



# Laboratory named a top-50 employer for Latina women

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For the first time in its 19-year history, the annual [Latina Style 50 report](#) has recognized a national laboratory—Los Alamos National Laboratory—as one of the 50 best workplaces for Hispanic women in the United States.

“Human Resources has really stepped out of the box and gotten creative in recruitment and retention efforts associated with diversity,” says Los Alamos’s Associate Director for Business Innovation Carolyn Zerkle, who oversees a task force that addresses women’s issues in the workplace. “We are paying more attention to nontraditional career paths and our own diverse New Mexico.”

Division Leader of Deployed Environmental, Safety, and Health Services, Stephanie Archuleta—one of the Lab’s highest-ranking Hispanic women—will accept the award on the Lab’s behalf in February 2017 at the *Latina Style 50 Awards Ceremony and Diversity Leaders Conference* in Washington, D.C.

More than 800 prominent companies competed for a spot on the list and had to demonstrate a mission of diversity and inclusion, including “exceptional effort” in their recruitment and advancement of Latina professionals. The Laboratory ranked No. 43 out of 50.

By the numbers.

Los Alamos hires a majority of its employees from Northern New Mexico communities and around the state, which is predominantly Hispanic. In 2015, 62 percent of hires were local or statewide applicants.

Since 2013, the Lab has directed its recruiting efforts toward colleges and universities around the country that receive a minority-serving designation from the U.S. Department of Education and/or confer larger-than-average numbers of bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees in science and engineering to women and other minorities, as reported by the Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology.

Although the Laboratory doesn’t have a fast-track promotion program specifically for Hispanic women, it does offer a mentoring program to encourage the advancement of female employees. The Lab also offers educational support, talent development courses, and a range of leadership development programs for all employees.

Leah Sanchez of the Human Resources Division, left, with Tatiana Espinoza.

Leah Sanchez, group leader for the Human Resources Field & Central Services Group, was the first member of her immediate family to earn a college degree.

“If you would have told me as a young Hispanic girl growing up in Northern New Mexico that I would one day serve in an important role for a world-renowned institution in support of the national security mission, I would have thought it unattainable,” she says. “Los Alamos National Laboratory provided me that opportunity.”

Sanchez might have achieved only a mid-level position were it not for the Lab’s support of her educational goals. “They paid in full for my graduate degree,” she says. “That was a huge weight off my shoulders because it was a financial burden I couldn’t manage myself or impose on my parents.”

Many of the employees Sanchez hires today started as she did in the Laboratory’s student program. “I’m reaching back and helping those Hispanic females come up in the pipeline for professional positions here at Los Alamos,” Sanchez says.

Debbie Duran.

Debbie Duran, a first-generation American who grew up in Texas in a Spanish-speaking family, also got her master’s degree with the Laboratory’s help. She was recently named acting group leader for Technology Services and Solutions.

Not only did she find a fulfilling career at Los Alamos, with ample opportunities for growth during the past 15 years, but she also discovered a deeper sense of cultural identity.

“Being in New Mexico and working at Los Alamos has encouraged me to love and embrace my Latin culture, food, and identity,” Duran says. “I am proud to be Latina, and I’m even more proud to be a Latina serving our nation at Los Alamos.”

Charlotte Lindsey.

Charlotte Lindsey, acting deputy associate director for Business Innovation, has worked at the Laboratory for more than 30 years. Her grandmother was a Velarde from Santa Fe and her father a Babcock/Romero from Española.

“I’m proud to work for an organization that is being recognized for its diversity efforts,” she says. “As a manager, I have been provided a diverse pool of applicants and have been able to promote and retain a significant number of Hispanic females.”

Lindsey adds, “I have held various senior positions at the Laboratory and have never been made to feel that being a Hispanic either promoted me or held me back. My credentials got me the position.”

Stephanie Archuleta.

Archuleta, also a native New Mexican whose Spanish ancestry dates back several generations in this region, saw her mother, Marcia Lujan, succeed as a human resources professional at the Laboratory and took her advice to get a college education. Archuleta worked here as a summer student while earning her bachelor’s degree in environmental science and continued as a graduate research assistant while earning her master’s degree in nuclear engineering.

For more than 20 years at Los Alamos, she has managed multidisciplinary teams dedicated to industrial hygiene and safety, radiation protection, environmental protection, and waste management—and witnessed the advantages that diversity brings to problem solving.

“This award means that we’re making progress,” says Archuleta, who recently joined the Lab’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee. “We have a ways to go, but we are making great strides, and I’m proud that Los Alamos is being recognized for this accomplishment.”

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**

**[www.lanl.gov](http://www.lanl.gov)**

**(505) 667-7000**

**Los Alamos, NM**

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