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## Real Estate Loans Help Business Owner Promote Community Health

*By Metta Smith, Director of Lending and Client Relations, Accion*

Health is a common denominator of Deanna Montoya's Belen businesses: the Extreme Fitness gym, which she started seven years ago, and the Enchanted Smiles dental practice, which opened in September 2013.

The lifelong Belen resident operates both businesses, leading Zumba classes at the gym and working as a dental hygienist at Enchanted Smiles.

Montoya's passion for fitness is obvious to locals — whether they're the other instructors she employs to lead spin, rip and circuit training classes at Extreme Fitness; the dentist, receptionist and part-time hygienist who work at the dental practice; or the people who've benefited from community fundraisers Montoya has hosted to help pay her neighbors' medical bills or raise awareness about cancer.



That enthusiasm was equally apparent to loan officers at Accion New Mexico, the nonprofit business lender that provided the commercial real estate loans that Montoya needed to open the gym and purchase the dental practice.

“In addition to a deep commitment to running a business and knowing what she was looking for in a commercial property, Deanna's great character and passion for what she does was evident from the start,” said Justin Hyde, New Mexico market manager for Accion.

Commercial real estate loans are often more complicated than home mortgages, in part because the businesses that occupy the property typically need to generate sufficient revenue for the loan payments. As a result, the loans often require more paperwork and analysis, and Montoya had little time to spare for either as a working mother of four children. “I approached Accion, and with both loans I was assured I would more than likely get the financing, and that the committee meets every (week) to review loans, and if any other paperwork was needed they would let me know. They are very easy to work with.”

Accion offers commercial real estate loans of up to \$750,000, and will consider more in some cases. Certified as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Accion can oftentimes be more flexible than a traditional lender around considerations such as credit history and collateral values for commercial real estate loans.

Montoya first spoke to Accion about the gym loan, and she had the money within a month. The longest part of the process was getting a commercial appraisal, which took two weeks, Hyde said. The loan for the dental office took longer, mostly because it involved a business acquisition rather than a simple real estate purchase.

Deanna's history with Accion on the gym loan helped her prepare for the process on the second loan, Hyde said. "The underwriting process and the work on our side remain the same for returning clients. But Deanna was motivated, so she provided the necessary documents in a timely manner, allowing us to act quickly."

Accion accepts down payments as low as 10 percent of the property value to purchase commercial real estate, whereas many traditional lenders require 25 to 30 percent down. The business property itself serves as collateral. Initial loan terms range from five to seven years with amortizations of 15 to 25 years.

To apply for a loan at Accion, visit [www.us.accion.org](http://www.us.accion.org) or call 800-508-7624.

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