



Governor Bill Richardson Dedicates West Capitol Building in Honor of Former NM Governor Toney Anaya

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SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson today dedicated the new West Capitol Building in honor of former New Mexico Governor Toney Anaya. Governor Richardson was joined by former Governor Anaya and members of his family, former members of the Anaya Administration, and other dignitaries for the ceremony.

The building houses the New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department, and Department of Aging and Long Term Services. It was designed with state of the art energy saving techniques, and features a system to collect rainwater that is used to water the native plants that are part of the building's xeriscape.

Here are Governor Richardson's prepared remarks from today's event:

"We are here today to pay tribute to a great New Mexican. Toney Anaya is more than a former Governor. He, as much as anyone in the long, proud history of this state, has had a profound impact on the people of New Mexico.

Governor Toney Anaya is a home-grown success story- someone who is a leader and an inspiration to others. I am proud to rename the West Capitol Building in honor of Governor Toney Anaya.

Toney Anaya epitomizes rural New Mexico. He grew up in a small adobe house with a dirt floor in Moriarty. It had no electricity and no plumbing. He spent time at New Mexico Highlands University before ultimately graduating from Georgetown University with a bachelor of arts in Economics and Political Science.

He didn't stop there. Toney went on to study law at the Washington College of Law, American University, where he graduated in 1967.

While in school, Toney got his start in politics by learning from two New Mexico pioneers. He worked as a clerical assistant to U.S. Senator Dennis Chavez, and was Legislative Counsel to U.S. Senator Joseph Montoya.

Toney returned to New Mexico in 1970 as a partner in a law firm.

But as we all know Toney's true passion is to serve as a public servant.

He won his statewide race in 1975, when voters elected him as New Mexico's Attorney General. He immediately established a reputation for being fearless and tenacious. He concentrated his efforts on issues like consumer education, consumer protection, and legislative campaign reform.

Toney went on to serve New Mexicans as Governor in 1983. The thing I admired most about Governor Anaya is he never wavered from his commitment to help people in need. He believed, and still believes, that government should provide services that individuals cannot provide for themselves.

Governor Anaya was perhaps best known for his strong stand opposing the death penalty; declaring New Mexico a sanctuary for political refugees as a response to the turmoil in Central America in the mid-1980's; and his fight against discrimination, especially when it came to immigrants.

He became a national Hispanic leader by expanding his activities to include involvement in national Hispanic politics.

He served as an advisor to the President of Mexico for five years during negotiations and passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

He was progressive on a number of fronts - economic development, education reform, affirmative action and the environment. And he oversaw investments of multi-billion funds to help diversify the state's economy during a major downturn in the national economy.

Among his efforts to streamline state government, he helped to create the Department of Regulation and Licensing, which combined the administration of dozens of previously independent licensing boards and commissions. It is appropriate that we dedicate the very building in which this department is now housed in Governor Anaya's name.

Today, Toney is still a leader in the community, as founding member of Valor Telecommunications, the first major Hispanic-owned telecommunications company and one of the 14 largest local exchange companies in the U.S.

I appointed him to the Board of Regents at New Mexico Highlands University, where he serves as Chairman of the Board. I also appointed him to Chair the Governor's Task

Force on Higher Education to make recommendations to strengthen higher education in the state.

But his most treasured accomplishment is his family. Together with his wife Elaine, they have three children and seven grandchildren.

These are just the highlights of an incredible career. Toney's pioneering work as Attorney General, Governor, an advocate for Hispanics, and community leader has improved the lives of countless New Mexicans, and has forever changed New Mexico for the better.

Please join me in congratulating and thanking Governor Anaya, as I officially designate this the '**Toney Anaya Building.**'"

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