

June 19, 2007



The Ability Center
for Independent Living

The Source of Freedom and Self-Esteem in the Southwest

Esteemed Crystal Benavidez:

Enclosed is The Ability Center's for Independent Living's Final Report for the Quality of Life Grant implementation for your evaluation. This report contains a review of the Outreach and Education work completed by The Ability Center's IL Program during the time of December 2006 to June 2007.

The Ability Center conducted intensive Outreach and Education in the New Mexico Counties of Luna, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, and Catron. Resulting from these activities The Ability Center accomplished the following goals:

- Obtained more Partners in its communities
 - Raised awareness about the services available for persons with disabilities
 - Increased its consumer base.
 - Relocated 4 individuals from nursing homes.
 - Promoted Disability Sensitivity through trainings and seminars.
 - Evaluated for Fair Housing Practices in Grant and Doña Ana Counties.
- Through these goals, the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico was greatly improved as knowledge is the stimulus for change.

It is the hope of The Ability Center that this report will provide insight to the Governor's Commission on Disability about how the Ability Center improved the quality of life of persons with disabilities in its catchment area using QLG funding. We hope this information will provide us with the credibility that we are a viable resource for improving the quality of life of person with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico. If you have any questions in regards to this project or report, please contact me at 1-800-376-4372 or at albertmontoya@theabilitycenter.org.

With respect,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alberto Montoya". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a blue line.

Albert Montoya
The Ability Center's IL Coordinator

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**THE ABILITY CENTER'S QLG
IMPLEMENTATION FINAL
REPORT
JUNE 19, 2007**



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IL COORDINATOR FOR THE ABILITY CENTER**

**PREPARED FOR THE NEW MEXICO
GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
DISABILITY**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	6
SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITIES.....	8
CONCLUSIONS.....	14
QLG PICTURE HISTORY.....	16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Introduction

This report describes the activities and results of The Ability Center's QLG implementation within its catchment area of the New Mexico Counties of Catron, Hidalgo, Grant, Luna, and Doña Ana. The report also discusses the expansion of the proposed goals and objectives and the failures experienced by the Ability Center for Independent Living in its Outreach and Education Campaign within its catchment area.

B. Methods for data

The relevant information for assessing the results of this Grant Project came from the presentations, meetings, lobbying, information dissemination, and networking the Ability Center completed within its catchment area.

C. Accomplishments

- The Ability Center for Independent Living, never having actually been in Catron County although it serves it unofficially, went into Catron County, gathered information, presented to the rightful authorities, and gained three Consumers in this County. The Ability Center had never had a Consumer in Catron County until the implementation of the QLG!!! The Ability Center formed several relationships visiting the Catron County towns, of Datil, Quemado, Reserve, Apache Creek, Glenwood, Alma, Pleasanton, Cruzville, and Red Hill. The Ability Center presented before the Catron County Health Council and is in the process of establishing a pilot School-to-Work Life skills program for students with disabilities in the two school districts within this County.
- The Ability Center, as proposed in the initial proposition of the grant, completed a presentation in Hidalgo county by conducting a presentation before the Lordsburg/Hidalgo County Senior Citizen Center. From this presentation, The Ability Center gained 5 Consumers that would have never received services from the Center if not for this presentation. In addition, the Center established a working relationship with the Senior Citizen Center. Lordsburg Public schools also received a copy of the School-to-Work life skills program for students with disabilities that the Ability Center wanted to implement within their schools. The Ability Center also visited the Hidalgo County towns of Rodeo, Animas, and Gary, establishing a relationship with Animas Public Schools.
- In Luna County, as proposed in the Grant, the Ability Center for independent living presented before the Deming Senior Citizen Center, where 7 Consumers were secured for services. The Ability Center also visited Columbus to distribute literature before the town's Post Office. Then, the Center traveled to Hachita and distributed reading materials to the Post Master there, discussing possible methods of service provision for the town. The Deming Public Schools were also presented with a School-to-Work life skills proposal in order to implement the program within their

schools.

- In Grant County, The Ability Center visited Silver City, Gila, Cliff, Buckhorn, Tyrone, Hurley, and Bayard. The Center presented to the Silver City Senior Citizen Center and to the Gila Senior Citizen Center. Resulting from these presentations, the Center's Consumer base in Grant rose by 300% with one relocation candidate identified.
- In Doña Ana County, presentations were conducted in Hatch and Las Cruces, promoting the Center's services and viability as a powerful resource for persons with disabilities.
- 4 individuals were relocated back into the Community from Nursing homes. As a component of the Center's Outreach and Education Campaign, nursing homes were visited and working partnerships were established to begin getting people out of homes and back into the communities supported with the right resources.
- The Ability Center conducted Fair Housing Evaluations in Grant and Doña Ana Counties. Regardless of the location, the findings were similar. Homes were inaccessible to wheelchairs and required major modifications, which the realtors and owners were unwilling to do.

D. Conclusion

The Ability Center for Independent worked hard to improve the quality of persons with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico. Through it all, due to a moratorium on the program, The Center's D & E Waiver Program was not able to increase its Consumer base by 15 Consumers as initially proposed. However, to compensate for this, The Ability Center completed a massive Outreach Campaign into its catchment area in Southwestern New Mexico and through these efforts, improved the quality of life of persons with disabilities by empowering them with the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and practices to live independently in American Society.

INTRODUCTION

This report examines the accomplishments and shortcomings of The Ability Center during its implementation of the Quality of Life Grant from December 2006 to June 2007. With this information, the Center hopes the Governor's Commission on Disability will have the information to conclude and identify The Ability Center as a viable source of services to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico. With the invaluable help of the QLG, The Ability Center accomplished several noteworthy milestones that will be discussed in this report.

Initial Proposal submitted by The Ability Center to Win Award

I. Introduction

TACIL was awarded the QLG to improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities residing in the New Mexico counties of Luna, Grant, and Hidalgo. This project was started in November of 2006 and ends June of 2007. This report covers the progress toward the attainment of goals outlined in the grant proposal from February 21 to March 20, 2007.

II. Project Description

A. In the grant proposal, TACIL outlined three goals it would achieve in the counties of Luna, Grant, and Hidalgo to improve the quality of life of these counties' individuals with disabilities. The three goals are:

Goal One: To enhance the Independent Living Program currently being conducted by TACIL's Outreach efforts within its catchment area.

Goal Two: To increase the number of individuals served in TACIL's D & E Case Management Program using the contacts made during its Outreach campaign.

Goal Three: To Partner with Border Fair Housing and Economic Justice Center (BGHEJC) to evaluate the status of current living situations for individuals with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico.

B. Over the course of the allotted time, TACIL would make progress toward achieving these goals by fulfilling the following objectives.

Goal One:

Objective one: To partner with the New Mexico Commission for the Blind (NMCB) to provide three trainings and outreach seminars in Luna, Grant, and Hidalgo counties.

Objective two: To educate and inform individuals attending seminars about

services available to elderly and disabled persons through the TACIL and NMCB partnership.

Goal Two:

Objective one: To demonstrate, by June 30th, 2007 an increase of 15 individuals in the Case Management program.

Goal Three:

Objective one: To recruit and train consumer volunteers to implement the BFHEJC's "Tester Program", conducting 15 evaluations by June 30, 2007.

The objectives would be completed by accomplishing the following activities.

Activities for objectives under Goal One:

A TACIL advocate and NMCB staff member will provide trainings and provide outreach seminars using PowerPoint presentations and related handouts.

Activities for objectives under Goal Two:

Referrals obtained through Goal One will be processed.

Activities for objectives under Goal Three:

Independent Living group members, TACIL volunteers, and staff will be trained to evaluate for fair housing.

C. TACIL, using census records from the U.S. government web page, identified an estimate of the number of potential consumers in the counties listed above. The figures are as follow in the counties of Luna, Hidalgo and Grant, proposed as the served counties in the initial grant proposal before its revision in March:

NM County	Estimated Disabled Population
Luna	5647
Hidalgo	1316
Grant	6140

D. TACIL has 17, 817 potential consumers in its catchment area outside Doña Ana County. TACIL realized the importance of serving its entire catchment area as all its potential consumers deserve to receive the services necessary to acquire an improved quality of life. The charts below break down the number of potential consumers in each county by percentages. Each number below the percentage reflects the number of estimated consumers served in accord with estimates averaged from the total population.

Counties	# Disabled	20%	10%	5%	4%	3%	2%	1%	0.05%
Hidalgo	1316	263.2	131.6	65.8	52.64	39.48	26.32	13.16	6.58
Grant	6140	1228	614	307	245.6	184.2	122.8	61.4	30.7
Sierra	3996	799.2	399.6	199.8	159.84	119.88	79.92	39.96	19.98
Catron	718	143.6	71.8	35.9	28.72	21.54	14.36	7.18	3.59
Luna	5647	1129.4	564.7	282.35	225.88	169.41	112.94	56.47	28.235
TOTAL	17817	3563.4	1781.7	890.85	712.68	534.51	356.34	170.99	89.085

Counties	# Disabled	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Hidalgo	1316	1052.8	921.2	789.6	658	526.4	394.8
Grant	6140	4912	4298	3684	3070	2456	1842
Sierra	3996	3196.8	2797.2	2397.6	1998	1598.4	1198.8
Catron	718	574.4	502.6	430.8	359	287.2	215.4
Luna	5647	4517.6	3952.9	3388.2	2823.5	2258.8	1694.1
TOTAL	17817	14253.6	12471.9	10690.2	8908.5	7126.8	5345.1

F. Thus, TACIL, using these objectives, activities, and figures, designed and will implement programs, procedures, and agendas to attain the superlative goal of improving the quality of life of all its consumers residing in its catchment area within the allotted time.

METHODS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDING

The following activities outline the type of activities used to implement the grant funding in order to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Southwestern New Mexico.

- Reconnaissance Missions - activities where information about a Community and a County was collected to contribute to the Planning Process of the Center's Outreach and Education Campaign. During this stage, contacts were made, preliminary data was collected, marketing flyers were posted, and presentations were scheduled.
- Presentations/Marketing Activities - Activities where the Center formally presented to an audience information regarding what the Center does and how its services can contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of persons with disabilities within these communities.
- Fair Housing Assessments - a volunteer or Center Employee went into the communities and posed as a "potential" tenant to conduct assessments of whether homes were accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Information and Referral - One-on-one sessions were held with individuals requesting information about the Center's services after the presentation. Flyers and literature, outlining the Center's services were also distributed at various locations.

The Center evaluated its Outreach and Education Campaign in the following stages:

- Planning Stage - gathering logistics and ideas on how to better approach our communities within the available resources.
- Collecting Evidence - we collected evidence for assessment during our Outreach in the following forms: number of contacts made; number of towns visited; number of presentations secured; number of information and referrals resulting from these activities; number of consumers gained; and finally number of initiatives begun.
- Assembling and Interpreting the data - data was analyzed for to determine patterns, areas of concern, and successful results.
- Reflection and Moving forward - from these interpretations of data, The Center adopted new practices and strategies for conducting Outreach and increasing Consumer numbers in each of its Counties.
- Reporting and Sharing- the findings were reported to the other programs here at the Center and to our established partners such DVR for their benefit.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS USING QLG FUNDING (broken down by County)

Catron County

Towns Visited - Datil, Reserve, Glenwood, Pleasanton, Alma, Apache Creek, Quemado, Red Hill, Salt Lake, Pie Town, Old Horse Springs, Cruzville, and Luna.

Contacts - Quemado Schools, Quemado Post Office, Reserve Schools, Catron County Health Council, Catron County Medical Center, Glenwood Town Council, Glenwood Library, Alma Grill, Pie Town Post Office and Pie Town Community Council.

Presentations Secured - 5 presentations: Catron County Health Council, Reserve Schools SPED Coordinator, Quemado Schools SPED Coordinator, Glenwood Community, and Catron County Health Council Health Fair.

I & R's resulting From Presentations - 114

Consumers gained from presentations and Outreach Activities - 3

Individuals Relocated From Nursing Homes - 0

Initiatives begun - School-to-work Transition Program in Catron County. This is a collaborative project with both school districts in this County. In addition, Nursing Home Transition will be addressed in this County.

Hidalgo County

Towns Visited - Rodeo, Animas, Gary, & Lordsburg.

Contacts - Animas Public Schools, Animas Post Office, Animas Grocery Store, Rodeo Grocery Store, Rodeo Post Office, Lordsburg Public Schools, Lordsburg/Hidalgo County Commission on Aging and Sunshine Haven.

Presentations Secured - SPED Coordinator of Animas Public Schools, Lordsburg/Hidalgo County Commission on Aging.

I & R's resulting From Presentations - 257

Consumers gained from presentations and Outreach Activities - 7

Individuals Relocated From Nursing Homes - 0

Initiatives begun - School-to-work Transition Program and Rural Transportation

Voucher Preliminary Data gathering pending funding. Nursing Home Transition will be addressed in this County.

Grant County

Towns Visited - Tyrone, Hurley, Bayard, Cliff, Silver City, Gila, and Buckhorn.

Contacts - Tyrone Post Office, Cliff Post Office, Cliff Convenience Store, Silver City Post Office, Region V Housing Authority, Silver City Senior Center, Gila Post Office, Gila Senior Center, and Buckhorn Post Office.

Presentations Secured - Silver City Senior Center and Gila Senior Center.

I & R's resulting From Presentations - 134

Consumers gained from presentations and Outreach Activities - 4

Individuals Relocated From Nursing Homes - 1

Initiatives begun - Nursing Home Transition will be addressed in this County.

Luna County

Towns Visited - Deming, Columbus, and Hachita

Contacts - Columbus Post Office, Hachita Post Office, Mimbres Rehabilitation Center, Deming Senior Center, and Deming Public Schools.

Presentations Secured - Deming Center

I & R's resulting From Presentations -95

Consumers gained from presentations and Outreach Activities - 8

Individuals Relocated From Nursing Homes - 0

Initiatives begun - Rural Transportation Voucher Preliminary Data gathering pending funding. Nursing Home Transition also will be addressed in this County

Doña Ana County

Towns Visited - Hatch, Las Cruces, Vado, Chamberino, and Anthony.

Contacts - New Contacts established - Post Offices of Vado, Chamberino, and Anthony.

Presentations Secured - 3

I & R's resulting From Presentations - 47

Consumers gained from presentations and Outreach Activities - 7

Individuals Relocated From Nursing Homes - 3 and 1 is pending

Initiatives begun - Rural Transportation Voucher Preliminary Data gathering pending funding.

Accomplishments Broken and Counties Compared in Efforts:

Towns Visited

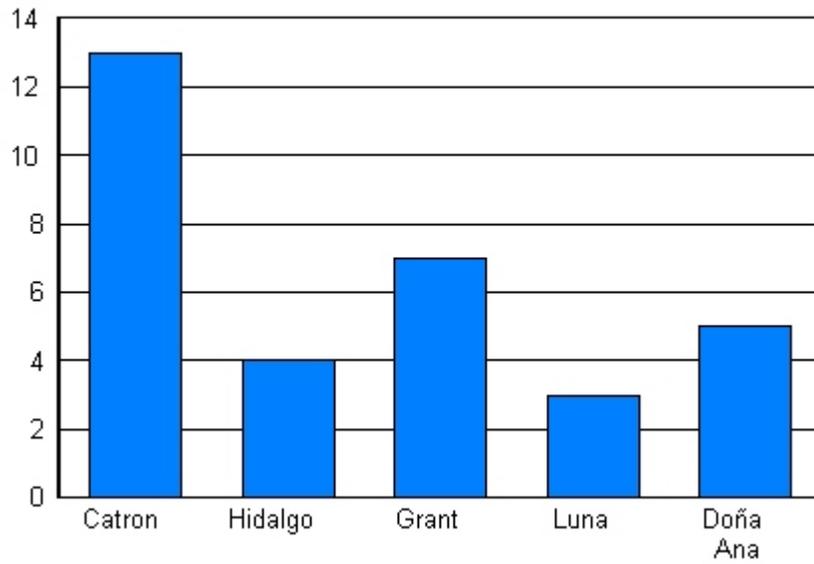


Figure 1- Cities and Towns visited by TACIL during QLG Project

Contacts Made

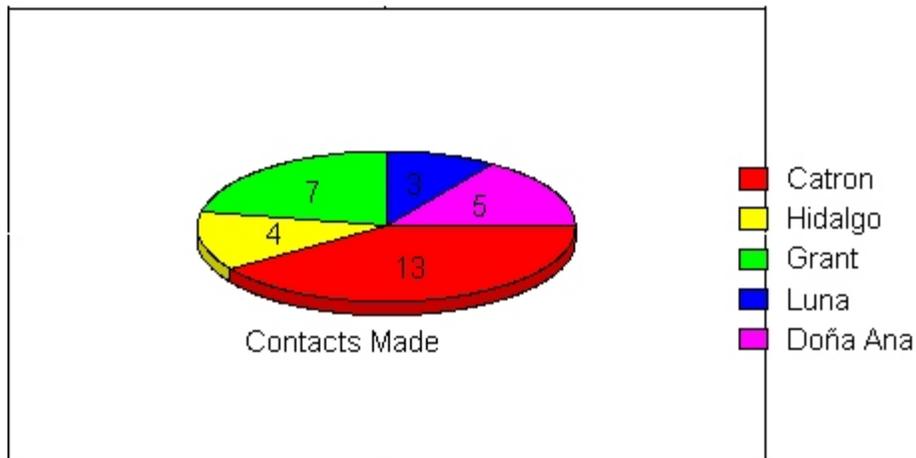


Figure 2 - Contacts made in Counties during QLG Project

Presentations Secured

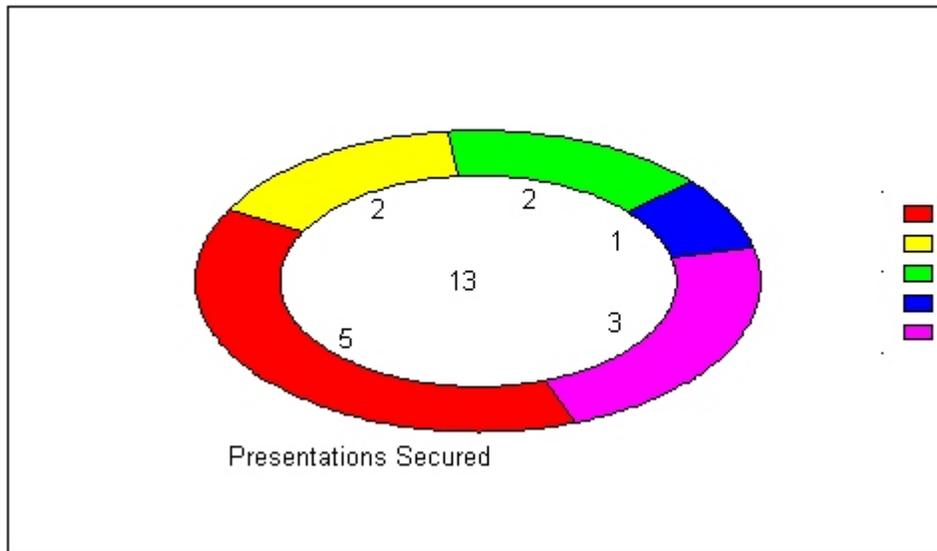


Figure 3 - Presentations secured during QLG Outreach

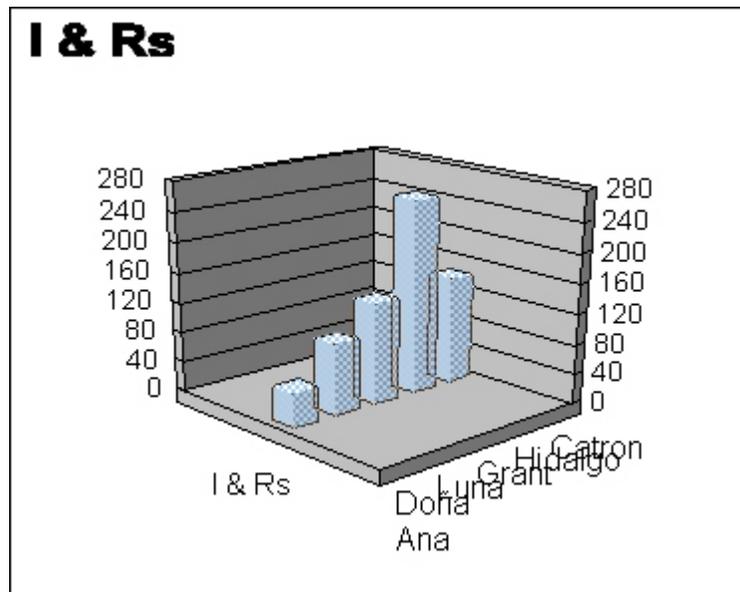


Figure 4 - I & Rs resulting from QLG Outreach and Education Campaign

Consumers Per County

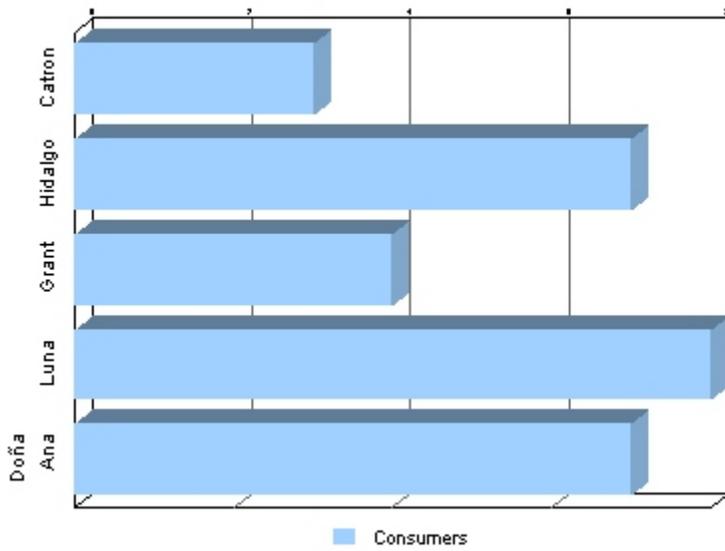


Figure 5 - Consumers gained per County during QLG

QLG Consumers Increased

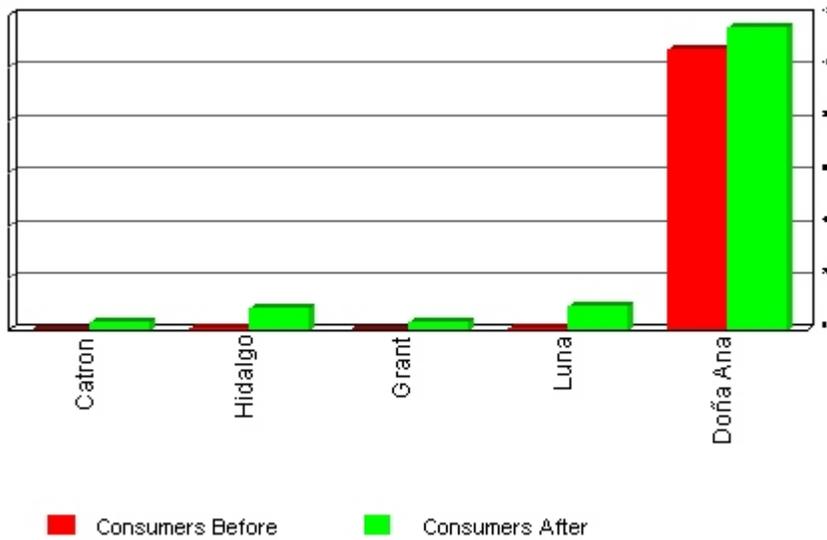


Figure 6-Consumer Comparison before and after QLG

Fair Housing Evaluations in Grant County and Doña Ana County:

Grant County - Two homes were evaluated for fair housing practices and the homes were a complete nightmare for a disabled person in a wheelchair. First, in both homes, there were no accessible curb cuts, ramps, or door ways to access the homes. In one home, there were only steps to get to the apartments because the available ramp had an incline of 85 degrees. What was more troubling was that the realtor for the two homes was reluctant to offer modifications for our tester.

Doña Ana - In Doña Ana County, we did not fare very well either. The two homes evaluated were inaccessible as the doorways to the bathrooms were considerably small and lacked maneuverability even for a mobile person. The homes were a health hazard for persons with disabilities and the needed modifications were agreed upon in principle by the landlord after some cajoling.

PROJECT SHORTCOMINGS

As is common with all projects, obstacles were encountered during the completion of the Quality of Life Grant. The most notable was the Center's inability to complete Goal Number Two of the grant as the Center's D & E Waiver program was on moratorium for the entirety of the QLG project. Many avenues were exhausted to get this moratorium lifted, but this was not accomplished as the Center's program was not compliant with state regulations.

Another failure of the Center was its ineptitude to materialize its proposed relationships with the New Mexico Commission for the Blind and Fair Border Housing Commission. Nothing had really been done for the implementation of the QLG until Project Managers were changed in March as this need became apparent due to time constraints and lack of performance from the initial Project Manager. The Project accomplished goals one and three to failed it fully complete its promises made in the grant proposal.

CONCLUSIONS

The Ability Center for Independent Living accomplished a lot of admirable feats during its Outreach and Education Campaign during the implementation of the Quality of Life Grant. Through this funding, The Center was not only able to further market its services but also improve the quality of life of many persons with disabilities, their families, and their communities.

With a 300% increase in Catron County Consumers and 400% increase in Relocation candidates, The Ability Center's hard work is visible. However, there is much to be done as this Grant only served as a catalyst for the future. Now, all the initiatives that have been started need to be sustained and perpetuated to increase the credibility of the

Center for the prosperity of the disability community in Southwestern New Mexico.
Then and only then, will the Center be a viable resource for improving the quality of life
of persons with disabilities.

Photo History of The Ability Center's QLG Implementation





QLG PROJECT TEAM

**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: NANCY LANEY, IL SPECIALIST;
ALBERT MONTOYA, IL COORDINATOR; AND ROSA
OROSCO, PEER MENTOR/CONSUMER ADVOCATE.**