

RISE Workshop Bios

Jennifer Romero, Santa Fe County

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Jennifer Romero has been working with the Santa Fe community since 2007. In addition to serving on several boards, Jennifer assists in organizing and developing community wide initiatives and currently serves as the Santa Fe County Health Care Assistance Administrative Program Manager, working with organizations to serve the residents of Santa Fe County. She has been instrumental in coordinating the CONNECT network based on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid model for Accountable Health Communities. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Sociology from the University of New Mexico and Masters of Social Work in Clinical Therapy from New Mexico Highlands University.

Amber Hamilton, Roosevelt County

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Amber Hamilton started her career at the Roosevelt County Chamber of Commerce and then progressed to Eastern New Mexico University. She has consulted with various companies for public relations, marketing and advertising. Amber also worked for a small, family-owned manufacturing company in Dallas specializing in marketing, development and management. Upon returning home to Roosevelt County, Amber began working at Roosevelt General Hospital. During her eight-year stint at the hospital, she was program administrator for Arise Sexual Assault Services for six years and director of marketing, public relations and hospitality for three years. Amber has a Master's in Communication.

Jamie Michael, Doña Ana County

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Jamie Michael serves as director of the Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department where she oversees county health care funding, outreach and education efforts, health promotion programs, and efforts related to the Stepping Up Initiative.

Virginia Lee, Sierra County

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Virginia Lee began her career working for the Riverside County district attorney's office in 1986, then moved over to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation where she worked for 18 years. She taught criminal justice classes at Palo Verde College in the evenings and worked weekends as a reserve deputy sheriff for Riverside County. She retired to New Mexico where she became the Sierra County Detention Administrator in 2014. The detention center was closed shortly thereafter and she has been working to help start rehabilitation programs as she believes the drug addiction she sees in the detainees is so strong, it is nearly impossible to break this lifestyle and addiction without intensive case management, therapy, and a supportive community.

Michael A. Hawkes, MPA, Socorro County

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Michael Hawkes has been the Socorro County Manger since June 2019. Originally from Belen, New Mexico, he has a master's degree from the University of New Mexico in Public Administration and is a graduate of the National FBI Academy. He served for five years as a project manager for NMEMRTC, 12 years as CEO of the Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc. and for 24 years with the New Mexico State Police where he was promoted to Deputy Chief/Inspector.

Athena M. Gassoumis, M.Div., LADAC, CCTP, Socorro County

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Athena Gassoumis has been director of the Socorro County R.I.S.E Program since 2020. Originally from Athens Greece, she moved from New York City to Magdalena, NM. Athena is a master's level addictions specialist and a Certified Clinical Trauma professional. She has 22 years of experience working in addiction, behavioral health, and trauma. She is a team member of Catholic Charities and NJ PACT/ ACT team (Progressive Assertive Community Treatment for the chronically mentally ill).

Daniel Webb, San Juan County

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Daniel Webb is the San Juan County Adult Detention Center Administrator. He started his law enforcement career in 1997 with the San Juan County Sheriff's Office. He then assumed the deputy administrator position in 2021 with the San Juan County Adult Detention Center and became the detention administrator in 2020.

Brenna Cook, San Juan County

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Brenna Cook is the San Juan County Adult Detention Center Deputy Administrator. She began her career with the San Juan County Adult Detention Center in 2004 as a detention officer. She was promoted to sergeant in 2015, promoted to administrative lieutenant in 2016 and promoted to deputy administrator in 2020.