

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**SEAHEC community health workers reach out to elders with COVID education & support**

Through a recent subcontract from the Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization Area Agency on Aging, SEAGO, Department of Economic Security, Division of Adult and Aging Services DES-DAAS, the local Nogales nonprofit, SEAHEC – the Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center – is working to provide elders with information and support. In a special effort to reach those community members age 60+ and caregivers, SEAHEC and its partners, are working to assure that this especially vulnerable population is provided with accurate COVID education and referral to services. This initiative is working in Santa Cruz, Cochise, Graham and Greenlee counties, where SEAHEC collaborates with other health and social service agencies including county health departments and community health centers.

SEAHEC has a cadre of trained local community health workers, “promotoras de salud”, who are developing and distributing up to date information on COVID including boosters, vaccine hesitancy, variant strains and other challenging concerns, and providing health education materials and resources in a culturally appropriate manner. As well, the team is providing in person and online presentations to groups and individuals who are potentially in need of COVID education and assistance and to persons who have knowledge of or are in a position to refer to individuals who are in need of or could benefit from COVID education and assistance.

Since the pandemic began, SEAHEC has developed and disseminated a variety of educational materials and resources related to COVID 19, its prevention, signs, symptoms, practices of social distancing, appropriate mask wearing, etc. The agency has both English and Spanish language materials and utilizes scientifically vetted (CDC and local health department) materials.

SEAHEC is part of a CDC Foundation national learning cohort which meets monthly to discuss progress on vaccination efforts and share materials and information regarding latest development in vaccine hesitancy and vaccine confidence materials.

SEAHEC’s Program Manager Brenda Sanchez, a public health specialist is also a Spanish Language Interpreter& Translator and Certified Health Educator, oversees SEAHEC’s CHW and COVID education efforts. The project’s Coordinator Lupita Gonzalez, is a bilingual/bicultural community health worker and has coordinated many efforts with elders in Santa Cruz County. The team has vast experience in implementing health education programming in diverse settings and are very familiar with local resources in the service area. Furthermore, SEAHEC practices a philosophy of making services available at the time and place where and when they are needed. SEAHEC is working closely with Mariposa Community Health Center, in Santa Cruz County, Canyonlands Healthcare in Graham and Greenlee counties, and Ventanilla de Salud and county health departments, throughout the project service area.

If you or your agency would like to coordinate efforts to provide COVID education and outreach, please contact: Lupita Gonzalez, Project Coordinator at: [lupita@seahec.org](mailto:lupita@seahec.org)



Caption: SEAHEC community health workers trained and ready to provide support and outreach to elders and caregivers on COVID 19.

Left to right:

First row- Christian Gomez– Paulette Nevarez

Second row- Ycied Talavera, Nora Guzman

Third row- Zuleyka Tabarez, Erin Sol

Fourth row- Brenda Sanchez, Lupita Gonzalez