ACEQUIA CAREER DAY 2021



THURSDAY MARCH 4TH
FROM 4:00-6:00 PM

New Mexico Acequia Association
~Celebrating 30 Years~
1989 –2019

NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION

@NM_ACEQUIA_ASSOCIATION

Thank you so much for choosing to join us for acequia career day 2021!

As young people from across new mexico, we have a special role to play in caring for the land, water and traditions of our home places. During acequia career day, we will highlight some of the many different ways you may decide to get involved as a protector of acequia waters and culture - from farming to music, from storytelling to science, and so much more.

We recognize that the paths we will learn about today are just a few of many many different possibilities, and that we must all experiment and explore to find our own unique skills and passions which we can use to help take care of our communities and build a healthy future.

We honor that what we learn from our own experiences, and from the earth and our home communities, is just as valuable as what we can learn in school. We remember that our ancestors and elders have so much to teach us. We also know that as young people, we face our own unique challenges and obstacles as we figure out who we want to be, and how we want to walk in our life path!

Community Organizing - Acequia Mayordomos & Commissioners



Gilbert Sandoval & Juanita Revak - father/daughter duo, Mayordomo for East/West Sandoval Ditch in Jemez

Gilbert Sandoval has been the Mayordomo of the East/West Sandoval Acequia for 60 years, he is also the Chairman of the Jemez River Basin Coalition of Acequias, which now in settlement negotiations with the Pueblos of Jemez and Zia. He is also a member of the New Mexico Acequia Association Concilio for over 20 years, a leader in the NMAA Mayordomo project, and a widely respected elder and community member. For many years, he also served his community as a Search and Rescue EMT and with the Forest Service. Juanita Revak is Gilbert's daughter and is learning from him to take over Mayordomo duties someday. After living away for several years she moved back home and became interested in preserving the way of life she grew up with.



Lucia F. Sanchez - President of the Commission, Acequia del Alcalde
luciafsanchez11@hotmail.com

Lucia F. Sanchez has served as the President of the Acequia del Alcalde commission since 2004. She is a graduate of Espanola Valley High School, and received her BA degree in Cultural Anthropology and Spanish from the University of New Mexico. In addition to her role as a caretaker of her community water in Alcalde, she is a farmer and rancher, works with the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission as the Water Planning Program Manager, and is the Upper Rio Grande Watershed District Board Supervisor.

Farming, Ranching & Land Based Skills



Don Bustos - Acequia farmer, Santa Cruz Farm & Greenhouses

santacruzfarm1@gmail.com

Don Bustos has been farming since he was a young child, on the land his family has farmed for 400 years. Don still uses traditional practices, while incorporating new technology and using nothing but solar energy, to grow 72 different types of produce – from salad greens, asparagus, squash, and cucumbers, to their famous blackberries. Don has amassed many generations of farming knowledge, and through the Farmer training program he designed as NM Director of the American Friends Service Committee, he has passed it on to more than 225 farmers around the state. He aims to empower and educate others and show them how to be self reliant. For almost 15 years, Don has been a board member of the New Mexico Acequia Association, doing advocacy to protect water rights for future generations. He currently serves as a commissioner on the Acequia del Llano, and as the Chair of the Rio Quemado, Rio en Medio, Rio Frijoles and Rio Santa Cruz Stream Systems Acequia Association.



Miguel Santistevan - father/husband, educator, farmer, artist/musician
www.solfelizfarm.org - www.growfarmers.org

Miguel Santistevan has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of New Mexico and a Master of Science degree in Ecology from the University of California, Davis. His research interests are in the adaptation of crops and traditional acequia-irrigated and dryland agricultural systems of the Upper Rio Grande and Sangre de Cristo mountains. Miguel is certified in Permaculture and ZERI Design and has directed several youth-in-agriculture programs for different organizations over the years. He has dozens of publications in local papers like the Green Fire Times and has presented many times about his research and activities. He has produced a public radio program called "¡Que Vivan las Acequias!" with NMAA and Cultural Energy, in addition to a video about food and seed sovereignty in New Mexico. He maintains an acequia-irrigated Permaculture farm with his wife and daughters in Taos called Sol Feliz where many visitors have participated in educational presentations, tours, and hands-on workshops. His farm is the venue for much of his research and is connected to the Acequia Madre del Sur del Río don Fernando de Taos of which he is a *parciante* and has served as past *Mayordomo* and President. Miguel also serves as the founder, President, and Executive Director for the non-profit organization Agriculture Implementation, Research, & Education. Miguel is currently adjunct faculty at UNM-Taos and teaches "Sustainable Food & Farming" and "Ecology" classes while helping his wife Margaret Garcia develop a local food and catering business called Taos Real Food.



Donne Gonzales - Farm Trainer/Farm Teacher with NMAA Los Sembradores Farmer Training Program

donne@lasacequias.org

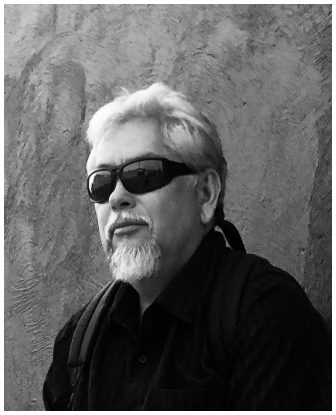
My name is Donne Gonzales, I'm 26 years old, and my heart belongs to the small community of Chamisal, NM. I have been fortunate to care for summer gardens, and small livestock with my family which instilled in me a great sense of querencia for gardening, community, and traditional practices. I was given the opportunity of being a (NMAA) Sembrando Semillas participant for over 10 years. My current position is Farm Trainer for Los Sembradores farm training program. I love teaching others about the land, and being outside with mother earth and all her elements, which is where I'm most at peace. I have a good understanding of soil, seeds, bugs, remedios, and food! I love to bake sweet treats and celebrate life with my family. Learning new things with my daughter is one of my favorite things to do!



Eduardo (Bardo) Gonzales - Adobero, farmer, traditional-skills teacher

Bardo is a lifelong resident of the Chamisal/Ojito Valley. He is the father of four children, and has three grandchildren. Eduardo graduated from Peñasco Independent School District, and studied Environmental Science, Carpentry and Welding at Northern New Mexico Community College in Espanola, NM. Eduardo is a Farm co-trainer for the NMAA Los Sembradores Farm Training Program and works closely with the Sembrando Semillas youth group mentoring youth in traditional gardening including planting, irrigating and harvesting activities. He is skilled in adobe/mud work, carpentry, fencing, farming, harvesting firewood, and raising and butchering animals.

Art, Music & Poetry



Levi Romero - New Mexico Poet Laureate 2020, Author and Assistant Professor in the Chicana and Chicano Studies department at UNM

xlromero@unm.edu

www.pbs.org/video/levi-romero-3kpg2p/

https://unmpress.com/books/querencia/9780826361608

Levi Romero was selected as the inaugural New Mexico Poet Laureate in 2020 and New Mexico Centennial Poet in 2012. His most recent book is the co-edited anthology, Querencia: Reflections on the New Mexico Homeland. His two collections of poetry are A Poetry of Remembrance: New and Rejected Works and In the Gathering of Silence. He is co-author of Sagrado: A Photopoetics Across the Chicano Homeland. He is an Assistant Professor in the Chicana and Chicano Studies department at the University of New Mexico.



Olivia Romo - Acequia Poet & Water Rights Activist

poetadelatierra8@gmail.com

www.westernfolklife.org/benedicion-del-agua

Olivia Romo is a farmer, poet and water rights activist from Taos, NM. She earned her dual Bachelor's degrees in English and Chicana/o Studies from the University of New Mexico in 2015. She intentionally focuses her activism and poetry to educate and mobilize New Mexicans around the risks and uncertainties of their natural resources. Her published works include the New York Times in the 2019 article "Work Songs of the Cowboy Poets". Olivia's flagship poem "Bendición del agua" was featured in the Western Folklife Center's "Moving Rual Verse" series in 2017 honoring acequia culture. She continues her journey in reclaiming her language, seeds, and stories of resilience.



Jeremiah Martinez - **Acequia músico, singer, songwriter, guitarist**

www.youtube.com/watch?v=11ZYHVl9ols

Jeremiah Martinez is a singer and songwriter from Northern New Mexico. His albums include 'Mi Nuevo Mejico'. Jeremiah has played an important role in celebrating and maintaining hispano music traditions in NM, and he is a member of New Mexico Hispano awards, with nominations for his songs "Mi Nuevo Mejjico", "Mi Bendicion" and "Las Mananitas Nortenas". He has provided music for countless acequia events over the years, helping everyone who has the opportunity to hear his music stay connected to the heart of la cultura de las acequias.

Law & Policy Advocacy



Paula Garcia - Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association

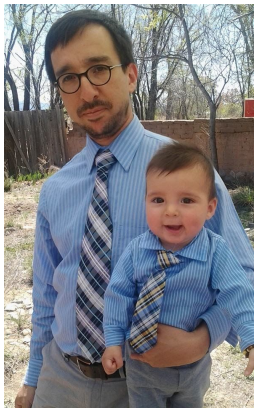
Paula Garcia is Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. During two decades of her service, acequias in New Mexico have built a movement around the principle that water is life, agua es vida. Through her leadership, acequias have strengthened community self-determination through local water governance, have enacted policy reforms protecting rural, agricultural water rights, and have fought for clean water to flow in our rivers. With the NMAA team, she has also established innovative youth and leadership development projects and farm apprenticeships that seek to strengthen the next generation of farmers and ranchers who are caretakers of water, land, livestock, and native and heirloom seeds. With her family, Paula cares for a small ranch and traditional gardens characteristic of the subsistence agriculture of her ancestors. When not living and breathing acequias, Paula can be found hiking, playing classical piano, and cooking a simple meal based on some variation of corn, beans, and chile. Her son is a first year student of the United World College which is dedicated to global peace and sustainability through education.



David Benavides - Director of the land and water rights project for New Mexico Legal Aid

davidb@nmlegalaid.org

David Benavides is director of the land and water rights project for New Mexico Legal Aid, a position he has held for 29 years. He received both his B.S. and J.D. from the University of New Mexico, and, upon graduating from law school in 1990, was awarded a Skadden, Arps Public Interest Law Fellowship to begin his work with acequias and land grants on land and water rights in New Mexico. David has advised countless acequia officials on water rights protection methods and governance matters. His work has additionally included representing acequias in gaining legal recognition for their water rights and their historic water-use customs, and to have greater decision-making authority in local water decisions. He has assisted land grants in retaining their common lands against various legal threats, and in 2008 coauthored a legal history of New Mexico land grants for the New Mexico Attorney General. He lives outside of Santa Fe, N.M.



Enrique Romero - Director of Legal Services for the New Mexico Acequia Association

Enrique Romero is the Director of Legal Services at the New Mexico Acequia Association. Upon completing his JD from Notre Dame Law School in 2014, Enrique received the Thomas L. Shaffer Public Interest Law Fellowship. During his fellowship, Enrique was a staff attorney for New Mexico Legal Aid's Land and Water Project and focused on advising acequias on their legal rights and obligations. Since joining the New Mexico Bar in 2014, Enrique has worked with countless acequia officers – commissioners and mayordomos – and parciantes throughout New Mexico. Enrique grew up in the Pojoaque and Española Valleys and frequently returns home to Nambe, New Mexico where his family irrigates land served by the Acequia la Nueva.

Food Business & Herbal Medicine/Remedio Making



Pilar Trujillo - Indigenous Women's Health Coordinator for Tewa Women United

pilarftrujillo@gmail.com, FB: Pilar Trujillo, IG: pilarica505

I was born and raised in Espanola and now make my home on ancestral land in Chimayo where I use la Acequia de la Canada Ancha to help water crops and animals and teach my young daughter about our traditions. I am blessed to be able to work in community organizing events that focus on health and wellness through Tewa Women United. I have a deep love for all plants and animals, and have been called to learn as much as I can about plant medicines in order to reclaim the wisdom of how to heal our bodies naturally. Our bodies are magic and the plants truly want to help us live our best lives!



Margaret Garcia - **Farmer, hierbera and food business owner of Taos Real Foods**

taosrealfood@gmail.com

Margaret Garcia, B.S. is a mother, wife, a local hierbera, and food lover and explorer. She was raised in the mountains of Northern New Mexico where her family has lived for many generations. Her family taught her to identify local herbs and how to use herbs and food as medicines. Margaret is passionate about the maintenance of traditional land-based knowledge and culture, especially food and herbs. Margaret has been the owner of Taos Real Food, LLC for 5 years and sells delicious sauerkraut. She and her husband, Miguel Santistevan, live in Taos, NM with their two daughters. They maintain a conservation farm, called Sol Feliz Farm, where many visitors have participated in educational presentations, tours and hands-on workshops.



Olivia Chavez - **Mamá, farmer, remedio maker, birth companion/doula**

oliviachav@gmail.com

My name is Olivia Mercedes Chávez. I grew up in Pecos, New Mexico. My mama is from Las Vegas, Nuevo México and my papa from Torreón, Nuevo México and East Los Ángeles, Califaztlan. I am a proud mother to two beautiful boys, Toribio and Francisco. They were both born at our home in Chamisal. My fiancé is Toribio García. I have studied Nutrition and Chicana Studies, as well as learned from numerous curanderas and healers such as Maclovia Sánchez and my family members. Some of their remedios include oatmeal baños, vicks vapor rub Sobadas, sana sanas, musica, limpias of sage and chamiso, manzanilla and Yerba buena tes, cannabis en alcohol, altares and giving thanks. We come from a long line of good comida y remedio. Coming home to a fresh pot of frijoles is our cura todo! I am a farmer on Acequia de Lino. I am outside all day learning and growing with my babies. We grow all kinds of comida and share with the community. Our plan is to make a small fruit, veggie and herb stand that is EBT accepting so let me know if you have ideas for that!

History & Storytelling



Estevan Rael-Gálvez - Project Director of the Manitos Community Memory Project & former NM State Historian

www.manitos.net - www.creativestrategies360.com - www.decolonizingnewmexico.com

Anthropologist, historian and cultural consultant, Dr. Estevan Rael-Gálvez is the former Senior Vice President of Historic Sites at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He also served as the executive director of the National Hispanic Cultural Center and as the state historian of New Mexico. He is currently the CEO and founding principal of Creative Strategies 360°, a consulting firm that supports transformative work within communities, governments, universities and cultural based organizations. He is also currently completing his book, Bound -The Shadows of Native American Slavery and Its Legacy. He also currently serves as Project Director for the Manitos Community Memory Project, an initiative to establish community-based digital cultural heritage archives grounded in the living culture of the villages of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. A native son of New Mexico, with ancestral and living ties to both Native American and Nuevomexicano communities, Estevan was raised on a farm and ranch stewarded by his family for multiple generations.



Aracely Chapa - PBS/NPR Broadcaster, Documentary Filmmaker, producer of "Acequias: The Legacy Lives On"
achapa@unm.edu

Aracely Chapa is an accomplished PBS/NPR broadcast journalist and documentary filmmaker. For many years she was the host and executive producer of the KNME weekly public affairs show "In Focus", as well as the KUNM Call-in Show. Aracely has over 30 years' experience in broadcast journalism, holding positions as anchor, reporter, news director, senior producer and executive producer. She has won several awards including 5 Emmy awards for history and culture documentaries and the prestigious National Press Club award for Investigative Environmental reporting. She is currently the Manager of Multi-Media Services at the UNM Center for Regional Studies.



David F. García - Acequia and community anthropologist, storyteller and músico

David F. García is a cultural anthropologist and a musician who applies "performance ethnography" to reflect on the public spaces and cultural movements related to land based knowledges in the US southwest/ northern Mexican borderlands. García was born in the Española Valley, and has played violin with the religious dance drama of Los Matachines de Alcalde for the last 24 years. In addition, García has utilized music and the arts as a vehicle to participate and promote community engagement in the NM acequia movement as well as immigrants rights activism. He worked in collaboration with the creation of the NMAA Escuelita de las Acequias and has participated in the El Puente caucus bridging elders with youth in acequia communities. García has also played in numerous local bands, the Al Hurricane band and the Blue Ventures. David has participated in the community folk dramas Los Pastores and Los Comanches, as well as the Teatro de las Acequias with NMAA. García composes canciones, corridos, entregas de novios and has written some of the first décimas in New Mexico since the 1950s. He began his research as an undergrad at UNM and has returned to UNM to teach in the Chicana/o/x Studies

program while working at the Center of Southwest Studies at UNM 2019 as a postdoctoral fellow and visiting researcher examining New Mexico Spanish language newspapers. He farms in El Guache New Mexico and is a parciante of Los Salazares acequia on the Rio Chama.

Infrastructure, Mapping, Engineering & Water Science



Marcos Valdez - District Manager for the East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District

marcos.Valdez@nm.nacdnet.net

Marcos Valdez is the District Manager for the East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation District. Marcos resides in Petaca, New Mexico. He is a 5th generation descendant ranching on the Petaca Land Grant. In his spare time, Marcos is the mayordomo of Acequia de los Chavez and Acequia de la Jarita. Prior to his employment with the conservation district, Marcos was successful in the implementation of a secure rural schools grant to clean up illegal dumpsites in the communities of La Madera and Vallecitos. Over 100 tons of trash were removed from arroyos in those communities. Marcos has worked with the conservation district for 10 years, starting as a technical service provider assisting the Natural Resource Conservation Service with field survey's and designs for irrigation systems. He later became the district manager for the conservation district in 2015. Marcos was instrumental in securing outside funding sources; in particular, developing a youth conservation corps program to hire local youth and have them inventory and map acequias within the district.



Lily Conrad - Graduate Research Assistant with NM Water Resources Research Institute

conradl@nmsu.edu

Lily is a native Iowan who was raised in Saudi Arabia, a background that gave her first-hand experiences surrounding water quality and quantity issues in two distinct areas. In the Middle East, she walked along *as-saqiyas* and learned about resilience in the desert. In contrast, Iowans often take water for granted – it is used frivolously and degraded by agricultural practices. Driven by these formative observations, Lily chose to pursue a BS in Environmental Science and is currently completing a MS in Water Science and Management at New Mexico State University where her research focuses on the acequias of the Rio Hondo Valley. After completing her MS, Lily hopes to continue work in community resilience to climate uncertainty by providing local communities with necessary tools and information to better manage water resources, such as making water data more accessible.



Clifford E. Sánchez - Natural Resources Specialist Technical Contractor with NMAA, NMACD, & Valencia SWCD

cliffsanchez@yahoo.com

I live in Belen, originally from Grants and La Merced de Cubero. Retired after 40 years with the Natural Resources Conservation Service USDA. As a technical contractor I assist Acequias with estimating costs for their improvement projects, and for securing funding these projects; and help landowners plan and install conservation practices. I have a small Pecan orchard and am the Spanish Choir Director at Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church.



Chavela Trujillo - Acequia Mapping Specialist and Acequia Program Assistant

chavela@lasacequias.org

Chavela grew up in the Pueblo de Abiquiu, NM. From a young age her parents instilled the importance of the land and self-sufficiency in her and her two siblings. With her parent's guidance Chavela was taught to irrigate, clean acequias, herd and work cattle, ride horses, and harvest food. Chavela is currently working for NMAA as a Acequia Program Assistant with a focus on GIS Mapping. Chavela started developing a profession in acequia mapping when she worked for the East Rio Arriba Soil and Water Conservation Districts Youth Conservation Corps team. She found that mapping could not only benefit her career but the entire acequia community she lived in as well. Chavela spends her free time running her own small business called Extreme Abiquiu Horseback where she gives horse riding lessons, trail rides, and trains horses.



Thomas Gonzales - Soil Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Hernandez Field Office

thomas.gonzales@usda.gov

Thomas Gonzales was born and raised in Northern New Mexico on the Pueblo of San Ildefonso Pueblo where he is an enrolled tribal member. Mr. Gonzales attended New Mexico State University and obtained his bachelors of Science in Agricultural Biology with an emphasis on Environmental Biology. Mr. Gonzales has worked for the NRCS now for 25 years with a variety of experience in conservation planning. Some of this experience includes assisting acequias solve their issues of water delivery, assisting thinning and reclamation efforts in forests, creating fish habitat and improving riparian corridors, assisting ranchers improve there grazing condition and management, assisting local farmers deliver water more efficiently as well as improving the production of their fields. Mr. Gonzales now works mainly in Rio Arriba County as a Soil Conservationist working with local producers to improve conservation efforts on private and other lands. "The best part of my job is I work in the field and work in the community making change that I can see."

Your hosts - The NMAA team! **Biographies for NMAA staff Paula Garcia, Donne Gonzales, Enrique Romero and Chavela Trujillo are included as speakers! Here is the rest of our team who will be hosting Career Day!**



Toribio Garcia - Acequia Education Coordinator - toribio@lasacequias.org

Toribio Garcia is a lifelong resident of Chamisal NM. Proud partner to Olivia Chavez and father to Toribio Garcia Jr. and Francisco Garcia. Toribio was raised off of the Acequia del Monte and has been an active peon since the age of 16. Toribio and his family are currently parciantes on the Acequia de Lino where they grow a garden, maintain a large high tunnel, and

care for a few fruit trees. Toribio has been an NMAA employee since 2015 and participated in the Sembrando Semillas program since it was created in 2005. Toribio's role at NMAA is to assist Acequias in applying for Infrastructure funding. Toribio also assists with many other day to day tasks needed by the team. These include managing contacts, working on various lists, and attempting to get all tasks that are requested completed in a quality and timely manner. Toribio really enjoys working with Acequias and assisting the people who volunteer their time for an important cause.



Juliet Garcia-Gonzales - Director of Operations - juliet@lasacequias.org

Juliet is a lifelong resident of Chamisal, NM and is the proud mother of 4 children. She is a neighbor to her parents and 3 grandchildren. She feels a strong obligation to serve the community that has held her family for many generations. She currently serves on the Chamisal Mutual Domestic Water Consumer Associations Board (9 yrs.), Chamisal Community Cemetery Board (7 years), and El Centro Family Health Board (15 years). She served on the Penasco Independent School Board (12 yrs.), and also served on the HELP New Mexico Advisory Committee (3 yrs.). She is the Director of Operations for the New Mexico Acequia Association, a traditional *Yerbera* and winemaker. In her free time she enjoys making jewelry and gathering firewood in the mountains with her family. She is passionate about maintaining and practicing local land-based traditions and feels that teaching it to families in a practical and relevant way ensures that our connection to land and family are passed on for generations to come.



Emily Arasim - Youth Education Co-Coordinator & Acequia Program Assistant - emily@lasacequias.org, IG=emily.semillas

Emily was born and raised on the Acequia Madre de Tesuque, where she grew up trailing behind the mayordomo and playing in her mothers small garden. She is dedicated to learning from the land, and working with community to protect traditional seeds, farming, and water stewardship practices in New Mexico. Emily works for NMAA as a co-coordinator of youth education - doing school presentations, youth organizing and curriculum development - and assists with communications and other programs. She was a 2018 NMAA Los Sembradores farm apprentice, and continues to farm and caretake local seeds with friends and mentors. She also serves as a youth representative for Communities for Clean Water, and previously worked from 2014-2018 as the Communications Coordinator for the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network International. She spends her free time jamming out to old school hip hop music and trying to become a better cook and herbal medicine maker.



Serafina Lombardi - Director of Programs - serafina@lasacequias.org

Serafina started with the NMAA team in 2012 and serves as the Program Director. Since then acequias have grown to be an all consuming passion. She came to work for NMAA by way of her love of community and working the land. On her paternal side she hails from an unbroken line of subsistence farmers, since agriculture first came to the Italian peninsula. She was raised in the garden and is raising her boys the same way. Serafina's role at NMAA is to assist all programmatic areas in moving forward and supporting the team as needed (aka cheerlead, manage, reflect on progress and refine). In other areas of her work she is most enthusiastic about supporting our acequia communities to thrive and adapt through climate disruptions, as well as other challenges that we face. Over the years she has assisted many individual farmers and ranchers in accessing USDA programs, and through the work of the Infrastructure team has assisted acequias in implementing millions in state and federal dollars to make improvements. When not at her desk you can find Serafina walking along the Rio Quemado, tending to her chickens, splitting wood, cultivating carrots or catching up with friends old and new.