



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

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Governor nominates regents for New Mexico colleges and universities

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Wednesday announced 10 appointments to the boards of regents for Eastern New Mexico College, New Mexico Highlands University, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech), New Mexico State University, Northern New Mexico College, and the University of New Mexico. The appointees must be confirmed by the Legislature.

Gov. Lujan Grisham announced the following nominees:

- Logan O'Brien, student regent, to Eastern New Mexico University for a two-year term through Dec. 31, 2024.
- Cody Rivera, student regent, to New Mexico Highlands University for a two-year term through Dec. 31, 2024.
- Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala to New Mexico Tech for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Adrian Salastri, student regent, to New Mexico Tech for a two-year term through Dec. 31, 2024.
- Dr. Ammu Devasthali reappointed to New Mexico State University for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Garrett Moseley, student regent, to New Mexico State University for a two-year term through Dec. 31, 2024.
- Michael A. Martin reappointed to Northern New Mexico College for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Casandra Batista-Dauz, student regent, to Northern New Mexico College for a two-year term through Dec. 31, 2024.
- Paul Blanchard to the University of New Mexico for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Paula Tackett to the University of New Mexico for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.

“These individuals play a critical role in guiding the future of education, research, workforce, and economic development in New Mexico, and our colleges, universities, and ultimately, our higher education students, will benefit from the experience, knowledge, and insights each of these individuals will provide,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**.

Dr. Srinivas Mukkamala is the Chief Product Officer for Ivanti, a tech company with over 40,000 customers, including 97 of the Fortune 500 companies, over 30 states and several federal departments. Dr. Mukkamala is a cybersecurity expert and technology leader with a proven track record for developing transformative technology in risk-based cybersecurity and offensive cyber capabilities. He is a recognized authority in artificial intelligence and the early use of Support Vector Machines and was part of a think tank that collaborated with the U.S. Department of Defense on applying these concepts to cybersecurity problems. He holds a Ph.D. and a Master of Science degree in computer science from the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology.

Dr. Ammu Devasthali currently serves as chair of the New Mexico State University Board of Regents and has served on the board since her first appointment by Gov. Lujan Grisham in 2019. Dr. Devasthali has more than 15 years of dedicated service both working and volunteering, and promoting the art community in southern New Mexico, including time as a board member of the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico and the Las Cruces Art Fair executive committee. She recently led efforts to open the Devasthali Hall arts building on NMSU's main campus and raised private funds to renovate NMSU's Visual Arts Department. Dr. Devasthali currently serves as Building Committee Chair for the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, a charitable resource linking donors with community needs that manages 315 endowments for a region serving 10 counties. She holds two master's degrees from New Mexico State University.

Michael A. Martin is the current president of the Northern New Mexico College Board of Regents and has served on the board since 2019. He was raised on the family ranch in El Rito and is a graduate of Mesa Vista High School and New Mexico State University where he received a bachelor's degree in Farm and Ranch Management. Martin is the grandson of George Martin, the first president of the Spanish American Normal School established in 1909 that later became Northern New Mexico College. He is committed to providing educational opportunities to everyone in northern New Mexico.

Paul Blanchard has extensive experience in commercial construction and commercial and residential development. He has served as chairman, president, and as an executive for numerous companies in a variety of industries including racetracks, casinos, fitness centers, and ranches. He previously served on the State Board of Finance under Governor Bill Richardson and served as co-chairman of the Renewable Energy Transmission Authority. Throughout his career, Blanchard directed the design and the implementation of strategic plans to ensure company growth and took on responsibilities ranging from hands-on involvement to oversight for financial and business development and planning activities.

Paula Tackett retired from the New Mexico Legislative Council Service after serving for 22 years as director of the Legislature's non-partisan, full-time permanent legal research and drafting agency where she oversaw two major renovations of the Capitol Building, helped build the Capitol Art Collection, and oversaw overall operations of the Capitol Building. Tackett continues to be active in the New Mexico State Bar Association, serving as chair of the Advisory Committee the New Mexico Compilation Commission, the state agency responsible for the publication of statutes, case law, and administrative rules. She is a member of the International Women's Forum-New Mexico, the Uniform Law Commission, and the current Secretary of the Governing Council of the New Mexico School for the Arts. Tackett has a bachelor's degree in History and a law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law.

Public four-year colleges, universities, and special schools are governed by boards of regents consisting of members who serve six-year terms and student members who serve two-year terms. The Board of Regents is responsible for governance of the school, including establishment of goals and policies, and overall operation and management. Other functions include approving degrees awarded and appointing the president or chancellor of an institution. Members of Boards of Regents serve in a voluntary capacity and are not compensated for their service.

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