

***Topic: Economic Development Strategies for Latino Communities***

***Veronica Barela, CEO, NEWSSED CDC***

Veronica Barela has served as the Director of NEWSSED Community Development Corporation since 1978. NEWSSED C.D.C. is a non-profit, community-based organization whose main focus is the revitalization of Denver's near westside community. Ms. Barela is recognized for her skills in community based economic development, community organizing, housing development, events, arts and culture and civil rights work. She is also recognized for the revitalization of Santa Fe Drive (between 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> avenue) and bringing the Cinco de Mayo back to the community. The Cinco de Mayo was celebrated on Santa Fe Drive for nine years. It grew and needed to be moved to Civic Center Park where it has been celebrated for eight years. It is the largest outdoor Cinco de Mayo Celebration in the United States.

Since Ms. Barela has been the Director of NEWSSED C.D.C. over three hundred fifty businesses have located to Santa Fe Drive and the surrounding near Westside Neighborhood such as 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Kalamath and 6<sup>th</sup> Avneue. She has developed, housing, two shopping centers, one mini center in addition to many other businesses for the community and NEWSSED. These businesses have created over 3000 jobs. NEWSSED is a multipurpose agency that provides a holistic approach to rebuilding the community. NEWSSED is a nationally recognized Community Development Corporation and Ms. Barela is known nationally for her work.

Ms. Barela has a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from the University of Colorado at Denver. Her undergraduate degrees are in Public Administration and Psychology from Metropolitan State College. In 1983, she graduated from the National Internship in Community Economic Development through the Development Training Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1985, she completed the Denver Community Leadership Development Program and Colorado Outward Bound School. In 1983, she completed the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund Leadership Development and Advocacy Program.