



National Education Association - New Mexico

Great Public Schools Begin With Us!

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Local Retirees Honored for Years of Service

The National Education Association of New Mexico bestowed its highest honor to retired educators **Bertha Gutierrez** from Gadsden and **David Jacquez**, formerly of Silver City and now a resident of Las Cruces. Both were inducted into the NEA-NM Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Albuquerque recently for their service to the profession and to NEA.

Bertha worked diligently in her community of Sunland Park, seeing the need for her bilingual services and dedicating her career to both Sunland Park Elementary and Santa Teresa Middle School. She also served as an instructional specialist, a curriculum writer, and presenter at professional conferences, delivered professional development opportunities to colleagues as well as holding parental involvement sessions for her families.

An NEA member for 28 years, she hosts NEA meetings in her home continues her involvement in her local. While now retired from the public schools, she is working as the on-site Coordinator for NM Community Faithlinks which provides tutoring services in schools wanting to increase student achievement. The director of the Albuquerque – based program cites Bertha's strong support and knowledge of the community and her volunteer work in her church as reasons she has been able to make the program a success in the Gadsden area. That church activity has expanded outside her San Martin de Porras Parish to the Catholic Church in Liaoyang, China which she assisted when she volunteered to teach ESL in China for two summers, along with acquiring \$5000 worth of books and materials for the Liaoyang Teachers college and then providing the professional development on how to use the donated materials in their teaching.

David Jacquez served as a teacher at La Plata Middle School, coach, elementary and high school principal and NEA local leader in the Silver City Public Schools, where he completed most of his 26 year teaching career. He spent many hours outside the classroom and school building supporting his students in their athletic events, science fairs, and other extra-curricular activities. He also spent many hours advocating for public schools and their funding at local meetings, and legislative meetings at home and in Santa Fe. His involvement also included serving in the NEA-NM Southwest Region and running for NEA-NM Vice-President. Upon moving to Las Cruces, he continued his NEA membership and involvement through his work as a bus driver member of the Las Cruces CSEC local.

David involved himself in his silver City community by serving on the Museum Board, Main Street Project advisor, member of the Gang Task Force, member of the Literacy Board and assisted with Teen Court. Presently, he is enjoying a foray into artistic and creative ventures which were recently featured in the *Las Cruces Sun-News*.