



# National Education Association - New Mexico

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## Local Retiree Honored for Years of Service

The National Education Association of New Mexico bestowed its highest honor to Retired Farmington teacher, **Connie Gooch**. Connie was inducted into the NEA-NM Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Albuquerque recently for her service to the profession and to NEA.

The accomplished bilingual teacher, dedicated community volunteer, and local Farmington Education Association president taught for 27 years before her retirement. A lifetime member of NEA, Connie served in other capacities including; leadership team spokesperson, newsletter editor, and membership chair. At the Region and state level she served as Region Chairperson, member of the Minority Affairs Committee, "I Can Do It" Classroom Management Certified Trainer and graduated from the Essential Leadership Cadre program. She served the school district on the superintendent's advisory committee, the district budget committee, and helped write the mentor program grant. Currently, she is very much in demand as a substitute teacher because of her vast experience and the caring, yet firm manner in which she approaches her classes.

She started the bilingual program at McCormick Elementary and served as a mentor teacher for new staff along with being a cooperating teacher for many student teachers placed in her classroom. Even with all her school and NEA work, she found time to be involved in church and community activities such as: President of the "Home Runners" Baseball Organization, Cub Scout leader, Merit Badge counselor, Spanish Dance instructor, and coach of various youth sports teams. She cultivated her interest in genealogy by translating Spanish records, teaching genealogy classes and volunteering at the Family History Center, and being a family history consultant.

Her nominator and colleague at McCormick, Theresa Salazar, writes, "Her former students still talk about the fun they had in her class and ask for her fondly, wanting to know what she is doing in her retirement."

It seems like she is still busy as ever and doing a lot for her colleagues and community.