



## ***News Release***

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### **Flood Relief Account for Local Victims Opens in Española**

RIO ARRIBA COUNTY, New Mexico, September 27, 2013— United Way has made a generous \$10,000 contribution to the Regional Development Corporation's (RDC) Local Flood Victims Relief Account, which is set up at Valley National Bank in Española, where community members can make their donations. The account was set up as a joint effort between the RDC, Rio Arriba County (RAC), The Española Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Española Valley Community Development Corporation, and the Española Community Market.

"The United Way of Northern New Mexico found ourselves in the position to be able to help people most affected by the recent floods," said Director Kristy Ortega. "Because of the money people invested in the community through this fund, we are able to help our neighbors get back on their feet."

"We were happy to work with other local non-profit organizations to provide assistance to the individuals and families who have been heavily impacted by the flooding," added Kathy Keith, Director of RDC.

The committee organized to oversee the funding process has determined that the best way to leverage these funds is to allocate them towards heavy equipment and materials such as base course and gravel. According to Elmer Salazar, flood committee member, victims should be expecting to wait at least two weeks until heavy equipment will be able to access the flooded properties allowing the water table to recede adequately.

According to Mateo DeVargas, RAC Emergency Manager, public inquiries about government assistance have been flooding his department. In addition to partnering up for the development of the account, the County has been compiling damage reports, which will be sent to Homeland Security by DeVargas' office. Hopes are that those reports will prompt financial assistance for families. Additionally, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and El Centro Family Health have offered assistance through their

volunteer programs.

The Rio Arriba County Board of Commissioners have also declared Rio Arriba County in a state of disaster as of July 1 of this year, which includes flood occurrences. To view a copy of the declaration, [click here](#).

The public is encouraged to dial 2-1-1 for referral to appropriate support agencies. United Way of Northern New Mexico, Santa Fe Community Foundation, and Self Help, Inc. will be using the 2-1-1 system as a clearinghouse for requests relating to the floods around the northern part of the state.

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