Transcript of
El Rio 10th Anniversary Event

[music]

Joan Warfield: With El Rio Adult Learning Center standing right behind, ready to open the doors to a better life, a better life that comes through education and learning, to all that pass through.

Karen Smith: This neighborhood center actually was built in 1972. This beautiful center was organized because community members demanded it. They organized for it because they knew that they needed a place like this. Adult Education started here as soon as the neighborhood center was opened. So in 1972 was the first GED class here and in 1973 was the first English language class here. We serve mainly students who are preparing to take their GED exam. A lot of them, high school didn’t work out for them for whatever reason and now they are ready to come back. Especially in this economy, many people are finding that they need their GED credentials to move forward for their economic goals, their educational goals. We also serve the immigrant and refugee population who are here to learn English. They’ve been coming to us since 1973 for English classes then and we also have rights and responsibility of citizenship courses as well and computer classes also.

Laura Porfirio: This is the first city neighborhood center that was opened in Tucson and I think that that’s what it means for the community. It means a place to gather, it means a place for recreation, it’s a place for education, it’s a place for social service organizations to reach the clientele that need their services. What this place means is access to information, access to services, access to education and we all know how important that is. Diversity leads to strength in a community. When you are not isolated and you’re connected to other people, especially through education, of course, that’s our area. We bring people together from all over the world and all over the country and all different backgrounds and they are finding strength and improving their lives through those connections.

Mayra Gavia Molina: I started taking classes here as English as my second language and three months after I had the opportunity to take the ABE and GED classes. I started taking classes at the community college and I started taking my science courses in there and then I moved towards the U of A where I had my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I graduated in 2007 and I’ve been a labor and delivery nurse since then in a local hospital here and I love my job. I love what I do and there is nothing better to do, in your job, what you love.