



Hispanic Women's Council

Fall/Winter 2019 Newsletter

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

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Vangie Samora, Editor

Un mensaje de la presidente

Dear HWC Comadres,

I write to thank and congratulate the board and you members for a lively year of activities that I was privileged to oversee as your president for the 2019 term. The Hispanic Women's Council (HWC), as you know, is a dynamic organization of women who bring service, cultural awareness, educational opportunities, and enduring friendship to women of all ages.

Since 2007, when our scholarship program began, the HWC has awarded 260 scholarships for a total of \$117,000. We support women who attend CNM and UNM as undergraduates and graduate and professional students. In this fall/winter newsletter we celebrate some of the many women who have been awarded scholarships by our organization. Students no longer, these women have now launched their careers, thanks in part, to our financial and mentoring help.



As our Vice-president, Vangie Samora, said at this year's scholarship fundraiser, the Masquerade Ball, "... we are reaping the rewards as we watch students move forward in their chosen fields, like:

Mónica Sánchez completed a Master of Fine Arts degree at UNM and is now a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the Department of Theater and Dance at Colorado College;

Karen Roybal Montoya completed a Ph.D. in American Studies at UNM and is now a tenured Assistant Professor in SW Studies at Colorado College;

Lisa Herrera has earned her medical degree from UNM and is now a resident at UNM's Health Sciences Center;

Marissa Elías completed a Master of Public Health degree from UNM and is now a research associate with the Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation (and, by the way is serving on our board);

Carla Nieto graduated from UNM and she is now a CPA working with Valerie Borrego, CPA;



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New Mexico's North Star



Our beloved Mari-Luci Jaramillo, Ph.D. passed away on November 20, 2019, at the age of 91. Mari-Luci was born in Las Vegas, NM, on June 19, 1928. Her parents, Maurilio Antuna Sr. and Elvira Encarnación Ruiz Antuna, encouraged her to get a good education as a way to escape poverty. She attended New Mexico Highlands University where she earned a bachelor's degree in education and minor in Spanish, and later earned her master's degree. In Albuquerque, she taught and earned a doctorate in curriculum and instruction with a minor in Latin American Studies, followed by a full-time faculty position at the University of New Mexico's School of Education. It was at UNM that her reputation grew as a civil rights activist for social equity and leader in bilingual education.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed Mari-Luci as the first female Hispanic ambassador of the United States, serving as Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras. It is for this extraordinary accomplishment that she was awarded the HWC *Primeras* Award in 2003.

After completing the ambassadorship, she served as the Pentagon's U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. Mari-Luci returned to New Mexico in 1981, and held the positions of Special Assistant to the President, Associate Dean for the College of Education, and Vice President for Student Affairs all at UNM. In 1987, she moved to California and worked as Assistant Vice President for Field Services with nationally recognized Educational Testing Service. In 1992, she joined the Clinton administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Latin America. She reflects on all these undertakings, and her personal life, in her memoirs titled *Madam Ambassador, The Shoemaker's Daughter* published in 2002.

Just this year, Mari Luci published a second book titled *Sacred Seeds*. This lovely book is from the point of view of a 10-year old girl and based on her own childhood memories. Almost to the day she died, Mari-Luci was doing book signings and delighting audiences with her humorous take on life experiences.

Mari-Luci never missed an opportunity to foster caring in the world, and in her memorial card, given to all who attended her mass, she published her own prayer as follows: *Thank you, Lord, for a most rewarding life. And thank you, family and friends, for guiding me toward a very happy one. I ask all who come to pray for me to help the less fortunate by a pat on the back, a monetary contribution, a word of encouragement, a letter of recommendation, a prayer...God be with all of you.*

Mari-Luci is survived by her husband, James Elliot; her children, Ross Ulibarrí and wife Kristin, Rick Ulibarrí and wife Dr. Rose Hessmiller, and Carla Ulibarrí and husband Mike Youngman; grandchildren, Kevin Potter and wife Gina, Geoff Smith and wife Amber, Dr. Nicola Ulibarrí and husband Dr. Ryan McCarty, and Sage Voorhees; great-grandchildren, Landon and Tina Marie Smith, Diego McCarty; and brother, Maurilio Antuna, Jr.

The U.S. Ambassador Mari-Luci Jaramillo Endowed Scholarship was established at UNM. Mari-Luci's archives can be accessed at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

As a long-time member of HWC, she was our advocate and an inspiring role model to us all, and to many of the students mentored by HWC. For all her goodness and kindness, she will never be forgotten.

Éxito y Más

The University of New Mexico's STEM-H Center received the 2019 Inspiring Programs in STEM Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, the largest and oldest diversity and inclusion publication in higher education. The award honors colleges and universities that encourage students from underrepresented groups to enter the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM-H Center in the UNM Health Sciences Center's Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion will be featured, along with 49 other recipients, in the September 2019 issue of *INSIGHT Into Diversity*. Award winners were selected based on efforts to inspire and encourage a new generation of young people to consider careers in STEM through mentoring, teaching, research and successful programs and initiatives.



Valerie Romero-Legott, MD

"The UNM Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's STEM-H Center, through its programs, resources and advocacy, is a leader statewide, regionally and nationally in the work being done to address inequities and improve STEM learning for all students," said Valerie Romero-Legott, MD, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer for the Health Sciences Center. "The Center offers rich opportunities for students to develop strong STEM identities that they might never have seen themselves embracing. These students will be the next generation of leaders developing STEM innovations to solve the grand challenges facing our world today."



Rebecca L. Avitia

Rebecca L. Avitia will serve as U. S. Senator Martin Heinrich's chief of staff in Washington, D.C. She will be one of three Latino chiefs of staff serving in the Senate. Before joining Heinrich's state leadership team, Avitia served as the executive director of the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

Avitia is a native New Mexican and grew up in Albuquerque's North Valley. She is a graduate of Eldorado High School, Trinity University and Columbia University School of Law. She was a practicing attorney in both New York and New Mexico and served as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico School of Law.

Joining Rebecca Avitia's staff is Elsa Menendez, the former Education Director at the NHCC; she will work on education initiatives.

Rebecca Avitia has been an HWC guest speaker and maintained a close relationship with HWC throughout her stellar tenure at NHCC.

On September 8, 2019, U. S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor spoke about her recently published children's book, *Just Ask!* The event was held at the Kimo Theater (presented by Bookworks). After she spoke, Justice Sotomayor invited the children in attendance to take a photo with her. Here is our very own Caydence Riley who was taken to the event by her grandmother Dr. Victoria Sanchez (former HWC President). She is also the great granddaughter of HWC member Petra Sanchez. As we all know, these moments can have a lasting impact...who knows if Caydence will some day be a featured speaker and we will clamor to have our picture taken with her.



Meet & Greet

September 11, 2019 at the South Broadway Cultural Center

Another year, another round of scholarships, another group of extraordinary students. The annual Meet & Greet provides the opportunity to get to know the students and their families one-on-one. As each student introduces themselves and shares a bit about their life story, we couldn't be more proud of them. They inspire us, and they affirm that our effort to provide financial support and mentorship is important. HWC is making a difference. The keynote speaker was Irma Rocío Vazquez; an edited version of her beautiful message appears on page 6. Special thanks to the Planning Committee for a very special event: Eva Gonzales, Chair, Kathryn Ramsey, Dr. Carmen Samora, and Dr. Victoria Sánchez.



Hispanic Women's Council

2019/2020 HWC Scholarship Recipients



Seated l-r: Ivonne Granados Alvarez, Mirella Galvan-De La Cruz, Rosa Elena Prada Vivas, Rebecca Gonzales, Stephanie Castillo, Amanda Martinez, Natalie Hernandez. Standing l-r: Wendolin Garcia-Martinez, Andrea Medina, Carlie Rose Marquez, Alexis Rael, Brittney Sanchez, Monique Gallegos, Bernice Madrid, Maria Vielma, Wenonah Stevens, Cristela Lozano, Yadira Salazar-Sanchez, Irma Rocio Vazquez. Not shown: Lizdebeth Carrasco Gallardo, Kimberly Rogge-Obando, Angelique Vargas. *Photo by of Carol Vigil.*

Ivonne Granados Alvarez—BS Early Childhood & Modern Languages

Stephanie A. Castillo—BA Elementary Education

Lizdebeth Carrasco Gallardo—JD Law

Monique Gallegos—BS Biology & Spanish

Mirella Galvan-De La Cruz—MD

Wendolin Garcia-Martinez—BS Biochemistry

Rebecca Gonzales—MBA Management Information Systems

Natalie Hernandez—BS Biochemistry

Cristela Lozano—BA Psychology/Criminology

Bernice A. Madrid—MA Educational Psychology

Carlie Rose Marquez—BA Political Science

Amanda M. Martinez—BS Population Health

Andrea Medina—BA Special Education Diagnostics

Alexis Rael—MBA

Kimberly Rogge-Obando—BS Chemical Engineering

Yadira Salazar-Sanchez—MPH Epidemiology

Brittney Sanchez—MA Public Health

Wenonah A. Stevens—MPH Epidemiology

Angelique Vargas—BA Liberal Arts

Irma Rocio Vazquez—MS Mechanical Engineering

Maria Vielma—BA Criminology/Spanish

Rosa Elena Prada Vivas—MA Hispanic Linguistics

Don't Limit Your Challenges, Challenge Your Limits, by Irma Rocío Vazquez

(keynote speaker at the Meet & Greet held September 11, 2019; this is an edited version of her remarks)



It's an honor to be your keynote speaker tonight. Today, I'm going to speak to you about my journey through education. However, I realize I need to step back and see how far I have made it and all the obstacles I have had to overcome. From knowing as a certainty that I was not going to be able to attend college, fearing deportation, and working every single day for the past 5 years, to now doing research in a science lab about novel clean energy alternatives.

I am from Mexico. My family immigrated to this country when I was three years old by parents who struggled economically in Mexico and wanted to give me and my sisters a shot at a better future. My parents, like many parents here tonight, came here with their pockets full of hope and with the aspiration that one day their children would have a life different from theirs. I am deeply grateful for the decisions that my parents made for me and my sisters.

I grew up in a single-parent household, and my mother is the strongest person I know. Her name is Irma Hernandez and she is amazing. She has worked two physically demanding jobs for years. Apart from her strength and valor, she also lives her life with so much grace, kindness and compassion. She showed me what it was like to work twice as hard but to never give up. There is not one day when I don't think about all the sacrifices that my mother has made for me and my sisters. Everything I do, I do with her in mind. The resilience of spirit that she has shown in everything she does is something that is born out of so much love and sacrifice; I will never be able to repay her.

We lived in this country, my mother always working, me getting through elementary school, and starting middle school. Until one day we received a fateful call. My grandmother in Mexico was fatally ill. We made the arrangements and left for Hidalgo del Parral, Chihuahua. For a year I experienced firsthand the beautiful vibrant Mexican culture and got to live with my kind grandmother. My grandmother passed, and we returned to the USA.

I enrolled again in middle school, and we all went on with our lives. It wasn't until high school that I had a deep realization. We had an expired tourist visa that made me an undocumented immigrant. When President Obama introduced the DACA initiative in 2012 which allowed hundreds of thousands of people that arrived to the USA before their 16th birthday, had gone to school here and continuously resided here since 2007, I saw an opportunity to lawfully reside here. Except, I didn't qualify for DACA. After consulting various immigration lawyers, we realized the time frame of when we left for Mexico made us not qualify. I found myself in limbo, not being American nor fully Mexican.

I was a Dreamer, but was I was not a DACA recipient. I was just floating around. In my last year of high school I had a harsh realization: my immigration status and my family's financial status would make it impossible to go to college. I asked myself, "Should I go back to Mexico and not see my family again? Or Should I work a full-time job, as many immigrants do, in a difficult physically demanding job? Should I even try to see if I can go to college, how am I ever going to pay for it?" I could not qualify for financial aid, I could not take out loans and the majority of scholarships required me to be a citizen, a legal resident or to have DACA. I had nothing. I was so scared.

I really wanted to pursue an education that had to do with math. In my life, I didn't even know anybody with a college education. I didn't know anything about the process, the money, what it led to. Pursuing college seemed like a faraway reality when I graduated high school. So, I starting to look for ways to help myself, calling and sending emails and asking lawyers about options. My family and I even applied for a Visa which will lead us to a permanent stay in this country. I looked for all scholarships I could that did not have citizenship requirements, and there were not many, but I got some, like this one. It was thanks to these scholarships (and working weekends) that I could pay my tuition.

I started my bachelor's in mechanical engineering. I struggled, I'm not going to lie, it was very difficult to sometime have no time to rest between school and work and knowing so much was on the line. During the weekends I worked at McDonald's starting at 5 am and after this first shift I headed to another restaurant to be a server until closing time. But it brought me so much resilience and it brought into focus. Why the sacrifice? Well, for one, to honor my mother...and because I had to get an education. I needed to pursue my dreams.

Being a woman in engineering is already hard enough, being an undocumented Mexican woman from a low-income single-parent household seemed to make it impossible to be a first-generation college student. It was difficult seeing all the people that I studied with getting an engineering internship at national laboratories, while I had to continue working nonstop at the restaurant. But the Hispanic Women's Council scholarship helped me so much and for this it holds a special place in my heart. This scholarship comes with advising, and without the advisement and some eye-opening conversations, maybe I would not be where I am today. Dr. Leila Flores-Duenas, my advisor, made me think about my goals and my future. I told her my story, admittedly I did not expect what she told me. I told her I couldn't get an internship, expecting some feel-well advice, but she asked "Well, what can you do instead?" I realized I must help myself, and I can't wallow. If I can't get an internship, then how else can I get engineering experience? Dr. Flores-Duenas helped me understand I can't put limits on what I can do. We must break free from societal standards and expectations.

I started being part of all the engineering projects I could. I spent a summer incorporating pneumatic shifting in a formula-1 style race car. I have worked in a cleanroom lab fabricating microelectromechanical devices. Then I asked Dr. Tehrani in the Mechanical Engineering Department if there was any volunteer work I could do. I told him about my interest in material science and about my undocumented situation. That was so scary. He welcomed me in his lab, and allowed me to do research for him as an undergrad. My research was about ultra-conductors. I designed experiments about optimizing fabrication methods of nanocarbon-metal composites. Basically, understanding the interface of synergistic combinations of different materials to improve conductivity. I wrote an undergraduate thesis for him.

I also became more involved in school. I served on the board of the Hispanics in Engineering and Science Organization, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and right now I serve as the vice president of the Pi Tau Sigma, the international mechanical engineering honor society. I graduated with my Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering with departmental honors and having already completed almost half of my classes for a master's degree. I was the first one in my family to graduate college.

I started graduate school and am doing research in the mechanical engineering department, working for Dr. Chabi, who is aware of my situation and welcomes me to her research lab and continues encouraging me. My current research has to do with energy conversion systems, specifically solar light energy to energy stored in chemical bonds. Clean energy research and implementation is paramount, and we need to more efficiently harness energy from renewable alternatives, such as the sun. Many times, I have been not only the only Hispanic in my engineering classrooms but the only female. Although this brings me a sense of empowerment, it also makes me feel discounted because the classroom demographics do not represent my community. Representing Latinas in engineering and having the immense opportunity to possibly help the world is such an empowering sentiment that brings me so much gratitude.

Looking back at my journey, I have seen that the sacrifices are worth it, and I am excited to continue to graduate school. My professional goals include continuing onto higher education in Engineering, focusing on real-world issues with my research, while serving as a role model for my communities. I want a Ph.D., I want to be a professional, and I know I can achieve my goals. To receive a scholarship from a Latina organization means so much. It's knowing that I am not alone and that my inspirational Hispanic counterparts are supporting me. It has also brought me faith in knowing that I am being heard and making a difference. This is something invaluable. The mentoring of the Hispanic Women's Council has been pivotal in the decisions that I have made. Dr. Flores-Duenas helped me realize how important it is to be involved and to seek out opportunities for myself, and above all to not limit oneself. I really have a lot to thank the HWC for, it helped me gain a more fruitful education, and has made my goals clearer.

I want to thank you all tonight for hearing my story, and I congratulate all the scholarship recipients...*Nosotras somos mujeres de alas, no de jaulas.*

Thank you to the Hispanic women's council for bringing me so much support and opportunities, and for standing for such great values. I still have a way to go in school, but I want to take a moment to thank my sisters Karla and Carolina, my best friend Samantha and my boyfriend Jesus, without whose support, my life would not be the same.

Lastly, thanks to my mother for her endless sacrifice, love, and dedication. *Eres mi mayor ejemplo mama, te amo.*



Masquerade Ball Brings in Dollars for the HWC Scholarship Fund



The Annual Masquerade Ball was held at the Crowne Plaza on October 26, 2019. Guests enjoyed appetizers during the reception hour and placed their bids at the silent auction tables. After dinner, Wendolin García-Martínez (pictured left) delivered personal remarks about how the HWC scholarship and mentorship she has received have strengthened her resolve to complete her educational goals. She personalized for all of us the importance of hosting this event so the scholarships can continue and the students can benefit from the mentoring.

La Marcha got everyone on their feet, led by Dr. Leila Flores-Duenas and Carol Vigil, and once completed, the dancing began. The music was provided by Eva Torres and the Ray Lucero Band and it was so good that the dance floor was at times packed to the limit, and we danced until the very last tune

was played. We thank all who attended for making the event financially successful and a great deal of fun, captured in these photos.







The ever popular HWC Holiday Party was held on December 8, 2019 at Nick & Jimmy’s Restaurant. A very special thanks to Kathryn Ramsey for organizing this fun event, including good food, great door prizes, and wonderful music by *Las Flores del Valle* (Carol Vigil & Leila Flores-Dueñas), accompanied by David García. They led us in a sing-along of *Las Posadas* and a variety of Christmas favorites. (photos courtesy of Dr. Victoria Sánchez and Rose López.)



!Felices Fiestas!



...President's message, continued from page 1

Solana Cummings graduated with a BA in Journalism & Mass Communication from UNM and is now pursuing an acting career in the film industry;

Trisha Martínez completed her PhD in American Studies at UNM and is now a post-doc in the Vice President's office for Equity and Inclusion and is also affiliated with UNM's Chicano Studies Program...just to name a few."

I should add that I (an HWC scholarship recipient before I joined the board) graduated with a PhD in American Studies from UNM, and I am now teaching in the Chicana Chicano Studies Department at UNM.

Don't miss reading Irma Rocío Vazquez' speech on page 6-7. Rocío was our keynote speaker at the September Meet and Greet, where we honored our scholarship awardees. You will be impressed, as I was, by the clarity and drive Ms. Vazquez shows in pursuing an education.

You, the members of HWC, make our organization vibrant and healthy. You joined in the fun of our fall events where we enjoyed each other's company. Among the events were our September Meet and Greet (my personal favorite), the Masquerade Ball fundraiser in October, and the lovely, crowd-pleasing Christmas celebration in early December. Whatever the event, I think you will agree with me that it was a satisfying experience. I look forward to greeting you at our next event, the Annual Meeting, in January (details to come). Until then,

Con cariño,

Carmen Samora
2019 HWC President

P.S. The board wants to gather information about where our scholarship awardees are now. If you were a scholarship winner, please contact me and let me know what degree you earned and what you are doing now. If you know a woman who was awarded a scholarship, please have her contact me. I can be reached at csamora@unm.edu.

Save the Date

January 26, 2020

12:30pm to 2:30pm

HWC Annual Membership Meeting

2018/2019 HWC Membership

Clara Apodaca, Former First Lady of New Mexico	Bernadette Howell, Miller's Inc.	Elsie Sánchez Small Business Consultant
Jeannine Miller Barreras Vice Pres., Miller's Inc.	Dr. Mari-Luci Jaramillo, Former U. S. Ambassador to Honduras	Petra Sánchez Retired Educator
Valerie J. Borrego, CPA	Parisa Kermani Student, UNM School of Medicine	Verónica T. Sánchez Retired UNM Administrator
Jane Braithwaite Homemaker	Teresa Leger Fernández Officer, Leger Law and Strategy, LLC	Dr. Angélica Sánchez-Clark UNM Research Asst. Prof., UNM Spanish & Portuguese Dept.
Theresa Cardenas Sustainability Practitioner & President, Noble Renewables Group LLC	Edna L. López, President & CEO Compa Industries, Inc.	Theresa Sandlin, Retired Admin. Los Alamos National Laboratory
Sonya K. Chávez, U. S. Marshal U. S. Marshals Service	Rose López, Retired	Marcela Sandoval Retired Educator
Gloria Chávez-Sampson	Karla Barela Lucero, Advance Planning Consultant, FRENCH Funerals	Mary Frances Santistevan Retired, APS
Dr. Rose Díaz, Library and Archives Research Historian, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center	Dr. Helen Lucero Retired Museum Curator/Director	Rose Spader, Author
Nicole Florez, Director Peterson Learning Center Manzano Day School	Linda Lopez McAlister, Founding Artistic Director, Camino Real Productions, LLC	Sylvia Ortiz Spence, President Silverado Apparel & Home
Dr. Viola E. Flórez Professor Emeritus UNM College of Education	Stella Noriega, Tax Consultant	Sue Stone, Lecturer, UNM College of Population Health
Dr. Merrilee Foreman, Owner Chiropractic Lifestyle Center	Carmen M. Rodríguez, President Carmen Cares Consulting	Elizabeth Trujillo
Margaret Gonzales Senior Operations Manager UNM Graduate Studies	Dominique Rodriguez, Student Cibola High School	Kim Trujillo, Costume Designer New Mexico Film
Dr. Melissa Gonzales Associate Professor Dept. of Internal Medicine UNM School of Medicine	Melissa Rodriguez, 5th Grade Teacher, Petroglyph Elementary	Mary Lou Trujillo, Retired Public Health Administrator
Tanya Gonzales, Paralegal, Law Offices of the Public Defender	Reina A. Romero, Retired Educator	Rachel A. Valenzuela
María J. Gutiérrez Financial Planner	Dr. Valerie Romero-Leggott Vice Chancellor for Diversity UNM Health Sciences Center	Sylvia Vigil-Raines, Program Communications Specialist Sandia National Labs
Samia Hindi, Educator	Lucinda Lucero Sachs, Writer	Miranda Zamora-Williams MS, ATC/LAT
	Brittney Sanchez, HWC Scholarship Recipient, MA Public Health	