



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

Good afternoon.

GO Bond C for Higher Education

In the upcoming general election, we will have a very full and important ballot before us. One of the statewide ballot issues that will impact UNM, as well as most universities in New Mexico, is General Obligation Bond C. Bond C will provide more than \$131 million in higher education funding, which will support facility updates and new technologies. This investment in higher education across the state will support the New Mexico economy with approximately 1,300 new jobs. For UNM, \$34.5 million will support our [Physics and Astronomy Interdisciplinary \(PAIS\) facility](#) as well as our [branch campuses](#).

The state's system of higher education is a critical component to making New Mexico more economically innovative and competitive with surrounding states. When New Mexico's colleges and universities are seen as nationally competitive, they attract the best and brightest and those graduates make up a highly skilled workforce that is based right here. The GO Bond will not raise taxes. I strongly encourage you to talk with your family and friends about the GO Bond and why it is important for our students and for the state.

While the election is on Nov. 8, absentee voting for New Mexico will begin tomorrow and in-person early voting will start on Saturday, Oct. 22 through Saturday, Nov. 5. I urge everyone to vote and let your voice be heard for the future of New Mexico. Tomorrow is also the last day to register to vote for the 2016 general election.

National Science Foundation Award for Women and Minority STEM Faculty

The way in which our STEM faculty can better reflect the diversity of our country has just been improved at UNM with an NSF, \$3.3 million, five-year [ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Award](#). Congratulations to the interdisciplinary "Advance at UNM" team: Julia Fulghum in Chemistry and Chemical Biology and Mala Htun in Political Science, who will lead the project, and Principle Investigators Mary Jo Daniel in the Office of the Vice President for Research, Stephanie Forrest in Computer Science, and Felipe Gonzales in Sociology.

This grant will allow UNM to increase the representation and advancement of women and minority faculty in the STEM fields, and support the development of a more diverse STEM workforce.

UNM Research Showcased on 'Nature'

It is always exciting when the research led by our faculty is represented in a public venue. Christopher Witt, associate professor of Biology here at UNM, will have his team's [research on hummingbirds](#) living at high altitudes featured in the documentary Super Hummingbirds, which airs Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 7 p.m. (MT) on the award-winning program "Nature" on PBS.

IT Efficiencies and Effectiveness

It was my pleasure to attend the first Information Technology town hall last week. I would like to thank the faculty and staff who attended for their participation in this ongoing discussion about the recommendations related to [IT efficiency and effectiveness on main campus](#). The next campus opportunity for engagement will be on Tuesday, Oct. 11 from 3-5 p.m. in SUB Ballroom C.

Gerald May Outstanding Staff Award

I am fortunate to be a part of recognizing the outstanding staff members who have made significant contributions to UNM, especially through some of the recent challenging times. When former UNM President Gerald W. May established this award in 1990, he said, "Staff is critical to the success of our university, and the recipients of this award are notable because they all lead by their example." In my time here, I have found these honorees to be setting the standard for excellence, and inspiring those they serve and with whom they work. Faculty, staff and students may [nominate a deserving staff member](#) for the 2016 Gerald W. May Outstanding Staff Award. The deadline for nominations is 5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 28.

Fair Labor Standards Act Compliance

UNM continues to prepare for full compliance with the revised Overtime Rule under the Fair Labor Standards Act before the deadline of Dec. 1. The rule that raised the exempt salary threshold from \$455 to \$913 per week requires that those earning less than \$913 per week, calculated at 100 percent appointment, be eligible for overtime and are therefore classified as nonexempt.

Nonexempt employees are paid bi-weekly, per UAP 3200 2.2, for hours reported as worked during a specified time period. In order to allow for timesheet submission, approval, and for payroll processing, nonexempt employees are paid for a pay-period a week after that the pay period concludes. To lessen the financial burden this may have on employees going from an exempt—monthly pay, to a nonexempt—bi-weekly pay with a one-week lag, status, they will now have until Oct. 2017 to choose when they will convert to the bi-weekly pay cycle. Human Resources will reach out to affected employees over the next week with details associated with the pay cycle selection process. Updates regarding the pay cycle option will be added [online](#).

I recognize this regulation change has not been easy for our employees or administrative staff. To the affected employees and their supervisors, I thank you for your patience as we implement the required changes; and to Human Resources and Payroll, I thank you for all your hard work in ensuring our compliance in a manner that allows for a compassionate transition for our employees.

Have a great week, and Go Lobos!

Bob