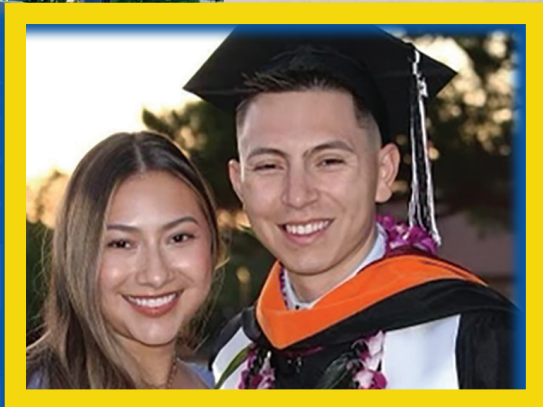


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The Voice of New Mexico's
Rural Electric Cooperatives

JEMEZ MOUNTAINS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SEPTEMBER 2023



Scholarships Advance Education

Over the last 30 years Jemez Mountains Electric Foundation scholarships have opened the doors to higher education for hundreds of graduating high school seniors. [Page 5](#)

Photos: Previous JME Foundation scholarship recipients Dominic Roybal (*pictured with girlfriend, Alicia Sanchez*) and Naomi Martinez.





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Board of Trustees

President, Dennis Trujillo
District 1 - Jemez Springs, Jemez Pueblo, Zia Pueblo, Surrounding areas

Vice President, Manuel Bustos
District 5 - La Mesilla, San Pedro & north up to Alcalde

Secretary, John Ramon Vigil
District 4 - Santa Clara Pueblo north to Medanales including Lyden & La Canova west of the Rio Grande River

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Danny Velarde, District 5 - Velarde, Dixon & other areas located in Rio Arriba County east of the Rio Grande River

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Marcelina Martinez, District 6 - Santa Cruz & surrounding areas located in Santa Fe County

Henry Roybal, District 6 - Nambe, Pojoaque, surrounding areas located in Santa Fe County

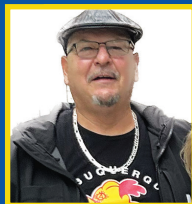
Marissa Maestas-Muller, Trustee-At-Large - represents the entire cooperative area at large

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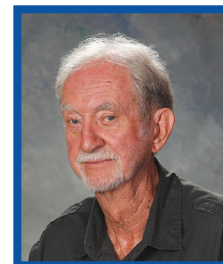


THANKS and Appreciation to Outgoing, Incoming Board of Trustees Members

Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative, Inc., gives its sincere thanks and appreciation to outgoing board of trustees members **Bruce Duran** and **Stanley Crawford**. Mr. Duran, who served Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative, Inc., as a board of trustees member for eight years, decided not to run for re-election in the 2023 cycle. Mr. Crawford is leaving the board as a result of the election after four years of service.



Bruce Duran



Stanley Crawford

We are grateful for the years of dedication that they gave to JMEC – thank you for your service!



Danny Velarde



Henry Roybal

JMEC is pleased to welcome the new members of the board of trustees **Danny Velarde**, representing District 5, Ward A, and **Henry Roybal**, representing District 6, Ward B. *We appreciate your willingness to serve!*

JME Foundation Scholarships Make an Impact



Even though most students have been back in school for a few weeks now, September is the traditional back-to-school month and for some heading off to college, they are doing so with the help of a Jemez Mountains Electric Foundation scholarship.

In just the last two years, nearly 50 students from area high schools and universities received a JME Foundation scholarship. Over the 30 years of the program's scholarship awards, the recipient students number in the hundreds and for some, the scholarship has made a difference in getting their degree without incurring student debt.



Dominic's dad Chris Roybal, left, and Dominic, doing a building project together.

"The JME Foundation scholarship, combined with some others, allowed me to finish school without any debt," said Dominic Roybal, a 2017 graduate of Pojoaque Valley High School. "That was really big for me; I was really blessed."

Roybal said the scholarship's impact for him was how it helped him focus on his studies rather than trying to balance a heavy college load and a job or, having to worry about how to otherwise secure the necessary funds somewhere else, as with a student loan.

"It is important for JMEC families to understand how much a JME Foundation scholarship benefits the student,"

Roybal added. "It is a big stress reliever in having those funds to help pay for tuition, books or even rent."

Roybal studied at New Mexico Tech before transferring to New Mexico State University. He has an undergraduate mechanical engineering degree and a masters in industrial engineering. After years of summer internships and then working parttime while pursuing his masters, Roybal now works fulltime for Los Alamos National Laboratory.

"We have one of the best scholarship programs in the area," said Marissa Maestas-Muller, JMEC trustee and chair of the board's school committee. "The scholarships are generous. They have been up to one-time \$4,000 awards and parents are so appreciative. The kids don't always understand how expensive it is for parents with room and board, books and fees. And for parents whose child is a first-generation college student, the costs associated with getting a higher degree can be new to them, too."

It is a big responsibility to get this scholarship funding into the community and Maestas said having a panel from Northern New Mexico College review and select recipients from the applications is a huge help. "It's totally anonymous," she said. "Applicants' personal identifying information is removed and the panel brings their expertise and independent thinking to the decision making."

Naomi Martinez is a sophomore at the University of New Mexico's main campus in Albuquerque. From Arroyo Del Agua, she graduated from Coronado High School and appreciates the opportunity to pursue higher education. "My parents didn't get to have that experience and I see how hard they work. They wanted this for me," she said. "Getting the JME Foundation scholarship was a very big deal. It really helps to pay for tuition, housing and other school costs."



Naomi Martinez

Story continues on page 28.

Employee to Trustee: Manny Bustos



Manny Bustos and wife, Sandra.

Manny Bustos, vice president of the JMEC board of trustees, representing District 5, had a terrific 27-year career as a journeyman lineman with the cooperative before running to serve as a trustee, and it wasn't even his first career!

After going to New Mexico Highlands University on a baseball scholarship, graduating with an electrical mechanical technical degree, Bustos worked alternately at Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories in the weapons department for a dozen years.

Then he went to work on The Superconducting Super Collider in Waxahachie, Texas – an exciting project designed to discover how to create large amounts of energy in a controlled and monitored environment. The excitement ended when the government cancelled funding for that project after two years. It was during

the recession of the early 90s and as the International Space Station was viewed more favorably for funding.

“I decided to get into something that couldn't be taken away from me and I have no regrets,” said Bustos. At the age of 31, he became an apprentice lineman through the union hall, working with PNM. When JMEC had an opening in 1995, he joined the cooperative as an apprentice lineman.

Bustos' second career was practically a family business. His dad, Manuel Bustos, Sr., who passed in 2008, was a lineman for 39 years. His younger brother, Anthony, has 24 years with PNM. His son, Brandon, is following in his footsteps and will soon graduate from JMEC's apprenticeship program to become a journeyman lineman.

“There were seven of us kids and my dad's job as a lineman provided for our family,” said Bustos. “It was a good career for him and it was a good career for me.”

Bustos was elected as a trustee in 2021 and has championed safety training and the proper equipping of the cooperative's linemen, among many other things.

“JMEC had not been a member of the New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA or, the “statewide”) for a few years by the time I joined the board of trustees,” he said. “I made a big deal of our rejoining as I felt the statewide's safety program and training was essential to protecting our linemen and thoroughly training them according to industry best practices. I pushed hard to get us back in.” JMEC renewed its NMRECA membership in 2022 after a nearly five-year absence.

More recently, Bustos has been hard at work on the cooperative's broadband initiative, Jemez Mountains Internet. “We just ask members to be patient as we are trying our darndest to get broadband to our members,” he said. “When it happens, I will be satisfied just to be able to say I played a small part in bringing broadband to Rio Arriba and Santa Fe counties.”

Bustos got his contractor's license in 2012 and launched Manny B's Electric, taking on projects often with the help of son, Brandon, and/or his son-in-law, Anthony. “Brandon is pretty busy though,” said Bustos. “In addition to his job, he serves as a county commissioner and is vice president of the school board. Have to give him a lot of credit to be meeting all those commitments at just 23 years of age.”

Bustos and his wife, Sandra, have four grandkids who occupy whatever free time he has. “I hang out with them a lot,” he added. “And, we have another grandbaby girl on the way!”

In Our Community: Barrios Unidos



The Santa Fe Community Foundation provided funds to gift Chromebooks and six weeks of training to grandparents served by Barrios Unidos Chimayo.

SAVE THE DATE – Saturday, September 16, 2023, is when Barrios Unidos Chimayo will be hosting an event to celebrate National Recovery Month.

Located at 7 John Hyson Drive in Chimayo, this 501.c3 nonprofit organization joins other dedicated recovery service providers throughout the U.S., on that day and every other day as they work to increase awareness and, in Barrios Unidos’ case, *querencia*, about mental health and addiction recovery.

Lupe Salazar is the executive director of Barrios Unidos Chimayo, although she describes herself as, “Just a mom in the community trying to make sure people feel seen, are helped on their pathway to recovery, are connected with resources and services – just that they know they are not alone.”

The organization is personal and hands on and while they work to respond to needs as they arise, **Barrios Unidos does have regular services for those struggling with addiction, for grandparents raising their grandkids, for youth and the homeless such as:**

- Twice a month The Food Depot comes to Chimayo for a food distribution event. Salazar welcomes food donations at any time for the organization’s pantry, emphasizing donations be both shelf stable and easy to access – without needing a can opener or other device to access the food.
- Self-care and Self-healing is a time geared toward grandparents who need respite from their responsibilities of child rearing, often a result of their own children falling victim to the opioid addiction crisis crushing many communities including those in Northern New Mexico.
- Peer Support, Salazar is a certified peer support worker and while Barrios Unidos has an open door to anyone in need, regular sessions are scheduled every two weeks.
- Community outreach to the homeless, often scheduled and as often carried out spontaneously, has volunteers going out into the community giving away donated goods – snacks, water, clothing, even tents and sleeping bags. “These may be little things but it lets those we connect with know they’re not alone, they’re loved, that *querencia* is alive and well in our community,” Salazar said.

In describing *querencia*, the Barrios Unidos Chimayo website quotes Estevan Arellano, “Love of place, land, culture and people. If we don’t learn to love them, we will never defend them.” Salazar said that much of her work is to educate individuals to bring empathy and understanding to those suffering from the real, practical effects of addiction and homelessness as well as the stigma associated with each.

“With addiction, for example, we take those who have come to us seeking recovery treatment to Santa Fe or Albuquerque and make sure they get a warm handoff” she said. “The struggle with stigma is real. We take care that the individual knows there is someone there for them and we stay with the individual until they are seen by a doctor.”

There are opportunities to volunteer – everything from sorting, folding and sizing donated clothing to assembling first-aid kits to gathering and organizing food that is shared during a street outreach. For donations, gas cards are a big help for families challenged to get a family member to treatment. Money donations can be made via the Barrios Unidos Chimayo website <https://www.barriosunidoschimayo.org/>.

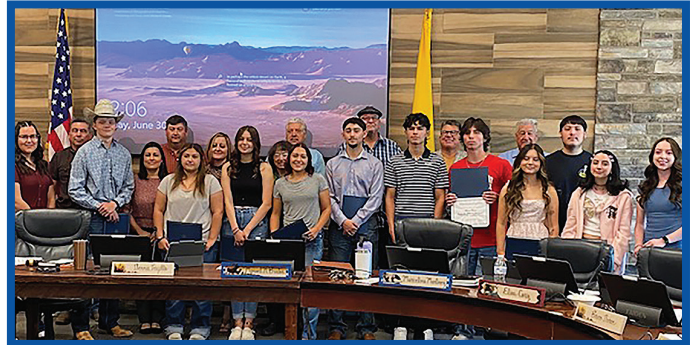
JME Foundation Scholarships Make an Impact

Story continued from page 5.

Martinez is pursuing pharmacy studies. She said she has seen the cost of opioid addiction in her own community and thought she could put her future career toward helping fight the crisis. She is taking her first pharmacy prerequisites this semester.

Beyond the classroom experience, Martinez is meeting and learning from a lot of new people. “The biggest surprise for me was how many new people I would meet and get to know,” she said. “My home is rural and we all know each other. At university, everywhere I turn there is someone new. I am really enjoying that.”

For more than 30 years, Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative has committed to higher education through The Jemez Mountains Electric Foundation scholarship program funding. Applications are available in the spring of each year which detail eligibility, requirements and deadlines and can be found on the JMEC website. Per bylaw, the Jemez Mountains Electric Foundation receives its funds from patronage capital



2023 scholarship recipients with several of the JMEC trustees.

either voluntarily assigned by members or that is unclaimed by members after good faith efforts to reach the member have failed.

In addition to the scholarships provided by the JME Foundation, others available to JMEC member families include:

- Basin Electric Power Cooperative - Member Cooperative Scholarship Program
- RMEL (Rocky Mountain Electrical League) Foundation
- Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., Scholarship.

Employee in the Spotlight: Christine Chavez



Prior to joining Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative, Inc., in 2013, Christine Chavez was a firefighter for 17 years, eventually becoming a crew boss and later, an engine boss. Then funding for her position was

cut and Chavez went to JMEC for what was supposed to be a six-month stint as a tree trimmer. Ten years later, she's running the cooperative's meter shop.

Whether she is in the shop preparing the meters or out in the field testing members' meters, Chavez said that she has terrific co-workers always available to offer their advice when she needs it.

“If I come upon complications, Randy Vigil (operations supervisor), Darryl Leyba, (journeyman lineman) and Leonard Bustos (journeyman lineman) always are there for me,” said Chavez. “When I need help, these are the

men I call upon. They direct me in the right way. We work together to make sure everything is correct and safe.”

Not surprisingly, Chavez said the thing she liked most about her job was the camaraderie. “My co-workers are just the best people in the world to work with. They understand what I deal with out in the field.”

Comments in her nomination to be the Employee in the Spotlight included, “Christine is always more than willing to go out and test meters for members and walk them through the process.” “She is hard working, dependable and efficient.” “Christine is always agreeable and is a wonderful co-worker.”

Chavez wants members to know that all the cooperative staff is there for them. “It takes a village to do what we do for members,” she said. “Everyone on the team from management to apprentices are doing everything in their might to serve them.” She added, for good measure, that she takes pride in making sure that their meters are 100 percent taken care of and that they report accurately.

A resident of Alcalde, Chavez says that when she is not working she enjoys her family, her five dogs – one Blue Heeler (Opie) and four Chihuahua terriers (Littles, Buzzard, Guy Guy and Choo Choo Train) and what her nephew, Dominic, calls her “giant truck” – a Dodge Ram.

A Heat Pump Could Save You Money, By Dennis Astley

One of the safest and simplest appliances for heating your home or business is an air source heat pump.

Gas furnaces currently average about 92 percent efficiency and allow very little heat to escape in the vent pipe.

A space heater or baseboard electric heater burn electricity to convert it to heat. They work very well and are considered 100 percent efficient because they convert 100 percent of the energy into heat.

To compare the cost of operating a gas furnace to an electric heating appliance, we must measure the amount of energy used and the unit is the BTU. We have converted the fuel into dollars and found:

12.2 cent electricity = \$1.21 propane and \$1.31 natural gas when using a 92 percent efficient gas furnace. If your cost of gas is higher, then a heat pump will save you money and provide cool air in the summer.

However, heat pumps are best compared to electric heaters because they do not burn gas and operate using only electricity. When you compare the electricity used to operate the heat pump to the electricity used in a baseboard electric heater you really see the efficiency advantage of heat pumps. The moving of heat from the outside air to a home with an air source heat pump uses less electricity than a baseboard heater and uses about 40 percent of the energy to do so. If you do the math, that makes an air source heat pump 250 percent efficient when compared to a baseboard heater. Wow!

How effective is a heat pump when the outside temperature gets cold? The air source heat pump works best when the temperature is 40 degrees or warmer but most air source heat pumps should work into the 20-degree range.

To work when the temperature is too cold to be efficient, heat pumps have a backup or auxiliary heat source such as a gas furnace or electric heat coils. Since most of the Northern New Mexico winter has a temperature above 40 degrees, the efficiency of an air source heat pump makes sense in our climate.

Dennis Astley is a professional engineer and JMEC's assistant general manager.

