

2022



OUTSTANDING
Women
of the *Mesilla Valley*



THE LAS CRUCES
Bulletin



CELEBRATING WOMEN OF THE MESILLA VALLEY

The range in age of this year's Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley is jarring.

Age 18 to age 97. I'll save you the trouble of doing the math. That's a 79-year spread.

In fact, we have two nonagenarians – Barb Hubbard is 95 and Flo Hosa Dougherty is 97.

As we have each year since we initiated this program in 2020, the variety of the talents and backgrounds of these outstanding women is as jarring as the age spread.

Did you know that making crystal suncatchers is a hobby? Neither did I. Another one of our outstanding women has a much more traditional hobby: Studying Scripture.

If you know me, or if you have read any of my columns I've been writing in the Bulletin the last dozen

years, you know my passion for New Mexico chile. So you can thank (or blame) me for the chile question. But since most of you share that passion, I hope you'll forgive me.

The best answer I got to that question came from Barb Hubbard, who answered it with absolutely ZERO hesitation: "Chope's red enchiladas!"

But I also love the answers from women who cited the chile dishes from friends and family members.

As much as I love chile, its joy is only temporary.

The work and inspiration of these outstanding women will last for generations.

Richard Coltharp
Publisher
Las Cruces Bulletin

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**The Las Cruces Home Builders Association
wish to recognize and congratulate this
year's Outstanding Women of the Mesilla
Valley for their exceptional contributions
and support of our community.**



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THE LAS CRUCES
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Elizabeth Brasher

What roles do you play as a woman?

I feel very blessed to be happily married and to be the person that two great kids call mom.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I moved to Las Cruces in 2003.

What is your job?

I am a teacher at Las Cruces Academy.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

That's easy! Red chile cheese enchiladas are my favorite.

What are your hobbies?

I truly enjoy spending time with my family: watching sports, playing games, making dinner, or just talking with them. I like to read, sing, and work in my garden.

What inspires you?

I am so proud to see the people that my children and my students are growing up to be.



Elizabeth Brasher

Linda Prendez

What roles do you play as a woman?

I am a daughter, sister, and friend.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I attended NMSU in 1967 to pursue a degree in secondary education. I graduated after four years, left to teach in Austin, Texas, and returned in 1972 to teach at Mayfield High School. My sister was going to attend NMSU and I wanted to help make her college years easier by providing her with all the necessities so she could concentrate fully on her studies. I fell in love with Las Cruces, my job and my friends.

What is your job?

I am working part-time at Centennial High School as an instructional specialist. I have the privilege of supporting teachers with technology, programs, initiatives, strategies, and NM PED requirements.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

I love a good salsa and red chile cheese enchiladas with onions. If you ask me if I choose red or green chile, red always wins out.

What are your hobbies?

I love walking, reading and crafting. I love to make unique gifts for family, friends and co-workers.

What inspires you?

Since I usually have four-day week-ends, I look forward to walking and watching the colorful sunrises in the Land of Enchantment. Their beauty and the possibilities the day can bring inspire me. My dedicated, hard-working, and caring co-workers inspire me by setting the example of life-long learners for their students. Family and friends are my most important inspiration because of their love, giving and kindness.



Linda Prendez

Stephanie Hofacket

What roles do you play as a woman?

Mother, wife, sister, daughter, educator

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

Came to NMSU in 1999 from Rio Rancho

What is your job?

Associate director of teaching and learning K-12 science/Challenger Learning Center of Las Cruces

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

I like everything! Tacos make me happy. Like Los Mariachis and El Sombrero.

What are your hobbies?

Currently all my spare time is on coursework and dissertation for my PhD at NMSU. If I have spare time, I like to read and be outside. Hike, walk, run.

What inspires you?

Getting to work with diverse people because their perspectives are so different from my own; my colleagues and co-workers inspire me. My PhD program, as well as my cohort in the program, have inspired some of my perspectives on teaching and learning. Living in New Mexico is inspiring, it's so beautiful



Stephanie Hofacket

and people are so nice. Even though I've lived here my whole life, I'm still inspired by my place.

Carrie Hamblen

What roles do you play as a woman?

Well, my identity as a person goes way beyond my gender. I am an activist, a partner, a friend, a leader, a senator....so, I would hope my gender is not what drives the recognition. I think every woman that gets recognized for an honor such as this credits their accomplishments and their community involvement above all else.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I moved to New Mexico in 1992.

What is your job?

President and CEO, Las Cruces Green Chamber

of Commerce; Doña Ana County state senator for District 38.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

My homemade beer battered chile rellenos made with my wife's healthy green chile sauce.

What are your hobbies?

I make homemade soap and candles to give as gifts to my friends, building a safe and stimulating environment for our 7-year-old African Sulcata tortoise, and working on our 1948 home that I share with my wife, Char.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by the



Carrie Hamblen

young people who are stepping up in the fight for equality, climate change, reproductive health, and equity for those whose voices are ignored. They are mobilized to act because they have seen the inaction by those who have done little or nothing to create a state, country, and a world that is a place where everyone has a chance to thrive and prosper.

Maria Laguerre-Diego

What roles do you play as a woman?

What an interesting question! Daughter, sister, mother, friend, colleague, teacher, boss, healthcare worker, neighbor.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I came to NMSU in 1999.

What is your job?

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist and a Registered Play Therapist by training. I am a healer and a helper by passion. My job title is CEO and Owner of A New Hope Therapy Center but my job is providing a safe, passionate environment for therapists to do the hard work that they do for our community. My

latest "job" has been providing educational workshops to other therapists in our community, state and across the nation.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Ooooooh!! That's a tough question, but you can't go wrong with the green enchiladas from Andele's.

What are your hobbies?

The quick answer would be playing! I enjoy creating cosplay costumes, traveling and enjoying adventures with my family. We are a gaming family, so we often play board games, role playing games and video games.

What inspires you?

The resiliency in others to

bounce back, grow and even thrive after a difficult situation. The ability to be kind and compassionate, even when others are not. We are all hurting and surviving, so when people lift up others it has a positive ripple effect. I have the honor of working with a team of people who dedicate their lives to helping others - I am inspired by their work, their passion to help heal our community, and their dedication to improving the lives of others.



Maria Laguerre-Diego

Flo Hosa Dougherty

What roles do you play as a woman?

Mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, professional artist, teacher and head of the school art department, and neighbor.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1995

What is your job?

Retired now, previously art teacher and head of school art department, Blue Gate Gallery owner and operator

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Too many good ones to single out just one.

What are your hobbies?

Crossword puzzles, reading, writing letters to friends and family throughout the country. Previously golf and gardening.

What inspires you?

My energies and my parents who allowed me to follow my desires and plans.



Flo Hosa Dougherty

Debbi Moore

What roles do you play as a woman?

As life changes, our roles do as well. My hope and prayer is no matter my specific role in life -- mother, grandmother, sister, widow, teacher, etc. -- is that I embrace each role with grace, zeal and passion to make a difference in someone's life. Our influence and impact can last a lifetime.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

2016

What is your job?

President and CEO, Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Green chile chicken enchiladas

What are your hobbies?

While I am an avid reader, I've been known to binge on a few foreign films with sub-titles (very hard to multi-task when you're reading sub-titles.) I suppose one could say my main hobby is Santa Claus and Christmas.

What inspires you?

For me, passion drives inspiration. Inspiration is defined as a feeling of enthusiasm you receive from someone or some-



Debbi Moore

thing, that gives you new and creative ideas. Being inspired may not always mean ideas, but could be simply how we look at life. Ultimately, inspiration is to be passed on and shared. To give someone else that one feeling that inspires them is priceless.

Rosalie Lucas

What roles do you play as a woman?

I am a daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, wife and friend. I am lucky to have a wonderful husband and share in his large family. I have my mother and her wonderful partner. Friends near and far bless my life.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

We visited and purchased a home in Las Cruces in April 2019 and moved in February 2020.

What is your job?

I have been a physical therapist for over 40 years. I first worked for Fyzical here, and helped set up and run inpatient

physical therapy for Three Crosses Hospital. Now, I work with a national company, HD Nursing.

What is your favorite chile dish?

One our neighbor makes that is a type of Hatch chile with sour cream.

What are your hobbies?

Mostly my grandkids. But I also like to hike, I sing in a chorale, I help out with the Borderlands Ballet, and I'm working on my golf game. I had time during the pandemic to do some sewing and create a few fun things. My husband and I also created a harness that can be used for exercise and balance training with

folks who are at risk for falling.

What inspires you?

The helpers! I see them everywhere and have felt inspired to jump in and help where I can in this community. I am always in awe of our beautiful open skies and stunning Organ mountains. I am inspired by the people who strive to make a difference here for the greater good and give of their time and talents to bring wonderful opportunities to our communities.



Rosalie Lucas

Congratulations Debbi Moore

Congratulations Debbi on the well-deserved honor of being named one of the **Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley!** We are extremely proud of you and appreciate all that you have done, and continue to do, for our community. We have long known that you are an outstanding citizen for our community and it is wonderful to see you recognized publicly!



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Dr. Sangeeth Shanbhag-Pai

What roles do you play as a woman?

I am a sister, a daughter and mother of two wonderful and successful children who are born and raised in Las Cruces.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I moved here in 2002 after my husband and I completed our education. My husband graduated from Rutgers University and I completed my residency in internal medicine at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

What is your job?

I am a board certified physician in internal medi-

cine and obesity medicine. My focus is primary care, diabetes, hypertension, weight management and women's health. I am medical director of New Mexico Primary Care Group, PC.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

I prefer chile in everything. However, my comfort food is a chile relleno burrito with beans and salsa from Go Burger.

What are your hobbies?

We travel and have covered a huge amount of New Mexico. I dabble in art, interior decoration and restoring old chairs, working on our small pecan orchard and long

walks either along the dam trail or Sierra Vista trails.

What inspires you?

Young women leaders like Amanda Gorman, Sabrina Gonzales Paterski, and Malala Yousafzai inspire me to be confident of our future. Also my office colleagues, which includes my daughter, who are mostly women with families and inspire me with their hard work of managing expectations of our patients and yet go home with a smile to take care of their families.



Barbara Hubbard

What roles do you play as a woman?

I'm a grandmother (one of my grandsons says I play a substitute role for his mom who passed away), to my sons I'm a mother, and out at the school I try to be a mentor.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I moved from Arkansas in 1954, to take a teaching job at Las Cruces High School.

What is your job?

I'm American Collegiate Talent Showcase executive director and I raise scholarships for young people who want to get into the entertainment business. We started that

in 1972, and Bob Hope was first one to put his name on one of the scholarships. We have endowments now in five states.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Chope's red enchiladas.

What are your hobbies?

I try to go to any Aggie athletics game the university has.

What inspires you?

I tell everybody right now, at 95, I think the good Lord's got something he wants me to finish. I want to finish it but I don't know exactly what it is. It might be the amphitheater project,



the idea I have for a big amphitheater with a large outdoor screen, and big enough for concerts, regional rodeo events and other things we're not capable of hosting right now. In addition, it would furnish jobs for the Valley. It would be something for the community and the students. I love the young people and want to believe there is something in this old crazy world for them and I just want to be a part of it.

Congratulations Dr. Sangeeth Shanbhag-Pai



on your well deserved honor of being recognized as an Outstanding Woman of The Mesilla Valley. We are so proud to see you recognized as a leading woman of this community.

FROM THE STAFF of NEW MEXICO PRIMARY CARE



New Mexico Primary Care Group, P.C.

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575-521-8500

Salma Barragan

What roles do you play as a woman?

Daughter to an amazing woman I owe everything to. Sister to a little brother, and two older sisters. One just became a mom and made me an aunt.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

2005

What is your job?

I am currently a first-year student at NMSU. My focus is to maintain good grades in biochemistry. My part-time job is at Sonic as where I get to work on my patience and communication.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla

Valley?

A chile relleno plate with a side of rice and beans. Now that I get the privilege of making this dish, I understand the hard work it takes. I am happy my family stayed in the Mesilla Valley so I can experience my Mexican culture through food.

What are your hobbies?

My current and only hobby is studying. However, I like going to the park with my dog, painting and helping out with the non-profit Distinguished Young Women.

What inspires you?

My mother is my biggest inspiration, having shown me exactly what a

woman should be: hard-working, dedicated and independent. She's shown

me and my siblings how much she's sacrificed for us. She's raised four kids as a single mother after leaving her country Mexico behind. She also left her career behind. She gave us the most beautiful childhood memories even through her struggles. I know one of mine and my siblings' biggest blessings was and always will be having such an outstanding woman as a mother.



Salma Barragan

Yvonne Silva

What roles do you play as a woman?

Daughter, granddaughter, sister, niece, mother grandmother, friend, supervisor, mentor, leader

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

All my life. I grew up in Mesquite, went to Gadsden High School, then moved to Las Cruces when I got married. I grew up throughout the whole valley.

What is your job?

Customer care supervisor for El Paso Electric. I oversee different customer service payment centers in Las Cruces and Anthony as well as some in Texas.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Green chile chicken and rice, red and green chile enchiladas made by my dad.

What are your hobbies?

Going to baseball games and sports, especially when my children are playing. Spending time with family and friends, like a nice cookout with good conversation. Hearing tales of my grandmother as she grew up in the Mesilla Valley.

What inspires you?

People's ambition. The people I'm surrounded with -- my children, my parents, my grandmother



Yvonne Silva

-- have overcome so many obstacles but remain eager to strive for success.

Alice B. Davenport

What roles do you play as a woman?

Mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and sister.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I came from Boise, Idaho, to Las Cruces in February 1992 for my health.

What is your job?

I started an alteration/sewing shop while getting a master's degree at NMSU. I am a Certified Family Life Educator listening to folks with "people" problems. My bookstore features books by 250 authors who live in Las Cruces.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

None now; restricted diet.

What are your hobbies?

Who has time for hobbies?

What inspires you?

People, especially ones with problems.



Alice B. Davenport

Monika Mojica

What roles do you play as a woman?

Friend, mother, wife, aunt, daughter, empath

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1998.

What is your job? Lord, which one?

I am a trial consultant, writer and client liaison for Kastl Law P.C. I am also an adjunct professor at New Mexico State University and run my own business called MoBu Creative. Through MoBu Creative, I help teach verbal de-escalation skills to officers of the law and I facilitate creative corporate team building workshops all over the United States.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

My husband makes THE BEST green chile sauce using our yearly supply of Hatch green chile. Just writing this makes my stomach growl.

What are your hobbies?

I love to hike and hang out with my empowering girlfriends.

What inspires you?

Everyone inspires me, everyone is a teacher. I am blown away by the stories we carry. I feel profoundly honored when someone shares their unique journey with me and celebrate our collective light.



Monika Mojica

Jessica Cauthorne

What roles do you play as a woman?

I embrace all aspects of being a woman, not one particular "role." I fight for women to have equal rights, equal pay, equal access to health care, government and the right for each woman to make personal decisions based on their own individual situations and needs.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

I moved to Mesilla Valley in 2005 to earn my Masters degree at NMSU, and have been here ever since!

What is your job?

I am currently a practicing therapist, and clinical

director, at "A New Hope Therapy Center." I supervise and train master level clinicians, and graduate level Interns, on providing the highest quality therapeutic care to our community.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

A vegetarian burrito smothered in green chile sauce!!

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy hikes with our dog, yoga, reading, anything musical and time with my friends and family.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by stories of



Jessica Cauthorne

those who fight for others' rights and equality, and those who fight to make the world a better place.

Deborah Weir

What roles do you play as a woman?

Wife, mother, stepmother, daughter, sister

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

We moved to Las Cruces in July 2016.

What is your job?

Director of Human Resources, Doña Ana County

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

Paisano Cafe's enchiladas verde; Chachi's red enchiladas

What are your hobbies?

Reading, hiking, biking, and keeping up with our son's activities

What inspires you?

The friendly, compassionate, and generous people of Mesilla Valley are a continual inspiration. This is a welcoming community that is always ready and willing to reach out and help those in need. The community's generosity is demonstrated daily in a variety of ways. My other inspiration comes from my peers and colleagues at Doña Ana County. They are true professionals dedicated to serving our community. They are committed to service and improving the quality of life in our community and for our residents. It is an honor to be part of an organization with so many professionals that have dedicated



Deborah Weir

their lives to transparency and continual improvement in service to our community.

Melissa Diaz

What roles do you play as a woman?

Wife (a pastor's wife!), stepmom, sister, daughter, Tia/Aunt, women's ministry leader and mentor to other female engineers

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

1997 - moved here to attend NMSU and has loved it here ever since.

What is your job?

Program Manager for Peraton Inc., supporting a multi-million dollar government contract managing 450 personnel that operate, maintain, and sustain space and ground assets around the world for NASA's Space

Communications and Navigation program.

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

The Christmas enchiladas at most of the Mexican restaurants in town, but especially Pepe's Restaurant on Valley Drive.

What are your hobbies?

Studying Scripture, reading biographies and watching documentaries on historical figures/events, walking my dog, and serving on the Board of Directors, Scholarship Committee, and Executive Committee for the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico.

What inspires you?

It inspires me when people are kind to each other. We don't think about that much, about how it elevates people and brightens their day. I am also inspired at how charitable and generous our Mesilla Valley community is.



Melissa Diaz

Lisa Lucca

What roles do you play as a woman?

A mother, a partner, a sister, a daughter, a friend, a coach and a writer. The hats I wear are ever-changing, and throughout my life it has been important for me to see myself as a woman first. It isn't easy for women to separate from the roles we choose or life assigns us, as they shape and define who we are.

What year were you first in the Mesilla Valley?

2018 and it immediately felt like home.

What is your job?

To inspire others to live true to who they are. I became a life coach

22 years ago and have always been a writer. My radio show, Live True, airs weekly on KTAL-LP. The show features conversations with people who share their stories of living with creative self-expression at any age. As an editor and advisor, I help other writers become authors. .

What is your favorite chile dish in the Mesilla Valley?

It's actually a drink: the green chile gimlet at Little Toad Creek!

What are your hobbies?

I love reading, walks in our beautiful desert, travel (especially in Italy), playing board games,

cooking, making crystal sun-catchers, and gardening.

What inspires you?

Nature is so inspirational, whether in the quiet stillness of a sunrise or in a wicked storm - I love it all. Hearing other people's stories - their challenges, hopes, yearnings and victories - is very inspiring to me. And travel - learning how people live in other places, trying new foods, seeing the world from a different perspective - it feeds my soul.



Lisa Lucca



Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley 2022 Winners

Elizabeth Brasher

Linda Prendez

Alice Davenport

Lisa Lucca

Flo Hosa Dougherty

Maria Laguerre-Diego

Barb Hubbard

Melissa Diaz

Carrie Hamblen

Monika Mojica

Debbi Moore

Rosalie Lucas

Deborah Weir

Salma Barragan

Dr. Sangeeth Shanbhag-Pai

Stephanie Hofacket

Jessica Cauthorne

Yvonne Silva



Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley 2021 Winners

Chenchie Schmukler
Mary Ann Constantini
Jeanne Gleason
Jenny Sims Clark
Miriam Torres
Hilda Luz Chavez
Susie Kimble

Mary A. Garza
Woojong Ko-Reel
Amy Bassford
Veronica R. Medina
Stacey Scanlon
Frances F. Williams



Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley 2020 Winners

Misty Arruda
Candace Avalos
Nova Castillo
Emily Chaddock
Denise Chavez
Yolanda "Yoli" R. Diaz
Grace Duran

Lou Ellen Kay
Elizabeth Kuchler
Wendy Lara
Christine May
Jennie Moore
Heather Pollard
Alexis Ramirez

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The Las Cruces Bulletin would like to congratulate the 2022 Outstanding Women of the Mesilla Valley for their exceptional contributions and support of our community.

THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin

Tough financial questions? Ask Jackie.



Talk to Jackie, a Branch Leader and Financial Consultant here in Las Cruces.

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