



# Hispanic Women's Council

Fall/Winter 2022 Newsletter

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

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## Un mensaje de la presidente

Queridas HWC Members,

What a wonderful year we have had! This fall, we hosted our Annual Scholar Meet & Greet. A hugely successful event, we honored the 19 women awarded an HWC scholarship for 2022. Each scholar had a chance to share their area of study and what their academic journey has been like thus far. It was really special to listen to the stories of these intelligent, strong women. The event was held at the UNM Rotunda and was catered by our very own Board Member, Linda Zamora. Great food, incredible company, and a joyful vibe - another awesome event in the books.



Following the Meet & Greet was our triumphant Masquerade Ball. What a night that was! From the incredible Hotel Andaluz space to the delicious food, live band, and silent auction - immeasurable amounts of fun was had by all. By the end of the evening, the dance floor was packed with members and guests alike, sharing laughter and making wonderful memories. A huge thank you to all who were able to join us and/or donate to our scholarship fund. Your participation is pivotal to the financial health and continued legacy of this program and we are so grateful for any contribution you can make. Please plan to join us again in October of 2023 - we'll plan another fabulous night!

Our annual Holiday Party was held at Season's Rotisserie & Grill in Old Town. We had a wonderful time reconnecting, enjoying a delicious meal, and singing Holiday Carols with Las Flores del Valle. It was a happy and fun way to end a wonderful year.

On a different note, I would like to say a special thank you to Samia Hindi, Petra Sanchez, and Veronica Sanchez. These three women generously donated HWC memberships for each of our 19 scholars. This considerable gesture promotes growth within our organization and supports our scholars' participation in the HWC community. *Muchas gracias, comadres!*

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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**HWC Annual Meeting, January 22, 2023**  
**Indian Pueblo Cultural Center**  
**11:00am to 2:00pm**

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In closing, I would like to extend my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your support this year. The wonderful women in this community mean so much to me and spending the year with you all has my cup overflowing.

And, finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the HWC Board. For the last 12 months, you have all worked tirelessly to plan and execute some truly amazing events. Your dedication to our community, incredible amounts of positivity, and sincere joy in connections makes me feel extremely grateful for each of you. Thank you for your endless support - you are amazing!

I wish everyone a wonderful, joy filled Holiday Season. I hope to see each of you in 2023.

*Un Gran Abrazo,*

Nicole Florez  
President, Hispanic Women's Council

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Standing l-r: Maria Robles Meier, Lucretia Vigil, Marissa Elias, Linda Zamora, Christina Brigance, Nicole Florez. Seated l-r: Vangie Samora, Dr. Leila Flores-Dueñas, Dr. Victoria Sanchez, Raqui Martinez. Drs. Flores-Dueñas and Sanchez are the mentors who hold regular sessions with the HWC Scholarship Recipients. All the others pictured are HWC Board Members. Photo was taken by Carol Vigil at the Meet and Greet held September 22, 2022.

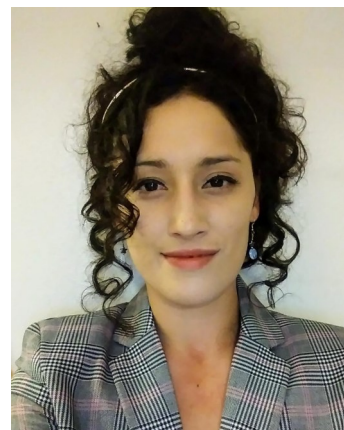
Gina Sisneros and her granddaughter Santana Sisneros at the Women's Art Show at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, October 2, 2022. Gina is an HWC member and was one of the featured artists. Santana is an HWC Scholarship Recipient.



## Exito y Más

### Lucretia R. Vigil is headed to Medical School

Lucretia was accepted into the University of New Mexico, HSC Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's and School of Medicine's Premedical Enrichment Program (PrEP) this past April 2022. She was recommended to interview for the program after going through the normal medical school admissions process. Students who successfully complete PrEP are automatically accepted into the UNM School of Medicine MD Program. She is entering the Class of 2023. PrEP is designed to prepare students to go to medical school. The program is a two-semester, post baccalaureate curriculum offered to educationally disadvantaged New Mexican students who exhibit exceptional non-cognitive characteristics (persistence, self-discipline, focus, confidence, teamwork, organization, etc.) but who are not eligible for direct admission into medical school due to MCAT scores or undergraduate GPA.




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### Dr. Diane Torres Velásquez receives the MALDEF Lifetime Achievement-Excellence in Community Service Award

*Diane Torres-Velásquez, Associate Professor, University of New Mexico College of Education and Human Sciences and President of Latino Education Task Force, was given the Lifetime Achievement – Excellence in Community Service Award. Torres-Velásquez worked with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) on a long-running educational equity case in New Mexico called Martinez v. State of New Mexico which brought about systemic changes to the state's education system. In her work, Torres-Velásquez has run poetry workshops for inmates serving time for crimes of passion and has served as the Hispanic Education Liaison for the state of New Mexico. She wrote the first report on the Status of Hispanic Education in that state, as required by the Hispanic Education Act. (Reprint from a press release issued by MALDEF.)*



The Annual Awards Gala was held in San Antonio, Texas, on September 30, 2022. Diane has been a member of HWC for many years, served a term on the board of directors and is featured in the HWC book, *Mujeres Valerosas*.

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### Dr. Rosalía Pacheco at the National Hispanic Cultural Center

**Rosalía Pacheco** has been busy working on her education, first on a Master's Degree then a Ph.D. She completed a PhD in Special Education at the University of New Mexico and is now serving as the Education Program Manager at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. Bravo!

Dr. Pacheco is a long-time supporter of HWC and is featured in the HWC book, *Mujeres Valerosas*.



**Comments by María Vielma**  
**Guest Student Speaker at the Meet & Greet Event**  
 September 22, 2022

***Poderosas, Through and Through***

A strong-willed and out-spoken *mujer Mexicana*, my mother always pushed against the cultural expectations of her gender. She didn't allow them to limit her. Not when she left México at twenty-one to pursue independence in the US; not when she got her GED in two months; and certainly not when she made a career for herself in the male-dominated roofing industry and was twice nationally recognized for her work. Even though she was not able to go to college, she instilled her value of education in my younger sister and me as we were growing up. Her stories served as my *enseñanzas*, teachings for how to fight for myself against those who saw me—a four-foot-eleven inch, brown-skinned Chicana—and expected academic failure. Her example showed me to yell “stop” when I was being bullied; to ask questions of teachers and principals without fear; to apologize directly to someone if I was in the wrong; to use my voice. She gave me the foundational tools that allowed me to navigate higher education as a first-generation, out-of-state college student on my own—she was my first mentor.



When I arrived at the University of New Mexico in the fall of 2017, I never imagined how many more powerful *mujeres* I would meet to guide me on my academic journey. As a freshmen, I joined an all women's mentorship group where my mentor, a senior at the time, told me about applying to the Honors College and studying abroad in Spain and becoming part of *El Centro de la Raza's El Puente* Fellowship. Having only been in college for two weeks, I thought “omg” how overwhelming, I could never. But that following semester, I was accepted to the Honors College; in the summer of 2019, I studied abroad in Spain; and in my senior year in 2020, I was accepted to the *El Puente* Fellowship.

As a sophomore, I took my first class in the Honors College with *Dra. Myrriah Gómez*. I remember very confidently turning in an analytical paper, and receiving a C with the comment “see me if you'd like to revise”! Determined to learn what I could improve, I went to her office and asked her if she could help me become a strong writer. She turned to me and said, “you are a strong writer, but I want my students, especially my students of color, to know that we are scrutinized more heavily for who we are rather than for our abilities. It is my job to make sure that I equip you with the tools to firmly defend your claims so that no one will ever dare to question your place here.” My revised version got an A, but the honest advice and constant feedback she gave me shaped me into a critical and confident writer—something I will always be grateful for.

Seven days before the start of my second half of junior year, I experienced something that diagnosed me with “Depression and Adjusted Anxiety Disorder.” I considered taking a break from school, but I didn't. Phone calls with my mom got me through every anxiety attack; my *tía*, who has treated me as a daughter ever since I moved here, helped me soothe the pain in my chest with her remedios of teas and movies; and *Dra. Leila Flores-Dueñas* reminded me that I was a *poderosa*, and that no one or nothing could take that away from me. In the Spring of 2021, I graduated *summa cum laude* with my Bachelor's of Arts in Criminology and Spanish with minors in Chicana and Interdisciplinary Studies.

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## Hispanic Women's Council 2022/2023 Scholarship Recipients



Ariana Aragón  
Bachelor of Arts in Environmental  
Planning & Design

Jazmín Arciniega  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Sandra Araceli Bello  
Master of Business Administration

Rylee Brachle  
Bachelor of Science in Population Health

Kamryn Chávez  
Bachelor of Business Administration

Brenda Elías  
Bachelor of Arts in Sociology

Analissa Gutiérrez  
Bachelor of Science in Population Health

Angélica Jiménez  
Doctor of Physical Therapy

Dylan Lucero  
Master of Business Administration

Nicole Martínez  
Master of Public Health

Florencia Monge  
Doctor of Medicine

Evelyn Rouse  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Dulce Saldívar  
Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts

Brittney Sánchez  
Master of Public Health

Roxana Sánchez  
Master of Occupational Therapy

Simone Sena  
Bachelor of Science in Biology

Santana Sisneros  
Master of Science in Biology

María Vielma  
Master of Arts in Spanish,  
Hispanic SW Studies

Kristal Vigil  
Doctor of Physical Therapy

Continued from page 4...María Vielma  
Guest Student Speaker at the Meet & Greet

I was awarded departmental honors for all 33 pages of my Spanish-written Bachelor's Thesis. I received three awards, published three works, AND I got accepted to UNM's Spanish and Portuguese Graduate Program for my Master's in Hispanic Southwest Studies. None of these accomplishments would have been possible had it not been for the empowering women in my life who not only told me, but SHOWED me that I was capable.

Today, as I begin the second year of my master's program, I am choosing to develop a Master's thesis that reflects the fact that mentorship among Latinas is crucial in the way that we *mujeres* believe in and support each other. The *enseñanzas* of our mentors and the *confianza* we build is crucial in the effects they have on every aspect of our lives. *En total*, we are each the sum of each *consejo*, of every "*hechale ganas hija,*" y cada "*si se puede.*" Though we each start out as mentees, especially those of us in the Hispanic Women's Council, we each eventually become mentors to other Latinas in our lives—whether they be our sisters, *primas*, best friends, or our own students. It is our responsibility to lift each other up and remind ourselves that we are a million times more capable than any white man, and that we are ***poderosas through and through.***

## Masquerade Charity Ball 2022

The 2022 Masquerade Ball was a sensation! Held at Hotel Andaluz on October 22, attendance was excellent and the energy in the room was charged with joy and excitement. The in-person event (after two years of no contact) allowed us to reconnect with friends, enjoy a delicious meal together, bid on great auction items, and dance the night away. The minute the band started up, people were on the dance floor "tirando chancla" with abandon. Generosity was also flowing and HWC raised over \$17,000 for scholarships thanks to our sponsors, donors and attendees. We sincerely value your continued support. Enjoy some images from the festive evening.







**Holiday Party**  
 Sunday, December 4, 2022  
 Season's Restaurant in Old Town

We chatted, we played games, we ate a great meal, we sang traditional songs. We learned about new achievements, we reunited with women who have rejoined, we heard about a way to help the homeless in our city. Thank you to the Event Committee for organizing a festive, joyful event: Nicole Florez, Lucretia Vigil, Marrison Elias, Raqui Martinez.



Miranda Zamora, Linda Zamora



Shaylee Rodriguez, Dominique Rodriguez,  
 Melissa Rodriguez



Vangie Samora, Elsie Sanchez



Lucretia Vigil, Marissa Elias, Rosalia Pacheco



L-R: Alberta Moberg, Karla  
 Barela, Rachel Valenzuela,  
 Sonya Chavez



*Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo*



Vi Florez, Donna Vigil, Kristal Vigil



Carmen Samora, Dulce Saldivar, Maria Vielma



Theresa Cardenas, Rosalee Montoya, Carol Vigil



Veronica Sanchez, Victoria Sanchez, Stella Noriega, Leila Florez-Dueñas



Josephine Martinez



Charlene Burriss, Clara Apodaca, Mary Frances Santistevan



Merrilee Foreman, Raqui Martinez

**2022 HWC Membership**

Clara Apodaca, Former First Lady of New Mexico	Rufina Hernandez-Prewitt	Elsie Samora Sánchez Small Business Consultant
Ariana Aragón, Student	Samia Hindi, Educator	Brittney Sánchez, Student
Jasmín Arciniega, Student	Anjélica Jimenez, Student	Mónica Sánchez, Theater Faculty, Colorado College
Dorothy Atkins	Edna López, Owner Business Properties, Inc.	Petra Sánchez, Retired Educator
Sandra Araceli Bello, Student	Lucía López, Retired	Roxana Sánchez, Student
Valerie J. Borrego, CPA	Rose López, Retired	Dr. Shelle V. Sánchez, Director of Cultural Services, City of Abq.
Rylee Brachle, Student	Karla Barela Lucero, Advance Planning Consultant, FRENCH Funerals	Verónica T. Sánchez Retired UNM Administrator
Charlene Burriss	Dylan Lucero, Student	Dr. Victoria Sánchez, UNM Emerita Associate Professor
Theresa Cárdenas, CEO Noble Renewables Group LLC	Elizabeth Márquez de la Garza Student	Marcela Sandoval Retired Educator
Kamryn Chávez, Student	Nicole Martínez, Student	Mary Frances Santistevan Retired, APS
Patricia Chávez, Owner PLC Enterprises	Helen Metzner	Simone Sena, Student
Sonya K. Chávez, U. S. Marshal U. S. Marshals Service	Paula Metzner	Gina Sisneros, Artist
Gloria Chávez-Sampson	Gloria Mirabal, MANA del Norte	Santana Sisneros, Student
Brenda Elías, Student	Florencia Monge, Student	Dr. Diane Torres-Velásquez Associate Professor, UNM
Bonnie Escobar, Exec. Director Enlace Comunitario	Dr. Cecilia J. Navarrete Retired Educator & Consultant	Yvette Tovar, Chief Development & Marketing Officer, All Faiths Children's Advocacy Center
Judith M. Espinosa, Former NM Cabinet Secretary	Dr. Rosalía Pacheco, Education Program Manager, NHCC	Jasmine Trujillo
Dr. Leila Flores-Dueñas Associate Professor UNM College of Education	Alexis Rael, Business Management Professional, Sandia Laboratories	Kim Trujillo Development/Advancement Director, Heading Home
Dr. Viola E. Flórez Professor Emeritus UNM College of Education	Victoria Rael, Educator, Desert Sage Academy; co-owner, NM General Contracting, Santa Fe	Mary Lou Trujillo, Retired Public Health Administrator
Dr. Merrilee Foreman, Owner Chiropractic Lifestyle Center	Kathryn Ramsey, Assistant Principal Mountain View Elementary, APS	Rachel A. Valenzuela
Margaret Gonzales Senior Operations Manager UNM Graduate Studies	Carmen M. Rodríguez, President Carmen Cares Consulting	María Vielma, Student
Maria E. González, Student	Louella Rodríguez, Retired Educator	Carol Vigil Entertainment Consultant
Tanya Gonzales, Paralegal Law Offices of the Public Defender	Evelyn Rouse, Student	Kristal Vigil, Student
Analissa Gutiérrez, Student	Lucinda Lucero Sachs, Author	Miranda Zamora-Williams
	Dulce Saldívar, Student	
	Dr. Carmen Samora, Lecturer III UNM Chicano Studies Dept.	