



2017 SHRM NM

HR Professional of the Year

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2017 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE
HR Superheroes: Upholding the Law



SHRM NM Human Resource Professional of the Year candidates are evaluated on their demonstrated Integrity, Leadership, Innovation, Strategic Thinking, Character, Objectivity, Passion, Influence, and Knowledge in Human Resources. The goal is to spotlight a Human Resources professional in NM who elevates the profession, who serves as a role model for their peers, and sets the standard for other HR professionals to follow. The only requirement is the recipient must be a current practitioner of Human Resources in NM for an organization(s) serving employees working in New Mexico.

We would like to congratulate all of our 2017 nominees. Thank you to those who have nominated these worthy professionals, to our panel of judges for their time and effort, and to our award sponsor, Innovate+Educate.

2017 Nominees

Dawn Boulware
Tom Frock
LaGina Glass
Rene Hatfield
Esther Lumague
Barbara Marcus
Patricia Martinez
Judy Perkins

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Dawn Boulware | HR Director/Sustainability Coordinator | Taos Ski Valley



Under new ownership, Dawn put together a group of employees to define what was important to carry forward into the new era. She facilitated the group to create the core values and mission that guided them through the transition. She also seized upon the new owner's strong conservation ethic, which evolved into Ski Taos achieving a B Corporation certification, making them the first ski resort in the world to receive the certification (meeting rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.)

Dawn's colleagues said: Every day we are empowered to make decisions and feel comfortable coming to her with any issue, no matter how minor. She is a director and colleague but more notably, a friend, as she is first to say "I'm not the boss, we're a team." She is sure to put others before herself, and sets the stage for how all directors and managers should treat others. She combines competence and confidence as a leader in a mostly male dominated industry. She knows the company, the staff, and the operation inside and out. Fun Facts: Dawn is a ski Instructor, is Mental Health First Aid certified, and holds a NM Alcohol Server certification.

Tom Frock | Executive Director, Strategic HR Business Partner | Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico



Tom works to develop the next generation of HR practitioners, and with Economic Development to attract new business to Albuquerque and keep talent in NM. Tom was instrumental in the formation of an employee-driven committee called "Proud to be Blue" advancing employee engagement, re-energizing morale, and promoting a culture of purpose.

Tom's colleagues said: Tom's leadership has enabled our team to live our motto, "Bring Heart", perform at our best, and face many challenges during a critical time of change in our industry. Tom is committed to living our purpose, "Stand with our Members in Sickness and Health." Tom influences by listening, and acknowledging others' worries with the sole intent of understanding the challenges they face. Tom's character and commitment are undaunted, he continually encourages us "to do the right thing," and to see change initiatives with the long term in mind. Tom's integrity does not allow him to doubt that any division is beyond reformation. As I've told Tom on numerous occasions, "Tom, if you charge that hill, I will follow, so long as you are leading..." Tom believes in nurturing an employee-centric culture.

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LaGina Glass | HR Director | Guadalupe Credit Union



LaGina's social media recognition initiative at GCU allows employees to post about appreciation for collaborations, excellent service, share about their hobbies, and get to know each other, and has engaged 97% of employees. LaGina also presents on HR hot topics at monthly leadership meetings. For the first time in its history, LaGina's former employer, Home Depot, had a location that made it to the point of a union election. LaGina was sent to that location as HR Manager, and within 14 weeks, the initiative was defeated by a landslide.

LaGina's colleagues said: From the moment I met her, I knew she would bring joy and charisma to our credit union. Her character has changed the perspective staff has of HR. Her knowledge in HR does not stop with the technical side. She projects a warm cheerful attitude, resolves conflict and handles difficult situations with remarkable patience and admirable tact, characteristics that well represent our company values. LaGina said: Every individual is born with intrinsic value and divine gifts. It is my personal mission to assist others in developing personal and transformational techniques to bring those gifts to light. Fun Facts: LaGina is a Reiki Master and practitioner.

Rene Hatfield | HR Director | PreCheck



Rene's colleagues said: Rene revolutionized HR for PreCheck. She inherited a neglected HR department, reorganized and brought it into compliance. She delivered strategic vision and innovation as we grew by 120%, made things scalable, and improved engagement, turnover, and morale. Rene is passionate about HR and immerses herself. She prides herself on remaining on the leading edge of HR best practices. Her ethics, integrity, reliability and thoughtfulness are unwavering. She balances compassion with rules. Rene is the one person I seek for answers related to workforce development and its impact on our local businesses and industry. She is a natural leader, brings out the best in people, and puts the human in Human Resources. She knows each of our 300 employees by name.

Rene said: We as HR pros are more than a function. I ask people, "How can I help you win today?" If money was not an issue and I could do anything with my life, I would still be in HR. I have the greatest job on this Earth. By helping people figure stuff out I figure stuff out. Our employees save and test my sanity every day and I wouldn't have it any other way.

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Esther Lumague, GPHR,SPHR, SHRM-SCP | Senior VP of HR| Los Alamos National Bank



Esther paved the way for a one-billion-dollar revenue gain by leading the launch of international business and HR affairs for her previous organization.

Esther's colleagues said: Within her first 90 days at LANB she transformed HR from transactional to a strategic partner with an eye on business impact. She doesn't just wait for HR issues to come along, she anticipates them and makes connections to people issues.

Esther believes in avoiding political and self-serving behavior, and standing up for what she believes. Esther stays in HR to work with people, make a difference, concentrate on the positives, and groom rising stars. Esther said: I am a business person who happens to specialize in HR and Organizational Development. To be an effective leader requires objectivity. I see and accept things as they are without projecting fears, background, and personal experiences onto them. I avoid limiting and unproductive ways of thinking, and open myself to engage in new learnings, opportunities and challenges. HR should master the administrative side, translate HR theory into practical application, connect to business strategy, and not get too caught up in new technology and programs that don't align.

Barbara Marcus | HR Director | Visit Albuquerque



Barbara was elected President of the largest state SHRM chapter, HRMA of Albuquerque, serving approximately 300 members. She created a certification preparation course for HRMA that beat the national average, with passing scores of over 80%.

Barbara's colleagues said: I admire the way she can calm a tense situation, and she always has perfect advice for dealing with difficult issues. Barbara has served in volunteer SHRM leadership roles for the last 7 years. She co-led an incredibly successful state conference with almost 400 participants. She has given so much of life's precious gifts, her time and her talent, toward advancing the HR profession. Barbara believes the easiest way to damage credibility on the part of the HR department is to leave promises un-kept and requests unfulfilled.

Barbara said: Throughout my 35-year career in HR, I have been amazed and in awe how the profession has been able to reinvent itself, and come out of each innovation more effective and more important to today's business world and that of tomorrow. I find myself looking forward to going to work every day.

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Patricia Martinez, PHR, SHRM-CP | HR Deputy Director | City of Rio Rancho



Last year Patricia's HR department handmade hundreds of Valentine and holiday cards and delivered them to City hospital and VFW staff, and to patients in their rooms.

Patricia's colleagues said: She ensures fairness and equity across the city, rather than appeasing the sometimes-shortsighted requests of hiring managers. She does not rest on her laurels. I have seen her get visibly excited at the prospect of undertaking new projects. Over the past year, Patricia developed and launched a citywide employee training and development program to astounding success. This helped not only the city and our employees, but ultimately all the citizens that we serve, and has mitigated policy violations and safety issues.

Patricia believes in helping others reach their potential, and leading by example regardless of what level one is at in an organization. Patricia said: I pride myself in knowing that I ask my staff nothing more than what I expect of myself. There is nothing in the HR rule book that says that discipline or terminations must involve a lack of respect, but rather a sense of honesty and accountability that must be communicated between the parties.

Judy Perkins | Director of HR | Ojo Spa Resorts



Judy's colleagues said: Her teaching is like a TED Talk. Judy possesses the innate ability to focus on minute detail and the big picture, while bringing a calming and steady impact. We rely on her keen observation, great listening, valuable insights and intuition. Judy's brain is always ticking with the potential legal and organizational ramifications of any course of action. She creates learning opportunities, empowering managers to make sound decisions. She is able to coach without preaching and encourage without pushing. Her energy is seemingly inexhaustible and tireless, when she comes to spend the day at Ojo Caliente I pack extra vitamins and protein bars. (Funny, most of us go to Ojo to relax. I guess Judy works hard so we can!)

Judy sees herself as a corporate social worker. She believes in not making HR the disciplinarians; that managers need to take responsibility for positive and corrective feedback to employees. Judy said: I have walked away from job offers to instead find leaders who truly wanted to hire a HR professional who would be a strong strategic partner. Fun facts: Judy wrote three books for the American Management Association, and is an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach.

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Special thanks to our judges:



Audrey Arnold is Director of Executive and Professional Education for UNM's Anderson School of Management, connecting exceptional students, renowned faculty, accomplished alumni, prominent business partners, and dedicated staff to provide high-quality educational resources such as accelerated MBA programs, professional development certificates, and customized training for New Mexico's business community.



Jamai Blivin is Founder and CEO of Innovate+Educate, a nonprofit based in New Mexico focused on education and workforce strategies to address the significant gaps between supply/demand in both education and the workforce. Jamai sits on the ABQ Learning Council, Mayor Javier Gonzales' Children's Cabinet, and ACT State Leadership Board. We thank Innovate+Educate for being our award sponsor.



Jason Espinoza is the president & CEO of the New Mexico Association of Commerce and Industry (ACI), New Mexico's statewide business advocate. Previously, Jason served as ACI's chief lobbyist as vice president for government affairs. As president, Jason has led ACI to more proactively champion policy, such as drafting and supporting pro-business legislation.



Tim Nisly is the CEO of the Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, as well as Social Impact through the Nonprofit Community (SINC), a non-profit incubator. He is also the founder of TEDxABQ. Tim works to support community leaders through building operational structures around big ideas and broad visions to achieve real impact.



Melonie Parker is Vice President of Human Resources and Communications at Sandia Corporation, Melonie is responsible for the leadership and labs-wide management of human resources and employee services as well as Sandia's communication efforts. Melonie was the first winner of SHRM NM's HR Professional of the Year award in 2016.



Linda Strauss, SPHR, SHRM-SCP is owner of Strauss HR Consulting, and Director of Awards and Recognition for SHRM NM, for which she created this award. Linda co-created *US News and World Report's* HIRE Awards, and serves as judge for Santa Fe Professional and Business Women's Woman of the Year Award.

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HR Brings It Together**

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