

## **Taos United - Creative working group**

Summary: The Creative Working Group met and discussed two major topics: how to tie larger national policy changes into local impacts, and How to create a larger impact of the protests into the everyday and visual landscape of Taos. Local impacts identified include small businesses affected by tariffs and immigration issues, younger people affected by cuts to educational and other funding, jobs and grants, and campus censorship; cuts to household safety networks affecting local families (cuts to food aid, housing, health care), military veterans, local immigrants and public lands. The group suggested we break into SMALLER RESEARCH GROUPS that might look into each of these. Second, the group discussed how to gain more visibility and impact by first expanding the protests to embrace more street theater (through art workshops and creating giant puppets, costumes and live music) as well as creating visual brands that could be worn to signify protest support in everyday life (pins, stickers zines cartoons). As well musical lists of protest songs on spotify, performances and art gallery shows that encourage the production of creative protest materials, the group suggested that we find members that want to participate in creating visual art, music, and wearable media that can be performed, shown and distributed to augment the visibility and strength of the protests.

## **How to recruit & raise visibility and participation of Protests**

### **1. Tie these protests into local issues/local impacts of administration:**

- **Small Business** - affected by Tariffs? Affected by Immigration abductions?  
RESEARCH: Chamber of commerce, restaurant owners/managers, construction owners/managers, and Taos Living Center
- **Younger taos** folks: interview those you know. RESEARCH: Connect with Dani & Madison at TrueKids1 and Sandy Campbell (TK1 summer camp)
  - Student issues: education funding and Pell Grants affected by administration
    - Americorp funding being cut: RESEARCH - Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
    - Campus censorship & curriculum censorship. RESEARCH - how are these things affecting local younger folks?
- **Poorer families** - CUTS to safety networks
  - Cuts to food aid, SNAP, food stamps - RESEARCH - fed policies and state cuts, online & at food banks, check out NMSU (NM state uni), study on FOOD INSECURITY in NNM.
  - Cuts to Section 8 housing - RESEARCH - local section 8 administrators? Taos Housing Coalition
  - Cuts to medicaid - RESEARCH - how will this affect richer folks as well, losing providers?
  - Cuts to Food Banks: St James (feeds 450 families once per week) - RESEARCH St James and Shared Table, Questa food bank? Taos Shared Table - feeds 400 families
- **Military Veterans** - VA funding being cut. RESEARCH - ANY of the many vets out here, also Vets Off Grid, Not Forgotten Outreach
- **Immigration** - green card holders married to citizens; people afraid to leave the country for fear of ICE arrest, Ice Raids RESEARCH - TAOS SIN FRONTERAS organization

- **Public Lands** - How does admin privatization of public lands, renting out fracking etc, and firing federal workers affect our parks and protected forests, trails, and GRAZING access? RESEARCH- US Forest Service, Taos Trails, Taos Mountain Biking clubs, local campgrounds
2. **Expand protests into fiesta/entertainment/theatre, visual branding and visual arts**
- **Add STREET THEATER elements to protests**
    - GIANT PUPPETS - learn how to make giant puppets that can join the protest and add VISIBILITY
    - COSTUMES - think about costumes and scenarios that we could enact as either a symbol of resistance to tyranny (Revolutionary war uniforms)
    - MUSIC - create Taos Marching Bands, encourage musicians or provide noise making instruments during protests, encourage musical creativity that might extend beyond the protest time too
  - **Create visual & audio brands/icons for distribution:**
    - PINS design a protest emblem (flags, no kings, etc) that can be worn outside of protests in order to carry the protest into everyday life and discussions with others
    - STICKERS with a QR code on them other merchandise that can help advertise the protests, create more visibility of resistance, aid in outreach and coordination,
    - ZINES - Taos Zine Festival in September at Taxonomy
    - CARTOONS - draw political cartoons to submit in Taos News etc
    - MARCHING BANDS etc that create protest music and soundtracks
    - SPOTIFY LISTS - of protest music
    - PHOTO GALLERIES of protests
  - **Create Gallery /curated ART EXHIBITS**, workshops and public art to encourage the creative participation of local artists and crafts aficionados
    - Public Art Installations: help the public visualize concepts that might seem too abstract (for example installations that show the difference between a billion and a million dollars, etc to help people understand the vast difference).
    - Curate & Showcase grassroots protest art and encourage the public to join in its creation
    - Find sponsors and spaces for workshops that help locals create their own protest art, signs etc
  - **Expand to the written word in the press and in social media, online news etc**
    - Write comments under news articles in the local press and more (like yahoo)?
    - Write my turns and other op eds
    - Create comics for Taos News, Questa News and Enchanted Circle News/more?

**EXTRA; Recruiting and talking with others: How to not alienate conservatives/gop/maga that could want to protest:**

- **Resist polarizing language that maga uses** - dont make it about Trump make it about other key issues that we can all agree on
- A contrary point in discussion is **embrace polarization** - builds solidarity among those oppressed (the resistance)