



2023 Scholarship Recipients



Richelle Rivera

Ms. Richelle M. Rivera is the granddaughter of Vangie Rivera. She is a recent graduate of Wagon Mound High School and currently attends New Mexico Highlands University pursuing a degree in Criminal Justice.



Hailey Chavez

Ms. Hailey M. Chavez is the daughter of Joseph & Tabitha Chavez. She is a recent graduate of Mora High School and attends the University of New Mexico pursuing a degree in Nursing.



455 State Highway 518
Mora, NM 87732



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Seniors find enormous benefits from being online



We're so accustomed to thinking that the internet is for younger people that we often fail to grasp how long it's been an important part of our daily lives. And we've all heard it repeated ad nauseum that older people "just don't get technology" to the point where we find ourselves repeating it as if it's true.

It's not.

According to a study by Pew Research, only 25% percent of American adults over 65 say they never go online, and that number continues to shrink each year.

Why? Well, consider that the internet as a commercial marketplace really came into being more than 25 years ago, and while it would have certainly been true that most seniors at that time had never used the internet, in the intervening years, the population has continued to age. A 65-year-old person today would have been right on the cusp of entering their 40s at the time the internet exploded into cultural prominence.



Increased cognitive function

Online games, such as Sudoku and Scrabble keep older minds agile, and learning new skills via YouTube, Skillshare, or online courses through companies like Domestika, means that learning never needs to stop. Keeping the brain active and challenged helps prevent memory-related issues later in life.



Increased mental health and social relationships

Connecting with friends and family through social media, FaceTime, or joining online communities with folks who share their hobbies or interests can keep seniors engaged as they age, while lowering the risks of isolation and depression.



Increased physical health

Thousands of health-related articles, recipes, and exercise videos are simple ways to use the internet to improve one's health. More recently, telemedicine has provided a convenient way for people of all ages to get the medical care they need without needing to leave their homes at all—and this is especially critical in rural areas where the local doctor may be several hours away.



Increased independence and safety

Internet-connected devices, such as home security systems, programmable thermostats, and water heater and electrical monitoring systems that can alert you to issues in your home, as well as smart home devices can enhance your quality of life while keeping you safe and secure.



Increased entertainment options

Today, the assortment of streaming applications, such as Netflix, Hulu, Disney+ and more, means that you always have something to watch. With internet-connected devices, such as your mobile phone or tablet, you can take your entertainment wherever there's Wi-Fi. What's more, many seniors find they can save money by cutting the cord with their cable companies, while accessing all the sports and entertainment they need online.

At La Jicarita, we care about *everyone* in our community. And if you ever have any questions about your service and what it can do for you, we'd love to hear from you!

Happy New Year!

2024

Fiber Project Update

La Jicarita's fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) project continues to make significant progress as planned. The communities of Buena Vista, Golondrinas, La Cueva, Rio La Casa, and currently North Chacon are in the construction phase and some areas nearing completion. In most places fiber is being spliced and cut-over to fiber from the existing copper facilities.

The focus of the project has shifted from fiber optic cable placement to moving the cooperative members over to the new fiber optic services from the existing copper services in the areas where new fiber has been constructed.

Moving into 2024, La Jicarita plans to continue upgrading facilities in the Mora Exchange, to include Sierra Bonita and parts of the Wagon Mound Exchange. The Cooperative is proud to serve and provide its members with the best telecommunication services as possible.

Please contact Michael J. Leyba, Operations Manager, with any questions you have.