



New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association

NEWSLETTER • FALL 2013

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2013 NMHBA-Sponsored "Law Camp" had Unprecedented Student Diversity and Community Collaboration

Twenty-four middle school students from across New Mexico spent part of their summer learning about the law and participating in a mock trial at the 2013 Summer Law Camp. While at law camp, the students got a taste of college life by staying at the University of New Mexico dorms. They also visited Metropolitan Court, Children's Court, the Court of Appeals and the University of New Mexico School of Law. The week culminated with a mock trial before a sitting judge at the Second Judicial District Court.

This year saw one of the most geographically and ethnically diverse law camps ever. Nine students were from Central New Mexico, eight students came from Northern New Mexico and seven students traveled from Southern New Mexico for the camp. The largest portion of students who attended the camp were Hispanic. Twenty



percent were Native American. Eight percent were black, and four percent were white.

The NMHBA, the University of New Mexico and ENLACE sponsor the camp. This year, the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division, the New Mexico Black Lawyers Association and the New Mexico Indian Bar Association also contributed to the program. The camp is provided at no cost to the students.

Special thanks to the Honorable Ben Chavez and the Honorable Briana Zamora for presiding over the mock trials. Also, thank you to Tina Cruz, Antonia Roybal-Mack and Dar-

ren Cordova for serving as instructors, and to Brian Colón for his generous fundraising efforts on behalf of Law Camp.



Above and Left: Law Campers enjoy a tour and presentations at an Albuquerque Law Firm

NMHBA Statewide Outreach — LAS VEGAS, NM

The NMHBA hosted a Northeastern New Mexico, spring membership event in Las Vegas on April 26, 2013. The Gene Torres Golf Course at New Mexico Highlands University set the backdrop for the thirty-person plus gathering of attorneys and students.

Attorney Michael Aragon of the Aragon Law Office in Las Vegas graciously co-sponsored the event. It provided an opportunity to bring networking and community building to NMHBA attorneys and the Hispanic community in Northeastern New Mexico.

NMHBA member and Las Vegas native, Robert Lucero – an attorney in the business department at the Rodey Law Firm, coordinated the event on behalf of the NMHBA. “Being from Las Vegas, it meant a lot to me to come back home and help bring together legal practitioners from northeastern New Mexico to engage with the NMHBA and its statewide mission,” said Lucero.

The NMHBA is planning several other statewide membership events over the coming months, including in Las Cruces and Taos.



Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Events & Activities!

- **Friday, December 6th:** *14th Annual NMHBA Holiday Fundraiser & Reverse Raffle, Hyatt Regency of Albuquerque*
- **Friday, October 25th:** *Las Cruces Membership Event & CLE—More details soon!*
- **Friday, September 27th:** *MALSA's National Latino Law Student welcoming dinner and reception—contact: Consuelo Gonzales, gonzalco@law.unm.edu*
- **Friday, September 20th:** *Last day to Sign Up to Mentor a Law Student through the NMHBA Mentorship Program—contact: Jorge Alvarado, jorgea@nmlegalaid.org*
- **Thurs., September 19th:** *MALSA 1L Reception, UNM School of Law—contact: Consuelo Gonzales, gonzalco@law.unm.edu*

Bar Scholarships

Alex Flores and Britt Marie Baca-Miller were awarded NMHBA bar scholarships in the Spring. Scholarship awards were made based on community involvement, academic achievement and financial need.

Britt was selected for the Eddie Benavidez award. The award recognizes an individual who has served as a positive role model or mentor in the community, has an interest in working in an area of law that advocates for the underprivileged or underrepresented community, has a desire for change or social movement that broadens opportunities for Hispanics in New Mexico, and has actively participated in an organization with a mission that furthers the achievements and/or opportunities of minorities. Eddie Benavidez' sons, Mario and Javier Benavidez, presented the award to Britt.

Congratulations to Alex and Britt on their recent success on the New Mexico Bar Exam!



Scholarship recipients with members of the Scholarship Committee, left to Right: Carlos Pacheco, Javier Benavidez, Robert Sanchez, Alex Flores, Sarah Gallegos, Britt Marie Baca-Miller, Denise Chanez, Elaine Lujan, Mario Benavidez

Pro-Bono Civil Legal Services in Crisis

At a time when the need for legal services for low-income New Mexicans is at its greatest ever, the groups that provide legal services are grappling with devastating funding cuts. Legal services providers help some of the most vulnerable people in our state, many of whom are Hispanic, with foreclosure and housing rights issues, employment issues, domestic violence cases, and family law matters -- just to name a few. The direct effect of the funding reductions for civil legal services providers means that those who need help the most will have a more difficult time getting it. Even before the most recent funding cuts, the need for civil legal services far outweighed the amount of state and federal funding that the providers received.

Without adequate funding, people like "Joe," who suffered a traumatic brain injury in a work-related accident and faced the possibility of having his disability benefits garnished through a false claim for child support, won't have access to the help they need. In Joe's case, he turned to New Mexico Legal Aid. Through its Volun-

teer Attorney Pool, NMLA helped Joe find a private lawyer who took the case pro bono and proved that Joe was not the father. "Joe" is just one example, but nearly forty percent of New Mexicans have incomes low enough to qualify for free legal services through New Mexico Legal Aid.

As members of the State Bar of New Mexico and the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association, there are ways you can help address the critical legal needs of low-income New Mexicans. One way is through New Mexico Legal Aid's Volunteer Attorney Program, which offers a wide range of pro bono opportunities throughout the state. In addition to handling individual cases such as Joe's, pro bono attorneys assist clients through legal clinics and legal fairs, as well as a hotline for victims of domestic violence, sexual assaults or stalking. To volunteer, please contact Erin Olson, Director of the Volunteer Attorney Program, at (505) 797-6077 or email her at erin@nmlegalaid.org. NMLA can provide you with training in the areas of greatest need no matter what your

specialty may be.

Another way to help is by getting involved in efforts to address the funding shortage. The State Bar of New Mexico's Young Lawyers Division is hosting a strategy meeting on September 16, 2013 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the State Bar Center. The meeting will be a brainstorming session for ideas to address funding cuts for civil legal services providers. NMHBA board members will be at the meeting to help brainstorm ideas for addressing the funding cuts.

The staff of civil legal services providers like New Mexico Legal Aid cannot meet the needs of New Mexicans on their own. Please get involved. Together we can make a difference.

~Ed Marks, Executive Director

~Jorge A. Alvarado, Managing Attorney
NM Hispanic Bar Association Board Member

NMHBA CLE

I.C.E. Bonds & I.C.E. Holds



In May, the NMHBA hosted a luncheon and CLE in Albuquerque focusing on immigration law. Over thirty people attended ranging from practicing immigration lawyers to a federal magistrate, to hear a presentation on "I.C.E. Holds & I.C.E. Bonds." NMHBA member and Immigration Attorney, Christina Rosado, moderated. Presenters included Jose Quiroz, Assistant Field Director for Immigration and Customs Enforcement in New Mexico and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers Azucena Sanchez and Rachel Daniels.

Panelists described in detail the considerations and process applied when considering whether to hold or set bond for persons detained on suspicion of immigration violations. The presentation provided practitioners with an overview of Immigration and Customs Enforcement holds, and how to request and receive an immigration bond. It also provided an inside glimpse of the I.C.E. process and procedure employed by I.C.E. officers, which in turn helps inform client representation.

The NMHBA was able to provide this opportunity at a low cost to its members thanks in part to *Tony Madrid Bail Bonds* in Albuquerque, who graciously sponsored the lunch portion of the event. "These types of CLE's provide an opportunity for NMHBA members to enjoy the benefits of their membership by providing affordable and meaningful legal education on important issues within our community," said NMHBA Board Member and Immigration Attorney, Iris Calderón. The NMHBA is exploring future opportunities to provide high quality, low cost CLE's to its members.



*Above 1: Jose Quiroz presents to the crowd
Above 2: Attendees enjoy lunch and the presentation*

Congratulations!

- **Margaret E. Montoya**, UNM Professor of Law Emerita was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Hispanic National Bar Foundation
- The **Mexican American Law Student Association (MALSA)** at UNM was awarded the American Bar Association's National Achievement Award for Diversity
- **Judge Jimmie Reyna** received the Hispanic National Bar Association's Latino Judge of the Year Award
- **Christina Vigil** was honored as a "Top Lawyer Under Forty" by the Hispanic National Bar Association
- **Antonia Roybal-Mack** was awarded an ABA Law Practice Division Fellowship for the Class of 2013-2014.

If you know of an NMHBA member deserving of recognition in future newsletters please submit the information to the NMHBA Secretary, Elaine Lujan, at nmhispanicbar@gmail.com

NMHBA Legal Professional Division is Set to Launch

On September 12, the NMHBA, with the generous sponsorship of UNM Continuing Education, held the inaugural meeting and reception of the new Legal Professionals Division. The event was attended by several legal professionals, students, and NMHBA Members. A number of attendees expressed interest in helping to move the Division forward, and establish a formal leadership. While this first meeting was a success, the Division will need the help of all NMHBA members to get the word out to all the legal secretaries, paralegals, and other legal professionals to take advantage of this amazing opportunity. Please contact Stefan Chacon at schacon@silvalaw-firm.com for more information, and keep your eye out for the next event, coming soon!

NMHBA President's Message



Dear NMHBA Members,

These past few months have been busy ones for the NMHBA. From our highly successful member lunch and immigration CLE, to our equally successful Northern New Mexico meet and greet, the NMHBA has been working hard to increase services for its members around the state. At the same time, the NMHBA has remained focused on its educational initiatives, awarding bar scholarships to deserving law students and hosting the University of New Mexico/NMHBA/ENLACE Law Camp for seventh and eighth grade students from across New Mexico. I hope you will enjoy reading about the NMHBA's accomplishments in more detail in this Fall Newsletter. I would also like to take this opportunity to let you know about a few important events, including our recent elections and retreat.

Each summer, the NMHBA elects twelve of its twenty-four volunteer board members. Following this year's election, we welcomed back two former board members and four new board members. The NMHBA is fortunate to have its remaining eighteen board members continuing to serve in their respective positions.

Welcoming new board members means that we must say goodbye to those who served before them. I would like to thank Steve Almanza, Vidalia Chavez-Gruber, Yolanda Gallegos, Rebecca Kitson, and Daniel Sanchez for their dedicated service. I would especially like to recognize Donna Trujillo-Dodd. For years, Donna has been the one constant on the NMHBA board. Thank you, Donna, for your leadership.

This year, a new executive committee is leading the NMHBA's board of directors. Jessica Terrazas and Stefan Chacon are serving as at-large members of the executive committee. Damian Lara returns for a third term as treasurer. Elaine Lujan is serving as secretary. Sarah Gallegos is the NMHBA's new vice president. And, I am honored to serve as the NMHBA's president this year.

I have big shoes to fill as president. Chris Melendrez, our immediate past president, stepped up to lead the NMHBA during his first year on the board. He led the board during a transitional year when nearly half of the board members were also serving their first terms. Thanks to Chris' leadership, the NMHBA did not miss a step. Luckily, Chris has agreed to continue serving on the NMHBA's executive committee as our immediate past president.



The 2013-2014 Board of Directors Pose at the Annual Retreat

I am convinced that the impressive group of lawyers on the board this year will take the NMHBA to new heights. Of course, we have to know what the "new heights" are so that we can also figure out how to get there. So, the board devoted its annual retreat to establishing the NMHBA's short-term and long-term goals. It was a collaborative and productive retreat that resulted in the board's commitment to the following long-term goals:

- 1) Increasing member services and recruitment efforts (with a special focus on re-engaging veteran members and increasing statewide membership);
- 2) Increasing and improving pipeline educational initiatives;
- 3) Finalizing the NMHBA's Foundation entity and establishing the NMHBA's financial stability and sustainability;
- 4) Expanding the NMHBA's advocacy efforts.

The board spent much of the day brainstorming some exciting ideas for how to achieve these goals, and our committees are already hard at work to implement them. But, we cannot do it without the strong support of our-

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New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association

2013—2014 Officers/ Directors

Denise Chanez—President
Sarah Gallegos—Vice President
Elaine Lujan—Secretary
Damian Lara—Treasurer
**Chris Melendrez—Immediate Past
President**
Jessica Terrazas—At Large
Stefan Chacon—At Large

2013—2014 Directors

Jorge Alvarado
Rebecca Avitia
Iris Calderon
Darren Cordova
Monnica Garcia
E. Aimee Gonzalez
Robert Lara
Chris Lucero
Javier Martinez
**Devon Moody (MALSA
Representative)**
Carlos Pacheco
Marcos Perales-Piña
Carolina Martin Ramos
Antonia Roybal-Mack
Robert Sanchez
Alicia Santos
Marco Serna
Charles J. Vigil

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membership. I encourage you to join one of the NMHBA's committees: Advocacy, Budget, Policies and Compliance, Education and Mentorship, Fundraising, and Membership. You can find more information about our committees on our blog at nmhba.blogspot.com. Please consider getting involved and making a difference in the NMHBA.

I believe that the NMHBA continues to play an important role in our legal community, as well as our broader community. It is not enough to have diversity in our community – it's what we do with it that matters. The NMHBA exists to ensure meaningful diversity. A diversity that comes not just from a critical mass of diverse lawyers, but from a critical mass of *truly outstanding* diverse lawyers. A diversity that comes from Hispanic law students believing that no door is closed to them – whether that door leads to being managing partner at a large law firm or serving the people of New Mexico as a public defender. The NMHBA is a resource for its attorney, law student and, soon, its legal professional members to help them succeed in their legal careers. And, it is a resource for the community as a whole when it comes to advocating for issues that concern diversity, access to justice and equal rights for all. I hope you'll join us this year as we work to make the NMHBA an even greater resource for its members and our community.

As NMHBA members, your input, ideas and feedback are truly appreciated. If you think the NMHBA can be doing something more for you, or if you have thoughts on how we can do something better, please let me know. You can reach me at work at (505) 765-5900 or by email at denisechanez@gmail.com.

Thank you for being a member of the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association. We appreciate your membership, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our events in the near future.

Best wishes,
Denise M. Chanez, NMHBA President