

REPORT—YEAR 2007

The office is open to the public:
Mondays 9:00 – 12:00
Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00 – 4:30
Wednesdays 9:00 – 12 and
1:00 – 4:30
Fridays by appointment

Selenia's Schedule
Please call. Schedule may vary
each semester

(Selenia is a Western State College Student, so her schedule may vary during the year)

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FROM ELLEN PEDERSEN
 COORDINATOR, MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE OFFICE

Imagine you immigrated to Africa and you see this sign:

የሰው ፍቅር ፡ ሁሉ ፡ ሲወለድ ፡ ነጻና ፡ በክብርና ፡ በመብትም ፡ አክልነት ፡ ያለው ፡ ነው ፡
 የተፈጥሮ ፡ የማስተዋልና ፡ ሕሊናው ፡ ስላለው ፡ ከንዱ ፡ ሌላውን ፡ በወንድማማችነት ፡
 መንፈስ ፡ መመልከት ፡ የገባዋል ።

You are in Ethiopia. What would you do? You could ask a passerby to read the sign to you, and you will hear the following transliteration:

Yä-säw lij hullu siwwäläd näs'a-nna bä-kibrinna bä-mäbtim ikkulinnät y-allaw näw yä-täfat'ro yä-mastäwalinna hilinaw silallaw andu lelawn bä-wändimamacinnät mänfäs mämälkät yä-gäbbawal.

You would probably be confused because you'd be unable to understand even one word (although you did take some classes before you left). The whole situation would be intimidating. A person that speaks your language tells you that the sign is the *Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Suppose you live in Ethiopia. Few people speak your language. You get sick and have to go to the hospital. How do you tell your employer that you can't go to work? How do you find a doctor? do you really need to go to the hospital or are there clinics? How do you explain the symptoms? How do you buy medicine? Where is the pharmacy—or rather, where is medicine sold? How do you take it if the instructions are written in a language you can't read? How do you pay? What is your address if they need to bill? How do you find out the street name and number? If they bill you, you'll have to get a bank account? How can I recognize a bank if I can't read the signs? Where can you go to take language classes?

I could go on forever with everyday situations. This is the experience of hundreds of immigrants in Gunnison County that come seeking help with the Multicultural Resource Office.

As you can see, I have a very interesting job, I meet very interesting people, and I am usually able to help. If somebody is sick, I help make an appointment, get an interpreter, and then I follow up to see if they are doing better. I may call the school at their request to let them know that somebody won't be in school. I also call the landlord if there are frozen pipes, or the employer when there are language barriers. I also assist connecting workers with Department of Labor if there are disputes. Sometimes, there is no way to help; the office works within the law at all times and many times this limits us. We try hard to provide resources while maintaining due diligence and figure, and even though we cannot help, we know that we tried.

If you have a communication problem, if you want to learn more about our immigrant neighbors, please call me and I will be glad to [try to] help!

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Translation Services
 14-24 cents per word
 Excellent quality
 Call the Multicultural Resource Office for a quote

Who are our clients and what do we help them with?

INTERESTING CLIENT STATISTICS 2007

The Multicultural Resource Office is now part of the merged Department of Health and Human Services. We act as a single entry point for non-English speakers in the community to get information, education, referrals and any type of assistance that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to facilitate a smooth transition in our county.

The Multicultural Resource Office opened its doors in December 2001; In 2007 we helped 248 families, almost two-and-a-half as many as in 2002 (Table 1) which includes 638 family members, of which 271 are children. The number of families per month ranged between 93 (in May) and 126 families (in April), with a mean of 109 families/month (Table 2).

The great majority (83.8%) of clients visiting the Multicultural Resource Office in 2007 were from Mexico (Table 3). Of those, 30.8% were Cora Indians and 1% Huichol Indians from Nayarit, in the mountains of Western Mexico, and 60.7% were Mexicans (non-Cora or Huichol) from several states. South and Central American countries were represented by people from Peru, Guatemala, Argentina, and El Salvador (6.3%) and Europe/Asia (0.5%) includes clients from Russia and England.

(Continued on page 3)

Table 1. Number of clients, family members and children

year	# Families	# people	# children
2002	94	n/a	n/a
2003	137	420	173
2004	147	420	189
2005	173	466	196
2006	196	523	215
2007	248	638	271

Table 2. Number of unduplicated families/month

Month	Families
Jan	101
Feb	95
Mar	115
Apr	126
May	93
Jun	112
Jul	120
Aug	113
Sep	102
Oct	103
Nov	115
Dec	118

Table 3. Ethnicity (families)	%
Mexico	83.8
Mexico (other than Cora/ Cora)	60.7
Huichol	1.0
So./ Cent. America	6.3
Europe/Asia	0.5
Unknown	9.6

Table 4. Age range of women (n=132)

Age	%
≤20	8.1
21-25	28.5
26-30	19.2
31-35	22.1
36-40	7.6
41-45	5.8
46-50	5.2
≥50	3.5

Table 5. Number of Children/family

Children	%
0	50
1	16.9
2	14.5
3	13.3
4	4.4
5	0.4
6	0.4

Table 6. Volunteer hours

year	hours
2002	431.5
2003	192.6
2004	617.5
2005	626.6
2006	517.0
2007	521.0

Table 7. Children's age (n=271)

age	#	%
0	24	9
1	25	9
2	28	10
3	20	7
4	19	7
5	14	5
6	14	5
7	15	6
8	19	7
9	11	4
10	16	6
11	17	6
12	12	4
13	14	5
14	4	1
15	7	3
16	6	2
17	3	1
18	3	1

Table 8. Type of contact	Number
Education	157
Health	1,441
Human Services	178
Legal	387
Miscellaneous	618
Work	217

(Continued from page 2)

Women are most frequently using the Multicultural Resource Office for assistance; over 75% of the clients were women on behalf of their families. Most of the men that visit the Multicultural Resource Office have family in their home country. About half (48%) of the women were in their twenties, 30% in their thirties, 11% in their forties and 3.5% of the women were 50 or over and 8% were younger than 20 (Table 4).

A high percentage (50%) of the families that use the Multicultural Resource Office either do not have children or the children are in their home country with relatives or they are over 18 (Table 5). For the families with children, the family sizes range from 1 to 6 children per household. Most families that have children in Gunnison have 1 or 2 children (16.9% and 14.5% respectively); others have 3 or 4 (13.3% and 4.4%, respectively), and 0.4% have 5 or 6 children.

Because of the relatively new phenomena of immigrant influx in our area, the population of younger children is higher than of older children. About 50% of the children are 6 years old or younger and only 8% are 14 and older. (Table 7.) All the families, people, or children are not necessarily in Gunnison at all times. Some people move to other places, but if they were in the Multicultural Resource Office at least once during the year, they get recorded as “clients” for that year.

A great group of people has volunteered over 2,384 hours since the Multicultural Resource Office opened in December 2001. In 2007 there were about 33 bi- or multilingual interpreters ready to assist at doctor or dental appointments, and any other circumstance needed, such as translating materials, answering immigration questions, talking to a landlord or business, etc.

The number of volunteer hours has decreased in the last couple of years (Table 6), in part because local businesses are hiring bilingual staff. The number of hours registered by the Multicultural Resource Office is also an under representation because the volunteers spend more time volunteering than they report.

Contacts: The Multicultural Resource Office made over 2,998 contacts on behalf of clients during 2007 (Table 8), which is a 22% increase from 2006. A contact is a call or communication to an office or person on behalf of clients or vice versa. All calls were followed up if necessary.

Education: are contacts with all schools (transportation, free or reduced food, a sick child, a lost pair of glasses, etc). Selenia Rascón, hired in August 2005, mainly takes this part of the job and her the statistics are not included.

Health: are contacts with Public Health (appointments for shots, family planning), local clinics and doctors, prenatal care, hospitals in Gunnison, Montrose, Grand Junction, and Denver, as well as the local and out of town dentists, and mental health offices. We helped making appointments, interpreting during the visits, inquiring about bills, pharmacy calls, etc.

Department of Human Services: communications with DHS for food stamps, Medicaid, child abuse or neglect, etc.

Legal: contacts with Colorado Legal Services and local and out of town law enforcement and lawyers. We provided interpreters, answered immigration questions, and had contact with the local police department and public defenders, as well as the courts and jail.

Miscellaneous: contacts with the Gunnison Arts Center, banks, driver's license office, grocery shopping, housing and landlords, car insurance, IRS, Mexican consulate, DMV, Partners and Bright Beginnings, phone company, post office, SHARE program, taxes, utilities, etc. We provided interpreters and helped understand the complex system of living in America.

Work: contacts with employers. The Multicultural Resource Office does not help finding jobs but helps communicating. In a number of cases we established contact with Colorado Department of Labor in cases when the employers refused to pay the employees.

HOW TO OBTAIN AND USE INTERPRETERS



Multicultural Resource Office interpreters are in most cases volunteers. The going rate to pay an interpreter (which many agencies, organizations and businesses do in town) is \$15-\$30 an hour (but can be up to \$150/hour or more). The interpreters use volunteer time to practice and broaden language and interpretation skills. Many are trained in specific areas such as Medical or Courts so they may not want or be able to interpret in a different situation.

The Multicultural Resource Office will be able to help you with your specific needs so please always call us first (970)-641-7999. The hours interpreters put forth are used to obtain grants to sustain the Office so it is crucial to report them.

Please contact the Multicultural Resource Office when you need an interpreter and never call the interpreter directly.

- Talk to the non-English speaker directly, the interpreter is just the “voice.”
- Interpreters are encouraged to talk in the first person- just as they hear it.
- The interpreter will interpret everything that is said to the best of their ability.
- The interpreter will stop the session if they feel there is misunderstanding or if they need clarification. They are also encouraged to explain cultural differences if needed.
- Using an Interpreter takes more time, be patient and plan accordingly.
- Refrain from turning the interpreting session into a tutoring lesson if you can speak some of the second language. If you would like help, ask the interpreter after the session.
- Interpreters are encouraged to bring a notebook, pen and dictionary. Please accommodate them if needed.
- Many of our Spanish-speaking clients are Cora Indians who speak Spanish as a second language. We do not have many Cora interpreters so know that there will be some gaps in the language since most interpreters will know more Spanish than the clients.
- When speaking, pause regularly so that the interpreter can do their job.

LIVING IN AMERICA WORKSHOPS

We had 3 very successful Living in America Workshops: 1) “Workers Rights” by Larry Gallegos from Colorado Department of Labor; 2) “Community Resources” by several speakers, and 3) “Talk to Law Enforcement”.

CALL
641-7999
TO INQUIRE ABOUT INTERPRETERS
OR TRANSLATIONS

“CONSULADO MÓVIL”

In the summer of 2007 the Mexican Consulate came to Gunnison. They usually go in the summer to rural areas to issue Mexican Passports and other documents. Gunnison Valley Citizen’s Alliance (especially Vicky Archuleta) organized this event for the first time in Gunnison. It took place at the Parish Hall. Thank you Vicky and Father Steve. They issued 174 matrículas and 74 passports

FUNDING FOR THE MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE OFFICE

Funding for the Multicultural Resource Office is provided by the following organizations:

THE COLORADO TRUST: Awarded 4-year grant of \$300,000 for immigrant integration projects in Gunnison County.

STATE TOBACCO EDUCATION & PREVENTION PROGRAM
CANCER, CARDIOVASCULAR, AND PULMONARY DISEASE PREVENTION PROGRAM
GUNNISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GRANTS & DONATIONS

INMIGRANTES UNIDOS

A new group has been formed by local immigrants with the support of CIRC (Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition). They are working on Immigrant rights, preparedness in case of emergencies, understanding of the system. They need support from “allies”, people from the community that can help in different ways. Contact the Multicultural Resource Office if you would like to participate.

SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE FAMILY INITIATIVE (SIRFI) ON IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

(BY MARY BURT)

SIRFI on Immigrant Integration is in its third year of implementation. This 4-year statewide initiative that is funded by the Colorado Trust, a grant-making foundation in Denver, began in Gunnison in 2003.

Currently nineteen communities are working on this effort. All communities take different approaches to Immigrant Integration. In Gunnison we focus on giving Immigrants opportunities to enable them to live productively. Immigrant Integration is a two way street where the receiving community and newcomers both have to work together to foster integration.

Gunnison is continually used as a model by other communities for the **Multicultural Resource Office**, the **Living in America Workshops** and now the **Intercambio** literacy classes.

For the immigrant community we have created and are sustaining opportunities to learn English, the laws of the United States, parenting and the education system. For the receiving community, we offer opportunities to engage with and learn about immigrants that live in our community.

This past year, we were able to launch our last activity outlined in the community written comprehensive plan of 2004 which is access to health care for the uninsured or underinsured.

The **Light Program**, named after Dr. Mason Light, one of Gunnison's past doctors who helped found Gunnison Valley Family Physicians, provides access to health care. This is a grant and donation supported project to promote access to medical care for residents of Gunnison County who do not have insurance or have only catastrophic insurance. The SIRFI funds pay a coordinator: Jill Stahlnecker of Public Health, to administer the program and to date, Mary Burt has written grants and secured donations from private individuals to the tune of \$4,800. This will help with the supplemental funding needed that cannot be accessed through other County programs. This voucher project is an example of a local solution to the universal health care access issue.

The **Literacy Action Program's** hard work at providing a comprehensive approach to education through instruction of **English, Spanish, Family Literacy, Homework Club** and **Early Childhood Education** is already being sought after by other grantee sites to be used as a model. Their partnership with the REIJ school district and Western State College will prove to be beneficial to the entire community.

For the next fifteen months left of the grant, Mary Burt will be working on sustaining the programs that receive SIRFI funds, as well as promoting Gunnison County's integration efforts across the nation and in Belgium. Mary is one of twelve Americans chosen to participate in a cultural exchange program. The project, titled *US-Belgium Cultural Crossing: An International Network of Local Practitioners Serving Immigrant Communities*, will facilitate a dialogue among U.S. and Belgian practitioners involved with immigrant communities to discuss best practices and new approaches to integration. Mary will travel to Belgium twice this year. Her work will focus specifically on the development of skills needed to confront the local challenges and questions facing immigrant practitioners as they work within the framework of local, state, and federal policies, as well as the realities of daily life in the communities "on the street." All program activities are devised to help the participants understand actual integration activities pertaining to education and job training, conflict resolution, intercultural training, public safety and law enforcement, governmental and private sector support, as well as political/community awareness and leadership. This program is sponsored by the Department of State and The King Baudouin Foundation.

Find the **Bilingual Resource Guide** [find all the resources available in the community] and the **Cora Booklet** [learn about our neighbors, the Cora] at http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/health_human_services_multi_cultural.html

Speakers in the Valley

The relevance of immigration was evident by **Public Policy Forum** invited speaker, Reverend Delle McCormick who talked about "Immigration and the Human Face of Economics" last summer. Delle is the Executive Director of "Borderlinks", a non profit organization dedicated to building healthy relationships and understanding between Latin America and the USA. Please see <http://www.borderlinks.org/bl/index.htm> for more information.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer of the year (Once again!)

Marketa Zubkova

For the third year in a row, Marketa has been the volunteer of the year. She volunteered 295 hours in 2007. Marketa has probably volunteered more than that, because she is constantly involved with the immigrants. Marketa is fluent in Spanish, a language she has learned in the past few years. She should be the inspiration for all of us who are trying to learn a language. It is not only her language skills that are outstanding; Marketa is genuinely a good person with a big heart and a desire to help.

This year again she has been going to almost all the prenatal appointments and in many cases she was called by Gunnison Valley Hospital at the time when the babies were born.

Fortunately for our community, Marketa is working (and getting paid) with several other programs where she has the chance to interact with immigrants.

To all of you who are lucky to work with Marketa, please remember that she is volunteering and please say: ¡Gracias Marketa!

Prenatal Program

In 2007, 23 healthy babies were born to mothers that had signed up for the Prenatal Program through Gunnison County Public Health and the Multicultural Resource Office.

The program is available for all women without insurance that do not qualify for Medicaid. For a reasonable fee, the women visit the doctor during the entire pregnancy, accompanied by an interpreter.

In the last 3 years all babies were born healthy, with good birth weight, and none of the babies had to be flown to a larger hospital.

A special GRACIAS goes to Drs. Bonney, Garren, Matthews, McMurren, and Niccoli who participate in the program. Again this year, for most of the appointments, Marketa Zubkova was the interpreter and often she was called to the hospital to interpret during the delivery of the baby.

Thank you to the doctor's offices (doctors, nurses, receptionists) and to the Gunnison Valley Hospital, Gunnison County, the interpreters, and everybody else involved.



Volunteers

In 2007 the Multicultural Resource Office had 33 volunteers who collectively speak 11 languages (Cora, Czech, Danish, English, French, German, Hebrew, Portuguese, Slovak, Spanish, and Sign (ASL / PSE)). Not all volunteers have an opportunity to work in part because of other commitments (family, work, school, etc.) or distance. I am grateful for having such a wonderful group of people that I know I can count on. I recorded over 580 volunteer hours. This year the number of hours recorded by the Multicultural Resource Office decreased slightly because Gunnison Family Medical Center has hired 2 bilingual receptionists and Gunnison Valley Family Physicians has hired Dr Matthews who speaks Spanish. Several local businesses have also hired bilingual staff.

I thank everybody, even those that are not able to volunteer much and those that help "off the record".

Thank you to the following volunteers: Elba Alarcón, Rossana Alarcón, Jose Alarcón, Arden Anderson, Tim Bakken, Monica Billow, Sylvia Bonham, Mary Burt, Cecilia Carreras, Elisa Celestino, Luke Danielson, Xavier Fane, Rolando Fernandez, Ivonne Guzman, Karen Immerso, Stevie Kremer, Kelsey McDonald, Veronica Mendez, Kathryn Merritt, Angelica Mora, Kate Osborne, Marisol Paniagua, Ellen Pedersen, Laura Rascon, Selenia Rascon, Daniela Runge, Cynthia Saenz, Marilyn Sandoval, Susan Searles, Alana Solimeo, Kendra Stuckey, Alicia Taggart, Janet Welsh Crossley, and Marketa Zubkova.

Special thanks to

Angélica Mora, Sylvia Bonham and Verónica Méndez for volunteering MANY hours.



Volunteer appreciation lunch in December, 2007.

L-R: Angélica Mora, Ellen Pedersen, Verónica Méndez, Selenia Rascon, Marketa Zubkova, Laura Rascon, Mary Burt, and Arden Anderson

ACTIVITIES AND COLLABORATION IN 2007

Gunnison Valley Hospital: To improve the quality of services for non-English speaking community members: –Language Barrier Program providing Medical Interpreters and substantial help from the Charity Program. –Bilingual volunteers for **Health Fair**; promoted the program and got vouchers for clients. **Dispatch and Police:** List of interpreters to call 24/7. **Gunnison Arts Center:** Multicultural art exhibition, guitar concert: Alejandro Dávila from Argentina and Jim Bosse from Cañón City, “Book Talk” (in March we discuss a book related to immigrant lives in English or Spanish and have a bilingual discussion).

Gunnison County Parks and Recreation: scholarships and translation of materials. **Union Congregational church:** Ellen was an invited speaker to share the experiences of Multicultural Resource Office. **Extension Nutrition Programs Family & Consumer Science Agent-Colorado State University Cooperative Extension:** Parenting classes, announcements, and activities. **Toys for Tots:** Distribution of Christmas presents. **Partners:** Promotion of Summer Youth Program. **Gunnison Shopper:** Publishes ads and announcements in Spanish. **Office of Resource Efficiency:** To help low-income families lower heating bills in winter. **Saint Peter’s and Community Church:** Assisted in helping needy families pay the rent during some especially hard circumstances. **Saint Peter’s Catholic Church, Community Church, and Congregational Church:** Provided funds for an interpreter for the “Talk to a lawyer” program. **Department of Human Services:** Board member of Child Protection Team, Health and Human Services. **Non-Traditional Emergency Preparedness:** Helping organize action in case of emergency or pandemic. **Translation of materials:** Bright Beginnings, Department of Human Services, Gunnison Valley Hospital, Library and Literacy, Local Businesses, Partners, Public Health, Toys for Tots, etc.

Colorado Fitness: Jane Tunnedine donated several free gym passes to Multicultural Resource Office clients. **GCSAPP** (Gunnison County Substance Abuse Prevention Project), **ECC** (Early Childhood Council) Immigrants represent the Multicultural Resource Office. **Restorative Justice** used Multicultural Resource Office interpreters for meetings.

Clients and community members donate money to the Multicultural Resource Office.

Health Fair

Gunnison Valley Hospital provided vouchers to be distributed to clients of the Multicultural Resource Office. In 2007 we gave out 86 vouchers, resulting in a donation of \$4,300 for blood tests. Again this year, immigrants were the volunteers who helped interpreting at the fair. Thank you to Angelica Mora, Rolando Fernandez and Elba Alarcón. After the results were mailed to the clients, the hospital set up an evening where the results were interpreted by Spanish speaking nurse Sarah Rais.



Gunnison County Dental Program

Thank you Gentle Dental Care dental office! Drs. Targos and Anderson and their staff donated thousands of dollars and countless hours to low-income and uninsured children! They set aside Tuesday afternoons for forty children, they do cleanings and provide the necessary treatments. Their dedication and commitment has provided these children with healthy smiles.

why you should not use computer translations

On the menu of a Polish hotel:

Salad a firm's own make; limpid red beet soup with cheesy dumplings in the form of a finger; roasted duck let loose; beef rashers beaten up in the country people's fashion.

The Light Program

The Light Program, named for former Gunnison County physician, Dr. Mason Light, is a collaborative program between Gunnison County Health and Human Services and participating private primary care providers working in Gunnison County. The program seeks to provide access to primary medical care to residents of Gunnison County who are low income and uninsured by issuing a Voucher which is good for a visit to a local clinic. The client pays between \$20-\$35 and then supplemental funds from public or private grants will help pay the \$50 cost of the Voucher that covers the expense of the visit. This program is funded in part by a grant from The Colorado Trust Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Family Initiative (SIRFI) and private donations or public donations that do not restrict the use of this program by undocumented residents. Grants received from the Rotary, Colorado Health Foundation and the Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley will help meet the goal of issuing 100 Vouchers for this pilot year of implementation. The Light Program does not attempt to duplicate services available elsewhere in the community and will screen and assist clients in enrolling in healthcare programs for which they may qualify. For more information, contact Jill in Public Health 641-0209.

A big thank you to the Community Area Foundation, Pat's Screen Printing, and Colorado Health Foundation for their contributions to the Light Program.



THE LIGHT PROGRAM

MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE OFFICE

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Gunnison, CO 81230

Please distribute to all interested people and organizations.

Call if you would like to be added to our mailing list

**Multicultural
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Mission Statement

Focus on providing an excellent resource for the Gunnison Valley where education, communication and networking can take place in order to aid in the integration of families into the community

Provide interpreters as needed for client and community

Develop, provide, and translate materials

Provide community with culturally appropriate materials and services

Provide statistical information for community planning

Work with community providers to promote culturally diverse, sensitive and affordable health services



Visit our webpage

http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/health_human_services_multi_cultural.html