

"It is a tight knit community," he said. "It is nice to be a part of something that is bigger than one's self."

But he said along with that

support their children."

The Foundation is a large contributor to the educational endeavors of many residents

area's politicians.

"It seems like a little clique of *politicos* is destroying our hope for the future," Gutierrez.

Foundation Chief Executive Officer Jenny Parks talked during the Our Voices: Intergenerational Visioning workshop Oct. 13, at Española Valley High School Library. Other than the teachers and counselors that attended the event, Graves was the only member of the District's administration to attend and listen to what the students had to say.

United Way Seeks Pre-K Development Input

By Barron Jones
SUN Staff Writer

Many studies have concluded early childhood education programs could have a positive impact on the lives of children who participate in one of the many programs that have sprung up in recent years.

Early childhood education programs have such an influence that one Santa Fe nonprofit believes every family in

Española and across the state should reap the benefits.

To emphasize that point, representatives from United Way of Santa Fe County rolled through Española Oct. 20 to visit the Family Learning Center and the Bond Street Education Center to talk with providers and community members about expanding the service to every family in the state.

United Way's Danila Crespin Zidov

ovsky and her colleagues are successful, New Mexico families will, someday, be able to send their 3- and 4-year-old children to school just like older children who attend traditional K-12 public or private schools. The initiative could also increase pre-K services for about 36,000 of the state's 3- and 4-year-olds, who historically have not had access to these services.

Specifically, the employees of United Way are working to promote a poli-

cy initiative that would provide "two years of high-quality, full-day pre-K to every New Mexico family that wants it," Zidovsky said.

The initiative would cost about \$285 million or \$57 million per year to fund the program for five years.

Zidovsky said she doubts, with the state's current financial crisis, such a measure would gain approval from state legislators. But that is all the more reason to keep pressing forward.

"Obviously with the budget shortfall, we have to take into consideration (what the) likelihood of not getting something like this passed this year would be," she said. "But obviously we have to stay focused on expanding pre-K. This is not the time to back down. This is the time to double down."

Before visiting Española, the tour stopped and talked in Las Cruces, Farmington and has a Dec. 1 date to visit Hobbs.

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