



NEWS RELEASE

Presbyterian Peace Fellowship Honors Santa Feans *Co-Presidents of New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence to Receive* *2021 Peaceseeeker Award*

March 25, 2022, Santa Fe, NM – Miranda Viscoli and Rev. Dr. Harry W. Eberts III, co-presidents of New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence, were recently named as recipients of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship’s 2021 Peaceseeeker Award.

Initiated in 1970, the Peaceseeeker Award gives “well-deserved recognition to those who have made a serious commitment to working for justice and peace.” Past recipients include Rev. Dr. William Barber II, architect of the Moral Monday Movement and the Poor People’s Campaign, and Fred Rogers, creator of Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood. The 2021 award will be presented virtually at the 2022 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church Peace Gathering, June 18-July 9 in Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Eberts, who is pastor of Santa Fe’s First Presbyterian Church, said, “Miranda and I are truly humbled by this, and accept this honor on behalf of all the amazing volunteers and supporters of New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence, and those whose lives have been lost or affected by gun violence in New Mexico.

“It is exciting to think that through this award the work we do in New Mexico might be known beyond our state and perhaps inspire others to get involved in gun violence prevention. Deep thanks and gratitude to Presbyterian Peace Fellowship for the great work they do and the witness for peace they share with people across the country.”

New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence (NMPGV) formed early in 2013, following the Sandy Hook shootings. Its multi-pronged strategy for addressing and reducing gun violence focuses on partnering with state and national legislators, schools, school boards, cities, counties, police departments, civic leaders, elected officials, interfaith and youth advocacy groups, and national and local organizations.

“A significant outcome of our strategy was our Guns to Gardens buyback program,” said Viscoli, the agency’s full-time co-president.

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“We created the Guns to Gardens gun buyback program in 2016 and have had 13 gun buybacks since then. To date, 1,030 firearms, of which 38% have been semi-automatic handguns, rifles and assault weapons, have been dismantled and made into garden tools and other items,” she said.

States across the U.S. are replicating NMPGV’s Guns to Gardens program. A nationwide Guns to Gardens Buyback Day is scheduled for June 11, 2022.

Another NMPGV project is the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence, which urges children and youth to reject gun use.

In addition to its legislative achievements, NMPGV also started Murals to End Violence for young artists to visually portray in their schools and neighborhoods gun violence prevention. To date, student artists have completed 11 murals “that lift the memory of victims, the pain of survivors and the hope for a less violent future,” said Viscoli.

About New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence

New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence (NMPGV) is a 501(c)3 non-partisan organization whose sole purpose is the prevention of gun violence in New Mexico. The organization, with several thousand members throughout New Mexico, works through grassroots mobilization to promote reasonable gun laws, as well as educating the public about gun safety and the high emotional and financial costs of gun-related violence against children and adults.

For information, call 505-984-3058, email info@newmexicanstopreventgunviolence.org or visit <https://www.newmexicanstopreventgunviolence.org/>

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