

COMMUNITY

NMSU welcomes Anna, Age Eight Institute

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LAS CRUCES - On July 1, New Mexico State University will be home to the Anna, Age Eight Institute, which seeks to prevent adverse childhood experiences among New Mexico's children.

Under an agreement with Northern New Mexico College, where the institute was established in 2019, NMSU will house the institute within the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. This will allow the institute to work with NMSU's Cooperative Extension Service infrastructure to expand its services throughout the state.

"We are pleased to welcome the Anna, Age Eight Institute to its new home here at NMSU," said NMSU President John Floros. "The move will allow the institute to build on the good work that began at Northern New Mexico College to create a statewide network to support children and their families experiencing trauma and social adversity."

Anna, Age Eight Institute uses a data-driven process focused on building the capacity of local government, non-governmental agencies and the business sector to provide the surviving and thriving services that community members need to strengthen health, safety and resilience.

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"We are honored to have served as the host institution for the inaugural year of the Anna, Age Eight Institute at Northern New Mexico College," said NNMC President Richard J. Bailey, Jr. "The Institute is the first of its kind in the nation, committed to overcoming – and ultimately eradicating – childhood and family trauma in our communities. We applaud the institute's expansion into a statewide initiative under the leadership of our friends at New

Mexico State University, and are committed to working together as a state on this ambitious but necessary endeavor.”

The institute’s co-directors are Katherine Ortega Courtney and Dominic Cappello. Cappello is a New York Times bestselling author with decades of experience advocating for public health, safety and systems of care. He and Courtney co-authored, “Anna, Age Eight: The data-driven prevention of childhood trauma and maltreatment,” a call-to-action for each state to end adverse childhood experiences, trauma, social adversity and health disparities.

Courtney earned a Ph.D. in experimental psychology from Texas Christian University, where she studied at the Institute of Behavioral Research. Courtney worked with the State of New Mexico for eight years, first as the Juvenile Justice Epidemiologist, then as bureau chief of the Child Protective Services Research, Assessment and Data Bureau.

Gregory Sherrow serves as the institute’s director of information technology and communications. Sherrow has decades of experience in creating educational, nonprofit and commercial technology solutions.

As part of the agreement with Northern New Mexico College, NMSU will continue to support the institute’s work in three pilot counties — Socorro, Rio Arriba and Doña Ana — in implementing its 100% Community Initiative. NMSU will also continue to support work in Taos Pueblo, and Santa Fe and San Miguel counties.

For more information about the institute, visit <https://www.annaageeight.org/>.

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