

## **PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE**

Good afternoon.

We are down to the last week before the semester officially starts and I am so excited to see our students and their families moving into the residence halls and getting oriented to living on campus. Many thanks to the staff who are making the transition as welcoming and easy as possible, including student activities, parking and transportation, housing and dining, advisement and many other departments. We can all make a difference in our students' first weeks, whether it's offering directions, advice or just a smile.

This week will wrap up the final planned travel on my statewide listening and learning tour as I head to the northwest corner of the state. As I've said before, the listening never really ends. New Mexico has been a living classroom for my introduction to the history and culture of the state, the aspirations and concerns of its people and the many ways UNM is embedded in the communities we serve. I will be sharing a full wrap-up of the tour in the coming weeks, which will include details, personal insights and common themes that emerged and will serve to guide us in our strategic planning.

### **Northern New Mexico**

The most recent trip connected me with other higher education institutions in New Mexico, as well as with regional healthcare providers. In historic Las Vegas, I was given a tour of New Mexico Highlands University by two of their students and President Sam Minner. We also met with other community members to discuss how we can develop and further our collaborative efforts to improve education and train students for careers in northern New Mexico. Heading to Raton, I visited the Miners' Colfax Medical Center, and now have a better understanding of not only what these miners go through, but also the medical care and providers needed in rural communities. In Tucumcari, I was able to observe the towering wind turbines of the North American Wind Research Training Center at Mesalands Community College, which trains students to work in one of the fastest growing industries in the world. I also toured the Mesalands Dinosaur Museum and Natural Sciences Laboratory. My final stop was in Santa Rosa, where I visited the Guadalupe Regional Medical Center (GRMC), which provides state-of-the-art care for patients and offers challenging learning opportunities for medical students. One of those students, Dr. Estevan Apodaca, is a graduate of the inaugural class of the UNM BA/MD program. He gave me personal insight on his time in the program and as a resident at GRMC. This trip provided me with a greater understanding and appreciation for what our educators and health providers deal with daily in the more rural areas of New Mexico in response to both industry and population needs.

### **Challenging Cancer Together**

Each of us knows someone who has been affected by cancer. A great way to 'honor those who have lost their battle, support those facing cancer, and celebrate those who have overcome it is to participate in or support events that bring our community together to fight for a common cause. On Sept. 8, UNM Health

Sciences is sponsoring the second annual [Lobo Cancer Challenge](#), a combination bike ride and run/walk event to benefit The University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center. Individuals or teams can [sign up](#) to ride 25-mile, 50-mile and 100-mile routes, run/walk 5 miles, volunteer or donate, and 100 percent of the funds raised go towards the innovative research, education and training, and support of our patients at the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Have a great week and let's go Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes

President

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