible to highlight and investigate the scourge of misinformation affecting Latino communities.

- Regulators, beginning with the Federal Trade Commission, need to play a stronger role, doing more to examine disparities in how platforms monitor disinformation from Spanish and other non-English sources.

- Meta, Twitter, YouTube, and others need to redouble their efforts and devote sufficient resources to exercise oversight over content regardless of language, which likely means dramatically increasing the number of culturally aware staff to flag and remove Spanish-language misinformation.

Assaults on the rights of Latinos don't just happen when they are migrants at the border, or as poorly paid but essential workers that this country both exploits and depends on. The partisan manipulation of Latinos, when they are lied to through their phones, tablets, and computers, is a particularly toxic and insidious form of political violence, perpetrated on the hearts and minds of our people.

When citizens make decisions about their lives, their interests, and their government, based not on facts and reality but on conspiracy theories and gross falsehoods, it is an assault on our rights and our freedom as Americans. Voters — all voters — deserve better.

Cristina Beltrán is associate professor of social and cultural analysis at NYU. Tony Affigne is professor of political science, Black studies, and Latino/a studies at Providence College. Reproduced with permission by [Ethnic Media Services](#).

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Trevizo

In short, the availability of abortion changes the direction of our lives. We cannot underestimate how much individuals value their constitutional rights.

That includes people from more conservative communities where God, guns, and country rule the day. Many Kansas counties that voted for Donald Trump in 2020 nonetheless voted decisively to protect abortion rights in 2022.

I come from a majority Hispanic town where religion is a community pillar and "vote yes" signs were lined up outside every church. Influenced by their Roman Catholic faith, many older Hispanic individuals hold conservative views on abortion.

But unlike their parents, U.S.-born Hispanic individuals are more open to the pro-choice movement. A 2007 Pew survey found that 65 percent of first-generation U.S. Hispanics opposed abortion rights — a figure that dropped to just 43 percent in the second generation.

So what are the lessons here?

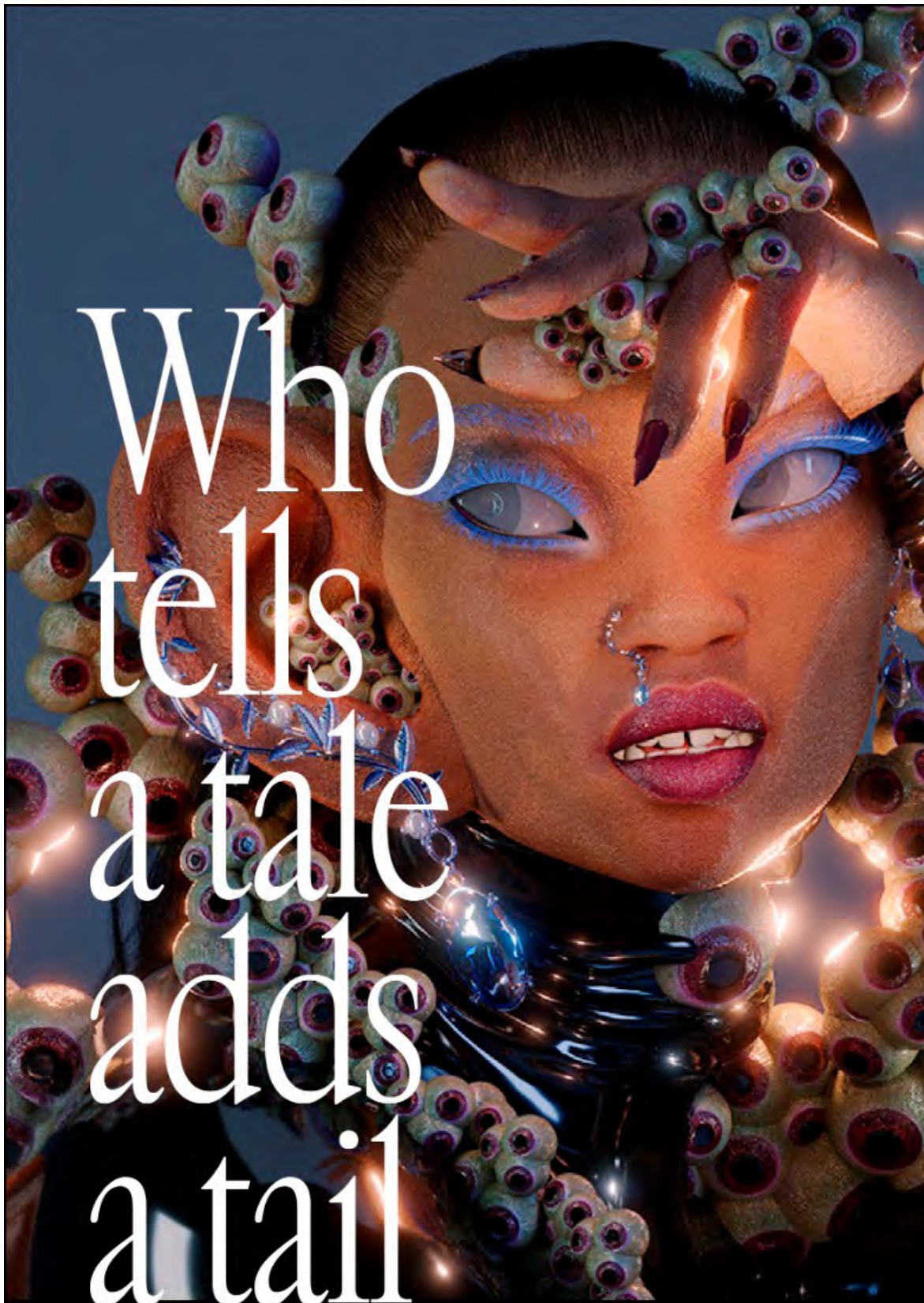
For one thing, progressive young voters have identified abortion as an issue that will get them to the polls. For another, conservative communities value their constitutional rights, too.

In the Kansas primary, I saw the power of organizing and the power of youth as hundreds of volunteers turned out weekend after weekend to register folks to vote, canvass, and educate. If they want any chance of winning in the fall, it's time for Democrats to listen.

This historic win not only reaffirmed the importance of voting but the possibility of winning in deeply conservative states. You read it here first: If Kansas can do it, so can people everywhere.

Alondra Trevizo is a digital media specialist at Community Change Action and a first-generation Kansan. This op-ed was adapted from [ChangeWire.org](#) and distributed for syndication by [OtherWords.org](#).

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Who tells a tale adds a tail

Latin America and contemporary art



Descubre obras de 19 artistas de vanguardia procedentes de América Latina.
En exhibición

IMAGEN: Vitría Cribb, VIGILANTE_EXTENDED (detalle de fotografía de video), 2022. Película e instalación digital; duración: 8 minutos, 44 segundos. © y cortesía de Vitría Cribb

Quien cuenta un cuento, añade un poco: América Latina y el arte contemporáneo está organizada por el Denver Art Museum. La exposición se presenta con el generoso apoyo de la Fundación Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Asimismo, recibe el apoyo de Birnbaum Social Discourse Project, de los donantes a la campaña benéfica Annual Fund Leadership Campaign y de los residentes que brindan su apoyo al Distrito de Organizaciones Científicas y Culturales (SCFD, por sus siglas en inglés). El apoyo promocional lo proporciona 5280 Magazine y CBS4.



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Department of Homeland Security to provide financial support to state and local election officials appear to have fallen short, with election officials saying they haven't seen and can't access the money.

While Colorado was able to acquire emergency funding, no other Byrne JAG funding recipients have reported using the funds for election security as of the end of March reporting period, the most recent data available, according to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the DOJ department that oversees the grants.

"It is a positive step that Byrne JAG funds may now be used to protect elections and election officials," the Colorado secretary of state's office said in an emailed statement. "More can be done to ensure that the funds are indeed allocated for this purpose."

Amy Cohen, the executive director of the National Association of State Election Directors, which is made up of election officials across the country, said federal agencies need to do more to ensure that election officials can obtain the money.

"They have made funds available, but they haven't made them accessible, and I think that's a pretty significant difference," she said.

Threats abound

Since the 2020 election, elections officials across the country have faced an unprecedented number of violent threats. In July 2021, DOJ launched a task force to help address the threats and as of this month, the department has reviewed over 1,000 threats, brought charges against five people, and secured one conviction, according to Assistant Attorney General Kenneth Polite Jr.

But a recent survey by the Brennan Center for Justice found that the problem is much larger than the Justice Department has reported. The survey by the left-leaning organization found that more than half of election officials do not report threats, and when they do, only 20% report them to federal law enforcement.

In response to appeals from people in the election community who said the Justice Department needs to do more to protect their safety, the department announced in January that the Byrne JAG program, the largest source of federal criminal justice funding for state and local jurisdictions, could be used by state and local election offices to help combat violent threats against people who work in elections.

Since 2005, the Byrne JAG pro-

gram has provided states, tribes, and local governments with funding to boost various law enforcement and corrections programs based on the size of the state's population and its rate of violent crime. In fiscal 2021, \$283.5 million was allocated through JAG grants.

In a letter to the state administering agencies, the DOJ wrote in January that the broad criminal justice purposes allow for the funds to also be "used to deter, detect, and protect against threats of violence against election workers, administrators, officials, and others associated with the electoral process."

At the time of the announcement, Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, who has faced threats from armed demonstrators outside her home, expressed relief, saying the allocation "removes from us the perpetual anxiety of trying to figure out how to fund needed security and protections."

Benson and other election officials began considering how they would use the money for physical security at their offices, like additional locks, cameras, and bullet-proof glass, and for other services like social media monitoring programs.

In Colorado, under a bill signed by the governor in June, the Colorado State Patrol is now required to provide protection and security services to the secretary of state, but members of the office told the JAG advisory board in May that other state and local election officials need similar law enforcement protection, according to minutes from the meeting.

The secretary of state's office told the board that it's currently paying for threat prevention with vacancy savings, "which is not a viable long-term solution." They also said they requested funding support from the General Assembly, but said it appears unlikely to be approved. Therefore, they said they're counting on federal grant funding to continue to combat threats.

Competition for funds

But in reality, the Byrne JAG program isn't providing the support needed to combat violent threats, according to advocates who work closely with election officials.

In each state, an agency or person is tasked with determining how to divide up the state's funds. While the federal government can give guidance, it's up to the state's administering agency to award the money.

One of the problems with the grant program is that it's shared by numerous stakeholders, Cohen

said. If elections officials request some Byrne JAG funding, they would be taking that money away from other state agencies and organizations that may have relied on it for decades.

Allowing an election office to hire private security, for example, might mean that a county has to take money away from indigent defense or a drug treatment program.

"There are so many different stakeholders for these grants that election officials are now at the end of the line," Cohen said. "They've just asked people to cut the same pie in smaller slices instead of making a bigger pie."

The law enforcement members of Colorado's advisory board have a vested interest in directing the funding to themselves and their programs.

According to minutes from the May meeting of the advisory board, Douglas Gray, Colorado's chief probation officer, said he feels like the secretary of state's request for funding "doesn't fit within JAG mission" and he "feels it's supplemental."

In Florida, David Stafford, the supervisor of elections in Escambia County, said he has not yet attempted to apply for federal grant money but might do so in the future. He called the new sources for federal funding a "net positive," but said the fact that the Byrne JAG grant is spread among so many agencies changes his calculation about whether to apply.

"One might be more hesitant to spend time and resources to apply for a grant in which you are potentially competing with other worthy recipients (police departments, corrections departments, neighborhood services, etc.) than just a pot of money set aside specifically for elections," he said in an email.

In a statement, Tannyr Watkins, a spokesperson for the Bureau of Justice Assistance, explained why more Byrne JAG funds aren't going to election officials.

"In both the state and local JAG solicitations that were released in June 2022, BJA included language that encouraged JAG recipients to utilize funds to prevent and respond to threats of violence against election workers, administrators, officials, and others associated with the electoral process," Watkins said.

"However, by statute, JAG recipients have the flexibility to determine how to utilize funding to best meet the needs of their state or unit of local government, and there is no requirement for states

and units of local government to utilize funds for election security."

But members of Congress want DOJ to do more to clarify the grant process and to protect election officials from threats. In a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland in April, Democratic Sens. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Dick Durbin of Illinois said that election officials are confused about the task force and how they can report threats and get financial assistance.

"Election workers have expressed a lack of clarity about how to work with state and local law enforcement to access Byrne JAG funding," they wrote.

No help from DHS program

Elections officials also aren't seeing assistance from the Homeland Security Grant Program administered by DHS, which can be tapped to protect elections officials from threats.

In May, the Federal Emergency Management Agency reinstated "enhancing election security" as a national priority area for the Homeland Security Grant Program. But while DHS provides funding requirements for some priority areas, election security has none.

A DHS spokesperson said no minimum spend was indicated because the funds need to have a nexus to terrorism and are intended to supplement funds from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission for this purpose.

Cohen said she's heard from election officials that decided not to apply for the DHS grant because they knew the application would be time-consuming, and they wouldn't get the money. She said that others who reached out to their state administering agency to talk about a project were told not to bother because all the money was already being used for other purposes.

Elizabeth Howard, senior counsel for the Brennan Center's Democracy Program, testified before the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security about the issues.

"Without firm requirements for state and local recipients of JAG and HSGP grants to spend a portion on election security, the state administering agencies that plan how grant funds will be spent are too likely to overlook election needs or to deprioritize those needs due to political pressures," she said in her written testimony.

One solution could be making election officials required recipients of grant money because, as

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Vaccination

The groups assisting the covid vaccine effort include the [International Rescue Committee](#), a global nonprofit that provides emergency aid to refugees and has resettled more than 28,000 refugees in the Clarkston area over the past 40 years.

[Clarkston is known for](#) its diversity, with large populations of refugees from Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Syria. Community health workers and grassroots organizations there have been crucial in educating people about the covid vaccine, and organizers say their efforts have largely succeeded.

According to data compiled by the [Prevention Research Center at Georgia State University](#), 70% of Clarkston residents were fully vaccinated as of July. In DeKalb County, where Clarkston is located, that number was 62%. The Georgia share, 57%, is among the nation's lowest.

The Georgia State center said Clarkston's vaccination rate is estimated to be more than 20 percentage points higher than other DeKalb County areas that have similar [Social Vulnerability Index scores](#), which assess communities on factors such as socioeconomic status; the density of housing; the availability of transportation and households; and race, ethnicity, and language. Outreach efforts in Clarkston are behind the higher vaccine rates there, said Mary Helen O'Connor, the center's deputy director.

The Prevention Research Center at GSU hired five [community health workers](#), each fluent in a different language, to promote the benefits of getting the covid vaccine. Kaeden Tun, of Myanmar, and Thomas Roger, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, are two of the workers serving the Clarkston area.

Roger said vaccine misinformation is a big challenge in Swahili-speaking communities, partic-

ularly among refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Before resettling in Clarkston, Roger lived in a camp in Tanzania, and he said that that nation's president, John Magufuli, who died in March 2021, denied the existence of covid and that many people were exposed to this misinformation on Facebook. Some people watched YouTube videos in Swahili linking the vaccine to satanic practices, Roger said.

He wasn't surprised when people in Clarkston initially wouldn't let him into their homes. At first, people saw him as an outsider. His friends associated him with the vaccine and wondered why he was getting paid to promote it. He developed strategies that worked best for the people he was trying to reach. To demonstrate that the shots are safe, he used his phone to record well-known members of the community as they got vaccinated.

Tun, who texted Chaw vaccine information, said he knew he was able to penetrate hard-to-reach communities when a family of Rohingya refugees — a people who historically have faced repression — recently attended a [health fair](#) and got vaccinated.

"What surprised me the most is how receptive everybody has been with our work," Tun said. "Because I can't even imagine, with everything that's been said about covid since it started, how confusing it might be for the community, especially with a language barrier."

Alander Rocha is a Summer Intern with [Kaiser Health News](#), a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of the [Kaiser Family Foundation](#), which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

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Hastings & Torres

the riots on January 6, 2021 at the federal Capitol and who, after the search of Trump's residence, said on Truth Social—the social media platform founded by Trump—that he wanted to kill FBI agents.

The FBI and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have sounded the alarm about the recent threats of violence against their agents and outposts, other officials, and even the publication of residential addresses and the names of the agents who participated in the operation—and their family members—on social media platforms.

Unfortunately, none of this is at all surprising, because the violence from Trump supporters that is promoted on social media has been normalized, to the extent that the Republican Party doesn't even worry about it. Their inaction in the face of this angry way of ending their own country is only comparable to the equally sinister way that their promotion of anti-immigrant rhetoric of hate and racism has become a Republican trademark, impossible to avoid.

What's more, it pays to look at how Republican leaders in Congress and nationally have reacted to the raid of Trump's residence. Those "paragons" of "law and or-

der" have been the first to question the actions of the FBI and Department of Justice, some even calling the operation "abusive" and "excessive," and others saying that they "planted" evidence, without any proof. It doesn't matter that Trump had classified information in his home, which could even include nuclear secrets, or that in the process Trump had violated the Espionage Act.

No, sir. None of that matters to Republicans, whose only interest is continuing to use Trump as a bridge to attract their recalcitrant and extremist base, with the goal of keeping themselves in power or defeating the Democrats. This same base now demands that they take money from the FBI, like the Black Lives Matter movement demanded taking funds from the police, in the context of the abuses by some that culminated in the deaths of African American civilians and other minorities through the use of excessive force. Equating the two in a joking way is not only incorrect, it is shameful. And they know it, but they laugh in the face of this nation because they have achieved such a degree of cynicism and impunity that they are not interested in the reality of the country in which they live, but in imposing a single,

white, and supremacist vision of the world, no matter the cost—even the blood, sweat, and tears that have been shed throughout the history of the United States.

But the Republicans who do not care what Trump does—whether it's the potential violation of the laws of espionage and using language that could incite violence—have us accustomed to this shameful conduct, since they continue compromising morality and decency to defend a corrupt figure who, even after leaving the presidency, continues to do a ton of damage.

Maribel Hastings is a Senior Advisor to [América's Voice](#). David Torres is a Spanish-language Advisor at [América's Voice](#).

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Leona Vicario in Ciudad Juárez, México, was converted from a factory into a migrant shelter. It is only miles from El Paso, Texas. / Leona Vicario en Ciudad Juárez, México, pasó de ser una fábrica a un refugio para migrantes. Está a solo unos kilómetros de El Paso, Texas.

few miles from El Paso, Texas.

The wait — which can last months — has led some migrants, like Alpizar's children, to develop health problems; exacerbated people's chronic ailments, like hypertension or diabetes; left some in dire conditions without care; and compounded the trauma experienced by those fleeing their homes.

Under Title 42, a public health emergency order that the Trump administration first invoked in March 2020 to stop the spread of covid, Alpizar and her family are not allowed to present themselves

at a border checkpoint and claim political asylum — they would be immediately expelled back to México without a screening.

The policy, just one of several that have kept migrants in Mexico, is actually "counterproductive" to protecting people from covid, according to Kaiser Family Foundation research.

The Leona Vicario shelter has experienced outbreaks of chickenpox and measles since opening in 2019. It is still considered one of the better shelters because the Mexican government runs it. Nonprofit and private shelters operate with

little oversight, and their quality varies.

Some migrants sleep in the streets. In general, conditions are making people sick, and care is limited, said Gabriela Muñoz, a project manager for Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center in Juárez.

Alpizar decided to travel to the border from Cuernavaca, a city south of México City, she said, after an attempt to kidnap her children. The same day, her brother Angel and partner, Pablo Sandoval Arce, were beaten on their way home from a job painting an apartment. She told Pablo, José's father, that it was not a coincidence.

Alpizar reported the incidents to the local police, she said, but was told that nothing could be done. A few days later, they arrived in Juárez with money from Alpizar's aunt in South Carolina, who had helped raise Alpizar and her brother after their mother died. Alpizar is now trying to get an exemption to Title 42 that would allow her family to file an asylum application and join her aunt until their case is heard.

Las Americas gets about 4,000 calls a day, said Crystal Sandoval, director of strategic initiatives at the El Paso center. Only about

100 draw a response. About 70% of callers need medical attention — they require immediate cancer treatment, have a condition like diabetes that is out of control, or have developed anemia. Others have been sexually assaulted or have high-risk pregnancies. The group helps 60 to 90 people a week get exemptions, which allow them to apply for asylum and wait in the U.S. for their court dates.

Immigration advocates say that not only has Title 42 done more harm to public health than good, but the rule has been applied selectively. U.S. Customs and Border Protection have stopped migrants about 1.7 million times in the current federal fiscal year, which started Oct. 1. About half of those stops resulted in an expulsion under Title 42, according to the agency. About 65% of those were people from México, while the vast majority of other expulsions involved people from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. In April, however, American authorities temporarily allowed Ukrainians in Mexican shelters to enter the U.S.

In many ways, the Alpizar family's medical story isn't the most extreme. Other migrants have immediate, life-threatening needs. In 2019, after five months waiting in a shelter, a Ugandan woman died in a Juárez hospital — the same week officials processed her asylum request. She died from sepsis, pneumonia, and tuberculosis, according to an autopsy.

Alpizar's situation reflects how U.S. immigration policy has outsourced migrant care to México, said Jeremy Slack, an immigration researcher at the University of Texas-El Paso, who first met Alpizar during a weekly visit to Leona Vicario.

Federal courts have delayed or blocked the Biden administration's attempts to lift some immigration policies. In May, days before Alpizar started her journey, a federal judge prevented the Biden administration from halting the Title 42 order.

Some nonprofits, meanwhile, seek to help migrants access care during their border waits. Hope Border Institute, a Catholic nonprofit, started a fund to assist them in seeing private doctors, paying for hospital stays, filling prescriptions, and covering transportation to appointments.

When a doctor advised Alpizar to put her son on a special diet, the family initially went shopping to buy him food not available in the shelter, which houses about 600 people. Later that day, however, when they checked a refrigerator that shelter residents share, the

fruit and yogurt were gone. Pablo now shops three times a week, buying only small amounts to keep his son fed.

Then, in late July, a shelter doctor diagnosed José with conjunctivitis and gave him antibiotic eye drops. Shortly afterward, his sister, Zoe, tested positive for covid, and the family was sent to the shelter's isolation ward.

Gastrointestinal issues, respiratory illnesses like covid, and skin conditions are common in congregate facilities, like shelters, where people are packed into tight quarters, said Dr. Julie Linton, co-chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health. She has treated many newly arrived kids who had multiple parasitic infections because they lacked clean water or access to sanitary conditions during their journey.

José could have something even more serious, but specialty care and testing are not available to migrants, said Dr. Bert Johansson, an El Paso pediatrician who volunteers in Mexican shelters.

Or José may just need a stable place to recover.

Chronic stress suppresses the immune system, which makes infections more likely and recovery harder, Linton said. The long waits are also causing or intensifying existing trauma, said Marisa Limón, senior director for advocacy and programming at the Hope Border Institute. Mental health ailments are among the most common health conditions for people in shelters and detention centers, said Linton.

In July, Las Americas officials told Alpizar that she would have to wait at least eight to 10 weeks before learning whether her family would be granted an exemption.

Alpizar has considered crossing illegally but doesn't have the funds. A sense of desperation has led migrants to make that dangerous journey.

The lack of legal pathways to seek asylum "makes people take more risks, in more dangerous areas," said Eddie Canales, director of the South Texas Human Rights Center. "The border is a graveyard."

Renuka Rayasam is a Senior Correspondent with Kaiser Health News, a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

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Election 1

Cohen explained, "when election officials are not a required spend, they have difficulty accessing the money."

Not enough time

The timing and deadlines for the funding have also posed problems for elections officials. By the time elections officials learned they could access the Byrne JAG grant from fiscal 2022, many of the deadlines had already passed or were too close for elections officials to meet.

The state administering agencies are not ones that election officials have worked with in the past, so Cohen said many have had to "start from scratch" to build relationships with the people in charge.

Moving forward, the timing may also present problems because elections officials will have

to make their requests early in the year.

"How could you possibly predict what voting locations might need an additional police presence?" Cohen asked. "How could you possibly know that a specific office is going to be a target? You couldn't predict that."

Similarly, the Homeland Security grant program made election security a priority late in the grant cycle, which left little time for states to modify their priorities to match the federal government's new priority of funding election security.

Additionally, election offices are already "stretched so thin" with limited resources and staff and increasing responsibilities, Howard said.

Election officials say they need the federal grants to prioritize

them, as the midterm elections are approaching and the threats and harassment that started around the 2020 election have not slowed. Republicans aligned with former President Donald Trump continue to falsely claim that the 2020 election was rigged and that election officials took part in schemes to help President Joe Biden and Democrats steal votes.

In June, the Election Assistance Commission voted unanimously to expand the use of Help America Vote Act funds to protect election officials from threats after the Government Accountability Office authorized them to do so. But that money is already used for other purposes, like replacing outdated voting equipment.

The Brennan Center survey found that almost 80 percent of local election officials think the federal government is either doing nothing to support them or are not doing enough.

The Brennan Center also estimated that roughly \$300 million is needed to physically protect election offices and workers over the next five years.

While Cohen said that NASED doesn't have a position on whether federal agencies should help fund elections, the current effort is meaningless unless more is done.

"We didn't realize we needed to say, 'If you are going to fund elec-

tions, we need to be able to access the money too,'" she said.

Kira Lerner is the democracy reporter for States Newsroom in Washington, D.C. This article is republished from States Newsroom under a Creative Commons license.

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Becerra

operational needs. We ask our nonprofit partners to develop innovative and bold solutions for behavioral health without a long-term commitment. Children need space to grow and learn," she said.

Kristin Oreskovich, SBHC program clinical operations manager for New Mexico Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health, said every county in New Mexico has shortages for both primary care doctors and behavioral health professionals. She said high poverty rates and a lower percentage of vehicle access creates a high social vulnerability in every county.

Other issues for New Mexico children include stigma, payment related issues such as high co-pays or a lack of providers who accept Medicaid, a lack of child and adolescent substance use treatment centers and immigration status issues.

"Kids in New Mexico have a lot of anxiety," she said.

She added that some positive trends include an increase in telehealth and mobile health due to the pandemic.

In June the U.S. Congress passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act of 2022 in response to the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, that killed 19 students and two teachers. President Joe Biden signed it into law the same month.

Among other things, the law allocates \$11 billion for mental health services which includes grants available to increase school-based mental health services. U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, also a Democrat, was one of 20 senators who formed a bipartisan working

group that reached an agreement on the bill's framework.

Gayle Porter, New Mexico Access and Crisis Line 988 Hotline supervisor, said the state's 10-year-old crisis hotline saw a "huge increase in calls" when the national 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline began in 2021.

At the end of the roundtable, Mayor Pro-Tem Kasandra Gandara presented Becerra with keys to the City of Las Cruces.

Becerra said during his brief remarks that Congress has "given us more money than we've ever had for mental health." But he also said "we don't have enough money."

"It's never enough," he added.

Luján, who suffered a stroke earlier this year, said one thing he learned from that experience was when not feeling okay, the best approach is to seek medical help.

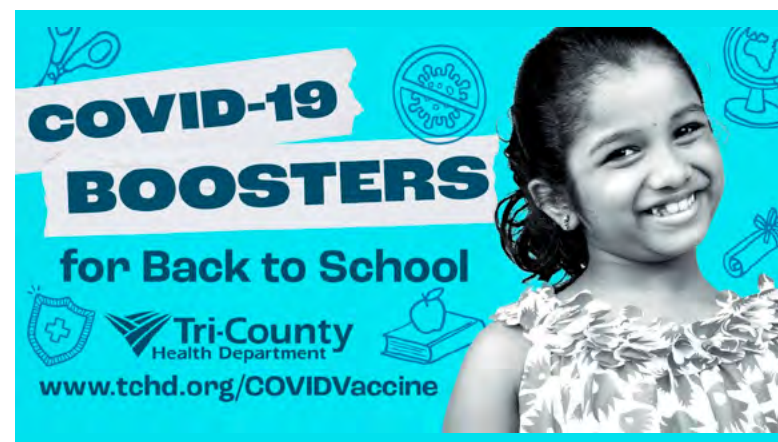
"If there's anything I learned from having a stroke six months ago, it's if you don't feel well, you don't try to sleep it off. You go see the professionals," he said.

Becerra emphasized the importance of recognizing a mental health problem and admitting it. He said the message used to be that if someone was "hurting, suck it up."

"It's okay to not be okay and that's what we want folks to know," he said.

Susan Dunlap is a Reporter with New Mexico Political Report. This story was originally published by New Mexico Political Report.

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ALPINE Springs

Becerra 1

con el pago, como los altos copagos o la falta de proveedores que aceptan Medicaid, la falta de centros de tratamiento de uso de sustancias para niños y adolescentes y los problemas de estado de inmigración.

"Los niños de Nuevo México tienen mucha ansiedad", dijo.

Añadió que algunas tendencias positivas incluyen un aumento de la telemedicina y la salud móvil debido a la pandemia.

En junio, el Congreso de Estados Unidos aprobó la Ley Bipartidista de Comunidades más Seguras de 2022 en respuesta al tiroteo en una escuela de Uvalde (Texas), en el que murieron 19 estudiantes y dos profesores. El presidente Joe Biden la convirtió en ley ese mismo mes. Entre otras cosas, la ley asigna 11.000 millones de dólares para servicios de salud mental que incluyen subvenciones disponibles para aumentar los servicios de salud mental en las escuelas. El senador estadounidense Martin Heinrich, también demócrata, fue uno de los 20 senadores que formaron un grupo de trabajo bipartidista que llegó a un acuerdo sobre el marco de la ley.

Gayle Porter, supervisora de la línea de acceso y crisis 988 de Nuevo México, dijo que la línea de

crisis del estado, que tiene 10 años de antigüedad, experimentó un "enorme aumento de llamadas" cuando la línea nacional 988 para casos de suicidio y crisis comenzó a funcionar en 2021.

Al final de la mesa redonda, la alcaldesa Pro-Tem Kasandra Gandara entregó a Becerra las llaves de la ciudad de Las Cruces.

Becerra dijo durante su breve intervención que el Congreso "nos ha dado más dinero del que nunca hemos tenido para la salud mental". Pero también dijo que "no tenemos suficiente dinero".

"Nunca es suficiente", añadió.

Luján, que sufrió un derrame cerebral a principios de este año, dijo que una cosa que aprendió de esa experiencia fue que cuando no se siente bien, lo mejor es buscar ayuda médica.

"Si hay algo que aprendí al sufrir un ictus hace seis meses es que si no te sientes bien, no intentes dormir la mona. Hay que ir a ver a los profesionales", dijo.

Becerra destacó la importancia de reconocer un problema de salud mental y admitirlo. Dijo que el mensaje solía ser que si alguien estaba "dolido, se aguanta".

"Está bien no estar bien y eso es lo que queremos que la gente sepa", dijo.

Susan Dunlap es Reportera de Justicia Reproductiva de New Mexico Political Report. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por New Mexico Political Report.

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Escuela



El padre de un alumno que no se presentó le entrega su teléfono a una defensora de la asistencia del instituto Northridge durante una visita a domicilio para que pueda hablar con la madre del chico. / The father of a no-show student hands his phone to an attendance advocate from Northridge High School during a home visit so she can talk to the boy's mother.

"He dejado de ir"

El año pasado, Ángel, que ahora cursa el 10º curso en Northridge, faltó mucho a clase: más de 300 periodos lectivos la última vez que lo comprobó.

Algunos de sus amigos ya habían abandonado los estudios, uniéndose a sus padres en trabajos de construcción.

"Empecé a abandonar mucho hacia el final", dijo. "A veces, simplemente siento que la escuela no es para mí, así que dejé de ir".

Pero Ángel acabó volviendo, y cuenta con Shena López, una de las promotoras de asistencia de la escuela, como alguien con quien puede relacionarse en Northridge. A menudo, pasa a verla tres veces al día.

"Tenemos una buena conversación sobre mi día o el de ella", dice. "Es amable conmigo, así que me gusta mucho".

Conectar con los niños en un papel no docente crea una relación diferente, dijo López.

"Es un trabajo diferente. Somos sus amigos. Estamos aquí para ellos", dijo. "Siempre les digo que voy a hacer lo que sea necesario para ayudarles a tener éxito".

A veces, los momentos que más significan no son los que los defensores de la asistencia esperan.

Cuando una chica llamada LaWren, una animadora de último año, pasó por aquí recientemente, mencionó lo sorprendida que estaba cuando Eckenrode pronunció su nombre correctamente en el primer intento durante una clase de asesoramiento.

"Vaya, ¿te acuerdas de eso?", le preguntó Eckenrode. preguntó Eckenrode.

"Fue un momento que me cambió la vida", dijo LaWren. "Es la primera vez que alguien acierta mi nombre en toda mi vida, en mis 17 años".

Cuando las llamadas y las visitas fallan

Incluso cuando los defensores de la asistencia localizan a los estudiantes, puede ser difícil conseguir que vuelvan a clase. Madera recuerda a un estudiante con el que trabajó el año pasado que dejó de asistir a la escuela por completo después de un par de meses, sus ausencias una larga raya roja en su tabla de asistencia.

El alumno de 10º curso no parecía querer ir a Northridge ni a ningún otro sitio. Cuando ella dejó una solicitud para un programa en línea, él tiró los papeles al suelo. Acabó llamando a la familia más de 20 veces, visitando su casa cuatro veces y enviando varios mensajes de texto a la madre del chico.

Nada cambió hasta que remitió al adolescente al tribunal de absentismo escolar.

"No quería que fuera así", dijo Madera.

Pero la medida funcionó, y el adolescente volvió a Northridge el pasado mes de abril, al principio tímidamente, con la capucha puesta. Asistió con regularidad durante los dos últimos meses y recuperó parte del trabajo perdido. Este año, Madera lo vio el primer día de clase, el 11 de agosto.

"Dios mío, está aquí", pensó.

Ann Schimke es reportera senior de Chalkbeat Colorado. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

Para Noticias de Colorado: ELSEMANARIO.US

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Inmigrantes

que amenazan sus vida. En 2019, después de cinco meses de espera en un refugio, [una mujer ugandesa murió en un hospital de Juárez](#), la misma semana en que los funcionarios procesaron su solicitud de asilo. Murió de sepsis, neumonía y tuberculosis, [según la autopsia](#).

La situación de Alpizar refleja cómo la política de inmigración de Estados Unidos ha externalizado la atención a los migrantes a México, señaló [Jeremy Slack](#), investigador de inmigración de la Universidad de Texas-El Paso, que conoció a Alpizar durante una visita semanal a Leona Vicario.

Los tribunales federales han retrasado o bloqueado los intentos de la administración Biden de levantar algunas políticas de inmigración. En mayo, días antes de que Alpizar iniciara su viaje, [un juez federal impidió que la administración Biden detuviera la orden Título 42](#).

Algunas organizaciones sin fines de lucro, por su parte, tratan de ayudar a los inmigrantes a ac-

ceder a la atención médica durante sus esperas en la frontera. El Hope Border Institute, una organización católica, creó un fondo para ayudarles a acudir a médicos privados, pagar las estancias en el hospital, conseguir las recetas y cubrir el transporte a las citas.

Cuando un médico aconsejó a Alpizar que pusiera a su hijo en una dieta especial, la familia fue a comprarle alimentos que no había en el refugio, donde viven unas 600 personas. Pero ese mismo día, cuando abrieron el refrigerador que comparten los residentes del refugio, la fruta y el yogur habían desaparecido. Ahora, Pablo compra tres veces a la semana y solo trae pequeñas cantidades para mantener a su hijo alimentado.

A finales de julio, un médico del centro de acogida diagnosticó a José una conjuntivitis y le administró un colirio antibiótico. Poco después, su hermana, Zoe, dio positivo en la prueba de covid, y trasladaron a toda la familia a la sala de aislamiento del refugio.

Los problemas gastrointestinales, las enfermedades respiratorias, como covid, y las afecciones cutáneas son comunes en los centros de acogida, como los refugios, donde la gente se hacina en espacios reducidos, explicó la doctora Julie Linton, copresidenta del Consejo de Salud Infantil y Familiar de los Inmigrantes de la Academia Americana de Pediatría. Ella ha tratado a muchos niños recién llegados que tenían múltiples infecciones parasitarias porque carecían de agua limpia o por la falta de condiciones higiénicas durante su viaje.

José podría tener algo aún más grave, pero la atención especializada y las pruebas no están disponibles para los migrantes, dijo el doctor Bert Johansson, un pediatra de El Paso que es voluntario en los refugios mexicanos.

O puede que José solo necesite un lugar estable para recuperarse.

El estrés crónico suprime el sistema inmunológico, lo que hace que las infecciones sean

más probables y la recuperación más difícil, apuntó Linton. Las largas esperas también provocan o intensifican los traumas existentes, señaló Marisa Limón, directora del Hope Border Institute. Las enfermedades mentales son las condiciones de salud más frecuentes entre las personas de los refugios y centros de detención, añadió Linton.

En julio, los funcionarios de Las Américas le dijeron a Alpizar que tendría que esperar al menos de ocho a diez semanas antes de saber si su familia recibiría una exención.

Alpizar ha considerado la posibilidad de cruzar ilegalmente, pero no tiene los fondos necesarios. Un sentimiento de desesperación ha llevado a los

migrantes [a realizar ese peligroso viaje](#).

La falta de vías legales para solicitar asilo "hace que la gente se arriesgue más, en zonas más peligrosas", dijo Eddie Canales, director del Centro de Derechos Humanos del Sur de Texas. "La frontera es un cementerio".

Renuka Rayasam es corresponsal de [Kaiser Health News](#). Esta historia fue producida por [Kaiser Health News](#), un programa editorialmente independiente de la [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) que no está relacionado con [Kaiser Permanente](#).

Para Más Noticias de Inmigración: [ELSEMANARIO.US](#)

Gulden

Bowser has [not allocated](#) any local funds or government resources to welcoming efforts, despite being eligible to apply to FEMA for reimbursement, and city officials have been encouraging nonprofits to seek additional federal aid instead.

On Aug. 12, Mayor Bowser [renewed her request](#) for assistance from the National Guard to process migrants, which the Pentagon previously denied. Sanctuary DMV has pushed back on this request, noting that doing so only serves to [further militarize](#) the reception of migrants, and that the city should instead focus on existing services, such as expanding shelter capacity, social services, and language access.

The DC Attorney General's office, whose funding is separate from that of the mayor's office, announced a [grant program](#) of \$150,000 to aid nonprofits leading the welcoming response. Sanctuary DMV applauded Attorney General Racine's decision but noted that it was simply a "[band-aid](#)" for more systemic issues, calling on the city to expand social services and utilize some of the millions of dollars in available FEMA grants to create a [respite center](#).

New York's Mayor Adams claimed that migrants were overwhelming the shelter system before Governor Abbott had even begun sending buses. As aid groups pointed out, the shelter system was [already overwhelmed](#) by a variety of factors, such as understaffing and rising evictions.

To his credit, Adams quickly mobilized [emergency measures](#) to accommodate migrants in the shelter system and appeared in person to greet migrants. Serious challenges still remain, as a new report shows that [migrant families are being separated](#) when entering the NYC shelter system. But perhaps Mayor Bowser can consider following in New York's example and finally commit to welcoming.

It is important to remember despite the murky intersection of city, state, and federal politics, and despite the narrative being further weaponized by anti-immigrant media outlets and politicians, the communities of DC and New York City have stepped up.

"We recently learned that people have donated about \$160,000 to Governor Abbott's effort to the DC community—have raised over \$350,000," [said Amy Fischer](#), Americas Advocacy Director at Amnesty International USA, and who has been actively welcoming with Sanctuary DMV.

"While politicians on both sides of the aisle use fear-mongering tactics to undermine the human right to seek asylum, we know that is not reflective of communities. When we feel overwhelmed with the numbers arriving, or the lack of capacity, our answer is not to tell people not to come. Our answer is to call for more support to expand our capacity to welcome, not shut the door."

Ways to Help

There are several ways that anyone, anywhere, can take action:

- [Buy a MELT ICE fundraising t-shirt](#)
- [Send supplies through wishlist](#)
- [Donate directly to Mutual Aid Network](#)
- [Donate through Venmo](#)

If you are based in DC, there are a couple of ways to help aside from making a donation:

[Call on Mayor Bowser to Support Migrants Being Bused to DC](#) (click to send a letter, tweet, or phone call).

• [Volunteer to greet, transport, and house migrants](#). Spanish, French, and Portuguese speakers are greatly needed. Volunteers are also needed to sort donations and for clean-up.

• [Drop off Donations at the Outrage on 14th St NW during business hours](#). Clothing, toiletries, and baby supplies are most needed. In New York City, [Grannies Respond](#) and [Team TLC-NYC](#) have been leading the welcoming efforts. [Click here](#) to support.

Alexandra Gulden is the Program and Outreach Coordinator at the Quixote Center. She works in digital communications, advocacy and education around immigration policy, and maintains the Center's partnership with the Red Franciscana para Migrantes, a network of migrant shelters in Latin America.

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Photo: Foto: Alyson McGowan for MSU RED

Shawn Brndiar was addicted to methamphetamine and used it for over seven years before getting clean. / Shawn Brndiar fue adicto a la metanfetamina y la consumió durante más de siete años antes de desintoxicarse.

"We are in the third wave of the opioid epidemic and in the worst overdose crisis in the history of this country," Pettersen said in a statement. "Fentanyl is the drug of choice for the cartels because it's potent, cheap and easy to traffic. We need to go after the dealers who are poisoning our communities and provide training and resources to better equip law enforcement to investigate fentanyl poisonings while increasing access to desperately needed treatment and lifesaving harm-reduction tools."

Limitations of the law

Once a prosecutor in the Denver District Attorney's Office, Lori Darnel, J.D., is the top legal expert in the Department of Social Work at MSU Denver. The assistant professor teaches master's courses on legal issues, policy and leadership, and she organizes trips to the state Capitol, so students are attuned to the macro-level discussions influencing their professional field.

"It's always hard to legislate in a way that effectively impacts what you are trying to accomplish," she said. "You could end up with a law being so broad that you're sweeping up people that you don't intend to or so narrow that you're not making the impact that you want to make."

Darnel is skeptical that increased penalties for drug possession will solve the fentanyl epidemic. Instead, she advocates for public health intervention for those in crisis and using drugs, such as the highly successful Support Team Assisted Response Program in Denver. The program dispatches mental health clinicians and paramedics or EMTs to certain 911 calls in lieu of law enforcement.

"When we were first concerned about all the deaths from opioids, we really looked at it as a public health situation instead of criminal justice because the communities that were so highly impacted were a lot of white communities and not the communities of color that we stereotypically think of as impacted by drugs," she said.

According to the CDC, prescription drug abuse started the first wave of opioid overdose deaths in 1999. A second wave began with a rise in heroin overdoses in 2010. At the end of the second wave, before fentanyl was as pervasive, white men had the highest age-adjusted overdose death rate of any race and gender combination. The death rate was 26.2 per 100,000 people, a figure that includes overdoses from any type of drug.

It wasn't until 2016 that overdose deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl surpassed other opioid overdose deaths. In this third wave, overdose death rates for every demographic group have grown drastically, but Black men now have the highest age-adjusted death rate from all overdoses at 54.1 per 100,000 people.

Darnel lauds the harm-reduction components of HB 22-1326 but warns that the felony penalties for possession could make it much harder for people to stay clean long-term when their criminal history becomes a barrier to getting a job, finding housing or accessing public benefits.

"The criminal justice system is over representative of many marginalized communities," she said. "So how do we stop using the system as the last resort for people who really need other kinds of help?"

Survivor story

Shawn Brndiar is one of the lucky ones — someone who went down the path of addiction as a young adult and managed to find his way out. Brndiar began experimenting with drugs in his 20s as he coped with childhood trauma, struggled with his sexuality and felt pressure to find a lucrative profession. He became addicted to methamphetamine and used it progressively more for seven years, until a life-threatening event prompted him to take a different direction.

Brndiar was shot by a Lakewood police officer in 2008 in an altercation that landed him in jail for five months. After he was released, he completed a drug treatment program and has been sober ever since.

At age 32, Brndiar was newly clean and unsure of what to do with his life. He had attempted prelaw, premed and business programs at three colleges by then, so he enrolled in a variety of summer courses at MSU Denver, where a Human Services professor helped him "fall in love with the idea of being a helper," he said.

Within five years, Brndiar earned a bachelor's degree in Human Services and a Master of Social Work from the University. Today, he is a licensed clinical social worker and licensed addictions counselor with his own counseling practice, Salient Counseling, in Centennial. He's also back at MSU Denver teaching courses as an affiliate faculty member.

Informed by his experience and daily work with substance abusers, Brndiar doesn't believe that law enforcement intervention is the ideal answer for helping addicts.

"I get that this is a highly emotional issue, and absolutely, some-

thing needs to be done," he said. "But we're going backward when we're talking about increasing penalties because we always know Black and Brown people are going to be affected at a level that far surpasses those who have any means of privilege.

"We need people to have access to quality treatment, and not just for 30 days but for a continuum of care over a year. For every dollar we spend doing that, we save so much more in incarceration."

Help on the way

At MSU Denver, faculty members are preparing students to understand issues such as the drug epidemic from many angles. Brndiar said he got a great clinical education from his Human Services degree and a systems-level education from his Master of Social Work, which he calls "the MBA for mental health care" because of its versatility. He has also heard great things about the University's recently launched Addictions Counseling graduate program.

All of the MSW courses Darnel oversees are taught by lawyers, giving students experience interacting with professionals in the field of law. Students learn the nuances of the language used by attorneys, a valuable tool as more professional social workers are called on to work with the legal system.

Assistant Professor Tanya Greathouse, Ph.D., said the Department of Social Work provides micro, mezzo and macro initiatives to engage students on the fentanyl crisis and other societal issues. On the micro level, students participate in field courses infused with addictions curriculum and get hands-on experience through internships at Denver Health and other community partners.

The mezzo perspective includes psychoeducation for community members, such as a March panel featuring state Rep. Leslie Herod and faculty members and alumni working in behavioral health. For the macro viewpoint, students learn more about policy and legal issues. Greathouse said it's critical that people see the big picture of fentanyl use and know it's not limited to a single demographic.

"The most important thing is for people to really understand there is no face to fentanyl," Greathouse said. "One of the most dangerous myths that individuals can believe is, 'This couldn't be my kid,' or, 'This couldn't be my mother or father.' It's everywhere."

Lost opportunities

Pérez's story is evidence of that.

MSU Denver's Fajardo, the Journey Through Our Heritage coordinator, called her former student's death a wakeup call for those who judge people struggling with substance use.



"We're going backward when we're talking about increasing penalties because we always know Black and Brown people are going to be affected at a level that far surpasses those who have any means of privilege."

Shawn Brndiar,
Counselor

Fajardo said Pérez was a prime example of what a person can do when someone believes in them. She recalled how he often worked nights and weekends for her program and even continued volunteering during a semester when he withdrew from classes to better support his family. He took on one of Journey Through Our Heritage's most challenging assignments, mentoring students at an alternative school for teenagers who were court-ordered to attend. Students naturally gravitated toward him because he could relate to them.

"You can't assume that because someone is using fentanyl that they don't count," Fajardo said. "You have people dying, like Eric, who had a burning desire to give back."

"If he had lived long enough, he would have made a huge difference in so many people's lives."

Matt Watson is a Writer for MSU Denver RED, Metropolitan State University of Denver.

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de acuerdo en que había que hacer algo con respecto a la crisis del fentanilo, pero no podían ponerse de acuerdo en mucho más. En total, se propusieron formalmente 75 enmiendas al proyecto de ley, y uno de los principales patrocinadores retiró su apoyo al proyecto el último día de la sesión. Los proponentes lucharon contra la presión de todas las partes, ya que el gobernador, el fiscal general y los funcionarios encargados de hacer cumplir la ley abogaron por la penalización de cualquier cantidad de posesión de fentanilo, mientras que los expertos en salud mental se opusieron a las penas más severas.

Para la senadora Brittany Pettersen, ex alumna de la MSU de Denver y una de las patrocinadoras del proyecto de ley, la legislación era personal. Pettersen ha hablado públicamente muchas veces sobre la lucha contra la adicción de su madre durante décadas, que comenzó con una dependencia excesiva de los analgésicos recetados después de una lesión. Durante una discusión en el Senado, Pettersen dijo que Colorado tiene el segundo peor acceso al tratamiento de la adicción a los opioides en el país, con más de 450 personas en el estado en listas de espera para la atención hospitalaria.

"Estamos en la tercera ola de la epidemia de opioides y en la peor crisis de sobredosis en la historia de este país", dijo Pettersen en un comunicado. "El fentanilo es la droga preferida por los cárteles porque es potente, barata y fácil de traficar. Tenemos que perseguir a los traficantes que están envenenando a nuestras comunidades y proporcionar formación y recursos para equipar mejor a las fuerzas del orden para investigar las intoxicaciones por fentanilo, al tiempo que aumentamos el acceso al tratamiento que se necesita desesperadamente y a las herramientas de reducción de daños que salvan vidas."

Limitaciones de la ley

La que fuera fiscal de la Oficina del Fiscal del Distrito de Denver, Lori Darnel, J.D., es la principal experta legal del Departamento de Trabajo Social de MSU Denver. La profesora adjunta imparte cursos de máster sobre cuestiones jurídicas, políticas y de liderazgo, y organiza viajes al Capitolio estatal para que los estudiantes estén en sintonía con los debates a nivel macro que influyen en su campo profesional.

"Siempre es difícil legislar de forma que repercuta eficazmente en lo que se intenta conseguir", afirma. "Puedes acabar con una ley

tan amplia que estés barriendo a gente que no pretendes o tan estrecha que no tengas el impacto que quieres tener".

Darnel es escéptica en cuanto a que el aumento de las penas por posesión de drogas vaya a resolver la epidemia de fentanilo. En lugar de ello, aboga por la intervención de la sanidad pública para las personas en crisis y que consumen drogas, como el exitoso Programa de Respuesta Asistida por Equipos de Apoyo de Denver. El programa envía médicos de salud mental y paramédicos a determinadas llamadas al 911 en lugar de las fuerzas del orden.

"Cuando empezamos a preocuparnos por todas las muertes causadas por los opioides, lo consideramos realmente como una situación de salud pública en lugar de justicia penal, porque las comunidades más afectadas eran muchas comunidades blancas y no las comunidades de color que consideramos estereotípicamente afectadas por las drogas", dijo.

Según los CDC, el abuso de medicamentos de prescripción inició la primera ola de muertes por sobredosis de opioides en 1999. Una segunda ola comenzó con un aumento de las sobredosis de heroína en 2010. Al final de la segunda oleada, antes de que el fentanilo estuviera tan extendido, los hombres blancos tenían la tasa de mortalidad por sobredosis ajustada por edad más alta de cualquier combinación de raza y género. La tasa de mortalidad era de 26,2 por cada 100.000 personas, una cifra que incluye las sobredosis por cualquier tipo de droga.

No fue hasta 2016 que las muertes por sobredosis de opioides sintéticos como el fentanilo superaron a otras muertes por sobredosis de opioides. En esta tercera oleada, las tasas de mortalidad por sobredosis para cada grupo demográfico han crecido drásticamente, pero los hombres negros tienen ahora la mayor tasa de mortalidad ajustada por edad de todas las sobredosis, con 54,1 por cada 100.000 personas.

Darnel elogia los componentes de reducción de daños del proyecto de ley HB 22-1326, pero advierte que las penas por posesión de drogas podrían dificultar mucho más que las personas se mantengan limpias a largo plazo cuando sus antecedentes penales se conviertan en un obstáculo para conseguir un trabajo, encontrar una vivienda o acceder a las prestaciones públicas.

"El sistema de justicia penal representa en exceso a muchas comunidades marginadas", dijo. "Entonces, ¿cómo dejamos de utilizar el sistema como último recurso para personas que realmente necesitan otro tipo de ayuda?"



"Estamos retrocediendo cuando hablamos de aumentar las penas, porque siempre sabemos que los negros y los morenos se van a ver afectados a un nivel que supera con creces a los que tienen algún tipo de privilegio".

Shawn Brndiar,
Consejero

Historia de un superviviente

Shawn Brndiar es uno de los afortunados: alguien que se adentró en el camino de la adicción cuando era joven y consiguió encontrar la salida. Brndiar empezó a experimentar con las drogas a los 20 años, mientras se enfrentaba a un trauma infantil, luchaba con su sexualidad y se sentía presionado para encontrar una profesión lucrativa. Se hizo adicto a la metanfetamina y la consumió progresivamente durante siete años, hasta que un suceso que puso en peligro su vida le hizo tomar una dirección diferente.

En 2008, Brndiar recibió un disparo de un agente de policía de Lakewood en un altercado que le llevó a la cárcel durante cinco meses. Después de ser liberado, completó un programa de tratamiento contra las drogas y ha estado sobrio desde entonces.

A los 32 años, Brndiar estaba recién desintoxicado y no sabía qué hacer con su vida. Para entonces había intentado cursar programas de pregrado, medicina y negocios en tres universidades, así que se inscribió en una serie de cursos de verano en MSU Denver, donde un profesor de

Servicios Humanos le ayudó a "enamorarse de la idea de ser un ayudante", dijo.

En cinco años, Brndiar obtuvo una licenciatura en Servicios Humanos y un máster en Trabajo Social por la Universidad. Hoy en día, es un trabajador social clínico autorizado y un consejero de adicciones autorizado con su propia práctica de asesoramiento, Salient Counseling, en Centennial. También está de vuelta en MSU Denver enseñando cursos como miembro afiliado de la facultad.

Informado por su experiencia y su trabajo diario con personas que abusan de sustancias, Brndiar no cree que la intervención de las fuerzas del orden sea la respuesta ideal para ayudar a los adictos.

"Entiendo que se trata de una cuestión muy emotiva, y absolutamente, hay que hacer algo", dijo. "Pero estamos retrocediendo cuando hablamos de aumentar las penas, porque siempre sabemos que los negros y los morenos se van a ver afectados a un nivel que supera con creces a los que tienen algún tipo de privilegio".

"Necesitamos que la gente tenga acceso a un tratamiento de calidad, y no sólo durante 30 días, sino a una atención continuada durante un año. Por cada dólar que gastamos en eso, ahorramos mucho más en encarcelamiento".

Ayuda en camino

En la MSU de Denver, los profesores preparan a los estudiantes para que comprendan cuestiones como la epidemia de drogas desde muchos ángulos. Brndiar dijo que obtuvo una gran formación clínica con su título de Servicios Humanos y una formación a nivel de sistemas con su Máster en Trabajo Social, al que llama "el MBA de la atención a la salud mental" por su versatilidad. También ha oído hablar muy bien del

programa de posgrado en asesoramiento sobre adicciones de la Universidad, que se ha puesto en marcha recientemente.

Todos los cursos de RSU que supervisa Darnel son impartidos por abogados, lo que proporciona a los estudiantes la experiencia de interactuar con profesionales del derecho. Los estudiantes aprenden los matices del lenguaje utilizado por los abogados, una herramienta valiosa ya que cada vez más trabajadores sociales profesionales son llamados a trabajar con el sistema legal.

La profesora adjunta Tanya Greathouse, Ph.D., dijo que el Departamento de Trabajo Social ofrece micro, mezzo y macro iniciativas para involucrar a los estudiantes en la crisis del fentanilo y otros problemas sociales. En el nivel micro, los estudiantes participan en cursos de campo infundidos con el plan de estudios de adicciones y obtienen experiencia práctica a través de prácticas en Denver Health y otros socios de la comunidad.

La perspectiva mezzo incluye la psicoeducación para los miembros de la comunidad, como un panel de marzo en el que participaron la representante estatal Leslie Herod y miembros de la facultad y ex alumnos que trabajan en

la salud del comportamiento. Para el punto de vista macro, los estudiantes aprenden más sobre la política y las cuestiones jurídicas. Greathouse dijo que es fundamental que la gente vea el panorama general del consumo de fentanilo y sepa que no se limita a un solo grupo demográfico.

"Lo más importante es que la gente entienda realmente que el fentanilo no tiene rostro", dijo Greathouse. "Uno de los mitos más peligrosos que los individuos pueden creer es: 'Esto no podría ser mi hijo', o 'Esto no podría ser mi madre o mi padre'. Está en todas partes".

Oportunidades perdidas

La historia de Pérez es una prueba de ello.

Fajardo, de MSU Denver, coordinadora de Journey Through Our Heritage, calificó la muerte de su ex alumno como una llamada de atención para quienes juzgan a las personas que luchan contra el consumo de sustancias.

Fajardo dijo que Pérez era un excelente ejemplo de lo que una persona puede hacer cuando alguien cree en ella. Recordó que a menudo trabajaba por las noches y los fines de semana para su programa e incluso continuó siendo voluntario durante un semestre en el que se retiró de las clases para poder mantener mejor a su familia. Aceptó una de las tareas más difíciles de Journey Through Our Heritage, la de servir de mentor a los estudiantes de una escuela alternativa para adolescentes que habían sido obligados por el tribunal a asistir. Los estudiantes se sintieron atraídos por él de forma natural porque podía relacionarse con ellos.

"No puedes suponer que porque alguien consuma fentanilo no cuenta", dijo Fajardo. "Hay gente que se está muriendo, como Eric, que tenía un deseo ardiente de devolver algo."

"Si hubiera vivido lo suficiente, habría marcado una gran diferencia en la vida de muchas personas".

Matt Watson es escritor de MSU Denver RED, Metropolitan State University of Denver.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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