

# CHWS IN ACTION

MARITN AND ERIKA

This is Martin and Erika, two community health workers (CHWs) from Cochise County who have been fully devoted to their community since they began their careers as CHWs. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the involvement with their communities has increased. They told us about the activities they are doing every day to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, how their hours have increased to more than 12 hours a day, and have been working to exhaustion to help their communities, and they have not given up.

It was exciting to hear the incredible stories they have about the work they've done, but above all, it was very motivating and inspiring to be able to recognize the passion with which they shared their stories. For AzCHOW it has truly been a pleasure to talk with them, which is why we have decided to make *CHWs In Action* a series dedicated to recognizing the CHWs on the ground, who are doing the work we admire. With every newsletter, we will share a new story, or stories, about our amazing CHWs throughout the state of Arizona. We want to hear what you and your fellow CHWs are doing as well! **Please send us your stories, let us recognize and give praise to our frontline workers.**



## Here is Martin's Story

Imagine a house, on the top of a mountain, in the middle of the Arizona desert. Now imagine being a community health worker, knowing that there's a patient in that house, in desperate need of medical care. *What would you do?* Well, for CHW Martin, there was only one solution - climb up the mountain.

Martin comes to us from Chiricahua Community Health Center as a Community Health Worker. He has worked there for 6 years and loves his job, mostly because he loves to help people, *all people*. He works long, strenuous hours and this has only increased since the COVID-19 pandemic started. One day, as he arrived at work, he got the news that there was an 84-year-old patient in a remote part of rural AZ who needed medical attention but was housebound and could not leave. So Martin, the dedicated community agent that he is, put on his hiking boots and scrubs and climbed up the mountain to her. He brought with him basic supplies - personal protective equipment, a blood pressure cuff, an oxygen tank, and a laptop to set up a virtual visit. He helped facilitate the visit with her provider, translated the information, educated her on the health recommendations from the doctor, and answered any question she had - and then he was on his way back down the mountain. Reflecting on his experience, Martin noted how important this part of his job was, he meets patients where they are (both literally and figuratively). He responded to the call of service. ***Martin saved that woman's life.***

*For more information or to reach out for an interview or with a story, please email Betsy Sorensen ([elizabetha@azchow.org](mailto:elizabetha@azchow.org)) and Kenia Zuniga ([kenia@azchow.org](mailto:kenia@azchow.org)).*

## FIGHTING THE COVID-19 MERCILESS MONSTER

This article shares an interview conducted with Mae-Gilene Begay, Director of the Navajo Nation Community Health Representative (CHR) Program, who shares the Navajo CHR role in the pandemic. Click [here](#) to read the article!