



Rural Development

Administrative Program

The Un-Sung Heroes of RD

“Okay, any ideas how we can improve efficiency with service to the staff?” said, Assistant to the State Director Eric Vigil during a recent administration staff meeting he held.

Ideas have become the hallmark for this four member staff. Ultimately, their ideas makes this group very successful in making their work more efficient and cost effective. The Rural Development administrative staff’s mission is to provide the tools and support needed by the rest of the staff across the state.



New Mexico’s RD Administrative staff (l-r), Mary Barela Business Services Technician, Eric Vigil Assistant to the State Director, Alan King, Management Analyst, and Marisol Olivera Contract Specialist

The work they do makes them Rural Development’s un-sung heroes in New Mexico. They quietly work behind the scenes to support their fellow employees who ultimately provide the rural residents of the state with the financial support in various programs administered by USDA Rural Development.

Because budgets are tight and the work load has gotten larger, they’ve had to adapt. For example, this team came up with an idea to improve the way supplies and goods and services are ordered by the rest of the staff. The new procurement process is more efficient in saving work time and ultimately stretching the valuable taxpayer dollar. Existing systems were combined and making the process better and more efficient. Something that was not the case years ago. They took an old paper filled system to a paperless digital system –which allows everyone in the team have electronic access which eliminated tracking down paper files.

Also, this team worked together to relocate the state office from one location to another. The U.S. Forest Service had leased office space but was moving out and the lease still had to be honored. As a result a national directive, Rural Development, the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resource Conservation Service took over various lease spaces in the new building as part of a USDA Pilot Project to decrease the leasing floor plan. The move for Rural Development cost thousands of dollars. However, once the move was made and the bills were paid the Rural Development portion of the move came in \$30,000 under budget.

When asked why? Vigil says, “The answer is simple, --it was team work.”