

Webinar: Building Power: A Conversation with Nonprofit Leaders of Color in Public Office

17 May 2021 #BuildingPower #POCLEaders

Presented by the [Building Movement Project](#) (BMP)

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: My name is Alicia Lueras Maldonado and I'm really happy to be moderating today's conversation along with the Building Movement Project. I do work with them as a consultant based here in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Welcome all of you. Thanks to the panelists that have joined us today, Representative Javier Martinez, Representative Kristina Ortez, County Commissioner Adriann Barboa, who I'm happy to say are all long-time friends and colleagues whose work I greatly admire and all the work that they've done, so thank you all for joining us today. Really grateful and appreciate you.

So a couple of housekeeping notes as we move through, -the attendees are not visible. Again let's utilize the chat to send questions to the panelists. Any tech issues, you can send to BMP admin. That's Catherine Foley, she is part of our Building Movement Project team, and I want to give her a huge shout out for all of the tech support and helping me with the presentation materials and promotion and just really, being there for anything that I needed to help get this together, so thank you Catherine, for all of your support.

Please feel free to tweet #POCLEaders and #BuildingPower, and this webinar is being recorded and we'll share the link along with additional material afterwards. So for today's agenda we're going to share a little bit of our BMP research and report findings from some of the reports and surveys that we've done in the past. We'll introduce our panelists, and the new will move into our conversations with our - leaders of color today.

So, a little bit about the Building Movement Project. -Building Movement Project is a national research organization and we are focused on developing resources and tools to support and challenge nonprofit organizations to be more focused and committed to progressive social change and there's three areas in which we do this work. So, moving from left to right, -one we do movement building, looking at how organizations collaborate and work together to have a bigger impact than they would on their own. Two, -service and social change. So developing the capacity of han services to engage constituents in addressing the root causes of the conditions that they're facing. And three, leadership. Looking at how non-profits can promote effective and inclusive practices. And I'm happy to say that I've been able to engage with the three panelists -in a variety of ways -through this particular work in these three different areas, so. Thank you all for your past support and contributing -to the surveys that we have put out, -as well as -being advisors to the work that we do here in New Mexico.

So first off, I wanted to just share a little bit about what we did in 2020. So, in 2020 we had a report from Building Movement Project and Solidarity Is. This was the report that was released on COVID and in particular impact of leaders of color, and so this was a survey that was released nationally and we did have a subset of data from folks in New Mexico, so there were over 400 nonprofit leaders of color that responded. There were key findings that we looked for, testimonials and quotes, and recommendations for philanthropy, non-profits, and the government.

So some of the key findings that we want to share, and we did two two webinars so far on this particular report. We did one back in October and we had -three leaders from New Mexico on that and then we

invited them back -to- do a webinar with us back in March, and so we had the same three folks join us along with 10 additional panelists. So, the key findings from on the front line report is that the crisis is about to get worse before it gets better. Non-profits are making up for government inefficiencies and I'm sure that you all can speak to this and we can get into that later in the conversation.

The climate is taking an immense toll on POC leaders and in particular, were men of color. The long term financial stability of POC profits is at stake, and it's time for systemic change and solidarity across the board. Additionally, we also released a report from our Race to Lead survey that we had done, and this was data that we collected from over 5,000 non-profit staff across the country, so a much bigger set of participants and reporting. We were really able to dig deep into the data and lift out a nber of key findings. Additionally, we had testimonials and quotes and recommendations and opportunities for change within philanthropy and the sector.

Normally, we would do these report backs in person, and in the past we've hosted them in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. -We did this -particular- webinar last year -via zoom. So, again, the key findings from The Race to Lead revisited, which was in 2017, right? We have found that the findings are still very relevant, -three years later. So, there is a def-a definite white advantage within the non-profit sector in terms of upward mobility, leadership, access to funding, -a nber of issues that -that were raised -in the findings of this report. -diversity, equity, and inclusion, right-those are like the-the-the big you know, keywords that we're seeing--you know, lifted up and used throughout the sector, but we're finding that folks are saying that there is some certainty about their effectiveness, how they're being implemented, what it really means, so really looking at how we get past -just the language and look at how things are actually implemented and are benefiting -in particular, people of color within the non-profit sector.

So, that's a little bit about the report that -that we have done in the last couple of years here in New Mexico, so again - the non-profit racial leadership staff in New Mexico, A Race to Lead brief was released in September of 2020. -we did the webinar in September of 2020 to discuss those results and then we've done two webinars on the effects of Leaders of Color, COVID-19 and the effects of Leaders of Color. -so again, we're really grateful for everyone who can bench for those. If you go to buildingmovementproject.org all of the -data, the reports, as well as the YouTube video recording and blog posts and tools are all on there, so we invite you to-to take a look -at our website.

So, I want to introduce our amazing panelists. I'm really honored -that-that you three have taken the time to-to join us today. I know that your schedules are incredibly busy, that you're running from meeting to meeting or from zoom to zoom, and so I just can't express enough, my gratitude, -to all of you for taking the time. So today we have the pleasure of talking to Adriann Barboa, she's -County Commissioner here in Bernalillo for district three, and she's also the policy director for Forward Together.

Javier Martinez is the New Mexico state rep for district 11 and he is the executive director of Partnership for Community Action. And our third panelist is Kristina Ortez. She's a new, -New Mexico state representative from district 42 and is the executive director of the Taos Land Trust. So, my interest in talking with these three folks in particular is that they have an immense background of doing community organizing and advocacy as leaders within the non-profit sector and decided to throw their hat into - public office and run for office, and are now all elected leaders. And so, we want to get into a discussion today around that. , but before we do that I wanted to share just a little bit about each of our panelists - and then we'll move into our conversation.

So, Adriann Barboa, is someone that I am so thrilled, I have known Adriann for I think over 20 years now and -it's just been a pleasure to see -her work -over the years and how she has navigated community organizing, -advocacy, -doing work with-with young folks, passing legislation to support pregnant and parenting young folks, -has done work on reproductive health, mobilizing community, -and hired [inaudible 00:12:23] -Forward Together First, a state based program which is now Strong Families, New Mexico. Now, she has -been committed to this work -for many, many years, and is now a county commissioner in district three, so -thank you, -Adriann for all of your work over the years.

Our next panelist is Javier Martinez and he is -as I said the-the -state representative for district 11 here in Albuquerque. -He has been a tireless advocate for New Mexico communities for over a decade. -I-I as his work in the legislature, he has served on the House Taxation and Revenue Committee, -as well as on the House Commerce and Economic Development Co--Committee and really worked on government transparency, early education, and renewable energy. As well as being the executive director for Partnership for Community Action, which is a non-profit -here in the South Valley in Albuquerque-, I drive by it every day when I'm going to Soleta and just excited to see the new developments. I want to hear about some of the stuff you all are doing, including that incredible building that's going up. -and then just the amazing work that you have done -for working families, -as a negotiator, as a consensus builder here in New Mexico, so thank you, Javier.

And we've got Kristina Ortez, who is a newly elected state rep -in Northern New Mexico, up in Taos, and has committed -her work toward the protection of New Mexico's land, water, and investing in families. - She was elected in November 2020 and although she says she's not a career politician, she has always worked in service to her community--and has really focused on resolving land and water issues in communities. She has been in Taos for 10 years -and has served as the executive director of the Taos Land Trust for five years. she's an advocate that's drafting legislation and advocated for public land, including water at the state and national levels, so thank you, all of you, and -we're going to get into our discussion.

So, I wanted to start off with a question for you all. You've been long-time -advocates, -and organizers who decided to run for office, and so I wanted to ask you what made you decide to take this journey, and I wanted to start off with -Kristina and -and get your story in terms of what was it that-that brought you into this?**Kristina Ortez:** Thank you so much, Alicia, Building Movement Project, my panelists, so nice to see you. Representative Martinez, Adriann, Commissioner Barboa. -and everybody who is on the other side watching. -that is an excellent question that I keep asking myself every day. How did I-how did I get here? -how do I stay here? -it's -it is -something I deliberate all the time, but I think that the-the two reasons for me being where I am now in my work and you know-as a newly elected legislator really, are my daughters Viva who is seven, and Gillian who is 10, they both -you know-I asked them for permission when I even started to contemplate the possibility of running for office, and that-that's a story that I think is probably enjoyed over some beverages. It's a long one. Lots of deliberation up and down, you know-but it-when you're-when you're finally called, right, you need to check in with yourself and with your family, -about you know, whether or not you can take that call and take that step, right?

But my daughters, you know--I-I think of, I think of all the decisions I was making when I was in my you know, teens and 20s, particular around you know, my own ability to choose my own-you know, my own health care, my own reproductive health care, and I thought about what their decisions would be and

where we were. You know, last year a-a two years ago and this, you know-challenging position of whether or not, you know-we could protect the reproductive rights-health care rights for our-for our daughters and I-that's really what prompted me to-to you know to-to do this. And so I started on that journey. I've been an advocate for a long time, I've been an environmental advocate for 17 years now, you know-and when you're an organizer in the field you're-you're you know, you're-you're, you know on the front line working directly with decision makers, right? All of us know that. We've all been doing that -and you know-we-you know we imagine think-you know think 10 years ago when you're getting people in your community to write letters or make phone calls to field staff, like you know.

I've been doing that, right? I always thought of myself as that person who would be organizing people to make you know-helping to draft legislation, never you know, being the person to decide on that legislation. So -I-It-It's kind of strange that I never thought of myself as that but it's just that was the case. But when I got to the point of being called to serve, right? I-You know I thought back about, I thought back to all of the-the points at which I'd been inactive in community, you know asking people to join me in a call to protect, you know to protect either public land or-or you know --on the sequoias work funding for sequoias, you know we're all just working together to fight this fight, right? And so it really does help us as an elected-as-as-an elected person if you have been doing the work in community. You understand. You understand you know, the issues.

That we're facing. So I did it for my daughters. I continue to do it for them even though they would rather me be -an owner of the Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you for sharing that Kristina. I wanted to -move to Adriann. And -you know get your story and also if you could share you know, what-What does it mean to balance both roles, right? Like, in a non-the non-profit work, and then being, you know-in public offices. What that journey is like. And we can double back to this again Kristina, because I see you nodding your head, right? But -something to think about so, Adriann, -if you could share with us your journey and in particular, sort of what that is like.

Adriann Barboa: Yeah, no, -thank you and -Ditto all the things Kristina so gracefully said, Rep Ortez, thankful to say that now. -I am Commissioner Adriann Barboa from Bernalillo County, district three. , really I would say that I've been an organizer since I was a really young person myself and I actually felt like I was blessed to be trained by-with the best. , like Alicia said, we've known each other for a really long time and really a lot of the same kind of organizing camps. -but-, in along that journey, being able to actually find and build the resources to bring hundreds, if not thousands of people to their decision makers, like in my work at Forward Together, we say one of our major roles is to shorten the distance between decision makers and the people that they represent, and in that role I've been able to -along my lifetime of doing that work, been able to bring the resources and the skill set and -engage community to where I've been able to bring hundreds, if not thousands of people to just-decision makers that represent them, and still often times met without much change, or seeing that in my view from bringing folks from their constituents and not always seeing the change that communities fight so hard for.

So that was really my sort of, decision to run was, but we need to be everywhere, -and we need to-I'm sorry, someone keeps calling me. I've turned off the thing. -Yeah we need to be everywhere and we

need all approaches. We need to be from every angle. -Some of the work around balancing it, -when I, I've got to say I don't know how our reps do it. I do have a paid staff at-at my county role as commissioner, and I was just telling my -you know, operations assistant that I think I would be drowning if-And -I am aware of that support, so I do think there's-there's so many different roles in which we play and which are year long or, you know-what did it-what did it look like in having an unpaid state legislature - but I definitely -I-boast the roles, one that I have the staff support and for like- I need at the county and then that my organization For Together has always been ready to take some risks, to take some steps to open up and-and-and see what can we do? Where and how are we building power? And so -they really allowed me that room and space. And -also is support to me almost in mentoring or advice- as to how I navigate and making sure I'm doing everything ethically. It's been those sort of dual roles and really feeling like I have pretty good support from both-both spaces.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Adriann. Javier I wanted to turn it over to you, and I wanted to ask if you think about this journey, right, and you know-if you could think about -sharing like-what-what are some of the challenges that you've faced, and once you're in elected office, you know-I-I-how do you determine both roles, and then how do you-how do you determine who you're still accountable to, right-in-because all of you come from communities -and then something to think about for all of you as we continue, like what in particular is this like to be a leader of color? Right? - in elected office and then in the work that you do. So, Javier if you could share with us your thoughts.

Javier Martinez: Yeah, so first of all thank you Alicia and Building Movement Project for the invitation and it's great to see Rep. Ortiz and Commissioner Barboa on this call as well. -You know, -I-it-it's -a difficult balance and I-I-in the New Mexico legislature in particular, because of what Commissioner Barboa mentioned earlier. You know, we are a volunteer operation. We don't have staff. -E-Even during the session is when we have a little bit of staff and Rep Ortiz will know that she actually has to share an adamant assistant with another legislator. -I-I-I have -I have a little bit of a leg up these days, because as a chairperson, I get to have like-two or three analysts that work for me, but only during sessions, so. I always joke with constituents, if somebody has an exemplary, awesome idea during this call today don't expect me to move on it right away, because I've got to delegate to hopefully somebody who will help me out. I don't-we don't have staffers year around.

So it's a tough balance-you know. And keep in mind, folks, I don't know how many of you on this call are from out of state, but New Mexico is actually the only remaining volunteer legislature, believe it or not. And it sounds beautiful, it-the citizen legislature, it's so romantic. -but it's a real detriment to advancing policies in this state that can really have a meaningful impact on families. , so-so it's-it's a tough balancing act in that regard. , I also think that for-for-for us who come from the organizing world, who come from -community mo-movement building organizations, -you know we are accountable, not only toward continuants, I believe we're accountable to constituencies everywhere. We're accountable to people who -see in us agents of change. Who see in us, who see us as an extension of that movement building work that's been happening long before we you know-we got involved in this work, you know 15, 20 years ago.

So it's a delicate balance. Now, I will say this, right, and I tell all my organizing colleagues or friends this, hold us accountable every step of the way. But also, we've got to understand limitations, both of the non-profit sector and movement building work and of specific legislators or politicians. -you know, we've got our own limitations and so it is that-that middle space, that middle ground, and I'm not talking

ecologically, I'm just talking sort of where everything kind of meets. I think that that's really the challenge for us over the next few years. How do we occupy that middle space? And how do we harness that energy and that accountability and that passion to move positions and to move policies -forward.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Javier, for sharing that. Thank all of you for, you know-sharing with us a little bit about your journey. Before we get into the next round of questions, we're going to really focus on-you know, what you all did this past legislative session and what you're currently working on within -your public office and-and- what kind of work that you're doing. We wanted to run a quick poll-for our audience members to participate in and so, I'm going to invite Catherine to go ahead and put the poll up.

So, what are your most pressing concerns right now? There are the options there and you can go ahead and select that. We'll give you all a couple of minutes. Right? So, I think we'll be generating -the responses here, in just a minute. As we're waiting, Kristina, did you have anything to add in terms of-you know, the balancing act that I asked.

Kristina Ortez: Yeah.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: The accountability factor, before we move on? As we're waiting for the results.

Kristina Ortez: I want to talk about-Yeah, for sure want to talk about balance in that there really is not any-. That's it, I mean, I--I think it's surrender, really. That's when I-when I accepted that, -it was much easier for me to manage the legislative session and taking care of my daughters during COVID with the help of my mother. I would not have been able to do it without her, and you know-trying to run a non-profit at the same time.

But -And I don't want to sound too cheesy, but, I don't care about that. -you know, I've been in therapy for like 25 years. Everybody needs to be in therapy, all the time, and my therapist says to me that if you want to-you can't get all of it done, right? You just can't, so don't even try. Don't like, try to prove yourself to anybody because it's just not worth it. You will kill yourself and nobody wants you dead. So, you should do these three things. You should prioritize, you should simplify, and you must ask for help, and I literally write that down everywhere I go-you know. It's like all over my home and you know, it's my mantra because when things start getting real, and they get real every single day, all the time. I just-I look at that, I'm like (sigh), all right, this is the time ask for help. Or-you know-I can't do that. And I just can't do that because there's just one of me, and that's all there is to it. So prioritize, simplify, ask for help, period. And don't try to do everything yourself. Ask for help. Ask your mother. Ask your [inaudible 00:28:51], ask Adriann-you know? And she'll ask someone else because she can't do it all either, and neither can Javier, right?

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: I think that is such an important thing, Kristina, and I think what all three of you have lifted up is-you know, the enormous burdens that are placed on leaders of color, right? To sort of manage it all. Families, work-you know, fundraising, policy, and-you know, one of the things that looks lifted up in the webinar that we did -on COVID-19 was, I-I-it really allows folks to kind of step back for a second to think about like, well within themselves and within their community, and within their organizations. And really, -prioritizing self-wellness in order to then be able to do the community work.

And so, I think that's hugely important and we're not often-we don't often give ourselves permission to do that, or we're not given permission to do that.

I thank you all for sharing that--and just really lifting up that--that it is a struggle, right? And that we do need help. And it's okay to ask for help -when we need it and collaborate as need be.

I think we've got the results from our poll -if- Catherine wants to share them. So, it looks like surveillance and criminalization of communities of color and food and housing instability are tied at 48%. -so those are things that are really on folks' minds, as well as, you know, some close ones. Water and the environment is-is at 40%--you know, there's--there's lots of--lots of concerns here-. I'm seeing that--that folks are still thinking about. So, thank you all for sharing -again, continue to drop into the chat as you join our call.

We're going to move into our next round of questions, and I'd love for all of you to share with us some of the work that you did -during the top legislative sessions. And--you know, what were some of the successes, what were some disappointments or challenges?

And then we had a question here from one of our -participants- that legislators have certain agendas that are important--when selected, these agendas might not be important to the collective legislative body. What have been some challenges that you faced. -What were some - important issues that you weren't able to get consensus on. So, let's have a conversation now about some of the work that you all were engaged in.

Adriann, I know that you were s-usually engaged as an advocate, but feel free to also share with us some stuff you're working on at the county level as well. And -I'm going to go ahead and ask -Javier to start us off on this one.

Javier Martinez: Sure. Thank you. You know, we had a--we had a great session this year. -you know we--we--passed--a very strong, I believe, a very strong budget, -that really, I think continues to double down on the investments in public ed, in early childhood. --parallel to the early childhood work, we finally were able to pass house resolution one, -which, there is a question in the chat box -that you just mentioned, and that's really like the issue that got me motivated to run for state house -seven years ago. It was the inability of the legislature to pass what I thought was a slam dunk -for New Mexico's children. That really motivated me to go. -we got that done finally. -we got the Civil Rights Act passed, -becoming only the second state, I believe, to end qualified immunity for state actors including police. I--you know I want to lift up speaker Brian Egolf and--and--and- his staff, Rena Shepeski -for really, I mean my goodness -they carried the weight of that piece of legislation -along with Senator Georgia Lewis -in an incredible, incredible way. And -you know when we have more time I'll-I'll share the story of how speaker Egolf -really just put that whole thing together.

-Almost a year ago, we were on our way to a special session in June -during the pandemic. George Floyd had just been murdered -and state government was focused on COVID relief and really not thinking at all about what had happened to George Floyd and what has happened for the last genera--you know--several generations in our communities. -and Speaker Egolf took that issue and really just made it happen.

-we had one of the biggest tax relief bills in the history of the state pass with a \$110 million dollar a year tax break for working families, for working people, for low income families, low income seniors, including undocumented workers, becoming only the second state in the country to open up our -our working families tax credit to undocumented workers. Huge, huge deal that really flew under the radar, but that really was -a huge policy victory --the-there were a host of other bills that I think - deserve mention. I know Rep. Ortez carried some of them as well, but look, you know-getting elected, back to the question right, from the chat box, getting elected is like, not even half the battle. It's like a tiny little percentage of the battle.

Building that consensus I-is really key, and you build that consensus - and I know that this is like the sort of, dirty word-you know-elephant in the room sometimes in our communities, but it's fundraising. And we need fundraising because our elections are not publicly financed, and so you have to compete against other people who have a lot of money from different interests, and so -again I want to uplift Rena Shepanski and Speaker Egolf and Leann Leith, Political Director of the House of Democratic Campaign Committee, because they put together an operation that only has for the last five years, been electing progressive people, they've been actually recruiting, developing, and electing progressive -- people of color, women of color. Our chamber now is majority female. -and thanks in large part to that leadership -of-of the speaker in Rena and Leann.

And you know, some of you on this call might be getting a call from me tonight or in the next few days about fundraising, about contributing, because we need to do that, and again-it's not sexy, it's not fun for people who come from a good government perspective, calling any-in-interest, whether it's the environmental interest, or the financial interest or whatever interest might be, is difficult. But that's the-you know, as an organizing, I'm pragmatic. I know my two colleagues are here as well. That's the-that's the playing field we're in. We've got to work to build-fix it. We've got to work to rebuild it, but until then, that's the game we're in, and so we've got to be able to switch those hats -with ease. Otherwise, we will be progressive elected officials of color who are there for symbolic purposes only, and that's not why we sacrifice, or what we sacrifice - to do. You know-we're not there just to be symbols. We're there to be actors that are active, who are going to bring results to our communities.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Javier. Kristina, your thoughts on-you know. Share-share with us what you're working on, and yeah. Challenges, what worked, what didn't.

Kristina Ortez: So many challenges, so many things, but thank you Representative Martinez, that was beautiful, I sent that-that's it, right? And he just gave a master card from all those things that-that we have to do and I'm so proud, as a freshman, -this-this election cycle just, this legislative session was bonkers, right? I'm so grateful for, you know-for the leadership and for folks like Representative Martinez for helping me, texting me, you know-while I-you know-I've never really did this before. I hadn't run for office since like, 1990, really, truly, student body president. So I didn't, you know-I didn't know how to do really any of those things.

I know how to talk about the things that I care about but what-but debating is a whole different scenario, right? So, --what-what I learned was that you know, you really-you know you've got to open yourself up to the criticism and use it quickly. Incorporate it and keep-keep moving forward, and I'm grateful to be part of this class of folks that decriminalize abortion, you know-with HB7. That was you know-I-I-that was really my answer to why -you know, what inspired you? It was a phone call from someone who might be on this -zoom right now, from Rachel Cox, saying "Hey, you need to do this", so-

and these are the reasons why you need to do this, so that we can-we can get rid of this stupid law. -so, that happened, end of life options, you know I'm just-I'm proud to be part of this legislation that moved our families forward.

From my perspective, you know-I did a lot of legislation that was unrelated to land and water and environmental issues, and I was able to get two bills, -signed by the Governor, which was pretty exciting. -I-I- saw the sad death of two bills on the senate side because of, I don't know, inertia, lack of understanding, lack of interest, and that made me really, really sad. I'm not dogging my senate colleagues but you know-we do a lot of good things in the house and it's really sad to put so much work into something and then see that people need and want, and see it just languish because there's no time. So, that-you know-I was really, really-and I'm sorry, I don't want to seem like I you know-a sour grape, but you know, I-I think we did a lot of good stuff on COVID, but we, our families you know-need a lot more help and we need to work harder to make sure that-that families, working families, and singles-I've got to be careful about that-working folks -you know, have more -hand-you know, money in their pockets, so that they can-you know-they can be-they can thrive, and that's what I'd like to see us do going forward, is really focus on that.

And I'm so honored and proud to be part of you know-the legislators that voted for HJR1, oh, my God. Oh, my God, you know-my children, the reason why I'm working and I'm doing this is because of high quality early childhood education and we need more of that. Everybody needs to have access to that, so thank you. Thank you for that being your motivating factor, Representative Martinez, and for pushing it for so long.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Kristina. And I just appreciate all of you and your honesty, so you know. It's challenging stuff. It's not all roses and I-I appreciate the conversation. Adriann, -share with us what was going on during the session and what you're working on currently.

Adriann Barboa: Yeah, and so and-as my role as policy director for Forward Together, -our-our-you know we've been -as a reproductive organization, been leading on the fight for -to repeal the abortion ban so, and -we were so proud of Representative Kristina Ortez's work, even before running of the candidate to bring along and show that the voices of Northern New Mexicans are with us. I think that's some of the work that I've been most proud of, that I've gotten to do as a policy director, is really depolarizing the issue of--and hopefully chipping away at the shame and stigma around our full spectr of our reproductive health access. -but you know-interesting enough too that, -the other bill that I got to work on with Forward Together has been -healthcare. We-We have the New Mexico Together for Healthcare Campaign that I actually get work for many years with -representative Javier Martinez. , and we passed the Healthcare Affordability Fund, which is going to bring over 120 million dollars into the state, specifically to just-how do we get to the place where we have true, quality affordable healthcare for all our families?

There was so much in there on different healthcare bills that we worked on that -included access for immigrant families that you know-adjust some of the ways that our families are receiving healthcare or not receiving healthcare right now. Mixed immigration, mixed tribal statuses, -those are all-have all been -some of the ways that we have chipped away at that this session.

-and-you know, interesting enough, our -for folks on the call that love political -politics and the maneuvers within, -we were once again facing with trying to get the Healthcare Affordability Fund, facing some roadblocks and -because there is such a seasoned and knowledgeable legislator and Representative Armstrong, one of our sponsors, -that you know-she was able to bring it back to life with -a behavioral health bill. And I'm using that sort of as my Segway, -behavioral health -because of the combination of those two bills they gave her a health -practitioners will not have the-have to pay the same tax that -they get a tax break for their service.

What led me to run for County Commissioner, I talked about the sort of place of being, wanting for us and our families and folks that are -for-people of color, women, young single moms like myself, to be better represented in our local government. -the-the other biggest thing for me, especially for the county, has been the behavioral health. If you live in Bernalillo County, you voted for behavioral health tax dollars that brings in over 20 million dollars a year, to really address what I say is the needs that our state has been going through for a long time, right? -the disease of drug addiction and substance use, right? , and I myself have lost a father and--several uncles to alcohol and substance use. I've worked in the field of providing direct services and knowing that our county has those kind of resources, how do we make them the best so we're actually re-reaching to-if you grew up in New Mexico, you love somebody who suffered from that -disease of-of-of substance use. And so, I really believe that we can use those resources, not just to provide services but to actually connect some of the dots, get some of the root causes.

So that's where my focus has been on, in that I'm trying to build in my very new seat since January as a County Commissioner, so. -I could go forever, so I'm trying to cut myself off.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Right. Well we'll have some time at the end for-for more conversation between the-the three of you. I wanted to move into looking at the potential power of non-profits to influencers policy, right? And you all know that work from-from your own experience, and so, wanted to-to chat a little bit about you know-what are your bold solutions, right? Whether it's in policy, of philanthropy, or on the movement levels, and -Adriann I know you were just chatting, but I wanted to ask you-you know, how do you go about building power within your organization as you think about the work that you do in influencing policy.

Adriann Barboa: Thank you so much, I'm glad because I-I actually think I'm allowed to go first on this. I think that -right I talked a little er-a minute ago in my several years as an organizer, I've learned things along the way and-and with the-when I-It has actually been nine years now since I opened the Forward Together Strong Families New Mexico office, here in New Mexico and -you know-some of that hav-having-having those years of-of like know how and trying and also like I talked about, having an executive director that is willing to take risks -you know, we really said how are we able, with the resources we have, to be able to build to the tightest skill that can influence power, right? -and-and-and but with the same values and intentionality so they won't just become this like mill of trying to get people to take action, but that we're actually building the relationships needed. We're moving together, and that's a skill, that we can influence power, so we really -you know-eight years ago said let's try working around New Mexico. We both -sometimes in rural New Mexico they have like-elections that are-that -we actually heard of elections where they've had to draw straws at the end, because they were tied-a three way tie, or seven people. This past session, we had like-one that in southern New Mexico, there was one of our closest chance at like-by 11 people, right? And so like if we can actually

build relationships and community where we're learning together, we're learning to practice together, we're learning about the issues together, and we're moving together, then we can have -- both. We can both influence power because we're able to hold accountable together, right? Because, you know-we can get all on one issue and still have 500 different opinions about how we should use those early childhood dollars, right?

-but when we're able to have a-a group that moves together, so that's the way that -and-and like you know, and to be honest as an elected-a newly elected official, I keep-this is one of my struggles or challenges, is that I keep being in this space where like-you know, I-I and I-and I feel like I'm going to go with it because it's my strength, I'm just going-I'll go with my organizer role, right. Like-where can I build some relationships in my district? Where can I make sure that I have people that trust me, are moving with me, understand the policies and what I'm facing -and so we can move together and that's the way of approaching it. Sometimes I-because I don't see a lot of that in-in among my commissioner colleagues, I'm like -maybe I'm not fully leveraging my authority as a commissioner. I'm not really sure yet, still to be learned, but -for now, those are the ways they sort of transfer over to each other.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Well, I would say that what you're doing is effective in terms of -how you're leveraging power, and I think you're touching on something right in terms of the relationships, right? The relationship building and how important -that is in-in the organizing work and also in the legislative and public office work. So--thank you for lifting that up.

Javier, I wanted to -turn it to you-you know, as we think about how nonprofits build power and leverage power, and wanted to ask in terms of partnership for community action-How are you all translating, you know-the work into effective policy-you know? What are you finding that is working for you all? -In terms of being able to push forward on some of the things that you all have -been able to be successful on, and then where, you know-where are the roadblocks that need to get out of the way -so that you all can be more effective as nonprofit leaders of color?

Javier Martinez: You know, I-I think one of the things that-that -that bears mentioning is the fact that -as an organization we-we are not in a silo, we are part of an ecosystem. -we are part of collaboratives and coalitions, Forward Together and Centro--Centro Savila [inaudible 00:48:05] development center, I mean-you name it right? And-and there are these relationships that are sometimes issue-based for the most part. We're all in this together building a movement of working people, of low age workers, of immigrants, of-of black and indigenous peoples across the city. In-in our case, right? There are others that do this state-wide. And you know we as an organization are very careful to not cross any ethical lines.

The-the legal answer well defined. You know we all-we all understand that [inaudible 00:48:44] but there are ethical lines too, right, that-that we need to really keep in mind and, you know--a-as an organization, -we-we have -enacted policies that allow for our staff members to serve in public service roles. Whether it's state legislature or the board of a charter school or whatever the case might be. -and at the same time, we have these walls set up-you know. When-when I'm a legislator for size days of whatever, I'm a legislator, and I take that role very seriously. I've got [inaudible 00:49:18] that live down the street for me that voted for me, not because I'm a non-profit leader, but because I'm a movement builder, but because they believe in me and what I can do for them as a legislator.

So I've got to respect that piece of it. At the same time, as Leaders of Color in this non-profit sector -you know-we've got to keep those lines of communication open. Right? And-and we all have a role to play - case in point, you know the work that Adriann was talking about New Mexico, New Mexicans together for healthcare, right. -you know that-that is work that is critical to our communities, that is critical particularly to undocumented immigrants with regards to healthcare access. -you know, I can play a supportive role. I don't have to be a person carrying legislation, right? There are much better, smarter, - veteranos, veteranas out there that do incredible work -and so, you know-I don't have to be everything to everyone-you know. But that communication is key because ultimately -you know-our ability to serve in public office and our ability to continue to build this collective movement -gets lost in -in-in the shuffle of the politics, right? -you know, not every role I take as a legislator, the non-profit ecosystem will agree with, right. And I've got -I've got a long list and I'm sure Commissioner Barboa is probably going to sort of feel that-you know-the more load she takes. Senator Ortiz is probably is the same, and that's okay.

You know-you don't have to-you don't have to check the progressive box on every single issue for that ecosystem to continue to thrive and get ahead, right? -and I find that those-th-th-the folks in that non-profit sector that fully understand and appreciate that are actually some of the most effective advocacy players in this state, right? Because they understand the pragmatism that they've got to approach this work through, you know the sometimes we will disagree on the substance of the policy, right, and that's okay. We should talk about those disagreements -and we can decide to talk about them in a public space or a private space, right?

-Depending on what's best for this movement, but it is okay to do that, right? And-and that is something that I think especially young leaders that are coming up in this sector who want to serve in public office, it is okay to break from that -you know-fr-from any one ideology, depending on the issue, depending on your constituents. Because again, I go back to that vehito, that vehita down the street, you know-and they couldn't care less about the movement we're building. They just want to make sure that they can put food on their table. They want to make sure their nietos are taken care of, they want to make sure the school down the street has the resources that it needs to serve the kids in this neighborhood. -and they're your constituents and you've got to listen to them.

Adriann Barboa: I wanted to thank you, if I can, pull onto Javier's -Representative Martinez's comments just-I-I think like it's also an interesting thing for me in this world to be able to think of like-how do you be an effective legislator or just policy maker, and how are you an effective community organizer or an advocate, or whatever, and those don't always-because you could be radical and say all of the things, but if you can't pass legislation, -so some of that I really appreciate the word prag-pragmatic today. , and thinking about it and just like right-that we also want to be effective in both spaces and -I also saw - Counselor Viavial commenting so yeah, I think definitely value based, but still pragmatic to get what we-how-how and where can we be effective in both those spaces.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Yeah, and I was looking at that comment as well, right-and that is that balance, right, of you know-how are you staying true to your values? -accountable to your communities, to your non-profit role, and also as a person who is in public office, so -Kristina, wanted to hear your thoughts you know-when we think about -the potential power of non-profits right, to impact policy change and-and what is at stake, right? In terms of this comment that was just put in there? -and in

particular I'd like to hear from you, you know-what-what do you see ahead for the non-profit -sector, and the-the-the rising tide of elected leaders of-of color?

Kristina Ortiz: Th-that-Thank you, there is a lot to unpack with that question, but you know I-I will say I knew the power of non-profits as a non-profit leader. You know I-I I knew the-pr-I knew that power in my own community, right, because we do a lot of work that local government cannot do. We're often vilified for it, at least in my community. It's really, really hard for me to take as a non-profit leader, when I'm-when I'm-I hear, you know-things about non-profits being -terrible, you know-just wanting all the money from government and it's just-we just know that that doesn't happen. That's not true. We're doing the things that government needs to do -that-they're not, so I just want to say that-that's sort of the universe that I'm playing in up here, right.

And I knew our power, but I didn't really, truly understand that power until the legislative ses-session began, you know. And I'm coming into this you know-new -and the non-the non-profits and the collaboratives, have worked for so long, for years on issues, leading the charge because have no staff, because we're unpaid legislators. We're looking at the non-profit community right, to like you know-to advance legislation. To build-build that -you know-community power through organizing you know-to take that to the legislator-legislators to make that decision.

So like it-the power of the non-profit world is-it's really -overwhelming in some ways, in a good way. Like, we need each other to you know-to push legislation forward so that was a beautiful thing for me to see. I think that if we want to-and we need to we-we're not going to have a paid legislature like that, right, it's going-it's going to take some time for it to happen so you know-we're going to have to continually feed each other you know and-and work together to you know-to build support for legislation and community and-and it's-it's an enervated process, right?

So, I think what we have to get comfortable with is you know-like for me, the discomfort of someone saying you know-"Oh, you know this is a conflict of interest. You work on protecting land and where you want the state government to provide funding for protecting land? That's a conflict of interest." Like, well-there are plenty of oil and gas attorneys and owners of companies in the legislature, but we're not seeing all the-the conflict of interest of you can't work on that, but we're saying-we're so hard on ourselves, right? And the progressive community, it's hard on the progressive community, and we ask these questions and I think we have to-we have to have a real conversation about what that looks like, right?

We have to as-I-I think as a non-profit community, and I'm talking to boards and foundations, get comfortable with your leaders having-holding elected positions and figure out how to be flexible enough for them to-to be able to do that. Be clear with yourselves about what you need to-to support that, because the power of the movement is you know, not only the community, but in the-who's making the decisions, right? The decision makers. So let's get our people who care about our issues into the places of power, right? And as-as a board, support those people, right. And as foundations, really support those people by I don't know-expanding the grant terms, for instance, right? And saying like, instead of your one year grant, here's a four year grant, you can use this for salaries, for not the person doing the programming, but the person who's doing the payroll, right? That is how you build movement in the non-profit, is that you support all levels, not just the-you know-the fancy, sexy, programming person, but everybody who makes the non-profit work, right?

More money, money for collaboratives, you know-money for you know-for capacity and you know, give us the time. Don't make us you know-apply every six months. Give us a four year grant. I'm going to stop there because I have a lot of ideas about this.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Kristina. Well, I'm going to let Adriann go and then -and Javier too and then I wanted to just let folks know that we will have a few minutes here for some Q&A, so feel free to drop into the chat, -questions that you have for our panelists, but go ahead, Adriann.

Adriann Barboa: Yeah, I think we really need to talk about -something [inaudible 00:58:30] Representative Orteza brought up. I also, in my organizing work, right in it's actually one of the reasons why and how I first came to know Building Movement Project. Is because of that same work that I've-I've said, I used to work service delivery right, and do direct service with young people in foster care and navigating the juvenile justice system. And I used to-and -part of when I started working and opened the New Mexico offices, like-we really need to be tapping in to those direct service providers where there is also a myth right, that folks that are doing direct service or are the closest to the ground are our C3 can't be talking legislatively, when actually, there is-the-next to the person directly impacted, they are the next best thing, right, because they actually are working day-to-day with those groups in the community.

So, I do think as a Building Movement Project conversation, that this like-conversation around how and where, and those barriers that are pulled up, and we hold to them as a suggested organization, but yeah, we see like-just like Representative Orteza were speaking right, there's oil and gas or that really, the difference between church and state when we look at religious organizations so, -I just had to jump on that one, too.

Go, Javier. I know we had this conversation this week, too.

Javier Martinez: Yeah, no-no, just briefly, look. -to-to counter Adriann's point, I think she's right, I mean I do think the values have to be aligned and I'll give you guys a real quick example, real brief story. , but in 20-2011 when -the previous governor came into office, she made it her calling to -to end this state practice of allowing undocumented people to-to get a driver's license right, as sort of-part of a national movement and New Mexico was actually one of two states that held the line. Us and Washington State. , in-in big, big part, due to the-to this movement, right. Organizations that came together and were holding the line even when Republicans and a majority of Democrats were against us and in support of that policy. We-we held the line.

Now, in 2016, -when-when everybody, including Republicans were getting tired of this issue, there was a compromise on the table, right. To-to effectively end the practice of giving driver's licenses but replacing it with, at the time what it was, a driver certificate, right. And we brought together this coalition of groups and I think all but one or two of them said "This is a good deal, it's a good pragmatic deal, let's take it, and then we will fix it."

Well, long story short, it has been fixed effectively. -even though there were s-I think it was one organization at most, and like a couple of activists were really mad at us as legislators, and at the movement for quote unquote, taking the deal when in fact it was probably one of the best moves-strategic moves we made, right. So, absolutely we have to be true to these values, but once you're in that colosse, right, once the sausage is being made, or the chorizo is being made, if you will you know

there are a lot of moving parts, right? And you've got to sort of take both you know-a-a one or two year, three year outlook and then what the 20 year outlook is. We've got to be able to envision that, otherwise we are reacting. Otherwise, we're that symbol of progressive champion in the chamber, and we are not delivering anything for the people, and that is my worst fear when it comes to this movement, and the movement -you know, getting people like us elected into public office.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you. -I opened it up for questions and we have one here that came in, and it is, how do we support elected leaders of color to push our local city, and county, and state to more progressive solutions to the problems in our communities that address root causes and system change? And we can just popcorn out if you all want to-

Javier Martinez: You know I-I think answering-a-a-answering those phone calls, you know I-answering you know-the participating [inaudible 01:02:52] you know the-the fantastic , constituent outreach that you have. You know, coming to our town halls whether it's on-on zoom, Facebook live, or in our communities, -you know -pitching in those five or 10 dollars when you get the call and you're asked to do it, and if you can do a little bit more, do a little bit more.

All of that really, truly helps us. I think shapes the bodies in which we're in, not only by bringing in these-these -these smart progressive root cause -driving policy proposals, but also by surrounding ourselves and getting people elected to these same bodies who share in that perspective in-and who-if nothing else, are open to learning, right?

I can't tell you the number of legislators that Rep Ortez and I serve with who are not a part of these movements. They don't come through these like social determinants of health, type of trainings to their policy making roles, but they're very open to them, right. And-and I call tell you example after example of folks who say "Okay. H. I thought, you know I thought-I thought health care was just like, funding the healthcare to go see the doctor. I never really understood that it goes far beyond that." And they become champions in their own right and in their own communities.

Kristina Ortez: I'd like to piggyback on that, you know -it-it's awesome that in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County folks seem to be working really closely together. It's not so much in-in Northern New Mexico. You know, we've got some barriers here -mostly philosophical but-but what with COVID-19, we had this new thing happen where we created this -collaborative community -organization Active in Disaster, we were focused on what to do, how to help community members --along-along, you know a lot of things. Housing, food-you know-healthcare, all of that, and we were all working together. Community organizations and elected officials, and I wasn't an elected official when I started -on this thing, but we all have this agreement, right, that we are coming together out of respect and that everybody is as important as the-as the other-you know on-in this group, and so.

I think that it's really important to have agreement, right, with our elected officials. Like, if we're engaged we have to engage in collaboratives. We have to agree that we're going to respect each other and work forward together, but we really just have to elect more people who are like us and also, you know who share our values, but also pay attention to the staffing, you know-within cities and counties, you know-and at the state level, because those are the folks that are making things happen, right? And so we also have to present that as an option, you know-public administration as an option for people where you can-you know-support your family and yourself, but also make real change happen, right, so that the visions are really, really important.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Adriann?

Adriann Barboa: I just-step in, quickly say that I agree with everything I think that like I said at the beginning, we have to be everywhere. -because I used to say a long time ago, like-we can have the-in fact we do, in a lot of instances have some of the best policies on the books and it never hits the ground if we don't have the mechanism in which it's implementing or to stay in local governments that are really going to see it through to what that beautiful pieces of legislation is saying, right. -And I think too, the supporting leaders of color, -you know-I again, got to do some of the work with-because we got to invest in -what they call unlikely voters or people that aren't engaged. I call it myth busting, right? Like-all we hear everywhere is that -people of color are hypothetical, they don't care, they don't want to be involved, but -guess what? I've knocked on so many doors when we got-when we target those unlikely voters, or people who aren't your everyday engaged, and they said, "I've lived in this house 25 years. I'm going to vote now, because you came to my door. Nobody has ever come to my door before" or I-or-like people telling me that rural communities don't care and aren't going to come out.

We have hundreds of people coming to our meetings in rural McKinley County and rural Doña Ana County because we provide a good meal and give them all the space they need to have their voices heard. They want to be heard. People want to share their voices, so when you're engaged and involved, who-who do you know-who is nearest to you, that you can bring engaged and involved to? And then with that accountability lik-I also learned from my good friend Andre [inaudible 01:07:24], like identifiers like race, class, and gender aren't always the-sometimes we've been, and back in part of one of your questions is what is it like being a leader of color, well in New Mexico, we've been the leaders, at least [inaudible 01:07:36] Mexicanos, we have been in leadership for a long time, and that doesn't always equal--equal what we need so pushing on how do we build those values that where we're moving together, where we're informed together, and-and playing this big-big bad game, learning that process together, -and moving together and accountable to those communities- is what I'm excited.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you for lifting that up Adriann, I think that's a really great point. And New Mexico is different in that way -you know-compared to nationally. I wanted -to address one last question in the chat before we start moving to our wrap-up.

This is the question. There is a lot of national hand wringing about political polarization. How has moving into elected positions impacted your thinking about this topic? Do you think of it differently when in your non-profit organizer advocate role? So, quick thoughts on that before we move to wrap-up.

Javier Martinez: Yeah-Yeah, well look. -I-I-I mean there is polarization, obviously, -within the legislative body, --the closer you get to the committee process, -at least my experience, like we-we work pretty well together, honestly. Like, it's not until the lights are on and the chambers are with their mics on, that people get all, you know-they draw their lines.

For the most part, we work pretty well together, especially on the fiscal stuff like I-I feel like we-we all kind of move in the same direction, more or less. -I think in the nonprofit sector though, I think it's actually more bipartisan 10 years or so has been working with -with immigrants, with young children, and sort of we've taken that frame -we work with most everybody. Anybody who wants to-everybody who shares in that spirit is welcome to work with us. And in a way, I feel like that's a good thing, because people-organizations like ours are on the ground, and I feel like there's probably a little less polarization once you're at that ground level. Like, you're vecinos, like-you know-you go to the same church

together, your kids go to the same school together. -and once you start talking politics, then you realize that that person maybe voted for Trp, and maybe this one voted for Biden, but at the end of the day, - you know-you worship in the same place, your kids go to the same school, you're neighbors and you care for one another. That's not to say that we don't have these acts of hate that we've seen and-and it's more and more now because there are these like weird political lines being followed, especially at the national level, but I feel like New Mexico is in a different place than most other places.

And-and I think that is -is--as movement building organizations, we do need to lift that up, -to the extent that we can, because I don't like it for us to be tagged as like, left liberals who will always vote for the Democrats. Like-that might be the case more so now because of Trp, but I can tell you that's not the case everywhere and it's not the case all the time, especially when you actually have reasonable Republicans -who-who-who are willing to do the right thing. I mean, working families tax credit at the national level, that's a Republican idea, and it's actually a really good idea. Like-40 years later, the data showed that it's one of the best poverty alleviation measures you can-we've enacted, and it was a Republican idea while-of all ideas so. Yeah. -It-it-it stinks that it's there at the national level but I-you know, I'm hopeful that-that we're going to get past it.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Javier. Any last thoughts before we move towards our wrap-up on this particular question? Any closing words of advice for folks?

Kristina Ortez: I was-no, no, no, I don't have any of that but I will say that I was very surprised of the collegiality committee and how -the-it-the pure theater in debate, that was something that I was not prepared for, like "Hey, but you said you liked my bill, and then-now you're out here you're dogging it! You didn't tell me any of these things in committee, I could have made it better then." -so, that was exciting and interesting.

Javier Martinez: I-I've got to get one last thing out. I-I've got to say this because Rep Ortez is totally right. , and also --I've never heard the phrase institutional racism or race, or racism used more by republicans than ever before. And I still I-I-their leadership is still I think, trying to grasp it. Like they weren't like, "Yay, let's get rid of racism, right?"

Kristina Ortez: They don't really know what it means.

Javier Martinez: They don't but-but they're using the language and some of the most critical bills, so two bills, working families tax credit and the other one was house bill, I think it was --I think it was house bill 112 was it the indigent, yeah-house bill 112, was it the indigent-

Adriann Barboa: Yeah, I was going to give a shoutout – to Representative Martinez.

Javier Martinez: Those-those two bills are specifically targeting immigrants. Like, the-house bill 112 specifically literally says indigent care programs across the state can no longer discriminate on the basis of immigration. Passed all chambers unanimously. Not one anti-immigrant word was spoken by the other side. -which to me-

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: I thought the same.

Javier Martinez: -holy cow we've mad some progress, because if you all remember 2011, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16-immigrants were traffickers, child traffickers, drug cartel members, murderers, all the bad things you can think of.

Adriann Barboa: I needed to say really quickly that it was Representative Javier who was the sponsor of that bill, Representative Martinez, and I think it's that again, back to my we need to be everywhere in all approaches necessary right, his relationships within the legislature, the years of community and organizations working towards that, it just can't-to have that bill go through unanimously on both chambers. I was going to shout out to him, and you beat me to it, Martinez, so. That's a piece of- He hblly did not mention that he was the sponsor and creator of that bill.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Well, okay, we are at time. I have two quick slides to share some resources with you, but before that, I just really want to again, express my gratitude to-to the three of you for taking the time today and being so honest and thoughtful in your responses. -we really, really appreciate your time and energy, the work that you do for New Mexico families and for your communities.

Wanted to share -a couple of slides that have some resources from Building Movement Project, and I think can put those up now. So again, as I mentioned, if you go to -these particular websites, you can download the reports that we've done on COVID-19 and it's impact on people of color. You can - download the Race to Lead report at racetolead.org -so that's information for all of you, and -I think we've got one more slide, if I'm not mistaken, here.

That might be it. Okay, well. I again, am grateful to all of you -for your time, thanks to everyone who joined us today. We will be sending out an email with links to -this webinar and sharing it on our website so, once again, thank you everyone for your time, I appreciate it.