



NEW MEXICO

**COMMON CAUSE**  
Holding Power Accountable

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## **Common Cause New Mexico Gives Best in Government Awards at Annual Luncheon December 2**

Common Cause New Mexico will honor elected officials, citizens, student advocates, journalists, and good government partners at its annual luncheon at noon on December 2 at the UNM Continuing Education Building, 1634 University Blvd in Albuquerque.

The cost of the luncheon is \$30, and registration is through [act.commoncause.org/nmlunch17](http://act.commoncause.org/nmlunch17) or by calling 323-6399 and leaving your name, phone number and number of tickets.

Every year, we recognize the contributions of outstanding citizens and elected officials who have made the year a bright one for good government and transparency. This year awardees came from seven categories:

- **Best in Media – Steve Terrell**, the capitol reporter for the Santa Fe New Mexican for 16 years, has led the coverage of money in politics, spending by lobbyists, PACs, and non-profits in New Mexico, setting the pace for other reporters and placing elected officials on notice.
- **Best in Government – Senator Jeff Steinborn** (D-Dona Ana) is a consistent champion of Common Cause issues in the New Mexico legislature. Sen. Steinborn's principled stands on measures for good, open government do not always win him friends among lobbyists or high scorecard ratings. But he is pushing the envelope for ethics, campaign finance reform and disclosure, and we salute him as a true hero of our cause.
- **Best in Local Government – Lynn Ellins**, former Dona Ana County Clerk, is a champion for voters who depend on fair, efficient administration of elections at the local level to make their voices heard. Previously Deputy Secretary of State in Colorado, New Mexico is lucky he migrated to Las Cruces.
- **Best in Government Employee – Kari Fresquez**, State Elections Director, Secretary of State, has been with the Secretary of State's office for several years now and her office has implemented many policies and supported legislation that improves transparency in elections, success in voting and access to information for the public. Her office has been instrumental in ensuring online voter registration works smoothly, they audit campaign finance reports and so much more. Kari is an exemplary employee, and we are lucky to have her in New Mexico.
- **Best Partner Organization – Doug Nickle and Take Back Our Republic**, a Republican organization, strongly support disclosure of money in politics. This national group has collaborated with Common Cause New Mexico, testifying at the Secretary of State's hearings this summer and responding to the Koch brothers sham organizations that flooded the state with opposition to the commonsense rules to require high dollar independent PACs (like them) to reveal who they are and what they do.
- **Best Citizen Advocate** – Retired event planner **Flora Lucero's** recent activity is testimony to what a single dedicated individual can do to spur both citizen engagement and candidate

accountability. This summer and fall she organized successful city council candidate forums throughout the city, coordinated with the League of Women Voters and handled myriad details. A leader in the Albuquerque Indivisible movement, she's what happens when citizens take their central role in democracy seriously.

- **Best Student Advocate – Adam Foster** is a high school student who is no stranger to the Roundhouse. He has been registered with the Secretary of State as an unpaid lobbyist since he was in 7th grade, researching and pushing for more broadband access, dual credit courses, and, since 2015, to minimize the danger of concussions. This session, facing down persistent opposition, he helped push through legislation to protect student athletes from brain concussions, which was signed by the Governor. His activism bodes well for the future of democracy.

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*Common Cause is a nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. We work to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest; promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all; and empower all people to make their voices heard as equals in the political process.*