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For Immediate Release

The New Mexico Health Equity Partnership to solidify health equity network to improve health in New Mexico

Santa Fe, NM - The New Mexico Health Equity Partnership based at the Santa Fe Community Foundation is entering a new phase of operations. During the next 18 months the Partnership will build upon the solid foundation of relationships developed during the past three years to solidify a statewide network of community organizations and members to improve the health of children, families and communities in New Mexico.

This effort continues to be supported by the Santa Fe Community Foundation and has recently been supported with a \$900,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Santa Fe Community Foundation is pleased to be able to continue our partnership with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation,” noted Christa Coggins, VP for Community Philanthropy at the Santa Fe Community Foundation. “The work of the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership is very much in line with our mission to build healthy and vital communities and we look forward to the next phase of this critical work.”

Health doesn’t just happen as a result of diet, exercise and regular visits to the doctor’s office. **Health is impacted by the policy decisions that shape where we live, work, learn and play.** When these local and statewide decisions are made without the input of diverse community members, the quality of life for all New Mexicans diminishes. Our lived experiences, expertise, and languages are not included in the dialogue for change. Decision-making positions in our communities are not held by people who look like us. Policies hinder community members from growing our food or living traditional ways. We are not able to learn our histories, share our cultural knowledge, and speak our languages in educational settings. Our families are incarcerated at a higher rate. Our children have access to fewer parks.

The New Mexico Health Equity Partnership believes the solutions to New Mexico’s challenges lie within the strengths, resiliency and expertise of our communities. New Mexicans’ cross-generational experiences, cultural knowledge and relationships with community members are critical to identifying creative solutions. Together, we can transform the conditions where we live, learn, work and play into healthy spaces.

During the next 18 months, the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership will collaborate with diverse community members, organizations and decision makers across urban, rural, frontier,

border, and tribal areas in New Mexico. This work will enhance our network in service of strengthening **community leadership skills, gaining the support of decision makers, and advocating for policy change that will improve health.** Additionally, the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership will focus on building an organizational model, leadership structure, and financial model that will position us to most effectively advance our work long-term.

The strengthened health equity network will provide a unique structure for people to join together and mobilize for common goals. By transforming conditions (political, social, economic, and environmental), the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership provides children, families and communities the opportunity to live safe, healthy and quality lives. This will lead to strong thriving communities.

About the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership, Santa Fe Community Foundation

NMHEP is a partnership formed in 2012 to work with low-income communities and communities of color in New Mexico to strengthen their capacity to shift power relations by advocating for systems and policy change that address structural and institutionalized inequities based on race, class, gender, and geography. The Partnership's vision is healthy, children, families and communities. The New Mexico Health Equity Partnership, based at the Santa Fe Community Foundation, is comprised of partners affiliated with non-profit organizations, foundations, health councils, PLACE MATTERS teams, Health Impact Assessment teams, community groups and members, statewide organizations and national partners. For more information, [visit www.nmhealthequitypartnership.org](http://www.nmhealthequitypartnership.org).

About the Santa Fe Community Foundation

The Santa Fe Community Foundation, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is devoted to building healthy and vital communities in the region where racial, cultural, and economic differences do not limit access to health, education, or employment; where diverse audiences enjoy the many arts and cultural heritages of our region; and where all sectors of our community take responsibility for ensuring a healthy environment. The work of the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership dovetails perfectly with the Foundation's commitment to equal access to health, education and employment and cross sector collaboration. For more information, visit www.santafecf.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 W. K. 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.