



STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY 2024

EACH OF US DEFINES ALL OF US AN INSPIRED IDENTITY

President Garnett S. Stokes | March 4, 2024

Good morning, Lobos, and welcome! Thank you all for coming to the 2024 State of the University address. Every year around this time, I traditionally take the opportunity to talk with the University community about the prior year, as well as to lay out some goals and aspirations for the future.

As always, before we talk about the future, it is our responsibility to honor our past.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' LAND & TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Founded in 1889, The University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico—Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache—since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

INTRODUCTION

I'm going into my seventh year at UNM, and over that time we have witnessed sea changes in the ways we learn and work—from remote academic and business operations to navigating the power of Artificial Intelligence, or AI. All in a climate that sometimes seems to challenge our very humanity. What I do know is that we are always stronger together, even if we don't always see eye to eye. So, as I look both forward and back, I do so through the lens of our inspired identity.

AN INSPIRED IDENTITY

To understand our place in the world and cultivate a strong community, it is essential for us to reflect on the significance of our identity, both internally and externally. Our identity is not merely a label or a logo; it is the embodiment of our values, aspirations, and collective mission.

Internally, our identity serves as a unifying force that brings us together under a common purpose. It shapes the culture of our institution, guiding our interactions, decisions, and priorities. Our identity fosters a sense of belonging and pride among each of us—and all of us—inspiring us to strive for excellence in everything we do.

Externally, our identity serves as the beacon that illuminates our commitment to excellence, innovation, and service. It distinguishes us from other institutions and communicates our unique contributions to society. How we are perceived by the broader community influences their decisions to engage with and support UNM—just look at the pride and engagement we saw when we launched our UNM Cherry on Top hot air balloon at last year’s International Balloon Fiesta.

As stewards of our identity, each of us plays a crucial role in upholding and advancing our shared values and mission. By manifesting the spirit of our institution in our words and actions, we strengthen our collective identity and elevate the reputation of The University **for** New Mexico.

When I first came to interview at UNM in 2017, I was truly enthused by the phrase “Each of Us Defines All of Us.” I thought, ‘what a great tagline’. What I quickly learned, though, is that it’s not really a tagline, but a calling for Lobos. It embodies who we are, what we do and why it matters.

Our actions as individuals reflect on us as a pack, and what we do as a pack affects us as individuals. The beauty of this is that it allows each of us to express ourselves as remarkable, curious and diverse individuals who also belong to a strong community of scholars, creators, thinkers and competitors. It is a simple, consistent and authentic way of stating that UNM is the sum of its people and its parts. Everyone who loves this place—and anyone who calls themselves a Lobo—contributes to the UNM story.

Taking the Lead . . . and Making a Future for New Mexico

As New Mexico’s flagship university and Carnegie Research 1 institution, we’re used to being held to high standards and meeting major expectations. Every day, we recognize and respond to the needs and dreams of our citizens. And those dreams continue to evolve quickly and, often, urgently. Fortunately, our Lobo community constantly rises to meet these challenges, whether in the classroom, the emergency room, or the laboratory.

I touched briefly on the power of AI—and there is perhaps no field growing faster, more furiously, and more alarmingly. At UNM, we know the best way to approach the unknown is through *understanding*. We’re leading the way by studying AI and its implications on teaching and learning across disciplines. Led by Dean Leo Lo of our College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences, we’re one of only 18 institutions taking part in a two-year study to unlock the potential of AI to advance higher education. Dean Lo has proven to be one of those fearless early adapters, jumping headfirst into AI to become one of the nation’s leading experts on the use of AI in higher education. Our office of research has also launched an initiative to explore how AI can contribute to our broad mission of discovery, and some of our schools and colleges, such as the School of Medicine, are exploring how AI will change the work within their professions. And as a university, we’re making what we find out available to anyone, with our UNM AI Resources website. And by the way, ChatGPT did not write these remarks for me!

As researchers, we also play a vital role in preparing the next generation of innovators, who stretch their imaginations to inspiring new levels. Whether our eyes are on the stars or seeking answers at the microscopic level, we are truly changing the way we look at the world around us and within us.

We’re doing pioneering work, for example, in the development of Quantum Information Science and Engineering, partnering with Sandia National Laboratories to launch UNM’s 11th research center, the Quantum New Mexico Institute. UNM is also working hand-in-hand with the national laboratories to develop next-generation nuclear micro-reactors, thanks to two grants from the U.S. Department of Energy. Together, we’re making New Mexico a destination for quantum companies, nuclear technologies, and scientists around the world. And at our new ARID Institute—Accelerating Resilience Innovations in Drylands—which we launched under the auspices of our Grand Challenges, we’re working to ensure that human societies can sustainably thrive and grow in arid places—work that will ultimately protect our entire ecosystem. Each of these initiatives is a vital part of our UNM 2040 goal to Advance New Mexico.

Our research is also incredibly versatile—we’re making strides in every corner, in every discipline and in countless fields of study.

We’re in Iceland, examining the way magma moves in live volcanoes. We’re scanning the edges of the galaxy for exoplanets—and using that knowledge to learn more about life on Earth. We’ve got our students working in our COSMIAC center to develop nanosatellites for space travel, creating a new and diverse generation of space researchers.

We’re looking deeper into the concept of intersectionality to encourage a greater diversity in STEM fields. We’re helping bring water to underserved communities who need it. We’re deciphering rare languages and writing their dictionaries. And we’re working to preserve and celebrate Native languages and local dialects that make our state sound like nowhere else.

At UNM's Health Sciences Center, we're making strides that will prolong lives and improve the standard of living not just for every New Mexican, but every human being. We're exploring contaminated water and its impact on vulnerable communities and the impact of wildfire smoke on the human brain. We've discovered that the massive presence of plastics in our environment has led to microplastics found in *every* human placenta examined in our study. We're finding new ways to treat knee arthritis—using one's own body's natural defenses—and, in a major finding, discovering vaccines that will lower cholesterol.

Truly life-changing, groundbreaking research—all in service to the public good.

Grand Challenges, Grand Ambitions

We are very excited about the progress we've made on our Grand Challenges, which we launched in 2018 to take on some of New Mexico's most complex issues. New Mexicans not only expect UNM to respond to the needs of our communities, but also to build on the University's strengths to serve and support all New Mexicans.

But don't take my word for it; just look at our results.

Our first Grand Challenges focused on three big issues: Sustainable Water Resources, Substance Use Disorders, and Successful Aging. Six years on, we've turned our initial investment of \$2.1 million into more than \$50 million in grants and awards. With our success to encourage and guide us, we've recently expanded our Grand Challenges to include three exciting new Level 2 teams:

- Sustainable Space Research
- Child Health
- Just Transition to Green Energy

While announced only last September, our Lobo researchers are already making gains, and making headlines. Most recently, our Sustainable Space Research Team sent tomatoes into space—yes, you heard that right—to learn more about growing food in zero gravity and what that means for other crops here on the ground. It's all part of an experiment known as Project TASTIE. Because of course it is.

And with the recent announcement by NASA that it intends to send astronauts to the Moon for the first time in more than 50 years, an interdisciplinary team of Lobo researchers from our Sustainable Space Research Team will help NASA analyze the lunar crust—one of only five teams in the nation helping to return us to the Moon and make history.

There's so much interesting research going on at The University of New Mexico that it's sometimes hard to keep track of it all. Fortunately, University Communication and Marketing is here to help. This past year, UCAM successfully launched a weekly podcast to spotlight our research and other academic ventures around our campuses. Called "It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science," it has featured Lobo researchers and faculty discussing everything from tackling substance use disorders to the psychology of New Mexico's folklore. Our most recent episode is a video conversation with a Nobel laureate about the Webb Space Telescope. It's really worth your time, and it's available wherever you find your podcasts.

Trailblazers

What is it that keeps us on the cutting edge of all this research? It's more like *who*. Our Lobo faculty make The University of New Mexico accessible and successful for each of us, and for *all* of us. Lobo faculty are the foundation upon which our success as an institution is built.

Here are just a few of the amazing accomplishments of our remarkable faculty over the past twelve months.

- There were nine winners of our Women in STEM Award.
- We elevated six faculty to the elite ranks of UNM's Distinguished Professors.
- We were privileged to hear lectures from the recipients of two of the highest honors faculty can receive, the Annual Research Lecture and the Community Engaged Research Lecture Awards.
- Two of our architecture professors received prestigious fellowships from the American Academy in Rome.
- We had one professor receive not just one, but two distinguished research awards, totaling over \$1 million, for research in microsystem energy harvesting and sensors.
- For the first time, the State of New Mexico is represented on the national nursing council that provides guidance on health-related policy.
- We have a winner of a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- We were thrilled to have a 2023 Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors.
- And we had a Professor of Medicine testify before the U.S. Congress on the physical and mental aspects of Long COVID.

Inspired Leadership

In addition to our incredible faculty, The University of New Mexico is also very fortunate to have outstanding leaders and staff who have the energy and expertise to ensure that UNM remains a

great place to work and continues to provide our students, our patients, and each other with the support needed to succeed.

Over the last twelve months, we've welcomed three new regents, including our new student regent who was confirmed just three weeks ago. We have also filled several key VP positions from across our campuses with new Lobo leaders and appointed some remarkable new deans.

I am grateful, as always, to our faculty, staff, and leadership team, who make The University of New Mexico a successful and supportive place to work, learn, and live. Our Human Resources Department has just issued its second Employee Engagement Survey to get a better feel for your workplace experiences, consistent with our UNM 2040 Sustainability Goals. Based on the 2023 survey, we're already revamping training and support resources for supervisors and expanded Career Ladder opportunities to facilitate career progression and improve succession planning for our employees. We'll continue to use our survey results to look for new ways to make sure we meet your needs and expectations. Thank you all for your care and commitment; it is a privilege to work with you.

CELEBRATING ALL CURIOUS MINDS

What Makes Us Different Makes Us Strong

As I said earlier, "Each of us defines all of us" is more than just a motto; it's a reflection of our *identity*. By our very nature as a public institution, we are many things to many people—and we must be those many things *all at once*. Educated, active, and successful citizens are about more than just the coursework they take and the degrees they earn.

Our support for our students takes on many shapes and sizes, from providing students with access to support services to making our campuses safer and more welcoming. It means engaging with the public, and with each other, to learn what our communities need and what our businesses want to ensure a thriving economy. It means leaning into our role as the state's only academic health center to provide the best health care anywhere. And it means responding compassionately and thoughtfully in times of strife and uncertainty.

Reaffirming Our Sense of Community

As the University *for* New Mexico, we fully and openly embrace the cultural diversity that has made UNM, and our state, such a unique place to live and learn and grow for generations. We strive to give our students the vital sense of belonging to the Lobo community, which understands, values, and respects them.

Last June, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision in the *Students for Fair Admission* cases, invalidating admissions programs in relation to how they consider race, and severely restricting the consideration of race in admissions. While we remain concerned that the decision restricts access to education for many students, we used this as an opportunity to reflect on the role of education in our communities and the strength we find in our differences.

American higher education cannot afford to restrict access, or to be perceived as a place where certain people can't or don't belong. Here at UNM we will continually strive to do and be better for our students, for their sake and for the sake of the nation. A court ruling may change the tools available to us, but it does not change our values.

A Culture of Inclusiveness and Engagement

For this reason, we are continually working to diversify our faculty, students, and staff and to educate our community to be better peers, mentors and supervisors. As articulated in our UNM 2040 Inclusive Excellence goal, we believe equity and inclusion make for a healthier, happier, and more successful campus climate. Our Division of Equity and Inclusion, supported by our cross-campus Diversity Counsel, has made great strides over the past year.

Our equity and inclusion initiatives include a series of UNM Campus Climate Surveys, which aim to enhance our insight into the experiences of faculty, staff, and students throughout our campuses. As a result, we have been pleased to support new initiatives for greater diversity in postdoc and faculty hiring, and in mentoring for students.

We've also taken seriously the comments we've heard from students about not feeling safe in online events. Our DEI Office is working with UNM-IT on resources to prevent and address online threats. And sometimes even little things in our campus environment can make a big difference, like the unveiling of the new mural of our Land Acknowledgement in the Student Union Building, a constant reminder of our history and legacy . . . and our responsibilities.

Community engagement is vital in higher education—it allows students, faculty, and staff to apply their expertise to real-world issues, gain valuable experience, and develop the skills to become responsible citizens. This involvement includes service learning, community-based research, and volunteerism.

UNM was classified as a Carnegie Community Engagement institution in 2020, highlighting our exceptional commitment to transform knowledge into meaningful action. Our efforts to maintain this critical designation include our upcoming community engagement week in April celebrating collaboration, service, and the power of community.

Lobos by the Numbers

Of course, we know that if there's any part of the Lobo community that truly embodies the idea that each of us defines all of us, it's our students—one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation. As a minority-majority student body, our Lobos *look* like New Mexico—which isn't surprising, as more than 80 percent of our students hail from The Land of Enchantment. And we are so proud to be *y our* University.

We also know how fortunate we are that our enrollment continues to grow, with increases across every class level and at nearly every one of our campuses. Fall 2023 is the second consecutive year we have seen an overall marked increase.

In fact, our Fall 2023 first-year class was the largest in school history. That class is also one of the most diverse we've ever had, with more than 70 percent of our new students coming from under-represented populations. We're also seeing increases in the number of returning students and international students.

We know our students and their families have many choices just within New Mexico as to where they can attain a college degree. With the support provided by Lottery and Opportunity Scholarships, more students than ever are now finding a college education within reach. We appreciate you choosing to pursue that education here at The University of New Mexico.

Lobos Leading the Way

And what a year our Lobo students have had! Among their notable accomplishments:

- We have two Goldwater Scholars, and three Fulbright Scholars.
- We have a Truman Scholar and a Udall Scholar.
- A group of Physics & Astronomy students constructed antennas at the third Long Wavelength Array, just north of the Very Large Array.
- A team of UNM Anderson undergraduate students took first place, and a \$5,000 cash prize, in the national collegiate marketing competition, in which they researched and developed a multi-platform campaign.
- A doctoral student in the Department of Physics & Astronomy has been awarded a student exchange scholarship through the U.S. Department of Energy and Italy's National Institute of Nuclear Physics, one of only 11 recipients nationally in 2023.
- We were thrilled to have Lobo runner Amelia Mazza-Downie selected as the Mountain West's Female Athlete of the Year. She also earned First Team All-America Honors in Track & Field,

along with teammate Elise Thorner. All total, our Track & Field team received 15 All American Honors.

- The Mountain West Men’s and Women’s Athletes of the Year for Track & Field were both Lobos—the first time in history that both winners have come from a single school.
- We also had conference men’s tennis player of the year, the cross-country freshman of the year, and, in basketball, the media newcomer of the year.

All in all, it was a good year to be a Lobo.

The Power to Empower

When we say “each of us defines all of us,” we’re also referring to our ability to come together as a university community to support the unique needs of each individual Lobo. We are fortunate at UNM to have great academic programs and a range of opportunities for students. We also have a wide variety of support resources, whether it’s programs on wellness and time management, or financial capability workshops and academic advisement.

Better Living Through CHILE

We know that our students often have trouble finding the opportunities and resources that they need when they need them the most. That’s why we just launched development of a dynamic multi-year project that I’m really excited about, called CHILE—or Coordinated Help in Lobo Experience.

CHILE will be a portal that provides students with a guided and interactive pathway through UNM, with quick access to all sorts of help. It provides a dashboard customized for students based on their interests, preferences and needs, that puts them in touch with the appropriate staff and faculty who can guide them toward their degrees and provide them with regular just-in-time information.

This UNM 2040 One University and UNM 2040 Student Success initiative is just one of the projects to strengthen our student success infrastructure that we have invested in to help all UNM units in their effort to help, retain, and graduate students.

Looking Out for Basic Needs

We know that food and shelter are *a/so* basic educational needs; when our students are food or housing insecure, it can lead to lower grades and less engagement with campus life. We wanted

to know more about how food and housing insecurity was affecting our students, so we did what we're really good at: we did some research.

Last May, our Basic Needs Project research team, which had surveyed 27 colleges and universities in New Mexico, presented its findings, with the results reflecting that 67% of the individuals who completed the survey—which included not just students, but also faculty and staff—experienced some form of basic needs insecurity.

Since issuing the report, we've hosted a roundtable discussion with U.S. Representative Gabe Vasquez to discuss student eligibility for critical federally-funded food programs. Building upon the success of the Lobo Food Pantry, we have also recently launched our LoboEats App, which lets users know when there is leftover food from any UNM-catered event.

I hope that leaders and decision-makers will continue to use the data from this report to devise evidence-based approaches for meeting the food and housing needs of those at colleges and universities across the state.

An Eye on Mental Health

Student success also hinges on mental health. Various stressors—academic, social, and societal—can negatively impact our students' well-being. In response, we are doing our part to look out for the mental health needs of Lobo students. We have invested significant resources in Student Health and Counseling, and greatly improved access to mental health services there.

Apart from the wide variety of support and wellness services we offer—from Student Health and Counseling to the various resource centers—this past year saw us add another comprehensive program to provide our students with free and equitable access to mental health support, medical care and basic needs assistance, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Through the TimelyCare app, Lobo students can access a wide range of health-related services from licensed physicians and counselors at no cost, and with no health insurance required. At the same time, faculty and staff can use the app to help guide students to resources that will help them achieve a sense of well-being, live healthier lifestyles and improve their mental health.

Our partnership with TimelyCare will allow UNM to ensure support is available to students around the clock, with little wait time, and from providers as diverse as our own student body.

On a related note, I hope you'll take a moment to read the social media post from Lobo basketball player Braden Appelhans, who openly and courageously shared the challenges of dealing with his

depression and how he got the help he needed. “Everyone needs help at some point,” he wrote, and it’s clear his story is relatable to so many—it has been viewed more than five million times and has been shared by thousands. Thank you, Braden, for sharing your story.

Steeped in Local Traditions and Local Communities

When we say, “all of us,” we mean it. The State of New Mexico *is* the Lobo community, and we are proud to have a formal presence in so many parts of our beautiful state. Our branch campuses remain an attractive option to many of our students, not only because of their value and the strength of their programs, but because they’re rooted in the diverse regions and communities many of our students call home. These campuses not only enrich us with their history and vibrancy, but they embody our commitment to educational excellence and a more prosperous state. For example:

- Our conservation-minded UNM-Taos campus has been officially designated as a “Bee Campus USA” for its work on education and conservation of bees and pollinator habitats.
- And while we’re talking about Taos, I also want to give a quick shout out to our Harwood Museum of Art, which just finished celebrating its centennial with a series of major exhibits, publications, and events. Congratulations on 100 amazing years, Harwood!
- Leaders at UNM-Gallup hosted the New Mexico Legislature’s interim Indian Affairs Committee for two days of conversations about serving the needs of our Native American student population.
- Over at UNM-Valencia, they recently received a four-year, \$2.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to establish an ENROLL program, offering vital services supporting underserved students in postsecondary education.
- And at UNM-Los Alamos, they continue to inform and explore local and regional workforce issues with the New Mexico Small Business Development Center through their ongoing Business Scholar Luncheon Series.

An Evolving Institution

We love being part of such a diverse and expansive community. As a state, our opportunities and challenges are constantly changing—and as a university, we do our best to change with them, updating and upgrading our programs to meet the needs of our students, the regional economies of our state, and expectations of our stakeholders.

Here are just a few of the new programs we’ve added over the last twelve months to meet the growing needs of our state and communities:

- As part of our ongoing efforts to address New Mexico’s teacher shortage, UNM’s College of Education & Human Sciences has established a new and quicker route to the classroom for aspiring teachers who already have a degree in another field. They were also awarded \$3 million to expand their successful District Partner Teacher Residency Program, which prepares teachers to work in high-need schools across our state.
- In response to an ever-increasing environmental awareness, and to further our own long-term sustainability goals under UNM 2040, we created a new Sustainability Department within our Institutional Support Services, to focus on UNM’s environmental impact. And I am pleased to note that we officially welcomed Anne Jakle as our new director of Sustainability on March 1.
- In recognition of our leadership in the field of open education—promoting the use of resources that are free of legal barriers for use in the digital classroom—we received major funding from the U.S. Department of Education to create the New Mexico Open Resources Consortium.
- And in our Department of Music, we created our first scholarship specific to jazz, with the establishment of the Richard Karmel Endowed Scholarship in Jazz Studies.

Through it all, as we continue to grow and evolve as an institution, UNM 2040 Opportunity Defined continues to guide our priorities and initiatives. We look forward to sharing our progress through a public-facing dashboard in the coming months.

A Changing Campus

Of course, our physical campus is always evolving as well. I am encouraged by the thoughtful approach we have taken to evolving our campus footprint and community skyline. Over the last few years, we’ve seen major improvements to our campus through the addition of some remarkable state-of-the-art facilities, designed with accessibility in mind, and complementing our campus environment and architecture. This is consistent with the goals we’re articulating in our Integrated Campus Plan, which is presently nearing its final stage.

Here are just a few of the most recent exciting additions:

- I had the pleasure of cutting the ribbon for the newest facility for Lobo Athletics, the New Mexico Champions Training Center.
- We also officially opened the doors of our nearly 16,000-square-foot Interdisciplinary Substance Use and Brain Injury Building, giving Lobo health care providers and researchers the space and resources they need to monitor, stimulate, and simulate brain activity.
- The College of Nursing and Public Health Excellence Building is getting closer to reality, with approximately 90% of the building completed. We’re on track to be finished by this summer.
- Work continues on the Critical Care Tower, as the final touches on the new adult emergency

department bring us one more step toward completion. We're still on target to finish the Tower by next Spring.

- We dedicated a new facility to house all our ROTC programs under one roof, in a fully renovated and refurbished building that once housed the Alpha Chi Omega sorority. We are grateful to New Mexico's voters, who approved the bonding for this improvement in 2018.
- In partnership with Bernalillo County, we're just a few months away from opening a Crisis Triage Center that will provide immediate behavioral health help that is so desperately needed right now in our community.
- This year, we will also open the doors on a new Welcome Center at the heart of our campus—and this Fall, New Mexico voters will have an opportunity to vote for General Obligation Bonds that will support capital projects across our state, including projects at our College of Pharmacy and at all of our branch campuses, a new humanities and social sciences facility, and bonds supporting all of our libraries.

A Culture of Safety

We know that creating a supportive learning environment is about more than just ensuring we have a beautiful campus, state-of-the-art facilities, and first-rate academic programs. It's also about investing in a safe campus environment—which, in an open, urban campus like ours, requires constant vigilance and attention.

- We continue to invest in improvements to our campus environment, such as the installation of safety cameras, enhanced lighting, and emergency blue phones. We are also working on implementing key card access for all of our major buildings.
- We've engaged with our community and with Albuquerque Police to support APD's new University Area Command Substation, to ensure more dedicated coverage of the UNM campus community by the 40 full-time officers working from this facility.
- UNM was selected as a new center for pedestrian and bicyclist safety, funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation at \$2 million annually for five years, to determine ways to make our campus—and other campuses in the nation—safer and more accommodating to bike traffic and pedestrians, especially those who have limited transportation options.
- We continue to assess our campus work safety culture. The results of our Safety Culture Audit, conducted by our Environmental Health & Safety Department, will be publicly available shortly.

We also understand that there's a big difference between *being* safe and *feeling* safe. While we do our best to make sure you are safe, we know we can do a better job of communicating with you about the improvements happening in our community. For example, while Lobo Alerts are required by law to keep you advised of incidents on or near campus, we know a lot of them lack context—and often closure—that can result in a sense of unease. We're looking at ways of making sure that not only *are*

you safe, but that you feel that way, too. We want you to know we've got your back—and that each of us relies on all of us.

UNMatched Success

Of course, one of the places where we most closely identify with “each of us defines all of us” is in athletics, where each of our Lobo athletes represents all of us every time they take to the field or the court or the pool. We take athletics personally and passionately, and we're proud to have our student-athletes—and their amazing crew of coaches and support staff—representing us in our conference, and in our community.

Here are just a few from a nearly endless list of amazing accomplishments we've celebrated over the last twelve months.

- First, let's welcome our newest member of Lobo Nation, our new Lobo football head coach, Bronco Mendenhall. 247 sports recently graded all 30 FBS head coaches hired for the upcoming season, and only one—ours!—received an A+. We're pretty excited about having you here, too, Bronco.
- I'm also excited for Women's Golf Coach Jill Trujillo, who was honored as the Mountain West Women's Golf Coach of the Year, and Track and Field Coach/Cross Country coach Darren Gauson who, in his first season as our head coach, led our Lobo men's team to a Mountain West Championship and was named the Mountain West Men's Coach of the Year.
- We were proud to take home several conference titles last year and make several post-season appearances. Our Women's Golf team finished the year tied for ninth nationally, while our men's cross-country was ranked 18th.
- I've already shared with you the accomplishments of some of our individual student-athletes—but as a whole, they are succeeding spectacularly in the classroom as well, with our athletes posting an overall GPA of 3.41. That's now 30 straight semesters of averaging a 3.0 or better—and we continue to lead our conference in Academic All-Mountain West selections.
- Our Vice President and Director of Athletics was given the honor—and responsibility—of being named Chair of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Oversight Committee. We're honored to have him representing UNM and the Mountain West Conference.
- And finally—and this is a big one—last fall, Lobo Athletics launched its new strategic plan, *UNMatched Excellence: The Lobo Standard*, to anticipate and support the needs of The University of New Mexico, the Lobo nation and, most importantly, our Lobo student-athletes.

A Healthy New Mexico

At The University of New Mexico, we take pride in the responsibilities that go with being the state's only academic health center. We know that a healthy New Mexico is a safer and more successful

New Mexico, and we are constantly striving to ensure our health professionals have the resources they need to meet the health care needs of *all* New Mexicans. A few highlights from the past year include:

- Our NM-INSPIRES Center, which supports environmental health issues, received \$5.1 million from the National Institutes of Health, for increased research capacity.
- We secured federal funding for our FOCUS program to increase services and access for families with children with developmental delays. It is our privilege to serve this vulnerable population.
- We welcomed several new associate and assistant deans at the College of Population Health, as it continues to expand on its way to becoming the state's only accredited School of Public Health.
- We've expanded our support for transgender patients, working under new protections enacted by New Mexico state law to bring much-needed services to remote, rural, and underserved areas.
- Our College of Nursing was awarded \$4 million in federal funding to expand its numbers and increase diversity in the training of midwives. We also received \$200,000 from the Kellogg Foundation to bridge the gap between nurse midwives and more traditional birthworkers who are influenced by cultural practices.
- From an institutional standpoint, we've completed the integration of the UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center into UNM Hospital, providing for a more seamless patient experience.
- And we've rolled out a strategic plan to map the future of UNM's Health Sciences Center and transform health, health science education, and research for the benefit of New Mexico—and beyond.
- In 2023, UNM Hospital and Bernalillo County partnered for a community health listening tour to hear directly from residents about their health needs, in anticipation of extending the mill levy on their property taxes when they go to the ballot box in 2024. The mill levy, which was last approved by voters in 2016, allows UNMH to provide innovative, accessible care to all those who need it.

A Foundation Upon Which to Grow

A key part of the Lobo community is our UNM Foundation, which is one of the cornerstones on which our institution continues to grow and thrive. Tapping into the generosity of our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends from around the world who believe in us and our mission, the Foundation and UNM work together as one to advance philanthropic and other forms of private support for the University.

- UNM and the UNM Foundation concluded 2023 with another remarkable year of fundraising, surpassing our fundraising goals with an impressive total exceeding \$101 million in gifts and pledges, the 2nd consecutive year the Foundation has exceeded \$100 million.
- This year's recently completed UNM Big Give brought in donations from more than 2,500

people around the world, setting a new record for the highest number of donations in a single fundraising effort in UNM history. And with our collaboration with UNM Athletics and its annual Lobos Give Day, we raised more than \$1 million for Lobo academics, health care, sports, culture, and wellness.

And what a year it was for some remarkable private gifts to our University. We are so grateful for the generosity of our donors and appreciate their support for, and pride in, The University of New Mexico. In the past year alone—

- We received \$5 million to establish an endowed scholarship fund for full-time juniors and seniors with financial need and a GPA of at least 3.0.
- The UNM College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences and the Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections received \$2.5 million to serve as stewards for the artistic legacy of renowned painter Wilson Hurley.
- The UNM School of Law received a donation of \$2 million to establish two endowed scholarship funds, benefiting future legal scholars.
- The Harwood Museum of Art in Taos achieved a \$2 million estate commitment towards its endowment campaign.
- Our School of Engineering received \$2 million to establish an endowed fund for the hiring of a distinguished computer science faculty member.
- An exceptional gift of \$2 million is helping to establish an endowed chair to advance research and education in behavioral finance at the Anderson School of Management.

Again, thank you for your support of The University of New Mexico. We are grateful for—and honored by—your generosity.

Once a Lobo, Always a Lobo

Our global community of Lobo alumni—our ambassadors to the world at large—inspire us every day and we are honored by their loyalty and support for our University. Wherever in the world our alumni may be living, they bring our unique Lobo culture and traditions with them. With over 215,000 living alumni in our ranks, our Alumni Association truly continues to celebrate what it means to be a Lobo for Life.

- Our popular annual chile roasts, held at several alumni chapters around the country, broke attendance records this year, and more and more of our alumni—and their friends—flocked to get their much-needed green chile fix.
- Our alumni themselves had a pretty good year, too, as we saw Lobos receive a National Humanities Medal from President Biden, win a gold medal at the Track & Field World

Championships, be awarded a prestigious MacArthur Genius Grant, and be named a CNN Hero of the Year

An Anchor for Our Community and Our Economy

When we say “Each of Us Defines All of Us,” that goes for our greater community as well. We are proud to be an active member of our neighborhoods, our cities, our counties, our state, our region . . . however you want to define it, UNM considers it a privilege to be your neighbor.

As New Mexico’s premiere Research 1 institution, we are constantly leveraging our resources for the greater good. Whether it’s collaborating on research with national partners like our federal laboratories, or providing the intellectual or financial capital for local startups, we value our role as an economic leader and motivator.

This is where we really embrace our role as an anchor institution in our communities. As the noted philosopher Stan Lee once said, “With great power comes great responsibility.” As communities look for ways to improve the lives of their citizens, we have the power, and the responsibility, of leveraging our own resources—whether financial, physical, or intellectual—to help local economies succeed. For example:

TIDD

I continue to be very excited about the South Campus Tax Increment Development District or TIDD, which is a Public-Public collaboration between UNM, the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and the State of New Mexico, to enhance community services, create new jobs and stimulate economic activity. This past year, we made this arrangement official, and the TIDD will revitalize an underutilized portion of the City—but more importantly, we expect it to spur the creation of more than 4,000 new jobs with over \$4 billion in wages. In a city like Albuquerque, that is a significant driver of the local economy.

MDC

As New Mexico’s only academic health center, there are times we are uniquely situated to help with the health care challenges facing our community. Last August, I was proud to stand alongside leaders from UNM, the City of Albuquerque, and Bernalillo County as we officially announced UNM Hospital as the new health provider at the county’s Metropolitan Detention Center. This collaboration builds upon the relationships we have with our county and city, as we work together to tend to the vital medical and behavioral health needs of our fellow citizens who are at this facility.

Rainforest Innovations

Rainforest Innovations continues to serve as one of our state’s leading catalysts for creative and forward-thinking economic development, forging relationships with businesses across our state, sparking technology transfer, encouraging start-ups, and generally acting as our economy’s most enthusiastic cheerleader.

Over the last twelve months alone—

- UNM received an Innovation and Economic Prosperity 5-Year Extension, in recognition of our commitment to social, cultural, and community development.
- Eight groundbreaking startup companies affiliated with UNM Rainforest were formed in 2023, including a company designing non-platinum fuel cell catalysts, and another developing an inhaler device to deliver high therapeutic doses to lung cancer patients.
- Rainforest issued its *Economic Impact Report*, where we learned that The University of New Mexico accounts more than for 47,000 jobs, \$1.9 billion in labor income, and \$5.2 billion in economic output.
- Just recently, I had the pleasure of attending the 2024 UNM Business and Economic Summit, hosted by Rainforest, with more than 220 attendees, to discuss our state’s entrepreneurial economy.

When we say we are committed to tending to the needs of all New Mexicans, we truly mean it; it is our obligation and our privilege to share our people, our expertise, and our skills to help make our state better, stronger, healthier, and safer for everyone.

WORDS MATTER

As we navigate the complexities of our roles as educators, learners, and citizens, it is crucial to recognize the power of dialogue and understanding in our shared journey. During my time at UNM we have weathered a confluence of crises and cultural flashpoints—from a global pandemic; to racial unrest; to increased political polarization; to the rising cost of basic needs; to a decrease in the understanding and value of higher education. Over the last two years in particular, international conflicts have left us grappling with how to approach differing opinions among friends, family, and colleagues.

You’ve heard of that expression “it’s a free country,” often uttered after someone has been told that what they’ve said is offensive or hurtful. While that may be true, it doesn’t mean that words are without consequences.

Free speech and inquiry are vital to all universities, with limits only at the edges where behavior threatens imminent physical harm. But while even speech that expresses hate is legally protected, it still harms our communities. Our role is not to suppress it, but to critique and, at times, rebuke it.

To this end, I am encouraged that Advance at UNM, along with Academic Affairs, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the UNM School of Law, are hosting two events this month for faculty and staff to help understand the current free speech climate and consider best practices for ensuring campus conversations remain civil.

I am frequently asked—sometimes demanded—to make a particular statement to take a position or a side and publicly declare “where the University stands” in response to what hurts, offends and horrifies. Words do matter, as do all the complicated things that make us human.

Building Bridges, Not Walls

A few words about institutional statements. While we may face pressures to take positions or issue statements on various matters, it’s crucial to remember that our primary mission is to cultivate an environment where diverse perspectives are respected and where the thoughtful exploration of complex issues is guided by our core values of respect, curiosity, and inclusivity. Our mission demands that we be a place where disagreement can flourish.

And while some will desire and demand certainty that UNM shares their position, statements do not build community or reduce harms or fear. Rather, community is built through both the respect for individual values and beliefs, an understanding of how people can see the world differently and our shared experiences as a university community. Community also requires each of us to consider carefully how our own words and statements may be heard by others in ways that we do not intend or may cause harm to others even when they are understood as we mean them.

I recognize that the platform of the President of UNM is one of great privilege and influence, and I do feel there are issues that are important to speak out about. But my decision to weigh in on an issue or an event should be based on its connection to our mission and the impact on our community.

I have reflected on my messages to our community over the years that relate to issues or events—the common thread is that they are focused on the impact on the University, its people—all of them—and what, if anything, we can do in response. I speak out against injustice and inequity and acknowledge the fear and anxiety that many may feel during uncertain or distressful times. But I also want to avoid speaking out on some issues and not others, which in essence creates a hierarchy of suffering or human value. Ultimately, there may at times *be* no message. And I know this will be unsatisfying to some.

By prioritizing dialogue over pronouncements and investing in genuine community engagement, we can foster a culture of understanding and mutual respect that strengthens our Lobo community. I encourage all of us to build bridges, not walls, and approach each interaction with empathy and humility, recognizing that true progress comes not from the imposition of singular perspectives, but from the collective pursuit of knowledge and understanding, even when we disagree.

CONCLUSION: IN SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC GOOD

As your president and fellow Lobo, I am proud to uphold the principles encapsulated in “Each of us defines all of us.” It is the essence of our institution, emphasizing the collective responsibility and interconnectedness that defines our community, while recognizing that every individual contributes uniquely to the rich culture and history of UNM. Our commitment to this principle not only enriches the educational experience but also strengthens the fabric of our society, reflecting our belief that by uplifting each other, we elevate the entire community.

As we reflect on the remarkable achievements of The University of New Mexico in 2023, it is clear that our commitment to serving the public good is the cornerstone of our success. From groundbreaking research that addresses pressing societal challenges to innovative educational initiatives that empower individuals and communities, UNM continues to lead the way in making a tangible difference in the lives of others.

As we look ahead, let us remain steadfast in our dedication to harnessing knowledge, fostering inclusivity, and driving positive change for the betterment of all. As individuals, together, we will continue to uphold the University *for* New Mexico’s legacy of service and inspire a brighter future for generations to come.

Thank you for listening today, and let’s go Lobos!