

Reminder: New Mexico's Primary is June 7

Word from the Chairwoman: Memorial Day

Debra Haaland, June 4, 2016

I want to start by thanking all our veterans and their families for the sacrifices they make to our country, especially those that the debt of gratitude will never be repaid.



Many people know that I am the daughter of a

Vietnam combat veteran who spent close to 30 years as a US Marine. My dad started out as a Private, and became an officer, because he served two years in Vietnam. Even though he came home safely after two consecutive tours, his heart was still with "those kids", as he'd call them. While watching the evening news, he mourned each time he learned of new casualties.

I was taught at a very young age that taking on the responsibility of a soldier was a serious and selfless act. And those who serve our country put themselves in harm's way without any questions asked knowing that they are defending our country.

We at the Democratic Party of New Mexico know our men and women in the armed for

Our veterans and their families sacrifice so much, and it does not go unnoticed. This weekend I hope you will thank a Veteran and keep those who were lost in battle in your thoughts.

Let's make it a point to keep our servicemen and women and their families in our thoughts on Memorial Day and every day.

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Dem of the Week: Julie Vargas

Adan J. Serna, June 4, 2016



Julie Vargas is running for the New Mexico Court of Appeals in the June 7, 2016

Democratic Primary Election.

Julie, a life-long Democrat and New Mexico Native, was born and raised in Old Town, Albuquerque,

where she continues to live. She received her undergraduate degree from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, but was anxious to return to New Mexico, its 300 days of sunshine each year, and its warm people. Julie received her law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1993 and has spent the last 22 years protecting the rights of New Mexican families and New Mexico small businesses. She is well-respected for her professional temperament and dedication to hard work, as well as her commitment to legal ethics and fairness in our justice system.

Julie's legal career has focused on business and commercial litigation and real estate law, helping New Mexico families, local businesses, mom-and-pop shops, homeowners associations, landlords, tenants, national companies and governmental entities. She practices in state courts throughout New Mexico, as well as the Federal Courts.

Julie is well known and respected throughout the legal community for her work training lawyers to act ethically and holding her fellow attorneys to the highest ethical standards. She has dedicated her career to the administration

of equal justice in our legal system. Julie is Chair of the NM State Bar's Ethics Advisory Committee, Member of the Disciplinary Board of the NM Supreme Court and a former adjunct ethics professor at the UNM School of Law. She is also a member of the NM State Bar Board of Bar Commissioners.

Julie's demonstrated commitment to improving the legal profession is representative of her dedication to improving the lives of her fellow New Mexicans in any way she can. She's rappelled down a 16-story building to raise money for health screenings and physical fitness programs sponsored by New Mexico Special Olympics. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the New Mexico Museum of Natural History Foundation, working to bring important science and technology exhibits to New Mexico children and families. Julie is eager to serve her community in a greater capacity on the NM Court of Appeals, where she will insist on fairness for all New Mexicans and protection of their constitutional rights. We can count on Julie to be honest, ethical and fair. She has the integrity and experience we depend on from a Judge.

Julie is pursuing public financing under the NM Voter Action Act to ensure fair and ethical elections by taking big-money out of judicial campaigns.

What is your legal background and experience?

I am a native New Mexican, born and raised in Old Town, Albuquerque, where I still live. After receiving my undergraduate degree from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, I was anxious to return to New Mexico; and, received my law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1993. Since graduating from law school, I have spent more than 22 years in private practice in Albuquerque, protecting the rights of New Mexican families and New Mexico small businesses.

My legal career has focused on real estate law, as well as business and commercial litigation, helping New Mexico families, local businesses, mom-and-pop shops, homeowners associations, landlords, tenants, national companies and governmental entities with their legal problems. In addition to my day-to-day practice, I advise lawyers on matters of legal ethics and work to insure that my fellow attorneys comply with their ethical responsibilities. In the past, I have taught legal ethics to second and third year law students at the UNM School of Law. Currently, I chair the NM State Bar's Ethics Advisory Committee, a committee that gives advice to lawyers confronting ethical dilemmas in the representation of their clients. I am also a member of the Disciplinary Board of the NM Supreme Court. The Disciplinary Board hears cases alleging that lawyers have breached their ethical duties to their clients and makes recommendations to the New Mexico Supreme Court as to whether those lawyers should be allowed to continue to practice or not.

Why are you running, and what do you hope to accomplish?

I've known since I was a small child that I wanted to be a lawyer. My dad was a lawyer; and, even as a child I recognized the power the law had to improve people's lives. I remember my Dad's former clients thanking him for his help. The sense of relief that their problems had been resolved was visible on their faces. I knew that I wanted to be able to instill that same sense of relief in people; and, it was important to me that people who found themselves in the legal system felt as though they had been treated fairly. As a lawyer, it is my job to make sure that my clients are treated fairly. As a member of the Court, it would be my responsibility to make sure that all people coming before the Court are treated fairly.

What kind of decisions are made at the Court of Appeals, and how do these affect New Mexicans?

The Court of Appeals reviews approximately

1000 decisions issued by district courts all around the State each year. It reviews both criminal and civil cases that raise issues affecting the lives of so many New Mexicans—everything from worker's compensation, to child custody, labor and employment law, property crimes, real estate issues, and so many more. In most cases, it is the court of final review of those district court cases. The Court of Appeals plays an integral role in the development of the law in New Mexico, issuing more opinions interpreting the law than any other state court.

How many members are there on the Court, and what is the political makeup?

The New Mexico Court of Appeals is made up of ten members. Currently, there are two women and eight men on the court. Four members of the Court are Republicans and six are Democrats. If elected, I look forward to increasing the former and decreasing the latter—each by one.

How has the experience of campaigning been?

I've enjoyed campaigning more than I ever expected. In a state-wide race, there is a lot of ground to cover, but I've met so many people I would never have otherwise had the opportunity to meet. It's been wonderful to talk to voters and not only find the common ground we may have, but to also hear different perspectives on the issues that are important to them. An unexpected benefit of campaigning has been meeting people who knew my parents or my grandparents and had stories to tell me about them. I was recently at an event in Roswell where a couple stopped me to tell me a story about my grandfather, who was a lifelong Taos resident and owned a restaurant in Taos for many years. It was the last place I expected to meet someone who knew my family. My Dad passed away last year and my grandfather died almost 25 years ago, so it's really special when a voter I've met out on the campaign trail has a story to share.

County Party Highlight: Chaves County Monthly Meeting

DPNM, June 4, 2016

The Chaves County Democrats had a great turnout for their monthly meeting in May. Hispanic Caucus Vice-Chair Ben Salazar spoke on behalf of the Democratic Party of New Mexico Hispanic Caucus, and reported an enthusiastic event.



Congrats to Los Alamos County Dems

Los Alamos County just became a Democratic Majority, all thanks to the efforts of the Democratic Party of Los Alamos County. They've done great work reaching out to voters and engaging the community.

Thank you to our interns!

This semester our super volunteer Jessica Pacheco Semenyuk helped coordinate an internship program here at the Democratic Party of New Mexico. She did a great job recruiting qualified interns and getting our newsletter off the ground. With her help, our program began strong and continued throughout the semester.

Adan Serna, Addison Flores-Thorpe, and Sonia Gonzalez are amazing team members. They helped write content for our newsletter, attended events, conducted interviews, and provided valuable support for our staff. Many of our elected officials interacted with them one-on-one through our Dem of the Week feature in the newsletter. They were professional and produced valuable content. We truly appreciate their work here at the DPNM.

If you know anyone that would like more experience working with the DPNM, we now accepting interns for the Summer. While interning for DPNM, interns will contribute to a weekly newsletter, connect with Democratic candidates, have the opportunity to attend special events, network with community leaders, and contribute to the 2016 election.

Students who would like to be selected must submit their resume and a brief letter explaining why they would like to intern for DPNM. Submissions should be emailed to felicia@nmdemocrats.org.

JUNE 11

County Conventions

(Please contact your county chair for more information)

JUNE 13

Los Alamos County Democrats Meeting

(7 - 8:30 p.m.)

JUNE 14

Cibola County Democrats Meeting

(5:30 p.m.)

JUNE 16

Doña Ana County Democrats Monthly Meeting

(6 - 8 p.m.)

JUNE 18

District Conventions

District 1: Highland High School in Albuquerque at 10 a.m. (registration begins at 8 a.m.)

District 2: Oñate High School at 10 a.m. (registration begins at 8 a.m.)

District 3: Santa Fe High School at 11:30 a.m. (registration begins at 9:30 a.m.)

JUNE 25

Post-Primary State Convention Albuquerque Convention Center at 10am

(Registration begins at 8am and voting will begin at 10 a.m.)