

Fuerzas Unidas Membership Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2023

Welcome: Chair Vicky spoke briefly about elections that were held in May, and introduced the leadership team to all members in attendance. Frances Gonzales was introduced as new Vice Chair Rural, and Augustine Montoya as the new Central West Representative. Also mentioned as being reelected were Christina Serna (Secretary), Christy Trejo-Montes (Southwestern Rural Representative), and Loyda Martinez (Northwestern Rural Representative).

Treasurer Report: Frances spoke on behalf of Treasurer Felice who was not able to attend. After going over the report we have a balance of \$1041.94. We were reminded about paying dues and to spread the word about paying them as a means to increase our bank account balance.

Summer Work Plan Priorities for June:

Christy: Will be doing outreach at Fiesta at WNM in Silver City, Festival Latina 2023, La Dama Fiesta, and SalsaFest in July.

Augustine: Will be meeting monthly with DP Chairs and will work on finding events in his area to attend.

Loyda: Working on identifying all SCC Hispanic members, drafting letters to County Chairs to send to members, working a DP table at Los Alamos Concerts, and asking to recruit members at the Rio Arriba fiesta.

Frances: Will work with Christy, Augustine and Loyda to coordinate some outreach and will continue looking for candidates to fill our remaining vacancies for representatives of the Central Western Rural, Southeastern Rural, Northern Metro, Central Metro, and Southern Metro areas.

Vicky: Attended her first Pride Parade with Augustine and discussed ways of furthering our support for all LGBTQIA+ community.

Change to Membership Meeting schedule: No meeting in July, will resume back in August. An email will be sent to remind everyone beforehand.

Presenters:

Isaac Dakota Casados- Secretary for New Mexico Democratic Party

Spoke about many different topics important to our party such as uplifting Hispanic and Native American communities, and the fact that suicide rates are high in these communities. He spoke of our collective knowledge about being marginalized, being made to feel less than, and being seen as uneducated. He said we are the lifeblood of our Democratic organization and it's our job to stand up marginalized people and stand on their behalf.

He spoke of Pride in the LGBTQIA+ community that is about love and community, and how New Mexico has the clearest protections for them. He stressed it is our job to tell others what the Democratic Party has done in our state for the marginalized people/groups.

He proudly mentioned the DPNM and how for the first time, all four executive officers were out of state working on business. The DPNM is the only one who maintains a diverse, talented, and committed staff all year round instead of seasonally. And again, it is our job to prepare a foundational base at local levels for the benefit of the future.

Questions to Isaac: *What is DPNM doing to help rural areas outside hub cities? (Augustine Montoya)*

Isaac-Including voices, allocating resources/staff to work with county chairs as representation in rural communities is important.

Is conversation happening about student loan debt? (Nicole Olonovich)

Isaac- Yes, currently. Ruling should be coming from SCOTUS and he will report back to us. He reminded us that while promises happen, change can take some time.

Carlos Abeyta- Clinical Department Administrator, DEI Associate Director, Department of Neurosurgery | The University of New Mexico

From Alcalde, NM, First generation graduate in family, Married 10 years to husband, Coach at Del Norte HS

Carlos talked about taking pride in youth protections and the rights of LGBTQIA+ youth and how pronouns are important to their identity and who they are. It is important for all caucus' to stand together for their protections. He is passionate about working with and advocating for the youth, transgender community and women's issues.

He spoke about the current book ban in Rio Rancho and women's rights to choose what is best for them and how we need to come together to educate and advocate against this censorship. He mentioned the myths being promoted about trans women and how it is not about reproduction but instead it is about who they are as a person. He said thank goodness for our state leaders who support this community.

He also mentioned the older LGBTQIA+ members who have had to hide who they were and that they have now been coming out later in life are finding themselves living happier lives being true to themselves.

Questions for Carlos: *What are one or two things we can do as a caucus and what do we pay attention to?(Vicky Estrada-Bustillos)*

Carlos- Align with NM Equality and advocate with them. Advocate that it is okay to be different.

Announcements:

Nicole Olonovich- Ivan's birthday party, asked for a \$50 donation from Fuerzas Unidas. Christy made a motion to help Ivan and Christina seconded the motion. Flyer to go out from Vicky later.

Augustine to donate \$50 to make donation of \$100. He made a motion to amend, and Christy seconded.

Nellie Soriano congratulated Gissel Nance for receiving a phone call from our Vice President Kamala Harris!

Next Meeting: August 17, 2023 at 6:00pm