



Martin J. Chavez Biography

Born and raised in Albuquerque, Martin Chavez obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of New Mexico and his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center. He served a clerkship in the office of the New Mexico State Attorney General and practiced law for approximately 20 years in the areas of bad faith insurance and medical malpractice.

When New Mexico converted from a court to administrative system for workers compensation, Chavez was tapped to serve as the founding director of the New Mexico Workers Compensation Administration (WCA).

After starting the WCA, Chavez returned to private practice and was elected to the New Mexico State Senate where he served for five years and was Chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. Some of his legislation included early voting, post card voter registration, the New Mexico Workers' Compensation Reform Act (which took New Mexico from the second highest workers compensation rate nationally to the second lowest), critical amendments to the Public Records Act (for which he received a major good government award) and the New Mexico Forrest Re-Leaf Act (which has planted millions of trees across New Mexico).

Chavez served three, four-year terms as mayor of Albuquerque (pop. 527,000) from 1993 to 1997 and from 2001 through December, 2009. During that time, Albuquerque emerged from last to first or close to first on all the right lists. Immediately upon being elected, scientists informed the Mayor that Albuquerque's aquifer (her sole source of water) would run dry within 25 years. Chavez immediately embarked upon a plan to reduce water use (one third over 10 years) and import water from the Colorado River Basin to which Albuquerque held rights. Albuquerque met its goals early and actually added 33 percent new accounts while reducing use by a full third. For this accomplishment, Chavez received the World Leadership Award in London in 2006 for Water and Utilities.

In addition, Chavez and Albuquerque received the following recognitions:

- First Place, Best Cities for Jobs or a Career (*Forbes Magazine*, March 2007)
- EPA Climate Protection award, First Place (2008)
- United States Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Award, First Place, (2007)
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce/Siemens Sustainability Award (2008)
- Fittest City in America, *Men's Fitness Magazine* (2008)
- 2nd Most Pet Friendly City (*Pet Magazine*)
- Top Ten Places To Live In The US (*U.S. News and World Report*, 2009)
- Renewable Energy Innovator of the Year Award, Association of Energy Engineers (2008)
- Mayor of Trees Award, National Alliance for Community Trees (2004)
- One of America's 25 most dynamic mayors (*Newsweek*, 1997)

Chavez served as a Trustee of the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and chaired the Urban Water Council, which involved lectures around the country and in France and Mexico. He was one of 4 mayors who served as an advisor to Newsweek Magazine on green initiatives.

In 2009, Chavez served on the International Committee of ICLEI Global, which assists local governments globally in determining their carbon emissions and setting strategies for reducing their carbon footprints. ICLEI, headquartered in Bonn, Germany, has chapters around the world and was the second largest NGO

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(Non Governmental Organization) at the COP15 climate negotiations in Copenhagen this past December where, at the request of the White House, Chavez presented on a panel on local government innovation. Chavez has also served on the ICLEI USA Board of Directors since 2008.

Chavez has been a member of or led delegations to Jerusalem (twice), China (three times), Japan (three times), France (three times), Saudi Arabia, Spain (three times), Germany, the inauguration of Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, and, the inauguration of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Most recently, Chavez was invited to speak at the World Mayor's Climate Conference in Hamburg, Germany in November, 2009 and by France to address businesses seeking to make "green" investments in the United States. Chavez was the only U.S. Mayor invited to participate in the "Citoyens de la Terre" (Citizens of the Earth) - The Paris Conference for Global Ecological Governance in 2007, hosted by the national government of France.