



**March Branch Meeting**  
**Carla Rachkowski, Director of Operations**  
**of the Regional Development Corporation**  
**Mesa Public Library, Upstairs Meeting Room**  
**Thursday, March 14, 2024, 6:30 pm**



The Regional Development Corporation (RDC) is a private non-profit organization dedicated to improving economic development in Northern New Mexico. The RDC provides private investment opportunities and technical assistance to facilitate job growth and diversify the economies of communities in the following seven counties: Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, Northern Sandoval, San Miguel, Santa Fe, Taos, and the municipalities and Native American Pueblos therein. Current funders include Los Alamos County, New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and Triad National Security LLC.

Ms Rachkowski will discuss the RDC's four key areas of focus. She will share success stories, challenges and future plans.

The RDC's four key areas of focus are:

**Business Retention & Expansion** through business outreach and direct investments. The RDC provides technical assistance that offers access to free, individualized support, mentoring, training, and workshops to help businesses grow and succeed. The RDC provides direct investments: grants and no-interest loans.

**Economic Development Capacity Building** through the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) which supports communities and Pueblos. REDI focuses on regional collaboration, business development, workforce, climate change & renewables, housing and broadband infrastructure, and funding.

**Workforce & Education** through identifying and addressing education and training needed to develop a well-educated regional workforce by providing internships and apprenticeships.

**Partnerships and Professional Services** to acknowledge that our partners are a critical component in addressing the needs of small businesses. The RDC works with other organizations in a variety of ways, including providing funding through sponsorships for regional events, facilitating community roundtables and events, and hosting essential business resource events.

## Great Decisions 2024

Great Decisions meets on alternate Thursday afternoons at the White Rock library at 2:00pm. Visitors are welcome.

Remaining scheduled meetings are:

Feb 29 1:00 pm	Pandemic Preparedness	Margaret Gibson
Mar 14	Climate Tech and Competition	Judy Prono
Mar 28	Understanding Indonesia	Group
Apr 11	U.S.-China Trade Rivalry	Marilyn Doolen
Apr 25	Mideast Realignment	Carroll Thomas

## Book Group

The March book is Sankofa by Chibundo Onuzo. Rozelle Wright will review at both meetings. The March 4, 7pm meeting will be hosted by Els Hoffer, 505 Grand Canyon, WR. Please let Els know if you will attend (505-672-3245, [jimelshoffer@icloud.com](mailto:jimelshoffer@icloud.com))

The 1pm, March 5<sup>th</sup> Zoom meeting will be hosted by Rozelle Wright at the Episcopal Church; she will send out a link for those wishing to attend via ZOOM.

## Nonfiction Book Group

The next meeting will be on April 15, 7pm; the book is The Wager by David Grann. Angela Coop will lead the discussion. Nina Thayer, 1707 Solana, LA will host the meeting.

## Un-Tea for Tech Trek

Our Tech Trek committee led by Carol Neal sent our traditional brightly-colored Tech Trek appeal envelopes to our membership. We all know how this one-week STEM camp immerses young girls in a world that empowers and encourages them to think about themselves as future scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and computer specialists. Share this link with others, <https://techtrek-nm.aauw.net/>.

## Out 'n About

The Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe is currently featuring an exhibit featuring items staff have chosen from the museum's collection. Each of the 35 staff members chose 2 items; the items' origins span 26 countries. The 70 objects range from sculpture to jewelry to clothing to painting and even a robot. I suggest a visit in April thus avoiding unpredictable snow storms. Wednesdays are free days for NM seniors, or we could choose a Saturday which might be more convenient for those of us who work. I propose Wednesday, April 17 or Saturday, April 20. We would follow our 10:00am visit to the museum with lunch at the Museum Hill Café. Car pools will be arranged. If interested, reply to [denisegeorge@icloud.com](mailto:denisegeorge@icloud.com).

## Legislative Report

Passed and awaiting governor's signature:

HB 129 now imposes a 7-day waiting period on firearm purchases by law-abiding citizens, including concealed handgun licensees and anyone else who passes a firearm background (NICS) check.

SB 5 bans open carry in and around polling places and at ballot drop boxes.

SB 137 upgrades the training and transparency of local school boards.

HB171 specifies graduation requirements, requiring 24 credits, with financial literacy as an elective required at each school.

HB151 requires state-funded post-secondary educational institutions to adopt policies addressing affirmative consent and prevention of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and harassment and stalking.

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Although the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act passed the Senate but fell two votes shy on the House floor, Rep. Christine Chandler is optimistic

that it will make it across the finish line next year. She also noted that two green-energy bills that she co-sponsored made it to the Governor's desk. Both are steps toward promoting clean energy across the state.

## Calendar

Feb 29	Great Decisions
Mar 6,7	Book Group
Mar 14	Branch Meeting
Mar 14,28	Great Decisions

## Coordinating Council 2023-2024

Carroll Thomas	Co-Facilitator	505-662-7617	<a href="mailto:carrthom58@earthlink.net">carrthom58@earthlink.net</a>
Judy Prono	Co-Facilitator/Public Policy	505-662-2691	<a href="mailto:djprono@msn.com">djprono@msn.com</a>
Linda McLellan	Secretary	505-690-3939	<a href="mailto:lindamcclellan@msn.com">lindamcclellan@msn.com</a>
Mary Ann Lindahl	Membership/Treasurer	505-660-2259	<a href="mailto:moonbeamx@comcast.net">moonbeamx@comcast.net</a>
Maryjane Giesler	University Representative	505-662-5574	<a href="mailto:mgiesler@unm.edu">mgiesler@unm.edu</a>
Marilyn Doolen	Diversity,Equity,Inclusion/Historian	505-672-3571	<a href="mailto:mtdoolen@aol.com">mtdoolen@aol.com</a>
Alahna Weller	<b>Member at large</b>	505-672-9539	<a href="mailto:acweller@comcast.net">acweller@comcast.net</a>
<b>Appointed positions</b>			
Helena Whyte	STEM	505-690-7824	<a href="mailto:mozden08@aol.com">mozden08@aol.com</a>
Nina Thayer	Hospitality/Pubic Policy	505-231-6312	<a href="mailto:gnthayer@cybermesa.com">gnthayer@cybermesa.com</a>
Bev Cooper	Publicity	505-672-9696	<a href="mailto:bcooper@cybermesa.com">bcooper@cybermesa.com</a>
Denise George	Newsletter/WEB	505-690-3534	<a href="mailto:denisegeorge@icloud.com">denisegeorge@icloud.com</a>
<b>Open</b>	Nominating		