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Deb Haaland

Profile

From activist and organizer to Native American icon and history-making member of Congress, a nationally recognized trailblazer and outspoken proponent for public lands and addressing climate change. Leader in supporting political and economic justice for underserved and underrepresented communities across the country. Has emerged as a leading voice in addressing the existential threat posed by the climate crisis.

Daughter of Marine and Navy veterans, a single mom and small business owner who overcame financial struggles to earn both university and law school degrees. After over a decade of organizing, served as the Native American Vote Director for the Obama-Biden 2012 reelection campaign. Known for activating voters and activists alike behind causes and campaigns.

In 2014, ran for Lt. Governor of New Mexico while leading one of the state's most successful tribal corporations at the Pueblo of Laguna. The first Native American woman elected as Chair of a state party, applied business acumen and passionate leadership to coalesce the Democratic Party of New Mexico to a sweeping victory in 2016, and built a reputation as a leader that exudes unwavering honesty and ethics.

Launched a grassroots, underdog campaign for Congress in 2017 to emerge victorious in a contentious six-way Democratic primary against better funded opposition. Was elected in a landslide.

Trusted ally and advocate for priorities established by Congressional Democratic leadership and House colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Named by GovTrack as one of the most effective freshmen in the largest Democratic class in over 40 years. Has built a flawless record of creating and retaining staff loyalty.

Reelected to a second term in 2020, by a 16-point margin, she has earned her reputation as one of the country's most recognized, respected and sought after Native American leaders.

EXPERIENCE

U.S. House of Representatives – Congresswoman

January 2019 to present

Leadership Positions

- Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources.
- Chair of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands.
- Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus.
- Vice Chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus.
- Vice Chair of the Equality Caucus.
- Member of the House Armed Services Committee.
- Two-time National Defense Authorization Act Conferee on Natural Resources.

Accomplishments

- Built coalitions to successfully pass legislation designating thousands of acres of public lands in New Mexico in the Public Lands Package.
- Conducted effective oversight of the Trump Administration through role as Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee.

- Successfully fought to secure \$8 billion COVID-19 relief for Tribal governments in both the House and Senate versions of the CARES Act and worked to ensure the Administration administered those funds fairly.
- Moved the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act through committee and managed the floor passage of the bill.
- Successfully sponsored/passed two pieces of legislation to address the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women including the Not Invisible Act, and the Justice for Native Survivor's Act.
- Passed Bipartisan PROGRESS for Indian Tribes Act to amend the Title IV of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) to reinforce the effectiveness of self-governance and self-determination for Tribes, streamline implementation and enhance tribal assumption of some federal responsibilities on certain construction projects.

Democratic Party of New Mexico – Chair

April 2015 – April 2017

- Managed the state-wide organization including 33 county parties, and the effective spending of the NM Democratic State Party's budget.
- Successfully managed and retired seven year party debt.
- Worked to build cohesion and unity during contentious times that led to an overwhelming statewide Democratic victory in 2016.
- Led Democrats to retake control of the State House, won the Secretary of State office, and delivered New Mexico to Hillary Clinton by 8 points.

Laguna Development Corp Board of Directors – Member, Chairwoman (Elected August 2013)

April 2010 – September 2015

- First woman to serve as Chair of LDC Board of Directors, a \$200M+ gaming and hospitality tribal corporation with more than 1,100 employees.
- Provided oversight to a complex, multi-faceted revenue-driven business that operates three casinos, restaurants, convenience stores, travel centers, hotel, RV Park, and grocery store.
- Led primary business entity, deftly navigated the social, cultural and political challenges with tribal government.
- Moved the corporation into environmentally friendly business practices.

San Felipe Pueblo – Tribal Administrator

January 2013 – November 2015

- Directed all departments within the Consolidated Tribal Governmental Programs federal budgeting scheme, including employee issues and procuring additional funding sources.
- Directed and assisted the Administration with federal, state, and tribal political issues.
- Managed work for lobbyists and tribal attorneys.
- Research and policy drafting.

2014 Statewide Campaign – Candidate for NM Lieutenant Governor

December 2013 – November 2014

- Built a broad coalition of voters statewide behind a campaign against a popular GOP Governor.
- Traveled statewide to promote Democratic values and ideals.
- Engaged with business leaders, organizations, advocates, Indian Tribes, and groups about state government issues, platform priorities, and issues.
- Tracked campaign finance reporting, public relations, policy-making, speech writing, public, speaking, and fundraising.

Obama-Biden Reelection Campaign – Regional Field Director, State Native American Vote Director

October 2011 – November 2012

- Managed organizers in 3 counties and subsequently across Indian Country to register voters, activate volunteers and new voters, and get out the vote for President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden.
- Reinvigorated the Native American Democratic Caucus of New Mexico to increase membership and organize GOTV efforts in Indian Country.

Maxcare Inc. – Residential Counselor, Administrative Director

November 2008–January 2009; November 2010–October 2011

- Facilitated care for developmentally disabled adults, including managing staff schedules, home care administration, and state program processes.
- Assisted clients with eligibility requirements to obtain proper levels of Medicare and Social Security Benefits.
- Managed client budgets and personal bank accounts.

Vote New Mexico -Native American Vote Program Manager

August 2010–November 2010

- Managed the Native American Program for the statewide Diane Denish/Brian Colón Gubernatorial Campaign.
- Managed deputy organizers, volunteers, and staff for canvassing and get out the vote activities.
- Planned and carried out rallies and meet and greets; managed political relationships with tribes, and tribal leaders.

J.D. Haaland Construction, Inc. – Administration, Carmel, CA

January 2009–August 2010

- Administered all areas of the business, including entry into Indian housing contracts.

Obama for America, Full-Time Volunteer in Indian Country

July 2008–November 2008

- Engaged in extensive organizing, canvassing, and GOTV activities in Southern New Mexico Pueblos.
- Planned and managed events and volunteers; managed Election Day staging locations.

Stetson Law Offices, P.C., – Associate

August 2006–March 2008

- Covered Civil matters, tribal laws and constitutions, Indian Housing, capital outlay organization and lobbying efforts for clients during NM Legislative session.
- Legal research and writing.

Pueblo Food Specialties – Business Owner

1995–2006

- Acquired start-up capital and business grants to start successful, sole proprietorship.
- Navigated state business and health regulations to ensure safe production and delivery of jarred salsa products.
- Managed production and statewide and national distribution by securing storefront and direct delivery outlets.

EDUCATION

- **University of New Mexico School of Law - J.D. 2006**
 - Mary Beth and W. Richard West, Jr., Award for Excellence in Indian Law 2006
 - Native American Law Student of the Year 2004
 - Summer Internships: Teaching Assistant at Pre-Law Summer Institute, UNMSOL; Nordhaus Law Firm, Albuquerque

- **University of New Mexico - B.A. English 1994**