



# La Voz de Esperanza

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**Editor:** Gloria A. Ramírez

**Design:** Elizandro Carrington

## Contributors

Yon Hui Bell, Tricia Cortez, Rachel Jennings, Tom Keene, Jere Locke, Kayla Miranda, Emmy Pérez, Andrea "Vocab" Sanderson, Victoria Vilaseñor & Lindsey Wieck, Yoania

## La Voz Mail Collective

The Collective is sheltering at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will be returning when their health and safety can be assured. Extra funds are being raised to pay for folding La Voz each month during this time.

## Esperanza Director

Graciela I. Sánchez

## Esperanza Staff

Elizandro Carrington, Kayla Miranda, Paul Plouf, Kristel Orta-Puente, Natalie Rodríguez, Imgard Akinyi Rop, René Saenz, Susana Segura, Amelia Valdez, Judit Vega, Rosa Vega

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- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

## La Voz de Esperanza is a publication of

Esperanza Peace & Justice Center

922 San Pedro, San Antonio,

TX 78212

210.228.0201

www.esperanzacenter.org

Inquiries/Articles can be sent to:

lavoz@esperanzacenter.org

Articles due by the 8th of each month

## Policy Statements

\* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

\* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

# Letter to the Editor of La Voz de Esperanza

February 11, 2021

I'm writing to you because today our organization celebrates the termination of the declaration of a national emergency on the southern border.

Nearly two years ago, on FEB 15, 2019, people who live in Laredo and many other places along the 2,000-mile border learned that our lives were somehow in danger, and that the place where we live is somehow a threat to the entire country, a national emergency.

Upon hearing this stunning news, RGISC and others in the community immediately got together to discuss and figure out next steps.

We quickly realized that this executive order by the former president was to be used as a means to take away billions of dollars from the military, and from military bases, to build his border wall and confiscate lots and lots of land.

This was about to place the future of Laredo and our river in crisis.

What he and his supporters didn't realize is that this act caused an uprising. It galvanized a group of people who quickly learned that power comes from the people.

This declaration helped a fierce and wondrous group of people to find their voice, and call out what was happening: an extreme act of environmental, social, and racial injustice. Those who were making these plans lived far away from here and had everything to gain while we had everything to lose.

Our fight to Delay and Cancel the wall made a difference. It saved Laredo and brought Laredo and the future of our river out of crisis. It showed us that we aren't second class citizens whose constitutional rights can be suspended at the stroke of a pen by dangerous political forces.

We are now in the next phase of this battle, which is to permanently cancel the contracts and halt the confiscation of land.

We are also in the process of envisioning the kind of future that we want here on the border.

Now is the time to formulate solutions that can more adequately address the border's many needs, not just security... but security combined with ecology, trade, water, asylum, immigration, culture, energy and history.

This movement taught us that we can no longer remain silent. It taught us that people on the border have power and can shape their own destiny.

We thank the Biden Administration for terminating this outrageous act committed against our people, and against a vibrant and dynamic region of the United States.

Tricia Cortez, Executive Director, RGISC (Rio Grande International Study Center)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Along with this letter Tricia sent a poem about the border, the Rio Grande and its meaning. This poem along with poems from 5 other poets are at the heart of the April issue of La Voz. We are hopeful as a new administration begins governing the U.S. but must remain ever vigilant and continue to hold all of our officeholders accountable to the people. After all, democracy means demos kratos, power to the people or rule by the people and we must make every effort to secure that power in the power to vote that is now in jeopardy.*

—Gloria A. Ramirez, editor of La Voz de Esperanza

**ATTENTION VOZ READERS:** If you have a mailing address correction please send it to lavoz@esperanzacenter.org. If you want to be removed from the La Voz mailing list, for whatever reason, please let us know. La Voz is provided as a courtesy to people on the mailing list of the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. **The subscription rate is \$35 per year (\$100 for institutions).** The cost of producing and mailing La Voz has substantially increased and we need your help to keep it afloat. To help, send in your subscriptions, sign up as a monthly donor, or send in a donation to the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center. Thank you. -GAR

**VOZ VISION STATEMENT:** La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.

