

Meet the Team

New Mexico Social Drivers of Health (SDOH) Integration Support ECHO Program

Hub Team

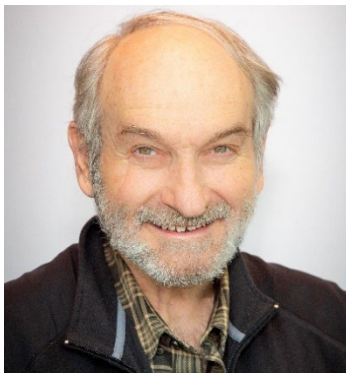


Benjamin Fox

Senior Program Manager | Office for Community Health

Benjamin Fox is a native New Mexican who began his career in healthcare in 2009. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Benjamin was part of the first team the New Mexico Medical Reserve Corps mobilized to help provide care and emergency response in some of the states hardest hit communities. Throughout the pandemic, he worked with various city, county, state, and federal entities to provide patient care and develop and manage programs and interventions aimed at supporting individuals and

communities that were among the most vulnerable. He has continued his work in public and community health with programs aimed at striving for health equity, addressing social drivers of health, and expanding access to Medicaid services in the state. He loves the New Mexican landscape and feels most at home in the mountains and wildernesses of the state.



Art Kaufman, MD

Vice President for Community Health | Office for Community Health

As Vice President for Community Health and former Chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine, which has a Family Medicine Residency program and Physician Assistant program, Dr. Kaufman's department has trained a sizeable percentage of New Mexico's primary care workforce, distributed in almost all counties in the state. He has helped create a set of primary care innovations in education and service. These include creation of the UNM Care Program—assignment of

uninsured patients to primary care medical homes; the Primary Care Dispatch—a web-based, emergency room located primary care follow-up appointment system that functions 24/7; a statewide, 24/7 Nurse Advice Line for all residents in rural and urban areas; a network of Health Commons primary care sites which serve as advanced models of Patient-Centered Medical Homes including community outreach and public health integration; deploying a cadre of field-based community health workers to manage patients enrolled in Medicaid Managed Care who are high users of health resources; and the creation of Health Extension Rural Offices models across the state linking University resources to priority community health needs. Research outcomes of each of these programs has been published in peer-reviewed journals.



Jhoniq Lentsch, MSPM

Program Planning Officer | Office for Community Health

Jhoniq is the Program Planning Officer for Community Health Worker Initiatives at UNM Health Sciences Center Office for Community Health. A first-generation college graduate with a Master’s in Project Management, she has a decade of experience in community education and human services. Jhoniq is an invited panelist, published author, and the 2024-2026 Precinct 21 Representative for UNM Staff Council.



Marnie Nixon, MA, LM

Health Extension Regional Officer | Office for Community Health

Marnie Nixon serves as the Health Extension Regional Officer (HERO) for the southwest region of New Mexico on behalf of the UNM Health Sciences Center, Office for Community Health. In this capacity, Ms. Nixon links community priorities to university resources. With an MA in anthropology from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University and through work as a licensed midwife (LM) on the US-Mexico border, Ms. Nixon has decades of experience working on rural, border and women's health issues and health education. She has extensive experience working with the nonprofit sector, foundations, universities and policy/advocacy groups.



Devona Quam, CCHW, BSE

Director | New Mexico Department of Health, Office of Community Health

Devona Quam is a Certified Community Health Worker (CCHW) and Director of the NM Department of Health, Office of Community Health (OCHW) which falls under the auspices of the Center for Healthy & Safe Communities within the Public Health Division. Devona has been serving in the role as the Director for 2.5 years. Her career in state government started in the Children, Youth & Families Department and continued within the Department of Health for a total of 16 years. Devona’s accomplishments include success in government relations, funding and resource acquisition, and grant writing and administration. Devona’s new endeavor for the Office of Community Health Workers is to promote branding of the Community Health Workers/Representatives (CHW/Rs) profession, integration of the CHW/Rs workforce within the health care and social service delivery systems in New Mexico, and CHW/R sustainability efforts to include Medicaid reimbursement and billing and workforce specialization.



Francisco Ronquillo, MA

Health Extension Regional Officer & Hispanic/Latino Health Specialist | Office of Vice Chancellor for Community

Francisco J. Ronquillo has a dual role as Health Extension Regional Officer and Hispanic/Latino Health Specialist under the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community. He has worked in the public health sector, for more than 20 years and is dedicated to tackling the social determinants of health and the needs of marginalized/underserved populations. Currently, his health equity efforts are aimed at building capacity between academic health centers and communities. As a bilingual educator, he applies popular education approaches in his trainings and interventions with Latino, immigrant and border communities on various health and social issues.



Van Roper, Ph.D., RN, MS, FNP-C, FAANP

Assistant Dean & Associate Clinical Professor | College of Nursing

Dr. Van Roper holds a Ph.D. in Nursing, specializing in Systems and Rural Health, and is a Certified Nurse Practitioner and Registered Nurse in New Mexico. He has held key roles in healthcare and academia, including Assistant Dean and Associate Clinical Professor at the University of New Mexico College of Nursing. With a career spanning over three decades, he has worked as a Family Nurse Practitioner across several states and has led initiatives in telehealth, rural healthcare delivery, and nurse practitioner education. Dr. Roper is a recognized researcher, presenter, and contributor to peer-reviewed journals, focusing on topics such as opioid use disorder and rural health. He is active in professional organizations, has received several awards for his leadership and clinical excellence, and is committed to serving underserved populations locally and internationally.

Faerl Torres, MFA

Strategic Project Director | Office for Community Health

Faerl Torres is primary author and co-collaborator on the SDOH and Health Equity 101 Certificate Course. The course pilot began in October 2023 and has been integrated into the UNM Strategic Plan for Health Equity. Torres is Strategic Project Director for a portfolio of SDOH-aligned programs and initiatives at UNM Office for Community Health.

Not pictured: Kelly Camden, Bea Martinez, Mario Pacheco, Evelyn Rising, and Faerl Torres.

Programs Team



Crystal Morales, MA

Senior Program Manager | Project ECHO

Crystal Lizeth Morales earned her master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of New Mexico, U.S.A., in the fall of 2023. She is fluent in Spanish and specializes in Spanish Counseling, focused on assisting Hispanic and Latine individuals with multicultural competencies. Currently, she serves as the Senior Program Manager for the NM Border and Diabetes programs at the ECHO Institute, University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center. Crystal has been with Project ECHO since 2007, holding various roles and contributing to supporting programs for mental health, substance use, community health workers, child and maternal health, COVID-19 programs, and Latin American Collaboratives for Project ECHO. In her current position, she oversees the NM border and diabetes program team, dedicated to supporting diabetes and health equity initiatives across New Mexico's border counties and along the Mexican border.



Deyanira Nuñez, MA

Program Specialist | Project ECHO

Deyanira “Dey” Nunez is part of the Programs Team as a Program Specialist for the NM Diabetes/Border Health Initiatives at Project ECHO. Dey has over 10 years of experience in higher education and student services. She attended UNM for both her BA in Spanish and MA in Organization, Information, and Learning Sciences. She joined Project ECHO in May 2024 and enjoys being part of the mission and vision dedicated to making a difference in communities through Project ECHO’s values and initiatives.



Andrea Ordoñez, MA

Program Manager | Project ECHO

Andrea Ordonez joined the ECHO Institute as a Program Specialist for Latin America in January 2022, where she supported strategic planning, coordinated initiatives and trainings, and managed technical aspects, including data management. Prior to her role at ECHO, she gained extensive experience in the legal field, having worked and studied in the UK, California, and Albuquerque. Andrea holds a joint degree in Comparative Literature and Spanish from Royal Holloway, University of London, and an MA in Hispanic Linguistics from the University of New Mexico. She currently serves as a Program Manager at the ECHO Institute, focusing on border initiatives in diabetes and loves the opportunity to serve her local community.