

Civic Participation

Community Vision – We envision strong, cohesive communities where engaged citizens from all ethnic and social backgrounds work together to preserve our lifestyles.

A community is healthier when citizens are involved in civic life as well as generous with their money and volunteer time. In any community, there are some members who need special assistance either due to a family tragedy, financial circumstance, age or disability. Indicators that were selected to measure civic participation include voter turnout and community giving.

Voter Turnout

The number of registered voters who vote in a general election is one indication of citizen involvement. Turnout is traditionally higher in a Presidential election in 2004, which is true also for our region. The League of Women Voters has chapters in Archuleta, La Plata and Montezuma County that conduct voter registration campaigns regularly.

Percentage of Voter Turnout					
Year	Archuleta	Dolores	La Plata	Montezuma	San Juan
2003	44%	49%	87%	62%	85%
2004	65%	77%	71%	64%	85%
2005	50%	37%	48%	50%	48%
2006	51%	71%	68%	53%	69%
2007*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

* No coordinated elections in 2007

Source: Colorado Secretary of State Election Turnout Results at <http://www.elections.colorado.gov>

Community Giving

A 2007 report, *The State of Giving*, published by the Colorado Generosity Project, stated the southwest region (including the San Luis Valley as well as Region 9) exceeded both the national and state averages for charitable giving and *outpaced all other regions studied in Colorado*. The report cites La Plata County alone gave \$31 million in 2005. Ignacio, Durango and Cortez were also cited for their generosity. This report is available at: (www.ColoradoNonProfits.org). While there are many charitable organizations in our region, this Index reports contributions to the Community Foundation Serving Southwest Colorado, the United Way and the Community Emergency Assistance Coalition (CEAC).

The Community Foundation Serving Southwest Colorado has increased their managed assets from \$300,000 in 2003 to \$2,000,000 in 2008, and holds 14 family donor funds and 28 non-profit funds. In addition, a new foundation has launched in Montezuma County called Onward! Legacy.

United Way Giving					
Year	Archuleta	Dolores & Montezuma	La Plata & San Juan	Annual Total	% Change from Previous Year
2001	\$60,174	\$96,895	\$373,700	\$530,769	
2002	\$56,555	\$72,622	\$387,792	\$516,969	-3%
2003	\$63,033	\$85,918	\$402,162	\$551,113	7%
2004	\$67,320	\$85,572	\$417,378	\$570,270	3%
2005	\$62,220	\$87,326	\$450,329	\$599,875	5%
2006	\$74,865	\$88,506	\$516,054	\$679,425	13%
2007	\$72,000	\$102,000	\$606,000	\$780,000	15%

Source: United Way of Southwest Colorado

Since 2001, United Way of Southwest Colorado’s annual campaign contributions have continued to increase across the region, with a notable rise of 15% from 2006 to 2007.

Over this same time period, the amount raised by the Community Emergency Assistance Coalition (CEAC) increased by \$27,914. The CEAC is a group of human service agencies that meet weekly in La Plata, Montezuma and Archuleta County to pool their resources and coordinate assistance to families in crisis. Some of the participating organizations include: churches, United Way, Volunteers of America, the Salvation Army and La Plata Electric Association’s Round Up Fund.

Community Emergency Assistance Coalition			
Year	Dollars Raised (All Region 9 Counties)	Numbers Served	% Change from Previous Year
2001	\$78,713	238 families	
2002	\$86,538	253 families	10%
2003	\$76,773	212 families	-11%
2004	\$77,766	184 families	1%
2005	\$82,130	136 families	6%
2006	\$70,571	134 families	-14%
2007	\$106,628	504 individuals and families	51%

Funding can be used for rent, utilities, mortgage payments, doctor bills and automobile repairs.

Source: Volunteers of America