

**Contact:**

**William “Bill” Smith**  
[wsmith@santafecf.org](mailto:wsmith@santafecf.org)

**For immediate release**

**New Mexico Health Equity Partnership to offer resources and coaching to increase organizational and advocacy capacity of coalitions committed to improving New Mexico’s health and wellness**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico** – The W.K Kellogg Foundation has provided \$1,150,675 to the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership (HEP), an initiative at the Santa Fe Community Foundation to continue its critical efforts in 2017 and 2018.

The HEP staff believes every New Mexican should have the opportunity to lead a healthy life, to live in neighborhoods where children and families thrive, and have a say in the decisions that impact their lives. Too many New Mexicans live in neighborhoods where the air is dangerous to breathe, water is dangerous to drink, the quality of education is poor, there is no healthy food available, and people are not fairly compensated for their work.

To address these challenges, HEP connects people, community groups and decision makers. They provide trainings and coaching that help residents and community groups hold decision makers accountable. They help elevate the community’s voice so residents can be the drivers of change. New Mexico needs residents actively involved in making a difference, and it needs strong organizations that are a galvanizing force that are able to educate decision makers. HEP is building the foundation to make this possible.

With the WK. Kellogg Funding, HEP will continue to invest in place-based efforts in Doña Ana, McKinley and San Juan communities, as well as provide new opportunities for training to rural, tribal, immigrant and refugee communities. During 2017 and 2018, HEP will:

- Offer training to strengthen advocacy utilizing Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure residents can make more of an impact when educating decision makers on issues they care most about.
- Create critical connections and cultivate learning opportunities among New Mexico’s diverse communities via gatherings and an online forum.
- Foster authentic community engagement by supporting community members to be their own champions and ensure local residents have a real voice and seat at the table.
- Provide resources and coaching to increase organizational and advocacy capacity of coalitions and residents.

The Doña Ana, McKinley and San Juan place-based teams will focus on initiatives in their respective counties to improve family and child well-being.

Through HEP's efforts, residents will increase their knowledge and build advocacy skills on issues that are important to them and impact community health and well-being. They will learn about decision making processes, how to utilize data to inform policy, become more comfortable educating decision makers, and hold decision makers more accountable. Three community-based Health Impact Assessment reports, with recommendations to improve children's health, will be produced by the end 2018. Through this process, communities will also strengthen their leadership and build bridges among diverse groups.

#### **About the Santa Fe Community Foundation**

The Santa Fe Community Foundation (SFCF) is devoted to building healthy and vital communities where racial, cultural, and economic differences do not limit access to health, education, or employment; diverse audiences enjoy the many arts and cultural heritages of our region; and all sectors of our community take responsibility for ensuring a healthy environment. The New Mexico Health Equity Partnership (HEP), an initiative at the SFCF, believes every New Mexican should have the opportunity to lead a healthy life, to live in neighborhoods where children and families thrive, and have a say in decisions that impact their lives. For more information, visit [www.santafecf.org](http://www.santafecf.org) and [www.nmhpep.org](http://www.nmhpep.org).

#### **About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).