



Home at St. E's

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Even Housed the Struggle Continues

It sounds like a great success story – young, single-parent mother with two children escapes a domestic-violence situation, finds a job, moves into St. Elizabeth's Sonrisa Family Transitional Housing Program and then leaves for an apartment of her own. But in today's high-rent, expensive food, rising-cost-of-living environment, it seems the struggles never end.

Victoria Jauregui, 31, knows this only too well. Growing up in San Ignacio, New Mexico, near Hermit's Peak, she met a local man and they had two children, but his drinking and drug use escalated and he became more and more abusive. Fearing for her life, she waited until he passed out one night, quickly packed a suitcase, woke the children and fled in her car. She drove to Santa Fe to stay with her brother who worked at the state penitentiary and lived on the grounds, thinking she would be safe there if her partner pursued her.

After staying with her brother for a while, she and the children moved to Esperanza, the domestic-violence shelter in Santa Fe, where they remained for nine months. Staff there introduced her to Neal Windham, Sonrisa's program manager, and when an apartment opened up in October 2023, they moved in.

"Neal has just been amazing," Victoria says. "He was always so helpful, and my kids loved him. We really enjoyed our time there and felt very comfortable. If we needed anything, I would just call Neal and



Victoria and her daughter, Ariana, enjoying their new apartment.

he would come over, even if only to change a light bulb.

"I'm grateful for Sonrisa because it's the only place my two children (Antonio, 4, and Ariana, 3) know and the rent was cheap enough to enable me to get back on my feet again. And when my neighbors told me they saw someone standing outside our apartment at night, I was worried

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St. Elizabeth is dedicated to assisting homeless individuals and families by providing emergency shelter, food, case management, counseling, supportive housing and referrals to partnering human-services agencies.

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St. Elizabeth Shelters & Supportive Housing
 804 Alarid St. Santa Fe, NM 87505
 505-982-6611 (office) | 505-982-5347 (fax)
 www.stshelter.org

Director's Corner



Marty Ruybalid

February will mark my one-year anniversary as executive director at St. Elizabeth. In this short period of time, I have made many new friendships and connections within our community. I am appreciative of all of them and humbled by your generosity.

Most of all I find myself amazed at what people without resources or homes – our clients

– must endure and the creativity, resilience and bravery they display in working to improve their situations. As I spend time with these wonderful individuals and families, I am reminded of the complexities and long journeys all of them have traveled. Our supporting them in achieving their goals is also a long and complex journey.

A shelter is one step, but the road is still long. St. E's is here to assist in the journey as well as the ongoing struggles that continue to come after getting off the street and into a shelter. Through case management, counseling and guidance, we support people throughout the entire process of moving into transitional or permanent housing.

Our ability to provide transitional housing for families at Sonrisa or permanent housing for adults with disabilities at Casa Cerrillos is crucial to supporting the whole journey of exiting homelessness. Rental support, mental health services and housing navigation for people recently and precariously housed at places like Santa Fe Suites is yet another way we assist people in getting off the streets and into housing. And even when they move into other housing of their own, our clients, particularly those who have been homeless for a long time or with significant physical or mental health challenges, receive continued support to enable them to maintain their newfound housing and thrive in the community.

It's a true continuum of care, and I want to thank you for the role you play to help make it happen.

Executive Director

Life During Government Shutdown

When I first heard that the federal government planned to suspend SNAP benefits for the month of November due to the ongoing shutdown my heart sank. The timing, right before the holidays, felt especially cruel. I immediately thought of the countless families who rely on these benefits to feed their children and the emotional toll of facing empty cupboards during a season that's supposed to be about warmth, gratitude, and togetherness. SNAP suspension during the government shutdown revealed how quickly stability can slip away when systems fail and strengthened my commitment to building a future where I no longer have to rely on it.

As a single mother and full-time student, I rely on SNAP to help nourish my daughter and myself while I pursue a better future. When the news broke I went into survival mode. I compiled a list of local food banks and community resources, determined to make sure we wouldn't go hungry. With only a small balance left on my EBT card from October, I began rationing what little we had by stretching meals with Ramen noodles, canned soup and sandwiches. It isn't ideal or super healthy, but it kept us going. I knew I had to be strategic, not just emotional. I even offered to cook weekly meals in my crockpot for our small community at Sonrisa, because I believe in sharing what little we have when times are hard.

Community support and state leadership played a critical role in helping us survive the crisis. Thankfully, New Mexico's governor, Michelle Lujan Grisham, released \$30 million in emergency state funding to cover SNAP benefits starting November 1, a move that helped bridge the gap for over

460,000 residents, nearly 21% of our state's population. I'm also deeply grateful for Sonrisa and St. Elizabeth Shelters, programs that provided my family with stable housing and resources during this crisis. Food and shelter are not luxuries; they are basic human needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs reminds us that physiological and safety needs must be met before we can even begin

to pursue education, employment, or self-actualization. When those foundational needs are threatened, survival becomes the only option. No one can thrive when their most basic needs are ignored.

Still, the uncertainty lingered. Federal judges in Massachusetts and Rhode Island ruled that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) must use its \$4.65 billion

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Sonrisa resident Darlene "Maddy" Eastman shares her thoughts and experiences during the recent government shutdown.

Even Housed the Struggle Continues

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it might be my husband. Neal quickly put up cameras outside and on our doorway, and I went to the judge who had issued the original restraining order. He threatened my husband with jail and the mystery man suddenly disappeared.”

While living in the Las Vegas, NM, area Victoria earned an associates degree in Allied Health from Luna Community College and worked as a home-health aide. After moving to Santa Fe she began work as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) at Christus St. Vincent where she remains to this day.

“My goal is to go to nursing school and become an RN,” she says, “but nursing school is eight to five and I have two children at home, making day care a real challenge. Once I get my two kids in elementary school,

I’ll start the program. But until then I’m working on my online bachelor’s degree in Health Sciences from Grand Canyon University and will graduate in June of 2026.”

Obviously education and professional advancement are important to Victoria, and she’s received several raises from Christus by obtaining a translation certification as well as an advanced CNA certification. This past October she and the children moved from Sonrisa into an apartment of their own. Still life remains challenging.

“We’re doing very well and I’m making good money at work,” she says, “but it’s hard to get by. Because of the raises I’ve received, we’re no longer eligible for SNAP benefits or WIC, so it’s two steps forward and one step back. Because day care

is so expensive, I have to work the night shift at Christus (7 pm to 7 am) so my children can stay with my brother and his wife.

“I’m committed to staying in Santa Fe despite the high rents and cost of living because I’m still fearful whenever we return to Las Vegas. I feel we’ve been pretty lucky finding Sonrisa and getting all the help the program offers, like assisting us with the fees and deposits to move into our new apartment. It may seem trivial, but having my own washer and dryer is a very big deal for me.

“Our future is looking good,” Victoria says, “and I’m hoping I can get a better paying job with the education I’m receiving so we can begin to enjoy life and not have to continually struggle.”

THANK YOU DONORS

Please visit our website,

www.steshelter.org

to view the list of our generous donors from

July 1, 2025 – October 31, 2025

Life During Government Shutdown

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emergency fund to provide partial benefits, but the administration warned that those reserves could run dry. Watching the news, I was stunned to hear commentary suggesting that the USDA wrote a memo demanding to claw back benefits already issued. A federal judge blocked enforcement of that memo and accused the Trump administration as “playing vindictive games with critical food assistance.” I could not agree more. To think that American families, especially children, might go hungry during the holidays was both heartbreaking and outrageous. We are the richest country in the world, yet here we were scrambling to feed our families while political leaders debated whether we deserved basic nutrition.

This experience has tested my resilience, but it has also deepened my commitment to advocacy. I look forward to the day when I graduate, begin my career and no longer rely on government assistance. And not because I’m ashamed of needing help, but because I’ve worked hard to build a life of stability and purpose. SNAP benefits helped me survive. My education will help me thrive. And my voice, shaped by lived experience, will continue to speak out for those still fighting to meet their most basic needs. As I reflect, I am grateful for my recovery of over three years because before I would have let this crisis derail me. Now I respond with strategy, not panic. I lean on community, not chaos. These programs save people’s lives and they provide hope for a better future.

The Indispensable Man

Anyone who visits St. Elizabeth Shelter sees or knows Jeremy Ladner. Everywhere at once, he's currently the HMIS data entry specialist as well as lead trainer for new staff and volunteers and in charge of the shelter's inventory of food and supplies, while in the past he's been an intern, shift supervisor and case manager.

Originally from Hazleton, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Keystone College with a BA in Visual Arts but began abusing drugs there. Keeping his use under control, he worked as a sous chef in a local fine dining establishment for several years. The death of his grandfather before COVID was hard on his family, so his mother and step dad decided to move to New Mexico, and Jeremy followed to give them support. But his parents found life difficult here and decided to return east while Jeremy stayed.

"I had friends in Denver and had visited there twice before, as well as Albuquerque, so I wasn't afraid to move out west since I was somewhat familiar with the area," he says. "I also thought I could

address my hidden addiction by changing environments, but it only got worse and I went down deeper into that hole. Fortunately I sought and received treatment and then applied to St. Elizabeth."

Jeremy began as an intern in January 2023, quickly learning the ropes and taking on more and more responsibilities.

"He's the rock of the shelter," says Riyah Garcia, program manager of the Men's Emergency Shelter. "He started as an intern where he learned all the ins and outs - all the data, forms, filing. He's done so much and has all the qualities we look for in great employees - integrity, empathy, compassion - while understanding the balance between upholding the program's rules and working in shades of gray. One size doesn't fit for all our clients; they're individuals and need to be treated in different ways."

Though never technically homeless, Jeremy has been very precariously housed and this experience combined with his struggle with drugs gives him a better understanding of the issues most of the shelter's clients face.

"My work helps me find and give my life purpose," he says. "I feel I'm of value due to my recovery. One of the most rewarding things about working here is when someone feels safe and comfortable enough that they begin to lean on me for advice based on our shared experience."

His fellow shelter



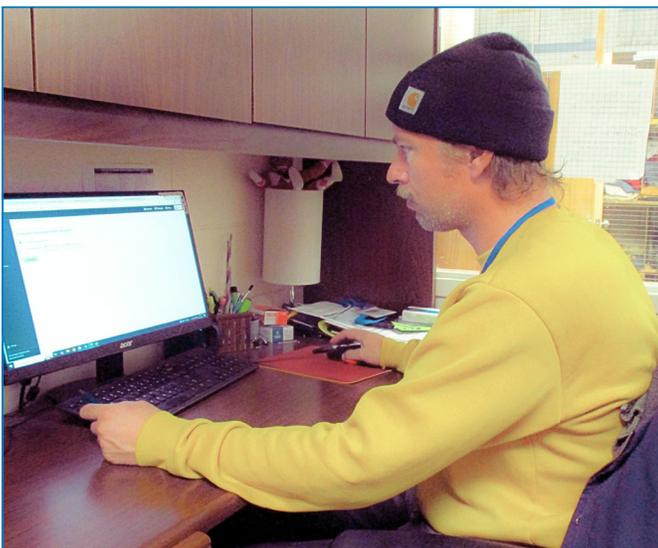
Jeremy bringing in a delivery from the Food Depot.

employees depend on him as well.

"Jeremy is rock solid, and I know he will always have my back," says Carrie Wilbur, case manager. "I bounce many of my ideas off him because he has a really good moral compass"

To further his goal, Jeremy intends to become a certified peer-support worker. Requirements are three years in recovery, two letters of support and a week-long course.

"The reason I am here is recovery," he says. "I feel I'm of value due to my recovery and I understand that it has to be the most important thing in my life. Nothing can come before that, and I try to impart that to our clients."

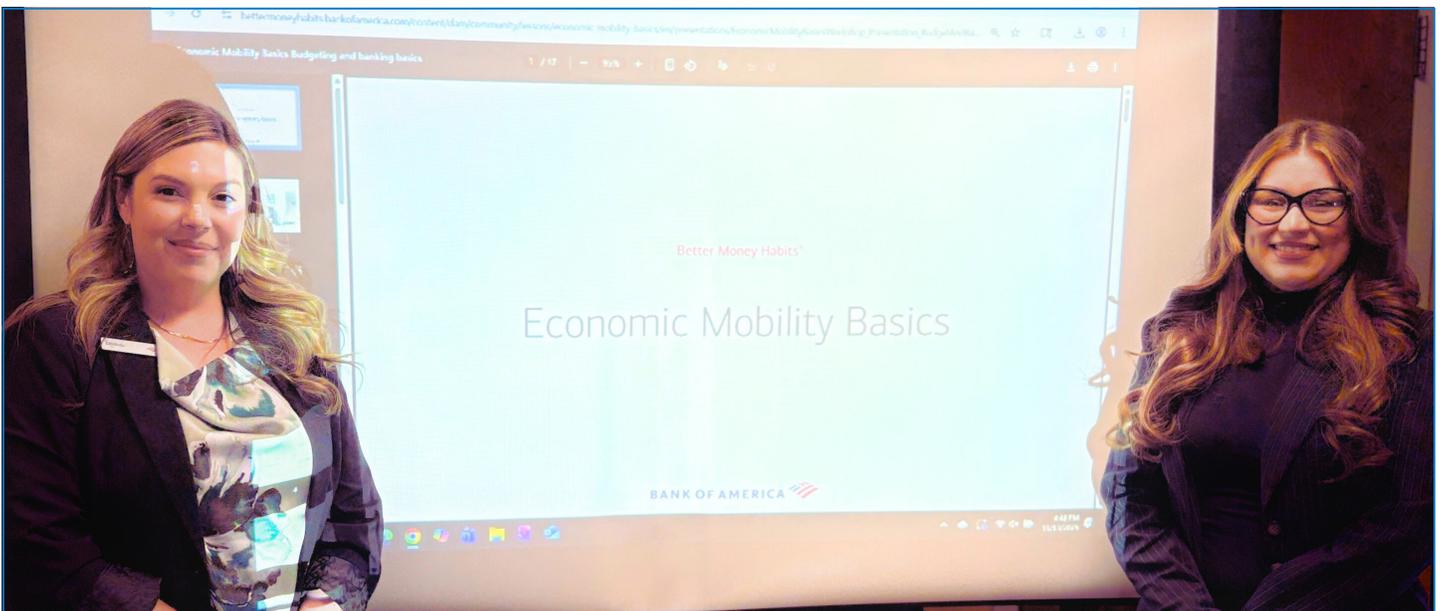


Jeremy inputting client demographic data into HUD's national HMIS database, a very important detail-oriented process.

Thank You to Our Dedicated Chefs!

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Kit Baum
Bethlehem Lutheran
Candlelight Neighborhood Association
Jackie Dulle
Calvin Fields
John Griego
Mike Hirsch
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Larry Montoya

Mormon Families of White Rock
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St. Bede's Episcopal Church
Tony Salazar & Friends
Santa Fe Vineyard
Kristin & Kathy Slater-Huff
Kim Ulibarri
United Church of Santa Fe
Upaya Zen Center
Zia United Methodist Church



Lindsay Panagakos (left) and Ashley Granillo (right), Bank of America financial center managers, present the first in a series of financial literacy sessions – budgeting, saving accounts, credit establishment, etc. – for residents at the Men's Emergency Shelter.



13TH ANNUAL

JOSEPH'S GULINARY PUB | VINAIGRETTE SANTA FE | HMF CHEFS | WHAT THE TRUCK | BOXCAR
Joseph Wrede | *Erin Wade* | *Victoria Bruneni* | *Eric Stumpf*

HUNGRY MOUTH *Festival*

It was a great evening with old friends and new ones!
 Thank you to all of our sponsors, donors and auction suppliers!
 Thank you to the amazing chefs that participated and truly tantalized the taste buds!
 Thank you to the Scottish Rite Temple for the amazing venue!
 Thank you to the volunteers that helped to pull everything together!
 Thank you to our auctioneer, Scott Rice, and all photo credit goes to Katie Johnson Photography.
 Thank you to my committee for a job well done and for making this the best event so far.
 They include Joanna Ipiotis, Sylvia Kumar and Donna Burns.
 Happy Holidays and may you all be blessed this holiday season and in the new year.
 Cheers,
 Calvin Fields, Event Fundraiser / Community Outreach
 St. Elizabeth Shelters & Supportive Housing

Thank you *and beyond for coming out to support the event.*
 Santa Fe



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Winter Wish List

MEN'S EMERGENCY SHELTER

Please call (982-6611) or bring the smaller items to St. Elizabeth at 804 Alarid Street.

Clothing: Hats, gloves, boots, shoes, socks, men's jackets, sweaters, hooded sweatshirts, long underwear, and winter outerwear.

Personal Hygiene: Disposable razors, shampoo, deodorant, chapstick.

Other: Sleeping bags, sleeping pads or mats, blankets, hand warmers, disposable blankets.

Food: Milk, juice, fresh fruits, bottled water, cheese, ground beef, ham, roasts, and sliced lunch meats.

Non-food items: Non-alcoholic cough syrup, Thera-flu, multivitamins, Emergen-C® packets, cough drops, Vitamin C, lip balm, band-aids, Alka-Seltzer cold®, Pepto-Bismol®, hand sanitizer, hand wipes, tissues, Lysol spray, foot powder.

Volunteers: Handy person for repairs, front-desk receptionists for 4- to 8-hour blocks of time once a week, cooks for dinners any night.

CASA FAMILIA

Please call (983-2042) or bring the smaller items to Casa Familia at 1604 Berry Ave.

Clothing: Women's underwear, socks, warm jackets, rain wear, hand warmers, shoes, weather-appropriate boots; girl's/boy's clothing, school uniforms.

Personal Hygiene: Hand sanitizer, shampoo, conditioner, moisturizer, feminine hygiene products, disposable razors (female), toothbrushes, toothpaste, band aids, hair brushes, foot powder, body soap, nail polisher & clippers, nail files, deodorant (women's) alka-seltzer cold®, pepto-bismol®, over-the-counter medication (ibuprofen), baby wipes, baby powder, make up.

Food: Non-perishable food, bottled water, juice, coffee & tea, spices, \$25 gift cards for Walmart, McDonald's, Wendy's, Subway, etc.

Other: Blankets, sleeping bags, tents, bed sheets (twin), diapers (all sizes, particularly 2-5), cleaning supplies, dish soap, toilet paper, paper towels, Qtips, cotton balls, laundry detergent, latex-free gloves, kitchen utensils, can openers, plastic plates, silverware, kitchen pots & pans, water bottles, shower shoes, AA/9-volt & AAA batteries, backpacks (adult & children), ear plugs, headphones, bus passes (Santa Fe Trails one-day, round trip or monthly), passes for community activities (eg. Chavez Center or Children's Museum), standard tools for home repair, microwaves, mini-fridges.

Volunteers: Front-desk receptionists from 4- to 8-hour blocks of time once a week, cooks for dinner any night.

CASA CERRILLOS

Please call (471-3456) to discuss their current needs before bringing them to the facility at 3811½ Cerrillos Road.

Household Items: Kitchen appliances, cleaning supplies, pet food.

Larger Items: Flatscreen tvs, computers & laptops, fencing materials.

SANTA FE SUITES

Please bring to 3007 S. St. Francis Drive (behind Albertson's) but call first (505-494-4231) for furniture.

Clothing: Winter coats, socks & boots.

Household Items: Cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, pots/pans, crockpots, cooking utensils, full size sheets/blankets, towels, dish soap, dish towels.

Other: AA/AAA batteries, BUS PASSES, hygiene and feminine hygiene products.