

For Immediate Release

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**La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (SPMDTU)**

**Has be Awarded $1,351,000 in Grants, to Restore Its Headquarters Building in Antonito, Colorado**

**Included Are**

**A Grant of $25,000 from the Sangre Cristo National Heritage Area**

**A Grant of $250,000 from the History Colorado State Historical Fund and**

**A Grant of $1,076,000 from the Colorado Community Revitalization Fund**

La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (SPMDTU) has been awarded a $25,000 grant from the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area of Alamosa, a $250,000 grant from the History Colorado State Historical Fund (SHF) and $1,076,000 from the Colorado Community Revitalization Fund. These three grants will enable the organization to complete the restoration of its iconic building in the 1925 adobe style. The building sits in the heart of Antonito on Main Street.

The Scopes of Work of these grants include: the stabilization and replacement of the roof and the deteriorating northeast corner of the building, restoration of the stage, plumbing and construction of two ADA Gender Neutral bathrooms, installation of a heating system, construction of an all-electric food service area, restoration of the stairs and floors, wall painting, and converting the office into a SPMDTU Museum/Visitor’s Center and Education/Research Center.

These funds will also be used to construct the following energy efficiency measures: an electric service area,
Electric Charging area for visitors to the building, Wi-Fi for internet connection for zoom and other web-based meetings, Solar Panels to provide a renewal energy source for the future maintenance of the building,
an apartment for an onsite manager.

Previous grants from the State Historical Fund and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area of Alamosa have funded Construction Documents and Architectural Plans (design/engineering) plus the restoration of all 26 outside windows and outside doors and the restoration the entrance and the vestibule.

The SPMDTU will continue to use the previous general contractor, Torres Builders, LLC and the previous architect, Scheuber and Darden Architects. Both companies know the building well and are well informed with the requirements for the restoration and rehabilitation of historical buildings.

The SPMDTU *Concilio Superior* Headquarters Building, located on the west side of Antonito’s main street at 603 Main Street, is listed in the State Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History.

Once the restoration and rehabilitation of the building is complete it will be returned to its splendor in appearance and style of 1925 and will used to host the type of artistic and historic events of the past, that is, musical performances by groups such as *Hilos Culturales*, art exhibitions, art displays and workshops, dances, weddings receptions, family reunions, and other community events. In addition, once the SPMDTU Museum is established it will be open to the public, tourists and for group tours, thus attracting more interest in the town and in turn having a positive influence on the town and its citizens.

The SPMDTU was founded 122 years ago on November 26, 1900 and is the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States. It was founded in Antonito, a small town in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado next to the New Mexico state line, by Celedonio Mondragón and six others to fight discrimination in the fields, mining industry, and railroads. Also, to defend their property rights.

After World War II the SPMDTU had more than 1,500 members. The SPMDTU had *concilios locales* (local councils or chapters) in 36 towns in northern New Mexico, three towns in Utah and 41 towns in Colorado. They were numbered in order of their founding. Those in Colorado included the following: No. 1 Antonito, No. 2 Capulin, No. 3 Mogote, No. 4 Saguache, No. 5 Ortiz, No. 6 La Isla, No. 7 Los Sauces/Salida, (later became No. 7 in Denver), No. 8 Del Norte, No. 8 Los Valdezes, No. 10 La Jara, No.11 Fort Garland, No. 12 Del Norte/Nos. 8, 30, No. 15 Center/No 41, No. 16 La Garita, No. 17 Lobatos, No. 18 La Jara, No. 19 Alamosa, No. 20 Oak View, No. 21 Ignacio, No. 22 Conejos, No. 24 Pagosa Springs, No. 27 Monte Vista, No. 28 San Pablo, No. 29 Los Pinos/Valle, No. 30 Del Norte, No. 31 Chama, No. 32 Fort Collins, No. 34 Pagosa Springs, No. 35 Durango, No. 36 Montrose, No. 41 Center, No. 45 McPhee, No. 48 Aguilar, No. 49 San Luis, No. 50 Cañon, No. 52 Leadville, No. 54 Garcia, No. 60 Brighton and No. 60 Walsenburg. The three *concilios locales* in Utah were: No. 59 Clearfield, No. 61 Odgen and No. 63 in Salt Lake City (see page 151-152 of *La Sociedad: Guardians of Hispanic Culture along the Río Grande).*

Towns in New Mexico that had *concilios locales* include: No. 4 Rodarte, No. 9 La Madera/ Vallecitos, No. 10 San Miguel, No. 11 Las Tusas, No. 12 Costilla, No. 13 Ojo Caliente, No. 14 El Rito, No. 15 Placitas, No. 18 Ranchos de Taos, No. 20 Ranchos de Taos No. 21 Española Valley ((Española, Alcalde, Velarde, Lyden), No. 23 Lumberton, No. 24 No Agua/ Tres Piedras, No. 25 Chama, No. 26 Española, No. 29 Los Pinos, No. 30 Chamita, No. 30 Ratón and Dawson, No. 32 Arroyo Hondo, No. 33 Las Cruces, No. 34 Chamita, No. 37 Rosa, No. 38 Tierra Amarilla, No. 39 Alcalde, No. 40 Velarde, No. 42 Arroyo Seco, No. 43 Cerro, No. 44 Questa, No. 45 Dulce, No. 46 Embudo/Dixon, No. 53 Taos, No. 57 Nambé, No. 58 Peñasco, No. 63 Amalia, and No. 64 Lyden.

The SPMDTU began as a mutual aid organization that sought, through non-violent actions, to combat the exploitation of Hispanic workers by land barons, mine owners, and the railroads. The organization is still active. Its *concilios locales* conduct monthly meetings and functions, to further the organization’s vision which is “The SPMDTU is comprised of a diverse group of men and women committed to enriching Hispanic communities and families, with fund-raising efforts aimed at providing and enhancing community services.”

For more information visit the SPMDTU website at [www.spmdtu.org](http://www.spmdtu.org) and see *La Sociedad: Guardians of Hispanic Culture along the Río Grande,* written by José A. Rivera, a SPMDTU member and University of New Mexico Professor and published by the University of New Mexico Press.

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