



President's Weekly Perspective

Good afternoon.

I wish the best to our students who are writing papers, studying for exams and preparing presentations, to end the semester successfully. This semester nearly 3,500 are expected to graduate, and this weekend more than 1,000 Lobos will walk across the stage at the [2015 Spring Commencement Ceremonies](#). This is the highlight of the academic year, in which we celebrate the discipline and dedication that goes into each granted degree. To every graduate, congratulations! You can proudly say that you are now a part of the [UNM Alumni Association](#), a community that promotes the spirit of Lobo life and the excellence of The University of New Mexico worldwide.

Commencement speakers are carefully selected each year because of the message that they can relay to our outgoing students. They make each ceremony distinct and meaningful, and exemplify the value of a UNM degree.

This year Mr. James Hinton, a 1981 graduate from the UNM Department of Economics department, will speak to our undergraduate class. His contributions to this state are invaluable, both in healthcare and education. Jim is president and CEO of Presbyterian Healthcare Service, and has driven this medical organization to be one of the best in the southwest. He also serves as the co-chair of "Mission: Graduate," an effort to increase degree completion rates in central New Mexico. He is a distinguished Lobo alumnus and living proof that with a UNM degree and hard work, you can go far.

Kathleen Townsend Kennedy, a UNM School of Law alumna, will speak at our graduate ceremony. Her long list of contributions and achievements in the public arena and private sector speak to her dedication to our nation. She is currently a Research Professor at the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University. I am thrilled to have her return to New Mexico to speak to our masters and doctoral degree recipients. She is a fine example of a Lobo who has excelled in a very broad sphere of influence.

Thank you to the Office of the University Secretary who always does a phenomenal job organizing and managing our large commencement ceremonies. I would also like to thank everyone who helps to coordinate smaller convocations held for our schools, colleges, departments and centers. While our larger ceremonies honor the achievement of hundreds of students at once, smaller ceremonies allow students to celebrate in an intimate setting with the peers and professors they have worked closely with during their time at UNM.

I would also like to take a moment to remember two students who will be awarded posthumous degrees. The Daily Lobo published excellent stories about two UNM students who are no longer with us; [Briana Hillard](#) and [Matthew Grant](#). They both made a great impact on our community, and it is fitting that they will be honored at our commencement ceremonies.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone to watch the [University leadership panel discussion online tomorrow, Tuesday, May 5, at noon](#). This panel format is a lively and powerful way to deliver UNM's message. I think this was an effective way to convey our progress, and I hope to hear your thoughts about this format. If you are not able to watch it at this time, it will be archived on president.unm.edu.

Congratulations to the class of 2015. I wish you all a wonderful week and a summer full of new adventures. For those of you who will be here this summer, I look forward to seeing you on campus.

As always, Go Lobos!

Bob