



## PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

### President's Staff Transition

After 17 years of service to UNM, many of which were in leadership roles, Amy Wohlert has informed me that she will be retiring on July 31. Amy has most recently served as Chief of Staff for the Office of the President, and has been a great asset to the office and UNM. I know she is looking forward to well-deserved free time, but she has been a wonderful colleague for so many of us at UNM and we will miss her. Libby Washburn, who currently serves as Chief Compliance Officer, will become Chief of Staff on Aug. 1. Given the interim nature of my own appointment, Libby has agreed to a non-renewable two-year contract so the next president will have both stability for the transition and flexibility in determining a permanent appointment. Libby brings outstanding knowledge and skills to the office, including past experience as Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. Due to our financial constraints and our desire to streamline administration whenever possible, Libby has agreed to continue to cover the compliance tasks as part of her suite of duties as Chief of Staff. We will closely monitor if and how both roles can be fulfilled effectively, and make appropriate staffing changes should the need arise.

### NMHED Capital Projects and NMSBoF Hearings

On Wednesday, July 12, a group of us went to Valencia to present the University's capital priorities for the next state bond issues to the NM Higher Education Department (NMHED). These included a request for planning money for the new Arts Center and the second phase of the Chemistry laboratories, as well as a request for a new building for the College of Nursing and requests from two of our branches. These requests were previously approved by the Board of Regents. Due to some of the feedback we received from that hearing, we will be adjusting our requests, bringing them back to the Board, and then to NMHED again. In addition, on Tuesday, July 18, we will be traveling to Santa Fe to present before the NM State Board of Finance (NMSBoF) regarding the Physics & Astronomy Interdisciplinary Science (PAIS) building (approval item) and the planning for the UNM Hospital modern medical facility (information item).

### UNM Administrative Retreat

On Friday, July 14, I convened a UNM administrative retreat at University House to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing UNM, and to start the process of re-engineering the university. The attendees included myself, Provost White, Chancellor Roth, and EVP Harris as well as their direct reports (22 total attendees). We are summarizing the discussion and will share it with the Board of Regents to seek their guidance and support prior to and during their retreat. We will also continue to broaden the conversation to include more groups and constituents.

### Considerations in Deciding on Honor Society

Membership in a UNM recognized honor society can be a meaningful and fulfilling experience. We want to make sure students have all the information and facts before they spend money to join an organization. Students often receive information via emails about joining honor societies, many of which include a membership fee. I encourage students who receive these emails to research the organization prior to paying any fees. The [Association of College Honor Societies](#) is another resource that can be helpful in determining

credibility of an honor society and may prove helpful in making a decision. I also strongly recommend that students join organizations that are [official chartered student organizations](#) at the University of New Mexico. The [UNM Student Activities Center](#) is a great resource to answer any questions about honor societies or any other official chartered student organization.

### **Operation Lobo Move-In**

Finally, a reminder that students will be arriving on campus for Fall semester in just a few weeks, and you can get them off to a good start, and get some exercise, too! Residence Life & Student Housing is looking for volunteers to help with Operation: Lobo Move-In. Join RLSH in assisting over 2,000 residents unload and carry their belongings to their new homes. Operation: Lobo Move-In is scheduled for Tuesday-Sunday, Aug. 15-20. All volunteers receive a free Operation: Lobo Move-In T-shirt and water will be provided. I encourage you to [sign up](#) and welcome our Lobos back to campus.

Until next time.

Chaouki T. Abdallah

Acting President

Follow me on Twitter [@chaoukita](#)

*There is so much more that happens on the UNM campus than can be conveyed in a weekly message. To find out about the latest stories and events, please visit the [UNM Newsroom](#), the central source of news and information for the UNM community.*