



# Hispanic Women's Council

Spring/Summer 2020 Newsletter

## Board of Directors

MAJ (Ret.) Linda C. Zamora  
President

Marissa Elías  
President Elect

Dr. Carmen Samora  
Immediate Past President

Nicky Ovitt, Vice President

Raqui Martínez, Treasurer

Vangie Samora, Secretary

Nicole Flórez

Lucía López

Dr. Victoria Sánchez

The Hispanic Women's Council is a non-profit, inter-generational organization established in 1988 to promote, support, and create opportunities for Hispanic women.

**P. O. Box 27271**  
**Albuquerque, NM 87125**

[www.nmhwc.com](http://www.nmhwc.com)

Vangie Samora, Editor

## Un mensaje de la presidente

Greetings Dearest HWC Comadres,

It has been the most interesting and uncertain of times in which to take the reigns from the wonderful, Dr. Carmen Samora. I thank her for her strength, leadership, humor, engagement and love for the HWC. As my predecessor, mentor and friend, she continues to guide and support with selfless devotion.

Our organization was created on a solid foundation built stronger each year by all the triumphs, trials, and experiences our members shared with one another. That resolve, forged over three decades, will not only sustain us in this tumultuous time, but will help us find ways to thrive, lead and succeed for the betterment of our organization and the community as a whole.

The success of our inaugural events is representative of that powerful HWC legacy. We started the year with the Annual Meeting where we re-elected board members and welcomed one new member, Nicole Florez (see her story on page 3). At the subsequent Board Retreat we elected officers: Marissa Elias, President Elect; Nicky Ovitt, Vice President; Raqui Martinez, Treasurer; and Vangie Samora, Secretary. We developed a full schedule of events for the year. Due to circumstances brought about by the pandemic, we are reevaluating them and making adjustments so they can still succeed in spite of the current situation.

Our hopes for a positive start to the year were bolstered by the tremendous success of our Mother-Daughter Virtual Event. With your generous support we were able to make a \$1,000.00 contribution to the Barrett Foundation so they can continue their unrelenting efforts for our community (see full details of the event on page 7). We are working through our committees to ensure the **Meet and Greet** (Sept 23, 2020-Chair: Dr. Carmen Samora), **Masquerade Ball** (Oct 17, 2020- Co-Chairs: Kathryn Ramsey & Dr. Vi Flórez), **Holiday Party** (Dec 6, 2020- Co-Chairs: Nicole Florez and Lucía López) and the launch of our **Social Media** presence: Chair: MAJ (Retired) Linda Zamora, are all equally successful endeavors. If you would like to join any of the committees please let me or the committee chairs know.

Thank you for your loving support, genuine concern for us and one another during this unusual time, and your selfless contributions of time, resources and energy to support this resilient organization.

*Con Respeto y Cariño,*

*Linda C. Zamora*  
HWC President 2020



**Annual Membership Meeting**  
**January 26, 2020**  
**Rosemary Restaurant**  
**4565 San Mateo Blvd, NE, Albuquerque**

A delicious brunch buffet and “mocktails” were enjoyed by all who attended. Kudos to Linda Zamora and the entire staff of Rosemary Restaurant for excellent service and a very special meal that included breakfast enchiladas, ham steaks, blueberry French toast bake, puff pastry bundles, chocolate croissants and tropical fruit salad...yums. Vangie Samora read a message from outgoing president, Dr. Carmen Samora (who could not attend) and the round robin allowed everyone a couple of minutes to share something about themselves or talk about an issue or project of interest to all. Board elections were held with four women re-elected to a three-year term: Raqui Martinez, Nicky Ovitt, Vangie Samora and Linda Zamora. One new board member, Nicole Florez, was also elected to a three-year term (see page 3).



Domi & Melissa Rodriguez, Carol Vigil



Vi Florez, Kathryn Ramsey



Nicky Ovitt, Sylvia Ortiz Spence, Sonya Chavez



Elsie Sanchez, Edna Lopez, V. Samora



Domi Rodriguez, Linda Zamora



Veronica & Petra Sanchez, Gloria Chavez-Sampson,  
 Victoria Sanchez, Melissa Gonzales



Nicky Ovitt, Helen Lucero, Sylvia Spence, Rose Spader



Merrilee Foreman, Reina Romero, Lucia Lopez, Loretta Sandoval



V. Sanchez, Leila Flores-Duenas, Raqui Martinez



## New Board Member Profile

### Nicole Flórez

Nicole was born and raised in Northwestern New Mexico. After graduating from Bloomfield High School, she earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of New Mexico majoring in Spanish and Elementary Education. Since then, Nicole has worked in elementary schools across the globe: Albuquerque, San Francisco, Madrid, Spain, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Atlanta. Nicole currently specializes in dyslexia education and literacy curriculum development and instruction. She previously taught kindergarten, first, second, and third grades, as well as Spanish as a Second Language. In May of 2018, Nicole and her husband, Brook, brought home a precious baby boy, Liam. Since then, Nicole spends all her free time playing and making messes with the boys. She also loves to travel (anywhere!), read (memoirs and historical fiction), and bake (bread, mostly, but sometimes cake too). Nicole is honored to be a part of the Hispanic Women's Council and is looking forward to serving this wonderful community. Before she became a board member, Nicole served on the 2019 Masquerade Ball Committee, along with her aunt, Dr. Viola Flórez, and her cousin, Kathryn Ramsey.



Nicole, Liam & Brook

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## *Éxito y Más*



HWC member **Verónica Sánchez** was one of three women featured on the radio talk show “Espejos de Aztlán” hosted by Cristina Baccín on KUNM Public Radio. The conversation was about the legacy of the late Ambassador Mari-Luci Jaramillo. Verónica joined Dr. Cecilia Navarette who co-wrote and illustrated Ambassador Jaramillo’s book “Sacred Seeds” and Anna Uremovich, the Archivist at the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC). Each of the women had a different perspective about the contributions made by Ambassador Jaramillo in her lifetime of public service. The “Espejos de Aztlán” interview was an effort towards ensuring that Ambassador Jaramillo’s legacy be remembered.

Dr. Navarette contributed an abridged chronology of Ambassador Jaramillo’s life and career and highlighted her bilingual education advocacy and civil rights activism before becoming the US Ambassador to Honduras. As coauthor of “Sacred Seeds” she also shared her experience in writing the book with the Ambassador. Dr. Navarette mentioned other opportunities to further Ambassador Jaramillo’s legacy, such as having a school named for her, creating a curriculum from her book, “Sacred Seeds,” and making the book available at libraries.

Anna Uremovich, the NHCC Archivist responsible for receiving and organizing Ambassador Jaramillo’s archives, shared conversations with the Ambassador, especially regarding the many photographs included in the archive.

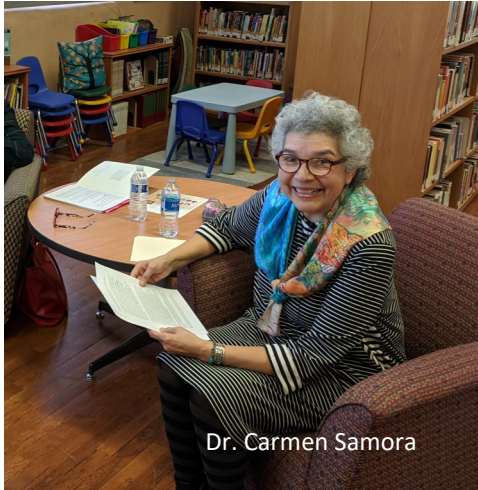
For Verónica Sánchez, important within Ambassador Jaramillo’s advocacy and activism was her commitment to the empowerment of *Hispanas*. She was often called to speak on their education. She also addressed *Hispanas* directly, notably at national MANA events, counseling them on maintaining a support system of family, other women, and the greater Chicano community. Also highlighted was her participation in the HWC and her love of her *comadres*.

The interview is archived as a podcast at <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/381443532/espejos-de-aztlan>. Ambassador Jaramillo’s archive is available through the National Hispanic Cultural Center, History & Literary Arts Program, by appointment by calling Anna Uremovich at 505-383-4706, or by using the NHCC’s finding aid, the Rocky Mountain Online Archive.

## ***La Canoa: Legacy Talks***

At the National Hispanic Cultural Center

February 8, 2020



Dr. Carmen Samora

The Hispanic Women's Council was invited to make a presentation as part of the *La Canoa* lecture series, sponsored by the NHCC's History & Literary Arts Program. This was a welcomed opportunity to highlight the founding and work of the HWC to a wider audience. Dr. Carmen Samora, HWC's 2019 President, gave an overview of our history and Vangie Samora, board member and former HWC President, read three essays from the documentary book, *Mujeres Valerosas*. She highlighted Mela Leger, Frances Garcia and Carmen Chavez.



Vangie Samora

Dr. Samora's introduction set the tone: "What can happen when a small group of determined women get together to form a Council of and for other women? Remember the times, 1988. We were well removed from the *Movimiento Chicano*, and we were in the midst of the second wave of the women's movement. Judith Espinosa, Patricia Madrid, Millie Santillanes, Mary Archuleta, and Ophelia Rinaldi and other local women leaders led a group of committed women to form the Hispanic Women's Council. They wanted to increase the participation of Hispanic women in high level, decision-making positions and to create a strong network so we could help each other. They developed our mission statement and the articles of incorporation that established our non-profit Council. The inaugural event was the HWC Summit, held in October of 1989 and featuring national speakers. The workshops included titles such as "Taking Risks," Communication Styles," and "Learning to Lobby."

"The HWC serves our community of women. We are a community of all ages and economic status. We are women who lift each other up as we help each other realize our potential. We are women who enjoy our deep friendships with each other, and we make newcomers welcome and they become our friends and *comadres*."

Dr. Samora's impassioned message elicited testimonials from HWC members and this, in turn, led to thoughtful questions and a substantive exchange with members of the general public.

Special thanks to Nicky Ovitt (HWC Vice-President) for designing the visual on page 5. As of the date of this event, we had said good-bye to thirteen of the women featured in the book, underscoring the importance of capturing their stories.

More excerpts from Dr. Samora's message appear on page 8. It's a good reminder of what HWC has accomplished over the past 30+ years.





# HISPANIC WOMEN'S COUNCIL

## *In Memoriam*



Loretta A.  
Armenta  
(page 110)



Ana Sánchez  
de Ayala  
(page 16)



Dr. Orcilia  
Zúñiga Forbes  
(page 113)



Frances M.  
García  
(page 44)



Ambassador  
Mari-Luci  
Jaramillo  
(page 52)



Mela Lucero  
Leger  
(page 55)



Melita  
Larrañaga Ortega  
(page 71)



Pamela B.  
Minzner  
(page 3)



Ophelia  
Rinaldi  
(page 75)



María  
Sedillo  
(page 86)



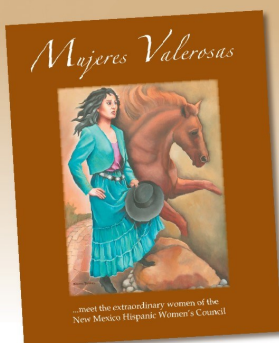
Millie  
Santillanes  
(page 91)



Angelina  
Calderón Torres  
(page 92)



Maclovía  
Zamora  
(page 107)



### MUJERES VALEROSAS

María Elena Alvarez-Luk  
Lillian G. Apodaca  
Carla Y. Aragón  
Mary Archuleta  
Lenore Armijo  
Ana Ayala  
Jacqueline J. Baca  
Terrie Flores Baca  
Valerie J. Borrego  
Theresa Cárdenas  
Carmen R. Chávez

Judith Córdova  
Rosalia de Aragón  
María Estela de Ríos  
Diane D. Denish  
Rose Díaz  
Judith M. Espinosa  
Leila Flores-Dueñas  
Merrilee Foreman  
Frances M. García  
Loretta A. Guerra  
María J. Gutierrez  
Dody Hoffman  
Mari-Luci Jaramillo  
Mela Leger  
Teresa Leger Fernández  
Edna L. López  
Susan R. López  
Patricia A. Madrid  
Petra Jimenez Maes  
Raquel I. Martínez  
Salomé Martínez-Lutz

Pamela B. Minzner  
Rosalee Montoya  
Melita Ortega  
Ana Pacheco  
Ophelia Rinaldi  
Geraldine E. Rivera  
Rowena A. Rivera  
Marlene B. Salas-Provance  
Carmen R. Samora  
Vangie Samora  
Elsie Samora Sánchez  
Marcela J. Sandoval  
Millie Santillanes  
Angie Torres  
Gloria Tristani  
Kim Trujillo  
Martha Vázquez  
Raquel Velásquez  
Carol Vigil  
Rebecca Vigil-Girón  
Maclovía Zamora

### COMADRES

Teresita E. Aguilar  
Loretta A. Armenta  
María Benitez  
Margarita H. Colmenares  
Carolyn Curiel  
Viola E. Flórez  
Orcilia Zúñiga Forbes  
Verónica C. García  
Betty Gonzales  
María Griego-Raby  
Terry Huertaz  
Antoinette Sedillo López  
Linda M. López  
Helen R. Lucero  
Mary Molina Mescall  
Gloria E. Mirabal  
Diana L. Montoya  
Margaret E. Montoya  
Patricia Montoya  
Carmen M. Rodríguez  
Sylvia Rodríguez  
Evangeline Sandoval Trujillo  
Lydia Villa-Komaroff  
Elizabeth Duran Watrin  
Margaret Werner-Washburne  
Bianca Ortiz Wertheim

## *In Memoriam*

**Elizabeth Serna Cárdenas**  
**July 18, 1930-April 22, 2020**



Elizabeth Serna Cárdenas was born in Santa Fe, NM, and began studying tap dance at the age of 10 with Elsie Hake then began Spanish dance lessons with Marie Wilson, known as “La Gitana” (the Gypsy). She graduated from Loretto Heights Academy in Santa Fe in 1947, was a Santa Fe Fiesta Queen in 1948 then continued her education at Loretto Heights College in Denver, Colorado. In 1949 she moved to San Francisco to attend the Christensen San Francisco School of Ballet where she studied classical Spanish dance under Guillermo Del Oro and Flamenco under Elisa Cansino. She returned to Santa Fe in 1952, opened a dance studio and introduced Spanish dance and Flamenco to a new generation of New Mexicans. Her legacy of expanding classical Spanish dance and Flamenco in New Mexico was documented in the museum exhibit titled “The Spirit of Flamenco From Spain to New Mexico” curated by Nicolasa Chávez at the Museum of International Folk Art, June 2016 (and is on tour in other cities). Elizabeth is also featured in the book that accompanies the exhibit (same title) and authored by Nicolasa Chávez.



Elizabeth is Theresa Cardenas’ mother and was a member of HWC for many years. She was a regular attendee of our events and a generous donor. In April of 2001, she hosted a *merienda* and presented a talk entitled “Exploring a Legacy of Spanish Dance in New Mexico.” Attendees

were treated to a fascinating lecture and a magnificent exhibit that included flamenco dresses, fans, shawls and archival photographs. This successful event raised funds for the HWC book project.

We will miss our beautiful and gracious *comadre*. Elizabeth had a kind and gentle nature and a wonderful sense of humor. Ever curious about the world around her, she stayed informed on current events and was always ready to discuss any issue. She will live forever in our memories of her...may she rest in peace. To Theresa, we extend our love and support.



## HWC Fundraiser Supports the Barrett Foundation

### *Virtual Mother-Daughter Celebration Helps Homeless Women and Children*

The annual HWC Mother Daughter Brunch celebration could not take place this year due to COVID 19 and the importance of keeping our families, community, and State safe. We thought long and hard about ways in which the Hispanic Women's Council could give back to our community during this unprecedented time. Knowing that many organizations must continue to provide services, shelter, and support to our unprotected and vulnerable community members, the HWC board of directors decided to honor the spirit of the traditional Mother Daughter Event, by raising funds to benefit a local non-profit organization. We decided to reinstate our past relationship with the Barrett Foundation, Inc., an Albuquerque non-profit that has been serving the needs of homeless women and children in our community since 1985. In years past we made it a tradition to collect money and toiletries for the residents of the Barrett House during our annual holiday party.



Drawings by artist Nicky Ovitt.

Our plan: offer HWC members a set of four greeting cards to be delivered to their home by mail. The pack included two Mother's Day cards and two blank cards. The beautiful and unique designs were created by HWC Vice President, Nicky Ovitt. A donation of \$10 to \$20 (or more) for a set of four cards was suggested. Those wanting to participate could mail their donation or donate on-line on our website.

The response was amazing! As a result of the generosity of our members and their networks, we raised \$1,000.00 for the Barrett Foundation. In the letter transmitting the donation to the Foundation, HWC President Linda Zamora wrote: "It is with deepest appreciation for the noble work you do for the women and children in our community that we, the Hispanic Women's Council, are excited to support your efforts. For everything you have done in your 30 plus years of operation and for everything you continue to do in support of the many families who need you in our community, please accept this humble donation of \$1,000 that was raised by our membership during our Mother-Daughter virtual event this year. We hope this contribution provides you with resources to advance your efforts and drive your mission forward."



...continued from page 4

## **Excerpts from Message Delivered by Dr. Carmen Samora at the La Canoa: Legacy Talks**

We sponsor a fundraiser, the Masquerade Ball, that raises money for our scholarships. We sponsor the Meet and Greet that introduces our scholarship recipients to our members. We are privileged to hear their stories of struggle and triumph. In May we celebrate our mothers and daughters and the important women in our lives. At Christmas we gather to share food and sing the old songs of celebration and reverence. And, we honor special women of accomplishment when we bestow the HWC *Primeras* Award to trailblazers in their fields. The *Estrella Brillante* Award recognizes the HWC member who has given extraordinary service to the organization.

In 1990 we instituted Mitote Hours—after work networking sessions that are also fun. The title evolved to “Mitote” Power Hour to reflect our belief that information is power. These gatherings allow us to kick off our shoes and visit with friends, old and new.

We have sponsored many educational conferences since the first one in 1989, often in collaboration with other women’s organizations such as MANA del Norte, Las Mujeres, and National LULAC Women. We have sponsored educational workshops and events including: Women and Investing, *Curanderismo*, Running for Public Office, Negotiating Your Worth, and Traditional Foods. More recently we sponsored events like the Legacy of African Americans in New Mexico, led by Mr. and Mrs. Powdrell; exploring the art and raft of Northern New Mexico Families, and an exploration of the magnificent art show, Visions of the Hispanic World, led by Andrew Conner, the director of the Albuquerque Museum.

We have sponsored a wealth of guest speakers, both national and local, including Carolyn Curiel, a senior speech writer and Special Assistant to President Bill Clinton and later Ambassador to Belize, Congresswomen Linda Sanchez and Loretta Sanchez who spoke at the HWC 20th anniversary gala, and in 2016 we hosted Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, an event attended by 600 guests. Local speakers include Teresa Leger, when she was a White House Fellow (now running for Congress from the 3rd Congressional District); Ana Pacheco, editor of *La Herencia*; Angie Torres talked about her life story and viewed the film *Stones of Ibarra*; Dr. Helen Lucero gave us a private viewing of the exhibit, *Arte Latino*, at the Museum of Fine Arts of New Mexico.

In 1992 we wrote our first book, *Nuestras Mujeres*, in collaboration with UNM faculty. From 1992 to 1999, HWC hosted Cambio on KOAT-TV, a half hour program interviewing women in our community on a variety of topics. Under the leadership of Dr. Leila Flores-Duenas, in 2007, the HWC Scholarship and Mentorship Program was established. Since that time, we have awarded a total of \$117,000 in 260 scholarships to women attending UNM and CNM. The mentoring component is especially helpful to our students, many of whom are first generation in their family to attend college. And, in 2013, thanks to Dr. Viola Flores, we established the Annual Masquerade Charity Ball to raise money for our important scholarship program.

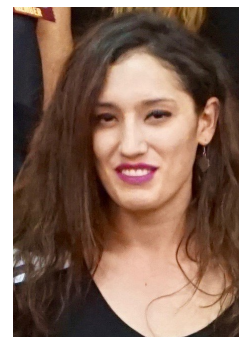
In 2009, under the leadership of Dr. Rose Diaz, our archives were established at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe. Vangie Samora wrote the application (to establish the archives) and takes charge of submission of documents and keeps the communication going with the archives. We are women who know that it is important to document who we are and what we do. And we are women who know that in documenting what we have done, our contemporaries and generations to come will know who we are and what we have done. We are trailblazers who know how important it is to leave a very clear trail.



## HWC Scholarship Recipient Highlights

A note to HWC from **Lucretia Vigil** (Masters in Public Health):

The experience of being a HWC Scholar was meaningful as it helped me to become more comfortable and confident with my identity as a Hispanic woman, and gave me a safe place to be open about my identity, culture, and hopes in academia. The impact this organization has had on my life and the growth I have had while engaging in this experience has been unforgettable. From interacting with professionals from a diverse set of backgrounds, helping to mentor other young Hispanic women, networking, education, and cultural preservation, it has been humbling to help celebrate the achievements of Hispanic women because many of us have been taught differently. As a result of my participation with this organization, the personal growth I have experienced has been tremendous. I recall my first mentoring meeting and where I was as a naive and unconfident undergraduate sophomore compared to the confident Master's in Public Health (MPH) graduate I am today. It was inspiring and meaningful to meet and watch other students complete their professional degrees while taking part in this organization, and I hope there will be many more to follow. I am finally getting the opportunity to submit a competitive application to several medical schools and continue to follow my dreams. If it were not the support and mentoring through the HWC organization, I never would have been able to be the first in my family to go so far with my education and endeavors. Thank You!



### Student Updates



**Florencia Monge**  
(PhD Biomedical Engineering)  
defended her dissertation in May and has been accepted

into the UNM Medical School. She presented her research on Alzheimer's disease at the Shared Knowledge conference at UNM and won the "People's Choice" award. Her research is Titled: "Novel Biological Super-Luminescent Sensors for the Detection of Neurodegenerative

Disorders." She's also the proud mother of an 8 month old daughter, Carolina!



**Jacque Garcia**  
(Masters in Public Health)  
completed an important step in becoming a family nurse practitioner; she is now an Registered Nurse in Northern California. She, too, is now a mother of a six month old son, Lucas.



The following 2019/2020 Graduates will be highlighted in the next newsletter:

Stephanie Castillo, BA  
Carlie Rose Marquez, BA  
Rebecca Gonzales, MBA  
Alexis Mariah Rael, MBA  
Ivonne Granados-Alvarez, BS  
Rosa Prada Vivas, MA

Congratulations to Theresa Cardenas! She has completed a Master of Sustainability Leadership Degree from Arizona State University School of Sustainability. Theresa is not an HWC scholarship recipient, but her academic success inspires us to keep on learning and growing. She is a former HWC President, is co-editor of the book, *Mujeres Valerosas*, and is a recipient of the HWC *Estrella Brillante* Award.



## 2020 HWC Membership

Clara Apodaca, Former First Lady of New Mexico	Teresa Leger-Fernández Officer, Leger Law and Strategy, LLC	Elsie Sánchez Small Business Consultant
Valerie J. Borrego, CPA	Edna L. López, President & CEO Compa Industries, Inc.	Petra Sánchez Retired Educator
Theresa Cárdenas Sustainability Practitioner & President, Noble Renewables Group LLC	Rose López, Retired	Verónica T. Sánchez Retired UNM Administrator
Sylvia Celedón-Pattichis Professor, Interim Senior Associate Dean, UNM COE	Karla Barela Lucero, Advance Planning Consultant, FRENCH Funerals	Theresa Sandlin, Retired Admin. Los Alamos National Laboratory
Sonya K. Chávez, U. S. Marshal U. S. Marshals Service	Dr. Helen Lucero Retired Museum Curator/Director	Loretta Sandoval
Gloria Chávez-Sampson	Josephine Martínez Retired FAA	Mary Frances Santistevan Retired, APS
Yolanda Cruz	Linda López McAlister, Founding Artistic Director, Camino Real Productions, LLC	Rose Spader, Author
Dr. Rose Díaz, Library and Archives Research Historian, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center	Gloria Mirabal Member, MANA del Norte	Sylvia Ortiz Spence, President Silverado Apparel & Home
Dr. Leila Flores-Dueñas Associate Professor, UNM COE	Dolores Montoya	Sue Stone, Lecturer, UNM College of Population Health
Dr. Viola E. Flórez Professor Emeritus, UNM COE	Kathryn Ramsey APS Instructional Coach	Elizabeth Trujillo
Dr. Merrilee Foreman, Owner Chiropractic Lifestyle Center	Carmen M. Rodríguez, President Carmen Cares Consulting	Joanna Trujillo
Barbara Gallegos	Dominique Rodríguez, Student Cibola High School	Kim Trujillo, Costume Designer New Mexico Film
Margaret Gonzales Senior Operations Manager UNM Graduate Studies	Louella Rodríguez Retired Educator	Mary Lou Trujillo, Retired Public Health Administrator
Tanya Gonzales, Paralegal, Law Offices of the Public Defender	Melissa Rodríguez, 5th Grade Teacher, Petroglyph Elementary	Rachel A. Valenzuela
María J. Gutiérrez Financial Planner	Reina A. Romero, Retired Educator	Carol Vigil, Entertainment Consultant
Samia Hindi, Educator	Brittney Sánchez, HWC Scholarship Recipient, MA Public Health	Sylvia Vigil-Raines, Program Communications Specialist Sandia National Labs
Dr. Parisa Kermani Northwestern Memorial Hospital		Miranda Zamora-Williams MS, ATC/LAT