



Office of the Governor

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Governor nominates regents for New Mexico colleges and universities**

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Friday announced three appointments to the boards of regents for Eastern New Mexico University, the New Mexico Military Institute, and New Mexico State University. The appointees must be confirmed by the Legislature.

Gov. Lujan Grisham announced the following nominees:

- Ray Birmingham to Eastern New Mexico University for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Phelps Anderson to the New Mexico Military Institute for a six-year term through Dec. 31, 2028.
- Deborah K. Romero to New Mexico State University 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 for years to come, 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**.

**Ray Birmingham** retired from the University of New Mexico in 2021 after serving as head baseball coach since 2007 where he led the Lobos to seven top-ten national finishes in batting average in 10 seasons with a 95 percent player graduation rate. He previously served as director of public relations and baseball coach at College of the Southwest in Hobbs and as a professor of physical education and baseball coach at New Mexico Junior College. In addition to coaching, Birmingham successfully raised over \$5.7 million for UNM’s baseball facility and operations and is a recipient of the University of New Mexico’s Community Service Award. He is a graduate of Hobbs High School and holds an associate degree from New Mexico Junior College, a bachelor’s degree in journalism from New Mexico State University, and a master’s degree in education from the College of the Southwest.

**Phelps Anderson** was born and raised in Roswell and is a former state representative for Chaves, Lea, and Roosevelt counties, serving from 1977 to 1980 and again from

2019 until his retirement from the Legislature in 2022. During his time in the Legislature, Anderson served on the House Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Committee, the Appropriations and Finance Committee, and the Health & Human Services Committee. Prior to entering politics, Anderson worked as a businessman, managing his family's investment in oil and real estate. He has served his community as a leader with the Boy Scouts of America, a member of the Historical Society for Southeast New Mexico, and as a member of the Roswell Rotary Club.

**Deborah K. Romero** retired as cabinet secretary for the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) in 2022 following a nearly 50-year career as a public servant in New Mexico state government. Romero has worked for nine different gubernatorial administrations and participated in over 40 legislative sessions. She has worked in budgeting and finance across a wide variety of fields, with the majority of her career spent at DFA. Throughout her time at the department, she established the infrastructure capital outlay process for local governments, created the state's capital outlay tracking system, and launched the state Infrastructure Finance Conference, which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. She also previously served as Chief Financial Officer for the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, as well as the Director of Boards and Commissions under two previous administrations. Deborah Romero succeeds Arsenio Romero, who vacated his position as a regent to serve as cabinet secretary for the New Mexico Public Education Department.

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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