

2021



OUTSTANDING

*Women*

of the *Mesilla Valley*

THE LAS CRUCES  
**Bulletin**



# Celebrating

## WOMEN OF THE MESILLA VALLEY

**A**s you read this publication, note the wide range of vocations, avocations and experiences of these 13 outstanding women.

One has been in the Mesilla Valley since 1952. Another has only been here since 2019.

One, a dentist, works on people's teeth. Another, a religious congregation co-director, works on people's souls.

Though only two are teachers by trade, all are deeply involved in education in one form or another.

They all have great admirers in the community, particularly their

friends, acquaintances and colleagues who nominated them as Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley.

They all also love their chile, as it should be.

Just as in 2020, when we launched our inaugural edition of this program, I was amazed by all the important, interesting and challenging work done by so many women in our Mesilla Valley.

In several cases, I had the honor of talking to these women, and breaking the news to them about their recognition. Each one was humbled

by the selection, some to the point of disbelief.

"Are you joking with me?" one asked.

But, no, this is serious business, just like all the beneficial work all these ladies do on a regular basis to make life in the Mesilla Valley better every day.

**Richard Coltharp**  
*Publisher*  
*Las Cruces Bulletin*

## THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin

**PUBLISHER**  
Richard Coltharp

**NEWS**  
Dave Burge  
Mike Cook  
Elva Österreich

**DESIGN**  
Albert Vasquez

**CIRCULATION**  
Teresa Tolonen

**SALES MANAGER**  
Jamila Khalil

**ADVERTISING**  
Claire Frohs  
Amelia Ontiveros  
Kassidy Schmidt

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## Stacey Scanlon

### Using care, compassion to help others achieve their best selves

**S**tacey Scanlon is the regional supervisor at Southwest Family Guidance Center Las Cruces (SWFGC), and has multiple roles within the agency. Her primary objective involves the treatment and care of Mesilla Valley youth who are struggling with emotional, behavioral or substance use issues as well as the training and supervision of interns and staff who provide services to young people.

Stacey typically works a 10-to-12-hour shift fulfilling her roles and does not leave work until she has adequately addressed each and every crisis or pressing need and after she has ensured each and every child has received their much-needed services they are scheduled for.

Stacey is a caring and compassionate individual who has the ability to make connections with kids and the skills to help them achieve positive change in their lives and circumstances. Stacey is also well known and respected in the community and has formulated trusting and collaborative relationships with multiple community entities, including the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office, Las Cruces Public Schools, Children Youth and Families Department and several mental health agencies in Doña Ana County.

More important, she has earned the respect and admiration of the staff at SWFGC, not only in the Doña Ana region but at the other agency locations statewide. In short, Stacey is a significant asset to multiple systems within the Mesilla Valley and most certainly deserves the honor of being an Outstanding Woman of the Mesilla Valley.

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Daughter, wife, mother, grandmother

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**  
2000

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

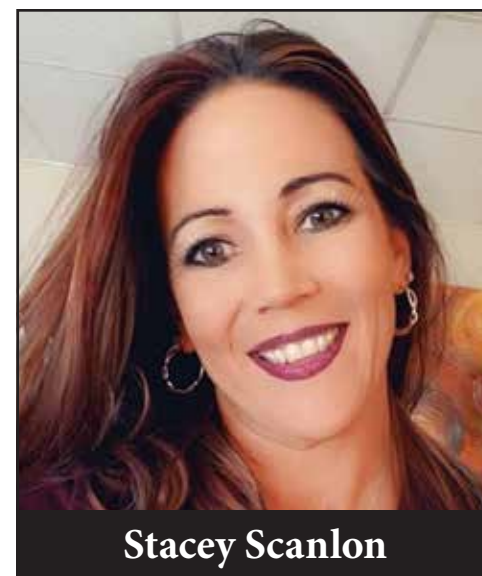
The brisket nachos at El Patron, with green chile enchiladas at Chachi's a close second

**What is your job?**

Regional supervisor at Southwest Family Guidance Center

**What are your hobbies?**

Exercise, spending time with my grandchildren, hiking



**Stacey Scanlon**

**What motivates you?**

Believing in what I do and the people I work with, getting people in line with the right resources so they can achieve their best self, according to them



# Mary Ann Constantini



Mary Ann Constantini

## Broad, deep teaching experience has propelled many students to success

**M**ary Ann Jennings Constantini, a native New Mexican, has always been a committed educator. She taught in an Arab high school, in a prison, business colleges and retired from the Las Cruces Public Schools. She was selected as the 1994 Vocational Teacher of the year for New Mexico. While teaching at Las Cruces High School, she developed an innovative school-to-work program placing students in accounting situations throughout the Las Cruces business community. Many of those students are now active accountants and some have entered professions such as medicine.

She introduced a computing program at LCHS and secured a grant to provide the necessary computers. Since retiring, Mary Ann has continued to be involved in education. For 20 years, she has been active with the Golden Apple Foundation, which identifies, selects and honors outstanding New Mexico teachers. She has been active on the Golden Apple board for 15 years and is currently head of the selection committee. Mary Ann was selected as a Fellow for Golden Apple in 2019.

She is on the board of the Goodgame Foundation which dispenses substantial sums to charities emphasizing young people. Mary Ann has been involved with other educational programs and has been selected to be on the New Mexico State University program, Educators Rising. She has sponsored two scholarships at NMSU and a scholarship at Eastern New Mexico University. Mary Ann has been married for 46 years and has two successful daughters.

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Mother, wife, grandmother, friend

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**  
1984

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**  
Green enchiladas at Salud de Mesilla

**What is (or was) your job?**  
Vocational teacher

**What are your hobbies?**  
Nutrition, cooking, physical activity, especially water aerobics

**What motivates you?**  
The future success and happiness of young people

“At Las Cruces High School, she developed an innovative school-to-work program, placing students throughout the business community.”

### Congratulations to the Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley!



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## AT A GLANCE

### What roles do you play as a woman?

Daughter, wife, mom, community servant

### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

2016

### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

That's almost unfair! Probably my friend's homemade red chile posole.

### What was your job?

I worked in the intelligence community in Washington, D.C.

### What is your hobby?

I don't have any. With all the things I do, it doesn't leave much time for anything else.



Jenny Sims Clark

### What motivates you?

I've always had a servant's heart, a heart to help others. There is too much that needs to be done.

# Jenny Sims Clark

## Las Cruces angel constantly helping

**"S**he is an invaluable asset to our community and Las Cruces is a better place to live because of her efforts," is the way Teresa Schroder described Outstanding Woman Jenny Sims Clark. Seven people nominated Clark for the honor and all marveled at her ability to help people in the community in so many different ways. The "Energizer Bunny" is how Janice Blankenship described Clark.

Jenny is a relative newcomer, having moved as a retiree from the Washington, D.C., area a few years ago. From the moment she arrived, she became a force for good in her community. Here's how.

**Veterans** – Jenny regularly makes and takes meals to veterans, particularly homeless veterans. At Thanksgiving, she provided them turkeys. She is raising money to help them build a shed at Community of Hope. She gathers monthly care packets for the veterans and holds sales to support the mission.

**Healthcare** – Jenny created a "medical repository," a sort of lending library of medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, shower chairs, etc.) People can donate items they no longer use, and others can use the items for an indefinite period. She also organizes trips to Palomas,

Mexico, driving groups of people there to purchase eyeglasses, get dental work done or buy medications.

**Hunger** – She has donated to food pantries and will pick up any donations and distribute them to the pantries.

**First Responders** – She also coordinates bakers and delivery of monthly cookies for first responders. On 9/11, cookies were delivered to all fire stations in Las Cruces.

**Education** – Jenny also helps to distribute books to local little free libraries.

**Animals** – She collects pet supplies, food and blankets for various animal rescue facilities. A few months ago, Jenny and her husband transported several dogs to an out-of-state animal welfare organization where they could be adopted.

She does these things, but also does things such as arrange morning coffee get-togethers with her neighbors.

"They may sound like small things, but they are the kind of actions and projects that make this such a wonderful town to live in," said Carol Kane.

One of her friends boiled Clark's efforts to one brief sentence: "She is an angel."

# Miriam Torres

## Building futures from past

**M**iriam Torres, activity director at Solstice Senior Living Residence, makes a positive difference in the quality of life for approximately 100 residents. She is a behind-the-scenes hero. Miriam schedules all kinds and levels of daily activities and excursions. She enthusiastically participates in many of them. She always comes up with new and different events to help create a vibrant lifestyle. She is a shoulder to lean on when help or confidence is needed. Even when Covid puts extreme limitations on us Miriam goes out of her way bringing activities to residents' doors. Puzzles, books, games-whatever it takes to keep people happily occupied in tough times. She can be seen wheeling her tote full of items down the hallways, always smiling. Miriam also reaches out positively to our community. For example, at Halloween, she arranged for the kindergarteners from Desert Hills Elementary School to "trick or treat" at Solstice. Also, additional candy bags were delivered to pediatric wards at local hospitals. If you asked any of the 100 residents their opinion of Miriam, it would be a unanimous thumbs up.

## AT A GLANCE

### What roles do you play as a woman?

Mom, sister, daughter, friend

### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1992

### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Chile rellenos from Nopalito's

### What is your job?

Vibrant life director at Solstice Senior Living

### What are your hobbies?

Working out, Zumba, reading

### What inspires you?

Working with seniors, I get to meet their past. And from that, I can embrace their future.



Miriam Torres



# Chenchie Schmukler



Chenchie Schmukler

## Taking care of the house has bigger meaning for Chenchie

Like most of us, Chenchie lives in a house, but Chenchie's house extends beyond the four walls of her home. Her house encompasses the entire community of Las Cruces. Chabad of Las Cruces is built on the foundation that we are all responsible for each other and has been serving Las Cruces and Southern New Mexico for more than 12 years.

Chenchie Schmukler is the co-director, along with her husband, Rabbi Bery Schmukler of Chabad Las Cruces. She tirelessly contributes to all in our community. Chenchie wears many hats.

Along with being the mother of eight children, she oversees many programs through Chabad Las Cruces. These include the Early Childhood Center, after-school programs, day camps, art classes and more. Chenchie also spearheads many charitable, fundraising and outreach activities such as free loaves of fresh baked Challah bread to all veterans on Veterans Day, the Thanksgiving Project which provides freshly prepared Thanksgiving meals for seniors and the homebound, the annual outdoor Light Up Las Cruces Mega Chanukah Concert and Menorah lighting Corona Relief Fund, created in response to families in need as a result of the coronavirus, as well as the charity fund for the needy.

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Wife, sister, mother of eight, cousin, friend

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**  
2009

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

Our homemade dishes, wherever you can put chile!

**What is your job?**

Co-director of Chabad Las Cruces

**What are your hobbies?**

Cooking and baking

**What motivates you?**

My family

“I hope my work can bring goodness, kindness and education to our city.”

Congratulations, Chenchie Schmukler  
on being an Outstanding Woman  
of the Mesilla Valley.

You bless our community each and  
every day with your love, light and generosity!

The Marks Family



Jeanne Gleason

## Jeanne Gleason

### Gleason's watchwords: *Carpe Diem*

**S**he grew up on a farm in Lea County, and finally retired in 2020, after developing multiple communications platforms that changed with growing technology.

From working as a New Mexico State University student in 1970, Jeanne Gleason wound up as department head of the university's Innovative Media, Research & Extension program. Altogether, she spent more than 50 years working for NMSU.

When she was a youngster in science class, Gleason's father suggested she build a camera.

"You can't build a camera!" Gleason said.

"Yes you can," the father said. "You can build a pinhole camera."

"We made one out of a coffee can," Gleason said. "And that's when I decided to become a photographer and a journalist."

As an instructional designer and educational media developer, Gleason put together teams of experts in video, animation, games, print, touchscreen and more. Their creations were produced in multiple languages.

"As much as possible, I tried to be a collaborator within our own group," Gleason said upon her retirement. "It just seems to me, by and large, if you treat people with respect, you really listen, then you give them an opportunity to follow their passion, and I have been able to succeed, because I surround myself with people that are amazing in their area. I can't think of anyplace better, to have invested my career, than right here at New Mexico State University. I've been able to see the world. I've worked on every continent except Antarctica. It has been wonderful, and I say, *Carpe Diem*."

Here are some numbers to illustrate Gleason's career.

- 48 countries visited
- 1,149,660 miles traveled
- \$124 million in grant funding secured

All along the way, she just worked. She didn't know any other way.

Her father always had jobs in town, leaving Gleason and her three siblings to do much of the farm work.

"We four children were his workforce," she said. "We all worked very hard on the farm, but that's how we developed our work ethic."

### AT A GLANCE

#### What roles do you play as a woman?

Daughter, sister, friend, supervisor, and maybe best of all, co-working with a wonderfully creative NMSU team

#### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1966 for the annual summer 4-H conference at NMSU and in 1970, when it was time to select my university, I knew NMSU would be my new home

#### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Carne adovada burrito smothered in lots of green chile sauce at Andele's Dog House

#### What is (or was) your job?

Leader of NMSU's Innovative Media, Research & Extension program (Although officially retired, I still work quarter-time for the university I love.)

#### What are your hobbies?

Scuba, genealogy research, painting, hiking and international travel.

#### What motivates you?

Working with young people who have their entire lives before them. They are so eager to imagine, create, and discover ways to make our world a better place.

## Thanks, Jeanne



Your unending innovation and support make a difference.

— From all those you've mentored, led and served at NMSU and Cooperative Extension



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.  
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“Young people may make mistakes, but they're not afraid to explore new ideas and to imagine ways to improve life for the next generation.”





Hilda Luz Chavez

# Hilda Luz Chavez

## AT A GLANCE

### What roles do you play as a woman?

Daughter, sister, aunt, friend to many friends who are just like family

### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1978

### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Blue corn green chile enchiladas from The Shed

### What is your job?

Naturopath, advocate, server, and "those don't really cover it all"

### What are your hobbies?

Anything you can do with plants: gardening, medicinal, cooking, teaching; music, particularly singing and piano

### What motivates you?

Seeing how much the world is in such trouble, working to raise consciousness and inspire, to help people find a better life

## Helping doctors, patients both navigate medicinals

Hilda Luz Chavez's devotion to her patients and to the community has been unwavering. She has made it her life's goal to educate in wellness and nutrition and helping people create the life they want to have. Since 2007, the start of the medical cannabis program in New Mexico, Hilda saw a great need for education. She first set out to educate medical doctors and mental health professionals in the Las Cruces community and to convince them they could certify patients without putting their careers in jeopardy.

Her next step was to start a consulting business to educate the would-be cannabis patients in the community. She created a network and totally facilitated the process of becoming medically certified for cannabis. Her 40 years-plus experience in the field of natural medicine enabled her to be a pioneer in this area. She has been a tireless advocate for the past 14 years and has improved the lives of thousands of patients. In 2016 she began contributing a column to the Las Cruces Bulletin's Well Being section called The Good Herb. Hilda has spent her life in service to others. She has done this with clarity, compassion and honesty for the highest good of all concerned.

# Susie Kimble

## Putting people together

Susie Kimble is an example of an outstanding Woman of the Mesilla Valley. For more than 15 years, she has supported and empowered those without a voice through service and dedication. In 2004, then-Gov. Bill Richardson received a \$5.6 million grant for the creation of Local Collaboratives to be located around the state. The collaboratives were to work with community services and consumers together to improve the lives of the consumer.

Mesilla Valley became part of the LC3. In LC3 Susie became a leader, training those who had no voice. LC3 was created to help consumers, especially in the area of behavioral health. Behavioral health consumers became chairmen and co-chairmen of the LC3. Behavioral health empowers, lives were changed and there was a future waiting for them.

LC3 helped deaf families stay intact. When it was brought to the attention of LC3 that deaf students (K-12) left their homes Sunday afternoon and returned on Thursday afternoon in order to attend the school for the deaf in Santa Fe, LC3 worked with the Gadsden School District to unite families by employing certified interpreters for all grades, especially high school. Now deaf students could stay with their families and attend school in their communities. This helped to eliminate the stigma of being deaf. High school students could now take classes they previously couldn't because they now had an interpreter. The gift of time, commitment and active service in Mesilla Valley is an example of Susie Kimble's accomplishments.

## AT A GLANCE

### What roles do you play as a woman?

Mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, wife

### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1986

### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Red chile pork with eggs and potatoes at the Shed

### What is your job?

I own a consulting business that provides services to healthcare professionals

### What are your hobbies?

Reading, writing, spending time with family

### What motivates you?

Finding ways to help others, particularly in education and behavioral healthcare



Susie Kimble

# Amy Bassford

## Blending talents of business, art to make Las Cruces a better community

**Y**ears ago, the Doña Ana Arts Council was gifted the Rio Grande Theatre and Amy Bassford became the council's executive director. As such, she was responsible for the renovation of one of the oldest historic adobe theaters in the country. For several years, Amy was surrounded by architects, engineers and construction workers on the site. She ran all the other projects for which the Arts Council was responsible (such as the Renaissance ArtsFaire) as well as her duties overseeing the theater preservation efforts.

Moreover, Amy led a great deal of fund-raising initiatives. Amy went on to hold several positions at La Casa Inc., the shelter for domestic violence. She was in charge of fundraising efforts, such as the La Casa Bazaar (still going strong) and in creating awareness of the serious problems in Las Cruces connected with abused women and children. Amy has the reputation in the community of being "the face of La Casa."

When the city of Las Cruces offered Amy a position in the budgets and grants office, she was a perfect choice. Her efforts partnering with other non-profits in Las Cruces, her keen financial mind from her years in the banking business and her abilities to write successful grants guaranteed her success as an employee.

During the past few years, Amy has bravely fought breast cancer and has had the challenge of juggling her health and her job. She has done so with grace and a fine sense of humor. Amy Johnson Bassford is truly an Outstanding Woman of the Mesilla Valley.

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Daughter, sister, wife, aunt, friend

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**

1981

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

Chile rellenos at Si Señor

**What is (or was) your job?**

Grants administrator for the City of Las Cruces.

**What are your hobbies?**


Reading, sewing, watching British mystery shows on television, antique collecting

**What motivates you?**

Appreciating what life has to give us, paying back what we've received



Amy Bassford



**Amy, your friends  
congratulate you!**

**You are one  
Outstanding Woman!**

*“Bassford has been instrumental in raising awareness of the serious problems connected with abused women and children in Las Cruces.”*



# Mary A. Garza

## Despite many awards, Garza's satisfaction lies in watching employees do great work

**F**orty-one years ago, Mary A. Garza, CEO of Solar Electric Company, had no idea where her life would lead her. Mary and her husband, Ralph, established Solar Electric Company in 1979, providing electrical contracting services to state and federal agencies throughout New Mexico and Texas.

Unexpectedly, Ralph passed away in 1989 leaving Mary to make a difficult decision about continuing the business or closing. Because of the state of the economy and her concern for the livelihood of her nine employees, Mary rolled up her sleeves and moved forward.

The challenge was massive, beginning with obtaining bonding credit at a time when women-owned businesses were few. As a minority-owned business, both physical and fiscal capabilities had to be re-established in order to obtain bonding credit. Her company originated with a bonding capacity of \$25,000 and today has a bonding capacity of \$6.6 million, obtaining some of the highest electrical contracts through Mary's perseverance.

From nine employees in 1979 to 50 in 2003, employee loyalty and commitment to excellence let to the success of Solar Electric, which earned numerous government contracts at White Sands Missile Range. Mary's customer service and commitment to excellence and safety has been recognized by numerous organizations.

Just to name a few: 1991 - Employer of the Year, Jobs for Progress Board of Directors; 1998 and 1999 - U.S. Small Business Administration Award of Excellence; 2001 - Public Service Company of New Mexico Entrepreneurial Leadership Award; 2002 - New Mexico Top 50 Women Owned Businesses; 2003 - U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year, Region II (9 states) and U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year.

In January 2022, Solar Electric Company celebrates 42 years in business, thanks to the hard work and perseverance of Mary A. Garza, a woman of strength, perseverance and commitment to provide electrical services to our community and throughout New Mexico and Texas.

### AT A GLANCE

#### What roles do you play as a woman?

Among many others, a business owner for 43 years

#### What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1976

#### What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Both the red and the green at Nellie's, especially the bañados

#### What is your job?

Owner, president and CEO of Solar Electric

#### What are your hobbies?

Reading and being with my friends


#### What motivates you?

Seeing my employees do such a great job. I'm blessed to have such great employees





Mary A. Garza

“After her husband passed away and she was faced with a difficult decision, Mary rolled up her sleeves and moved forward.”



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# Woojong Ko-Reel, DDS

## Continually striving for new summits in life and work

**D**r. Woojong Ko-Reel has been providing public health dentistry for over 16 years. Ko-Reel provides services for all ages, from children to senior citizens.

She spent much of her youth in Lawton, Oklahoma, and while studying as a math major at Oklahoma State University, she had an epiphany.

“One day I myself became a dental patient,” Ko-Reel said. “Something struck me, and I realized that was going to be my life.”

After finishing her undergraduate degree, she headed east, and earned her dental degree from Columbia University in New York City. After several years working in California, Ko-Reel and her husband moved to Las Cruces in 2019.

As an immigrant herself, she has unique insight into her patients’ lives, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Addressing the needs of her aging parents is another challenge she embraces. Las Cruces is fortunate to have Ko-Reel caring for people. She also recently completed a three-day backpacking trip, reaching the top of Wheeler Peak, the highest point in New Mexico.

“Getting this recognition is a really humbling experience,” she said.

“One day I myself became a dental patient. Something struck me and I realized that was going to be my life.”



Woojong Ko-Reel, DDS

*With gratitude...*

The Las Cruces Bulletin team thanks all the Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley for all they do day in and day out.

THE LAS CRUCES  
**Bulletin**

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Big sister, daughter, wife, aunt, friend and caregiver to my patients

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**  
2019

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

Red chile enchiladas homemade by my assistant, Gracie

**What is your job?**

Dentist at Ben Archer Health Center

**What are your hobbies?**

Hiking with my husband, reading spiritual books, gardening (“I call the plants my green children.”)

**What motivates you?**

People’s stories and making a difference in their lives



# Veronica R. Medina

## Giving back helps Medina receive the greatest gifts

**V**eronica Medina grew up, literally, as a coal miner's daughter. Her father was a coal miner in Gallup, and she grew up one of six children in a family that was always helping others.

"Whenever people needed something, whether it was shelter or whatever, my Dad would bend over backwards to help," Veronica said.

When her own family moved to Las Cruces in 1982, Veronica quickly followed the family tradition of helping, especially when it came to young people.

She took a job driving a school bus, including many years driving for special needs children. In the 1990s, she was president of the school bus union.

Veronica has been the committee chair for Mayor's Top Teens for the past seven years but has been on the committee since it began in 2007, a project she got involved with through a former mayor.

"Bill Mattiace was a friend of ours," she said. "He started the Top Teens here when I was president of the Women of Moose Lodge 2081."

She has also served as president of the Three Crosses Lioness Club, the women's auxiliary of the Lion's Club. Veronica also spent time as a soccer coach.

"I'm very humbled by this honor," Veronica said upon learning of her selection as an Outstanding Woman of the Mesilla Valley. "I think I'm in shock."



Veronica Medina always keeps this photograph nearby. The photo may be blurry, but its meaning to Veronica is crystal clear. It pictures Veronica and her granddaughter, Jayde Perez. When Veronica's kidneys were failing a few years ago, Jayde's proved to be a match, so she happily donated one of her own kidneys, giving her grandmother a new lease on life.



Veronica R. Medina

### AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**

Mother, grandmother, great grandmother, wife, sister, daughter, friend

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**

Chile rellenos at Nellie's

**What is (or was) your job?**

Retired after 25 years as a school bus driver, most of those years as a special needs driver

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**

1982

**What are your hobbies?**

Being an advocate for kids, bowling, interior decorating

**What motivates you?**

It's in my blood. We were poor when I was growing up, but we didn't know we were poor. I come from a strong background of helping people out.



Frances F. Williams

# Frances F. Williams

## AT A GLANCE

**What roles do you play as a woman?**  
Daughter, wife, sister, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and I just became a great-great-grandmother. I'm also a lifelong proponent of women's issues.

**What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?**  
1952

**What's your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?**  
Chile rellenos at Nellie's or Chope's

**What is your job?**  
Civil rights officer. And I worked from 1952-87 at White Sands Missile Range, the last 17 years as director of equal opportunity.

**What is your hobby?**  
There's no time for hobbies.

**What motivates you?**  
Compulsion. I'm a compulsive do-gooder.

## Focused on civil rights

Frances F. Williams represents the best that her community, state and the nation has to offer, dedicating her life to serving those who need a helping hand and crashing employment barriers impeding their abilities to be all that they can be.

She was one of the founding commissioners of the New Mexico State Ethics Commission, established to root out corruption in government; helped to build the Vietnam Memorial at Veterans Park, procuring the Huey Helicopter for the memorial; has advocated and worked tirelessly for equal of opportunity in employment establishing and implementing programs leading to an increase of women and minorities in positions never held before; serves as a consultant, adviser to business and government on management and employment issues; served as a housing commissioner for the city and state; a whistleblower who uncovered the corruption in these organizations, resulting in an overhaul of housing authorities in New Mexico; a whistleblower bill protecting them; founding member of Temple Beth El; president of the White Sands Missile Range Museum Historical Foundation raising \$1 million for its expansion; worked to stop a private company wanting to build an electric line across New Mexico which could take private ranchers' property by eminent domain, and impairing the mission of White Sands Missile Range.



## Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley 2021 Winners

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Chenchie Schmukler   | Mary A. Garza       |
| Mary Ann Constantini | Woojong Ko-Reel     |
| Jeanne Gleason       | Amy Bassford        |
| Jenny Sims Clark     | Veronica R. Medina  |
| Miriam Torres        | Stacey Scanlon      |
| Hilda Luz Chavez     | Frances F. Williams |
| Susie Kimble         |                     |



## Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley 2020 Winners

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Misty Arruda           | Lou Ellen Kay     |
| Candace Avalos         | Elizabeth Kuchler |
| Nova Castillo          | Wendy Lara        |
| Emily Chaddock         | Christine May     |
| Denise Chavez          | Jennie Moore      |
| Yolanda "Yoli" R. Diaz | Heather Pollard   |
| Grace Duran            | Alexis Ramirez    |