

SILVIA

By Faith Torres

CONTRERAS

HOME WARRANTY
OF AMERICA

sponsor spotlight ◀◀



SILVIA CONTRERAS

is a southwestern woman to the core. She grew up in El Paso, Texas, where she went to high school and college, married her high school sweetheart, and raised her kids. Even after her husband's career in the FBI moved them other places in the United States, Silvia said, "[W]hen we had the opportunity to move back to the Southwest we did...We've had opportunities to live all over the country, but we love the Southwest and this is really home." And she's sure they'll stay, even now that her daughter and son are grown and her nest is empty.



Her love for the region makes Home Warranty of America (HWA) a perfect fit. Silvia, who has been with HWA for seven years, applied for the job when an unexpected opportunity presented itself. "[M]y sister [who's in the industry] encouraged me to apply. Two weeks later, retirement was over, and I started with HWA," she said.

Silvia is an expert at staying chill, both literally and artistically.

HWA has been in business more than 20 years, and their 13-month warranties have no age limitations for the homes or the appliances they cover. "I work with REALTORS®, buyers, and existing homeowners," she said. "When people ask what it covers, I tell them P.E.A.C.H. - Plumbing, electrical, appliances, cooling, and heating."

Silvia spoke cheerfully about her work and takes pride in being local. "I love the people and the mountains," she said of Albuquerque. "It's a great place to raise a family." Her local knowledge and proximity make her unique to other nationally based warranty companies. "I live in the Southwest; I serve New Mexico and El Paso...I'm actually local...I'm here [in the Albuquerque area] and a member of the Greater Albuquerque Association of REALTORS®."

Silvia understands the challenges of living in the desert both personally and professionally. When asked what her main call is about, she laughed, "Air conditioning! AC is our main claim. We'll go out and diagnose and replace with new parts or a new unit." For winter, she explained it's the opposite. "Heating units," she said. "Not only the furnace but also the water heaters. In the winter you don't want to take a cold bath."

Silvia is an expert at staying chill, both literally and artistically. A dedicated ceramic artist who spends time at the wheel, wrist-deep in cool clay, she loves participating in an art form that's an iconic part of Southwestern culture. Her art life is both personal and social,



attending breakfast club and classes with her fellow artists and working in her home studio. Her children tell Silvia how proud they are of her art; how impressed to see her pursuing a new passion. "[W]hen they were at home my focus was the kids...but now...I have...grown into this artist."

Ceramics, like HWA, happened by accident. She was signed up for a painting class at the art museum and ended up switching to ceramics. She's always had a creative streak, she explained, "I knew I was an artist and my dad enrolled me in classes [as a kid], but I can't believe how it's blossomed."

Her favorite things to craft are bowls on the pottery wheel. "I gravitate to terracotta and southwest turquoise," she said, telling me how she likes to bring homemade salsa to parties, giving the host the bowl as a gift. "I

haven't sold many pieces, but I love sharing what I create." Now that she's an empty-nester, Silvia has the opportunity to do everything she loves from home, including work. She enjoys her second career and sharing her experience with people. "I'm able to work from home but still give it 100% with HWA. If I need to work weekends, I have my desk here and my office here," she said, making me wonder how empty her nest actually is.

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