

# 2018 SHRM NM State HR Conference



## 2018 SHRM NM HR Professional of the Year

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**2018 SHRM NM STATE CONFERENCE**  
*Solving The People Puzzle: HR Connects The Pieces*



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 2018 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, Modrall Spering.

**2018 Nominees**

Dawn Boulware  
Alyssa Brodsky  
Lisa Bronowicz  
Lynne Carlberg  
Christine Garcia  
Michael Ibarra de Perea  
Leah Jackson  
Denise Montoya  
Sheila Nunez  
Joe Palmeri  
Anita Sanchez-Triviso  
Naomi Serna-Olander  
James Stevens  
Jamie Wagoner

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



As HR Director for 20 years, Dawn has developed creative recruiting and retention strategies to handle the business and staffing requirements of a seasonal organization. In addition, Dawn heads up the sustainability efforts and charitable giving.

Due in great part to her initiative and leadership, Taos Ski Valley became the first Certified B Corp ski resort in the world, recognizing a commitment to support their staff, community, and the environment.

With the input of the entire organization, Dawn introduced a reference tool that shares the organization's history, values, and work ethos.

Dawn's colleagues feel she's been instrumental in "developing a culture around transparency, equality, teamwork, inclusion, and support." She's seen as a fair-minded leader who keeps both employees and the business in mind when making difficult decisions. Dawn's co-workers repeatedly emphasized her commitment to do the right thing, "especially in regards to balancing the needs of staff, the company, our community and larger environment." They respect her for looking for new ways to improve the way they do business, for inspiring employees to challenge themselves, and for following through on the initiatives she creates. "In every instance that I have known Dawn, she's been a contributor. One that immediately engages with a group as a team member, supporter, and advocate for change."

#### **Alyssa Brodskey, MBA, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | HR Consultant | Southwestern HR Consulting**



A frightening situation in the workplace over 20 years ago led Alyssa to pursue a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management. Alyssa thrives on keeping up to date with laws, best practices, and emerging trends. Her passion for HR is reflected in many years of service to both HRMA and SHRM NM. Her commitment to serving others extends to coaching and mentoring junior level HR professionals and pro bono work for non-profits, including resume and interview coaching at a men's homeless shelter. She has presented on a number of HR topics at conferences and for a variety of organizations.

Jill Avey, President of Southwestern HR Consulting shared that Alyssa helps her clients grow their culture and business with "powerful HR advisement, innovative approaches to hiring, accountability, team building, and compliance." She also says that Alyssa "has effectively turned HR into a partner to business leadership, as well as to employees."

Alyssa is proud to have been nominated for this award by one of those clients and sees it as the greatest of compliments. Alyssa says, "Throughout my career and especially as a Consultant, I have had a seat at the table with the Executive Team. Today, more than ever, companies see HR as playing a key role on the strategic leadership team. We know that our employees are our greatest assets and HR plays an important role in this."

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**Lisa Bronowicz, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | HR Supervisor | Presbyterian Medical Services**



With her interest in what makes people behave and think the way they do, it's understandable Lisa pursued a career in HR. Service to others is important to her. She's been on the NNMHRA board for 10 years. She sees it as an opportunity to learn from others and sharpen her skills.

Recently, PMS implemented a new HCM system. As employees struggled with the platform, Lisa focused on making the change easier for them. Diane Kramer, HR Manager for PMS said that despite the challenges presented, "Lisa remained calm and composed throughout the process. She has a very strong ethical character and is a wonderful supervisor." She refers to Lisa as "a kind, caring, and compassionate professional" who is "humble in her approach."

Lisa believes both management and employees must trust HR. "I recognize these as the DNA of HR: Honesty and Ethics, Respect, Character, Critical Thinking, and Knowledge." A colleague shared that Lisa is a mentor and attributes her own growth to Lisa's example. "Through her conduct and leadership, she has shown a high level of integrity."

Lisa says to be treated as a strategic partner, HR must act like one. This means being adaptable to change, having the ability to analyze situations and solve problems, and being prepared with facts and financials. "We must know what we are talking about and still be able to be humble."

**Lynne Carlberg, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | Corporate Director of HR | Haverland Carter Lifestyle Group**



Lynne had two stressful and unrewarding turns as a manager early in her career. Lynne's fairly recent re-entry into leadership was a career defining moment for her and has also made a significant impact on the team she now leads, her CEO, and the 600 employees she serves.

HR team member, Amanda Guth, emphasized Lynne's commitment to mentorship, selfless leadership, and described Lynne as "ambitious and highly respected." Amanda credits Lynne's actions and passion for helping others with dramatically decreasing turnover to 15% lower than average within the highly-regulated retirement and healthcare industry. "I have never worked with someone as committed to others' successes," says Amanda, "Lynne is the type of leader that motivates others to want to become the best that they can be."

E DeAnn Eaton, CEO says, "It's easy to make decisions based on financial and regulatory impact, but because of my high regard for Lynne's perspective, critical decisions are not made without her input. In addition to her in-depth knowledge of the HR discipline, I have learned that she is also well-informed of current events and has a fabulous reading list."

You might also ask Lynne what's on her music playlist. She once served as KUNM Public Radio's Music Librarian.

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#### **Christine Garcia, PHR | HR Director | Sysco New Mexico**



Christine works closely with senior leadership to ensure she understands the needs of the business. She guided the launch of a new information systems platform and helped others to navigate it. Says a colleague, “She continues to focus on improving the quality of our leadership team and has been a full partner in improving accountability across the organization.”

She’s passionate about inspiring others to unlock their potential. She asks questions, learns what motivates employees, and helps them achieve their goals. Christine took pride in mentoring her HR Generalist. When the employee accepted a promoted position elsewhere, Christine advised her to pay attention during Senior Staff meetings outside of HR, as that was where she’d learn the most. Her colleagues say Christine’s patience in teaching and training is unmatched. “She spent endless hours working with me and developing my skills.”

Christine feels her greatest professional achievement was standing up for what she knew was the right thing to do, despite it being the unsafe or unpopular decision. Colleagues acknowledge the respect Christine has earned from management and employees alike. “She has removed the stigma surrounding HR through the compassion and respect she shows to all of her employees and peers.”

#### **Michael Ibarra de Perea, MBA, SPHR | Director of HR | Southwest CARE Center**



Mike supports 200 employees who support populations across New Mexico who have historically experienced drastically unmet health needs. Mike’s goal is to enable his staff to enjoy the same judgement-free and compassionate experience that patients are given.

“Mike was placed into an interim Director position with great personal opportunity, but also a situation that could have been overwhelming for many people,” according to CEO Jeff Thomas and Mike’s boss, Eric Garrison. They agree Mike has demonstrated “exceptional insight, initiative and willingness to face the challenges of a rapidly growing enterprise.”

Team member Terri Verrette credits Mike with her decision to become a HR professional. “He does not shirk accountability,” she says. “He assumes responsibility not only for mistakes made within his department, but also for the correction and avoidance of future issues.” She says Mike “upholds management’s interests and concerns without disadvantaging employees and upholds employees’ interests and concerns without undermining the need for productivity and profitability. Leaders like Michael make the difference, raising our ship from mediocrity to excellence.”

Speaking of ship, Mike served three tours in the Navy performing HR duties. In addition to earning his MBA in HR, Mike also majored in Asian National Security Studies and Anthropology.

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#### **Leah Jackson, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | Director of HR | Southwest Cheese/Glanbia Nutritionals**



Nadia King, VP HR shared, “Through Leah’s vision, leadership, understanding of the business, passion and partnership, she helped turn the underperforming, high turnover, low morale, high safety incidents, and high employee claims Clovis site, into the top performing site in production, safety, employee engagement, retention, and development. Through Leah’s influence and vision, it became a pipeline of talent for the rest of the organization.” Leah has taken on two additional sites in California, now supporting 900 employees. Leah also laid the groundwork for how the global company of 6,600 employees manages transgender/transitioning employees. “She took on this very new and sensitive topic with respect, objectivity, and pragmatism.”

David North, Senior Site Director said Leah does all this while “remaining approachable and friendly to all. She can be counted on to interject ideas, hold peers accountable and be part of the solution. Whenever there is a need, Leah is available and willing to help.” Leah says she learns about employees’ lives outside of work to demonstrate they are more than a number. This treatment rubbed off on other leaders, increasing morale. Outside of work, Leah has been involved in Clovis’s Community College, Chamber of Commerce, School, and Workforce Development Boards.

#### **Denise Montoya, Ph.D., SHRM-SCP, SPHR | HR & Payroll Director | New Mexico Highlands University**



“Doing something ‘well enough’ is not good enough for her,” wrote one of Denise’s colleagues. “She never shies away from helping a colleague, peer or student,” and is a “role model with high principles and knowledge.”

In the past 18 months at NMHU, Denise implemented a talent management system, acted as the Chief Negotiator of the bargaining team, designed and introduced a variety of employee training including the “Power of Service” and “Learning Happens Here,” all while providing HR organizational development services to a variety of clients as the President of her own consulting firm, P.S. People Strategy, LLC.

Denise has had a distinguished twenty-five-year career in human resources, most recently at three higher education institutions. She is a published author and has dedicated almost ten years to the Society of Human Resources Management, primarily as Board leader of SHRM-NM and a liaison for SHRM Membership Advisory Council in the Southwest Region.

Denise’s greatest professional achievement was earning her doctorate in philosophy (Ph.D.) in organization, information, and learning sciences from UNM. She wrote, “It never ceases to amaze me what a human soul can endure and overcome. HR professionals must believe in human potential, including their own potential.”

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**Sheila Nunez, SHRM-SCP, SPHR |HR Director| Eastern New Mexico Medical Center**



When asked what prompted her to start a career in HR, Sheila wrote, “More than 20 years ago I was given some ‘personnel’ duties that no one else wanted and it was like I finally found my passion! I couldn’t get enough of it.” And her employers have benefited greatly from her passion.

Most recently, while working at ENMMC in Roswell with 500 employees, Sheila reduced nurse turnover by 50% over the prior year by implementing a new retention program that involved solid interviewing techniques, peer interviews and identifying flight risk employees. She was successful in leading the HR Department to receive no findings during the Hospital Joint Commission Accreditation’s two most recent surveys. Sheila implemented a new HRIS, integrating applicant recruitment and tracking with on-boarding and time-keeping.

Sheila’s colleague wrote that she exhibits unwavering leadership and extensive knowledge in her field. Her CEO indicated that he “makes few managerial decisions without first consulting her.” He commented that she “has the ability to think creatively and strategically, to establish broad policies, and to focus narrowly on the fine details. Sheila personifies all that is good about the HR profession.” Sheila has stayed in HR all these years because she loves interacting with others and feels like she makes a difference.

**Joe Palmeri, MBA, SHRM-SCP |Manager, Talent Acquisition & HR Management| Los Alamos National Bank**



Joe has committed to a transparent and open-door policy while his organization has weathered some substantial and difficult change. He is also committed to assisting employees with achieving their professional goals within the organization. In 2017, 38% of employees were either promoted or internally transferred. He has helped HR go from being reactive to being highly respected strategic partners and influential leaders within the company.

Carole Steward, VP & Manager, Human Resources says, “Joe has developed a reputation as an individual of strong integrity and character. In the short time he has been in New Mexico, he has developed strong networks, resulting in recruiting quality talent. Joe demonstrates his strong passion for the profession by volunteering his time as Treasurer of NNMHRA.” His HR colleague, Melanie Cimafranca says, “With the level of demand and stress in our job, I am so amazed with Joe’s enthusiasm, motivation and drive. Even more so that at the end of the day he still finds time to give back to the HR community.”

Where will Joe go from here? Ask him to make a prediction of his future workplace performance and behavior using his Predictive Index certification.

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#### **Anita Sanchez-Triviso | HR Director | Albuquerque Housing Authority**



When the Housing Authority separated from the city of Albuquerque, Anita became an HR Generalist almost overnight. She's accepted the challenges and worked with supervisors to improve recruiting strategies, establish more effective communication, and improve employee morale. Anita was instrumental in developing a new policies manual, as well as procuring, configuring, and implementing a new Personnel/Payroll System in record time.

She tackles tough issues and is an advocate for employees, as well as the organization. She strives to create a safe, productive workplace, and protect the organization. Anita elevates HR by seeking the best solution for all involved and applying best practices.

Anita says, "I find great joy in helping uncover employees' strengths, encouraging them to dream big, and cheering them on as they work to make their dreams a reality. That's what keeps me in HR." She is proud to have elevated her role from a necessary administrative function to a performance-driven contributor who nurtures positive results.

Barbara D'Onofrio, Director of Finance said she's relied on Anita to provide "professional insight on all human resources legal, policy, and business professional advisement." She noted that Anita provides leadership with integrity and fairness as she finds innovative ways to keep AHA in compliance.

#### **Naomi Serna-Olander, MBA, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | HR Director | ARCA**



Naomi has worked for ARCA for 18 years, most recently as the Human Resources Director. She's brought "great value to ARCA through her leadership, innovation, and strategic thinking and was instrumental in moving ARCA onto a modern integrated software system for our 700 employees," wrote the President and CEO of ARCA. He indicated that Naomi was instrumental in helping to recognize ARCA as a 2017 Top Work Place in New Mexico by the Albuquerque Journal.

Naomi is a "do-er" and a "shining example of a true HR professional," wrote a colleague. She's "not one who seeks out the spotlight, but is the wizard behind the scenes, the glue that holds everything together," commented another admiring colleague. She is "not afraid to stand for what she believes in and challenge others, with grace and from a position of doing things right." "Naomi embodies passion, perseverance, resourcefulness, commitment, excellence and service. They are part of her DNA!"

Volunteering for SHRM-NM and HRMA have been a long-time passion for Naomi. She has served in a variety of Board positions and is the current Co-Director for the 2018 SHRM-NM State Conference. When asked why she stays in HR, Naomi wrote, "I stay in HR because HR is the heart of the organization."



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#### **James Stevens, MA, LMHC, SHRM-CP, PHR | Director of HR | Santa Ana Star Casino**



James wants to be called Director of Positive Mojo and can be found earning that title as host of a dance party in HR every Friday afternoon at 3. John Cirincione, the General Manager says James is “truly dedicated to his craft” and the most talented HR professional he has ever come across in his 33-year career. “James’ dedication and fortitude was tested on every front,” says John. “His intelligence and forethought combined with his ability to unite a workforce resulted in reducing staff by 25% and increasing profits by 45%, while simultaneously winning multiple top places to work awards. James is champion and guardian of our corporate culture. One can simply and easily preach the gospel of positive work culture, but James demonstrates our message through actions daily without fail.”

HR colleagues Rebecca Beardsley and Pamela Barnes describe James as “willing to do any job in the department or casino,” and say James “challenges all to surpass their current potential. He has created a unique dynamic where HR is truly a resource in partnership with, versus a bureaucratic module which hinders others. James put the human back in Human Resources.”

Next time you see James, ask him to show you the HR department cheer, and if that doesn’t cheer you up, keep in mind James is also a Licensed Mental Health Therapist.

#### **Jamie Wagoner, SHRM-SCP, SPHR | Benefits and Compensation Manager | City of Farmington**



For the past five years with the City of Farmington, Jamie has made a tremendous impact, most recently on modernizing the worker’s compensation program. Jamie spearheaded the development and deployment of a Transitional Employment Assignment Management System (TEAMS) that has become a forward-thinking model for others in New Mexico.

Referred to as a “top notch HR Professional”, “tireless worker”, “vibrant leader”, and “model for excellence, integrity, and character,”

Jamie has become an essential part of the City of Farmington’s HR Department and has contributed to the success of the City.

Jamie volunteers her time in a variety of ways including as Area Chair for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a past President of FCHRA, and Co-Director of SHRM-NM State Conference 2018. When asked about what prompted her to start a career in HR, she wrote: “Once I got my first official HR job and got my feet wet, I knew that this was my calling. I stay in HR because there are no other jobs like it. HR allows me to be a connector, data-cruncher, marketer, magician, psychologist, mediator, consultant and the voice for employees.” “Jamie’s enthusiasm, dedication and passion for her professional endeavors remain difficult to match.”

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#### Special thanks to our judges:



**Celina Busey** serves as the Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions where she began her career in state government. Born and raised in Albuquerque, Ms. Bussey received a Bachelor of Arts in political science and communications from the University of New Mexico. Her vision includes the Department of Workforce Solutions as a leader in and a facilitator of a competitive workforce for the benefit of all New Mexicans.



**Danny Jarrett** is Managing Principal of Jackson Lewis's Albuquerque office. His practice focuses on counseling and representing employers, government entities and Native American tribal organizations, successfully representing clients before the NLRB, the EEOC, and the WCA. Mr. Jarrett has served as a member of the Board of Bar Commissioners of NM, and board member and chair of the Bar's Employment/Labor Section and Indian Law Sections of the State Bar. He is current Chair of the Board of the NM Association of Commerce and Industry, and former Legislative Director for SHRM NM.



**Barbara Marcus**, SHRM-SCP, SPHR, is the State Director for the SHRM NM State Council. She serves as the HR Director for Visit Albuquerque and has worked in Human Resources for over 35 years. As a finalist for last year's award, Barbara looks forward to celebrating those that are vying for this honor. Barbara is both a mother and nontraditional grandmother! Her joys and interests include travel, jewelry design and beading, which, along with HR, are her passions.



**Judy Perkins** is the HR Director for Ojo Spa Resorts (including Sunrise Springs and Ojo Caliente). Before moving to Santa Fe three years ago, she was SVP CHRO at Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank for 13 years. Prior, Judy followed her entrepreneurial spirit and started her own HR consulting business, providing services to 100+ clients in New England. Judy is Past President of NNMHRA and SHRM NM Director-Elect for Awards and Recognition. Judy was honored with being named SHRMNM's 2017 HR Professional of the Year.



**Giovanna Rossi** is the President/CEO of Collective Action Strategies, LLC, a consultancy that improves the lives of women and families. She is the Founder of Family Friendly New Mexico, a proud award partner of SHRM NM. FFNM supports businesses to adopt and implement family friendly policies in the workplace. Giovanna also hosts The Well Woman show, a radio show on KUNM 89.9fm and iTunes podcast. Giovanna holds a Master of Science degree in Public Policy from the London School of Economics.

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**Linda Strauss**, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, is owner of Strauss HR Consulting. She serves as Director of Awards and Recognition for SHRM NM, and re-created the *HR Professional of the Year* award in 2015. Linda co-created *US News and World Report's* HIRE Awards, and has served as judge for Santa Fe Professional and Business Women's *Woman of the Year* award for several years. Linda is the NM trainer of TRP® *Becoming the Totally Responsible Person*, and strives to make

all of New Mexico TRP!

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**The 2019 HR Professional of the Year Award**

**will be announced at the**



**2019 State Legislative Conference**

**Watch for updates on this event. We look forward to seeing you there!**

