



STATE BAR OF NEW MEXICO

2026 Annual Awards

Call For Nominations

Nominations are being accepted for the **2026 State Bar of New Mexico Annual Awards** to recognize those who have distinguished themselves or who have made exemplary contributions to the State Bar or legal profession in the past year. The awards will be presented at a ceremony on **Friday, Oct. 23**, at the State Bar of New Mexico, 5121 Masthead St. NE, Albuquerque, NM. All awards are limited to one recipient, whether living or deceased, with the exception of the Justice Pamela B. Minzner Professionalism Award, which can have two recipients—an attorney and a judge. Nominees may be nominated for more than one award category. Previous recipients for the past three years are listed below.

To view last year's recipients and the full list of previous recipients, visit:

www.sbnm.org/AnnualAwards

🌀 Distinguished Bar Service Award – Nonlawyer 🌀

Recognizes nonlawyers who have provided valuable service and contributions to the legal profession over a significant period of time. Nomination should include specific examples of service/contributions; specify in what ways they affected the legal profession; and the period of time.

Previous recipients: William “Bill” Workman, Katina Watson, Mary Galves

🌀 Excellence in Well-Being Award 🌀

Many individuals have made significant contributions to the improvement of legal professional well-being including destigmatizing mental health, strengthening resiliency, and creating a synergic approach to work and life. This award was created to recognize an individual or organization that has made an outstanding positive contribution to the New Mexico legal community's well-being. As the State Bar of New Mexico is committed to improving the health and wellness of New Mexico's legal community, we strongly encourage self-nominations and peer nominations for any lawyer, judge or nonlawyer working in some capacity with the N.M. legal community. Nomination should include examples of significant contributions to the legal profession, and outstanding positive contribution to the legal community's well-being.

Previous recipients: David J. Stout, Briggs F. Cheney, Joy Applewhite

☞ Judge Sarah M. Singleton* Distinguished Service Award ☞

Recognizes attorneys who have provided valuable service and contributions to the legal profession, the State Bar of New Mexico and the public over a significant period of time. Nomination should include examples of service and contributions to the legal profession; service and contributions to the State Bar; service and contributions to the public; and the period of time.

Previous recipients: Leon Howard III, George David Giddens, Jr., David Stout

**This award was renamed in 2019 in memory of Judge Singleton (1949-2019) for her tireless commitment to access to justice and the provision of civil legal services to low-income New Mexicans. She also had a distinguished legal career for over four decades as an attorney and judge.*

☞ Justice Pamela B. Minzner* Professionalism Award ☞

Recognizes attorneys and/or judges who, over long and distinguished legal careers, have by their ethical and personal conduct exemplified for their fellow attorneys the epitome of professionalism. Nomination should describe the long and distinguished legal career, and provide examples of how they have exemplified ethical and personal conduct that is the epitome of professionalism for their fellow attorneys.

Previous recipients: Judge Joshua A. Allison and Gerald G. Dixon, M. Mitchell Moss, Justice Edward L. Chavez

**Known for her fervent and unyielding commitment to professionalism, Justice Minzner (1943–2007) served on the New Mexico Supreme Court from 1994 to 2007.*

☞ Justice Pamela B. Minzner Outstanding Women's Advocacy Award ☞

Recognizes attorneys who have provided legal assistance to women who are unrepresented or underserved, or advocated for causes that will benefit and/or further the rights of women within the previous calendar year. This award is not a lifetime achievement award; it is for an attorney who is currently doing the work and pushing the status of women forward. Nomination should describe the legal assistance provided to women who are unrepresented or underserved, and provide examples of how they have advocated for causes that will benefit and/or further the rights of women.

Previous recipient (created in 2025): Sonia M. Gipson Rankin

☞ Outstanding Legal Organization or Program Award ☞

Recognizes outstanding, extraordinary law-related organizations or programs that serve the legal profession and the public. Nomination should include examples of how the law-related organization or program is outstanding or extraordinary, and how it serves the legal profession and the public.

Previous recipients: New Mexico Christian Legal Aid, Inc., American Indian Law Center PLSI Judicial Clerkship Committee, Judicial Branch IT Staff

🌀 Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year Award 🌀

Awarded to attorneys who have, during the formative stages of their legal careers by their ethical and personal conduct, exemplified for their fellow attorneys the epitome of professionalism; nominee has demonstrated commitment to clients' causes and to public service, enhancing the image of the legal profession in the eyes of the public; nominee must have been admitted to the practice of law in any state for ten (10) years or less. Nomination should include examples of how they have exemplified the epitome of professionalism; how they demonstrated a commitment to clients' causes; list their public service; and provide examples of how they enhanced the image of the legal profession in the eyes of the public.

Previous recipients: Eduardo Ramirez, Cameron S. Bush, Shasta N. Inman

🌀 Robert H. LaFollette* Pro Bono Award 🌀

Presented to an attorney who has made an exemplary contribution of time and effort, without compensation, to provide legal assistance over his or her career to people who could not afford the assistance of an attorney. Nomination should include examples of exemplary contribution of time and effort, without compensation, to provide legal assistance, and for what period of time.

Previous recipients: Evangelina F. Mercado, Ronald T. Taylor, Ella Joan Fenoglio

**Robert LaFollette (1900–1977), Director of Legal Aid to the Poor, was a champion of the underprivileged who, through countless volunteer hours and personal generosity and sacrifice, was the consummate humanitarian and philanthropist.*

🌀 Seth D. Montgomery* Distinguished Judicial Service Award 🌀

Recognizes judges who have distinguished themselves through long and exemplary service on the bench and who have significantly advanced the administration of justice or improved the relations between the bench and the bar; generally given to judges who have retired or soon will be retiring. Nomination should provide examples of how they have distinguished themselves; describe their long and exemplary service on the bench; provide examples of how they advanced the administration of justice; and provide examples of how they have improved the relations between the bench and the bar.

Previous recipients: Judge Stan Whitaker, Judge Robert H. Scott, Judge Lorenzo F. Garcia

**Justice Montgomery (1937–1998), a brilliant and widely respected attorney and jurist, served on the New Mexico Supreme Court from 1989 to 1994 decades as an attorney and judge*

Nominations should be submitted through the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/sbnm/2026sbnmawards>

Additional information or letters may be uploaded with the form and submitted with the nomination. Please include all relevant information and elaborate on all responses to assist the Awards Committee in selecting the recipients. Ensure that your nomination includes reasons for the nomination and addresses all criteria.

Deadline for Nominations: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 5 p.m. (MT)

For more information or questions, please contact Kris Becker at kris.becker@sbnm.org or 505-797-6038.

