



PRESS RELEASE

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Supreme Court Justice and PB&J Founder Honored with Awards

ALBUQUERQUE, NM— New Mexico Supreme Court **Justice Petra Jimenez-Maes**, and children's advocate and founder of the Peanut Butter and Jelly therapeutic preschool, **Angie Vachio**, were both honored last night at New Mexico Voices for Children's Spirit of Hope Celebration. Ms. Vachio was chosen to receive the Patty Jennings Citizen Advocacy Award and Justice Jimenez-Maes received the First Annual Alice King Public Service Award. This is the first year these two awards have been presented.

Four youths – two winners and two honorees -- were also presented with the 16th Annual Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award at the event. The two winners were **Alejandra Carmona** of Albuquerque (13-18 age group) and **Fionna Walters** of Mexican Springs (19-26 age group).

New Mexico Attorney General Gary King was on hand to give out the award honoring his late mother. Members of Patty Jennings' family were also in attendance, although her husband, Senate President Pro Tempore Tim Jennings, was unable to make it due to the special session, which did not adjourn until late that night. Amy Biehl's mother, Linda, was also unable to attend, although she has been present at Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award ceremonies in the past.

In addition to the winners, four finalists were also honored. Second Judicial Court Judge Maria Monica Zamora and Director of the State Office of African American Affairs, Dr. Harold Bailey, were finalists for the Alice King Public Service Award. Youth advocate and co-founder of the KUNM Youth Radio Project, Roberta Rael, and early childhood advocate and co-founder of the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children, Lenore Wolfe, were finalists for the Patty Jennings Citizen Advocacy Award.

Alex Wirth of Santa Fe (13-18 age group) and **Arielle Hawney** of Sapello (19-26 age group) were the two second place honorees for the Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Award. All 19 of the youths who were nominated for the Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards were honored last night with a pre-celebration VIP reception.

Please contact Sharon Kayne (505-401-8709) if you would like to interview any of last night's winners.

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New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities.

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