

***¡Salud!* Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month**

Since 1968 the nation has celebrated National Hispanic/Latino Heritage every September 15 - October 15th. National Hispanic/Latino Heritage month is an opportunity for the TREE Center familia to come together to embrace and celebrate our diversity, reflect on our legacy and embrace “culturally based knowledge” and “community driven practices” for advancing health equity.

As part of the southwestern region, New Mexico is one of the most unique states in the nation. Prior to 1848 and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,¹ ten states were the territory of the Mexican government including New Mexico, Arizona, California, Colorado, Kansas, Nevada, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and Wyoming. These boundaries also encompassed the original inhabitants of New Mexico including the Navajo, Pueblo, Apache, other native tribes and other indigenous and mixed-race peoples (Spaniards, Aztecs, Mayan, Mestizos, Criollos, Geniseros, Africanos). The mixing of these cultures by both choice through peaceful exchanges and by force through slavery and colonization comprises New Mexico as we know it today!

In spite of colonization, genocide and oppression, Latinx communities continue to face adversity with cultural resiliency. **We are a people who embrace the principle of “la cultura, cura” which translates to “our culture cures.”** For instance, the parteras (midwives), curanderas (traditional healers), medicine men and alike are some of the earliest healers in our state.² Today, we must continue to value the rich history, culture, language that Latinx communities bring and recognize them as leaders and innovators in developing local, state and national models in public health, medicine and social sciences. It is the very nature of our culturally rooted generativity that builds collective action for improving the health outcomes and decreasing the health inequities of our state and nation.



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See Francisco’s Ignite 4Equity Talk at: <http://www.ignitetalks.io/videos/mental-and-behavioral-health-an-urgent-call-to-accion>

¹ Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Guadalupe_Hidalgo

² A History of Public Health in New Mexico Unknown Binding – 1962 by [Myrtle Greenfield](#) (Author)