



Hispanic Women's Council

Spring/Summer 2022 Newsletter

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Marissa Elías
Immediate Past President
and Secretary

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Vangie Samora
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Lucretia Vigil

MAJ (Ret.) Linda C. Zamora

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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.

Un mensaje de la presidente

Queridas HWC Members,

It has been a wonderful start to another year together! After the challenges of 2020 and 2021, we have eased into a blossoming 2022.

Our Annual Meeting was a successful start to a new year. Held via Zoom, we elected a new Board Member, announced our Estrella Brillante, and got to know each other through introductions, among other things. It was really nice to see those that could attend. Our first in-person event was the well-attended Mitote Power Hour at Salt and Board in UNM's Brickyard District. This was such a joyous event where many of us met for the first time. There was a lovely mix of seasoned and newer members, which offered all of us the opportunity to refresh and remember why we joined HWC in the first place. Next came our newly coined Mujeres Valerosas Event (formerly the Mother/Daughter Event) was a huge success. A coffee tasting, a silent auction, good food, and even better, company - what more could we ask for?! Finally, our most recent event was a moving talk by Dr. Carmen Samora. Working through grief during a pandemic was not easy, but the Samora family did it uniquely. This event was a hybrid, allowing for both in-person and virtual attendees.



As you can see, we've had a very fruitful few months. For our community to restart and flourish like this is a testament of our dedication, tenacity, and the belief in the HWC's mission. I feel incredibly grateful to all of you who share your talents, time, and treasure with our community. Every one of you matters and we are beyond lucky to have you.

Looking ahead, we are very excited for this year's Masquerade Ball. For our much-anticipated return, we will be celebrating at the Hotel Andaluz in Downtown ABQ. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, October 22, 2022. Details will be shared as they are available. For donation and sponsor information, contact Marissa Elias, Raqui Martinez or Linda Zamora (Committee Chairs) by sending an email to web@nmhwc.com. We truly hope to see you all there!

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Finally, I want to thank outgoing president Marissa Elias. The pandemic raged during her year as president, and she kept us connected via creative programming. Read her final message on page 7.

I wish everyone a fun and relaxing summer. I hope to see each of you soon!

Con Cariño,

Nicole Florez

President, Hispanic Women's Council

Kathryn Ramsey Receives *Estrella Brillante* Award



The *Estrella Brillante* Award was created to honor a woman who has given extraordinary service to HWC and has demonstrated excellence, integrity and professionalism. Kathryn Ramsey was recognized for her leadership on the HWC Board of Directors and on the Masquerade Ball Committee. Additionally, she was commended for “leading by example.”

Kathryn has been a member of HWC for several years and has served on the HWC Board of Directors. She began her tenure on the Masquerade Ball Committee since the event began. Her “across the board” work spans from planning and fundraising, to soliciting items for the silent auction and creating table decorations. She focused on the end product, creating beautiful, enjoyable events. She proved to be a resourceful “Jane of all trades.”

When she was elected to the HWC Board, she brought that same focus and tenacity to whatever project we were working on. During our meetings her input, observations and questions were always thought through and you knew that she did her homework. She was quick to “lend a hand” to other Committee Chairs and led the Christmas Party Committee for several years.

Perhaps the best way to lead is by example. Kathryn recently went back to school to garner more credentials in her field and advance her career. She earned an Administrative License, along with a Master's certificate in Educational Leadership from the University of New Mexico. In addition to her Master's degree in Advanced Literacy and Instruction, these new credentials allowed her to move into an administrative position within the Albuquerque Public Schools where she is currently an Assistant Principal at Mountain View Elementary School.

She is the daughter of HWC past president and current member Dr. Vi Florez, former Dean of a college and Interim Provost at UNM, so we see that “the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.”

Welcome New Board Members

Former Scholarship Recipient Joins HWC Board

Lucretia R. Vigil currently serves as the New Mexico (NM) Child Fatality Review Coordinator for the NM Department of Health where she coordinates and facilitates the four statewide NM Child Fatality Review (CFR) Panels. The panels are Child Abuse & Neglect, Youth Suicide, Unintentional Injury and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). Lucretia graduated in the summer of 2019 with a master's in public health (MPH) degree from the University of New Mexico (UNM) Health Sciences Center in the College of Population Health, with a concentration in Health Policy. She is a native New Mexican, and her family has lived in Albuquerque's South Valley for generations. She graduated from Rio Grande High School in the top ten of her class. She earned two Bachelor of Science degrees, in Biology and Psychology; during her undergraduate studies she competed as a 400m sprinter for the Lobos Track and Field Team. Lucretia was a recipient of the HWC scholarship for six years starting in her sophomore year of college. She is the second student to serve on the HWC board (following Marissa Elías).



María Robles Meier recently returned to Albuquerque after a distinguished career in Washington, D.C. She is a leader on diversity and inclusion in the public sector, a life coach, author and speaker. Her multi-faceted experience includes legislative strategy, multicultural marketing, communications, and professional development training. She founded the social enterprise, We Are The People, to promote public service among under-represented voices and to assist organizations build inclusive talent forces. In 2020, she co-authored the first-of-its kind guide for Congressional hiring managers on building and maintaining diverse and inclusive staff.

Previously, María had a career as a leadership staffer in Congress in both the US House and Senate. She is a former Executive Director of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and for over five years led the Senate Democratic Diversity Initiative. At the local government level, she helped develop award-winning public education for multicultural and multilingual audiences. In the private sector, Maria was a principal for a nationally-recognized public affairs firm where she co-founded the Latino outreach practice and started one of the first-of-its-kind blogs on national Latino/a/x policy and politics.

She has spoken to hundreds of others on issues related to diversity, US politics, and public service, and her unique expertise has resulted in invitations to address Members of Parliament in the UK and Germany on the importance of building inclusive talent forces. *National Journal* magazine named Maria to their list of the twenty most powerful staffers on Capitol Hill. She has received recognition for her commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion, and Members of Congress commended her for "outstanding service to community and nation."

Virtual Annual Meeting held January 23, 2022



Once again, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic (Omicron), our meeting was held via Zoom. But this didn't hamper enthusiasm and the "charla" between members. Outgoing president, Marissa Elias, opened the meeting and the first order of business was the election of a new board member, Lucretia Vigil (read about her on page 3). Next was the presentation of the *Estrella Brillante Award* to Kathryn Ramsey (see page 2). The Round Robin provided all attendees an opportunity to introduce themselves. We heard from long-time members and new members and learned something about their life experiences, both professional and personal. Marissa Elias delivered a heartfelt message summarizing her productive year as president in spite of the challenges the pandemic created for our ability to gather. Marissa received numerous accolades from individual members for her leadership and steadfastness. Finally, we heard from our incoming president, Nicole Florez. She is eager to begin her year of service and inspired us with her emphasis on caring for ourselves so we can care for each other. After the conclusion of the meeting, several attendees stayed on Zoom for an informal exchange similar to our "Mitote" Power Hours. We sure miss our in-person gatherings, and hopefully this year will allow us to do just that.

March Mitote Power Hour—in person

Finally, after more than 2 years, we were able to gather in-person for our popular *Mitote* Power Hour. Thanks to Nicole Florez for arranging a place for us to gather and enjoy the company of *comadres*. Some 20 members showed up at Salt and Board, a *charcuterie* based restaurant offering wine and unique craft beer selections in Albuquerque's Brick Light District, 115 Harvard, S.E. Lots of warm, long hugs were shared, and the chatter was non-stop. It was a nice mix of long-timers and newbies and in four cases, mother and daughter attended: Linda Zamora and daughter Miranda; Melissa Rodriguez and daughter Dominique; Vi Florez and daughter Kathryn; Judith Espinosa and daughter Magdalena. Others who attended: Nicole Florez, Raqui Martinez, Vangie Samora, Elsie Sanchez, Maria Meier, Edna Lopez, Merrilee Foreman, Yvette Tovar, Marrisas Elias, Victoria Sanchez, Christina Brigance, Lucretia Vigil.



The Covid Pandemic is still with us, but on the date of this event, March 18, 2022, the infection rates were very low and we were all fully vaccinated.

***Mujeres Valerosas* Event (formerly the Mother-Daughter Event)** **May 1, 2022, Crowne Plaza Hotel**

This popular and well-attended event was especially sweet given that we had not celebrated in two years. Along with a delicious meal and silent auction, we were treated to a coffee tasting by Villa Myriam Coffee and door prizes. Attendees were invited to write a note or speak about the women who have been a “positive force in our lives.” Heartfelt stories were shared about nurturing mothers, grandmothers, sisters, *madrinas*, and teachers. Kudos to the Planning Committee: Christina Brigance, Marissa Elias, Linda Zamora, Melissa Rodriguez & Raqui Martinez. Photos courtesy of Marissa Elias, Linda Lopez, Nicole Florez and Vangie Samora.



Event Committee: Raqui Martinez, Linda Zamora, Christina Brigance, Marissa Elias, Melissa Rodriguez



A special thanks to all who donated to the silent auction:

Russell Brigance
 Nancy Newburg
 Vangie Samora
 Lucia Lopez
 Cheo Torres
 Marissa Elias
 Louella Rodriguez
 Linda Zamora
 Vi Florez
 Raqui Martinez
 Samia Hindi
 Nicole Florez
 Rachel Valenzuela
 Christine Backus
 Villa Myriam Coffee
 Sonya and Loren Vigil,
 owners of Burning Bush



Upcoming Events

Meet & Greet the Scholarship Recipients
September 22, 2022 5:30pm-8:00pm

Masquerade Ball
October 22, 2022

In Memoriam



HWC member **Dr. Linda López McAlister**, philosopher and academic, died in late 2021. A lengthy obit appeared in the New York Times, December 14, 2021, focusing largely on her work in creating Hypatia, an academic journal presenting scholarly writing on feminist topics.

“She held several positions in academia, spending much of her career at the University of South Florida and where she became Professor Emerita of Philosophy in 1999. She has also worked as a radio film critic and has run her own theatrical company. McAlister attended Barnard College and earned a Ph.D. in philosophy from Cornell University. As a Senior Fulbright Researcher at the University of Würzburg, she worked with a colleague to organize the first meeting of female philosophers in Germany. That event led to the establishment of the International Association of Women Philosophers.

Early in her career, she taught at Brooklyn College and San Diego State University. After three years as dean of the USF Fort Myers campus, McAlister was an administrator for the State University System of Florida. From 1987 until her 1999 retirement, she returned to USF, teaching philosophy and women's studies. For her last three years at USF, she was a department chair.”

Linda McAlister hosted *Radio Theatre* for KUNM in Albuquerque since 2004. She founded a theatrical company associated with the National Hispanic Cultural Center known as Camino Real Productions.

Some Final Words from Outgoing President Marissa Elías

My deepest gratitude goes to all you for the unwavering support you have provided to the Hispanic Women's Council throughout the year 2021. As I conclude my term as your Hispanic Women's Council President, my heart is filled with joy and with pride for all our accomplishments this year. Some highlights:

We learned a great deal from Dr. Josie Lopez's virtual talk "The Universal and the Specific in Mexican Modernism" based on the Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera & Mexican Modernism Exhibition she curated at the Albuquerque Museum.

The virtual Mother Daughter Event included a cooking class that allowed attendees to cook a meal together, but in their own kitchens. We also accepted donations to benefit the Barret Foundation, one of many community organizations struggling with meeting the needs of their clients during the pandemic. Thanks to the generosity of our members, HWC raised \$1,525 for the Barrett Foundation. As a token of our appreciation, each donor received a copy of a cookbook, *Recetas y Dichos*, edited by Vangie Samora and comprised of recipes and *dichos* submitted by HWC members.

Dr. Rita Serda presented a virtual talk titled "Science as Art and My Journey Towards Finding a Cure for Cancer" giving us an inspiring overview of her life's journey to become a cancer researcher.

At the virtual Meet & Greet we heard directly from some of the students. A total of 28 scholarships were awarded for the 2021/2022 academic year.

The virtual Masquerade Ball became a Masquerade *Peña* featuring local artists. The event raised over \$18,000 for the scholarship fund!

A Holiday Happy Hour allowed some of us to gather in-person. Everyone was required to be fully vaccinated, and we followed existing Covid-19 protocols. Thanks to the Event Committee for making arrangements to provide all our members with a token of appreciation: each member received a pair of wine glasses etched with the HWC logo.

I want to acknowledge and remind you that each and every one of you have contributed to the legacy that HWC has created and continues to develop. It is because of you that we have created a community where women can connect, grow and inspire one another. For your words of encouragement, your attendance and participation, your donations and generosity, I am deeply grateful.



Con mucho cariño,

Marissa Elías

“Sewing in the Time of Coronavirus” a Talk by Dr. Carmen Samora



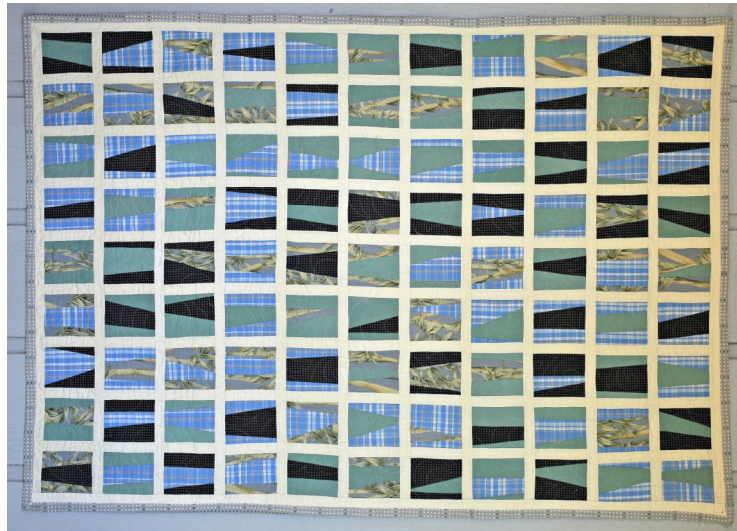
On June 11, 2022 some of us gathered at O’Niell’s Pub in Nob Hill and others attended via Zoom to hear Dr. Carmen Samora’s talk about working through loss and grief during the Coronavirus Pandemic and “emerging 24 months later whole and reasonably intact as a family.”

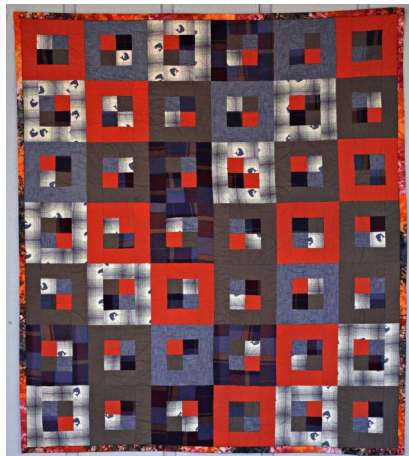
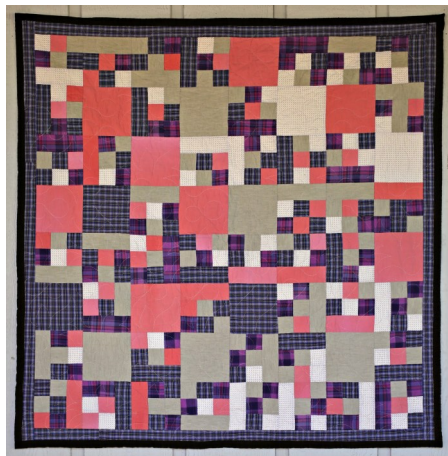
Carmen shared that “her brother, David Samora, died April 8, 2020, at 72 years of age. He would have celebrated his 73rd birthday on May 18, 2020. We celebrated for him. Although he died at the beginning of the pandemic, he did not die of Covid 19. On March 7, 2020, he had his right knee replaced and a month later he was dead from colon cancer that had spread to his brain and three other organs.” Because of the restrictions in place at the time, the family could not gather to celebrate his life for more than a year.

While cleaning out David’s home, Carmen discovered a large inventory of shirts. “One day, I started taking everything out of his closet and then stopped. His shirts were gorgeous. An idea was blooming to cut up the nicest of his shirts and make something out of them for the nieces, the nephew, and the grandson. Quiltmaking is a long-held tradition in our family. I asked my dear friend Roxie Weger to help me make the quilts out of David’s shirts and this is what we made. We began the planning and the cutting that summer of 2020. Roxie cut up all the shirts, taking off all the buttons, cutting squares, triangles, and strips out of the cloth. As we went through David’s linens, I set aside sheets that would work for backing, and before we knew it, we had the makings for the sixteen quilts we made.” The quilts were gifted to siblings, nieces, a nephew, and grandson.

“Last fall we finally gathered for David’s memorial service. We strung clothesline in the trees and hung the quilts up with clothes pins. It was comforting and beautiful to be surrounded by David’s quilts.”

Carmen’s talk included many more touching details about her brother and family traditions that enriched our understanding of her journey. And, in a most generous gesture, she has given us permission to publish images of the exquisite quilts.





2022 HWC Membership

Clara Apodaca, Former First Lady of New Mexico	Rufina Hernandez-Prewitt	Elsie Samora Sánchez Small Business Consultant
Dorothy Atkins	Samia Hindi, Educator	Mónica Sánchez, Theater Faculty, Colorado College
Valerie J. Borrego, CPA	Edna López, Pres. & CEO COMPA Industries, Inc.	Petra Sánchez Retired Educator
Theresa Cárdenas, Strategic Civic Engagement & Policy Manager, New Mexico First	Lucía López, Retired	Dr. Shelle V. Sánchez, Director of Cultural Services, City of Abq.
Patricia Chávez, Consultant	Rose López, Retired	Verónica T. Sánchez Retired UNM Administrator
Sonya K. Chávez, U. S. Marshal U. S. Marshals Service	Karla Barela Lucero, Advance Planning Consultant, FRENCH Funerals	Dr. Victoria Sánchez, UNM Emerita Associate Professor
Gloria Chávez-Sampson	Elizabeth Márquez de la Garza Student, HWC Scholarship Recipient	Marcela Sandoval Retired Educator
Bonnie Escobar	Helen Metzner	Mary Frances Santistevan Retired, APS
Judith M. Espinosa, Former NM Cabinet Secretary	Gloria Mirabal MANA del Norte	Simone Sena, Student HWC Scholarship Recipient
Dr. Leila Flores-Dueñas Associate Professor UNM College of Education	Dr. Cecilia Navarrete Retired Educator & Consultant	Gina Sisneros
Dr. Viola E. Flórez Professor Emeritus UNM College of Education	Alexis Rael, Business Management Professional, Sandia Laboratories	Dr. Diane Torres-Velásquez Associate Professor, UNM
Dr. Merrilee Foreman, Owner Chiropractic Lifestyle Center	Victoria Rael, Educator, Desert Sage Academy; co-owner, NM General Contracting, Santa Fe	Yvette Tovar, Chief Development & Marketing Officer, All Faiths Children's Advocacy Center
Margaret Gonzales Senior Operations Manager UNM Graduate Studies	Kathryn Ramsey, Assistant Principal Mountain View Elementary, APS	Jasmine Trujillo
Maria E. González, Student HWC Scholarship Recipient	Carmen M. Rodríguez, President Carmen Cares Consulting	Kim Trujillo, Costume Designer New Mexico Film
Tanya Gonzales, Paralegal Law Offices of the Public Defender	Louella Rodríguez Retired Educator	Mary Lou Trujillo, Retired Public Health Administrator
Analissa Gutiérrez, Student HWC Scholarship Recipient	Lucinda Lucero Sachs, Author	Rachel A. Valenzuela
	Dr. Carmen Samora, Lecturer III UNM Chicano Studies Dept.	Carol Vigil Entertainment Consultant
		Miranda Zamora-Williams