

SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Fe County Clerk's Office Wins Recognition for Several New Programs

The Santa Fe County Clerk's Office, under the leadership of Katharine E. Clark, earned several 2023 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo) and an honorable mention from the Election Assistance Commission (EAC). These organizations celebrated the office for their improvements to accessibility at polling sites and their unique civic engagement programs, including the Democracy 101 High School Outreach Program, the "I Voted!" Sticker Design Contest, and the Election Worker Mentorship and Debrief Program.

The EAC recognized the Clerk's Office for outstanding efforts in improving accessibility for voters with disabilities. The office went above and beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statutory requirements. Several drive-up absentee ballot dropboxes have been installed, all poll workers receive Disability Rights New Mexico-approved ADA assistance training, and the office surveyed every polling site, adjusting for compliance and other accessibility-related improvements.

"This recognition sets a very high bar for our office," said Clark, whose staff notably excelled during her first term in office. Clark points out, "Santa Fe County was the only New Mexico County to win recognition from the EAC for two consecutive years. I am indebted to my staff who work tirelessly to deliver a high standard of excellence in running our elections."

The Democracy 101 program gives high school students the opportunity to learn about the election process and empowers them through a mock election process to understand how to fill out a ballot, and cast them into the tabulator. Students also heard a brief lecture from Clerk Clark on their civic rights and duties, and they could freely ask questions to the Clerk and staff.

The "I Voted!" Sticker Design Contest, which accepts designs in both English and Spanish, inspires next generation artists and public servants to take an interest in the elections process. The winning design celebrated the tri-cultural nature of the Santa Fe area and was selected by county staff via ranked choice ballot.

The Election Worker Mentorship program allowed newer Presiding Judges to shadow more experienced Judges during Early Voting before serving for the first time on Election Day. This empowered these new judges to perform the Election Day procedures with confidence. Additionally, the in-person Debrief Program allowed all Election and Presiding Judges to provide feedback directly to the Clerk's Office after each election. The office takes this feedback to account when improving future elections.

The Santa Fe County Clerk's Office will continue to expand its existing programs as well as implement new, innovative community engagement opportunities throughout the remainder of Clark's time in office.

For more information, contact Mitchell Cox, Voter Outreach Coordinator at mcox@santafecountynm.gov or 505-992-9858