

Hispanic Affairs Project



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For Immediate Release

Our Love for the United States of America

In the spring of 2006, a group of leaders from the Hispanic Affairs Project had the opportunity to attend a private meeting with the Rocky Mountain Minute Men of Western Colorado. Our two organizations could not have had more intensely opposing views on immigration and immigrants. After watching a documentary about the experiences of immigrants crossing the border from Mexico, we had a conversation about our differences and our recommendations to fix the broken system of immigration. Although we did not change our conflicting views, we left the meeting with a greater mutual respect. Both groups love the United States of America. In the midst of our differences we found friendship and left behind many of our misconceptions about each other.

This week a national leader and a Grand Junction woman were in the media projecting with similar language ignorance and lack of compassion toward the newcomers.

Throughout the years, Hispanic Affairs Project, HAP, and our immigrant community have worked hard to cultivate relationships with our receiving community, with elected officials, local organizations, social services agencies, and governmental entities. In the diversity of our community we have great potential to strengthen the values that unite us.

We need to work together to promote integration and celebrate our diversity, one of our country's most powerful and unique attributes. Immigration, resulting from economic forces, armed conflicts, and natural disasters will continue as it has since the birth of the United States. Right now we should take advantage of the opportunity to speak frankly about racism, discrimination, unequal opportunities, and ignorance as real problems in our communities. Here in western Colorado we have progressed, but we still have a long way to go. HAP is an organization affiliated with Welcoming America and Welcoming Colorado. We have resources that we would like to share with the community to facilitate a society where all of us can feel safe and proud to be who we are.

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