

BE *AUDIT* YOU CAN BE

A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER FROM THE OSA



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We're thrilled to have the opportunity to continue building our great team at the Office of the State Auditor (OSA). Do you think you have what it takes? We bet you do!

Check out our job postings online by visiting our website at:

www.saonm.org

Six Months of Success

Auditor Colón shares his vision for the Office of the State Auditor and talks about what he's most proud of as State Auditor.



Auditor Colón Shares His Vision Six Months of Success

As soon as the administration began Auditor Colón made a commitment to bring accountability, transparency, and excellence to the OSA. Over the course of the past six months, significant strides have been taken to ensure taxpayer dollars are valued and protected. Read more inside about the State Auditor's vision and the OSA's accomplishments thus far.

"In such a short period of time I am so proud of the accomplishments of Team OSA. I'm excited as we continue to rebuild New Mexicans trust in government."

*- Brian S. Colón, Esq.,
State Auditor*



Lt. Governor Morales, Auditor Colón, and attendees look on as the color guard presents the United States and New Mexico State flags

FOREVER MAY IT WAVE!

State Auditor Colón, Lt. Governor Morales, and Key Leaders Dedicate Official Flagpole at the Office of the State Auditor

On July 3rd, Auditor Colón was joined by several dignitaries, including Lt. Governor Howie Morales, PhD. and other key leaders in a ceremony to dedicate the first official flagpole at the Office of the State Auditor.

The 25 foot flagpole installed at no cost to the taxpayers. Both the United States flag and New Mexico State flag flown at the Office of the State Auditor were originally flown over the United States Capitol Building and the New Mexico State Capitol Building, respectively. The ceremony included presentation of colors by State and National award winning Wilson Middle School's 470th "Wildcat Squadron" Leadership Cadets; the singing of the National Anthem by New Mexico recording artist, Robyn Christian; and remarks by Lt. Governor Howie Morales, PhD.



State Auditor Colón & Lt. Governor Morales share a handshake



Wilson Middle School "Wildcat Squadron" salute while raising the US and NM State flags.

"It's an honor to be here," said Lt. Governor Morales "What a special, beautiful day. The day before America celebrates its birthday and our independence to celebrate the vision that has brought us here together, a vision by our State Auditor to see things not as they are but what they can be."

[Watch the Flag Dedication Ceremony](#)

WE'RE HIRING!

The New Mexico Office of the State Auditor is seeking highly motivated professionals to join its dynamic team of auditors and investigators!

SENIOR AUDITOR

AUDIT SUPERVISOR

AUDIT MANAGER

The OSA needs great public servants to join our team in the fight against fraud, waste, and abuse. As a member of Team OSA you will be at the forefront of supporting this mission at the highest levels of state government.

JOIN
OUR TEAM

GAO FY2018 Findings Report



GAO

Government Accountability Office
New Mexico Office of the State Auditor

Recently, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), a division of the OSA, released its annual *Findings Report*. The report provides a comprehensive look at the overall financial health of NM state governmental agencies.

What did the report review?

For FY2018, the report evaluated 514 complete and released audit reports of agencies subject to the Audit Act.

What's in the report?

Notably, 96 percent of agencies audited received *unmodified* opinions and 35 percent of audits received *no findings*.

How can I learn more?

For full details and to read the report in its entirety visit the GAO Reports page by navigating to the Accountability Office from the home page or click on the link below.

[GAO FY2018 Findings Report](#)



Auditor Colón presenting at the 2019 Audit Rule Training

2019 Audit Rule Road Show

Each year the OSA embarks on a statewide tour to provide training to governmental agency employees and independent public accountant (IPA) firm representatives to provide training on significant and critical updates to the Audit Rule. This year, Auditor Colón and Team OSA visited the following six cities across the state: Las Vegas, Las Cruces, Portales, Farmington, Taos, Santa Fe, and Albuquerque.

“As the newly elected State Auditor, I was excited to join the OSA’s team of highly qualified professionals on the road,” said Auditor Colón, “I believe education is key in taking proactive measures to fight fraud, waste, and abuse. Presenting Audit Rule updates is fundamental in that process.”

Accountability, transparency and excellence are the value of the OSA under the leadership of Auditor Colón and one of the best methods to achieve its mission is to deliver important information on the Audit Rule to its stakeholders. Fostering an environment of partnership and collaboration is a powerful tool for improved governance.



GAO Director, Stephanie W. Telles; State Auditor, Brian S. Colón; and Deputy State Auditor, Natalie Cordova present at various stops during the 2019 Audit Rule Training

Did you miss the training? Read the Audit Rule and check out our video presentations by visiting our website. You can find links to the Audit Rule and videos by exploring the features in the [Auditing](#) section from our home page. Or just click [HERE!](#)

Six Months of Success

Since being sworn in on January 1, 2019, Auditor Colón has been committed to the responsibilities granted to him by the state constitution. He entered the office on day one of his term with clear eyes, a focused mission, and a duty to protect the taxpayers of New Mexico. The OSA, through its work by a stellar team of dedicated public servants and accounting and audit professionals, has achieved many significant milestones in six short months that embrace the OSAs stated values of accountability, transparency, and excellence. Auditor Colón is pleased to deliver this update on several key successes at the OSA with more progress still to come.

Reports of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse on the Rise

The act of reporting fraud, waste, and abuse by private and public whistleblowers remains one of the most effective means of detecting the abuse. Direct efforts, such as trainings and public outreach events, encompassing over 1,265 attendees, encouraging New Mexicans to report concerns related to fraud, waste, and abuse have led to the substantial increase in complaints to the OSA.

“Everywhere I go, every opportunity I have, I encourage individuals to reach out to our office with any concerns and as a result we’re receiving more complaints,” said Auditor Colón. “This is not to say more fraud is occurring, but it does allow us to take a closer look at potential problem areas. If you see something, say something. That’s how we can work together for improved governance and quite frankly greater accountability.”

Of course, with the uptick of complaints the OSA is also seeing increased need to conduct thorough evaluations of the complaints received. Acknowledging the increase of complaints the OSA is receiving Auditor Colón stated “We’re seeing more complaints, which is leading to more open evaluations within our Special Investigations Division, but that doesn’t mean previous complaints are being ignored.”

Closed the Gap in Audit Report Review Backlog

Each year the OSA oversees annual audits of nearly 1,000 agencies subject to the audit act. Every agency we audit has a financial story to tell that illustrates its goals and intentions. A significant aspect of this process is the review and release of agency audit reports. In the first six months of the Colón administration, OSA took on a backlog of previous audit reviews. Of the 706 audit reviews received since January, 686 have been completed and released. This represents a review completion rate of 91% of total pending audit reviews. Completion of audit reviews in a timely manner is a top priority for the Colón administration and shows a commitment to important work that the OSA does for the taxpayers of New Mexico.



Six Months of Success

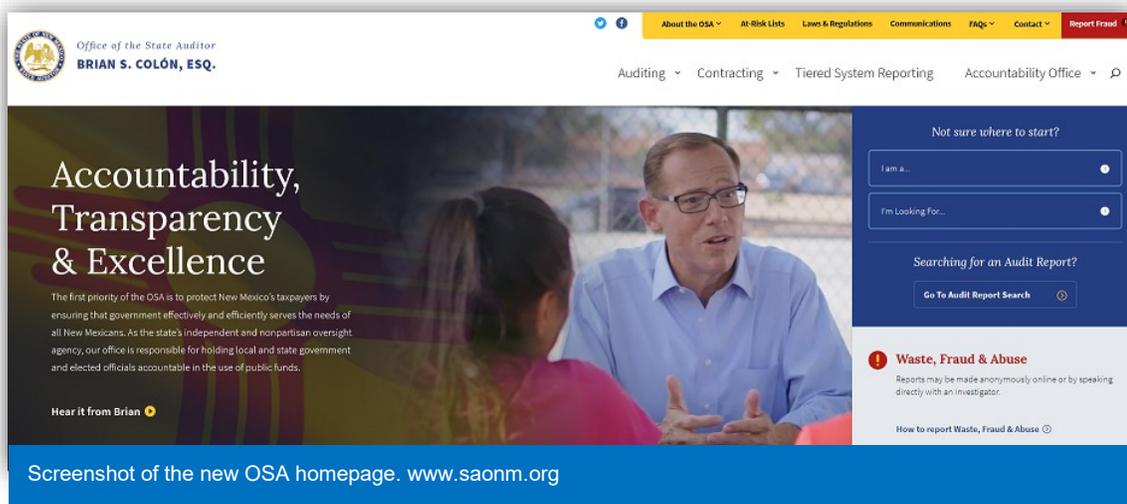
“Closing the gap on the audit report review backlog was a major priority for me and thanks to the committed public servants I have the fortune to work with each day, we were able to focus our collective efforts to review and publish over 90 percent of FY2018 audits.” remarked Auditor Colón.

Website Redesign for Improved Functionality

The OSA relaunched its website. The primary goal of the website redesign was to improve functionality for OSA stakeholders and better illustrate the values and mission of the office: accountability, transparency, and excellence. One of the most significant improvements was to [OSA-Connect](#), the online portal where state agencies subject to the audit act procure its contracts with the

Independent Public Accountant (IPA) selected to perform the agency’s annual audit.

“We wanted to create a digital space that is as welcoming as our physical offices.” said Auditor Colón. “I think we accomplished that while also advancing its functionality.”



Screenshot of the new OSA homepage. www.saonm.org

Connect allow for a more streamlined approach to contracting and advances the overall productivity of report submission and review. Additional upgrades to the site make it easier and more user friendly for individuals who are concerned about fraud, waste, and abuse to [report it to our office](#).

A New Deputy for a New Day!

When asked about other milestone moments the OSA achieved in the first six months Auditor Colón was quick to point to the appointment of Natalie Cordova, CPA as Deputy State Auditor.

“In Natalie, the OSA has one of the most—if not the most—experienced deputy state auditors in its history.” beamed Auditor Colón. “Not only does she have the relevant experience for the position, she has the passion for it. I’m thrilled to have her as my right-hand. She’s an exceptional leader.”

Happily married and mother to three young children living in Truchas, NM, Natalie Cordova is a veteran accountant with a strong background in internal and external auditing and overall financial analysis. She was most recently the Chief Financial Officer for the New Mexico Attorney General. Natalie joins the Office of the State Auditor for the second time, previously serving as its Director of the Financial Audit Division.



OSA Executive Leadership: Pictured left to right: A. Corrales, J. Holloway, S. Telles, B. Colon, N. Cordova, C. Catechis, J. Gallegos

One minute with...



Welcome to **One minute with...** a regular feature where we introduce you to members of Team OSA! This month we're introducing you to a few members of our executive team:

Natalie Cordova, Joseph Holloway, and Chris Catechis.

What is your role with OSA?



Natalie Cordova: I am privileged to serve as the Deputy State Auditor for our beautiful state.

Joseph Holloway: I am fortunate to serve as General Counsel to the OSA.

Chris Catechis: I have the honor of representing the OSA as its Chief of Staff.

Before working at OSA, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?

Chris Catechis: In college I used to conduct Adaptive Aquatics with disabled children. It's one of the most rewarding jobs I ever had. I also spent an evening as a bodyguard for Leonardo DiCaprio. That was a surreal experience for sure.

Joseph Holloway:

The Fountainhead
by Ayn Rand

"But I don't think of you."

Said by the character Roark after his arch nemesis Mr. Toohy gloats believing that he's destroyed Roark's life states "Mr. Roark, we're alone here. Why don't you tell me what you think of me? In any words you wish. No one will hear us."

Any favorite line
from a movie?



What is your wish for the
next four years with OSA?

Natalie Cordova

"To be a leadership organization that makes a measurable improvement in financial accountability and understanding in our state."



Team OSA with family of staff pose after planting a blue spruce.

Let's Have a Celebration!

On April 25, 2019 the OSA recognized both National Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day and Earth Day with a series of fun events.

We first celebrated the unofficial national holiday, Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day, joining over 3.5 million workplaces and 37 million Americans, and exposed students to future job possibilities and the value of an education. This is especially important for the young people of New Mexico, as our state lags behind many others in graduation rates for students.

In addition, the OSA recognized and celebrated Earth Day with our staff and young visitors. The OSA recognizes our stewardship of the natural environment for our children and engaged in a tree planting ceremony to demonstrate our commitment to both the environment and our future.

“I was thrilled to host such bright young people at the OSA,” said Auditor Colón, “I know the value of investing in our youth first hand, and I am proud to honor this tradition of workforce development while also having the opportunity to demonstrate support for our environment.”



New Mexicans concerned about potential instances of fraud, waste, and abuse should contact the Office of the State Auditor.

Reports may be made anonymously through our website or by calling our fraud hotline at:

www.osafraud.org

1-866-OSA-FRAUD

You may also speak to an investigator by calling:

505-476-3800



The Office of the State Auditor
2540 Camino Edward Ortiz, Ste. A
Santa Fe, NM 87507

Phone: (505) 476-3800
Fax: (505) 827-3512
www.saonm.org