



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

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Gov. Lujan Grisham announces \$150k LEDA investment with innovative Santa Fe company

Funding allows homegrown New Mexico company to grow workforce more than five times over

SANTA FE, N.M. – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced on Wednesday that the State of New Mexico is providing LEDA economic assistance to an innovative Santa Fe company that has developed a one-of-a-kind technology to process cremated remains into smooth stones.

Parting Stone has seen rapid growth with the increase in cremation rates as the business has nurtured relationships with some 600 funeral homes across the United States and Canada. As families are more dispersed and burial costs are on the rise, more people are choosing cremation for their departed loved ones. Parting Stone is also able to process the remains of deceased pets.

“The vision for Parting Stone and the technology that is driving this company are home-grown, developed with New Mexico resources and talent,” **Gov. Lujan Grisham** said. “This investment will boost Parting Stone to a new level so it can offer this comforting service to more families across the country and bring opportunity and jobs to New Mexico.”

The State of New Mexico is pledging \$150,000 from the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) so Parting Stone can grow from 20 to 109 employees with an average salary of \$48,000 at its Santa Fe facility. The City of Santa Fe is serving as the fiscal agent for the grant and pledging an additional \$25,000 of local LEDA economic assistance, pending review and approval by the Santa Fe City Council.

Parting Stone founder Justin Crowe tapped into many of the startup and innovation initiatives offered by both the State of New Mexico and the City of Santa Fe. In April 2022, the state awarded Parting Stone \$134,000 in Job Incentive Training Program funding for 15 trainees. Crowe was a winner of both the Biz Mix accelerator and the Balloon Pitch and Ski Lift Pitch competitions. He also participated in TechSprint, an accelerator for startups at NMSU’s Arrowhead Center. Crowe developed the Parting Stone material technology with help from Los Alamos National Laboratory and the New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program, which matches scientists at the state’s national labs with small businesses needing technical expertise to commercialize a product.

“This is an innovative company that has invented a service that is transforming the death-care industry,” Economic Development Department **Secretary Alicia J. Keyes** said. “The new jobs and continued growth of Parting Stone is good news for family members who lost a loved one or a pet and want to continue to hold them close.”

“Parting Stone has done a brilliant job of recognizing a deep human need and developing an important business to meet that need, sensitively and artfully,” said Santa Fe **Mayor Alan Webber**. “This business is a Santa Fe success story and a testimony to the

entrepreneurial talent in our community. We're eager to continue celebrating their success and working alongside them to support their continued growth."

Crowe said he started thinking about the cremation process with the loss of his own grandfather in 2014, realizing he and many family members craved a more permanent lasting connection.

"It is a profound opportunity to live with the remains of our loved ones, but the look and feel of conventional cremated remains make that experience uncomfortable," says **Crowe**. "We developed a new form of remains to help families feel a connection with their departed. When you choose cremation, you no longer have to take home ashes."

Tom Antram of the Albuquerque-based French Funerals said, "Our team at French has seen the impact that Parting Stone is having with New Mexico families. Their alternative to cremated remains has given the families we serve a way to memorialize their loved ones. Solidified remains by Parting Stone is one of the most promising new options emerging in our profession of death care for both humans and pets"

"Our team at Berardinelli Family Funeral Services has always strived to find local alternatives and suppliers," added Andrew Rawls, managing partner of Berardinelli Funeral in Santa Fe. "With continued growth in the area of cremation, we were excited to partner with Parting Stone to offer more options for those families choosing cremation. Their solidified remains option has provided a uniquely creative alternative for many of our families."

Santa Fe Community, and Economic Development Director Rich Brown said Santa Fe's creative entrepreneurial ecosystem is the perfect location for Parting Stone to grow its business. "Justin Crowe demonstrates that Santa Fe's creative sector knows no bounds. He took his training as a potter and leveraged the entrepreneurial ecosystem to revolutionize an industry while reimagining how we care for our loved ones' remains.

Since Gov. Lujan Grisham took office, EDD has supported more than 14,000 new jobs and trained 7,085 New Mexicans for better pay. EDD has utilized LEDA to make investments in 56 businesses, supporting more than 8,600 new jobs at an average wage of \$65,748 and \$7.2 billion in new capital investment across the state.

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