

Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce names “Citizen of Year”

The Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 27th Annual Awards Gala on February 21st. The theme for the 2020 Awards Gala was “Where Heritage meets Innovation”.

The LCHCC Gala gave out numerous awards to business, organizations and individuals who have all made a difference in people’s lives of this community. One of the biggest highlights of the evening was the announcement of the individual who was selected as the “Citizen of the Year”. In 2019 the award was given to the late Mark Medoff. In Marks memory, his wife Stephanie Medoff presented the 2020 award.

Abel Covarrubias, founder of Aprendamos was proudly named the LCHCC 2020 “Citizen of the Year”.

Abel Covarrubias is one of nine children born to Jose and Antonia Covarrubias. Through the Bracero Program, Jose and Antonia left Mexico and settled in Arrey, New Mexico. Jose and Antonia eventually founded Covarrubias Farm



Abel Covarrubias proudly displays his Citizen of the Year award as Miriam Alcala, Jeffrey Silva, Rick Supple, Richard Aguilar, US Congresswoman Xochitl Torres-Small, Stephanie Medoff, Gloria Vaquera, Belia Alvarez and Rosa Banuelos joins him for a photo. (Gala photos by Dee Bernal – Prophecy Studio)

that is still family owned and operated today. Growing up on the farm taught Abel how to work hard and be compassionate. As a child he would often run into farm labors that were making the long journey from Mexico to the United State and his mother would drop all she was doing to make them burritos and get them some water. His father would let them know that he didn’t have work for them, but they could stay the night and have somewhere warm and safe to sleep. It is these early experiences and lessons of

compassion that have lead Abel down his own path.

Abel graduated from New Mexico State University with degrees in Special Education Communication Disorders. As a Speech Language Pathologist, Abel began working for Direct Therapy Services, as a therapist to adults who have a disability. He quickly learned that his clients who had early childhood interventions exhibited more skills. So with the support of the shareholders, Abel founded Aprendamos. Under Abel’s leadership as Chief Executive Officer,

Aprendamos has grown over the last 14 years to 215 passionate team members. Aprendamos

family of services includes Aprendamos Early Intervention, Esperanza Children’s Therapy Clinic, Mariposa Autism Service Center, Alegria Family Counseling Clinic, Cariño Home Visiting Program, and Conscious Fathering Program of Southern New Mexico. Through Abel’s vision, thousands of children and families in our community have benefited from the services offered by Aprendamos.

Abel is actively involved in various boards, including Hearts for Autism, Board of Director of the Las Cruces Catholic School, Health Advisory Council, US Bank Community Advisory Board and the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico along with the National Board of ZERO TO THREE. He is a Paul Harris Fellow/Rotary Foundation of Rotary International and received the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico Salud Award for his significant and outstanding commitment to improve healthcare in

Southern New Mexico. He was also awarded the 2017 Outstanding Healthcare Professional by the Hispanic Heritage Awards. Aprendamos Intervention Team also received the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce 2017 Large Business of the Year Award and the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 2013 Business of the Year award under his leadership. Abel has completed the Leaders Across Borders Advanced Leadership Program through the U.S./Mexico Border Health Commission under the Obama Administration, and completed the ZERO TO THREE Fellowship Program, a prestigious fellowship that engages, enriches, and inspires leaders who are dedicated to advancing the health, development, and well-being of infants and toddlers.

Abel is passionate about philanthropy and has completed mission trips to Ecuador and Nicaragua. Abel enjoys running half marathons and spending time with his wife, Monica and three amazing daughters Alexa, Avery and Nyla.

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OUR ROCKET MAN

Michael P. Moses is the President of Virgin Galactic, a publically-traded human spaceflight company that was formed by the vision of Sir Richard Branson with a goal to open up access to spaceflight experiences for everyone.

Mike is responsible for overseeing the commercial suborbital spaceflight program for Virgin Galactic. He leads the team in all aspects of safe and successful spaceline operations, including program development, vehicle readiness, astronaut training, flight crew, and mission operations.

Mike came to Virgin Galactic in 2011 follow-

ing a distinguished career with NASA's Space Shuttle Program. Mike started his NASA career at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas where he was a Space Shuttle flight controller in both the Propulsion and Electrical Systems groups. In 2005 he was selected as a Flight Director, joining an elite group of people who lead the team in mission control in the planning, training and execution of Space Shuttle missions. In 2008 and until the end of the Shuttle Program in 2011, Mike served at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida as the Launch Integration Manager, where he led all



Mike Moses, President and CEO of Virgin Galactic delivers a fantastic message as the LCHCC Keynote speaker. On stage with Mike is the official space suit for Sir Richard Branson. This suit will be worn by Sir Richard on his first suborbital space flight.

space shuttle processing activities that readied the vehicles for flight. In this role, Mike was the chair of

the Mission Management Team, where he provided ultimate shuttle launch decision authority for the final 12 Space Shuttle missions.

Mike attended Purdue University, earning a bachelor's degree in physics and a master's degree in aerospace engineering. He also earned a master's degree in astrophysics from Florida Institute of Technology. Mike's service to NASA was recognized on two separate occasions by receiving the NASA Outstanding Leader-

ship Medal.

Mike has recently relocated his family, along with many other Virgin Galactic employees to Las Cruces, New Mexico in anticipation of the start of commercial spaceflight operations.

"The Las Cruces Community is proud to have Mike and his family as a resident of our city. We now have our own Rocket Man" said Curtis Rosemond, President of the LCHCC.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Congratulations to the 2020 Gala Award Recipients

Every so often we have to refresh our minds of what our goal is here at your Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Our goal is to provide business programs and services that will expand and mature investments, job opportunities, education, community service, wellness and economic growth in Las Cruces. These are our goals and is what we strive to provide for you every day. We know that without you we could not exist. We most always remember to be thankful of those who support us in our goals..

On February 21st we celebrated our 27th Annual Gala Awards, "Where Heritage Meets Innovation". A heartfelt thank you to Mike Moses, President of Virgin Galactic who was the Keynote Speaker, to NMSU Dean Rolando Flores was the Guest Speaker and our masters of ceremonies KVIA 7 GMEP anchors Hillary Floren and Mauricio Casillas.

I would like to congratulate all of our 2020 Gala Award winners beginning with our Citizen of the Year Abel Covarrubias CEO of Aprendamos, Educator of the Year Morgan Harding, Biligual Educator of the Year Alison Remington-Padilla, Amigo of the Year Bernadette Tirre, Distinguished Community Service Ammu Devasthali,

Community Partnership New Mexico State University, Non Profit of the Year Families and Youth Inc., Small Business of the Year Del Valle Physical Therapy and the

Business of the Year US Bank. Two new awards the chamber presented was the Cultural Heritage Award that went to Irene Oliver-Lewis. And the Hispanic Philanthropist of the Year was given to Roberto Estrada. Congratulations to all the awardees.

I would like to give a personal and heartfelt thank you to our major sponsors, Beasley Mitchell Inc., El Paso Electric and New Mexico State University and to our Corporate Sponsors, Aprendamos, Citizens

Bank, Mesilla Valley Hospice, Mayor Ken Miyagishima, Hacienda de Mesilla, La Posta, Del Valle Physical Therapy, Casa de Peregrinos, Dona Ana Community College, NMSU, US Bank, Families and Youth Inc. and Lesson of Life.

And last but not least I would like to give a huge sincere thank you to our board of directors and our outstanding Los Amigo team. Without your hard work we would not have been successful. I appreciate all of the support and dedication that you all give to our chamber. I hope we all continue moving forward together with our vision.



CURTIS ROSEMOND
LAS CRUCES
HISPANIC CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

People Making a Difference in our Community

In the last few years and especially at our recent gala and awards ceremony, I've learned that leadership in our community and in business begins in the home and in what you do for the community you live in. Examples like J. Paul Taylor who served and continues to inspire service in our community come to mind. He has left a lasting impact right here where we live as a businessman and public servant as well as a philanthropist. At our annual gala Roberto V. Estrada, a business icon in our community was recognized as philanthropist of the year, and he's much more than that. Abel Covarrubias was recognized as citizen of the year and Ammu Devasthali for her distinguished service was also recognized.

You see these are not just people that are doing what they have to as mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, business people and leaders, these are people that have a love for this community we live in. They have dedicated their lives to making this a better place to live and to love thy neighbor as their own family.

I've seen it with my own eyes and experienced it in my work. This is the

most giving community I've ever lived in and I have never been prouder to call it home. I'm around people every day that strive to lift others up as employees,

fellow citizens and people that simply need a hand up.

They more than likely ask themselves the same question every day: Have I done everything I was supposed to do today?

They have recognized that in the grand scheme of life, people are greatest assets. I hope to one day have a servant's heart just like some the wonderful people in our fine city. I am a part of many organizations, like the Knights of Columbus, Mesilla Valley

Rotary Club, MVEDA, the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Mole (the Mexican delicacy not the animal) Monday.

These groups and people are out to make a difference in our communities. You have to ask yourself if you are ready to go above and beyond for your community. I think, I'm ready!

Thank you for supporting our chamber of commerce and this community. God bless you and your families.



LORENZO ALBA, JR.
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Mobile Detailing Service Comes to You

AMC Xtreme Mobile Detailing, LLC is a local company in Doña Ana County that offers auto mobile detailing; it means that this mobile unit “comes to you”, whether it’s at home, work, or the gym, basically anywhere, to take care of your vehicle and make it look like new. This company was founded by three friends who share the same ideals and the same passion, the love for cars. This has helped to form an efficient team to provide a quality service, to our community.

The idea of starting this company started when this group of friends shared the idea of establishing their own company, after years of experience working in car maintenance. The company started in October 2019, with the essential resources to provide basic services in car detailing. However, with the enthusiasm and desire of its founders to offer the best service to its customers, they searched for several options to be able to obtain the best equipment and the best products to expand their services and thus be able to provide high quality results. In this path

of growth, thanks to Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico which supports new and small businesses, AMC Xtreme Mobile Detailing, LLC was able to expand their services.

After having established a close relationship and having been able to meet the requirements required by the nonprofit organization of Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico, AMC Xtreme received the necessary funds to equip the first mobile unit with the best products and tools on the market, in order to offer the best professional detailed package. Today and after having fulfilled the dream of having the first work unit, AMC Xtreme Mobile Detailing, LLC offers Cars, Trucks, RVs, Motorcycle, and Marine detailing at the highest quality and at very affordable prices.

In despite of being a company that just started, AMC Xtreme is a corporation whose vision is, that in order to grow this

company, the best publicity is customer satisfaction. Thanks to the combination of the experience of its founders and our priority being, using the best quality products out there for vehicles, we can achieve our mission of customer satisfaction. This corporation is gaining the trust of its community; such is the case, that on February 20,

2020, AMC Xtreme Detailing, LLC became a member of Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and this March started the process to be an accredited member of Best Business Bureau. Currently people interested in hiring AMC Xtreme Detailing LLC can use social networks, on Google or by calling 575-888-1780 directly.



AMC Xtreme Mobile Detailing, LLC held its Grand Opening of their Mobile Detailing business on February 20th. Pastor Gabriel Solis blessed them with a pray prior to ribbon cutting. Owners (blue shirts left to right) Armando Saenz, Marvin Realivaquez and Juan Carlos Galaz are the proud partners of the company.



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Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 27th Annual Awards Gala



NMSU Regent Ammu Devasthali and NMSU Chancellor Dan Arvizu (holding awards) celebrate with their NMSU and DACC Colleagues.

The Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce held their 27th Annual Awards Gala on Friday, February 21, at Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces.

The Chamber and their guest were honored to have a warm welcome from United States Congresswoman Xochitl Torres-Small. They were

also honored to have Virgin Galactic President, Michael P. Moses as their keynote speaker and NMSU Dr. Rolando Flores as a guest speaker.

The 27th Annual Awards Gala celebrated with their theme "Where Heritage Meets Innovation. Dr. Rolando Flores captured the audience with a past glimpse of the Hispanic

Culture in Dona Ana County. He explained how the deep roots of the Hispanic Culture came from, and where it has come to be now. Then Mike Moses fascinated everyone one with his speech on where we are now and where we will be in the future with Virgin Galactic's Innovations.



NMSU ACES Dean, Dr. Rolando Flores was the LCHCC guest speaker, fascinated the crowd with his message about the Hispanic Culture.

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Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 27th Annual Awards Gala



US Bank executives, (front of photo) Donna Stoller, Steve Apodaca and Jennifer Charity (holding award) pose for a celebration photo for US Bank receiving the LCHCC Business of the Year Award.



U.S. Congresswoman Torres-Small congratulates and hands trophy to Families and Youth, Inc. CEO Brian Kavanaugh with the LCHCC Non Profit of the Year Award.



The LCHCC Board of Directors proudly selects NMSU for their outstanding community service. Chancellor Dan Arvizu of New Mexico State University accepts this year's Community Partnership Award.



NMSU Regent and Community Icon, Ammu Davasthali received the outstanding Community Service Award for her outstanding passion and kindness of contributions in making our community a better place to live.

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Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 27th Annual Awards Gala



The Educator of the Year Award was proudly received by Morgan Harding, a Special Education Low Incidence teacher at Picacho Middle School. Harding takes great pride in making a positive impact in the lives of her students.



Alison Remington-Padilla was honored with the LCHCC Bilingual Educator of the Year Award. As an Educator at Sierra Middle School she is an invaluable asset to the students and community of Las Cruces Public Schools.

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FROM THE LOS AMIGOS CHAIR

Doña Ana County Has a Bright Outlook

Did you know that Dona Ana County has multiple community impact initiatives? What is a community impact initiative you ask? Community Impact is a group of agencies from different sectors who come together to solve a specific issue using a common agenda.

The Success Partnership is an Education initiative that was developed in 2013 to bring together key community and education leaders who began discussing the need for the entire community to come together and focus on how we collectively support children's success and opportunities. This initiative has since sparked a few other collaborations over the years such as:

The Las Cruces Part-

nership for Community Schools which was founded with a goal to provide support to schools who wish to become a community school. A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities from children, youth, families and communities.

With the success of the first community school in



Jen Garcia Past Chair of the LCHCC Los Amigos accepts Gavel Award from current Los Amigo Chair Amanda Morales. Jen was honored for her outstanding work ethic, dedication, leadership and support she gave to the LCHCC and the Los Amigos. Thank you, Jen Garcia!

Las Cruces, Lynn Middle Community School, the partnership has now launched three new community schools: Booker T. Washington Elementary, MacArthur Elementary and Doña Ana Elementary.

The Bridge of Southern New Mexico is the backbone organization for the Workforce Talent Collaborative. This collaborative aligns with the mission of The Bridge by working to increase high school graduation rates by improving workforce opportunities. The collaborative works to create 'pathways' that begin in high school that continue into post-secondary education and end with degrees and certifications for higher-wage jobs and careers in key employment sectors.

Thriving Families is a program of the collaborative that focuses on a whole family approach to strengthen families to overcome barriers to education and job opportunities.

New Mexico True Talent is another program of the

collaborative. Employers looking for a skilled and ready individual in the workforce can visit this website to connect the dots and close the gaps between education and employment in key industries.

LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative looks to build an ideal behavioral health system model in New Mexico by setting shared regional behavioral health priorities, developing regional training for professionals, and providing technical assistance to partners.

Resilience Leaders is the nation's first data-driven, cross-sector and technology-empowered strategy on a county level to strengthen ten vital services shown to ensure trauma-free and thriving children, students and families. Across New

Mexico children endure Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma, and social adversity. The goal for Resilience Leaders is 100% community which means to have 100% of families in the community thrive. The 100% Community initiative is designed to be a blueprint for taking a county from a place of trauma and social adversity to one of resilience and opportunity.

With the different cross-sector collaborations that are currently being facilitated here in Dona Ana County, I feel that I can safely say that this community is in great hands. I truly believe that this community will continue to prosper with the work that is being done and the leaders that have taken the charge to make positive change.

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FROM OUR U.S. SENATOR

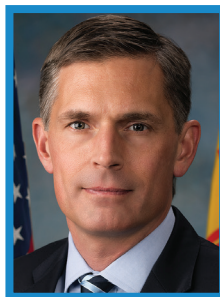
Growing Southern NM's Trade Economy

BY U.S. SENATOR
MARTIN HEINRICH

Increased bilateral trade with Mexico has benefited New Mexico's economy tremendously. This is especially true in our southern border communities that have long prospered from their unique binational culture and economy. In February, I sat down with business leaders in southern New Mexico to discuss the obstacles and opportunities they see for our growing trade economy.

New Mexico led all U.S. states in export growth percentage over the last year. Santa Teresa has grown to become the 4th largest exporting land port on the U.S.-Mexico border. That is thanks to the hard work and dedication of the local stakeholders who have seen the real opportunities for growth at Santa Teresa.

I will keep calling for federal resources that support the economic growth of our thriving border region. I am focused on growing and modernizing our ports of entry, like Santa Teresa and Columbus, to fuel new economic opportunities in bi-



HEINRICH

lateral trade and create jobs. We need to make sure we invest our border security resources smartly to meet staffing and infrastructure needs at our ports of entry so they can increase security and facilitate more lawful trade.

New Mexico's ports of entry require more staffing and resources to operate at full capacity. In recent years, I have worked alongside business and community leaders to secure millions of dollars in federal funds to modernize infrastructure and increase staffing and commercial hours at our ports of entry. I led the New Mexico Congressional Delegation effort to secure a public-private partnership with Dell, Inc. and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to fund expand-

ed commercial operating hours at Santa Teresa.

Major infrastructure improvements at our ports of entry help grow our state's trade economy and also make our nation's border more secure. Improvements in inspection facilities ensure that U.S. Customs and Border Protection can better screen cargo into the United States, and make sure our communities are protected from threats.

I will keep doing everything I can to help New Mexico fully realize its bright potential as a major center for bilateral trade. This is a concrete opportunity for businesses and to create good-paying careers in southern New Mexico. We must support common-sense border policies that keep our nation safe, invest in our economy, and ensure our border communities can thrive.

Please stay in touch about this and other issues important to you by writing me at Heinrich.Senate.Gov or by calling my Las Cruces office at (575) 523-6561. It's an honor to serve you in the United States Senate.

FROM OUR U.S. SENATOR

The census counts: Fill out your form and encourage others to also

BY U.S. SEN. TOM UDALL

The 2020 Census is underway now. Don't miss it. The stakes for New Mexico are too high.

The Census, required by the U.S. Constitution, determines the level of federal funding over the next 10 years for critical programs. These include programs like Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, food stamps, the school lunch program, Head Start, and housing assistance. And programs like small business loans.

In 2017, New Mexico received over \$10.7 billion through 55 programs based on the Census.

Every person counts:



UDALL

missing only one person can translate into losing \$5,000 every year for the next 10 years. And if we undercount our state's population by just 1%, we could lose over \$1 billion. In Doña Ana County, a 1% undercount could cost us over \$100 million over the next decade.

New Mexico is the most vulnerable state in the

nation for an undercount. That's because we have so many hard-to-count populations: rural residents, immigrants, Latinos, colonias, Native Americans.

The good news: If we work hard, we can count all New Mexicans.

We need your help to educate friends, families, and co-workers about the importance of filling out their Census form. It's only 10 questions and can be filled out by mail, telephone or, online. Businesses, nonprofits, faith organizations, schools, and other organizations can help get an accurate count by encouraging participation

SEE UDALL, PAGE 11

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The Southern New Mexico Hispanic Philanthropy Society was created in an effort to expand the philanthropic movement of Hispanic families in our community by celebrating Hispanic leaders and empowering families to become engaged in philanthropy to support strong, healthy neighborhoods.

This giving circle allows Hispanic leaders in our region an outlet to transform the community through valuable grant funding initiatives, volunteerism, networking opportunities and a celebration of our historic culture, to lay a solid foundation for our future generations.

Membership is open to residents from Doña Ana, Hidalgo, Otero, Grant, Sierra, Lincoln or Luna counties who are committed to making a positive impact in southern New Mexico and growing the capacity of Hispanic leaders in the community.

For more information or to become a member, visit www.cfsnm.org or email jordan@cfsnm.org.

The Southern New Mexico Hispanic Philanthropy Society was launched as a collaborative effort to impact the community



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NEWS LAS CRUCES

FROM OUR U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

Expanding Economic Opportunity for Southern New Mexico

BY U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
KOCHITL TORRES SMALL

In February, the U.S. House of Representatives passed my bill, Securing America's Ports Act, with bipartisan support to make smart investments in inspection technology at our ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico Border.

Trade continues to increase at our ports of entry in Santa Teresa and Columbus. In conversations with officials and business owners, I've listened to issues ranging from staffing shortages to outdated technology and crumbling infrastructure. Too often, local businesses are tasked with the burden of these shortcomings.

I hosted a field hearing at the New Mexico Border Authority headquarters in Santa Teresa in December 2019 to bring together stakeholders from the business sector and Customs and Border Patrol. Stakeholders highlighted the need to speed up commercial traffic between the US and Mexico while keeping New Mexicans safe.

Securing America's Ports Act is a direct result of these conversations and is a critical step in ensuring continued economic growth. This bill will increase the scanning rates of vehicles entering the United States at land ports of entry with large-scale non-intrusive inspection (NII) systems to 100%. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) uses these



TORRES SMALL

systems to inspect contents of commercial and passenger vehicles for potential contraband, such as drugs, without physically opening or unloading it. Investing in smart technology will support the efforts of Port offices who are already stretched too thin and stimulate cross-border trade.

I also fought for a revised trade deal that works for our needs in southern New Mexico. The re-negotiated United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which ultimately passed in December, is a huge win for New Mexican workers, business owners, agricultural producers, and economy.

Truck drivers stand to benefit as USMCA gives the United States more control over how many Mexican-based carriers can deliver freight in the United States. Other New Mexican industries, like manufacturers and developers in Santa Teresa, oil and gas producers in the Permian Basin, and world-famous New Mexico chile and pecan

SEE **TORRES SMALL**,

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growers will benefit from the resolved negotiations to continue their robust trade.

I will be continuing that fight for New Mexico's rural communities as the new-

est member of the House Agriculture Committee. With over 10,000 farms and \$1.6 billion in agriculture revenue, New Mexico's 2nd Congressional district is a critical agricultural engine. I've had the privilege to

meet with farmers, ranchers, dairy producers, and all who work with them to discuss our shared challenges and opportunities, and I am ready to champion their priorities on the Agriculture Committee.

UDALL,
CONTINUED FROM 9
from their employees, customers, clients, members, students and parents. There are toolkits online to help at <https://nmcounts2020.org/resources/#toolkits>. Employers and businesses can make a difference. At stake

in New Mexico is over \$115 million in small business development funding we can't afford to lose.

And it's important to know that the 2020 Census does not have a citizenship question and all information provided is kept confidential. In fact Census

employees take an oath not to disclose Census information. Undocumented immigrants don't need to be afraid to answer. And it's important they're counted.

The Census matters. Now is the time to stand up and be counted for New Mexico!



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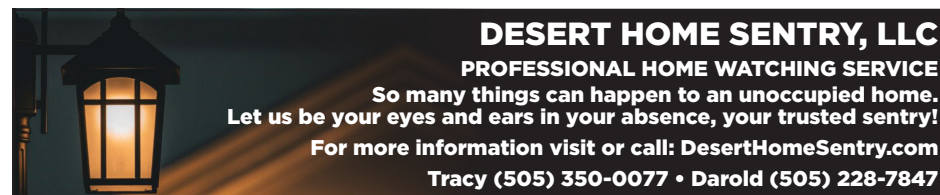
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Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce 27th Annual Awards Gala



Based on her hard work, dedication, and support to the chamber the LCHCC Los Amigos, selected Bernadette Tirre, from Citizens Bank, as the 2020 Los Amigo of the Year.



Community Leader and Icon Irene Oliver-Lewis made a statement that had the whole ballroom in laughter. Irene is the first to be honored with the LCHCC Cultural Heritage Award.



Founder and CEO of Del Valle Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation, Mark Figueroa received the LCHCC Small Business of the Year Award.

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