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# Somos un Pueblo Unido Newsletter

January 2009

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Somos Launches Somos Primos Campaign on February 7th

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Join us for the launch of *Somos Primos*, a grassroots public information campaign aimed at dispelling the myths meant to divide local New Mexican and Mexican immigrant communities and celebrating our shared history, culture, and politics. This landmark campaign will include a series of media advertisements and cultural and educational events geared toward Nuevo Mexicanos and Mexicanos of all ages.

Our lives intersect everyday at work, at church, at school and in our homes. Through *Somos Primos*, we will explore our communities' shared struggles and dreams *porque entre familia, todo se puede*.

Launch activities include an afternoon of dialogue, food, and special performances. We will also unveil our campaign media ads and PSA's.

**What:** *Somos Primos* Campaign Launch  
**Where:** El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe (1615 Paseo de Peralta)  
**When:** Saturday, February 7, 2009 from 1:00-9:00 PM

1:00 PM **El Lonche de los Primos** (lunch provided)

1:30 PM **Platicas y Conversaciones:** A Community Dialogue about our  
Shared Language and History (led by NM State Historian)

4:00 PM **Los Primos y la Politica:** A Legislative Forum about  
Primo Initiatives

6:00 PM **Reception**

6:30 PM **El Festejo entre Familia** (dinner, music, and dance  
performances by Moving People Dance Espanola Program and  
special guests)

*Somos* is joined by many groups and individuals in this effort including Northern New Mexico ENLACE, the Ben Luján Leadership and Public Policy Institute, Santa Fe Partnership, Sabine Ulibarri Spanish as a Heritage Language Program (UNM), and the New Mexico State Historian's Office.

For more information, call *Somos* at (505) 424-7832.

## Support State Legislation that Helps Immigrant Workers and Families

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Somos is working very hard to pass two bills this year at the State Legislature which would help ensure that immigrants and other vulnerable minorities are not unfairly profiled by police and which would provide workers stronger protections when their employers refuse to pay them.

Support the Bias-Based Policing Ban

No one deserves to be treated unfairly by law enforcement. This bill, sponsored by Representative Nathan P. Cote (D-Doña Ana/Otero), would ban bias-based policing in New Mexico and make sure that law enforcement agencies implement policies and procedures to prohibit and prevent profiling based on race, ethnicity and nationality. We've teamed up with the NAACP and the Family Justice Campaign to make this bill one of our top priorities this year.

Support the Anti-Wage Theft Act

Millions of immigrant and native born workers are not getting paid what they're owed by employers in the United States. New Mexico is no exception. Our state's Wage and Hour Bureau investigates hundreds of wage claims every year--and those are the ones that get reported. Many immigrant workers don't file claims for unpaid wages or overtime because they fear retaliation. Somos is working with Representative Miguel Garcia (D-Bernalillo) to pass a bill that would provide stronger protections in state law against retaliation and that would stiffen the penalties for unscrupulous employers who steal wages from their workers.

What can you do to help?

- Join us at *Somos' Immigrant Lobby 2009* on Thursday, February 12th (8:30 AM to 1:00 PM). For flyer and agenda click [here](#).
- Contact your legislators and tell them to support these proposals. Visit <http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/> to view the bills' status and to get your legislators' contact information.
- If your organization wants to endorse these bills email us at somos@rt66.com or call us for more information at 424-7832.

Other bills Somos is endorsing this year:

1. **Treatment Instead of Incarceration**--For more information go to the New Mexico Drug Policy Alliance's website at <http://www.drugpolicy.org/about/stateoffices/newmexico/tni/>
2. **Include Farmworkers in Workers' Compensation Act**--Go to the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty's website at <http://www.nmpovertylaw.org/Farmworkers%27%20Compensation.html>

Somos Works to Support Affordable Housing Initiative

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Somos has teamed up with the United for Affordable Housing Coalition to rally support for the Santa Fe Affordable Housing Initiative set for a special election on Tuesday, March 10th.

If voters approve this ballot initiative, it would generate about \$1 million every year for affordable housing programs through a transfer tax on the sale of high-end homes. Buyers of houses worth more than \$750,000 would pay a one-time fee of 1% of the amount over \$750,000. Funding would go to help develop more affordable rental housing and to help low and middle income working families buy homes.

Somos is launching a Get Out the Vote campaign called "Techo para Todos 2009" geared toward new and infrequent Latino voters on the south side of town. To ensure that those of us who work in Santa Fe can also afford to live in Santa Fe, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

- Get informed. Check our Coalition's fact sheet at [www.SantaFeAffordableHousing.org](http://www.SantaFeAffordableHousing.org)
- Pledge to vote YES for affordable housing on March 10th. Click [here](#) to sign the pledge form.
- Volunteer to phone bank or door knock by calling Somos at 424-7832



EARLY VOTING STARTS FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup> AT CITY HALL

Join us for a rally at noon on Wednesday February 18<sup>th</sup> at City Hall with Mariachi Buenaventura and delicious Mexican food.

## Other Local and National News

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Immigrant Children Across the Country Need Your Help!

Recently, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed an expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). SCHIP is the federal block grant program that states depend on to provide coverage for low-income and

working poor families. A vote on the bill in the Senate Finance Committee is set for early next week.

Please call Senators Bingaman and Udall at 1-800-828-0498 (Capitol Switchboard) to tell them to support the SCHIP expansion which would cover close to another 4 million low-income, uninsured children and lift a five-year coverage delay for documented immigrant children and pregnant women. Senators started their discussions on January 23rd. Some Senators will try to weaken the legislation in this debate and floor vote, so we need you to weigh in ASAP.

Border Patrol Agents Return to Work After Uncovering Unethical Behavior by Agency

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of New Mexico successfully settled a suit this week against U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on behalf of two agents who blew the whistle on the agency's unlawful practice of "shotgunning traffic," stopping vehicles without reasonable suspicion, and as a result were retaliated against by their superiors. Agents Juan Curbelo and William Leafstone, Jr. were returned to their regular positions this week and had all job privileges restored. To read ACLU's press release, click [here](#).

Adult Basic Education Spring 2009

Santa Fe GED classes in Spanish start on February 2nd. All classes are free. The registration dates are January 29 from 8 AM to 8 PM and January 30 from 9 AM to 5 PM at the Santa Fe Community College (SFCC). For more information, call (505) 428-1356.

Mujeres en Transición Class to Support Spanish-Speaking Women

Mujeres en Transición, a class in Spanish that will provide information and support to women in transition regarding mental and physical health, financial well-being, and career development, starts on January 29 at 12:30 PM at SFCC. For more information, call Service Learning at 428-1702.

Contact Information

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phone: 505-424-7832

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