The Moab Valley Multicultural Center is conducting an all-new fundraising campaign throughout this month — an event slated to be MVMC’s largest 2018 fundraising effort.

“The catchphrase is Multicultural March: Help us help each other, or Marzo Multicultural: Ayudenos a ayudar,” MVMC Outreach Coordinator Joanna Onorato said. In previous years MVMC relied on funds raised through “Love UT, Give UT” held by the Community Foundation of Utah. “Last year, MVMC raised $11,445 from 450 individual donors, placing us second in the ‘Inspiring our Communities’ category and winning an additional $2,500,” Onorato explained. After the foundation made some major changes to the event, MVMC decided not to participate.

The center is accepting donations and conducting fundraising events all month.

“If people want to come in and give a donation, here at the center we have a photo booth that they can use,” Onorato said. “We’re taking photos of all of our donors that we’re going to compile into a fun video.”

The photos and videos are optional and will be posted on the MVMC Facebook page. Several local businesses are getting involved in the campaign, including the Barkery, which is donating 5 percent of profits on March 15, and Eklecticafe, which is donating 5 percent of profits on March 18. The center’s Amigos a Amiguitos program is also conducting a tortilla sale to raise funds.

“They’re homemade and delicious,” Onorato said of the tortillas. “We can take orders, but we encourage people to get them from Amiguitos because we have prizes for the little ones, so they’re definitely out in the community trying to sell some tortillas.”

At the end of the month, MVMC will be holding a free all-day celebration of their success and appreciation for the community’s support.

“On the 30th is our big celebration, and here at the center we’re going to have lunch sponsored by Giliberto’s restaurant, and we’re going to have chile verde, so come on by for lunch,” explained Onorato. “We’re also going to have a soiree that evening, and everybody who donates is entered into a raffle with a fun prize giveaway. We’re going to have a fun toast to celebrate our success with appetizers and prizes. So we’re going to be celebrating all day.”

MVMC Education, Outreach and Programs Assistant Haley Austin, who will be playing the banjo at the Mar 30 event, said, “The soiree is going to be super fun,” she said. “This is the first time we’re doing our own crowd sourcing and crowd funding, so share our posts and help us out, even if you cannot donate. And you’re going to be supporting general programming here at the center.”

The MVMC has big goals for the campaign. “We made $21,000 last year, and this year our goal is $22,000,” Onorato explained. Anonymous donors have agreed to match donations from the general public, leaving it up to the center to raise a total of $11,000 from individual donors in order to meet the goal.

Onorato elaborated on how these funds will be used at the center, saying, “Our projected operating budget for 2018 is $280,000 and based off last year, we are expecting about 42 percent to be from individual donors, so we get a huge amount of support from individuals,” she continued, “This is going to be unrestricted funding. The center is a walk-in location, so a lot of our spending is unexpected, depending on client needs or emergency crisis. So, this is especially used for that sort of situation.”

In the month of January alone, MVMC spent 308 hours helping 1,062 clients.

“Our biggest initial hurdle is going to be getting the word out, because Love UT, Give UT was a known phrase, and so trying to make it understood that Multicultural March is pretty much Love UT, Give UT, but under a different name,” Onorato said. “Every little bit counts. It all helps to make the multicultural center run and function, and also one of the biggest helps that people can give is to spread the word.”

Further information about Multicultural March can be found on MVMC’s website at moabmc.com.

ByBy Jacque Garcia

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