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PRESS RELEASE

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2ND ANNUAL CYCLING TOUR TO BENEFIT SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Route will take cyclists through the historical Juan De Oñate Trail and beautiful green fields and pecan farms in New Mexico

El Paso County Attorney's Office will host its 2nd annual cycling tour "Cycle for Change: From Surviving to Thriving" on Sunday October 26, 2014, at Gallegos Park (7361 Bosque Rd., Canutillo, TX).

The purpose of the event is dual: to bring awareness about the recovery phase of the survivors of domestic violence and to raise funds to provide scholarships for educational opportunities and therapeutic services for survivors of domestic violence.

"The first cycling event held last year was a great success, and thanks to the support of the community, nine survivors of domestic violence received funds to pursue educational opportunities," said El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal.

"Once victims finally escape the hold abusers have on their mind and body, they get a whole new outlook on life. There is an overwhelming sense of freedom they get while finding themselves once again. There is also a sense of fear in undertaking a new path in their lives. They want to do things they have not been able to do. Escaping domestic violence provides a whole new perspective for former victims. That's where the Cycle for Change Scholarship comes in to assist and empower the survivor to soar to new heights while breaking the cycle of violence they have endured," Bernal added.

"Our shelter was created out of a desire to help homeless women who might be struggling to recover from an abusive relationship and who might have substance abuse problems or mental health issues," said El Paso Villa Maria director Linda Velarde.

Sponsors of this year's event include the NM State Police, El Paso Sheriff's Office, the New Mexico Department of Public Safety, El Paso District Attorney's Office, and more than 16 local businesses.

The cost to register for the cycling event [online](#) is \$35 for adults or \$15 for children under 17 and active duty military. Online registration will end on Wednesday October 22, 2014. There will be on-site registration the day of the event starting at 7:00 a.m.

Participants will be able to choose from 3 different courses:

- **20 Mile course:** (Description)
- **30 Mile course:** (Description)
- **50 Mile course:** (Description).

We will give out t-shirts to the first 250 registered participants. There will be cash prizes to the top 3 finishers in the 50 mile ride, and gift cards to the top finishers in the 20 and 30 mile courses.

This year, individuals who want to support the scholarship fund but are unable to attend the event can register as "Sleep-in for a Change," paying \$20.

WHO: El Paso County Attorney's Office/ Villa Maria Shelter

WHAT: 2nd Annual Cycling Tour "Cycle for Change"

WHEN: Sunday, October 26, 2014 @ 8:15 a.m.

WHERE: Gallegos Park, 7361 Bosque Rd., Canutillo, TX

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