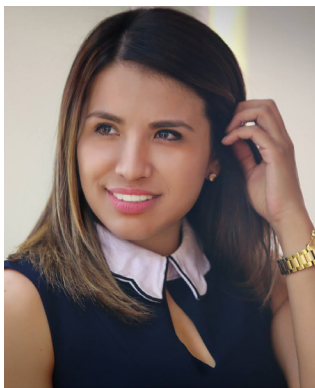


2018 Award Winners



Awards Emcee



Cindy Nava | Executive Director, Learning Alliance New Mexico

Cindy left Chihuahua, Mexico, at the age of 7 with her parents and siblings and was raised in Santa Fe. She is proud to call herself “a Mexican-New Mexican” and to serve the state she loves so much. Cindy managed to surpass many barriers to take on key positions in education and immigration policy work at the state and national levels – being the first undocumented student to do so. She is a national motivational speaker and has been rated as one of the “40 under 40s: Latinos in U.S. politics” by the Huffington Post. Cindy has worked as an education analyst for the state House of Representatives and research assistant at the Educational Policy Research Center of UNM. She is President of the American Mexican Association of Young Immigrants (AMAYI) and is a 2017-18 national fellow at the Latino Center for Leadership Development. Cindy is completing her Masters in Education Leadership and Policy.

Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards

Honors young people in New Mexico who have stepped up to bring positive change to their communities and/or the world at large through community service.



Jonathan Alonzo | 1st Place, 13-18 age group

Jonathan’s activism career began in 2014 at the age of 11 when he found a passion for social justice. In 2016, he stood on the front lines with the Water Protectors at Standing Rock. With his Native American and Chicano roots, Jonathan has always understood the importance of social movements and the role they play for his people. Interning at Generation Justice as a youth producer has opened new opportunities for him working with various activists, journalists, and artists on community and national levels. He worked with SouthWest Organizing Project’s (SWOP) Youth Group and helped organize the 2018 Albuquerque Women’s March and March for Our Lives Albuquerque.

“Although I may be young, if all of this has taught me one thing, it would be to never stand silent while others make decisions that will impact your life.”

Amy Biehl Youth Spirit Awards



Yahaira Carreras Cubillas | 2nd Place, 13-18 age group

Yahaira is attending CNM and plans to eventually earn a law degree. She was 2-years old when she moved to Arizona where she experienced racism in school at an early age. Coming to New Mexico was a welcome change, as her native language was spoken here and people were not so different from herself. Yahaira has worked with Young Women United and learned about reproductive health resources for all people, LBGTO awareness and advocacy, and has done research and media creation on police reports and substance charges. She joined the SouthWest Organizing Project's *Con Mujeres* group and learned about Dineh/Choctaw healing ways from indigenous elders. She was a lead organizer for the 2018 Albuquerque Women's March and presented at the 2017 World March of Women (WMW) in Philadelphia.

"If awarded, I would use it as a platform to show others what is possible with dedication and being involved in our community. My heart pushes me to help others, keep cultural legacies alive, and to co-create a better community."



Hope Alvarado | 1st Place, 19-26 age group

Hope is a proud indigenous gender-queer femme from the Dine, Mescalero Apache, and Comanche Nations. She is a senior and double major at UNM in Intercultural Communication and Native American Studies with a minor in Peace Studies. She experienced homelessness for several years, and is a survivor of sexual and domestic violence and attempted sex trafficking. These experiences have empowered her to create critical consciousness for her communities. Hope is involved as a youth leader at New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks (NMCAN). She uses her lived experiences to create and lead change in child welfare and incarceration systems through policy advocacy. In 2018, Hope advocated for the Foster Youth Employment Tax Credit Law. She traveled with the NM Dream Team to Washington, DC, to be involved with the Clean Dream Act in December of 2017. Hope's goal is to be actively engaged with community initiatives, to create change, and to be in solidarity with marginalized communities and their struggles.

"Young people such as myself and many of my colleagues are creating a community where our children and children's children will continue our legacy of resistance."



Ingrid Karina Ordóñez | 2nd Place, 19-26 age group

Ingrid is originally from Namiquipa, Chihuahua, Mexico, and graduated from CNM. She came to the U.S. when she was 11-years old. Life changed in a blink of an eye for Ingrid while fearing for her family's lives, not knowing the language in the U.S., and surviving her family's economic struggles. Despite this, she attended South Valley Academy high school and became involved with social justice projects. She linked up with classmates and created the *Feria de Informacion Para la Comunidad Inmigrante*, which dealt with labor rights issues, medical and education access, and emergency deportation plans for undocumented community members. When she got older, she and her brother were abandoned by their parents, but Ingrid was able to get legal guardianship of him. She took care of and raised her brother and both were able to get permanent resident status.

"I am pursuing a degree in Education at NM Highlands University now, and I want to make a change in student's lives. In spite of everything that has happened in my life, I am aware that with all of those struggles, I would not be where I am now, and I would not be the person I am. I am grateful for all I've been through."

Patty Jennings & Polly Arango Citizen Advocacy Award

Honors a New Mexican not in elected or in public life with a proven record of exceptional advocacy, community, and civic engagement, who demonstrates outstanding civic and charitable responsibility.



Searchlight New Mexico | Non-partisan, nonprofit news organization

Searchlight is dedicated to investigative reporting and innovative data journalism. In a landscape of shrinking media resources, their mission is to focus high-impact investigative journalism on topics of local, regional, and national interest in order to allow the public to see into the remote recesses of government and institutional intrigue and to expose abuses of power by government, business, and other institutions. They believe great reporting empowers people to demand honest, effective public policy and to seek appropriate remedies. Searchlight is being honored for its work specifically done in their year-long series *Raising New Mexico* – covering in-depth the challenges children and families face in this state. They are determined to shine a light on these grim truths and, in so doing, promote meaningful change. Searchlight is an organization composed of veteran journalists – reporters, photographers, videographers and editors – who will spend the next year covering a single subject: child well-being.

Spirit of Hope Direct Service Award

Honors New Mexico's hard-working supporters of programs and services that engage and touch children, making a difference in their lives. Their work has had both subtle and profound impacts, creating a cumulative effect.



Roberta Rael | Founder & Director, Generation Justice

Roberta has devoted 23 years to empowering youth, building racial and gender equity, and organizing – all while igniting a passion for journalism and media justice in New Mexico. The program she founded and still leads, Generation Justice (GJ), is a multi-racial, multi-cultural project training youth to harness the power of media and give rise to narratives based on truth, analysis, and hope. GJ's mission is to inspire youth to become media makers committed to social transformation. In New Mexico, GJ has been recognized as the premier youth media group and has been the recipient of numerous local and national awards. Roberta has also been recognized locally and nationally for her leadership.

Alice King Public Service Award

Honors a public leader who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to and service for New Mexico's children and families.



Susan Thom Loubet | Host of "Women's Focus," KUNM

Aside from her radio show on KUNM, Susan is the Executive Director of the New Mexico Women's Agenda. She has a long history of fighting for the rights of women in New Mexico. Susan was one of the founders of NM Women's Foundation and Emerge New Mexico, and is chair of planning and launching for the YWCA Women on the Move Awards for New Mexico. She formerly taught French in high school, was an assistant to Gloria Steinem at *Ms.* magazine in New York City, an advisory board member for *New Mexico Woman Magazine*, and President of the National Women's Political Caucus in New Mexico.

Legislative Advocacy Award

Recognizes those who serve as citizen legislators in our state Senate and House of Representatives and have demonstrated great advocacy on behalf of New Mexico's children and vulnerable families.



Jerry Ortiz y Pino | New Mexico Senator, District 12

First elected in 2004, Jerry Ortiz y Pino is a 14-year Democratic member of the New Mexico state Senate. He earned a BA in Latin American Studies from UNM and an MSW from Tulane University. He retired after a 40-year career in social work, all of it in New Mexico in both public and private agency settings. He also served as NM Voices' Executive Director from 1995 to 1997. In the Senate he chairs the Public Affairs Committee, which deals with social service, health, and mental health issues. During the interim he is Vice Chair of the Health and Human Services committee. His legislative record has been centered on health care and behavioral health concerns. Possibly his most far-reaching work was sponsorship of the state Working Families Tax Credit, which annually puts millions of dollars back into the hands of lower-income working New Mexicans.