



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



*December 9, 2019*

Good afternoon.

As we count down the last five days of the semester, I wanted to take a moment to wish our students the best of luck on their final exams, term papers and projects, and acknowledge their hard work during what I hope has been a challenging and rewarding semester. To the more than 2,000 Lobos who will be graduating as members of the fall class of 2019, congratulations! We are so proud of your accomplishments. As Lobos for Life, I hope you stay connected to UNM, no matter how far your journey may take you from New Mexico. And for those who will be [attending the ceremony this coming Friday](#) at Dreamstyle Arena - The Pit - I look forward to joining you and your family and friends in celebration of your success.

## **Search for HSC Executive Vice President Begins**

UNM bears both the privileged distinction and responsibility of being home to the only academic medical center in the state. Our mission to improve health outcomes through education, research and patient care, with compassion and courage, impacts so many lives. This month we have begun the search for our next Executive Vice President of Health Sciences, which is one of the most critical leadership positions for not only UNM, but all of New Mexico. I have begun the discovery phase of gathering input and recommendations regarding expectations for this position, as well as perspectives on the ideal candidate profile. We have engaged WittKiefer as the executive search firm that will assist us in this national search process. They will work in support of the search committee, led by Provost James Holloway, and my office. In the coming months, opportunities will be provided for members of our community to contribute their perspectives and feedback, as well as to interact with identified finalists. I will continue to keep the campus updated as milestones are met, and search progress and information will be housed on the [executive search site](#) as it becomes available. I would once again like to express my deep thanks to Chancellor Paul Roth for his continued leadership of the HSC until a new leader is selected and for the foundation of excellence and compassionate care he has created across the health sciences at UNM.

## **Lobo Leadership Transition for Alumni Relations**

As many of you know, Vice President of Alumni Relations Dana Allen has taken a position at UC Davis, after four years at UNM. Many thanks to Dana for her service and we wish her the best of luck in California! I am pleased to announce that I have selected [Connie Beimer](#) to take on the interim leadership of this office. Connie is a lifelong New Mexican and two-time UNM alumna who has dedicated her career to public service, including heading our Office of Government and Community Relations for the past several years. She has held numerous local and state roles that emphasize community engagement and is also a past president of the UNM Alumni Association. Her energy and ability to connect people to their passions will be a valuable asset to our alumni and the University.

## UNM Faculty Elected Fellows of the National Academy of Inventors

Our research story continues to be told through the outstanding accomplishments of our faculty, and it is amplified when innovation collides through collaboration. Bryce Chackerian and David Peabody, both professors in UNM's Department of Molecular Genetics & Microbiology, have recently been [named 2019 Fellows of the National Academy of Inventors](#), having demonstrated "a highly prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on the quality of life, economic development and welfare of society." The work of Dr. Chackerian and Dr. Peabody is in developing a new vaccine technology that targets infectious diseases, chronic diseases and cancers; and together they co-founded AgilVax, a startup company that is licensing their VLP-based vaccine platform to develop antibody-based therapies to fight cancer. Their pioneering efforts are, indeed, deserving of this honor.

## Recognizing Exceptional Members of the Lobo Family

One of the many wonderful things about our university is the dedication, generosity and compassion of the people who make up our community. It is always a pleasure to take the time to celebrate those who stand out to their friends and colleagues. The [2019 Sarah Belle Brown Community Service Awards recipients were selected](#) for their impactful community service and volunteer efforts, emulating Sarah's ongoing commitment to helping those in need. This year's winners are Stacy Sacco, faculty member at Anderson School of Management; Tracy Owen, staff member at UNM Valencia Campus's Advisement Center; and Aaron Boswell, an undergraduate student in the department of Psychology. The [Gerald W. May Outstanding Staff Awards recognizes outstanding staff members](#) who have made significant contributions to the University. This year's awardees are Robben Baca Brown, Graduate Studies; Crystle Collier, Anderson School of Management; Jolyne McCrary, Internal Medicine; and Rudy Montoya, Student Activities Center. All of these award winners exemplify the kind of Lobo spirit that makes UNM and New Mexico a better, stronger and more caring community. Congratulations to this year's awardees - you inspire us all.

Have a great week and let's go Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes  
President