

NMCA DV Spotlight

Member Spotlight
EL REFUGIO, INC.



ROSIE FARREL
COUNSELING DIRECTOR

Advocate of the Month
ELISA CHACON



Member Spotlight

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COUNSELING DIRECTOR

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And that's exactly what it is, that as a play therapist, I am the witness.

I walk with them as the witness. And when they tap into their inner wisdom, they know what they need to do for their healing and what's awesome is that they do it.

Then when that dream ended, that was when I walked into El Refugio for the first time in that little teeny office. And I said, yeah, I just have to trust, and so the ones who have taught me the most have been the children.

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I was born and grew up on a farm near Hill City, Kansas. I was the 5th child of nine children. We were poor but rich in love and learning adventures together. I entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in September of 1958 in Concordia, Kansas.

My first mission was in Grand Island, Nebraska. I taught first grade there for six years. My next mission was in Monett, Missouri. I taught 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade in this school for three years. During that period of time, I spent a summer in Father Ralph Beiting's Christian Appalachian Project in Berea, Kentucky. I did home visiting in the mountains and taught bible school. The poverty, simplicity and inner beauty of the poor people there touched me deeply.

I was then assigned to an inner-city school in Chicago, Illinois. I taught first grade there for 4 years. It was quite an adjustment and cultural shock from living in the Ozarks to an inner-city school where there were many diverse cultures, gangs, and lots of cement. If the children wanted to plant something in science, they had to buy the soil. My next mission was in Boonville, Missouri where I taught first grade for 7 years. We were very much involved with the families we worked with in the community. I helped two Teens Encounter with Christ weekends for the Diocese.

In 1981, I was assigned to Socorro, New Mexico where I taught for six years. During my time there, I worked with college students in the Newman Club and directed a parish choir. I taught first, second or third grade for 27 years. I had always dreamed of doing missionary work in Central America. I took a Sabbatical Year of Studies from September 1988 to May 1989. I spent three months in Cuernavava, Mexico studying Spanish and participating in a Social Justice Program that took me into extremely poor areas of the country, where we studied the political and social conditions of the country. I continued my studies in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. During that time of studies, my desire was to work with the children in these countries who were suffering from hunger, violence, and poverty. My health did not hold up and I had to return to the United States.

I recognized a new call when I went to Silver City, New Mexico where our Religious Community had a mission. I started working at El Refugio, a domestic violence counseling agency with Lou Ruskey and Sister Carmel Garcia. We wanted to open a Domestic Violence Shelter and provide a safe place for victims of violence to come, tap into needed resources, set their goals and continue their healing through counseling and other advocacy services.

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releasing August 19th!

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Member Spotlight

EL REFUGIO, INC.

ROSIE FARREL

COUNSELING DIRECTOR

My 27 years of teaching experience helped me acquire a deep knowledge and understanding of children and their needs. It prepared me for working with the children who have been victim witnesses of domestic violence or who have been abused either verbally physically, sexually, emotionally, or psychologically. I received many trainings to become a play therapist.

I do direct and indirect play therapy that makes use of the therapeutic powers of play. Play is the language of children. It is the way they develop mentally, physically, and socially. Through play therapy, they can address their conflicts, anxieties, fears, and the trauma they have witnessed and experienced. They tap into their own inner wisdom as they utilize all the resources in my therapy room to help them move toward health and growth.

I consider my therapy room sacred ground because of the healing work that the children do there. They allow me the honor of walking with them through their journey of pain toward healing. I stand in reverence before the children because they know how to tap into their own inner wisdom and healing powers.

I have even worked with babies or pregnant mothers. Often even the womb is not a safe place because of the violence. The little one within is impacted by the violence being done to the mother. I do a lot of work with the mothers/ caregivers and their children together to help rebuild the attachment that gets disrupted in the violence.

In August of 2007 I became a Registered Play Therapist Supervisor. I have worked with master's Level Counseling Interns or Social Work interns from several different Universities. I continue to provide supervision for other play therapists who are working toward becoming Registered Play therapist or want supervision for their licenses. For several years I headed a Professional Study group for counselors in our agency and in the broader community. We studied books written by leading experts in the field of trauma, the latest brain research and how to effectively work with children and families to move them toward healing. We had to stop that group when Covid prevented us from doing it in person.

Learn more about El Refugio, Inc. at eridv.org.

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It's really important that I create a space of beauty.

So my play therapy room has all kinds of beautiful things in it for healing their eyes – that have seen so much horror. And their little ears, so I have musical instruments and they love to play those little musical instruments. Then I have some smell bottles so that they can heal their senses. So it's like the outside in healing by doing things with their senses.

So anyway then after they do the healing with the senses, then I get them involved in like sand tray play therapy which is they get into the sand and it's sensory nurturing, sensory healing, good brain stimulation for them, but it gets their creativity going and then they can work through all kinds of things in the sand or in their drawing, in their art and or in their puppets and stuff.

So it's like using their imagination, heals 'em from the inside out. And the outside with the senses in. So it's amazing the power of play and using the language of play for healing.

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Advocate of the Month

ELISA CHACON

My name is Elisa Chacon, I am a Shelter Advocate and a Shelter Assistant at El Refugio Incorporated. I have been working with victims and survivors of domestic violence at El Refugio for the past ten years. I attended Western New Mexico University and graduated with a dual major; a Bachelorette Degree in Social Work and a Bachelorette Degree in Sociology. I interned at the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office where I learned a lot from the exceptional women and men that attempted to help many teens through their difficult times as adolescents. I continue to come into contact with many of the teens I worked with back then, now as adults.

I started my career as a Children's Case Manager and Adult Case Manager at Border Area Mental Health Services. I ended my time there as a Jail Diversion Coordinator working with individuals who were recently released from jail. I frequently collaborated with judges, attorneys, and counselors during my time as the coordinator.

I never expected to be working in a domestic violence shelter. I didn't even know one existed in Silver City. One day a client of mine came to me badly beaten by her boyfriend. I was able to find a placement for her at El Refugio. That was when I saw the compassion and wonderful attitude of one of the shelter advocates that helped us that night.

In my current role, I support shelter residents through case management, life, and social skills, ensuring a safe, clean, and cooperative environment. I conduct intake assessments, eligibility, and demographic interviews, manage crisis calls, crisis situations, assess the client's needs, strengths, and obstacles, develop personal goals with the clients, and follow up with the progress of those goals. I implement a safety plan for clients to enhance their well-being and help meet their basic needs. My particular focus is on the needs and empowerment of people who are victims of domestic violence, vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. I connect clients to appropriate agencies and resources to obtain basic needs including housing, financial services, transportation, health services, education, employment, legal, relationship, and social services.

I am also the Food Program Coordinator for El Refugio. I have special training on state mandated food requirements for different ages and follow detailed criteria for healthy nutritional meals and snacks. I manage kitchen cooks of the day for efficient and effective preparation of the daily meals required for the children in the shelter. I also maintain training for new employees, schedule, and delegate responsibilities on a weekly basis. I assist in the preparation and submission of purchase requisitions, activities necessary to support special projects and events, organizing food and supplies for special department projects and events. I provide information about the food program and other programs as needed to delegate authority for correct financial reimbursement. I distribute a variety of materials, attend meetings, participate, organize, and assist with community events and help promote El Refugio's mission. I receive, organize, and store donations, distribute these items to needy families, and manage every aspect of the shelter and safety of the building.

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Advocate of the Month

ELISA CHACON

The success stories that I have seen firsthand have truly made me appreciate the work that I do. I am so proud of the survivors who have changed their lives for the better and can experience life without violence. What else can you ask for!!!

Aside from Domestic Violence services, I have provided direct patient care in nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, and assisted living facilities. I learned the ins and outs of Medicare, Medicaid, and private health insurance. I learned to interact with many people of different diagnoses including cerebral vascular accidents, Parkinson's amputations, traumatic brain injury, and other orthopedic injuries to name a few. With my 28 years of experience, I feel I have a more well-rounded outlook and capacity of working with all types of clientele.

During my free time I enjoy wildlife, scenic drives through the mountains and going camping. I like being creative and spending quality time with my family. In the last 18 years, I have come to the realization that I enjoy artistic outlets. I'm interested in intricate details of art and try to use this hobby every chance I get to decompress.

“ **I have a lot of clients that I still keep in touch with from 10 years ago.**

I think getting them where they wanna be and where they feel success and to hear them call me just for an update on how they're doing – how happy they are, how they have accomplished everything.”

“ **[Elisa] is a super duper advocate.**

She's able to see where the resources are in the community, how to make contact, how to help the client to do their own self-advocacy so that they get the resources themselves. But she directs 'em so that they know where to go and how to do it, and how to manage so they can really accomplish their goal and feel self empowered and self affirmed.

They do come in as victims and then we work with 'em and give them skills and resources so that they can become not just survivors, but we help 'em with all that so that they can be thrivers – not just survivors but thrivers – where they can get out and they can move forward with a new approach to life.

And I would say Lisa is one who really helps empower the women by her ability. She's just really good at plugging into resources, showing them where they are, how to get in, and then she lets 'em do it.

– Rosie Farrel ”



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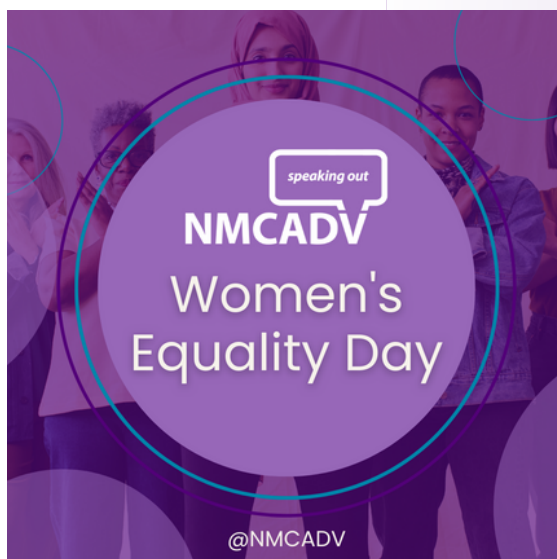
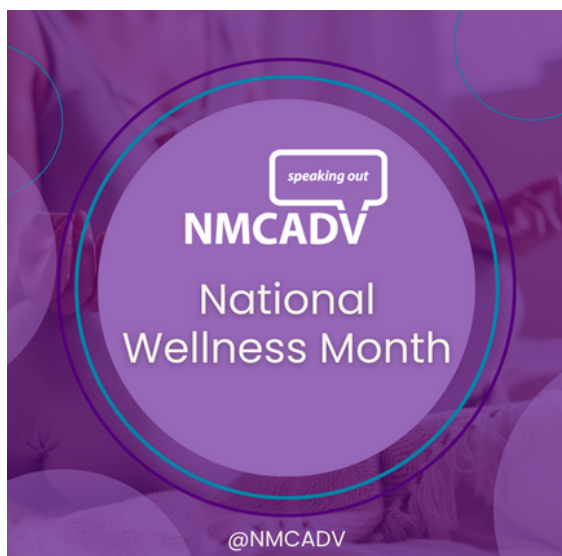
This Month's Toolkit

AUGUST 2023

- National Wellness Month
- National Nonprofit Day (8/17)
- 19th Amendment Ratified (8/18)
- Women's Equality Day (8/20)



Use our social media toolkits to help spread awareness in your community!



Take Care

BEING OF SERVICE

This month we're taking a cue from Rosie and Elisa of El Refugio, Inc. and National Nonprofit Day – let's be of service!

Research shows that being of service and engaging in acts of kindness can have a profound impact on our mental health and overall well-being.

Benefits to being of service include:

- Reduced Risk of Depression
- Increased Life Satisfaction
- Lower Stress Levels
- Improved Sense of Purpose
- Enhanced Social Connections
- Reduced Feelings of Isolation
- Improved Self-Esteem

In a society where mental health issues are increasingly prevalent, incorporating acts of service into our lives offers a simple yet powerful tool to promote well-being. Whether it's volunteering at a local charity, helping a neighbor in need, or participating in community projects, every small act of kindness has the potential to create a positive ripple effect.

So, let's make a conscious effort to be of service to others – if you're reading this, you most likely already are! By doing so, we not only make the world a better place, but we also nourish our own mental health and find greater meaning in our lives. Remember, a little kindness goes a long way – for both others and ourselves.

Find your local domestic violence program and give back today: nmcadv.org/find-nm-resources

Stay Connected



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“At the end, it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished. It's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back.”

DENZEL WASHINGTON

Feedback? Email Rochelle@nmcadv.org