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Con Alma Announces Grant to Strengthen Health-Care Safety Net, Organize Advocates

(Santa Fe) – Con Alma Health Foundation announced today that it has received a \$200,000 grant to strengthen the health-care safety net in New Mexico and support a network of organizations to advocate for health policies and health-care reform.

“As the future of health-care reform is uncertain, it is critical that we join together to strengthen our fragile health-care safety net and ensure that we continue to make progress in improving the health of the children, families and communities,” said Dolores E. Roybal, Con Alma’s executive director. “When this project is completed, we also expect to have stronger networks that can address continuing issues around health care and the health needs of all.”

The two-year grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation is the next step to Con Alma’s work in assessing how the Affordable Care Act was implemented in New Mexico with a unique focus on health-equity measures in the federal law. Con Alma is pleased to partner with the New Mexico Health Equity Partnership at the Santa Fe Community Foundation on this project.

Con Alma released a comprehensive report last year examining the state’s progress in working on measures of health-care reform related to assuring that all children and families have a fair chance at getting insurance coverage and accessing health care and other social resources which are needed to live a healthy life. As part of that report, researchers learned that the safety net is shrinking in New Mexico, an unanticipated outcome of the ACA.

“Now it’s time to develop an actionable agenda regarding those elements of health care reform that are critical to the health of children,” Roybal said. “We will bring together people who should have a voice in this important issue. They can help guide our policy makers and other stakeholders in policies and practices that will protect the health and wellbeing of children and families in New Mexico.”

Visit www.conalma.org for more information about health-care reform or to view the ACA report. Recommendations in the 2016 report include:

- Continue to assure all children are insured regardless of race, ethnicity or citizenship status- While almost half of New Mexico’s children are covered by Medicaid; 22 percent of Native American and 9 percent of Hispanic children remain uninsured.
- Improve accountability and transparency by collecting enrollment and health plan data by race/ethnicity, language, age, income and geography.
- Explore opportunities for Native American tribes to purchase health coverage for members who have complex, costly health-care needs

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 includes provisions that focus on improving quality of care for racial and ethnic minorities. In New Mexico about 70 percent of children are of color, and almost a third of children live in poverty.

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Con Alma Health Foundation seeks to improve people’s health status and access to health care services, and advocates for health policies to address the unmet health needs of New Mexico’s culturally and demographically diverse population. Con Alma supports and partners with organizations to improve health in New Mexico. Visit www.conalma.org.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.