



Dr. Jennifer Gomez-Chavez

Jennifer Gomez-Chavez is a native New Mexican born and raised in Hagerman, a small rural farming community. Jennifer has 30 years of experience working with low-income, and students from underrepresented backgrounds through her positions with the LULAC National Educational Service Center and the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque. She holds a B.A. in Criminal Justice, a Master's in Counseling, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. This year Jennifer is starting her 27th year working at the UNM's Health Sciences Center as the Special Assistant to the Associate Vice Chancellor for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In her present role, Jennifer is the Executive Director of the Unidos Project, Central Region Director for ENLACE New Mexico, and directs Collective Impact Initiatives.

Jennifer began her career at the university as an academic advisor for UNM's College Enrichment Program, which is a prominent New Mexico student retention initiative. In 2006, she was named to lead the first Title V grant at the University, which became a nationally recognized model on how to implement, manage, and institutionalize a federal grant focused to increase Hispanic and low income students. In 2011, she was appointed as the first director of Student Academic Success for the University. In her role, she directed several programs that led to reach historic undergraduate six-year graduation rates at UNM. At the same time, Jennifer was named Executive Director of the Unidos Project, a grant funded by the Lumina Foundation to increase Latino Student Success across the country. The Unidos Project received national recognition by the White House Initiatives on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. In 2016, Jennifer was appointed to the Division for Equity and Inclusion to serves as the Special Assistant to the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion.

During her tenure at the University, she taught the Psychology of Hope for eleven years. She strongly believes in the power of hope to help individuals achieve their highest potential and overcome any challenges. In 2008, Jennifer was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and travels the country advocating for the differently abled as a way to inspire others to never give up.

Additionally, Jennifer is active in the community and has been recognized as a grassroots leader. She has received countless awards and recognitions for her service including the following: Inducted into the LULAC Women's Hall of Fame, Albuquerque Business First Women of

Influence, Alliance for Hispanic Serving Institutions Educators - Founding Member Award, Ohtli Mexican Government Award UNM Presidential Luminaria Award for Inclusion, Access & Student Success, National Verizon Award – Latina Business Professional, New Mexico Hispano Round Table Legislative Walking the Talk Award, and the National MS Society induction into the Volunteer Advocacy Hall of Fame.

She serves on numerous state and national boards providing guidance on student and family access and success. She is a nationally certified academic coach and trainer. Currently, she is a national speaker presenting on various topics to empower individuals to use their voice as a way to self-advocate.

Listed below are a few of her community and national boards and committees:

- College Connect New Mexico - Chair
- Mentoring Kids Works - Board Member
- MANA de Albuquerque – Member
- New Mexico Hispanic Heritage Committee – Board Member
- MLK Jr. Commission Foundation - Board Member
- UNM LULAC Young Adult Council – Faculty Advisor
- LOBOS for Legislation – Member
- National MS Society South Central Region – Leadership Advisory Board Member
- AARP – Government Relations Advocate & Volunteer
- Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities – Member
- American College Application Campaign – State Coordinator
- Global Embassy of Activists for Peace – Member
- Alliance for Hispanic Serving Institution Educators – Founding Member & Council Member
- Excelencia in Education – Hispanic Serving Institutions Center for Policy & Practice Center – Advisory Committee
- Hispanic Education Act Advisory Committee (HEAC) – Appointed by State of New Mexico