

the laboratory connection

your community's link
to information, opportunities, and people
at Los Alamos National Laboratory

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October 2003

a word from the Associate Director for Weapons & Engineering



Rich Mah

I am very proud to have been asked to chair this year's United Way campaign at the Laboratory because I believe it is an excellent way to address social needs in our communities. Here at the Laboratory, we are committed to developing collaborations with community partners to improve the quality of all of our lives, and the annual United Way campaign is an excellent example of how that can work effectively.

Each year, the Lab partners with the Santa Fe County and the Northern New Mexico/Los Alamos United Way campaigns to raise funds to benefit those in our region who may need special assistance, whether short or long term. The United Way positively affects the lives of thousands of New Mexicans by providing critically needed funding to more than three dozen service agencies in our region. Many of our employees agree that the campaign is an excellent way to support important community needs because it provides resources that assist in care for the disadvantaged and the elderly as well as support for educational and recreational youth programs.

Over the past few years, we at the Laboratory have witnessed how our neighbors will stand with us during difficult times. We appreciate the opportunity to give back through the United Way campaign and hope that this partnership will continue for many years to come.

United Way Then and Now

The United Way and its affiliated agencies have been helping Los Alamos and its surrounding communities for nearly 50 years. United Way Los Alamos will celebrate its 50th Anniversary next year during its 2005 campaign. The underlying principles have remained the same over the years, but now our local United Way serves more agencies, and its monetary goal, as well as the number of people it helps, has increased dramatically.

The United Way concept was created in Denver, Colorado, in 1887. A Catholic priest, two ministers, and a rabbi borrowed an idea that had worked well in England in response to a community crisis following a population boom. These founders organized what they termed a "combined fund-raising appeal," a single, short-term campaign to raise funds for food, shelter, and medical supplies for the entire community. They called it "Community Chest."

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Nancy Boudrie of X Division was an enthusiastic shopper at the Book Fair held in conjunction with the 2004 Lab United Way kickoff celebration at Fuller Lodge.

United Way Then and Now
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The idea grew rapidly, and today there are more than 1,400 United Way organizations across the United States and about 250 additional organizations around the world. In 1974, United Way of America established United Way International and it provides training and technical support for about 250 United Way organizations. Each organization, both national and international, is independently run by a local board of volunteers. Some of the offices also have paid staff.

In Los Alamos, the Community Chest appeal began because most people wanted to decide only once a year how their donation could help serve the largest number of charitable services. In 1953, Lew Allbee, chairman of the Kiwanis Community Affairs Committee, brought in a guest speaker from the national Community Chest organization. All the charitable clubs and organizations were invited to send representatives. An open planning meeting was held shortly thereafter, and Articles of Incorporation were drawn up, creating the Los Alamos Community Chest, Inc.

The first Board of Trustees meeting was held on April 19, 1954, and in October of the same year, the first fundraising drive was held.

The Los Alamos Community Chest, Inc. supported twelve member agencies, including the YMCA, the American Red Cross and the

Boy and Girls Scouts of America. It also supported the Family Council, the Salvation Army and the Cancer Clinic.

Today, the Northern New Mexico/Los Alamos United Way in partnership with the Santa Fe United Way, supports 19 member agencies and more than 30 programs, including some that began with the Community Chest. The slogan this year is "Caring that Changes Our Communities" and the LANL United Way Campaign goal is to collect 10 percent more than the \$752,000 raised during the 2003 campaign. The Northern New Mexico/Los Alamos United Way community goal is \$1.2 million.

"We're hoping that people who have not contributed in the past will consider making a donation to this year's campaign," said Raul Rodriguez, Director of the NNM/Los Alamos United Way. "Their gifts really make a difference and are wisely invested."

United Way agencies now include organizations based in the Española Valley like Amigos del Valle, which helps provide meals and healthcare to the elderly, Las Cumbres, which provides early intervention and therapeutic programs for young children and their families and services for children and adults with developmental disabilities, and Las Clinicas del Norte, which provide medical care to rural northern New Mexico.

"The benefit of being an agency of United Way for Amigos [del Valle] is that it gives us more freedom in addressing the needs of the senior clients we serve here in the valley," explained Dennis Hefner, Executive Director of Amigos del Valle. "It gives our seniors greater autonomy and a happier lifestyle. Let's face it, everyone will be needing these services eventually."

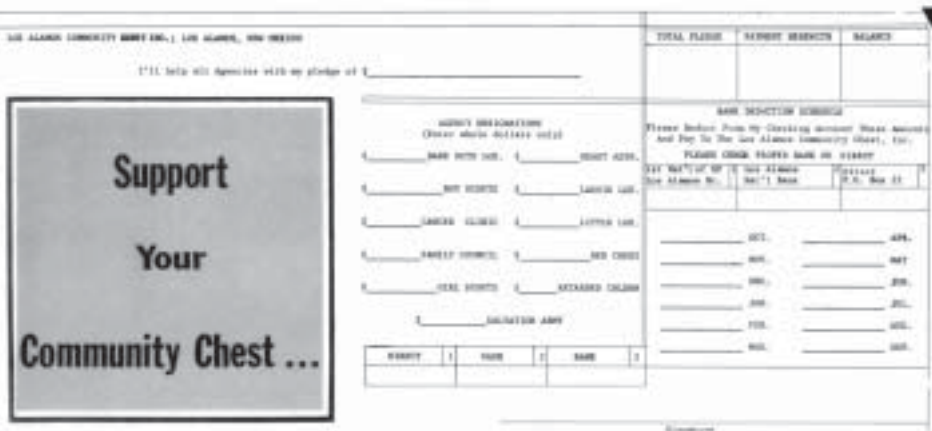
The constant goal for United Way has been to dramatically strengthen health and human services in the region. Equally important is sound financial management and a strong commitment to improving the surrounding communities as well as the Los Alamos community. This commitment ensures that all contributions are judiciously invested.

"LANL employees and the United Way have had a dramatic impact on the lives of young children with delays, disabilities, and special emotional needs," said Virgil Goode, Director of the Las Cumbres Learning Center.

A campaign that began nearly 50 years ago with paper pledge cards and goals of less than \$50,000 has slowly grown to a campaign where LANL employees can pledge online and the goal is nearly one million dollars. Gifts can be targeted to a specific agency, or donors can make a contribution to the Community Solutions fund, which addresses the most pressing community problems.

"All the agencies that receive funding are carefully screened by a group of dedicated volunteers who strive to invest the donations where they are needed the most and where they will have the greatest impact," Rodriguez said.

For more information, please contact the Lab's Community Relations Office at 665-4400 or Raul Rodriguez of the Los Alamos United Way at 662-0800.



Paper pledge forms were used exclusively in early campaigns for Los Alamos Community Chest, and fundraising goals were well below \$50,000.

Lab Employees Volunteer in Many Arenas

The dictionary tells us that a volunteer is “one who enters into or offers himself/herself for a service out of his/her own free will,” as in volunteering for military duty, medical experimentation, or a trip to Mars. Often there are incentives involved with volunteering. One joined the navy to see the world, or so said the posters promoting enlistment. You take a new, experimental medicine to cure the incurable; after all, your doctor said you have nothing to lose. And, Mars may well turn out to be a better place than planet Earth. Many would say there’s no way it can be worse.

According to numerous World War II books and movies, the most common advice given to new recruits was: If it moves, salute it; if it doesn’t move, paint it; and never, ever volunteer for anything.

Obviously, the heroes didn’t come from those who heeded such advice. Sometimes, there’s not enough time to make a conscious decision to volunteer or not. A firefighter faced with a crumbling building knows he will not be criticized for not entering, but instinctively goes in anyway to save what he can. Hundreds did so on 9/11 and never came out. Had you asked them what they were trying to accomplish, they would have told you that they were just doing their job. Those are the real heroes, as distinguished from those taking the bows, and everyone of them is a volunteer.

So, there are many ways to approach this business of volunteering. Some folks have no idea what they’re getting into. Others look forward to the experience of doing something different. Still, others may simply have nothing better to do. There’s no putdown in saying that, because volunteering is among the best things you can do.

The Los Alamos National Laboratory Volunteer Program has over 500 registered volunteers. These LANL employees, retirees, and subcontractors have all expressed

interest in volunteering for a multitude of activities in our local and neighboring communities. LANL Volunteers receive e-mail from the Community Relations Office describing current volunteer opportunities and needs. Such information is also posted in the Daily Newsbulletin and on the CRO website. When interested in a particular event or volunteer activity, LANL Volunteers usually respond directly to the organization/agency sponsoring the event to make arrangements.

Volunteerism at the Laboratory takes on many forms. For example: LANL Volunteers are invited to participate in a variety of opportunities in northern New Mexico. Some of those include mentoring and tutoring students, judging science fairs, serving on boards and commissions, serving meals to seniors and the homeless, and participating in special community events.

Our most successful Volunteer opportunities to date is the Big Brothers Big Sisters/Los Alamos Lunch Buddies Program. More than 120 LANL volunteers served as Lunch Buddies during the 2002-2003 school year. These special volunteers were paired with Española, Los Alamos, and White Rock ‘at risk’ elementary school children to be a caring adult friend and mentor. Volunteers meet weekly with their Lunch Buddy at a local school.

Annually, the LANL United Way campaign is a huge undertaking. It couldn’t be done without the help of Volunteers in every Laboratory division. In 2002, there was 100% participation throughout the Laboratory. Every division had at least one United Way representative. They were responsible for setting up division and group United Way presentations, coordinating special events, and working closely with CRO on the Lab-wide campaign.



Lunch Buddy volunteers receive mentoring tips at the recent training session for Lab employees.

During the 2002 LANL Holiday Drive more than 400 children and 50 families received food, clothing, and holiday gifts. The gifts were all solicited and collected by LANL Volunteers across the Laboratory.

A dedicated group of LANL Volunteers serve on the Los Alamos Employees’ Scholarship Fund Advisory Board. These Volunteers give of their time in several ways: outreach and recruiting northern New Mexico high school students to apply for the LAESF scholarships; review and interviewing of applicants; selection of the 40 scholarship recipients; fundraising campaign and special events; and monthly meetings. Over \$750,000 have been raised in the program’s 5 years of existence.

Although there is no efficient way, or, perhaps, no point in keeping exact records of LANL volunteerism, it’s a safe bet to estimate that more than 100,000 hours are expended each year in this noble work. You’ll find few, if any, taking bows. Their reward is the knowledge that they have done something good. For them it is enough to be a hero, if only in their own hearts.

To join the LANL Volunteers and be placed on our mailing list, please contact Debbi Wersonick at 667-7870 or sonic@lanl.gov.

Lab Volunteer Will Mentor Pojoaque Student Paralyzed In Fall

After a terrifying fall from the Santa Cruz dam over the summer, 16-year-old Patricio Pacheco returned to Pojoaque High School this fall in a wheelchair. The formerly active 10th grader is determined to walk again through disciplined physical therapy, but everyday life has become a challenge. Despite his difficulties, he is also determined to pass in all his academic subjects and present his own project at the school science fair this winter.

Lab technician and volunteer Len Valerio probably can't help Patricio get back on his feet physically, but as his mentor and tutor, Valerio will play an important role in seeing that the young man can master his academic challenges.

"I like to give back," Valerio said. "That's why I've been a volunteer for 23 years, mostly through the Laboratory's volunteer program. Getting his health back will be Patricio's biggest challenge, and he will have high and low times. I just hope that I can help with school and maybe make a bit of a difference in his life. I like his positive attitude, which will help a lot."

Valerio and Patricio meet for several hours weekly to work on biology, math, geography, and English. And they have begun to plan Patricio's science fair project on static electricity.

"I only did one science fair project before," Patricio said. "It was in the seventh grade and it was about how fast milk spoils in the refrigerator or left out in the sun."

This time, Valerio will help Patricio design a number of static electricity experiments, like walking on carpet and

touching a light fixture, to demonstrate how different variables can affect the results.

Patricio couldn't ask for a more experienced coach for his project. The father of two, who puts in more than 1,000 hours of volunteer time each year, specializes in judging science fairs. Twenty years ago when he worked for the old electronics group at the Lab, he was in demand to help with science fairs at a time when electronic projects were popular. Since then, he is recruited every year for fairs at the Española, Pojoaque and Taos schools, Manzano Day School, and the National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

"The biggest thrill is the expression on a kid's face when you ask questions about his or her project," he said. "You can see the excitement in their eyes when you really take an interest."

Presently, Valerio is an Internetworking Professional with the Lab's Telecommunications Group, installing and supporting computer networking systems. Over the years, he has given networking classes at McCurdy School, Northern New Mexico Community College, and Española and Escalante High Schools. He also gives free telephone advice about networking problems to the schools and other entities, including the City of Española.

"We don't mind helping," he said. "We're a world-class institution with world class technologies, and some of the school systems have really old equipment. If my assistance can help one kid, it's worth it."

Valerio has been a volunteer with the Supercomputing Challenge for the past 10 years and has mentored several other students, one of whom is now a Lab computer system administrator.

"He was a student at Escalante High School who proposed a computer lab as a school project back in the early '90s," Valerio said. "I helped him with telephone consultations, and helped locate old computers through the Lab's equipment gifting program. He not only set up the computer lab, he went on to teach at Escalante and now works here at the Lab."

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Len Valerio offers Pojoaque High School's Patricio Pacheco some advice on a writing assignment about Osama Bin Laden in the news.

Lab Volunteer
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Valerio's success as a mentor was one reason the Lab's volunteer program sought him out when Patricio's Godfather requested assistance. Initially, Valerio met with Patricio and his mother, his psychologist, therapist, counselor and several of his teachers and school administrators.

"They all really appreciate the Lab helping him out," Valerio said. "We talked about his needs and issues and went through some of his curriculum. His goal is to make it to the 11th grade and to pass every course. He's a happy kid, but he does have some personal issues to deal with.

"Patricio was a real outdoors guy who liked to play ball and go fishing," Valerio said. "Being in a wheelchair is a big adjustment for him, but I have encouraged him to talk to me about any issues he has. We don't always have to just do schoolwork."

Valerio plans to take Patricio on a fishing field trip later in the year.

Another concern for Patricio's family is transportation. The young man's Godfather drives him to school and appointments in his small, two-door car. Valerio hopes someone may agree to donate a used van to the family.

"It's pretty hard for him to get in and out of the car and to transport his wheelchair," he said.

Valerio, whose office walls are covered with certificates of appreciation for his volunteer efforts, give credit to the support of his managers.

"My group leader, Allen Ford, and my team leader, Jerry Lopez, both encouraged my desire to help Patricio," he said. "I couldn't do this without their support."



Business Briefs

The NNMSA 4th Annual Trade Fair

The Northern New Mexico Supplier Alliance (NNMSA) sponsored its 4th Annual Procurement Expo this month in cooperation with the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the City of Española. The event, scheduled for October 15-16, was held at the Northern New Mexico Community College Eagle Sports Plex, which provided more space for the event, which has successfully helped local businesses and government suppliers work together to identify and leverage business opportunities.

This year's theme "Reaching New Heights" describes the NNMSA's effort to be more proactive in helping small northern New Mexico businesses identify and recruit the spending power of government agencies. This year's Expo featured two new partners, the Department of Interior (DOI) and the Small Business Administration (SBA).

"One of the highlights of the Expo is the one-on-one sessions that were available for subcontractors and small businesses," said Tim Martinez of the Lab's Community Relations Office. "The opening afternoon session focused on bringing the buyer and the seller together for a brief meeting so the seller met the contact at each agency, the agency requirements, and how to leverage themselves within each distinct procurement process."

Expo participants included the Department of Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, Kirtland Air Force base, Sandia National Labs, the National Park Service, the State of New Mexico Purchasing Office, the University of California, the Department of Energy/NNNSA, the U.S. Forest Service, the United States Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The NNMSA is a nonprofit, member-driven organization that promotes economic growth through business development in Northern New Mexico.

This year, the Expo also included two training sessions for procurement specialists and a job fair cohosted by LANL, the NNMSA and the NNMCC.

Training sessions on "How to Utilize the GSA Schedule" and "Outsourcing to the Federal Government" were part of the program.

A job fair hosted by all the agencies represented was held at the NNMCC Administration Rotunda.

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Lab Security Specialist Always On Call For Families In Crisis

When security specialist Donna Martinez leaves her office at 5:30 pm, she's not through working. She heads home, but also to her second job as a volunteer crisis counselor and victims' advocate. Every night and on weekends, Martinez is on call to assist with emergency calls which typically involve issues such as domestic violence and sexual assault.

"Domestic violence is often kept under wraps," she said. "Unfortunately, there are always victims, even in Los Alamos. But our town is very unique because we have so many different cultures here and security clearances are often an issue."

Martinez moved to Los Alamos from Colorado more than 20 years ago to work for PTLA. For the past two years, she has worked for Los Alamos First Response, a nearly all-volunteer group working in coordination with other local organizations like the Los Alamos Police Department and Los Alamos Medical Center. Los Alamos First Response is part of the Northern New Mexico Crisis Center.

"We respond to calls from throughout the area, including Española, but we try to focus on Los Alamos," she said. "If the call is the result of an incident of some kind, we first make sure the scene is safe and secure for the victim and for the responders. Then we offer voluntary counseling, go through a 'safe plan' and guide them through their options."

"We find them a place to go if necessary and give them a packet of material on available services, she said. A follow-up will be done, usually the following day. Many cases involve numerous follow-ups."

Martinez said the work can be frustrating and demands a great deal of patience and understanding.

"Victims, who are usually female, will often be repeat victims," she said. "Because the perpetrator has often been abusing the victim for a long time, both emotionally and physically, the victim is often afraid and doesn't always know that there could be other options."

"They don't always get it the first time, or even the second time," Martinez said. "Often the abuse has been going on for a long time before we are called and the victim may call only after a particularly violent attack. And we're not usually talking about just one victim. There are often children who are witnessing the abuse."

Martinez is one of two women who are on call from 5:30 pm to 8 am the following morning Monday through Friday, and day and night on the weekends. She said there is no such thing as a "typical" week at Los Alamos First Response.

"We can go for months without a call, and then get them back to back," she said.

Martinez became involved with First Response after answering their call for volunteers. New recruits receive between 20 and 40 hours of training, which is ongoing. Currently, the organization is again seeking individuals who are interested in working as victims' advocates. Martinez said they are looking for people with particular personality traits.

"We have to be very careful who we recruit," she said. "Volunteers must be



Although October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Lab security specialist Donna Martinez tries to help raise awareness of the issue every day.

able to separate emotionally and not be drawn into the victim's dilemma. You have to stay focused on what needs to be done."

Despite her round-the-clock obligations, Martinez also volunteers in other arenas. The mother of an 18-year-old son, she serves on the steering committee of Proteens, a group founded by local parents to share concerns and solutions on teen issues like underage drinking. She is also the point of contact for Los Alamos County for Parents of Behaviorally Different Children, based in Albuquerque. For the past five years, she has also been a member of the Lab's Crisis Negotiating Team.

For more information or to volunteer for Los Alamos First Response, contact Jennifer Bartram at 672-2208 or Donna Martinez at 665-7467.

For more volunteer opportunities, see the Lab's Volunteer Page at http://www.lanl.gov/orgscrcr_volunteerop.shtml.

New Lab Medical Director Looks at Health Beyond Los Alamos

Dr. William Brady, M.D., who recently joined the Lab as the new Medical Director, sees his role not only as it relates to the workers at the Lab but also with an eye toward the rest of the Northern New Mexico.

"I'd like to see a closer relationship develop between the Laboratory and the local medical community because there are overlapping interests involving both worker's health and safety but also emergency preparedness issues as they relate to a post September 11th world," he said.

Until recently, Brady was the Medical Director of the Hanford Site in Washington state. He sees chemical and radiological exposure as something the local medical community needs to be prepared for with the advent of terrorist threats and said that the Lab is in a unique position to help. Other issues he sees as critical for the Laboratory as a whole are the prevention of ergonomics injuries and stress reduction. "Early intervention in medical conditions can make a big difference, reducing the cost to the Labora-



Dr. William Brady

tory and trauma to the employee," said Brady. "In the case of stress, something most people have to deal with, the nature of the work we do here and issues involving security can compound that stress and we need to make sure that employees get help without necessarily worrying about their security clearances and jobs."

He's also interested in trends, not only as they pertain to the Laboratory, but also across the entire Department Of Energy (DOE)

complex because there are similarities in the types of work performed and possible exposures. "In trend case management you look for what's different from what might be expected and then talk to the people concerned to determine what or what might not be going on," he said. "Some trends might be easy to miss, he says, particularly if you aren't looking for them—particularly in situations of gradual or low-level exposure to a hazard."

Prevention, said Brady, is a cornerstone of his approach along with education so people can be better prepared to make important decisions. "Some choices are pretty clear in terms of knowing that they could have negative health effects – like smoking or overindulging in alcohol," he said. "Sometimes things can be subtler, such as how a job is designed and questioning whether it's designed in such a way to reduce either potential exposures or hazards."

One change that Brady has already instituted has been the reintroduction of exit exams. "Now, before employees leave the Lab we want to make sure we address any questions or concerns they might have regarding their medical condition, he said. "We don't want people walking out the door unsure of how working at the Lab may have affected their health. Part of that is medical documentation to ensure that we have all the information we need to have to address questions. Record keeping is crucial."

In addition to his medical degree, Brady has master's degrees in public health and in business administration. He is also chair of the DOE Medical Directors Steering Committee. His unique perspective incorporates not only his experience as a medical director and physician but also his various involvement in DOE-wide endeavors leading to a very broad knowledge of health and medical issues across the complex.

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Minority Enterprise Development Week Luncheon

On October 17, the Small Business Administration (SBA) hosted its annual Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Luncheon at the Sheraton Old Town Inn in Albuquerque.

MED week is the largest federally sponsored activity held on behalf of minority-owned businesses.

Upcoming Workshops

Business Insurance 101

October 23, 2003

UNMLA, 190 Central Park Square, Los Alamos, NM

1:30 to 3 p.m.

Fee: \$25

Contact: 505-661-4803

Developing a Successful Business Plan

October 25, 2003

UNMLA, 190 Central Park Square, Los Alamos, NM

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Fee: \$50

Contact: 505-661-4803

QuickBooks Accounting

October 24, 2003

NNMCC, 921 Paseo De Onate, Española, NM

1 to 4 p.m.

Fee: None

Contact: 505-747-2236

Managing Accounts Receivable & Collection Procedures

October 30, 2003

UNMLA, 190 Central Park Square, Los Alamos, NM

1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Fee: \$25

Contact 505-661-4803

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Los Alamos

NATIONAL LABORATORY

Ideas That Change the World

United Way Snapshots

The annual Lab United Way campaign is filled with informative presentations and fun events. At left, Debbi Maez and Terri Dubois from Los Alamos Search and Rescue explain how the rescue dogs are trained to newly recruited group and division representatives. Below, two of the costume contest winners from the 2003 campaign's Monster Mash are Lucy Maestas from the Director's Office and Christina De La Torre from the Plasma Physics Group.



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