



NEWS RELEASE

November 7, 2022

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AREA Chairman's Distinguished Service Awardee for 2022 is Jennifer Thomas

The 505 Awards are bestowed by the Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance and recognize outstanding leadership in economic development in the region, to be awarded at the Nov. 17 AREA Annual Dinner at Sandia Resort

Albuquerque, NM – Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance has announced the honorees for the fourth annual 505 Awards, which recognize organizations and individuals that are making exceptional contributions to economic growth and prosperity in the greater Albuquerque region, resulting in improvements to its overall economic strength and competitive position.

The Chairman's Distinguished Service Award recognizes individuals or organizations that have exemplified support for economic development efforts in alignment with AREA's Strategic Plan in a wide variety of areas, truly setting the bar for the future of the region. The 505 Awards for 2022 have the wonderful opportunity to recognize Jennifer Thomas, recently retired from Bank of Albuquerque. A lifelong banker, Jennifer has been continually active in numerous boards during her career. She retired from Bank of Albuquerque this year after more than 19 years, serving as President then Chairman and Market CEO. She was responsible for designing and executing strategy in New Mexico and led an outstanding group of leaders and bankers. Previously she served as NM Market President, led the Private Bank and other leadership roles for Bank of America for 11 years. Jennifer is a past board chair of AREA in 2013 and served on the board and executive committee for many years. She is also the founder of the Albuquerque Forward Fund, designed as a non-profit to support AREA's mission and attract greater corporate foundation funding to economic development.

"I appreciate and am humbled to receive this award as I have the greatest respect for AREA's work as well as the board, staff and donors that drive it forward," says Jennifer Thomas.

This award is a unique and special recognition, selected by the AREA Board Chair. "When I think of someone who has delivered a legacy of service to the region in support of economic development, it is impossible for Jennifer's name to not immediately pop into my mind. Watching her selfless leadership and commitment to community has inspired me time and time again," commented Cynthia Schultz, President and CEO of Bradbury Stamm Construction and Board Chair of AREA.

The awards will be bestowed in person at AREA's signature event, the Annual Dinner and 505 Awards which will take place November 17 from 5 – 9 p.m. at Sandia Resort. This year's theme is



“Taking Flight” – a nod to the significant industry presence and opportunity for the region in aerospace and defense but also a recognition that AREA’s strategic plan and shift to a more regionally inclusive approach to economic development is taking flight and gaining momentum as well.

To attend the 2022 Annual Dinner and 505 Awards, where honorees will be recognized, or for more information on awards categories, eligibility requirements or judging criteria, visit www.abq.org/505Awards/.

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About AREA

The Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is leads and executes strategies designed to grow and diversify the economic base of the greater Albuquerque region, creating a prosperous, diverse and inclusive economy and elevating the standard of living for all. AREA provides confidential assistance to businesses considering the area for expansion and new investment. Since its creation in 1960, AREA has recruited more than 250 companies and more than 35,000 jobs to the Albuquerque metro area. AREA also provides retention and expansion assistance to existing industry. For more information, visit ABQ.org.

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