

**NEW MEXICO  
PREVENTION  
NETWORK**

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[www.toosmarttostart.com](http://www.toosmarttostart.com)



PreventionWorks

[WWW.NMPREVENTIONNETWORK.ORG](http://WWW.NMPREVENTIONNETWORK.ORG)

**Prevention Specialists Networking to  
Empower our Youth and our Communities.**



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**Christina Gomez, Prevention Specialist  
for the Santa Fe County DWI Program  
Receives 2009 Prevention Specialist of the Year Award!**

The New Mexico Prevention Network, NMPN on October 22, 2009 presented Christina Gomez their 2009 Prevention Specialist of the Year Award. Christina Gomez is a Substance Abuse Certified Prevention Specialist working for the Santa Fe County DWI Program. Christina has extensive experience implementing evidence-based programs in the schools and the community. Her leadership skills and commitment to our youth was quite evident during the April 2009 "Change Your Reality" 2-day Youth Conference in Santa Fe. Christina was in charge of the entire event including a year's worth of planning; "Christina's dedication, commitment to excellence and leadership skills are a tremendous resource for the Santa Fe County DWI Program and the Prevention Community at large", said NMPN's PIO Frank Magourilos.



Last year's Award recipient Frank Magourilos, presenting Christina Gomez the 2009 Prevention Specialist of the Year Award!

**\*This month's special edition features: Paula Feathers, MA ATODA Prevention Training System and Brenda V. Martinez, SCPS Director of Prevention Optum Health New Mexico both providing their expertise on Prevention in New Mexico and its future.**

## WHERE IS PREVENTION HEADING—WHAT IS WORKING

Paula Feathers, MA  
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### 1 How do you see Prevention in New Mexico?

On the right track! There are several areas I have noticed we have made great strides in during my time as a preventionist. The areas of improvement that immediately come to mind are: more agencies are using data to select strategies; the significant increase in Certified Prevention Specialists; increases in the implementation of environmental strategies; an increase in prevention partners; and significant positive outcomes in many communities.

There are some areas we could improve in also because we have not quite fully evolved into a prevention system. If all prevention funding agencies in New Mexico would have common funding requirements, our prevention efforts would become even more effective. What I am suggesting are common principles...IS :

- Everyone who receives funding from state agencies and provides prevention services in the community be required to go to Prevention Generalist Training and Prevention Ethics courses.
- Community specific data is used to select strategies.
- Comprehensive prevention being supported in communities. Comprehensive to me means prevention in every domain (individual/peer, family, school, and community).
- Adequate funding for each strategy. When agencies are asked to do multiple strategies, but are not provided with enough funding to do each of those strategies with fidelity, it hurts prevention as a whole because our outcomes are impacted. Down the road, that leads to important decision makers believing money is not well spent when it goes to prevention.
- Evaluation required for all funded programs.
- The Institute of Medicine Continuum of Care model being used as the guide that links prevention and treatment in communities.

I am not suggesting all funding agencies become the same. What I am suggesting it there are common principles state level funding agencies could adopt to help the prevention system as a whole. The stronger our system, the better the outcomes. Our profession as a whole is dependant on positive outcomes.

### 2. Where do you see Prevention going in ten years?

There are three major themes I have noticed are being talked about more and more at the federal level. Those three themes are:

1. Population level change
2. Data Driven
3. Producing outcomes

This is the direct result of research findings. According to a majority of the literature that is being produced right now environmental strategies and selective and indicated programs are seen as the most effective in achieving the three areas listed above. That is why not only evaluation, but publishing evaluation findings is so important. If it is not being published, it is not being noted. I believe a majority of funding at the federal level is headed towards environmental strategies and indicated and selected programs.

### 3. What role do you play within your job?

Training is one of the most important aspects of our prevention system. Prevention is a field that appeals to a lot of people with a lot of different backgrounds. My role is to find people and topics that can provide the most up to date information in a variety of disciplines that can help preventionist succeed in their jobs. It is a responsibility I take very seriously, am passionate about, and love.

## WHERE IS PREVENTION HEADING—WHAT IS WORKING

**Brenda V. Martinez, SCPS.**

**Director of Prevention**

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### How do you see Prevention in NM?

Interestingly I have been thinking about this a lot lately mainly because of the current state of prevention funding and the future of prevention funding. As prevention dollars are cut I worry about how the hard work that is being done in the communities can continue. As the dollars get smaller, I am hopeful that our communities will work diligently to continue the prevention efforts and, as a result, there will be more collaboration. In hard times is when people tend to band together and knowing the people in the prevention field their strength will persevere.

### Where do you see Prevention going in 10 years?

In 10 years I see Prevention focusing more on environmental strategies and less on direct services. As funding gets slimmer I see funding agencies looking at environmental strategies to "get more bang for their buck". For those direct service programs that are still funded, I foresee them being funded to work with our younger children. We need to shift our focus to those early elementary years in order to "catch" them before they begin to be negatively influenced. Lastly, I see a more comprehensive approach to prevention--from birth to death--being implemented. With prevention efforts across the lifespan, this change will influence the Institute of Medicine's model approach to a continuum of services for substance use.

### What role do you play within your job?

My official title is "Director of Prevention" for Optum Health New Mexico. I oversee the NM Department of Health, Office of Substance Abuse Prevention's funding and the NM Human Services Division, Behavioral Health Services Division's Gambling Project. I also serve as a "Subject Matter Expert" for other projects (Total Community Approach, Methamphetamine Prevention, etc.) and I continue to serve as the Vice-Chair of the New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals & Vice-Chair of the New Mexico Prevention Network.

**We hope you enjoyed the interviews with our local prevention experts. The next Newsletter will feature interviews, County by County, with the Prevention Professionals from the DWI programs. Several attempts have been made to contact Bernalillo County for interviews, but we have not been successful in conducting an interview; therefore, the next County to be highlighted will be Catron County. Readers and members please submit any questions you have about prevention or working in the field of prevention in New Mexico to Christina Gomez at: [cgomez@cosanta-fe.nm.us](mailto:cgomez@cosanta-fe.nm.us) . Please submit your questions/scenarios by the 15th of each month so that the members in the prevention community can pose answers/assistance. NMPN thanks you for all you do and wishes you all health and wellness.**