



## President's Weekly Perspective

Good morning.

Students of today, as well as those responsible for ensuring that higher education supports their success, face real challenges; many challenges are those of adversity. Active problem-solving is empowering. In her article [“How to Use Optimism to Defeat Adversity.”](#) Daniels College of Business Dean Christine M. Riordan noted that however we choose to respond to life's struggles, “productive optimism” and determination appear to be significant elements in “picking ourselves up when adversity hits” and moving forward toward success.

### Powering Success

I would like to begin this week by sharing some exciting news with you, as UNM welcomes news of a national grant to take a groundbreaking student financial aid strategy to the next level. A program developed by UNM and our community partner New Mexico Educators Federal Credit Union (NMEFCU) to help students maneuver through a financial crisis and stay in school has been selected as the national recipient of the [Catapult award from the Public Strategies Group](#) (PSG). It is a unique strategy to use micro-lending to provide underserved and high-risk students with a program that finances education in the same way as startup companies are financed. UNM provides the collateral that allows students to gain access to a traditional lender, the credit union, which can then operate without high risk. Students can then use the loan to address their emergency situation and stay in school. Financial capability training and support are put in place to ensure that student accesses all financial aid and services within his budget and stays on track for graduation.

The \$100,000 grant comes in the form of a Lab – an intensive week-long design, strategy development and change management planning session. It brings together key people from the selected organization to work with outside experts and members of the PSG team for free to help boost an initiative like “Powering Success” in its efforts to transform lives and change educational achievement and economic outcomes. Scholarships, financial aid and student loans only reach part of our student population. Micro-aid can help create greater impact, increasing retention and graduation. We look forward to incorporating the strategies and concepts we learn in the Catapult lab to strengthen this unique approach to solving a critical need in New Mexico.

### July is Staff Appreciation Month

At UNM, we recognize that the collective efforts of all staff members contribute to the overall mission of the University. Please remember that this month is [Staff Appreciation Month](#). There are many great events designed to say “thank you” to each employee for their contribution to this wonderful institution and their Lobo spirit. Be sure to join our July celebration, and remember that our staff do great work all year long!

Have a great week and Go Lobos!

Bob