



## **New Mexico IDEA, the Statewide Association of Economic Developers, Announces 2015 Award Winners at Annual Meeting in Las Cruces Today.**



Top L-R: Steve Vierck, Davin Lopez, Therese Varela, Sean Ormand, Carol Radosevich, Eric CdeBaca. Bottom L-R: Sara Haring, J.P. Jones, Mike Espiritu

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Las Cruces, New Mexico, November 13, 2015 - New Mexico IDEA presented awards to individuals recognized for stellar achievements in economic development at their annual meeting in Las Cruces today.

The awards are intended to recognize professional economic developers as well as volunteer leaders and public servants. Most awards are given for significant contributions and achievements made over the past year, while two are focused on those who have made significant contributions over many years to New Mexico's economic development.

Linda McArthur, Special Events Coordinator with the Small Business Development

Center at Western New Mexico University, is the Linda Kay Jones New Mexico First Award winner, which recognizes an individual whose career has exemplified a statewide impact on economic development. Her nominator said of Linda, "McArthur worked side by side with the New Mexico Economic Development Basic Course Director, Linda Kay Jones, to make sure that the course was a success every year. Her efforts have had a statewide impact helping us grow a professional and proficient talent base of economic developers. Over 700 graduates of the course will attest that the course would not have happened without Linda McArthur's hard work. She worked diligently to maintain the high standards and blueprint for the course established by the founder and namesake of the award, Linda Kay Jones."

Mike Espiritu, President and CEO of the Otero County Economic Development Council and Alamogordo Chamber of Commerce, was recognized with the Dallan Sanders Award in recognition of his dedication and achievements in rural New Mexico. Mike is a past president of NMIDEA and is a board member of the New Mexico Partnership and the Rural Economic Council. According to his nominators, "Mike has been indefatigable over the years in his efforts to advance the interests of not only Otero County but rural New Mexico as a whole. He exemplifies motivation, dedication, trustworthiness, talent and commitment."

The Developer of the Year Award went to Davin Lopez, President and CEO of the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance, for outstanding results achieved in new and expanded companies over the past year. According to nominations, "Davin and MVEDA worked with a group of completed projects over the past year that is the most impressive of any region in the state. A sample list includes CN Wire (Turkish wire manufacturer), ARCA Space (unmanned vehicles), Franco Whole Foods (food processing), and MCS (manufacturer and distributor). He is collaborative and inclusive in engaging those organization's that can help develop and close projects. He then shares credit among all the players engaged."

Sean Ormand, President of First New Mexico Bank of Silver City and Vice Chair of the New Mexico Partnership, was selected as Volunteer of the Year. Sean has served as Acting Chair of the Partnership for six years and brought steady, positive leadership to the organization. His nomination said of him, "Sean's leadership has been instrumental to the Partnership's rejuvenation. He is the very embodiment of what the "Volunteer of the Year" award hopes to recognize. He has worked hard and effectively and consistently conveyed positivism to all of us. Sean has gone well above and beyond what would be expected of an excellent volunteer leader while at the same time maintaining a low profile and directing the credit to others."

Eric CdeBaca, the New Mexico Partnership's Vice President of Business Development, was recognized with the Ethics Award for his commitment to ethical behavior in the economic development profession. According to one nomination, "Eric is a fine and excellent example of ethics; both personally and in our profession of economic development. He exemplifies the characteristics of patience, virtue, honesty and integrity without fail, every time, every day."

The Ben Lujan Public Servant of the Year award was received by Sara Haring, Director of the Job Training Incentive Program at the New Mexico Economic Development Department. Haring was recognized for her exceptional work in assisting the training needs of new and expanding companies in every corner of the state. As one nominator wrote, "this person embodies the spirit of public service, and she does it with true professionalism, unbiased judgment and a strong desire to help the people of New Mexico".

In addition to the six annual awards, Carol Radosevich of PNM was recognized with Honorary Member status by the NMIDEA for her long term leadership of the organization's advocacy efforts on behalf of economic development legislation. Radosevich is only the third member in the organization's history to be so

recognized.

This year's awards selections were made by an eight-member awards committee, and were presented by NMIDEA President Therese Varela and Awards Committee Chair Steve Vierck at a luncheon at the Hotel Encanto.

NMIDEA promotes New Mexico's economic growth through focused advocacy of economic development issues, providing networking, professional development, education, and training opportunities for its members. For more information, contact Therese Varela at (505) 827-0323.

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