

Arizona Health-e Connection

SUMMIT SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



The Honorable Janet Napolitano (video address) Governor of Arizona

As Arizona's 21st governor, Governor Janet Napolitano fights for quality schools, forward-thinking economic development, a safe homeland, affordable health care, and a government that is run efficiently and responsibly.

Napolitano was first elected governor of Arizona in 2002, and was re-elected in 2006.

Chosen by Time magazine as one of America's Top Five Governors, Governor Napolitano's hallmark is common sense – she does what makes sense and what works. Newsweek has commended her “pragmatic, post-partisan approach to solving state problems.”

Governor Napolitano has made education a driving force of her administration. She created a new school grade level by offering state-funded voluntary full day kindergarten to every Arizona family and secured a historic teacher salary package to keep Arizona's best teachers in the classroom. Her commitment to education has led to historic investments in early childhood education. By raising the graduation standards for Arizona's high school students she is working to ensure graduates have the science and math skills they need in today's knowledge-based, global economy. To increase the number of students who earn bachelor's degrees, Governor Napolitano is working with state universities to retain more students, create more options for students in rural areas, enroll more first-generation students, and boost the number of students coming from community colleges.

Napolitano believes that good jobs are essential to growing and maintaining a strong economy. To ensure a continued strong job market in Arizona, she is leading partnerships with businesses to expand the state's bioscience and high-tech industries, and offering investment and tax incentives for those who create jobs in the state. Since 2002, Arizona has created more than half a million new jobs. Governor Napolitano has also eased the tax burden on Arizona families through a \$370 million income and property tax relief package.

A longtime national leader in addressing illegal immigration, Napolitano was the first governor to push for the federal government to accept their constitutional responsibility for securing our nation's borders. She successfully called for the National Guard at the border at federal expense to provide critical support to the Border Patrol. In 2004, she opened the nation's first state counter-terrorism center to help keep our borders safe, and has deployed new technology to interdict stolen vehicles that transport illegal immigrants and drugs on Arizona's highways. Arizona has become the leading state in the nation in confronting America's broken borders head-on.

Napolitano believes that health care should be affordable and available to all Arizonans. In working to expand health care access, she addressed the critical shortage of doctors in Arizona by partnering with the state universities to break ground on Phoenix's first medical school. She has worked with Arizona's business community to offer affordable health insurance to thousands of small business owners and employees. And, by

creating one of the nation's first free prescription drug discount cards, Governor Napolitano has helped Arizona seniors save more than \$17 million.

Governor Napolitano's leadership extends beyond our state's boundaries. In 2006, she was the first woman and first Arizonan chosen to chair the National Governors Association where her groundbreaking *Innovation America* platform will continue to move forward to enhance our nation's capacity to innovate and lead industries of the future.

Prior to her election as Governor of Arizona, Napolitano served as US Attorney for the District of Arizona, where she supervised the prosecution of more than 6,000 illegal immigration cases. She also served as Arizona's first female Attorney General, where she helped write the law to break up human smuggling rings.