

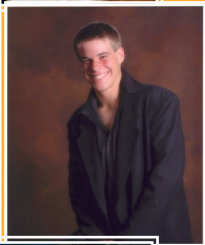


NEWS AND  
VIEWS FROM  
THE E.D.



By Jane  
Tomchik

On this Thanksgiv-  
ing, I am  
thankful for my  
husband Art,  
my son Matt  
and my dogs



Mickey, Teddy  
and Lucy  
(Buddy is camera-shy) and the  
“higher power”  
providing guid-  
ance and sup-  
port.  
Happy Thanks-  
giving to all of  
you!

# The Bravo Newsletter

Project  
BRAVO is  
now on:

facebook

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER, 2010

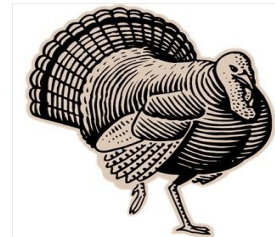


## THANKSGIVING EDITION



**T**hanksgiving was originally a day to give thanks for the bounty of each year’s harvest; a day to express gratitude by sharing some of that harvest with those you are “thankful” to be surrounded by. With the advent of supermarkets, Butterball frozen turkeys, and “Black Friday” (the biggest shopping day of the year), the true meaning of the holiday may have gotten lost along the way. As the years go by, families learn to count their blessings not only by what they have, but by the opportunities and services they have access to. Community Action Program Project BRAVO is proud to celebrate another year of reaching out to families and helping them achieve self-sufficiency through its multiple programs—and we continue to grow!

This issue, we introduce our “Gratitude Guest Book” (on page 4). Go see what Bravo team members are saying and what they are thankful for this Thanksgiving !



### Thanksgiving Facts

- The first Thanksgiving celebration can be traced back to the Plymouth Pilgrims in the fall of 1621.
- The celebration in 1621 lasted for three days and included games and food
- The ‘wishbone’ of the turkey is used in a good luck ritual on Thanksgiving Day.

## Board Profile: DR. MARIA ARIAS

**A**s the Chair of Project BRAVO’s Board of Directors, Dr. Maria Arias is a positive guiding force behind the agency’s exciting direction. Before her current appointment, she served on the board for four years and was Vice Chair for two of those years, she said. She is currently the Director of State and Federal Programs at the Socorro Independent School District.

“I went from being a teacher’s aide to becoming director of Bilingual Education ... to getting my Ph.D.,” said Arias, who is proud to be the daughter of migrant parents.

Among the various programs that Dr. Arias would like to see in the agency’s future, she said she would like to see more opportunities that provide emergency transitional housing to families, or services that help families relocate if they ever have to. But more importantly:

“I love the fact that we’re helping families find employment,” she said..



“Because we’re giving them the gift of self-sufficiency.”

BRAVO GUEST COLUMN

By

Apolonio Montejano /

Housing Manager



HUD-Certified Housing Counselors provide a vital service for families affected by the economic downturn El Paso County is faced with. As an agency fighting poverty for over 45 years, a depressed economy only adds to our obstacle of keeping families sustainable and out of poverty. To reduce poverty, family sustainability must include asset development, not just assets that are investments such as savings, retirement accounts, home, and business ownership. Asset development must also include investments in non-tangible property such as, education, training, and skills that can lead to building wealth and income. This can lead families to social connect- edness, political participa- tion, and ability to improve goal setting and planning for the future. Whereas, Pro- ject Bravo continues to build resources and voca- tional opportunities that assist families in non- tangible investments, in its fight against poverty, ob- stacles beyond our control can sometimes deter our successes but not our will.

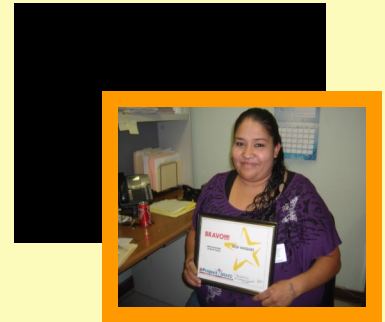
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# Bravo Awards

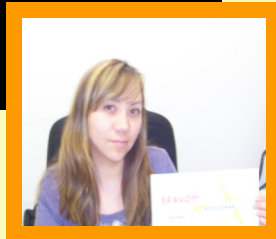
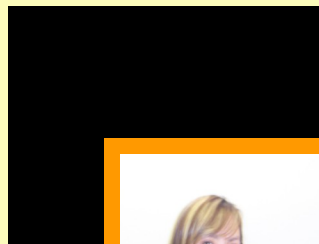
## Spotlight on Jessie Vasquez

Project Bravo is pleased to announce Jessie Vazquez as one of this month's recipients of the BRAVO Employee Award. Jessie's dedi- cation and hard work ethics have made her a model employee for us at the Housing De- partment," says Housing Manager, Apolonio Montejano. "Her ability to learn unfamiliar tasks quickly has assisted the counseling staff to prevent from bottle necking and able to provide quality service to our clients who come already stressed about their housing situation".

**GO JESSIE!**



## Spotlight on Rocio Duran



We are equally pleased to announce Rocio Duran as the second recipient of this month's BRAVO. "Rocio is a very hard working, well organized individual. She knows the pro- grams well, and administers them," said East- side Office Supervisor, Armida Patino. "She takes time to learn new procedures. She meets her deadlines...she takes the initiative to look for information that we will be need- ing to implement the programs and starts the ball rolling".

**GO ROCIO!**

# From the Client Side

**W**ith home foreclosure rates climbing steadily all across the country, making a mortgage payment for many El Pasoans has become a difficult struggle. Like many Americans, couples Daniel and Patricia Huerta and Antonio and Maria Velasco did what they could to keep their homes. But the economy failed to improve and the housing market declined forcing their home mortgage lenders to begin foreclosure proceedings. Luckily, both couples chanced upon Project

BRAVO's staff of HUD-certified housing counselors who worked closely with their lenders to modify their mortgages and lower their interest rates. Today, the Huertas and the Velascos are back on track and optimistic about their futures. "It was the help of Project BRAVO that saved us," said Mr. Velasco during a recent Project BRAVO Board of Directors meeting. As the mortgage crisis continues, Project BRAVO's housing

counseling staff consisting of Pete Huerta, Nick Lara and Ignacio Segura are working to help countless of local residents hold on to their American dream. Keep up the great work!

Nationally, 17% of Latino homeowners have lost their homes to foreclosure\*



\*Center for Responsible Lending

## Housing Department Guest Column (Contd. From p. 2)

Recent current events regarding Foreclosures, has initiated the Texas Attorney General to halt all foreclosures, all sales of properties previously foreclosed upon and all evictions of persons residing in previously foreclosed upon properties until mortgage companies have complete a review of their processes, including whether employees or agents "robo-signed" affidavits and other documents which were recorded in the State of Texas. A lot of *mumbo jumbo* to say that the public and hard working families trying to build assets and having a place of their own to live in, have once again been deceived by forces beyond our control.

Nonetheless, Project Bravo a HUD Certified Housing Counseling Agency is prepared to assist you, if you find yourself in a foreclosure situation, or if you are a first-time homebuyer and need budget and debt management counseling, pre-purchase counseling and/or predatory lending counseling. Homeownership is our biggest investment and first tangible asset toward building wealth...let's not allow those who's arrogance and greed deter our American Dream.



# QUE ONDAS?

*“Gratitude is the sign of Noble souls” -Aesop*

*"On Thanksgiving Day, all over America, families sit down to dinner at the same moment - halftime." -Anonymous*

## Reminder:

Remember to “fall back” an hour on Sunday,  
November 7, at 2AM.  
**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**



***“If you can’t feed a hundred people, then feed just one” – Mother Teresa***



## Chiste:

**What do you call a dead bee that gets up and flies?**



**A Zombee**



## *“This Thanksgiving I am Thankful For...”*

“This Thanksgiving I am Grateful For ... Being employed when others in this economy aren't so lucky ” -Ignacio Segura, *Housing Department*

*This Thanksgiving I am thankful for...my hardworking Northeast center staff who loves to have potlucks J -Gayle Conley, Northeast*

*This Thanksgiving I'm thankful for friends and family ... and that Conan O'Brien makes his comeback on TBS - Maribel Santoyo/ Community Relations*

“This Thanksgiving I am Grateful For...my health, my son, my job, a holiday that doesn't require atonement or starvation, the fact that I'm not a vegetarian and that I never had to play a tree in a Thanksgiving Day play.” - Tania Rice, *Executive Assistant*

## Thanksgiving Guestbook

