



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON



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Governor Bill Richardson Congratulates Education Secretary Veronica Garcia on National Service Award

SANTA FE- New Mexico Secretary of Education Veronica C. García will be honored by the National Governors Association (NGA) with its Award for Distinguished Service to State Government at its Centennial Meeting on Sunday, July 13 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Secretary García is one of eight individuals in the nation selected by the NGA for her valuable contribution to public service.

“Secretary Garcia is a tireless and selfless public servant,” said Governor Bill Richardson, who nominated García for the award. “She has worked closely with me as we invested in classroom innovations, while holding schools accountable for improving student achievement.”

Each year, NGA presents three awards to state officials, three to private citizens and two for distinguished service to the arts. Only four New Mexican’s have ever received the award.

“I am honored that Governor Richardson nominated me for this award, and I thank him for his bold leadership in education reform for New Mexico,” said Secretary García.

“We recognize eight individuals for their leadership and record of achievement on important and diverse state issues,” said NGA Chair Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty. “The nation’s governors and I are grateful for their dedication to improving their states and the nation.”

Established in 1976, the NGA Awards for Distinguished Service to State Government allow governors to bring national recognition to their states’ most valuable civil servants and private citizens. The awards emphasize the commitment of state administrators and the important contributions private citizens make to their state. The awards program is administered by a selection committee comprised of three permanent representatives from the academic community, as well as designees chosen by the NGA chair and vice chair.

In November 2003 Dr. Veronica García was appointed New Mexico's first education secretary. Secretary García has worked for 35 years to revolutionize education in New Mexico. Her ability to build coalitions has resulted in the development and implementation of an accountability system and higher standards for education from early childhood to college and career readiness across New Mexico. Under her leadership, New Mexico is nationally recognized for strong standards and assessment and accountability systems. Secretary García has forged partnerships with other state agencies, tribal nations and pueblos and community representatives through advisory councils and committees for Indian Education. These partnerships have lead to breakthroughs in standards and accountability for the revitalization and preservation of native languages.

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