



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



April 15, 2019

Good afternoon.

New discoveries can change our perceptions of the universe, and last week, our perceptions were stretched a little further, as we saw the first image ever captured of a black hole – and [one of our own UNM alumna helped make it happen](#). Raquel Frago-Encinas is one of the contributing authors of the [Event Horizon Telescope Results article](#) released last week. She received her BS in Astrophysics here in 2001, with an Honors thesis prepared under the guidance of UNM Professor Rich Rand from the Department of Physics and Astronomy. Her thesis examined data from the Very Large Array and used it to map certain parts of a galaxy. That research, coupled with her work in the UNM Society of Physics Students, made her a true star of the department while here.

The scope of research with which our institution is engaged reaches from the expansive to the minute. Not only are our students looking deep into space, our researchers are stripping the problem of deadly air pollution down to the particulate level. A [paper published last week](#) by Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences was written in part by UNM Economics Professor Andrew Goodkind, and it explores more efficient ways to prioritize the mitigation of emissions, which were responsible for an estimated 107,000 premature deaths in 2011. Thanks to his research, policymakers will be able to better understand where and how the particulate matter is being distributed.

These discoveries and assessments are outstanding representations of our mission as the state's leading research university. The achievements of today are laying the groundwork for the successes of tomorrow.

UNM Student Government Leaders

The University's student government is a critical part of our campus operations. These peer-elected officials are the voice of the UNM student body, representing the ideas, opinions and concerns of more than 25,000 people in our university community. Associated Students of The University of New Mexico (ASUNM) and the UNM Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) recently held their [annual elections](#). Adam Biederwolf will be ASUNM's president, Madelyn Lucas its vice president, and Muhammad Afzaal will serve as the new GPSA president starting next month. I look forward to working with them and collaborating to support and enhance the Lobo experience. Congratulations to all of our elected student government representatives! My personal thanks and best wishes to this past year's leaders, Becka Myers and Emily Wilks of ASUNM, and Boney Mutabazi of GPSA, for the time and effort they contributed to the University. These connections to students through their democratic representation are vital to open communications, and I have enjoyed working with them and greatly valued their input.

Taking Advantage of On-Campus Events

The Spring semester is drawing to a close, which means plenty of late nights for many students, staff and faculty. Although it's crunch time, be sure to make time for self-care during this hectic part of the semester. During the next few weeks there are many happenings on campus that could help you log a few steps on your fitness app while also providing you with fresh air and a clearer mind. Our Sustainability Studies Program is hosting the [Sustainability Expo this Thursday](#), with local growers, artisans and community partners coming together to encourage our campus to live green. The College of Fine Arts ['ArtsUnexpected' student showcase](#) is going on this Friday, with pop-up exhibitions happening across campus. Finally, next week the [International Festival will be held on Cornell Mall](#), celebrating our international students and each of the beautiful, unique cultures they bring to our community.

Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Candidates on Campus

A reminder that two of the candidates selected to visit UNM for the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration position will be on campus this week, with the third and fourth finalists coming next week. There will be one forum for each candidate, and we've [posted the times, dates and livestream information online](#). I very much appreciate everyone's participation and feedback during our executive leadership searches.

Budget Update

At last week's budget summit, we asked the Board of Regents to postpone a decision regarding tuition and fee increases due to new information from the Governor's office. Since that time, we have been digging even deeper into UNM's finances to determine our most responsible course in light of the Governor's request that we fund 4% across the board raises for our faculty and staff. I would love to find a way to offer our campus community such well-deserved compensation after years of inadequate funding to do so. The Budget Leadership Team will be meeting this week, and we will be presenting our revised budget recommendations at a special board meeting to take place on Monday, April 22.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President