



To Whom it May Concern,

I have had the pleasure of collaborating with Dr. Elizabeth Silva in different capacities over the course of the past 15 years. I met Dr. Silva when I was a graduate fellow at the University of New Mexico's El Centro de la Raza, Latinx student service department. Dr. Silva was an undergraduate fellow and we worked together, with our fellows to build programs, advocacy, and mentorship for UNM's Latinx student population. As a graduate student, she led UNM's Peer Mentoring for Graduates of Color, of which I was a steering committee member.

Most recently, the organization I lead, Working Classroom, was selected to partner with the City of Albuquerque's Violence Intervention Program to pilot a program at West Mesa High School. Working Classroom is supporting impacted youth by providing arts and healing mentorship with teaching artists. Dr. Silva was overseeing the City's VIP project as it pertained to this pilot. Working Classroom was eager to join this project, in part, because of the trust and commitment we have seen from Dr. Silva's work over the course of the years.

Working Classroom spent many hours with Dr. Silva and often, her supervisor Ms. Geri Bachicha, to design and launch this pilot project. We have been working closely with Dr. Silva since the early part of 2022, and in that time, we have had frequent and clear communication about our direction. We have always felt our questions were answered in a timely manner and our perspectives were weighed heavily. Dr. Silva created an environment of active listening and true partnership, which can be challenging between such disparate partners – government, school, and community organizations. We are grateful we had her expertise to help get this project off the ground – her diligent work has helped set this project up for continued success.

While we are disappointed to know that Working Classroom will not be able to lean on Dr. Silva during the continued development of the West Mesa VIP pilot program, we know she would make a strong candidate for a variety of positions. She has deep experience working in a variety of roles in higher education, government, and independent research. In the many years I have intersected with her career path, I have always been impressed by the nuance and excellence she brings to her work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Madalena Salazar", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Madalena Salazar

Executive Director, Working Classroom