



**TRANSFORM
EDUCATION**
NM

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LOCAL EDUCATION ADVOCATE CALLED TO WASHINGTON, D.C. TO FILL PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT

*Cindy Nava, Executive Director of Transform Education New Mexico,
is the First Former DACA Recipient to ever Receive White House
Presidential Appointment*

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – Cindy Nava heads to Washington, D.C. where she will become the first former DACA recipient in the U.S. to receive a White House Presidential Appointment. Nava will serve as the Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Marcia L. Fudge.

“I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to serve my country in this capacity,” said Nava. “HUD is an agency that is responsible for creating and enacting policy that directly impacts the communities I represent and which have played fundamental roles in my success.”

Nava is currently serving as executive director of Transform Education New Mexico (TENM) and will be transitioning out of this role in July. TENM is a community-based coalition built to help align New Mexico’s education system with the landmark court ruling from the Martinez-Yazzie consolidated lawsuit. The ruling focused on ensuring educational sufficiency for four student groups – English Language Learners, Native American students, low-income students, and students with disabilities.

“This appointment is bittersweet because of the progress that Transform Education NM has made in realizing equity for all public school students in New Mexico. As an English Language Learner myself, and a former undocumented immigrant, I was able to deeply relate and see myself in the students we served,” said Nava, referring to the work of TENM. Nava is a former DACA recipient and became naturalized as a U.S. citizen on February 6, 2021. “While I will miss working for TENM, I know that I will best serve my state, now and in the future, by answering this call from the White House.”

Nava has long been a champion of immigrant rights, from her days as a college student at SFCC and UNM to those sitting on boards and serving organizations including UNM El Centro de La Raza, Youth Development Incorporated, ENLACE NM, the National American Mexican Association and many others. Her professional passion has been advocating for public policy that expands access and opportunities serving marginalized communities.

Nava’s passion for education policy was evident since her starting point serving as an intern for former NM State Senator Cynthia Nava in the NM Legislature at the age of 18. “My time in the New Mexico

Legislature provided the opportunity to work on both my passions – immigrant rights and education equity, “ said Nava, referring to her time as an intern and later as an education policy analyst. “Despite having the same name, we have no relation, but I think that fact really endeared me to Senator Nava and she was a great mentor to me, showing me how to translate my passion into policy.”

Other individuals who Nava counts as mentors include Regis Pecos, who served as former Governor of Cochiti Pueblo, U.S. Secretary of Interior Debra Haaland, Congressman Chuy Garcia of Illinois, and her former boss U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan.

TENM’s work will continue to thrive with the strong network of community leaders and advocates that continue to push for educational transformation, and with the foundation that Nava has helped build to strengthen the organization’s infrastructure. The TENM advisory board will soon announce hiring and transition plans for a new director.

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Transform Education NM is a coalition of education, Tribal, and community leaders, advancing a new vision for our public education system in New Mexico. www.transformeducationnm.org