New Mexico leads the nation’s states in Hispanic/Latino representation: nearly one in every two New Mexico residents is Hispanic/Latino; among those age 50 and older it is one in three. Black and Asian populations are smaller but growing.

Although Hispanic/Latinos represent such a significant proportion of the state’s population that it can no longer be considered a “minority”, median household income still lags for this group.

**Native American Population**

Native Americans are another significant part of New Mexico’s multicultural diversity. There are more than 190,000 Native Americans in New Mexico and approximately 40,000 are 50+ (or 6% of the state’s total 50+ population).

Native American representation is largest in the northwestern region of the state.

**New Mexico’s Multicultural Population by Zip Code**

Multicultural 50+ cohorts drive growth of the ‘boomer’ demographic.

**Projected 50+ Population Growth 2011 to 2016**

- Total Pop
- Total 50+
- African-American/Black 50+
- Hispanic/Latino 50+
- Asian 50+

**2011 Total Median Household Income – New Mexico**

**Number of New Mexico Legislative Districts comprised of at least 40% “minority” 50+ populations:**

41 out of 70 State House Districts;
21 out of 42 State Senate Districts;
3 out of 3 Congressional Districts.
Needs of the 50+ in New Mexico

- Home and Community Based Services – Quality long term care and staying at home in older age are illusory priorities for many of New Mexico’s 50+ residents. Nine in ten New Mexicans age 50 and older feel it is “extremely” or “very” important to be able to stay in their own home as they get older, and that they have high quality long term care for themselves or family members when needed. Yet, 56% of all 50+ residents and 74% of Hispanic 50+ are either “not very” or “not at all” confident they could afford the average cost for three years of care.

- Home Energy Affordability – A majority of New Mexico’s 50+ residents support an energy assistance program that would use a small portion of all electric bill payments to help make electricity more affordable to low-income residents in the state. 69% of all New Mexico 50+ and 79% of Hispanic/Latinos 50+ either “strongly” or “somewhat” support it.

- Livable Community – Concerns are more prevalent among Hispanic/Latino 50+ when it comes to driving and safe walking in the community. 29% of all 50+ and 54% of Hispanics 50+ worry about driving in the community; 34% of all 50+ and 57% of Hispanics 50+ worry about accessible neighborhood sidewalks and good street lighting so that an older person can easily walk around.

AARP NM increased engagement of all 50+ in the Albuquerque area when it held the first annual AARP NM Fall Festival. The vision for the Fall Festival was truly grounded upon two of AARP’s founding principles of giving back and helping one’s neighbor. The Fall Festival was also a method to bring back that sense of community by bringing people together and showcasing all the positive work being done in the Albuquerque area like You’ve Earned a Say, Telling Our Story, Affordable Care Act Education, and other programs.

AARP-New Mexico’s presence in our communities reflects the richness of New Mexico’s diversity, enables engagement and channels value for people 50+ where they live.

For more information, contact Shanna Lapsley, Associate State Director, Multicultural Outreach.  
slapsley@aarp.org  (505) 603-6101.  Or connect with us online at: www.aarp.org/nm.

1 Source: Voices of 50+ and 50+ Hispanic/Latinos in New Mexico  AARP, February 2011

Fall Festival

AARP NM has engaged Hispanic/Latinos in community conversations regarding topics of importance to them. These listening sessions have included discussion of Medicare and Social Security as part of the You’ve Earned a Say / Tu Voz es Tu Derecho initiative. The listening sessions demonstrate to the community that AARP NM is listening to them, and thereby laying the groundwork for a trustworthy relationship between AARP and the Hispanic community.

AARP’s 2012 Advocacy Priorities

- Medicaid Funding & Home and Community Based Services
- Protect core aging services programs, such as meals, transportation and in-home services
- Oppose reinstating the state’s food tax
- Protection from unfair mortgage foreclosures
- Reduce unnecessary utility rate increases

Red or Green Listening Sessions

Last year, AARP-NM held a Veterans Listening Session in response to an appeal from veterans to work on their behalf to improve the application process for VA disability benefits. This listening session was an opportunity for AARP to learn more about the veterans’ service structure and how we could best be involved. AARP-NM invited several veterans organizations to discuss how we can all work together to coordinate services for veterans. Our ongoing goal is to continue to meet regularly and to create a resource guide for veterans.

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“Here our community is the place where we can be most effective.”
—Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, AARP Founder

Source: Voices of 50+ and 50+ Hispanic/Latinos in New Mexico  AARP, February 2011