

New Mexico

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Launch *into the* FUTURE

New Mexico is the place for space

Discover
FIVE CHARMING
SMALL TOWNS THAT
SHOULD BE ON
YOUR RADAR

*Catch your
BIG BREAK
in the film
industry*

ALL INCLUSIVE

Programs promote
Native American
entrepreneurship



FIVE REASONS
TO CALL THE
STATE HOME



Southwest Cheese



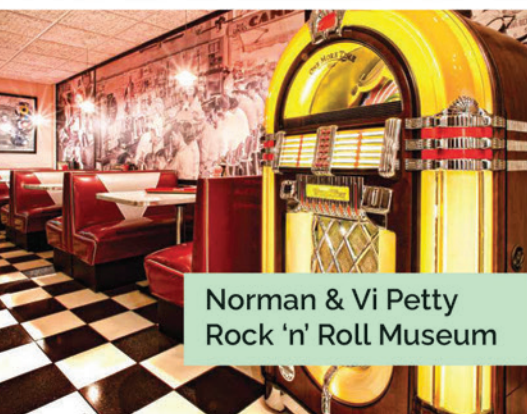
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The Heart

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION



MRGEDA's goal is to enhance the quality of life in the Middle Rio Grande Valley, while reinforcing the unique characteristics of our counties and communities.

mrgeda.com

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OF THE



ARRAY DATA
STRUCTURE



RIVERBEND
HOT SPRINGS



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MIDDLE RIO GRANDE



Mission: Socorro County is dedicated to serving the public in a fair, honest, efficient and cost-effective manner. Though we are a government with several elected offices and agencies, we are committed to working as a team to get things done for our constituents and employees. Our organization is also committed to transparency and access to services. Lastly, we are focused on fulfilling our duties as professionals.



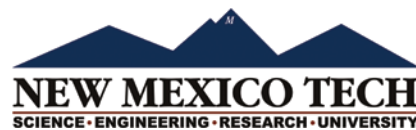
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Vision: New Mexico Tech aspires to be a preeminent community of scholars dedicated to research, education, and innovation – advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics – to meet the challenges of tomorrow. We will drive innovation and education through transdisciplinary collaborations.

Values: Excellence • Integrity • Research • Creativity
Collegiality & Collaboration
Innovation
Economic Prosperity & Technological Development
Integrated Planning & Decision Making.

Contact: Kathryn Bauer - Kathryn.bauer@nmt.edu

nmt.edu





It's easy to love where you live and work when you're in Santa Fe County. In addition to its rich blend of culture, art and technology, the area offers unrivaled outdoor adventures that feed the soul and spark the creative spirit.



SANTA FE COUNTY

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WHERE
YOU LIVE**

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New Mexico

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

— 2023 Edition • Volume 4 —

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Find Your Place

There are a lot of factors to consider when choosing where to live. We have 16 questions you should ask yourself before making this life-changing decision. livability.com/find-your-next-place



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Test Drive That City

You've got your sights set on a new place to live! But here's why you should take that city for a spin first before making the final decision to move there. livability.com/test-drive-city



New City! Now What?

So you chose your new city and made the move. What's next? Now comes the fun part! Check out these six things you need to know about starting a new life in a new place. livability.com/life-in-new-city

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New Mexico offers an unmatched way of life.

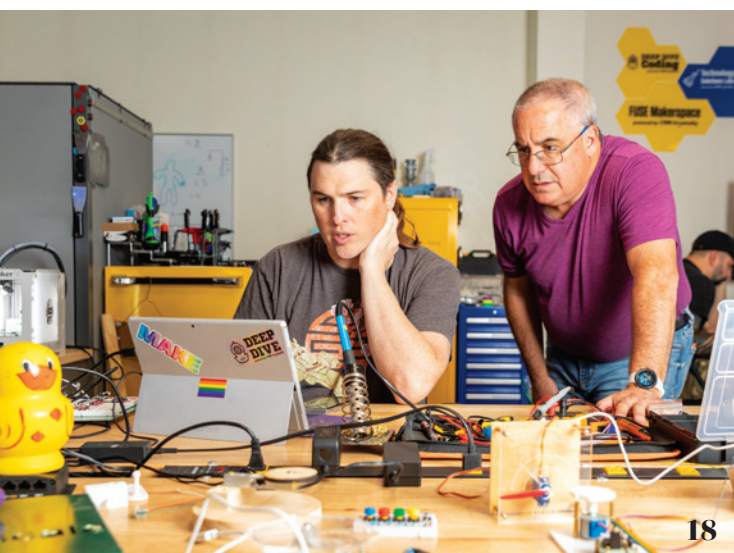
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Every year, over 150 teams from around the world travel to the state to participate in the Spaceport America Cup.
Photo by Joe Najera/Spaceport America

THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS IS MAKING A NAME FOR ITSELF IN BUSINESS

Small Community. Big Possibilities.

NEW AMAZON FULFILLMENT CENTER



Los Lunas is a friendly, pro-development community located just 20 minutes south of downtown Albuquerque. With its direct access to New Mexico's main I-25 and I-40 interstate arteries plus its close proximity to the Sunport International Airport, Los Lunas continues to attract big global names like **META/FACEBOOK**, **AMAZON**, and **WALMART** who have all built hubs in one of the fastest growing communities in New Mexico. To meet all the bustling activity in Valencia County, the recently opened **UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO WORKFORCE TRAINING CENTER** is working in partnership with companies on customized training programs for retention and expansion efforts.

New Mexico's ideal business climate plus our strong talent pool make Los Lunas the ideal place to live, work and play. Learn more at ACommunityThatWorks.com.



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Call New Mexico Home

Nicknamed the Land of Enchantment, New Mexico is attractive for reasons that range from its sand dunes and forests to its vineyards and chile fields. Here are some reasons why New Mexico is an ideal place for you to live, work and grow:

If You're Environmentally Conscious

Both Albuquerque and Santa Fe appear regularly on lists touting the least polluted cities in the U.S., and such low pollution allows for amazing views of starry night skies. New Mexico has always been a leader in traditional energy production such as oil, and now the state is also at the forefront of energy innovation involving solar, wind and biofuels. Plus, New Mexico has a strong history of energy research advancements, thanks to the presence of Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory.



Taos Ski Valley

Go Outside and Play

It's no wonder New Mexico is called the Land of Enchantment, with natural destinations like three national parks, seven national forests and 35 state parks. You can also go kayaking on the Rio Grande, snow ski at Taos Ski Valley, explore Carlsbad Caverns ... and on and on.

CELEBRATE YOUR CREATIVITY

If you're a fan of arts and culture, New Mexico is the place for you. It's easy to explore the finer things in life here, such as viewing authentic Native American art and sculpture exhibits at places like the Poeh Museum & Cultural Center in Santa Fe and the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque. You can catch a show by Performance Santa Fe, which was established in 1935. Be sure to attend annual festivals throughout the state, such as Mardi Gras in the Mountains in Red River, Pie Festival USA in Pie Town, Hatch Chile Festival in Hatch and the three-day Roswell UFO Festival.

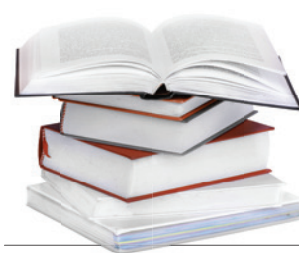


Poeh Museum & Cultural Center in Santa Fe

GREAT UNIVERSITIES TO ATTEND

New Mexico has more Ph.D.s per capita than any other state. Along with a network of community and technical colleges, academic options include:

- » University of New Mexico
- » New Mexico State University
- » New Mexico Tech
- » Eastern New Mexico University
- » Western New Mexico University
- » New Mexico Highlands University
- » University of the Southwest



DYNAMIC PLACE TO LIVE

During the last five years, more than 350,000 people have moved to New Mexico. While the state's population continues to grow, New Mexico is still ideal for anyone who likes open spaces with room to breathe. The state averages about 12 residents per square mile, and varied landscapes make for charming home bases.

Discover New Mexico

EXPLORE SOME OF THE BEST SMALL TOWNS IN NEW MEXICO

1) Tucumcari

In the northeast portion of the state is Tucumcari, home to Mesalands Community College, which features a dinosaur museum.

Tucumcari has more than 1,200 hotel rooms because it is a long-time popular stop for travelers along Route 66.

The city's downtown is highlighted by more than 50 murals painted on district buildings. Tucumcari has quite a few popular independent restaurants, including Kix on 66, Watson's BBQ and Del's Restaurant. The median home value here is a comfortable \$92,000 (Zillow, August 2022).



2) Silver City

Officially classified as a town, Silver City is in southwest New Mexico and has a population nearing 10,000 residents.

Several large festivals are hosted in Silver City, including Chicano Music Festival, Red Hot Children's Fiesta and Red Paint Powwow.

The climate here includes clear mountain air, low humidity and four distinct seasons. Silver City is nestled against the 3.3 million-acre Gila National Forest as well as several area lakes. Silver City is home to Western New Mexico University, and many musicians and artists reside in the downtown district, which features about 30 galleries and art studios, along with buildings graced by beautiful murals. The median home value is around \$209,000 (Zillow, August 2022).



3) Chama

This village in the north-central part of the state is along the Rocky Mountains, about seven miles south of the New Mexico-Colorado border.

The historic Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad offers train rides from Memorial Day weekend to mid-October, showcasing rugged mountain views around Chama.

Chama welcomes visitors, especially in the winter months, thanks to multiple opportunities to enjoy cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. During your visit, stay at one of the many bed-and-breakfasts available.

Other outdoor recreation options include fishing local trout streams and lakes as well as hiking and mountain biking along many trails – including the nearby Continental Divide Trail. The median home value in Chama is \$222,000 (Zillow, August 2022).

4) Artesia

Developed largely by money from the oil and gas industry, the economy of Artesia today is also bolstered by agriculture, dairy and tourism sectors.

This southeast New Mexico city of 12,500 residents offers year-round sunshine without pollution or traffic congestion.

Popular recreation destinations for residents include an aquatic center, along with Baish Park and Jaycee Park. The community has recently invested heavily in its downtown area, which is now classified as a New Mexico MainStreet District.

The median home value in Artesia is \$297,000 (Zillow, August 2022).



5) Bloomfield

In the northwest portion of the state is Bloomfield, with a population estimated around 7,800 residents. The city's economy is diverse, with strong sectors in oil and gas, alternative energy, retail and tourism, and more than 400 companies making up the business community.

The San Juan River courses along the city's boundary and provides excellent fishing, kayaking and canoeing recreation. Bloomfield serves as an ideal center point to visit nearby attractions like Quality Waters, Navajo Lake State Park, Angel Peak Scenic Area and Salmon Ruins & Heritage Park.

The median home value is \$184,000 (Zillow, August 2022).





LAUNCHING into the Future

Spaceport America propels
New Mexico's burgeoning
space industry



Some people use New Mexico as a launching pad, riding a rocket that takes them to outer space and back. Others come from around the world and stay for a few days, and often a lifetime, developing rockets of their own or participating in the state's growing air and space industry.

Many launches in New Mexico take place at Spaceport America, the first purpose-built commercial



The University of Sydney took home the overall winners' trophy after impressing the judges with their 30,000-foot rocket launch.

spaceport in the world, where anchor tenant Virgin Galactic helped create the space tourism industry. Other space companies at Spaceport America include HAPSMobile, AeroVironment, UP Aerospace and SpinLaunch.

Their presence has helped continue New Mexico's history of being a catalyst for innovation, attracting top scientists, engineers and mathematicians from around the world.

That makes the state a destination for events such as the Spaceport America Cup, the world's largest intercollegiate rocket engineering competition. This year's competition attracted more than 1,300 students.

"We had 95 teams in total, our largest event ever, with 57 teams from the United States and 38 from other countries such as Canada, Poland, Brazil, Australia, Taiwan and India, just to name a few," says Cliff Olmsted, president and chair of the Experimental Sounding Rocket Association (ESRA), a nonprofit that promotes

engineering knowledge and experience in rocketry.

Tomorrow's Leaders

Spaceport America Cup is a yearlong engineering competition. The event is run by the ESRA and hosted by Spaceport America. The competition requires skills in managing complex projects to design amateur high-power rockets carrying avionics and payloads to altitudes of 10,000 feet or 30,000 feet. Skillsets range from engineering design and analysis to project management, logistics, manufacturing and flight testing.

"Spaceport America Cup provides an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to enter the workforce with direct and relevant experience in an industry that is clamoring for more talent," Olmsted says.

New Mexico is the perfect location for events, especially those that relate to the cutting-edge aerospace industry, he says.

"Spaceport America and the city of Las Cruces are world-class in their

The fourth-annual Spaceport America Cup was held in June 2022.



ability to host this competition. The demands of hosting a global competition with over 90 teams and 1,400 students launching rockets as high as 30,000 feet are very significant. Frankly speaking, there are few locations in the United States that meet these requirements and are capable of supporting so many students at the same time,” Olmsted says.

Spaceport America provides the necessary access to airspace for the event, and the relatively flat terrain permits much easier tracking and recovery of rockets. The proximity of Spaceport America to Las Cruces is a huge advantage for team lodging and addressing logistical challenges.

In addition, Spaceport America provides its own extremely robust operations and safety infrastructure that is foundational to hosting the Spaceport America Cup, Olmsted says.

Choosing New Mexico

“The Cup fulfills Spaceport America’s mission to promote educational involvement in spaceport activities and training of the workforce to develop the skills needed to enter aerospace careers,” says Executive Director of the New Mexico Spaceport Authority Scott McLaughlin. “We have seen many rocketeers return to Spaceport America once they have graduated and joined the aerospace workforce. We are particularly excited to see so many of our local institutions getting involved in the competition.”



“Spaceport America Cup provides an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to enter the workforce with direct and relevant experience in an industry that is clamoring for more talent.”

— Cliff Olmsted, Experimental Sounding Rocket Association

Collegiate teams from New Mexico participating in the 2022 Spaceport America Cup included the Atomic Aggies from New Mexico State University, NMT-EXSR from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, and Lobo Launch from the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque.

Spaceport America, situated on 18,000 acres adjacent to the U.S. Army White Sands Missile Range, has a rocket-friendly environment of 6,000 square miles of restricted airspace, low population density, a 12,000-foot by 200-foot runway, vertical launch complexes, and about 340 days of sunshine and low humidity.

“New Mexico created Spaceport America knowing the area was primed to be a key part of the growing commercial space sector,” McLaughlin says. “We have good flying weather, wide open spaces, airspace access, a large aerospace community and a statewide entrepreneurial spirit. Where else could an event with 100 launches over four days with 1,300 college students occur but in the beautiful desert of southern New Mexico?”

– Bill Lewis

Learn more about innovation in aviation in New Mexico at livability.com/nm.

Spaceport America

6,000

Square miles of restricted airspace

18,000

Acres, adjacent to the U.S. Army White Sands Missile Range

12,000

feet in runway length

340

Days of sunshine and low humidity

4,600

Feet above sea level, making launches that much closer to space



NMSU's Atomic Aggies take the Chile Cup at the 2022 Spaceport America Cup.

A NEW Spin

Spaceport tenant works on cost-effective launch innovation



Everyone knows you need a rocket to launch satellites into orbit, but SpinLaunch is working to develop a more sustainable and cost-effective system out of Spaceport America in New Mexico.

SpinLaunch's ground-based system uses kinetic energy to fling satellites into space. The company has successfully tested its Suborbital Accelerator, which is a critical stepping-stone in SpinLaunch's path to orbit.

The 33-meter mass accelerator offers testing capabilities to customers and provides long-term value as a satellite qualification facility.

In spring of 2022, SpinLaunch formalized a partnership with NASA and will fly a NASA payload on the Suborbital Accelerator to provide information about potential commercial launch opportunities.

The next milestone is SpinLaunch's Orbital Launch System, which will accelerate a launch vehicle

containing satellites up to 5,000 miles per hour using a rotating carbon fiber arm within a 300-meter diameter steel vacuum chamber.

More than 70% of the fuel and structures that make up a typical rocket can be eliminated. Above the stratosphere, a small, inexpensive propulsive stage provides the final velocity for orbit. The first orbital launches are planned for 2025-26.

Spaceport America, where SpinLaunch leases more than 10 acres, offers a unique geographic location adjacent to historic White Sands Missile Range, allowing for restricted airspace. And while the spaceport is in a remote area, it offers strategic access to top universities and aerospace engineering talent.

SpinLaunch is targeting a launch price of \$500,000 for 200 kilograms of payload at a pace of five to 10 launches a day, far more frequent and cost-efficient than any existing rocket launch system.

— Bill Lewis



SpinLaunch

A Better Way to BUILD

A general contractor brings expertise and a unique approach to construction

Constructable is a fast-growing general contractor that is taking construction to a whole new level.

That's because the firm has years of experience, knowledge of the local dynamics and the ability to turn construction projects around approximately 50% quicker than most companies.

"I saw a huge deficit in the way customers interacted with the general contractor and the way that flowed downhill to subcontractors and suppliers," says Jared Hellums, principal of Constructable.

Traditionally, once a client comes up with an idea and purchases land, most construction projects lie in wait while the client hires an architect, works back and forth with him/her on the structure's design, puts the project out for bid and then selects a contractor.

Hellums launched Constructable in 2020 to cut out much of the middle ground. As a design/build general contractor, the company works with a client from start to finish, managing the design and construction process almost concurrently.

"Having a good understanding of the environment allows us to deliver value and both time and money."

— Jared Hellums, principal, Constructable



Constructable works with a client from start to finish.

The company also prides itself on its ability to take on large and complex projects, ranging from renewable energy and aviation structures to oil refineries and medical centers.

And as a third-generation southeastern New Mexico contractor, Hellums brings a vast knowledge of the state to every project and how to handle its unique construction challenges.

"Constructable understands the time and labor constraints that most contractors don't have – unless they're from here – which drives up the cost and prolongs the project,"



Hellums says. "So, having a good understanding of the environment allows us to deliver value and both time and money."

Clients have raved about Constructable's ability to quickly bring their ideas to life, as well as how senior-level management remains intimately involved throughout their project.

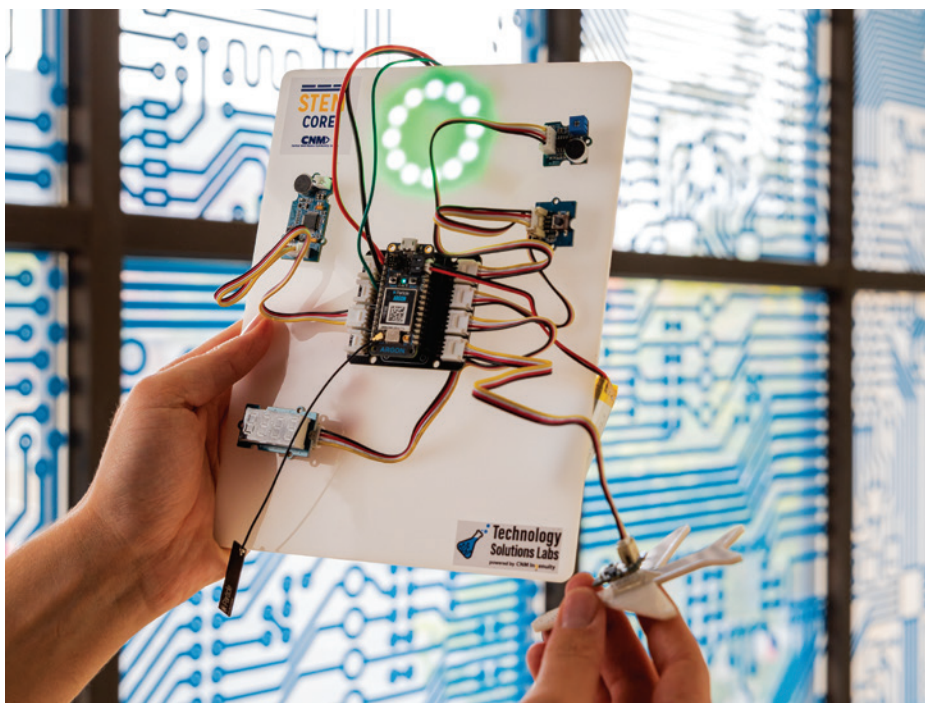
"With us, we're still small enough that, more than likely, I'm very involved and very available to all of our clientele," Hellums concludes.

Opportunity IN EVERY DIRECTION

New Mexico offers businesses the tools to grow and prosper

Plenty of shovel-ready sites and office space, a strategic location and a dedication to providing the talented workforce needed today and tomorrow – it's all here in New Mexico, and this unique set of advantages is accompanied by a business-friendly environment that adds even more appeal.

As the saying goes, location is everything, and New Mexico's is prime. The state offers quick access to key consumer markets, nationally and internationally, for manufacturing and logistics/warehousing operations, and rail connects it to two major ports in Los Angeles/Long Beach and Houston/Galveston. And 75% of the U.S. population is reachable by roadway within two days. New Mexico also is an international gateway, sharing a border with Mexico.



COMPANIES COMING

Small wonder that so many companies are growing across the state. BNSF Railway's site certification program has certified business parks in Clovis, Gallup and Los Lunas as ready for development. Xcel Energy also provides a similar

service to highlight development-ready sites across New Mexico.

A network of industrial/rail parks, including Raton Station (rail), Milan Industrial Park, Roswell Air Center and Sandia Science & Technology Park, make doing business in New Mexico easier

by connecting mutually beneficial businesses and industries.

The state has scored a number of recent new capital investment and expansion projects. Among them:

» Las Cruces-based telehealth company Electronic Caregiver's





Sandia Science and Technology
Park in Albuquerque

announced its plans to create 770 jobs, with \$1 million from the State of New Mexico's Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) job-creation fund and a pledge from the City of Las Cruces for an additional \$235,000.

» Facebook is in the midst of adding two more buildings to its massive data center in Los Lunas, expanding its investment there by \$800 million.



Through a partnership with CNM Community College, FUSE Makerspace supports members as they design, prototype and create manufactured works.



» Nature's Toolbox, or NTxBio, relocated from Santa Fe to a 25,000-square-foot building at the Enchanted Hills Commerce Center in Rio Rancho, bringing over 100 new jobs with them.

TALENT FOR TOMORROW'S JOBS

Workforce training programs continue to thrive in New Mexico, ensuring that companies here now, as well as those that are coming, can find all the talent they need.

Among them are the Aviation Maintenance Technology program at Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, which feeds that region's growing aviation sector, and Central New Mexico Community College's Ingenuity Inc. and Deep Dive Coding Bootcamps, which offer job training opportunities for residents in rural New Mexico interested in pursuing careers in tech. The North American Wind Research and Training Center at Mesalands Community College offers real-world, hands-on training experience to prepare students to conduct troubleshooting, preventative maintenance and repairs on wind turbines.

These and many other industry-tailored programs throughout the state support oil and gas, food production, IT and programming, manufacturing trades, and a wealth of other

industries. They are joined by three Tier-1 research universities – the University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University and New Mexico Tech – and major research assets, including Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Air Force Research Laboratory.

TECH HUB

That pipeline of talent will be needed for the state's growing tech ecosystem. There is a higher concentration of STEM talent in New Mexico than the national average, and new research from Software.org shows that between 2018 and 2020, software jobs grew 18.7% in the state, the fastest in the country.

This means that in addition to major players, New Mexico's growing tech ecosystem includes a diversity of subsectors, everything from bioscience to AI software development to 3-D printing operations. For instance, Curia, a leading contract research, development and manufacturing organization for the bioscience industry recently announced plans to add up to 274 more employees to it Albuquerque operations and invest more than \$100 million into facility expansion.

– Joe Morris

Learn more about career opportunities in New Mexico at livability.com/nm.



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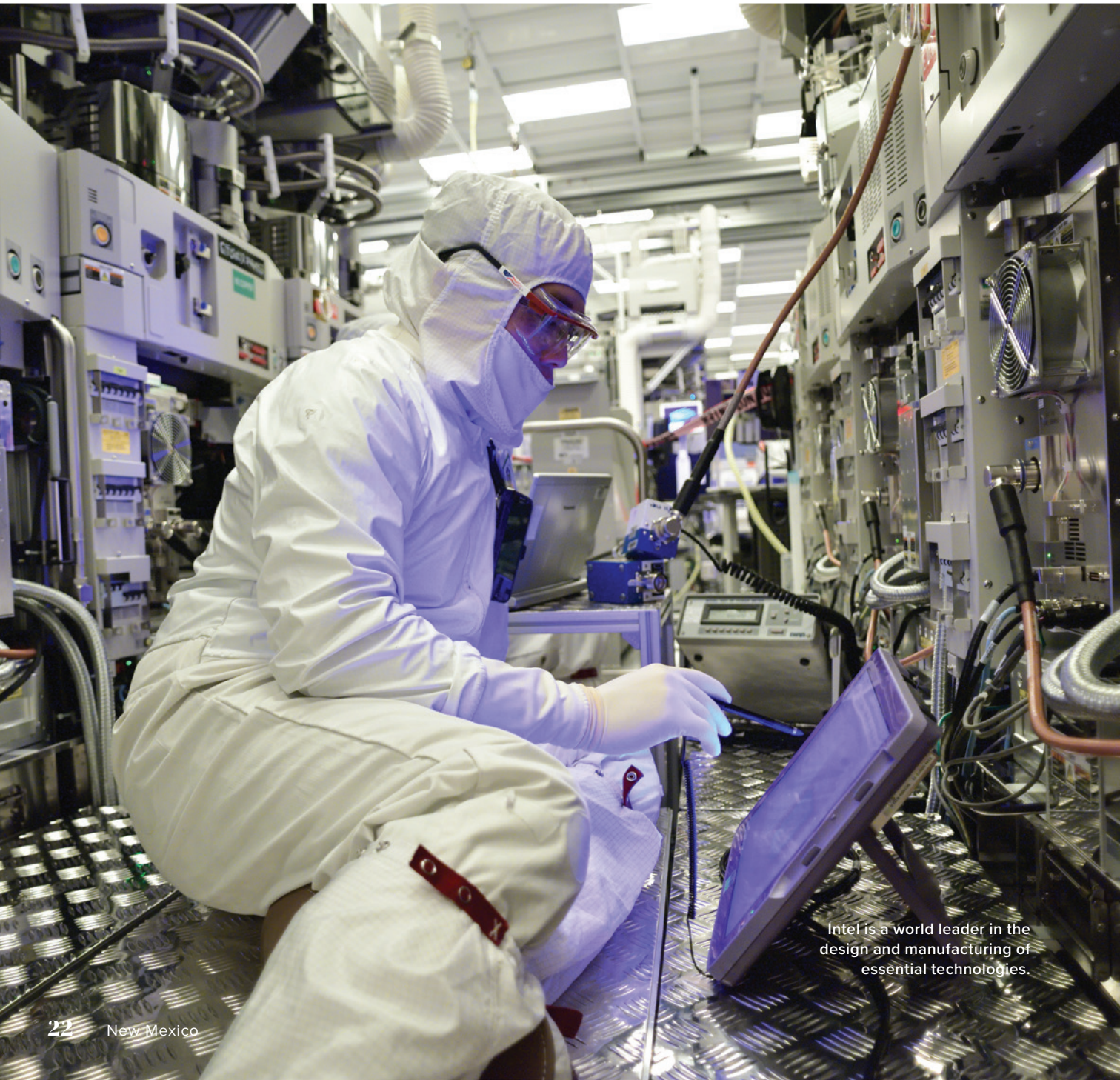
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BUILDING *the* ECONOMY

Advanced manufacturing thrives in New Mexico



Intel is a world leader in the design and manufacturing of essential technologies.

Some of the world's most advanced and in-demand products are designed and built in New Mexico.

From furniture and value-added agriculture products to cutting-edge aerospace and space manufacturing, New Mexico's advanced manufacturing sector is at the leading edge of innovation.

The state's advanced manufacturing industry is driven by businesses large and small that produce computers and technology equipment, petroleum and energy, wood and metal products, food and more.

In May, the state announced that a partnership between a Kentucky capital investment firm and Ball Corp. would lead to a \$2 billion investment in an aluminum can sheet rolling mill and recycling center in Valencia County. The project will create nearly 1,000 jobs and open in 2026. The jobs will pay an average of \$68,000 a year.

New Mexico was chosen in part because of its competitive business climate, proximity to a transportation network – including rail service – the growth in can-making facilities across the Southwest, and the state's commitment to sustainable energy.

JOB-READY WORKFORCE

With 180,000 workers employed in manufacturing, production, logistics and construction roles, New Mexico has the skilled workforce that advanced manufacturing industries demand and a pipeline of new talent from its research universities and vocational institutions.

To help industries hire skilled workers, New Mexico funds on-the-job and classroom training for expanding or relocating businesses for up to six months and provides cash reimbursement of 50% to 75% of wages. The state also boasts one of the nation's highest concentrations of research talent, thanks in part to the location of three national labs.

New Mexico's geographic location means quick access to key consumer markets. The state is equidistant to major ports in Southern California and Texas and shares an international border crossing with Mexico. Three major interstates that cross the state, a vast railway system, and regional and international airports provide direct access to much of the U.S. and Mexico. Seventy-five percent of the country is reachable in two days by truck.

New Mexico offers a strong value proposition through lower costs

medical industry, including endoscopic surgical supplies. In Carlsbad, Mosaic Potash makes and distributes crop nutrient products sold worldwide.

New Mexico's advantages appeal to successful and growing companies across the state, including MCT Industries in Bernalillo and FXI in Santa Teresa.

MCT Industries is a family-owned business that offers parts, sales, service and rentals for trailers and heavy equipment in its commercial division. Its waste division offers



FXI operates a comfort sleep solution manufacturing plant in Santa Teresa.

and attractive incentives. With no inventory tax and the lowest effective tax rate for manufacturers in the nine-state Western region, New Mexico offers a business-friendly environment with some of the most competitive incentive programs in the U.S. Renewable and traditional energy resources are abundant and affordable in the state.

BIG NAMES CHOOSE NEW MEXICO

Some of the state's top advanced manufacturers include chipmaker Intel, which employs 1,200 workers at its Rio Rancho plant. Jabil Inc. in Albuquerque has 800 employees providing engineering and manufacturing solutions for the

roll-off service to Albuquerque and the surrounding area and residential service to the Santa Fe area. MCT's government operation works with clients from design and prototype development to full-rate production. The company's products range from nuclear and chemical munitions transporters and self-propelled ground support equipment to large-scale plant fabrication and construction.

FXI is a leading producer of comfort sleep solutions, including mattresses, toppers and pillows. The company designs, manufactures, and delivers mattresses, toppers, and pillows under SleepInnovations, novaform and Reflex brands.

– Kim Madlom

Learning THE ROPES

Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments offers innovative training program for entrepreneurs

When the founder of CO.STARTERS visited the area to speak about his national entrepreneur training program, leaders at the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments

realized this was just the boost their small businesses needed.

“Statistics show that new startup businesses have an 80% failure rate if they don’t start in some kind of an incubation-type

scenario,” says Emily Gojkovich, deputy director of SWNMCOG, which boosts economic development and quality of life in Catron, Grant, Hidalgo and Luna counties.

“This was a perfect opportunity for our communities because we don’t technically have to build a brick-and-mortar building, which really none of my communities are big enough to support on a long-term basis,” she adds.

The new CO.STARTERS program, which features 10 weeks of collaborative peer sessions to help aspiring entrepreneurs turn their dreams into sustainable money-making ventures, was just taking shape with door-to-door invitations when the pandemic hit.

That didn’t stop organizers from kicking it off virtually in Grant

County in the summer of 2020 and, thanks to CARES Act funding, go on to expand it in the other SWNMCOG counties. In-person sessions are now offered several times a year.

Participants especially appreciate the been-there-done-that stories from guest mentors who “tell the good, the bad and the ugly about owning a business,” says Gojkovich. “And then, when you throw a wrench into the works, like COVID, it can be very scary because your whole heart and soul is on the line. They get to hear other speakers talk about how they did overcome COVID and that it is not impossible.”

The two-year-old program has already paid off. Of the 90 CO.STARTERS graduates so far, more than half have opened new businesses, and others are still



The Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments is helping aspiring entrepreneurs succeed.



“It’s really about building this strong, sustainable entrepreneur ecosystem and creating a business-friendly environment.”

— Emily Gojkovich, deputy director, Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments



interested in doing so, a success rate highlighted in a national CO.STARTERS case study.

One soap-maker who’d previously worked out of her home recently held her grand opening in a storefront in downtown Silver City.

More services are in the works. A new software management system

will soon pair struggling small-business owners with advisors who can steer them in the right direction. And the first CO.STARTERS meetup recently gave entrepreneurs a chance to mingle with suppliers, bookkeepers and other service providers.

The benefits, however, aren’t limited to business owners.

“I work with some communities that have 150 people in them. Smokestack chasing is not a reality for them,” Gojkovich says. “CO.STARTERS is something that rises all boats because we’re able to diversify our economy and bring out some of those products that can be produced in rural communities and

become very successful in creating jobs.

“It’s really about building this strong, sustainable entrepreneur ecosystem and creating a business-friendly environment,” she continues. “It’s not such a heavy lift for one person, but it’s a lift for all organizations that do economic development to help one another.”

You'll Be **ENCHANTED**

New Mexico offers an
unmatched way of life

Luminaria Restaurant
at Inn and Spa at
Loretto in Santa Fe

The lure of the West draws people from across the country to New Mexico, a place with the perfect mix of urban life and rural escapes. As people gravitate toward easier ways of life, in areas with little traffic and a lower cost of living, they are finding that New Mexico is the ideal place to build their careers and grow their families.

Victoria Uliano moved to New Mexico in late 2020, originally for an internship at the Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary in Ramah. She fell in love with her job as well as the New Mexico lifestyle, and, at the end of her internship, she accepted a staff member position.

“The state is so beautiful in such a different way than I’m used to,” Uliano says. “I love how much space there is, and I enjoy the rural area I live in. There’s a lot of culture and so much history to learn about, which makes exploring the area super enriching.”

Views of gorgeous red mesas in every direction plus an affordable cost of living, Uliano says, further add to the quality of life she’s discovered in New Mexico.

Unique Outdoor Attractions

With dark sky designated parks, otherworldly landscapes and beautiful mountains, New Mexico certainly earns its nickname as the Land of Enchantment, and the abundance of outdoor opportunities allows residents to enjoy a peaceful and productive work-life balance.

New Mexico is home to 35 state parks and three national parks that are enjoyed year-round thanks to a mild climate. Plus, culture, history and nature coalesce at the state’s 10 national monuments, which include Aztec ruins, cliff dwellings, volcanic landscapes and stalactite-studded caves.

Adventure seekers will also enjoy New Mexico’s eight ski resorts, a unique scuba diving spot in the desert known as the Blue Hole as well as several hiking and biking trails.



Plaza Cafe in Santa Fe



Rafting in Taos



The town of Mesilla is home to several unique shops like Nambe.



National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque; Right: Pottery found at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture



“It’s a melting pot here,” says Justina Grant, an advertising account executive with Albuquerque Business First and a member of Young Professionals of Albuquerque. “New Mexico is rich with culture.”

Rich Arts and Culture

New Mexico is one of only five majority-minority states. The state is also home to 22 Native American tribes. Originating from Spanish and Native American influences, the state’s rich history is celebrated and shared through its museums, live concerts, cultural events, arts and craft markets, adobe architecture and diverse food scene.

Residents, for instance, can get a taste of the state at one of its authentic New Mexican restaurants. The state is the country’s largest producer of chile, and many locals are either in a red or green chile camp – but if you’re a diplomat, you can order your burrito “Christmas style.”

As New Mexico becomes a high desert Hollywood, other points of pride that come with being a resident are seeing the state’s landmarks showcased on Netflix and also having access to top-notch recreation, whether that’s hiking in the Sandia Mountains or kayaking along the Rio Grande River, Grant says.

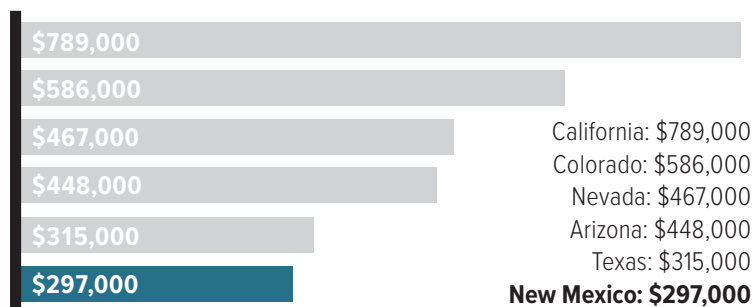
“You can access all different types of landscape here,” she says.

Great Career Opportunities

Your career is calling in New Mexico, where new and exciting employment opportunities are always presenting themselves and are interspersed throughout the state.

MEDIAN HOME VALUES

Source: Zillow, August 2022



New Mexico has lots of industries firing its economic engine, ranging from cutting-edge science and engineering to agriculture and food production.

A pro-business environment, an innovative workforce and the presence of collaborative world-class scientific and research institutions allow for all types of industries to thrive in New Mexico.

Your Dollar Goes Further

You get more for your money in New Mexico. The cost of living is 93% of the U.S. average overall and 88% of the U.S. average for housing. The median home value in New Mexico cost is roughly \$297,000 (Zillow, August 2022), which is far below the national average.

Plus, there's a slate of free entertainment options, from community festivals to the great outdoors.

An Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The entrepreneur community is also on the rise, sparking a boom in other industries like advanced manufacturing, aviation, agriculture, logistics and more.

A decade ago, Christina Ballew moved to Las Cruces, where she built her business NMCO Creative Studio, which creates immersive campaigns, designs, videos and more for clients. The community, Ballew says, is thoughtful, engaged and supportive of small businesses, which has helped her business thrive, positioning the studio for national growth.

She enjoys all that Las Cruces has to offer, from the Saturday farmers markets to hiking in the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

"It feels like Las Cruces is on the precipice of something big," she says.

– Brittany Anas

Hopping to It

Microbrew business grows strong statewide

New Mexico has long been tapped into the craft brewing movement, and today nearly 90 breweries across the state produce almost 100,000 total barrels of beer each year. Albuquerque has one of the highest concentrations of microbreweries in the state with 20, and the city even hosts an annual Albuquerque Beer Week. Nicknamed "liquid tourism," residents and visitors to New Mexico can find information and directions to all breweries and taprooms via an online map produced by the New Mexico Brewers Guild and the New Mexico Tourism Department. The maps are at newmexico.org/things-to-do/cuisine/breweries-tap-rooms.

– Kevin Litwin



The Sandia Mountains are a mountain range located in Bernalillo and Sandoval counties.



Things to Check Off Your New Mexico Bucket List

New Mexico offers plenty to do in every corner of the state, with easy-to-get-to attractions, cultural events and tourism sites. Here are seven interesting things to do in this Land of Enchantment:

1 SKI THE MOUNTAINS

When people think of snow skiing, states that often come to mind are Colorado, Utah, Vermont and California. Better add New Mexico to that list, with resorts in communities like Albuquerque, Alto, Angel Fire, Los Alamos, Red River, Ruidoso, Santa Fe, Taos and Vadito. Some of the most-visited destinations include Enchanted Forest, Pajarito Mountain, Sandia Peak, Sipapu, Ski Apache and Ski Santa Fe.

2 SOAK & SPA IN 'T OR C'

Once known as Hot Springs, Truth or Consequences is a long-time destination for what city officials call “wellness tourism.” Visitors travel to “T or C” to enjoy healing mineral waters at numerous bathhouses in town, and there are also many spas throughout the city – several of which are located within hotels.

3 GO DUNE SLEDDING

In the south-central portion of New Mexico near Alamogordo is White Sands National Park, where one of the most fun recreational activities is sledding down pristine white sand dunes. You can bring your own toboggan-like sled or buy one at the park's gift shop that sells waxed plastic snow saucers that are perfect for the dunes.



Clockwise from top left: New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe; Hot Springs in Truth or Consequences; Santa Fe's Original Food Tour; Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

4 VISIT THESE TWO ART MUSEUMS

If you're in north-central New Mexico, do yourself a favor and spend a couple hours viewing exhibits at two standout museums. New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe features more than 20,000 works, including from notable artists such as Ansel Adams. Meanwhile, Harwood Museum of Art in nearby Taos is celebrating its 100th anniversary throughout 2023.

5 IMMERSE YOURSELF IN FOOD

A 2.5-hour guided walking tour in downtown Santa Fe is what the city's Original Food Tour is all about, with patrons eating and drinking at four to five top restaurants. Tours are also offered in Albuquerque.

6 MARVEL AT BIG COLORFUL BALLOONS

The largest hot-air ballooning event in the world is the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022. The festival now features about 500 entrants compared to 13 at the inaugural 1972 event. Albuquerque is ideal because the city has safe and predictable wind patterns in October.

7 EXPLORE CARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK

If you like the outdoors and nature, then you'll appreciate Carlsbad Caverns in the Chihuahuan Desert, which features more than 100 caves and an abundance of hiking trails.

– Kevin Litwin

Tee It Up

THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT
OFFERS PLENTY TO LOVE
FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOLF

First, there's the weather, with more than 300 days of sunshine on average, there's less chance of your round being rained out.

Second, there are a slew of standout courses in every corner of the state, including some that are nationally ranked. Here is just a small sample of the great courses available in New Mexico:

Paako Ridge Golf Club SANDIA PARK

The Ken Dye-designed course opened in 2000 and was ranked 58th on Golf Digest's 2021 America's 100 Greatest Public Golf Courses. Both the out and back nines work up mountain foothills for several holes before playing downhill. Paako Ridge was named Best Golf Course in New Mexico by Golf Digest in 2021-22.

The Club At Las Campanas (Sunrise and Sunset) SANTA FE

Sunrise and Sunest are two Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Courses available at the Club at Las Campanas. Both consistently rank among the very top courses in New Mexico, as selected by Golf Digest. Each of the 18-hole courses offers an unparalleled golfing experience enhanced by glorious mountain vistas.

Black Mesa Golf Club LA MESILLA

This northern New Mexico gem is located in the Española Valley, with views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains serving as a backdrop. Designed by Baxter Spann, Black Mesa incorporates the natural topography, unique rock formations and natural vegetation indigenous to the region into an 18-hole course.

THE NEXUS OF

Work & Play



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YOUR *BUSINESS & ADVENTURE*

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Flavors of New Mexico

Value-added agriculture has deep roots in the Land of Enchantment

New Mexican cuisine is renowned throughout the world for its unique flavor profiles. Hatch green chile, summer onions, nuts and dairy farms flourish across the state. The unique culture and geography of New Mexico have contributed

significantly to its thriving food and agriculture industries.

‘Napa Valley of Green Chile’

Famous for its green chile, Hatch is situated on the banks of the Rio Grande at above 4,000 feet in elevation. Hot days and cold nights

contribute to a strong plant and a uniquely flavored chile.

505 Southwestern, owned by Flagship Foods, is one of the nation’s leading green chile producers.

“We call [Hatch] the Napa Valley of green chile,” says Rob Holland, CEO of 505 Southwestern.

Based in Albuquerque, 505 Southwestern started as a small regional brand.

After being acquired by Flagship Foods over 10 years ago, its products are now featured in stores around the world, while its roots remain thoroughly New Mexican.

“We really feel like our brand is one of the brand ambassadors not just for New Mexico green chile peppers but for New Mexico as a state,” Holland says.



New Mexico

#1

Chile, pistachios and summer onion producer

#4

Cheese producer

24.8K

Farming operations in the state



John Thomas, left, and Jim Thomas purchased the El Pinto Restaurant from their parents in 1994.



Family Style

Regional ingredients are essential to many New Mexico-based food companies. For El Pinto in Albuquerque, family ownership is equally important. Founded by Jack and Connie Thomas in 1962, the company remains family-owned to this day.

El Pinto is the largest New Mexican restaurant

in the state, selling sauces and salsas in major chain stores nationwide. In 2000, the twin sons of the restaurant founders launched El Pinto Foods' salsa division. Today, El Pinto uses 120 tons of chile a year, makes 2,000 cases a day, and can make up to 4 million jars annually in their 8,000-square-foot salsa production facility attached to the El Pinto restaurant.

Family recipes and specialty ingredients remain core to El Pinto's products. The family has grown its own red and green chile in Hatch for 17 years, many of them from heirloom seeds.

Local Farming

505 Southwestern has longstanding relationships with a number of chile farms in the region, many of them family owned. Its

True Scholars program, founded in partnership with the New Mexico state government, provides yearly scholarships to high school students interested in studying agriculture.

"Our corporate philosophy that we adhere to as a company is 'Honor the American farmer,'" Holland says. "Let's help young people who are seeking higher education

to afford that opportunity, specifically if they're focused on agriculture in the Hatch Valley."

A recent distribution deal with Walmart makes 505 Southwestern products available in every state. While green chile remains the "hero ingredient," according to Holland, the brand pays

homage to Southwestern flavors with a variety of salsas, sauces and pure roasted chile.

Chile and Beyond

In 2020, Olam Food Ingredients acquired Mizkan, a U.S.-based chile business with a plant in Deming, where green chile and other specialty peppers are processed. As a value-added ingredient, peppers have wide applicability in powdered, dehydrated and brined forms.

The affiliated Olam Spices facility in Las Cruces is the largest organic chile processor in the U.S. Olam



505 Southwestern production facility in Albuquerque

also grows many of its pistachios in southern New Mexico, where hot, dry conditions are ideal for pistachio trees.

Baked Goodness

Rising to meet the demand for healthy, delicious energy bars, Taos Bakes in Questa has a nationwide presence. The energy bar market is growing swiftly, with a projected growth rate of 9.1% from 2020 to 2027.

Taos Bakes became an essential part of Questa in 2015 when it moved into a facility funded by a \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. In this small town, job opportunities at Taos Bakes are welcome.

Taos Bakes products range from energy bars packed with nuts, chocolate and berries to cilantro lime pistachios

and assorted granolas. The company has a presence in chains such as Whole Foods, REI, The Fresh Market and more in 22 states.

In Roswell, Leprino Foods operates the world's largest mozzarella cheese producer. The company, which employs 600 workers in Roswell, is investing \$60 million in the plant for upgrades to wastewater systems.

The Roswell plant leverages its water recycling capabilities, allowing for all the water used in the plant to be treated for irrigation purposes on nearby cropland where the feed is grown for local livestock.

For businesses across the state, the unique ingredients, culture and geography of New Mexico are well worth preserving and sharing with the world.

— Wesley Broome



Taos Bakes produces healthy, gluten-free snacks.

MORE *to the* STORY

Charming Santa Fe County
thrives as a business hub, too

To the rest of the world, Santa Fe County is best known for its spectacular tourist attractions. But it also boasts an innovative work environment highlighted by strong support for its forward-thinking industries.

“The characteristics that make Santa Fe County exceptional include its business-friendly environment, heightened innovation, striking geography and lifestyle filled with adventures that feed the soul,” says County Manager Katherine Miller.

Here are nine industries where Santa Fe County excels:

1. Agriculture

In addition to longtime crops like green chile peppers and apples, cannabis was recently legalized, boosting an already booming agricultural industry.

2. Arts and culture

Santa Fe County offers a unique arts and cultural experience through

architecture, history and natural beauty; Native American Pueblos; artisans; galleries; and other cultural attractions that collectively are a significant component of the economic base.

3. Film production

Stunning landscapes, expanding film studios attractive film tax incentives, first-class local talent and crew, and assistance from the Santa Fe Film Office and other groups make Santa Fe County one of the best spots in the country for filmmaking. Development programs train 7,500 local workers in the movie industry.

4. Finance

Home to a variety of small- to medium-size enterprises, the financing industry plays a critical role and is essential for the circulation and management of money, attracting investments, lending and financial forecasting.



5. Green industries

Sustainability is key in Santa Fe County, which is shifting to solar power, comprehensive recycling programs and fuel-efficient options for commercial and residential buildings.

6. Health and wellness

People have been traveling here for centuries to renew body, mind and spirit in the area's high mountain desert for healing, natural hot springs. The county leads in both traditional medicine and alternative medicine, from world-renown spas to a new, modern elder academy that promotes emotional and physical well-being.

7. High-tech enterprises

In addition to two national laboratories in the region, Santa Fe County is home to innovative companies that are developing solutions to global challenges, conducting cutting-edge research and advancing groundbreaking technologies in fields ranging from medicine to construction.



Santa Fe County is the perfect blend of beauty and business.

8. Hospitality and tourism

Santa Fe County has a rich and vibrant arts, entertainment and outdoor recreation industry that displays the immense cultural, historical and geographic assets that make Santa Fe County unique and draws a significant number of visitors to the region every year.

9. Outdoor recreation and ecotourism

Santa Fe County has invested in outdoor recreation by building and enhancing trail infrastructure to expand its trails system. Locals and visitors can immerse themselves in the beautiful outdoors with adventures like mountain biking, hiking at national parks and glamping, a new but fast-growing industry.

All Inclusive

New Mexico programs help promote Native American entrepreneurship

Diversity within technology-based industries gives New Mexico a competitive edge. An impressive roster of universities, business incubators and accelerators, and networking organizations help Native American entrepreneurs grow their

careers and businesses in the technology sector — adding to the state’s dynamic workforce and cementing the state’s status as a hub for innovation.

INCLUSION LEADS TO INNOVATION

“Startups are important to the economy at any

level as they create new opportunities for the region. Startups bring jobs to the area and new products, as well as boost productivity and competition. Native American startups are unique in their own way; most tend to address specific issues and invest in their own. These types of practices attract others and promote collaboration,” says Brooke Montgomery, program director at New Mexico State University’s Arrowhead Center.

“Diversity is an important aspect of small business because it brings together different cultures, views, systems, experiences and more, which creates the opportunity to develop and share new ideas,” she says. “Diversity in small business ownership also influences the communities in which a company/individual represents, these individuals can lead others by example and provide support for other organizations and startups or for a fellow entrepreneur.”

Montgomery’s department runs the American Indian Business Enterprise

(AIBE) at New Mexico State University’s Arrowhead Center. The AIBE works to grow and retain Native American entrepreneurial talent in New Mexico and promote special mobility in the Native community. The AIBE’s business incubator provides free business development resources, such as coaching, funding and technical assistance.

“Our entrepreneurial curriculum is either cloud-based so they can learn at their own pace or live cohorts that span four to five weeks. The classes cover topics such as bookkeeping, financial literacy and customer discovery. We also offer advising and mentorship and serve as a network that fosters collaboration,” says Rachel Livingston, AIBE program specialist.

THE RIGHT RESOURCES

The AIBE partners with other organizations with similar goals in assisting Native communities — from Native Community Development Financial Institutions to educational and professional development programs. Livingston says Native startups joining AIBE are



Arrowhead Center at NMSU



Aggie Shark Tank is a pitch competition for NMSU entrepreneurs.

Making Connections

SANTA FE INDIAN SCHOOL CREATES PATHWAYS
TO IN-DEMAND TECH CAREERS

Established in 1890 as a federal boarding school, the Santa Fe Indian School (SFIS) has been owned and operated by the 19 Pueblo Governors of New Mexico since 1978 and serves Native American students in grades 7-12 from Pueblos, Apache and Navajo tribes.

As a tribally controlled Bureau of Indian Education school, SFIS boasts a culturally responsive curriculum that meets the needs of tribal communities and cultivates generations of Pueblo leaders, professionals, artists, entrepreneurs, farmers and maintainers of culture.

Kimball Sekaquaptewa, chief technology director, details the school's role in preparing the next generation of tech talent.

Traditionally, what role have Native Americans played in advancing technology in the state?

For almost 10 years, New Mexico Pueblos have been leading broadband connectivity efforts by building high-speed fiber optic networks connecting schools and libraries, as well as the communities themselves.

As tribes increasingly learn to deploy broadband infrastructure, we are learning that we can be our best solution to bridge the digital divide. New Mexico tribes are building robust middle-mile networks as well as high-speed last-mile networks, providing essential residential services.

How does the school prepare students for in-demand careers within tech industries?

SFIS has created a dual path to prepare tribal students and tribal members for in-demand careers. At the middle school and high school level, SFIS is fostering STEAM and CS pathways in conjunction with local nonprofits and in partnership



with Pueblo education departments and tribal libraries.

The holistic and community approach to create youth programs enables us to reach young students in the feeder schools and to start growing their interest and digital skills from an early age to influence their post-high school career and education choices.

Why is workforce diversity in technology fields so important for the state's economic success?

SFIS is keenly aware of the lack of tribal IT professionals and had to create a workforce training pipeline so that tribal members can operate these broadband networks on their tribal lands. As recently as 2018, one-third of New Mexico's 19 Pueblos did not have an IT Department.

Tribes need IT workers, but tribal members have not pursued these careers, despite the increase in demand for these types of workers nationally. These are high-skilled, high-paying jobs, in which tribal members can stay working in the Pueblo as contributing members of their communities while increasing the economic stability of their families.

invited to take part in the opportunities provided by the organization's partners and are encouraged to take advantage of the Arrowhead Center's free grant writing assistance.

At Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, the Navajo Tech Innovation Center hosts a business incubator program that helps students and other tech entrepreneurs get their businesses off the ground. Access to these networks and resources is especially important for Native American entrepreneurs in tech industries, says April Armijo, director of digital media and communications for the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), an international organization dedicated to advancing Indigenous peoples in STEM.

The AISES STEM and Business program provides opportunities and resources for members who want to use their STEM education and experience to start or expand their business.

"The program equips individuals with the skills and knowledge to develop individually owned businesses, help grow tribal enterprises and ultimately support tribal communities as they achieve economic independence and tribal sovereignty," Armijo says.

In addition to the organization's STEM and business program, AISES hosts an annual summit in the spring

By Teree Caruthers

and a national conference in the fall that provides professional development, business development and networking opportunities. Armijo says AISES membership is also a great way for Native American professionals and entrepreneurs to amplify their visibility and gain recognition among their peers and networks.

“We know that under a successful diverse economy, more people and more communities thrive. Native Americans are one of the most

underrepresented groups across the country in almost every industry, institution and economic sector,” she says.

New Mexico has one of the largest populations of Native Americans, well-positioning the state for the opportunity to be one of the most diverse and inclusive economies in the country, Armijo says.

“Native Americans bring a unique strength to businesses, the workplace and the economy through an Indigenous worldview that values sustainability,

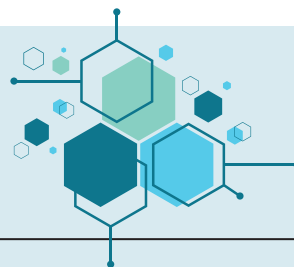


community and reciprocity, contributing unique approaches to problem solving and offering valuable diversity

of thought,” she says. “All are critical components for innovation and economic development.”

– Teree Caruthers

TECH TALK



State provides many advantages for IT, data and computing companies

The data is clear: New Mexico has many good reasons why emerging tech companies are choosing to do business here.

Several startup and growing companies in fields such as information technology, data centers and quantum computing are opting for New Mexico because of the state’s strategic location in the Southwest as well as its 300+ days of sunshine and moderate year-round climate. New Mexico also has an extremely low risk of events such as earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding or other natural disasters, thereby allowing tech companies to benefit from higher business operations uptime.

In addition, New Mexico’s electricity rates are about 16% below the national average. That allows businesses statewide to enjoy some of the lowest overall energy prices in the nation.

Officials with IT, data centers and computing companies add that the state also provides access to top-quality talent at major research and education facilities, including the University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory. Tech companies can recruit talent for advanced careers in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, supercomputing, big data, imaging and more.

Today, tech companies that have chosen to set up operations in New Mexico include Hewlett Packard, Intel, TEKsystems, Ultramain, Identity Guard, General Dynamics, Twistle, Calculex, SavantX, Descartes Labs and Facebook. In fact, Facebook is investing more than \$1 billion for a new 2.8 million-square-foot data center that will open in late 2023 in Los Lunas and will be powered 100% by renewable energy.

– Kevin Litwin



Work */s a* BREEZE

Renewable energy powers homes, businesses and economies in New Mexico

New Mexico has paved the way forward for a diverse renewable energy industry. The state ranks second in the U.S. for solar energy potential and in the top 10 for wind energy potential.

The wind industry is growing and various programs across the state are meeting workforce demands.

Mesalands Community College (MCC) offers unique work experience while students are in the two-year program at the North American Wind Research and Training Center.

“Our curriculum is set apart by mainly one thing – a commercial wind turbine on campus,” says MCC’s Director of Renewable and Sustainable Technologies Andrew Swapp. “This gives our students hands-on training, not just labs and books. Our students maintain our turbine with us. When an error message pops up on the system, we allow students to assess the situation, troubleshoot and repair. It doesn’t get any better than this. Our students go out with confidence that they can climb almost 300 feet and work safely. We get grease under our fingernails!”

MCC’s program was established in 2008, the result of collaboration between the college and high schools to develop the curriculum, and the college and local employers to fill the workforce pipelines. Most MCC program graduates start between \$22 and \$24 per hour with full benefits, Swapp says.

Employers benefitting from New Mexico’s trained workforce include Pattern Energy Group, among the world’s largest privately owned developers and operators of wind, solar, transmission and energy storage projects.



PHOTOS: FROM TOP: ISTOCK.COM/MIKEMAREEN; MESALANDS COLLEGE

Danielle Osborn Mills, Pattern’s senior manager of political and regulatory affairs, says the clean power sector so far has created 3,800 jobs in the state, and invested more than \$9 billion in capital and \$30.9 million per year in extra payments to local farmers, ranchers and landowners.

“Businesses and manufacturers need to know that they will have reliable electric service to keep their companies running and their costs down,” she says. “New wind and solar projects compete with conventional sources – and win

on both cost and value – on a regular basis. Once built, renewables protect customers from fuel price volatility and inflation.”

In 2021, Pattern Energy completed construction of Western Spirit Wind and Transmission, a complex of four wind energy project sites in central New Mexico, generating 1,050 megawatts of installed capacity. With the SunZia Transmission and SunZia Wind projects, Pattern Energy has committed to an \$8 billion

investment in New Mexico over the next decade

“Western Spirit Wind represents the most wind power ever constructed as a single phase in the Americas,” Osborn Mills says.

– Val Hunt Beerbower

Driving **FORCE**

Statewide support and logistics infrastructure attract new companies



New Mexico's strong logistics infrastructure gives companies ready access to U.S. and international markets by both rail and road.

The state is within a two-day drive to 75% of the U.S. population, and it is equidistant between major ports in Southern California and the Houston area. Class I rail carriers BNSF Railway and Union Pacific provide direct rail service

to the ports, as well as ports of entry in Mexico and Canada.

New Mexico is a major gateway to the Mexican border. State officials have made expanding infrastructure at the border a top priority, hoping to continue to boost international trade. Setting a record for exports in 2021, New Mexico exported more than \$5.4 billion in goods, a growth of 48% from just five years earlier.

As a popular location for logistics and distribution operations, the state has announced several new projects.

"These announcements are all possible thanks to New Mexico's competitive business environment, particularly for this industry," says Melinda Allen, CEO of New Mexico Partnership, which serves as the state's single-point-of-contact to help businesses move to New Mexico.

FUNDING THE FUTURE

New Mexico's statewide Local Economic Development Act job-creation incentive, or LEDA, has helped push new logistic and warehousing projects over the finish line and encourage new infrastructure developments. For example, Artico Cold Management utilized LEDA funds to set up operations in New Mexico. The Chicago-based company manages temperature-controlled storage warehouses used by agricultural producers and food manufacturers.

Artico was awarded \$600,000 from the LEDA fund and is building a \$30 million cold storage facility in Las Cruces that will open in September 2023. The company has pledged to hire up to 60 employees.

"Cold storage is in short supply across the United States, and we see the need in New Mexico for more capacity," said Artico CEO Richard Taveras in a news release. "There are significant opportunities here to help producers of chile, dairy, pecans, meats and vegetables. This is an attractive opportunity, and the LEDA investment is critical – the state and city support gets this moving and helps us get over the finish line."

LEDA also helped a New Mexico-based company build a larger warehouse space, providing \$750,000 to help jumpstart the project. Aspen & Autumn, which distributes food and beverages, is constructing the new space in Albuquerque, with completion



Albuquerque International Sunport;
Below: Universal Hydrogen

Air Power

New Mexico offers access to international air service via Albuquerque International Sunport (ABQ) and El Paso International. ABQ provides direct flights to 24 destinations. Commercial service is also available at regional airports in Hobbs, Roswell, Santa Fe, Taos and Alamogordo. Overall, there are 64 public airports in the state.

slated for spring 2023. The expansion will result in 70 new jobs over the next three years.

LOGICAL LOGISTICS

New Mexico was the right location for Universal Hydrogen, which is developing a major manufacturing and distribution hub on the grounds of Albuquerque International Sunport. Universal Hydrogen's mission is to make carbon-free fuel to reduce the climate impact of air travel. The facility is scheduled to open in 2024.

"Hydrogen is the best and only scalable solution to truly decarbonize aviation, and we want to bring it to market decades sooner than anyone thought possible – by 2025," says Jon Gordon, co-founder and general counsel for Universal Hydrogen. "We chose New Mexico as a place that will give our employees an affordable, high quality of life with access to culture and the outdoors."



Also making logistics news is Amazon, which will open another distribution site in Los Lunas that will create more than 600 jobs.

New Mexico's access to the Mexico border has made Santa Teresa one of the hottest spots in the U.S. for attracting companies involved with moving goods. Two recent arrivals are Tecma and Ergomotion, both of which are establishing logistics operations in the area.

Tecma specializes in helping manufacturers handle all the intricacies of doing business in

Mexico, while Ergomotion makes adjustable bed bases that are sold in 30+ countries. Both companies also have operations in Juarez, Mexico, and they have elected to expand into Santa Teresa to add to their trucking and distribution operations.

"New Mexico has become key for many companies looking for ease of access to distribute products within the United States and to the rest of the world," says New Mexico Cabinet Secretary Alicia Keyes.

– Kevin Litwin

WE'RE ROLLING

New Mexico's growing
film industry drives
the state forward



Students in a cinematography
class at NMSU prepare for
a career in the film industry.



As the fifth-largest state by geography, New Mexico's more than 121,500 square miles is made up of communities with varying weather patterns and land regions, from the Great Plains and Colorado Plateau to the Rocky Mountains and Basin and Range Province. Throughout the years, its diverse offerings have caught the eyes of filmmakers, and today, the state is considered one of the top states for film and television production

Major media and entertainment companies, like Netflix and NBCUniversal, call New Mexico home. Netflix acquired Albuquerque Studios in 2018 and made it a production hub, while NBC struck a deal with Garcia Realty and Development in 2019 and recently celebrated the opening of an 80,000-square-foot production studio with three soundstages in Albuquerque.

In May 2022, film studio 828 Productions said it was relocating from California to Las Cruces, where it plans to invest \$75 million to build a 300,000-square-foot studio and 20-acre back lot over the next six years, creating at least 100 high-paying jobs.

Additionally, several production companies with superb facilities can be found all over the state, such as I-25 Studios in Albuquerque, New Mexico Film Studios, which broke ground on a backlot in Albuquerque in March 2022, and Garson Studios in Santa Fe.



BIG IMPACT

Whether companies choose to film a particular movie in New Mexico or invest more heavily and set up shop, like Netflix or NBCUniversal, their work in the state has quite the positive impact.

For example, when a company chooses to film here, it drives the economy forward by creating jobs, boosting tourism and increasing the number of sales at local restaurants and businesses.

"In fiscal year 2022, we announced a record-shattering \$855 million in direct film and television production spent in our state," says Director of the New Mexico Film Office Amber Dodson. The office is a division of the New Mexico

Economic Development Department that markets the state to the film industry, services productions and creates jobs for New Mexicans.

RESOURCES

While several factors go into deciding where to film a movie or television show, New Mexico is different from other states because it checks off many of the boxes on an entertainment company's checklist.

In addition to diverse scenery and weather, New Mexico offers a slew of resources, from a great selection of local talent, crews and vendors to organizations that are ready to lend a hand, answer a question or connect companies with the information they need.

Film Festivities

New Mexico celebrates filmmaking year-round

While numerous Hollywood movies have been shot in New Mexico, the state is flourishing with local amateur and seasoned filmmakers who produce their own creative feature and short films. To celebrate and showcase their work, several festivals are held throughout the state during the year, drawing filmmakers, die-hard film lovers and casual moviegoers.

its eighth event in the spring of 2023, is considered the showcase of the Southwest for independent features, narrative shorts, documentaries and student films.

High school and middle school students can also make their mark at the Desert Light Film Festival, which is held each year in Alamogordo. Here, they can show off their work and take

part in seminars designed for young filmmakers.

While Desert Light is a one-day event, the Santa Fe International Film Festival brings downtown Santa Fe to life for five days in the fall. The event features filmmaker awards, industry forums and other film education events.

Also quite the draw is Madrid Film Festival, which screens New Mexico-produced short films. Held each September, this event supports amateur and minority filmmakers, and their works are showcased outdoors at Oscar Huber Memorial Ballpark.

“To see one’s own film on the big screen with an audience – which is out of reach for most young, aspiring filmmakers – I think it’s an invaluable experience,” Wice says.

“There’s no other art form where you get to use audio, visual and subtext to tell your story, so when film is done well, it’s a wonderful way of taking in a story,” says Andrew Wice, co-producer of Madrid International Film Festival.

Let’s explore a few events on New Mexico’s calendar where filmmakers can highlight their work.

The annual Las Cruces International Film Festival, which will soon hold

The New Mexico Film Office offers several training opportunities for those interested in the film industry. Its Film Crew Advancement Program, for example, provides on-the-job career training for New Mexicans in technical positions and reimburses companies 50% of a participant’s wages for up to 1,040 hours worked.

POLISHING TALENT

Speaking of job training, the state is home to a slew of higher education institutions that offer film or media programs for those pursuing a career in the industry.

Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque offers a film technician program; New Mexico State University-Carlsbad offers a digital media technology program; and Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) in Espanola offers a film and digital media arts program, to name a few.

“If you come to Northern, we can find a way for you to be successful and to grow, and soon enough, maybe go directly into the film industry in an entry-level way, or you can integrate the film in a bigger, fuller way into your life,” says David Lindblom, an associate professor of film and digital media arts at NNMC.

In addition to the programs offered by area higher education institutions, thanks to the soon-to-be-formed Next Generation Media Academy (NGMA), additional programs will become available to help train up New Mexicans in this industry. New Mexico received \$40 million to fund the academy in the spring of 2022.

“The NGMA will be a game changer for the industry of New Mexico and, likely, the nation, as it will be a place for skilled training, paid apprenticeships and pathways to in-demand jobs and union membership,” Dodson says. “Not only will the NGMA be the epicenter for traditional crew training but also ground zero for emergent production technologies.”

– Lindsey Hyde



Santa Fe International Film Festival

Shared Visions, COMMON GOALS

XCEL ENERGY AND NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES
TEAM UP FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH



New Mexico, with its timeless vistas, is anything but stuck in the past. And the outlook of the company powering a sizable share of New Mexico's economic growth is uniquely matched to the state's vision for innovation and growth.

Xcel Energy can claim New Mexico roots through a predecessor company established in Roswell in 1904. Abundant and affordable electric power helped build the energy and agricultural industries of the eastern New Mexico communities Xcel Energy still serves today.

"The spirit of cooperation from those early years persists as we work together to develop clean energy resources and technological innovations that will shape economic growth for decades to come," says Mike McLeod, Xcel Energy regional manager for Community and Economic Development in Roswell.

In 2020, Xcel Energy invested more than \$900 million in the Sagamore Wind Project in Roosevelt County south of Portales, generating enough electricity to power 194,000 homes annually while saving customers millions in fuel costs.

Sagamore is playing a leading role in Xcel Energy's vision to provide 100% carbon-free electricity by 2050 as it and other Xcel Energy renewable resources generated close to 40% of the region's power needs in 2021.

New Mexicans can further benefit from these added renewable resources by taking advantage of Xcel Energy's new electric vehicle incentives that



Xcel Energy's innovations
will provide positive
impacts for the future.

include special charging rates, rebates and affordable charging infrastructure to make it easier for New Mexicans to drive electric.

To ensure these energy resources are available when and where they're needed, Xcel Energy has invested more than \$3 billion in transmission and substation infrastructure in its New Mexico and Texas regions, with the lion's share earmarked for New Mexico grid enhancements to support growth in the energy, agricultural and mining industries that benefit all New Mexicans.

Another way Xcel Energy supports growth is through real estate programs that provide an online inventory of the area's most

marketable industrial sites and buildings at **economic development.xcelenergy.com**, and by Xcel Energy's economic development professionals at national trade shows, industry events and presentations to site selectors.

Site consultants will find information on dozens of characteristics, including robust power capacity and infrastructure, access to transportation and communication networks, and other criteria designed to increase speed to market.

"New Mexico is driving growth for our company, and we're committed to investing in its future and supporting our communities in every way possible," McLeod concludes.



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Economic Profile



RACE

Hispanic or Latino	50.1%
White	35.9%
American Indian	11.1%
Black or African American	2.9%
Two or more races	2.9%
Asian	1.9%

AGE

Under 18	22.4%
18-64	69.1%
65 and over	18.5%

EDUCATION

High school graduate	86.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher	28.1%

HOUSING

984,110

Housing units

2.6

Persons per household

87%

Living in the same house one year earlier

\$1,293

Median selected owner cost with mortgage

\$297,000

Median home price

\$857

Median gross rent

POPULATION

2,115,877

(2022)

2,059,199

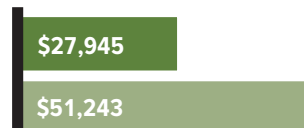
(2010)

Change: 2.8%

MSA POPULATION (2021)

Albuquerque	918,259
Las Cruces	221,508
Santa Fe	155,201
Farmington	120,993

INCOME (2021)



- Per capita income
- Median household income

HOMEOWNERS / RENTERS



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>>> The Heart of Economic Development in the Middle Rio Grande <<<

KEY INDUSTRIES



MRGEDA's goal is to enhance the quality of life in the Middle Rio Grande Valley, while reinforcing the unique characteristics of our counties and communities.

Contact: Kirstin Keller, Executive Director / P.O. Box 143 / Socorro, NM 87801 / (575) 517-0310 / mrgeda.com

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