

Governor receives national award, recognition for mental health advocacy

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SANTA FE — Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham was awarded the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology’s annual Public Service Award in recognition of her significant efforts to champion mental and public health in New Mexico.

A press release published the news Dec. 19, but the governor officially won the award on Sept. 7.

The ACNP is a professional society comprised of more than 1,200 leading scientists in the field of neuropsychopharmacology.

“Our selection committee was impressed with Gov. Lujan Grisham’s efforts to improve the health of the public, with a particular emphasis on being a fierce champion for senior citizens, veterans, and individuals living with disabilities; for sponsoring the HOPE for Alzheimer’s Act (H.R. 1507); and prioritizing policy changes and education to increase access and treatment of addiction and substance use disorders in New Mexico among many other things,” Carlos Zarate Jr., M.D., ACNP awards committee chair, said.

The governor was nominated for the award by University of New Mexico Distinguished Professor and Chairman Dr. Mauricio Tohen.

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“[Gov.] Lujan Grisham has had a broad and inclusive influence on behavioral health policy. Throughout her years of service, she has been a fierce champion for senior citizens, veterans, and individuals living with disabilities,” Tohen said. “She has sponsored state and national legislation to better the lives of Americans living with mental health conditions.”

As a multi-term congresswoman, the governor cosponsored the Hope for Alzheimer’s Act, a bipartisan effort that expanded Medicare coverage to include care planning services to ensure better outcomes and better quality of life. In 2017 and 2020, she introduced the Care Corps Act to address the growing demand for quality community and in-home supports for seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

In 2021, Lujan Grisham established the New Mexico Health Care Affordability Fund that reduces the cost of health insurance and medical expenses for working families and prohibits copays and other cost sharing for people with insurance who seek behavioral health services.

“I’m honored to receive this award, but I know there is much more to do. As governor, I will continue to implement solutions to make healthcare more affordable and accessible to every New Mexican,” Lujan Grisham said. “To the members of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, thank you for presenting me your 2023 Public Service Award, and thank you to Dr. Mauricio Tohen for nominating me.”

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