



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



April 22, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos --

As we make the turn into the final weeks of the Spring 2024 semester, we're beginning to see more and more of our Lobos recognized for excellence throughout the year. Whether it's our faculty being acknowledged for their inspired teaching in the classroom, our students honored for their innovation and leadership, or our alumni serving their communities with distinction, I'm always proud to see Lobos receive much-deserved recognition.

First, congratulations to **Carlos LópezLeiva**, an associate professor in the College of Education and Human Sciences, who was just [named by the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education as its University Bilingual Education Professor of the Year](#). LópezLeiva chairs the Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies (LLS), and this award recognizes his leadership and vision for bilingual education at UNM and across our state. Well done, Professor LópezLeiva.

I was also delighted to see [four Lobo students honored at the 2024 American Nuclear Society Student Conference](#), held this year at Penn State. **Lauren Bailey, Alexandra Martinez** and **Courtney Mace** won best undergraduate poster for their project "Model Development of a Hydrogen Cooled Multi-Pin Particle Bed Reactor," beating out 28 other posters from 24 other universities. At the same event, **Michael Trombetta** presented "Radioisotope Retention in Molten Lead for LFR Source Term," winning best undergraduate paper in the Nuclear Fuels and Materials track, competing with 10 undergraduate papers.

Meanwhile, at the Hispanic National Bar Association moot court competition in Seattle, **Crestencia Pihlaja**, a 2L at The University of New Mexico School of Law, [earned second place for Best Oral Argument](#), competing against more than 60 other law students from law schools across the country. And when the Jeff Harnar Awards were given out by The UNM School of Architecture + Planning (SA+P) and the Thornburg Foundation to honor the best architects in the region, Lobo **Jeffrey Coons'** project, *Starscape: Preserving and Appreciating Dark Skies in New Mexico*, was [selected for the First Prize Student Award in Landscape Architecture](#). Congratulations to all our students on their remarkable achievements.

Among our distinguished alumni, the [State Bar of New Mexico has selected as its latest president](#) Erinna "Erin" Atkins, a 2009 graduate of The University of New Mexico School of Law. She is also the first woman from the Southern part of New Mexico to be elected president of the State Bar Board of Commissioners. And finally, we sing the praises of opera soprano *Lydia Grindatto*, a 2017 graduate of the UNM Department of Music, who recently [won the prestigious Fernand Lamesch Award of the Metropolitan Opera Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition](#). Later this year, she'll join the [San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program](#) as one of 29 artists selected from more than 1,300 applicants. I'm thrilled to see our alumni reach such prominence in their fields; you make all Lobos proud.

UNM to Host First Child Language Symposium for Indigenous Communities

The University of New Mexico is proud to [host the inaugural Child Language Acquisition Symposium for Indigenous Communities \(CLASIC\)](#), coming to UNM's Hibben Center on May 17-18. Organized by UNM's Indigenous Child Language Research Center (ICLRC), this unique symposium will focus on the acquisition of Indigenous languages by children in New Mexico--and beyond-- offering opportunities to share experiences and solutions for language continuity. The two-day event will feature keynote speakers and over a dozen presentations on Indigenous child language acquisition, language nests, and parent roles. More details, including [registration information](#), is available from [ICLRC](#).

Critical Care Tower Focuses on Sustainability

As work progresses on the highly anticipated and much-needed Critical Care Tower (CCT)--it's about 82 percent complete--[UNM Hospital continues to aspire to a high degree of sustainability for the new structure](#). Consistent with UNM's [sustainability goal described in UNM 2040](#), the hospital is striving, for example, for the highest [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\) certification](#) for the CCT, ensuring it minimizes its carbon footprint and preserves the integrity of the surrounding natural environment. Along with efforts to reduce sprawl, encouraging the use of public transportation, and tightly monitored HVAC systems, the CCT maintains a "patient-first" approach to design that is not only good for the patients who need our care, but also good for the environment and for our healthcare providers who work in the facility.

Postdoc Research Symposium Spotlights Innovation Statewide

This Friday, April 26, the [UNM Postdoc Association](#) and the [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#) will be hosting the 2nd Annual New Mexico Postdoctoral Research Symposium from 9 am to 4 pm at Domenici Center. This event spotlights research undertaken by postdoctoral students from around New Mexico, giving participants an opportunity to explore the innovative research underway not only at The University of New Mexico, but also in industry and at the national laboratories and other academic institutions in our state. The symposium is free, but please [register in advance](#).

Finalists Named for Deans of Graduate Studies, University College

Provost Holloway recently announced the [two finalists for the position of UNM's dean of Graduate Studies](#), advancing UNM Professor of English Jesse Aleman and UNM Professor of Geography Maria Lane. Professor Aleman will hold a presentation on Monday, April 29, at 1:30 p.m. in SUB Room Lobo A, and Professor Lane will hold her presentation on Tuesday, April 30, also at 1:30 p.m. in SUB Room Lobo A. These sessions are open to the public. More information on these candidates can be found on the [Executive Search website](#).

The Provost has also announced the [two finalists for the dean of UNM's University College](#), putting forward UNM Mechanical Engineering Regents' Professor Peter Vorobieff and UNM Associate Professor David Weiss from the Department of Communication & Journalism. Professor Vorobieff will hold his open presentation on Wednesday, May 1, at 10 a.m. at University Advisement & Enrichment Center (UAEC) 265 & 266, while Professor Weiss's session will be in the same location on Thursday, May 2, at 10 a.m. These sessions are open to the public. More information on these candidates can be found on the [Executive Search website](#).

On This Week's Podcast . . .

This week's installment of the *It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science* podcast is sharing the debut episode of a limited original podcast series, [*PlaceKnowing with Dr. Ted Jojola*](#), brought to you by [UNM's Indigenous Design and Planning Institute \(iD+Pi\) in the School of Architecture + Planning](#). This first installment of the six-episode production examines the essential relationship between land, storytelling, and community and the importance of visioning and revitalization around brownfields (abused or neglected land). The podcast aims to inform and inspire listeners to lead change in their own spaces through Indigenous design methodologies. The premiere episode will be featured as part of your regular subscription to *It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science*; you can also [subscribe to the *PlaceKnowing* podcast series](#).

Have a great week, and let's go, Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes
President