

Gov. Lujan Grisham fills Supreme Court vacancy

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SANTA FE — Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has appointed **Julie J. Vargas** to the state Supreme Court, closing the vacancy left by the Honorable Justice Judith K. Nakamura, who retired Dec. 1.

“Judge Vargas has demonstrated her quality as a consistent and conscientious jurist,” Lujan Grisham said. “She is a fair, trustworthy and thoughtful representative of New Mexico’s judicial system, and I know New Mexico will benefit from her service now as a justice.”

Vargas has served as a judge on the New Mexico Court of Appeals since her election in 2016, reviewing District Court decisions and drafting opinions, in addition to evaluating court performance measures and implementing a plan to eliminate a case backlog.

Prior to her time on the bench, she worked in private practice, including more than 20 years at Hunt & Davis, an Albuquerque firm. She has served as co-chair of the Advisory Committee of the Code of Judicial Conduct since 2018 and also as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico School of Law.

An Albuquerque native, Vargas earned a bachelor’s degree in history and English literature from Brown University in Providence, R.I., and her law degree from the University of New Mexico. She was admitted to the New Mexico bar in 1993.

The governor selected Vargas from the list of candidates provided by the Judicial Nominating Commission after conducting interviews.

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