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Devon Skeelee named State Librarian

SANTA FE — A library and digital media expert with more than three decades of varied experience in such institutions as the Library of Congress, San Juan College and the New Mexico Museum of Art has been named New Mexico State Librarian.

“Devon Skeelee is the consummate library professional,” said Cultural Affairs Department Secretary Veronica Gonzales. “Her broad experience with special needs library services, school and community libraries, and her considerable experience in New Mexico State Government will serve her well as she takes on what is surely one of the most important cultural administrator positions in the our state. ”

Skeelee is currently librarian, archivist and webmaster for the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe, responsibilities that she has held since September 2008. She was previously with the State Library where she was director of the Public Services Bureau in charge of reference, federal and state documents, circulation and the Southwest Room from 2000 to 2002.

“I am very pleased to be coming back to the State Library, which has a unique role in serving both individuals and other libraries in the state,” said Skeelee. “My background in a wide range of library services has helped me to see the real core of what libraries do for individuals and for their communities. With that vision, I look forward to helping libraries in New Mexico continue to grow and develop.”

Skeelee, who holds a Master of Science in Library Science degree from the University of Southern California, worked in the Library of Congress and its National

Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped for more than 15 years. She has also been the manager of a branch public library in Rockville Maryland and a librarian for the California State Braille and Talking Book Library in Sacramento.

In New Mexico, in addition to her positions with the Department of Cultural Affairs, she has been a librarian and teacher at Turquoise Trail Charter Elementary School in Santa Fe and a reference librarian at San Juan College in Farmington.

Skeele, who was recommended to Sec. Gonzales by a search committee made up of representatives from New Mexico libraries, replaces former State Librarian Susan Oberlander who retired in April. Since last spring, the State Library has been led by interim director Ben Wakashige who has been on loan from Central New Mexico Community College where he is Director for Libraries and Educational Resources.

“We have been very fortunate to have the experienced leadership of Ben Wakashige at the State Library during this lengthy, but crucial, search process for a permanent State Librarian,” said Sec. Gonzales. “We are especially indebted to Dr. Katharine Winograd and CNM for their generosity in lending the State Library this most respected library administrator.”

Established in 1929, the State Library has a budget of approximately \$5.7 million with a 53-member staff. The agency provides services that support public and tribal libraries, as well as delivers direct library services to rural populations, state agencies, the visually impaired and physically disabled, and students and citizens conducting research.

The Department of Cultural Affairs includes, in addition to the State Library and New Mexico Museum of Art, the Museum of Natural History & Science, National Hispanic Cultural Center, New Mexico History Museum/Palace of the Governors, Museum of International Folk Art, Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Museum of Space History, New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, State Monuments, Museum Resources Division, the Office of Archaeological Studies, New Mexico Arts and the Historic Preservation Division.