



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



October 1, 2018

Good afternoon.

I hope you all enjoyed Homecoming last week and much as Jeff and I did. We were fortunate to spend a great deal of time meeting with alumni who had come back to UNM – from near and far – to reconnect with friends and reminisce about their experiences while students on our campus. What made it truly special was the effort and pride shown by our students, faculty and staff to create new UNM memories and special connections for our alumni. Many thanks to everyone who worked or volunteered to make this year's homecoming an inspired success!

The Spirit of Our Community

There are countless ways UNM Lobos are [enriching our communities](#). Our students understand that being a Lobo means not only doing well in the classroom, but also doing good in the community. UNM student organizations plan entire events dedicated to beautifying and enhancing our campus and community—dedicating countless volunteer hours to Fall Frenzy and Spring Storm. Over the past five years, the UNM Greek community has annually engaged in over 10,000 hours of community service and raised thousands of dollars to benefit charities of various causes. And our student-athletes participate in youth sports camps, make hospital visits, and take part in after-school programs such as Read with the Lobos. [Our staff and faculty enrich our community](#) as well through the many research projects, donation drives, and fundraisers they host throughout the year. They also mentor UNM students and provide community leadership within many local, regional and national organizations. The UNM Health Sciences Center is a model for assessing community needs and meeting them through their applied expertise. [Running Medicine](#), an [award-winning community approach](#) to creating a family-friendly, inclusive environment for fitness, was formed as a program of the UNM Native Health Initiative. And for the next several weeks, students from our professional health schools are volunteering their time and expertise in [staffing free flu shot clinics throughout the metro Albuquerque-area](#).

UNM Gives

[Today kicks off the annual UNM Gives Campaign](#), yet another opportunity for faculty and staff to contribute to and engage in our community through monetary donations or the volunteering time and talent. As I have said before, community giving is very important to me, and I think it is imperative that we as a campus community come together to support Albuquerque and New Mexico as a whole. For more than 20 years, UNM has supported the United Way of Central New Mexico through the UNM Gives campaign, raising millions of dollars for the initiative and its partners. The campaign will run through December 20. Let's put our varied skills and expertise together to make our community a better place.

The Strength of Our Community

Together we learn, make new discoveries, and serve society. It is also important that together, we look inward to ensure that we are identifying and offering solutions to challenges facing our campus. Members of our community have recently spoken about their experiences with racism and the resulting impact of systemic disrespect and exclusion. I share in their disappointment, anger, and frustration. As someone who has been dedicated to advancing inclusion and awareness among diverse peoples and ideas throughout my career, I am committed to working with this campus and the broader community to nurture deeper roots of respect, understanding and diversity here at UNM. The upcoming search for the Vice President of Equity and Inclusion is an opportunity to engage the campus in the process for how to improve our community by embracing diversity on all levels - campus participation and feedback will be critical. We are a university that takes pride in inclusive excellence across scholarship, research, health outcomes and societal improvement. We take pride in seeking, discovering, and creating better ways to understand and respond to our world but our efforts will only be successful if everyone participates. What we say and do, and what we represent as a university, transcends any individual or group, and becomes a true and long-lasting part of who we are as an institution.

I hope you have a great week. Let's go Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes

President

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