

# 4 ways to build community in your business

BY ALEX BELSEY

After a year of lockdowns, distancing, and separation, many are craving connection. By helping to foster these connections, you could place your business at the heart of your local community. Being seen by others as local leaders can benefit your business, your peers, and your neighborhood! Now is the time to connect. Whether you have been separated from friends and family over the past year, have struggled to get your business out there, or have been otherwise unable to do the things you want to do, now is a great time to get creative and reconnect with the community around you. The same is true in business. Being part of a community is powerful. It is not only essential for our mental health and wellbeing, but it's also a vital element of a thriving business. A sense of community is important between businesses and customers, and also between employers and

employees. With the tips below, you can start to build a business that is not only a positive part of the wider community, but one that also fosters a positive community within the business itself.

**1. Start From Within**

Building a community is not only about looking outward at your wider surroundings. It is also about looking inward and reflecting on the community that you are building within your own business — however large or small. It can be helpful to consider the values and mission of your business overall, and how you can reflect them within your business culture. For example, your values might include originality, innovation, and self-expression. Think about the ways you could encourage these values among your workforce — such as by scheduling regular creative activities or field trips for your team members, perhaps. Another great way to build additional commu-



nity within your business can be to attend events or training courses together. You could perhaps begin by researching the certifications or qualifications that are most valued or relevant to your industry, and then get started. You and your workforce will not only build great team values and stronger connections, but will be more qualified too.

**2. Get Involved Locally**

Even if you are a global or international business, or

operate entirely online, you can still contribute to your local area. You are providing value and growth to the local population - even if indirectly - so why not make an effort to connect with your community and get involved? This might include donating to local causes, getting engaged with fundraisers, offering internships or work experience for local students, giving encouraging talks or speeches in schools, and more.

There may also be some complimentary local businesses with whom you could collaborate. You could run joint offers with them, for example, or joint advertisements. And if you have similar or crossover skillsets, perhaps you could join forces on particular projects. Whether you are building a community online or in person, reaching out to potential collaborators can reap real rewards.

**3. Host Events**

Community is of course about bringing people together, and what better way to do that than by hosting events? You could perhaps hold conferences, conventions, or networking events and set them up online, if needs be. For example, during national lockdowns, many businesses or educational institutions around the world took their programmes and services entirely online. Live-streamed conferences, Q&As, and tutorials are especially popular and can be hosted via websites or social media platforms. This can be a great way to connect with potential clients and customers who may be all over the world, as well as those who are more local but might have limited mobility. Attending a wide variety of events both online and in-person — or even organizing them yourself — is an excellent way to build a strong and supportive com-

SEE **COMMUNITY**, PAGE 2

INDEX	FROM BOARD MEMBER SILVA .....	2	FROM THE LOS AMIGOS CHAIR .....	5
	SPACEPORT AMERICA HOSTS SIR RICHARD BRANSON.....	3	SEN. LUJAN .....	6
	NEW BOARD MEMBERS.....	4	SEN. HEINRICH.....	7



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## FROM THE BOARD

# A Green Idea!



**JEFFREY SILVA**

For the most part of the years 2020 and 2021, many of us were able to work from home and experienced many changes in our daily lives. During this time, I started asking myself how I could make a positive contribution to our community and our planet.

On a morning walk on a trail on the city dam off Telshor Blvd, my 13-year-old son asked me if we could start a recycling program at home. As we walked, we noticed many recyclable items caught in the bushes along the trail and we made a commitment to go out a few times each week to pick up those recyclable items. As we continued doing this, additional people joined us,

and it felt good knowing that there are other people who also want to make a difference in our community.

Now that our recycling program is in full swing, we are looking at other ways to help our planet and community. Some of the ideas that we are working on are

quite simple and they are efficient ways to conserve electricity, water, and other natural resources. I ordered an additional recycling bin from the City of Las Cruces, and now we fill up both recycling bins with recyclables for the city to pick up every other week. Also, I drive less now which means that in addition to saving on fuel, my vehicles do not add as much carbon monoxide emissions and other harmful gases into our city air. We are using less water bottles or other drinks in plastic bottles and have switched to a water purifier container and reusable drinking glasses instead. I am now using less paper for printing documents and I am sending files elec-

tronically via email when working with customers. We are switching to LED lights bulbs which are more energy efficient and do not generate ultraviolet light or heat. These simple changes have made me realize that it is possible to reach our goal and that there are many ways to accomplish it.

When the outdoor temperature gets cooler, I will be looking for members of the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and other community members to join us in a "Community Clean Up Challenge". The plan is to go out to pick up trash, bottles, and other recyclable items at different designated areas around the community. Another idea that we are working on for

the near future is to have a ride your bike, take the bus, or carpool to work day.

Our challenge started with a simple idea at home and it continues to grow as we identify more ways to make a difference in our community and our planet. I encourage everyone to consider starting a program at home or place of employment and see what difference you can make. Working on a simple Green Idea today will make our planet a better and cleaner place to live for our future generations.

If anyone have more ideas or suggestions that would like to share or would like to join us, feel free to contact me at [Jeffrey.silva@bbva.com](mailto:Jeffrey.silva@bbva.com).



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#### COMMUNITY, FROM PAGE 1

munity for your business. Not only will you be giving genuine value and knowledge to others, but you will receive the same in return.

#### 4. Outsource To Experts

Building a community starts within your business, branches out to your customers, and can also include those who you outsource to! Outsourcing important aspects of your business to experts is a great way to save time, make use of others' skills, and grow your business organically.

Outsourcing to an expert might mean entrusting your blog to a professional

writer with knowledge of search engine optimization, for example, of maximizing your opportunities in tendering by hiring a bid writing professional, or by seeking guidance on technical subjects such as GDPR regulations, perhaps.

These are all examples of outsourcing crucial business facets to experts who might have years of valuable experience.

Through outsourcing in this way you can help the community by providing work and building a collective with knowledge and expertise, while giving your business the best chance of success!



# Spaceport America hosts Sir Richard Branson's spaceflight

July 11, 2021, Sierra County, NM- Spaceport America, the world's first purpose-built commercial spaceport, hosted Virgin Galactic's first commercial passenger spaceflight from Southern New Mexico with Virgin founder Sir Richard Branson on board. This is the first of many commercial human spaceflight operations from the New Mexico spaceport as Virgin Galactic looks to begin regular passenger flights in 2022.

"This flight is the culmination of decades of work by many hundreds of people focused on the creation and operation of Spaceport America," Executive Director Scott McLaughlin said. "As the owners of the site, I hope the citizens of New Mexico see the benefits of the investments made and we all see the aerospace marketplace continue to grow in economic impact. Thank you to Spaceport America employees and partners for

your dedication over years to get to this point."

New Mexico has been at the forefront of advancements in aerospace since Robert Goddard arrived in the state in the 1930s. Spaceport America's partner White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), is known as the birthplace of America's missile and space programs. WSMR has launched more suborbital flights than any other range in the U.S. WSMR controls 6,000 square miles of restricted airspace from the ground to infinity and has an agreement with Spaceport America to share access to that airspace.

Spaceport America has been used as a research and development launch complex since 2006. It is the only FAA-licensed launch facility with both horizontal and vertical launch areas. Spaceport America has hosted flights from student rocket launches at the annual Spaceport America Cup, to Boeing Starliner capsule



COURTESY PHOTO

**Virgin Galactic's CEO Michael Colglazier, Astronaut Sirisha Bandla, Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes, New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and fiancé Manuel Cordova, Astronauts Beth Moses and Colin Bennett, and Spaceport Executive Director Scott McLaughlin.**

tests, and now human spaceflight since May 2021.

Spaceport America was designed, built, and is owned and operated by the State of New Mexico. The New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA) manages Spaceport America. NMSA coordinates all the airspace, manages all facilities across the 18,000 acres, and provides security, fire, and

EMT support. All facilities at Spaceport America are paid for by New Mexico taxpayers.

"Spaceport America is currently in talks with several customers and tenants that encompass vertical and horizontal launches, engine building and testing, and UAS/UAV training and testing" said Business Development Lead Susan

Raith. "We are in a good position to attract more aerospace businesses to New Mexico and grow our employment numbers in the coming years."

Virgin Galactic is the largest employer at Spaceport America with around 180 employees and holds a 20-year lease agreement for the use of the Gateway to Space and the horizontal

launch area. Other tenants with long-term leases at Spaceport America include AeroVironment/HAPSMobile, UP Aerospace and SpinLaunch. Boeing, Swift Engineering, Stratodynamics, C6 Launch Systems and White Sands Research and Developers are among the many short-term customers at Spaceport America.

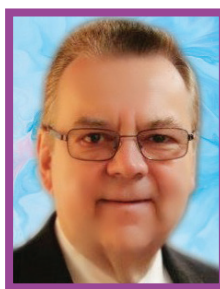
## Virgin Galactic a Magnet for Tourism and Economic Growth

BY PHIL SAN FILIPPO

On July 11, years of planning, hard work and determination paid off for Virgin Galactic, and, potentially, for Las Cruces. On a beautiful Sunday morning, Sir Richard Branson and his amazing crew opened the doors to commercial space tourism. It was a flawless flight and the most awesome experience I ever witnessed.

For years, we watched

Virgin Galactic blossom from an idea to a viable entity. Many in our community felt, and some still feel, that we will never see our return on the investment made in Spaceport America and its main tenant, Virgin Galactic. Virgin has already



**PHIL SAN FILIPPO**

invested millions of dollars in New Mexico. Its staff has gone from 10 or 11 to close to 200 now based in its offices in Las Cruces and Spaceport America. These employees own or rent homes, shop in our stores, patronize our restaurants, pay

taxes, and have grown to call New Mexico home.

Virgin Galactic makes a strong effort to purchase goods and services from New Mexican companies, and they have supported educational and other programs that have helped our children. They are an integral part of the Las Cruces community.

Of course, many are already asking what comes next? Will we finally derive

benefit of this amazing effort? Besides growing the size of the company tenfold in New Mexico and actively hiring staff from within our community; Virgin Galactic's presence in the Las Cruces area is a tremendous asset for bringing additional businesses.

During the weekend of Sir Richard's flight, every hotel in the area was completely full. Many restaur-

rants experienced a huge surge in business. Those in attendance included press and future astronauts from around the world who are planning their journey into space. Estimates from Visit Las Cruces claim that there was a \$400,000 benefit during the weekend. Some critics complain that right now space tourism is only for the very rich. The first commercial airplane flight

# Chamber welcomes new Board Directors

## Cameron Culpepper

### About yourself:

Born and raised in the Four Corners area, I have spent my life as a native of New Mexico. I have been fortunate to call Las Cruces home for 20+ years, and look forward to growing my family here for many more to come. My ever-supportive better half Jaclyn, and our two-year-old son Jordan, continuously drive my motivation.

### Profession:

I am currently the Branch Manager for Sunflower Bank in Las Cruces, and have collectively been with the company for more than 15 years.

### Education:

Farmington High School Graduate – Farmington, New Mexico

New Mexico State University Alumni – Bachelors



**CAMERON  
CULPEPPER**

in Small Business Management/Economics

### Community involvement:

Involvements with the LCHCC Amigos the two years prior to the pandemic were numerous. Money Smart Week, Junior Achievement, Alzheimer's Association, Habitat for Humanity, LCHCC Backpack Drive, NMSU Hispanic Heritage Game Day, and many more. Any

charity or event that I am able to get involved with, I am willing to support them.

### What do you think about living in Las Cruces?

Las Cruces is a unique mixture of culture and business, one simultaneously feeding into the other. The ability for locals and newcomers alike to thrive here is an abundant, unbiased opportunity. Additionally, the dynamic of Las Cruces is one that provides ease of living unlike many other areas, with recreation and big city experiences just a stone's throw away.

### Why did you get involved with the chamber?

I initially joined the LCHCC, simply, because of the individuals involved. The character, purpose, and values that go into serving this community are

those which I fully support. I am proud to serve on the Board of Directors for the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber.

### What is your opinion of the local business climate?

The pandemic caused great strain and loss for many across the globe... Las Cruces was no exception. I am pleased with the local business climate as we move in the direction of recovery and re-growth. Opportunities are becoming abundant, doors are opening, and business will once again flourish. Inevitably, great things are ahead, and the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce directors are eager to play our part.

## Ludmila Garcia

### About yourself:

I am a native of Patzcu-



**LUDMILA  
GARCIA**

aro, Michoacan, Mexico.

### Profession:

I am currently a Senior Marketing Consultant of The Las Cruces Bulletin

### Education:

Bachelor of Business Administration

### Community involvement:

I'm a volunteer for the YMCA of El Paso, Altar Servers Mom of Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Ambassador of Hikerbabes

Community of El Paso, Member of Hikerbabes Community of Las Cruces.

### Why did you get involved with the chamber?

I am proud to serve on the Board of Directors for the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber. I joined the Chamber because I want to help the Hispanic Community in Las Cruces, I noticed that a lot of people don't speak English, and they don't use all the tools they have available to grow their business. I want to contribute with my experience and knowledge, and assist them to do so.

### What is your opinion of the local business climate?

I'm happy because the business owners are working hard and the economy is getting better. Consumers are more positive to go out and shop.

## MAGNET, FROM PAGE 3

took place in 1914. The flight traveled from St. Petersburg to Tampa, Florida. The flight lasted 23 minutes for an 18.6 mile flight. The cost of the flight at the time was \$400 (which would be valued to over \$10,000 in today's market.) No one can argue the economic impact and mass appeal of the airline industry today. The point is innovation and technological advances are expensive, but these innovations will yield big dividends for our children and our children's children.

Bringing wealthy people into our area is a tremendous opportunity. If they

like what they see, some may choose to expand their businesses or invest in our area. This can result into more jobs and a better economy for Las Cruces. Last weekend both Richard Branson and Elon Musk were in Southern New Mexico. Hopefully both left with a positive impression. Soon all those who have already signed up for future flights will be heading to Las Cruces for their flights. It is critical that they experience a community that is welcoming and business friendly.

Virgin Galactic delivered on their promise. Yes, it took longer than expected, but they delivered. The challenge now is how can

we ensure Las Cruces receives continued benefit. How we move forward is not Virgin Galactic's job. It is up to community leaders to maximize the impact of having such a recognizable partner in our own backyard.

Virgin Galactic can be a magnet for tourism and economic growth if we chose to capitalize on this major asset.

I am confident more tourists will come to the area to see the location where Virgin Galactic made history. Space-related



businesses will also be looking a little closer to Southern New Mexico as a good place to do business. Students will look to NMSU as an opportunity to be close to the cutting edge of the commercial space industry. I hope we seize the moment.

Are we ready for these visitors? Do we have enough hotels up to the standards required by most of these guests? Hotel Encanto and Hilton Garden Inn were primary hosts of the Virgin invitees and Belia Alvarez and her team did a remarkable job

getting the properties ready after a long hiatus due to Covid. Short-staffed and short notice didn't stop her group from working tirelessly to meet the expectations of their visitors. I am certain many other hotels had to scramble to be ready and adequate staffing remains a problem.

As Virgin continues to flourish, there will be a need for all types of workers and products required to fill the supply chain. These are all opportunities for the Las Cruces area. Albuquerque is far ahead of us. A core of business people are collaborating and looking at creative ways to attract these busi-

nesses. Las Cruces needs to be proactive. We need to have the best business minds come together and develop a competitive and superior plan lest we lose this opportunity to our neighbors to the north.

No doubt, some of this planning may already be happening. I hope so. It's not up to Virgin Galactic to ensure how we benefit. They did their job and will continue to deliver. How we capitalize on their success is not up to Virgin Galactic. The ball is clearly in our court and the countdown has begun. How we manage these opportunities will tell the story of our future success.



## FROM THE LOS AMIGOS CHAIR

# United Way supports TRIO Upward Bound

**U**nited Way of Southwest New Mexico's mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities in Southwest New Mexico to advance the common good and we achieve this by providing support to our three focus areas- Basic Needs, Education, and Financial Stability.

Our Financial Stability goal is to increase the number of opportunities for low-income individuals and families to become economically self-sufficient. So many families in Southwest New Mexico are struggling economically, so children cannot thrive when they face stressors and adverse experiences that negatively affect their brain development, long-term health, and socio-emotional well-being. Research shows that a child's well-being is strongly tied to his or her family's stability and resources. United Way of SWNM strongly believes in providing financial education to not only, individuals and families, but also children,



**AMANDA  
MORALES**

teens, and young adults.

That's why it was a no-brainer when our organization was approached to assist with providing financial literacy classes to New Mexico State University's TRIO Upward Bound program during their Crimson Summer Institute.

One of the summer virtual programs provided by TRIO Upward Bound GISD/LCPS' 2021 Crimson Summer Institute is the Aggie Academy. The Aggie Academy provides a six-week academic curriculum including math, English, reading, science, career prep and college knowledge, a foreign language and educational and

cultural workshops. Additionally, this summer the programming will include a study abroad theme along with a new component, Wellness Wednesdays, featuring health and financial wellness.

Our organization coordinated six financial sessions during the summer program. Presenters were requested from the local Money Smart Week coalition which includes bankers, government entities, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. The curriculum used was the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) – Money Smart for Young Adults. Session topics included - Working Hard for the Money, Designing Dreams, The Almighty Dollar, Can You Pay Your Bills, Protect Yourself, Convertible or Clunker, to name a few.

Other collaborations for Aggie Academy included: Strategic Doing training also known as "NMSU's Aggie Think!" as part of college readiness with Lauren Goldstein, organizational



**United Way of  
Southwest New Mexico**

development specialist with the NMSU's chancellor's office; Wellness Wednesdays will include nutrition and etiquette with Andrea Ariguicci, program coordinator from NMSU's Marriott Hospitality Futures Center, and virtual cooking with NMSU's Chef Pete Mitchell;

mental wellness headed by Marie Zubiato and team of counselors with the Aggie Health and Wellness Center; Tai Chi for Mind, Body, and Soul with Shigang Liu, TRIO Upward Bound instructor; and education opportunities with Phame Camarena, dean of the

NMSU's Honors College. Upward Bound is a federally funded TRIO program that helps low-income and first generation students attend and graduate from college. Each year, the TRIO Upward Bound Gadsden Independent School District/Las Cruces Public Schools program serves 90 students from five target high schools: Gadsden, Santa Teresa, Las Cruces, Mayfield and Organ Mountain.

For more information, contact Amanda Morales at 575-524-7561 or via email at [impact@uwswnm.org](mailto:impact@uwswnm.org). To learn more, visit [trioub.nmsu.edu/](http://trioub.nmsu.edu/) and [trioub.nmsu.edu/gisd-lcps/](http://trioub.nmsu.edu/gisd-lcps/)



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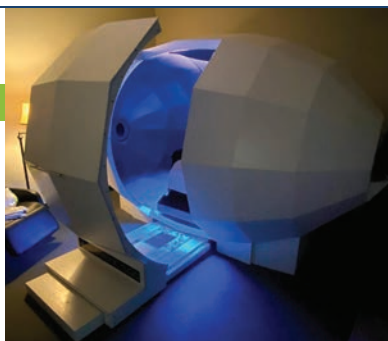
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FROM OUR U.S. SENATOR

# Rescue Plan helping New Mexicans

BY U.S. SENATOR  
BEN RAY LUJAN

Dear Friends,

Since being sworn into the United States Senate, I have been hard at work to deliver COVID-19 relief for New Mexico workers and small businesses. This past year has been a difficult one, but New Mexicans are strong and resilient, and we will recover and rebuild stronger than before.

I want to recognize the members of the Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for assisting

New Mexicans throughout this pandemic. Like many New Mexicans, you all stepped up to do your part. I'm grateful for your service and partnership.

Earlier this year, I was proud to work with my Senate colleagues to pass the American Rescue Plan to deliver much-needed relief to New Mexicans and the business community.



LUJAN

Signed into law by President Joe Biden, this new law is reaching every corner of our state.

From the direct payments to small business support, the American Rescue Plan is

making a real difference in the lives of New Mexicans. Recently, I traveled across New Mexico meeting with local leaders – from Las Cruces to Los Alamos – to

learn how the American Rescue Plan is helping our communities, and what priorities should be included in the upcoming American Jobs Plan.

With new partners in the White House, I am working to invest and modernize our infrastructure and create new, good-paying jobs and opportunities for New Mexicans here at home. Communities across America need investments in clean drinking water, wastewater infrastructure, road and bridge improvements, and

getting residents to 100% internet connectivity.

I am working with local leaders to make sure Las Cruces and Doña Ana County can take full advantage of this federal funding. The American Jobs Plan will empower New Mexicans to Build Back Better and get the economy back on track. There is no greater investment than when we invest in our people – and that's what the American Jobs Plan will do.

I look forward to working with the Las Cruces

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to identify and advance priorities that will help New Mexicans and the business community.

As always, thank you for your partnership and leadership. As we continue to make incredible progress in getting shots into arms, I hope that we can reconnect in person soon.

You can learn more about my first 100 days in office at [www.lujan.senate.gov](http://www.lujan.senate.gov).

Sincerely,  
**Ben Ray Luján**

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FROM OUR U.S. SENATOR

# Investing in New Mexico's Recovery

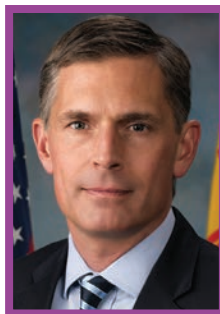
BY U.S. SENATOR  
MARTIN HEINRICH

I am more confident than I have ever been that New Mexico is heading in the right direction. After weathering everything that the pandemic threw at us, New Mexicans have stepped up to do our part and get vaccinated. Although there is still plenty of work ahead of us, there's no doubt that we are finally on the rebound.

I am squarely focused on delivering the resources that New Mexicans need to rebuild a strong economy. The emergency funding that Democrats in Congress and President Biden passed into law earlier this year is helping New Mexico put an end to the pandemic and providing important economic relief to families, local small businesses, and our public

schools. But if we want to set the foundation for sustainable, long-term success, Democrats and Republicans in Congress need to find a productive path forward on passing President Biden's American Jobs Plan.

This is our once-in-a-generation opportunity to make big and bold investments in our infrastructure, in our people, and in our planet. We can't afford to let it pass us by. We can put millions of Americans back to work rebuilding our infrastructure so that every family in our country can have access to clean drinking water, broadband



HEINRICH

internet connectivity, safe transportation, a high-quality education, and affordable housing.

Modernizing our infrastructure for the 21st century also means preparing and

adapting to the new climate reality. We need to restore the health of our forests, soil, and watersheds. I recently introduced major agriculture resilience legislation to empower farmers and ranchers to make their land and soil more resilient. Their operations are already being impacted by extreme weather events and long-term drought and aridification. They need to play a

leading role in implementing climate solutions.

We also need to build a nationwide network of charging stations for the growing number of electric vehicles on our roads, make it easier and more affordable for homeowners and businesses to electrify their appliances, and site new transmission lines like SunZia to make room for new, utility-scale wind and solar energy projects in New Mexico that will power our economy for years to come. Finally, we urgently need to prepare all of our infrastructure to handle more extreme weather events, extended drought conditions, and more destructive wildfire seasons.

As the new Chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appro-

priations Subcommittee, I am also overseeing all of the Department of Defense's construction funding and the entire budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). I am committed to building the modern facilities our military needs to keep all of us safe and keeping America's promise to our service members and their families to provide them the benefits that they earned when they return home as veterans.

I will be especially focused during my chairmanship on restoring the funding for military construction projects at Holloman and at White Sands Missile Range that the Trump administration wrongly raided to pay for the misguided border wall. I will also make sure the

VA has all the funding it needs to improve telehealth services for rural veterans, support a strong Covid-19 vaccination campaign for veterans, and provide better health care and housing assistance for veterans experiencing homelessness.

I am committed to helping New Mexico families and small business owners find all the support they need to get back on their feet after all we have been through over this past year. My office is here to help you navigate the challenges you face or identify new opportunities. You can find my Las Cruces Office by calling (575) 535-6561 or by visiting my website at Heinrich.Senate.Gov. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance to you and your family.



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