ABARA: BORDERLAND CONNECTIONS

2021

IMPACT REPORT

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ABARA
BORDERLAND CONNECTIONS

But first, a word of Thanks

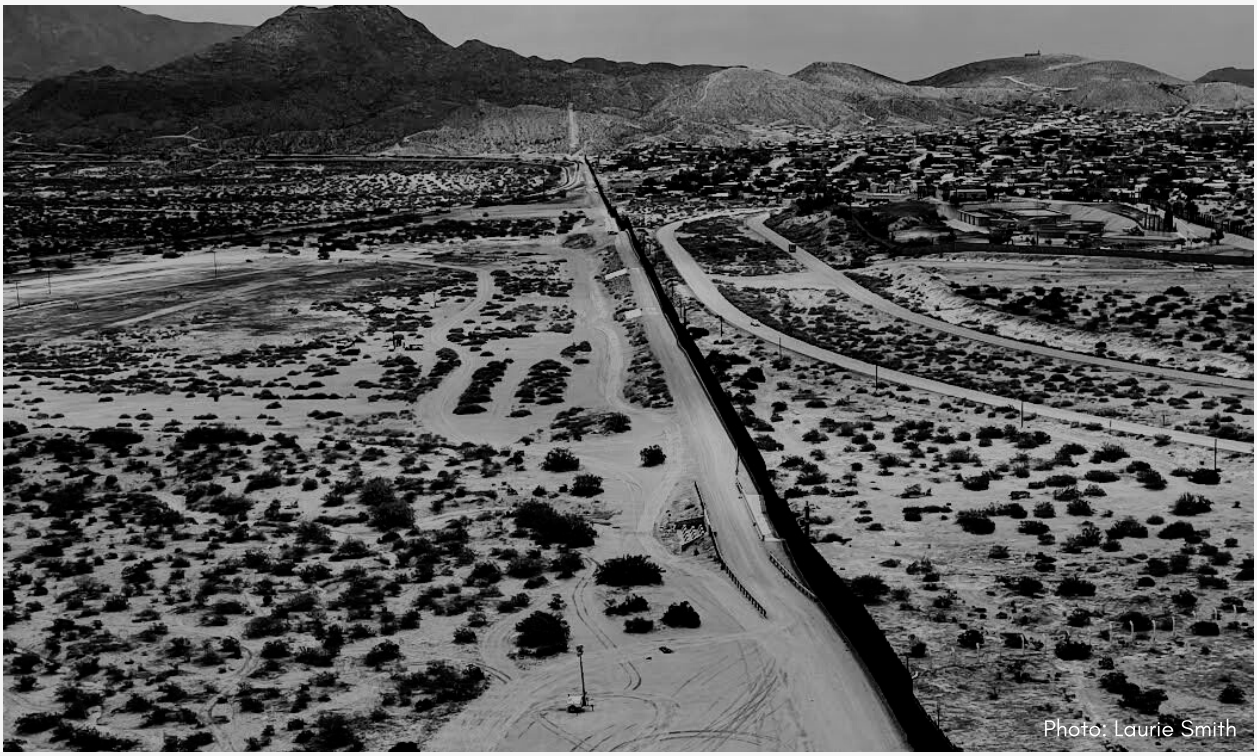


Photo: Laurie Smith

Dear Friends of Abara...

WE HAVE HAD AN INCREDIBLE AND EVENTFUL YEAR. AFTER A FEW YEARS OF INCUBATING AT CIUDAD NUEVA, ABARA RECEIVED ITS 501(C)3 IN FEBRUARY AND SINCE THEN, WE'VE MOVED FORWARD TO SECURE 4 ACRES OF PROPERTY INCLUDING A HISTORIC RESTAURANT ON THE BORDER FENCE. WE'VE HOSTED A WIDE RANGE OF BORDER ENCOUNTERS FROM PARTICIPANTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND PROVIDED BROAD SUPPORT TO THOUSANDS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS IN JUÁREZ DURING COVID. IT HAS BEEN BUSY, HEARTBREAKING AT TIMES, AND ALSO A GREAT JOY THANKS IN LARGE PART TO THE LOVE AND SUPPORT FROM ALL OF YOU!

-SAMI DIPASQUALE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ABOUT ABARA

IN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL MIGRATION IN A POLARIZING WORLD: ABARA INSPIRES CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIVIDES THROUGH NARRATIVE, SYSTEMS AND PERSONAL CHANGE

Photo: Laurie Smith

ABARA IS FOCUSED ON ACCOMPLISHING OUR MISSION BY FACILITATING **3 CORE AREAS OF ACTION**:

- **BORDER ENCOUNTERS**: 3-5 DAY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES TRAINING LEADERS, FAITH GROUPS, AND NATIONAL NETWORKS THROUGH REFLECTION AND ACTION
- **BORDER RESPONSE**: RESOURCING AND CONNECTING MIGRANT SHELTERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE RIO GRANDE
- **ABARA HOUSE**: GATHERING AT THE HISTORIC HACIENDA RESTAURANT TO LISTEN, LAMENT, CELEBRATE AND ENGAGE ACROSS DIVIDES

FROM BORDER ENCOUNTER PARTICIPANTS

"This is a great way to understand the pain and suffering our immigration policies are having on people who are trying to find a safe place to live and work. You will benefit from a variety of perspectives and learn why we need a comprehensive reworking of our immigration policies and laws."
(Kathryn Vaselkiv, WR)

"Abara Border Encounters is a fantastic and meaningful opportunity to engage vital issues in our country today with face to face interactions and hearing from the people most directly affected. It's a powerful thing for the issue of immigration to be human instead of just political."
(Jon Paramore, Coracle)

"It is clear that those at Abara are fully immersed in what is going on at the border, and this therefore bred an environment where I felt like I was truly learning and experienced the realities of the border at El Paso/Juarez. I could not recommend this organization more for those who truly want to learn from those who are daily ministering to those on both sides of the border."
(Anonymous, Immigrant Hope/EFCA)

"Abara's Border Encounter experience provided an excellent theological and historical perspective on migration as well as current circumstances regarding migrant experiences in both Juarez & El Paso. The visit to the border wall was a worshipful experience where I realized with each migrant story, God is introducing me to the privileged of the Gospel: his children on the margins, which is a sacred space and experience to behold."
(Mary Beth Meadows, WOW)

Metrics

20

RACE LITERACY PARTICIPANTS IN 2021

13

BORDER ENCOUNTER GROUPS IN 2021

274

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN ART THERAPY CLASS IN 2021

114

BORDER ENCOUNTER PARTICIPANTS IN 2021

"A LOT OF TIMES WE HEAR THINGS IN THE NEWS THAT SEEM TO BE IN CONFLICT...IT WAS HELPFUL TO HEAR BORDER PATROL AND CHURCHES ALL TALK ABOUT THE SAME ISSUE BUT FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES."

National Immigration Forum Border Encounter Participant

BORDER RESPONSE:
A DIVE INTO YOUR IMPACT

Abara employs 2 Shelter Connectors based in the US and contracts and 1 Shelter Connector based in Juarez. In 2021, our team members developed and implemented weekly therapeutic art classes in the unaccompanied minors shelter as well as relaunched our micro-enterprise workshops to provide income generating revenue for migrant women - following a hiatus during the height of the pandemic.

Abara's shelter connectors have been working to build relationships with 12 local nonprofits, 19 Juarez and El Paso based shelters, and 5 governmental entities that support migrants on the border. These relational connections allow for coordinated initiatives throughout the wider region. For example, in November, Abara Shelter Connectors accompanied government officials from the Mexican state of Chihuahua to Ojinaga, Mexico. This state has very little infrastructure to support migrants. One huge outcome from this trip was the development of a coalition of migrant support shelters and organizations within Ojinaga. Community mobilization is hard to quantify but it's at the heart of the migrant response in our sister cities.

In 2021, Abara has provided over $15,000 in direct support to local shelters including medicines, hygiene supplies, COVID cleaning products and PPE, art supplies for the unaccompanied minor shelter and biweekly food deliveries to partnering shelters.

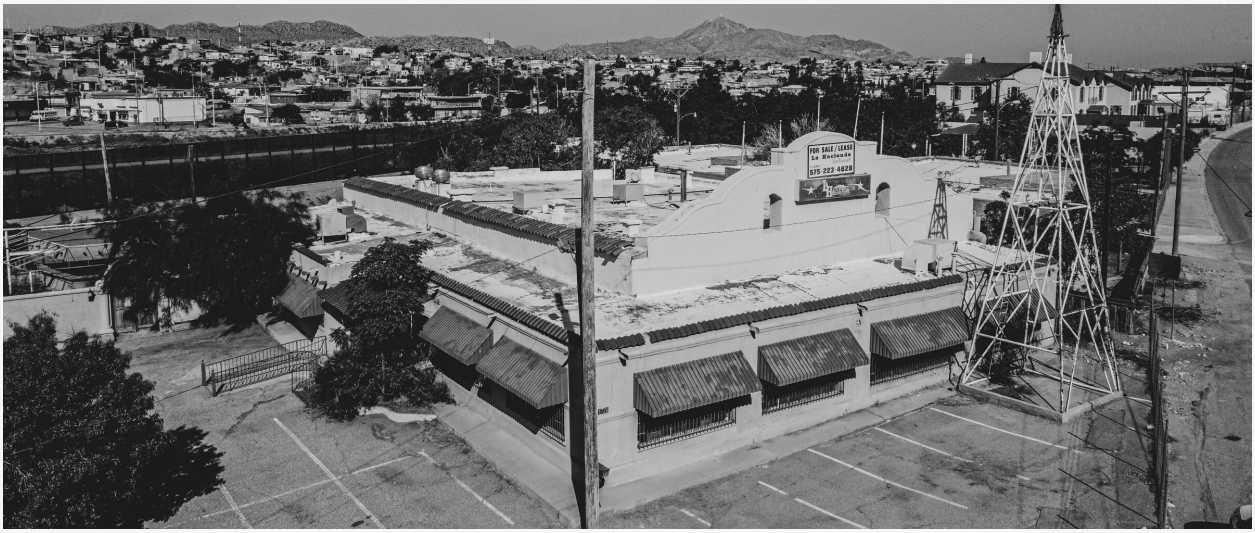
In addition to direct support, Abara staff works to leverage relationships and connections within the El Paso / Juarez community and beyond to identify needs and connect to opportunities for support. This has included facilitating introductions for funding opportunities for local shelters, gathering in-kind goods from our Amazon Wish List, and managing our donation supply closet. This included coordinating supply donations to care for the 1,200+ Haitian migrants El Paso welcomed in the summer from Del Rio.

ABARA HOUSE

A DREAM BEGINS

On August 26th, we officially closed on the historic property at 1720 W. Paisano Dr. in El Paso. Through friends of Abara, we secured the Old Hacienda Restaurant including the historic monuments at Oñate's Crossing and three small apartment buildings with 14 units - all located on 4 acres along the border fence. Learn more about Abara House here.

We plan to take the next six months to finalize the master plan and architectural drawings for the properties and request bids for the project from construction companies. Once we have solid figures, we will embark on a capital campaign to raise the funds necessary to pay back loans, renovate the buildings, landscape the property, and begin operations.



PROJECT TIMELINE: ABARA HOUSE

TASK	DATES
PHASE 01 ACQUISITION & INITIAL PLANNING	SUMMER 2021-PRESENT
PHASE 02 PARTNERSHIPS | RESEARCH | MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT	ONGOING
PHASE 03 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN | ARCHITECTURE DESIGN, ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS	MID 2022
PHASE 04 START RENOVATION CONSTRUCTION FOR ABARA HOUSE	2023

A final note

A COMMUNITY'S PURSUIT OF TRANSFORMATION TAKES TIME. TRANSFORMATION INCLUDES QUALITATIVE (RELATIONAL) AND QUANTITATIVE (NUMERICAL) OUTCOMES THAT WORK TOWARD INWARD AND OUTWARD CHANGE, NOT EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE. IN ADDITION TO QUANTIFIABLE OUTCOMES, ABARA'S WORK OFTEN LOOKS LIKE FACILITATING CONNECTIONS, INTRODUCTIONS OR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANT SHELTERS (TO INCLUDE START UPS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER). WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON SEVERAL INITIATIVES TO INCLUDE:

-A MIGRANT NARRATIVES PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH CIUDAD NUEVA
-EXPANDING OUR REACH THROUGH IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND A NEW WEBSITE
-COLLABORATING WITH A DENOMINATION TO ASSIST IN THE START-UP OF A FOUNDATION
-EXPANDING OUR BOARD

IN SHORT: WE ARE EXCITED TO FURTHER DEFINE OUR MEASURABLE OUTCOMES FOR 2022 FOR BOTH QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE IMPACT. MANY OF THE LEADERS THAT ABARA HOSTS ON A MONTHLY BASIS THROUGH OUR BORDER ENCOUNTERS ARE LEADING OR INFLUENCING DENOMINATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, FAITH COMMUNITIES, AND UNIVERSITIES THAT REPRESENT THOUSANDS WHICH FURTHER MULTIPLIES PERSONAL, NARRATIVES AND SYSTEMS CHANGE.

ABARA'S ACTION IS ENABLED BY YOUR GENEROUS PARTNERSHIP. YOUR SUPPORT SUSTAINS OUR MISSION OF INSPIRING CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIVIDES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE ARE WITNESSING PERSONAL, NARRATIVE & SYSTEMS CHANGE ACROSS PERSONAL AND CULTURAL DIVIDES. THANK YOU FOR ENGAGING THIS WORK.

GRATEFULLY,

Sami, Clara, Kim, Jen, Monica, Nate, Gustavo, Rosa & Meredith