

YDI's Fab Five

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Youth Development Inc. (YDI)



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Founded in 1971, Youth Development, Inc. (YDI) is a nationally-recognized, New Mexico-based, youth and family service organization. We assist with early childhood education and child care, prenatal care, alternative education, job training and placement, mental and behavioral health services, homeless assistance, mentoring, family development and family counseling services.

For almost a half century, YDI has been helping children and families improve their lives, which began by fighting a war against poverty and all its causes and effects. On the front lines of this battle is a strong group of experienced female leaders, each of whom provides essential contributions to our organization's success. These women write the grants, implement the programs and are responsible for positive outcomes that support YDI families.

Debra Baca, VP Early Childhood Education & Family Development: I know when I joined the YDI family in 1983, we were small but had a powerful voice and passion. That has sustained for 55 years. I have been given the freedom to create a pipeline of services from home visitation for pregnant women to home-based services for families, center-based services for children 6 weeks to 5 years old. I cherish the ability to embrace best practices along with an incredible team of hard working and visionary leaders.

Donna Martinez, VP Human Resources: I realized that YDI was the organization where I wanted to build my career when I witnessed how everyone came together to get the work done. Job titles did not matter—what mattered was the shared commitment to serving families. That dedication began with supporting employees and their families, creating a culture of unity and purpose that inspired me to grow with the organization.

Diana Lopez, VP Prevention, Intervention & Behavioral Health Division: I started my career at YDI in 1984, and I currently oversee a division of \$20 million that is comprised of 27 individual programs overall. When I was first hired my intent was to do one year then apply for law school, but there was another purpose for me. I loved working with youth and this was the best place to do that! I sincerely believe even through our growth we've maintained a tight knit family environment.

Concha Cordova, VP, Education, Employment & Training Division: I started as a case manager working directly with youth and families, and 25 years later I am still here. I realized that I could make an impact on the other side, with youth which eventually will positively impact our justice system, but there was more need and hope on this side. I worked my way up to executive management and while I miss working directly with youth, I love the role of designing much needed programs and services for youth and families and securing funding to make it happen.

Tanya Brown, CFO: I was born in 1973 at the height of the heroin epidemic happening in the South Valley. YDI was founded in 1971, by individuals that realized there were young men in the community being lost to drugs. My biological father was a heroin addict during this time and eventually died. I never knew him, and my mother moved on and married a man who adopted me and treated me as his very own. However, I often wonder what my biological father's voice sounded like, or what a kiss on the forehead would feel like from him. I will never know. But here is what I do know: YDI helps folks with these similar stories. This means something. This is my "why."



BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Debra Baca, Vice President, Early Childhood Education & Family Development Division; Concha Cordova, Vice President, Education, Employment & Training Division; Tanya Brown, CFO

FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Diana Lopez, Vice President, Prevention, Intervention & Behavioral Health Division; Donna Martinez, Vice President, Human Resources