



grapevine

Fall/Winter 2011

What we do today affects generations to come.



Angie Vachio, Mrs. Hawk, Susannah Burke, NM Sen. Tim Keller, Bernalillo County Commissioner Maggie HartStebbins and Dr. Javier Aceves cut the ribbon to the new Robert M. Hawk PB&J Family Services Building.

Opening the Package of Dreams: SE Heights Ribbon Cutting

By Phoebe Becktell

Preceded by drums, dancing, and a blessing by Aztec Dancers a group of supporters snipped the ribbon that opened the package that Angie Vachio and Dr. Javier Aceves have dreamed about for many years.

Under a clear blue New Mexico sky, the Robert M. Hawk PB&J Family Services Building was opened. Henceforth members of the International District community have access to integrated health and family services. Aceves summarizes the impact of this collaboration: "PB&J can help us address the other 70% of what determines healthy outcomes; our medical interventions focus on the 30% that has to do with healthy lives."

In the Summer/Fall issue of this newsletter we told you about the collaboration between Dr. Aceves at the Young Children's Health Center (YCHC), and Angie Vachio, then Executive Director

of PB&J. In response Nancy Bearce, Chair, board of Directors La Mesa Community Improvement Association and President of the District 6 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, clarified the history of the SE Heights community: "The WZ term was first used during the beginning of what is now Kirtland Air Force Base and the United State's involvement in the Korean War, Word War II and then the Viet Nam War. When military members returned . . . many returned with new families and spouses from those foreign lands and settled in the neighborhoods surrounding Kirtland AFB. . . Both Catholic Charities and national agencies identified Trumbull Village and La Mesa neighborhoods as war refugee resettlement programs because of existing cultural diversity, affordable housing and proximity to services and public transportation." During the 1970s to 1990s the area became distressed. The community was targeted for transformation 12 years ago, and three years ago "the old moniker of the area [was] changed & memorialized by all 3 levels of New Mexico government, i.e. City, County, and State" henceforth to be known as The International District.

Community efforts have indeed transformed the area. One example is the dream package effort of YCHC and PB&J that foreshadowed the integrated services realized by the opening of the Robert M. Hawk PB&J Family Services Building. The late Robert Hawk who passed away in June, served as Bernalillo County Commissioner for 6 years prior to his 14 year tenure in the NM Legislature. He was honored, and other facilitators were recognized in a ceremony attended by SE Heights families, professionals, and local dignitaries.

One of the families attending was among the first clients of Claudia Benevidez, who is named as the SE Heights program director of the new facility. Norma and José live in the heart of the International District. When their first baby was born, PB&J's Benevidez visited them to assess their family functioning needs. Norma said the doctor had told them the baby would have Down Syndrome. She fearfully asked Claudia, "Can you look at my baby and tell me if he has Down Syndrome?" She was afraid to go back to the doctor for fear of more bad news.

Claudia went over to the Young Children's Health Center, which had served the area for more than 30 years. There Dr. Aceves looked up records, examined the child, clarified what must have been a misunderstanding due to the language barrier, and pronounced the baby normal and healthy. YCHC Family services have continued to aid and support them.

Norma and Jose's "baby" is now 5 years old. He's fully bilingual, and teachers describe him as bright. (He didn't attend the opening ceremonies because he didn't want to miss school!) His parents both have stable jobs and continue to learn English. The family lives on a strict budget; they have opened a savings account, and are close to reaching their goal of a down payment for a house.

The combined services now offered in the International District will serve as a model for health and family services in the future.

You see, "What we do today really does affect generations to come."



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Hello Dear PB&J Friends,

As we approach our 40th year of serving New Mexico families, I am so proud to share with you some very exciting news. Through funding from the Kellogg Foundation, PB&J is beginning a program evaluation process that will help us measure the effectiveness of our programs. For all of these years our programs have grown in response to community needs as expressed by our families and our collaborators. As we have worked with families and other providers we have learned; we have shared our knowledge; and we have advocated for policies that support children and their families. Now through better use of data, we will be able to refine our programs and PB&J will be able to better inform policy analysis. I cannot think of a better way to honor our 40th anniversary and honor the work of all the people who have contributed to the greatness of PB&J.

My sincerest thanks to all of you for your dedicated support,

Susannah Burke

It W.O.R.K.S.

By Dina Ma'ayan, Katrina Soto, and Phoebe Beckett

Emily had spent time in prison; when she was released, she returned to a domestic violence situation; she was the full time parent of two toddlers; and she had probation, meetings, counseling, and job searching to manage while being surrounded by bad influences. But she had

been successful in PB&J's reintegration program while in prison.

That success helped qualify her for "Project WORKS!" (When Opportunity Really Knocks, Share!) PB&J Family Services is among the top 7% of the applicants throughout the nation funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Second Chance Act Grant in 2009 for its work with the reentry of felons back into the community.

"The grant addresses the needs of some of our most challenging clients to employ," PB&J Executive Director Susannah Burke explains. "The moms and dads who are selected [from those involved in the reintegration program] are referred to as "protégés. It's exciting and challenging." They are all highly motivated and demonstrate incredible potential.

Project WORKS! actually begins during incarceration. Selected participants meet weekly to prepare for reunification with their families. Upon release, graduates of the program are matched with mentors volunteering from more than a dozen corporate partners to provide the skills necessary for employment.

The Project WORKS!" grant request grew out of the assistance Wells Fargo had offered PB&J on financial literacy, budgeting issues, and ways to avoid debt with a "Train the Trainer" program.

"Financial education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, and PB&J has implemented an impressive model. We are honored to partner with this exceptional program," explains Linda Riley, regional president for Wells Fargo NM.

The remaining gap—helping our clients to get jobs—was filled by a program designed by Intel volunteers to provide assistance to clients to prepare résumés and learn job interviewing skills. The data for the program they designed gave PB&J the information needed to create the federal grant which

was awarded funding for the next 2 years. The first year provided for 30 clients, followed by 100 in the second year. Upon release from prison, these clients are matched with mentors to provide job tips, ideas for networking, and the support needed to find a job. They are also provided with case management and support with parenting by PB&J staff.



Protégé receives a mock interview from Jennifer Riordan at Wells Fargo

Since Soto was matched with Emily in April 2011, they have dedicated time every Tuesday to meet. One of the first issues they faced was the domestic violence situation. Through the mentoring, Emily was able to recognize the situation and find the courage to leave in order to provide safety for her children and herself.

“Currently my protégé maintains a 10 month sobriety; she is enrolled at CNM on her way to receiving her GED, and [being] a single parent providing for her kids. Emily is beating all odds, working hard, and is 100% dedicated to breaking the cycle to better herself and the life of her kids,” declares Soto. “I am truly proud to share her progress.”

Be sure PB&J Families are on your Christmas list this year!

Adopt-A-Family Holiday Gift program allows you to send a gift either personally or through us directly to the children in our community. To sign up, please contact Donna Brew at PB&J 877-7060 or at donna@pbjfamilyservices.org

Save the Date

Be our guest for our annual Thanksgiving Celebration.

**Tuesday, Nov 22,
11:30-1:00**
St. Anne's Parish in the South Valley, 1400 Arenal Rd SW

**Wednesday, Nov 23, Our Lady of Sorrows,
11:30-1:00**
301 Camino del Pueblo, Town of Bernalillo

Pathways to Health

By Phoebe Beckettell

Do PB&J children go on to finish high school? Do our families have lower social services referrals? Is the generational cycle of crime broken by PB&J’s prison programs? Are families successfully reunited after children experience abuse or neglect? What are the pathways that lead to healthy families?

For the past 39 years the staff at PB&J Family Services have been “helping at-risk children grow and develop to their full potential within nurturing families and a supportive community.” Strategies have been based on common sense. For example, when the kids of depressed mothers learned to play, it became evident that the mothers were challenged by this new, enthusiastic behavior. When the mothers were included in the program, parent and child learned together and became a stronger family. That was the profound finding that continues to dictate our Family Centered approach.

As early childhood theory shapes intervention strategies, anecdotal evidence seems to show that we’re on the right path. And we have lots of data. In general, though, the outcomes have

not been evaluated to demonstrate that, overall, we’re setting a standard for best practice. Oh, we have some evidence. The recidivism data for our programs for families impacted by incarceration show that 90% of clients served by PB&J have not returned to prison; and Time Limited Reunification programs have resulted in successfully reuniting 85% of families in less than 12 months, well above the federal Administration for Children and Families performance of 76.2%.

However, many of our long term outcomes have not been evaluated. The grant awarded by the Kellogg Foundation (see Susannah Burke’s letter, page 2) to a five member collaboration of organizations in the South Valley will help PB&J address some of those outcomes. The Collaborative—consisting of the Rio Grande Economic Development Center, La Plazita Institute, Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, Casa Salud, and PB&J Family Services—uses the strengths of each agency to respond to the health needs of the South Valley community and determine the Pathways to Health. The focus of PB&J will be to use our vast data base to evaluate whether what we are doing is effective in the long term.

PB&J Family Services will then be able to demonstrate that we are setting the standard for practices that are the pathways to healthy families.



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Thank You...

*For the Robert M. Hawk PB&J Family Services Building.
Created with a vision for health & wellness for the families of
the International District:*

County Commissioner
Maggie HartStebbins

Former County Commissioner
Deanna Archuleta

Senator *Tim Keller*

State Representative *Al Park*

City Councilman *Rey Garduño*

PB&J Founder *Angie Vachio*

**Dr. Javier Aceves & UNM Hospital's
Young Children's Health Clinic**

**& the Neighborhood Associations,
Coalitions, and residents of the
International District**

Lobby

*Named for Angie Vachio,
PB&J Founder*

**Therapeutic
Preschool Classroom**



**Therapeutic
Preschool Classroom**



Front play area

*Being designed by Griffin &
Hunter; to be in place soon*

Community Kitchen



**Wing to Community
Resources**



Playground

*In Loving Memory of James Mulcahy.
He loved kids and was a big kid himself.*

Conference Room *Named for the Anderson Family &*



Counseling Room *The "Don't Be Afraid to Speak Room"*

Named for the Monte Family

Picnic Area

*An anonymous "Guardian Angel"
(being designed by a PB&J Papa, to be in place
soon!)*

Path to Wellness *PB&J's 2011 & 2012 Guardian*

*Angels, Angie's Legacy members & Board
of Directors
(being designed by a PB&J Papa, to be in place
soon!)*