

News Release

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NMMRA Board Member Receives Special Recognition of Appreciation Award from National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)

Albuquerque, NM — Ophelia Rinaldi, MSW, consumer beneficiary representative on NMMRA's Board of Directors since 2003 was recently recognized at the Leadership Luncheon as part of the National Hispanic Council on Aging Annual Conference in Dallas, TX. As founding member and vice chair of NHCOA, this award was presented to Ms. Rinaldi for her work as a compassionate leader who has served as an advocate for older adults since the nationally based Washington D.C. organization's establishment in 1979. In honoring Ms. Rinaldi, NHCOA celebrates her generosity, hard work and many contributions ensuring the stability and growth of the organization.

Prior to retiring, Ms. Rinaldi worked 10 years with the State of New Mexico as well as with local senior programs in administration and program management. She worked at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Albuquerque as a direct service provider and as a social worker in the area of geriatrics. For four years, Ms. Rinaldi was a clinical therapist in private practice. She has held numerous volunteer positions and has been a founding member and past president of the New Mexico Hispanic Council on Aging, an organization in which she is a member.

Ms. Rinaldi serves as a volunteer with SET for Health New Mexico, the State Long-Term Care Advisory Committee, and the New Mexico Mental Health and Aging Coalition, to name a few. She has served on a variety of American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) committees, is co-chair of AARP's Diversity Committee and is a member of the AARP Capital City Task Force. Additionally, Ms. Rinaldi is the chairperson of NMMRA's Consumer Advisory Council and very recently served on the Healthcare Associated Infections Task Force created earlier this year by the state legislature.

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According to Dan Jaco, NMMRA’s CEO, “We are honored to have Ms. Rinaldi as a member of our board. Ms. Rinaldi is highly respected in the health care and Hispanic communities and is an excellent role model for her peers as well as future generations of women leaders. This award confirms her commitment to improving the lives of older adults and their families on both a local and national level.”

Ms. Rinaldi received her Bachelor’s degree in home economics education and behavioral health from the University of New Mexico and her Master’s degree in social work from the University of Denver.

For over 25 years, NHCOA has supported the growing number of aging Hispanic adults through advocacy, research, the building of support networks, capacity-building assistance to support and strengthen Hispanic community-based organizations, and funding for community-based projects. NHCOA’s annual conference is the largest three-day gathering in the country specifically focused on the health, financial, educational, and cultural needs of the nearly two million Latinos over the age of 65 in the U.S.

NMMRA is a not-for-profit, physician-sponsored organization that is New Mexico’s federally contracted Medicare Quality Improvement Organization and External Quality Review Organization for Medicaid. The organization works with health care providers, consumer and health care organizations, and state and federal agencies to improve the quality of health care in New Mexico.