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Jo Galván Nash
Co-President, 575.339.7115
jogalvan.nash@gmail.com

OTERO COUNTY RESIDENT RECEIVES ‘MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK AWARD’

LAS CRUCES--- Kayla Blanchard of Alamogordo has been selected for the 2024 Making Democracy Work Award (MDWA) given annually by the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico. Blanchard was presented a Certificate of Recognition and a cash award for \$250 at the Feb. 10, 2024 meeting of the LWVSNM in Las Cruces, said League Co-President Jo Galván Nash.

Blanchard is the health equity specialist and coordinator for the Otero County Community Health Council (OCCHC) in Alamogordo. As a healthcare and public health official, she participated in a fellowship program that provided seven months of training in the nonpartisan initiative Vot-ER. Vot-ER is a national initiative which integrates voter access into healthcare institutions.



Kayla Blanchard

“Kayla’s work exemplifies what this award is all about — recognizing individuals who are strengthening democracy in southern New Mexico,” Nash said. “Her work with the Vot-ER project is engaging others to be active in activities that advance voter registration and participation.”

“I am truly grateful for this honor, and I pledge to continue advocating for civic health and democracy in all communities!” said Blanchard. “As someone who has witnessed firsthand the unique challenges faced by rural areas, I am acutely aware of the critical need to empower and engage residents in the democratic process.”

Nash said Blanchard’s colleagues nominated her for the League award. Unexpectedly, icy weather on the San Augustin Pass prevented Kayla from traveling from Alamogordo to Las Cruces to receive the award in person. Her colleague, Molly Mata of Las Cruces, who nominated Blanchard, accepted the award on her behalf. The MDWA winner is traditionally announced around February 14, the anniversary of the creation of the League of Women Voters in 1920.

This is the fourth year the Making Democracy Work Award was given by the League that represents the counties of Doña Ana, Otero, Sierra, Grant, and Luna. There is also a unit of the League located in Alamogordo. More information about the League is available by emailing lwvsnm@gmail.com or online at www.lwvsnm.org.