

# **Achieving a Fair Political System**

## **Building a Grassroots Coalition To Revive Our Democracy**



April 28, 2018

Santa Fe Community College  
Santa Fe, NM

Sponsored by; New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics,  
The Max & Anna Levinson Foundation, New Mexico Highlands University,  
Santa Fe Community College

# Saturday Morning Agenda

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8:00 am Registration

8:30 am Welcome by Santa Fe Mayor Alan Webber

8:35 am Opening Remarks – Bruce Berlin, President, New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics (NMMOP)

8:45 am Keynote Address – Doug Nickle, Director of Development, Bridge Alliance:

“Building a Broad-based, Grassroots Coalition to Revive Democracy in New Mexico”

9:15 am Q & A

9:30 am Panel Discussion – Big Money’s Impact on New Mexico

Moderator: Bruce Berlin – President, NMMOP

Panelists: Miguel Acosta – Lead Organizer, New Energy Economy; Co-director, Earth Care

Camilla Feibelman – Director, Rio Grande Chapter, Sierra Club

Eric Griego – State Director, New Mexico Working Families Party; Fellow, Center for Health Policy, University of New Mexico

Donna House – Navajo Consultant for Indigenous Peoples’ Ecological and Environmental Policy

Miranda Viscoli – Co-president, New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence

Issues: 1. How does Big Money impact your organization’s ability to reach its goals?  
2. What can we do together to overcome the undue influence of Big Money on our organizations’ programs and New Mexico’s political system while maintaining our effectiveness in our respective organizations or initiatives?

10:20 am Q & A

10:35 am Break

10:50 am Breakout Sessions – Developing Goals

Issue: What goals can we agree to work on collaboratively to overcome the undue influence of Big Money on our programs, our organizations, our government and the political process in order to create a fair political system in New Mexico?

The following breakout sessions will address this issue in their respective Initiative Areas:

A. Education and Media Initiatives – Room 410

Camilla Feibelman, Sierra Club and Bianca Sopoci-Belknap, Earth Care/New Energy Economy

B. Local initiatives – Cafeteria Lounge

Miguel Acosta, Earth Care/New Energy Economy and Rev. Gail Marriner, Santa Fe Unitarian Church

C. State Initiatives - Room 412

Miranda Viscoli, New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence and Colin Baillio, Health Action New Mexico

D. National Initiatives - Room 414

Donna House, Navajo Consultant and Michele Korri, New Mexico Indivisible Congress

E. Movement-building initiatives – Jemez Room

Eric Griego, New Mexico Working Families Party and Graham Bartlett, Abq. TEA Party

12:00 pm Lunch

# Saturday Afternoon Agenda

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1:10 pm Panel Discussion – Achieving a Fair Political System to Revive Our Democracy

Moderator: Rebecca Álvarez, PhD – New Mexico Highlands University, NMMOP Board of Directors

Panelists: Viki Harrison – Executive Director, Common Cause New Mexico  
Doug Nickle – Director of Development, Bridge Alliance  
Maria Perez – Director, Fair Vote New Mexico  
John House – Co-chair, 28th Amendment Comm., NMMOP Board of Directors  
Bob Perls – Founder and President of the Board of Directors, New Mexico Open Primaries

Issues: 1. What are we doing to achieve a fair political system?  
2. What strategies can we employ in collaboration to achieve a fair political system?

2:05 pm Q & A

2:20 pm Break

2:35 pm Breakout Sessions (con't) – Developing Strategies to Achieve Our Goals

Issue: What strategies can we employ in collaboration to achieve a fair political system in New Mexico?

Breakout sessions will continue working together to develop effective strategies for implementing the goals they set in their respective Initiative Areas in the morning.

A. Education and Media Initiatives – Room 410

Maria Perez, Fair Vote New Mexico and Dr. James Webster, New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence

B. Local initiatives – Cafeteria Lounge

Viki Harrison, Common Cause New Mexico and Tom Taylor, Abq. TEA Party

C. State Initiatives – Room 412

Paul Gibson, Retake Our Democracy and Bob Perls, New Mexico Open Primaries

D. National Initiatives – Room 414

John House, NMMOP and Sheila Burns, Wolf-PAC New Mexico

E. Movement-building initiatives – Jemez Room

Doug Nickle, Bridge Alliance and Kendra Pinto, Navajo Community Organizer, Dine Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment

3:45 Plenary: Where Do We Go From Here?

4:30 pm Close of Conference

# Speakers and Panelists' Bios

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**Miguel Angel Acosta**, Lead Organizer, New Energy Economy; Co-director, Earth Care. Miguel has been community organizing with underserved populations for over 40 years. A former Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education member, he helped establish The Community Schools Partnership.

**Rebecca Álvarez, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice, New Mexico Highlands University, and a member of the board of directors of New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics. Her work on representation in social movements has appeared in *Critical Sociology*, among other publications.

**Colin Baillio**, Director of Policy and Communications, Health Action New Mexico. Colin's policy areas include Medicaid, affordability, prescription drug prices and dental care. He is a former Fred Harris Congressional Intern and temporary Legislative Correspondent for US Senator Martin Heinrich.

**Graham Bartlett**, President, Albuquerque TEA Party. Graham is a partner in Integrated Quality Group. He worked at Sandia National Labs for the last 15 years as a contractor assisting them in quality, production, and inventory management systems.

**Bruce Berlin J.D.**, Founder and President of New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics. Author of *Breaking Big Money's Grip on America*, Bruce previously served as a senior ethics attorney with the New Mexico Public Education Department. He is a former Peace Fellow with the U.S. Institute of Peace.

**Sheila Burns**, Wolf-PAC New Mexico Organizer. A former private sector financial manager, Sheila is the owner of Account Ability, a business consulting firm. She also has served as a board member and volunteer advocate for the Solace Crisis Treatment Center.

**Camilla Feibelman**, Director, Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. Former National Director of the Sierra Student Coalition and Deputy Press Secretary for Diversity Programs, Camilla was a 1998 Fulbright Scholar. In 2014, she was appointed to the Udall Foundation's Board of Trustees by President Obama.

**Paul Gibson**, Co-founder of Retake Our Democracy, an organization designed to support advocacy at state and local levels. Previously he co-founded SantaFe4Bernie and Retake the Roundhouse, where he partnered with Working Families Party, Progressive Democrats of America and other grassroots groups.

**Eric Griego**, State Director, New Mexico Working Families Party and a Fellow at the Center for Health Policy at UNM. Eric is a former Albuquerque City Councilman and New Mexico State Senator, where he sponsored among other measures, a one-year ban on lobbying after serving in the legislature.

**Viki Harrison**, Executive Director, Common Cause New Mexico. Viki directed several major reforms: leading the coalition to make New Mexico the first state to pass a bi-partisan fix to public financing laws; passing and effecting online voter registration; and becoming the 2nd state to oppose the Citizens United ruling.

**Donna House**, Consultant and Researcher for Indigenous People's ecological and environmental policy. Donna works to protect Indigenous People's health and ecosystems locally and nationally. She was a key designer of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington.

# Speakers and Panelists' Bios

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**John House J.D.**, Co-chair, 28th Amendment Committee, New Mexicans for Money Out of Politics (NMMOP) and member of the Board of NMMOP. A semi-retired attorney, John is a Local Leader for American Promise and a participant in its "Writing the 28th Amendment" Project.

**Michele Korri**, New Mexico Indivisible Congress Leadership Team, the statewide organizing group for Indivisible. Michele has served as an organizing model facilitator for an Indivisible training workshop and continues to study and practice values-based organizing.

**Rev. Gail Marriner**, Minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Fe for the past 7 years. She is past president of the Interfaith Leadership Alliance.

**Doug Nickle**, Director of Development, the Bridge Alliance, and founder and Executive Director for Dare To Be United, a nonprofit organization focused on increasing citizen engagement in creating a more responsive government. He also founded Make California Count, an Electoral College reform organization.

**Maria Perez**, Director, Fair Vote New Mexico, a non-profit organization seeking to make democracy fair and more representative. Maria is an organizer, facilitator, health care practitioner, advocate, coalition-builder and firm believer in the power of people coming together to address complex social problems.

**Bob Perls**, Founder and President of the Board, NM Open Primaries, and Senior Vice President at Visual Health Solutions. As a former NM state representative, Bob worked to create rural jobs in renewable energy. He also served as a U.S. Diplomat in Germany, Canada, Pakistan and The Gambia.

**Kendra Pinto**, Navajo Community Organizer with Dine Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment. Kendra has addressed the adverse impacts of natural resource extraction felt by her community with members of Congress in Washington and the Bureau of Land Management.

**Bianca Sopoci-Belknap**, Co-director, Earth Care and Associate Director of New Energy Economy. Bianca works with young people of color, low-income youth and their families to organize for their rights and the protection of the Earth. Bianca is the former Chair of the Sustainable Santa Fe Commission.

**Tom Taylor**, Albuquerque Tea Party Board of Directors; President, Thermogenics, Inc. A businessman who holds numerous patents, Tom developed an advanced waste to energy system and a water treatment system that promise to produce fresh water with a great reduction in costs of operation and performance.

**Miranda Viscoli**, Co-president of New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence. Miranda has worked with schools, school boards, police departments, legislators and city councils to implement gun violence prevention measures. She serves as a regional board member for States United Against Gun Violence.

**Alan Webber**, Mayor of Santa Fe. Founder of One New Mexico and the business magazine, Fast Company, Alan has served as a policy advisor to Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and as Special Assistant to Secretary of Transportation Neil Goldschmidt in the Carter administration.

**James Webster, MD, MS, MACP**, New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence Board of Directors. As President of the Chicago Board of Health, Jim helped reduce gun violence and improved health coverage for minority populations. He also was Executive Director of the Chicago Institute of Medicine.