

VERONICA GONZALES

Associate Consultant



Veronica N. Gonzales brings to Lord's Thought Leadership Team an extensive background in public policy and administration, state museum systems, governance, management and operations and state and federal legislative expertise.

Most recently, Ms. Gonzales served the state of New Mexico for eight years in the position of Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, one of the largest and most well-respected state cultural agencies in the nation. She has been recognized for her forward thinking agenda, leadership, and solid record of accomplishment, which includes strengthening the agency's \$40+ million budget, operations, and services. Through a strategic assessment of the governance structure of the state museum and historic site system, Gonzales advanced key changes to improve operations, policies, and procedures. She was able to institutionalize strategic planning, evaluation, and a technology strategy, building a cohesive structure and common agenda for the agency's 15 complex and diverse operations. Through an increase in statewide outreach and engagement, Ms. Gonzales established a solid and comprehensive statewide network of arts and cultural organizations and communities as well as strong working relationships with corresponding foundations, commissions, and boards and the state legislature. Over her tenure, the museums and historic sites realized increases of over 50 percent in attendance.

Ms. Gonzales commissioned the state's most comprehensive research study to date on the economic impact of New Mexico's arts and cultural industry. In an extensive outreach campaign, Ms. Gonzales shared the findings with several communities in New Mexico as well as the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the NM Congressional delegation. The study's release has since resulted in numerous initiatives and heightened public awareness at local and national levels. The data is currently being used by city, county, and state officials, a number of businesses, nonprofits, library and educational institutions, as well as other states and national organizations. U.S. Senator Tom Udall relied on the report's data for the sponsorship of his CREATE Act legislation and several New Mexico communities and cities are using it for their cultural planning.

Ms. Gonzales' experience also includes high level professional positions in the United States Congress, the White House, federal departments, and as executive director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, a national non-profit representing 36 tribal colleges and universities dedicated to tribal community advancement and culturally-based curriculum.