

## **SFRB Executive Summary 2014-2015** **El Centro de la Raza (El Centro)**

El Centro de la Raza was established in 1969 and was created for students by students because they needed a place of belonging during their studies at the University of New Mexico. El Centro is a student support department enriched with resources to assist Hispanic students with their academic endeavor at the University of New Mexico we are committed to the cultural, social, and academic experience of Hispanic students. El Centro offers various scholarships particularly emergency scholarships, professional development and programming support. This funding opportunity is available to all UNM students whom are interested in utilizing these resources. The department also offers an undergraduate research fellowship program which enhances critical skills to apply and get through grad school. The internship program allows undergraduate students to obtain hands on community experience at local non-profit organization.

The SFRB funding is used to support:

- Student programming costs and services
- Student supplies and training material
- Direct student costs and scholarships
- Student salaries

The SFRB funding would benefit UNM a Hispanic serving institution (HSI) by providing excellence in; community service experiences, research, knowledge, social, cultural, and economic development.

El Centro is seeking SFRB funding to support students in either student employment or scholarships and supplies. El Centro also seeks other funding sources that it dedicates to support special services to students.

We collaborate regularly with UNM departments and community organizations to enhance a web of support for UNM students. Some of these and organizations are:

- Chicana and Chicano Studies
- Southwest Hispanic Research Institute
- Graduate Resource Center
- Dean of Students Office
- American Indian Student Services
- African American Student Services
- Global Education Office
- University College Advisement Center
- Career Services
- Enrollment Management
- UNM Libraries
- UNM Alumni Association

Off campus partnerships include:

- South Valley Academy
- El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos
- Martin Luther King Commission
- La Plazita Institute
- NM Immigrant Law Center
- Partnership for Community Action
- Los Jardines Institute
- International District Coalition

The funding increase that El Centro is requesting is intended to fund the Lobos Unidos Mentorship program, the grant funding will be exhausted on September 2015 and El Centro's continuation of this program will be offered to all UNM freshman students. This increase will provide eight mentors to help students transition through UNM.

**1. Describe the history and mission of your unit, and how its services support the mission of the University. Please address each of the following bullet points in your answer.**

**History of El Centro de la Raza (El Centro)**

El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) was created under the umbrella of Chicano Studies in 1969. El Centro evolved into an independent student services department under the Division of Student Affairs to support Latino/Hispanic students and the underserved population of students. Even though the majority of students that El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) serves are Latino and Hispanic students, all students at UNM are welcome and encouraged to take advantage of all the services it provides.

El Centro has over 44 years serving the Latino/Hispano community and 20 years receiving state funding to support New Mexico students. Under New Mexico State Statute, El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) is charged with serving the largest and fastest growing ethnic population at the University of New Mexico. El Centro provides special programming, scholarships, advising and advocacy services to over 13,000 Hispanic students and families every year. In addition, El Centro changed its strategic direction to be in total compliance and support with the NM Hispanic Education Act (HEA) of 2010 (HB150), which charges state institutions with “providing mechanisms for parents, community, and business organizations, public schools, schools districts, charter schools, public post-secondary educational institutions, the department and state and local policymakers to work together to improve educational opportunities for Hispanic students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates and increasing post-secondary enrollment, retention, and completion.”<sup>1</sup>

One of the reasons HEA is very important is because of future demographic changes across the United States. According to the census data of 2010, Latinos constitute 46% of the population of New Mexico. By the year 2050 the Latino population will become an absolute majority in the US.<sup>2</sup> This means that the need to serve this population will increase, thus the growing demand of programs and services to meet this demand will increase as well. In addition, the services that are particularly tailored to Latino/Hispano students will need to correlate with the needs of our economy and industries to ensure that the Latino/Hispanic population is competitive and thus it can be in the position to add more value to our economic base.

**El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) Mission Statement**

El Centro provides tools for self-determination, personal responsibility and resiliency of Raza<sup>3</sup> students at the University of New Mexico. We support the transformation of students through knowledge and skills, while challenging systems to achieve social justice. In engaging the Raza community, El Centro continues the legacy of advocacy, holistic support, and partnerships as we are “Celebrating 45 Years of Excelencia”.

**What services does your unit specialize in that are not offered in a similar form elsewhere**

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on this act see: <http://1.usa.gov/17ngY1S>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nclr.org/index.php/publications/>

<sup>3</sup> Due to the complex nature of the Raza population in the US, in this report the term Hispanic, Latino, and Raza will be used interchangeably to refer to those who are from New Mexico, the US, Mexico, Central and South America and who themselves identify with their European or Indigenous roots or with very special groups such as Chicanos, Mexicans, and New Mexicans.

### **within the University?**

The services that El Centro offers that are not offered in a similar form elsewhere within the university are coined under the notion of a “one stop shop”. El Centro de la Raza provide special programming to our students that promote better understanding of research and academics, professional development, study habits, financial support through scholarships, internships, and fellowships that promote academic success and community involvement. Our Student Programs Specialists are cross-trained in many areas regarding student’s needs and concerns that might impede their success. We provide support in advising, financial aid, academic success, and community collaboration. What makes El Centro unique is that our staff is both bilingual and culturally sensitive to the needs of the student population and their families and is up to date with many of the challenges that traditionally underserved and marginalized populations face educationally, economically and socially.

### **How does your unit serve the University’s commitment to diversity?**

El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) is committed to diversity and inclusion as a core value in all the programs and services we offer. All of our programs connect academics to cultural diversity, equity and social justice. Our goal is not just to support UNM creating future leaders and professionals, but also to develop conscientious leaders and professionals who will embrace our ever-changing society. Because our society is not only diverse, but also globally and culturally diverse, El Centro coordinates the Transformar program which promotes service learning activities in diverse communities so our students understand the challenges faced by our local communities. We also coordinate El Centro Speaker Series, which brings scholars from different fields so our students are exposed to a variety of academic areas and International faculty who analyze views and paradigms different than our own.

## **2. Briefly describe each program/project in your unit that is funded specifically by student fees. What are the outcomes, so far, of each program/project?**

- **El Puente Undergraduate Fellows Program** – The internship program is now in its 9th year and has been an outstanding model of professional and leadership development for students on campus involved in civic engagement. The internship provided **9 students (2013-14)** with research opportunities, leadership development, professional field experience, and academic mentoring. The activities under this internship program enhance and support student academic excellence and success by providing the best professional development experiences and a successful pathway to graduation or Graduate/professional School. In FY 15, El Centro has committed resources to 20 students.
- **Transformar Community Organizing Fellowship** - Through the Transformar Community Organizing Fellowship, El Centro provided **9** undergraduate student community fellowships that actively participated in a community driven project. The goal of the community fellowship is to enhance the leadership, civic engagement and professional experience of UNM students, while assisting local communities in addressing issues within their social, cultural, economic and political contexts.

- **The Latina/o Graduate & Professional Student Fellowship** – The Latina/o Graduate & Professional Student Fellowship is in its 5th year, El Centro in collaboration with the Graduate Resource Center, provided **10** scholarships. The goal is to increase representation of minority students in graduate programs and to serve as a support system by making resources, networks, and skills available to students for a successful completion of their graduate degrees.
- **Leadership & Professional Development** – The professional leadership component is focused on providing students with the knowledge and tools necessary to succeed in the business/professional world. Under this area, El Centro provide leadership and professional development to **38** students who participated in the El Puente Fellows Program, Transformar and the Latina/o Graduate Fellows Program. The idea is participants get trained on professional areas that will help them in their academic and personal development.
- **Scholarships & Sponsorships** – El Centro provided **91** emergency and professional development scholarships given to current students participating in special programs or students requesting funding to participate in professional conferences or to expand their professional knowledge and workforce skills. In addition, El Centro provided support to student organizations that requested assistance with professional activities, conferences and events.
- **Speakers Series** – The Speaker Series have been arranged by academic concentrations per semester to expand the academic focus of our undergraduate/graduate students while exposing them to research opportunities by learning about faculty research and educational interests. Over **170** students participated in this series.

**3. Describe any increase in SFRB funding you are requesting, and provide justification detailing how raising student fees will improve your unit's impact on the student population.**

El Centro is requesting \$191,261 in FY15-16, an increase of \$24,389 from our previous allocation of \$166,872 in FY14-15. The primary reason and justification for an increase in SFRB funding is to continue providing key support services to Latino/Hispanic students at UNM in general and specifically for the students who utilize our mentoring services. El Centro, in collaboration with multiple programs on campus and outside campus is coordinating the Unidos Mentoring Program, under the Unidos Project, which is promoting Latino Student Success. Under this program El Centro manages 8 UNM undergraduate students who serve as mentors. These mentors provide support to students who are flagged through early warning systems so they can receive assistance with time management, and issues related to their academic standing. The Unidos Project is scheduled to end by September 30, 2015. Our goal is to continue

providing at risk students with additional support to retain them by providing them with special support, guidance, and special services.

**El Centro’s proposed increase in SFRB funding will cover the following line items:**

<b>Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Purpose/Justification</b>
<b><u>\$24,389</u></b>	8 Undergraduate Mentors each/Academic Year Work-study Salaries and Fringe.	The Unidos Mentorship Program is an outstanding model of student support that provides underrepresented, low income and rural students with the assistance in understanding how to be successful at the university level through an academic coaching model. The mentors are available to these students in order to help them navigate UNM and find the resources academically as well as non-academic essential services and programs

- a. Please complete Budget Form B for funding increases and one-time requests.**  
Budget Form B is attached.

**4. Describe student participation in your unit, and any plans to improve it, addressing each of the following bullet points.**

El Centro uses several methods to assess the participation of students who are utilizing El Centro’s services and programs. At the front desk we use El Centro’s kiosk to document all the students that use our services. The system that we are now using to capture data is Campus Labs, which resides within an IT environment that allows us to protect student data. We also use surveys and sign in sheets to document student participation in the events and activities that El Centro coordinates. In FY13-14, for example, over 12,000 students used our services. The participation of students goes from participating in specific programs (El Puente, Transformar, Speaker Series), using our facilities (break room, printing, computer lab, study room, and the foyer areas), and volunteer opportunities (mixers, el día de muertos, and Raza Junta). El Centro has recently undergone some major transition. Under the new leadership there is a renewed effort to increase the number of students served. For example, in FY 14 there were 9 El Puente Fellows and this current year (FY 15) we doubled the amount of students to 20. We plan to build capacity one program at a time through collaborations and cost effective planning.

**a. How are students involved in the governance/decision-making of your unit?**

El Centro’s interns, graduate support, and student office staff meets regularly to discuss upcoming events, deadlines, important issues, and concerns that are facing UNM students with respect to their academic programs, personal and other critical student needs. El Centro student leaders (including interns and student organization members) are involved in the process of coordinating activities for students at El Centro. Additionally, El Centro conducts surveys and solicits feedback from students about programs, services, and what we call “*Cafecitos Con Rosa*”, which are special one-to-one meetings that our Director has with students and community members to learn about their needs and expectations.

**b. How many students do you employ (including graduate assistants, interns, etc.)? over the course of the year**

A total of 65 students are employed through work study (office assistants) or receive academic and professional funding (scholarships/stipends) for special projects, undergraduate and graduate mentorship, professional development, academic research and community involvement. Breakdown is as follows:

- 7 Student Employees/Office Assistants (Graduate and Undergraduate)
- 3 Graduate Professional Interns/Mentors
- 20 El Puente Research Fellows
- 5 Transformar Community Fellows
- 8 Lobos Unidos Mentors
- 20 Graduate Fellows (Latina/o Graduate Fellowship with Graduate Resource Center)
- 2 Tri-National Indigenous UNM Study Abroad Participants

**5. Describe specific improvements your unit has made in the last fiscal year to the visibility/accessibility of its services, and any plans to further improve visibility/accessibility.**

**Program Highlights & Improvements:**

El Centro is going through major changes. Our Director, Veronica Mendez-Cruz retired after 25 years of service. Our new Director, Rosa Isela Cervantes, is restructuring operations to serve more students, as well as to become more data driven for assessment and the evaluation of our programs. As part of this restructuring of services, El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) is outreaching to local high schools, community partners, UNM colleges, and other support systems such the other ethnic centers, research centers within UNM, and the Global Education Office so we can have a wider network of collaboration that can best serve the needs of our students. The main goal is for El Centro to continue serving as many of our UNM students as possible that need support, and we look forward for our partners to support these needs through special programs.

One of the highlights of El Centro is the number of students and the amount awarded in scholarships. See table below:

***Scholarship Awards FY 2014***

<b>Scholarship</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qty</b>
El Puente Interns	\$ 24,875.00	9
Community Fellows	\$ 14,375.00	9
Emergency Graduate	\$ 11,300.00	22
Emergency Undergraduate	\$ 14,850.00	40
Professional Development	\$ 6,200.00	18
Graduate Interns	\$ 31,500.00	3
UNM Programming Support	\$ 2,550.00	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 105,650.00</b>	<b>109</b>

The following are some of the collaboration and partners that El Centro is working with on special programs and services:

- In partnership with the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Student Academic Success Office, El Centro received funding through a Lumina collaborative grant to establish the Mentorship Program “Lobos Unidos,” which focuses on serving Hispanic freshman and “At risk” students.
- In partnership with Chicana and Chicano Studies Department and the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute, El Centro developed the Community Based Research and Learning Initiative (CBRLI), a collaboration framework aimed at promoting academic excellence through community based learning and research activities. This initiative will foster on-campus and off-campus recruitment and retention efforts by increasing student scholarship, community engagement, interdepartmental collaboration and faculty support.
- In order to better support undergraduate students, El Centro expanded its internship program (El Puente) to include a rigorous research, academic and community based learning component, through El Centro’s new program Community Research Education and Academic Retention Program (CREAR), with the mission to offer professional learning and research opportunities that will center on key areas of development for local communities in New Mexico.
- The Latina/o Graduate Fellowship was successful and the partnership grew from 10 to 20 graduate student fellows, through partnership with the Graduate Resource Center.
- The Speakers Series is an effort coordinated between El Centro de la Raza and the Center for the Study of Race and Social Justice, which brings together students with faculty, community and international guest speakers.

#### **6. How does your unit collaborate with other campus units and/or off-campus entities?**

One of the cornerstones of El Centro has been the collaboration that it has with other UNM departments and programs that also serve UNM students at large. Some of these departments and programs are the College Enrichment and Outreach Programs, Student Support Services, the Center for the Study of Race and Social Justice, the Graduate Resource Center, the Office of Graduate Studies, Chicana and Chicano Studies, the University Libraries, the Hispanic Research Institute, American Indian Student Services, African American Student Services, Accessibility Resource Center, University College Advisement Center, Career Services, UNM Health Center – CATS, Financial Aid, and Enrollment Management. Outside of the university, El Centro is collaborating with LULAC, the Hispanic Round Table, La Plazita Institute, Natural Justice, Southwest Creations, The Center for Social Sustainable Systems, Los Jardines Institute, the Red de Mujeres Indigenas en Biodiversidad, the Partnership for Community Action, New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, the Martin Luther King Foundation, Universidad de la Selva, al Universidad Technica del Mezquital, and South Valley Regional Association of Acequias. El Centro maintains close ties and collaboration protocols with these units and community organization (as well as others) because they offer academic advisement, financial aid advisement, career exploration, recruitment services, admissions advice, cultural support, and special community programs that support the academic and professional development of our students. The way we collaborate with these units and community organizations is by creating special programs that bridge their main focus with the needs of our students. In most cases we do joint programs that involve cost sharing so we can maximize our funding. In other cases, we

bridge the expertise that the units and the communities have so we can serve as the “coordinators” and thus this dynamic allows us to bring together a special program with an academic unit to benefit our students.

With respect to the specific services that El Centro provides, El Centro prides itself in that we are a “Gateway” for all and any forms of issues or concerns that our students might have with respect to their personal and academic needs at UNM. El Centro’s Student Programs Specialists are cross trained in many areas regarding a student’s journey through higher education, and the collaboration links that El Centro has with multiple departments and programs in and outside of UNM helps our staff provide the special services that students need to address their personal and academic needs. El Centro and its staff are sincerely and genuinely committed to all students. We know that by providing them with special programs and services, UNM students should have better chances to be retained and graduate from UNM. Retaining and graduating our students is not only good for UNM; it is good for our economy and our local communities. Retaining and graduating, however, is not something that El Centro can do alone, but rather by promoting special programs and strong networks with UNM’s departments, student organizations and community programs.

**7. What methods have been used in evaluating your unit’s impact on the student population (e.g. surveys, focus groups, interviews), and how effective have those methods been?**

<p>1. <b>MEASURE SOURCE:</b> Data source(s) for the measure and who maintains documents.</p>	<p>1. Campus labs - web-based student tracking system, student kiosk – which specifically gathers students, visit &amp; services received. 2. Loboachieve is a university wide system used to support student advisement services 3. Staff databases- El Centro uses excel spreadsheets maintained by individual staff members housed on the university IT server. Dept. Staff and IT Support maintain all documents and data collected. 4. Focus groups- new director meets with students, staff, faculty and community members and asked a series of open-ended question to understand what they wanted to see continued, changed, and initiated within the office.</p>
<p>2. <b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b> Who is responsible for collection, analysis &amp; reporting data?</p>	<p>All staff members are responsible for updating and maintaining Excel spreadsheets. The Senior Program Manager is responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting the data.</p>
<p>3. <b>METHODOLOGY:</b> Methodology used to collect data.</p>	<p>Students &amp; families are counted/recorded at events &amp; meetings. Students use a self- service kiosk to sign in to use El Centro facilities, programs, and services. Much of the analysis is made through the internal systems (SPSS and excel systems) that allow us to do data collection and analysis</p>
<p>4. <b>DATA COLLECTION FREQUENCY:</b> Time frame for data collection and reporting.</p>	<p>Data is recorded daily, collected quarterly and reported annually.</p>



Additionally, Survey Monkey has been used to conduct student needs assessment and program, event, and presentation evaluations. We are now, however, shifting all our surveys to Campus Labs. The reason for doing this is because by using Campus Labs we can ensure that a) we use a system that is supported by the UNM environment and 2) we can comply with FERPA regulations. El Centro has an open-door policy that allows for constant feedback. While there is always room for improvements, all of these methods have been effective in informing student programming, department facility use policies, identifying areas for improvement, and building effective relationships.

**8. What are your unit’s current non-SFRB sources of funding (e.g. Instructional & General, state or federal grants, self-generated revenue), and if applicable, what additional funding sources are you seeking this fiscal year?**

**FY14-15 El Centro Organizational Budget**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Allocation</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
SFRB	\$166,872.00	27%
UNM I&G	\$248,522.00	40%
State funding	\$158,100.00	25%
Grants (including federal and private)	\$46,078.00	7%
Internal Departmental Support	\$4,706.00	.75%
Ida Romero Endowment Interest	1,076.00	.25%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$625,354.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Other Funding/Self-generated Support**

- \$17,655 – This funding (Tri-National Indigenous Grant) is part of collaboration with New Mexico State University to work with Mexican and Canadian universities on student exchanges to promote indigenous entrepreneurship and community development. With this grant, El Centro has been sending students to Mexico to study abroad for a semester.
- \$25,179 – Funds for Unidos Mentoring Program through the Unidos Project Grant.
- \$50,000 – Additional funds from the NM State Legislature to support special programs. With this funding El Centro was able to increase the number of fellows from El Puente from 10 students to 20 students. This funding also helped to increase the support for operations.

- a. **What increases or decreases from non-SFRB funding sources do you anticipate compared to your budget last year?** At this time we cannot estimate that we will have any increase. Furthermore, funding for the Unidos Project ends September 30, 2015 and Tri-National Indigenous Grant is also scheduled to end this fiscal year.
- b. **Please complete Budget Form C for non-SFRB income.**  
Budget Form C is attached.

**9. What are your unit's current plans to address the recommendations of last year's SFRB?**

El Centro did not receive any recommendations from last year's SFRB.

**10. Provide any other information or a narrative that will assist the SFRB in making its decision to fund your unit.**

The Latino/Hispanic student population continues to face issues of access to the institution, educational equity, educational resources, and degree completion. Due to the unique "minority-majority" demographics of our state, UNM is a Hispanic Serving Institution. According to 2013 Enrollment Data, there are 28,644 students enrolled at the University of New Mexico and Hispanics comprise 39.9% of the total student population. Retention of Hispanic students has declined 4.5% from 2008-2010. Latino/Hispanic students continue to fare worse than their White, Non-Hispanic counterparts in 3rd semester retention and 6-year graduation rates. According to 2005 PED data (the most current year available), completion rates for UNM Hispanic students was 46.96%. Overall, UNM has been successful in enrolling large numbers of Hispanic students but continues to suffer shortfalls in the success of these students, demonstrated by retention, graduation and completion rates. El Centro is determined and diligent to address this need at UNM and statewide, to improve upon recruitment, retention and graduation efforts by strengthening collaborations with UNM department and community partners.

El Centro is committed to support UNM's retention and graduation efforts by providing the best services and programs to our students. Research demonstrates that when students have holistic programming, services and advocacy such as El Centro, they fare better in their academics and the campus climate is better for all students. The success of El Centro's endeavors is evidenced by the hundreds of alumni, many of them still advocating for El Centro's work and socially engaged in their professional and personal lives. El Centro's student mentorship and leadership models encourage students to take risks while providing experiential learning opportunities. To continue its work, El Centro de la Raza (El Centro) relies on the support of funding sources from sources such SFRB. Thank you for believing in the work of El Centro and for the continuous support offered through out the years.

*Celebrating 45 Years of Excelencia!*