



NMSU Library News Release

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NMSU Library and 16 Partners Awarded \$204,000 by National Library of Medicine for Border Health Network

The New Mexico State University (NMSU) Library is the lead agency for the Border Health Information and Education Network (BIEN!), a consortium of seventeen public and academic libraries, hospitals and health organizations in Dona Ana, Luna, and Otero counties. A \$204,000 Information Access grant has been awarded to BIEN! by the National Library of Medicine. This award will enable BIEN! to achieve its goal of creating opportunities for improving the health of people in the border region through the provision of quality health information resources in electronic and traditional formats, and through health outreach activities in border communities. The energy and enthusiasm of the seventeen partners, and the recognition that health information can improve the quality of people's lives, is conveyed by the project's acronym, BIEN!, which is Spanish for "well."

The border area of southern New Mexico has a high poverty rate, and contains several medically underserved areas and health professional shortage areas. The need for quality health information is great. The BIEN! partners have been meeting for over a year to assess the health information needs of the border area and plan the health information activities of the network. The National Library of Medicine funding will enable the BIEN! consortium to provide reliable online and print health-related resources in Spanish and English to consumers, health professionals, and educators in the border area, and to provide training in the use of these resources. Public access computers will be installed in BIEN! partner institutions for access to online sources of health information.

BIEN! is the brainchild of Norice Lee, Branch Librarian of the Dona Ana Branch Community College (DABCC) Media Center and Chair of the BIEN! Executive Board. Sylvia Ortiz, the Head of Branson Library Reference at the NMSU Library, is the project director. Members of the BIEN! Executive Board are: Carol Brey, Director of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library; Dr. Hugo Vilchis-Licon, Director of the Border Epidemiology and Environmental Health Center; Frances Scappaticci, Director of Case Management and Health Education at Memorial Medical Center; Dr. Paul Lang, Health Promotion Manager of the New Mexico Public Health Division, District 3; and Molly McGetrick of Las Cruces.

BIEN! partner institutions in addition to those mentioned above are: the NMSU Alamogordo Townsend

Library, the NMSU Health Science Department, Mimbres Memorial Hospital in Deming, La Clinica de Familia, the Southern Area Health Education Center, the NMSU Cooperative Extension Service, the New Mexico Border Health Office, the Hatch Public Library, the Alamogordo Public Library, Marshall Memorial Library in Deming, and the Valley Community Library in Anthony. The National Library of Medicine grant was written by Jeanette Smith of the NMSU Library, and the project evaluator is Dr. Fred Lillibridge of DABCC.

BIEN! project activities began this spring with a planning grant of \$10,000 from the Paso del Norte Foundation of El Paso. This funding supports a part-time temporary employee, Linda Sandoval, who is coordinating initial BIEN! activities so the consortium is better poised to conduct the full project funded by the National Library of Medicine.