



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



September 21, 2020

Good afternoon, Lobos.

With the gorgeous early autumn weather making it even more pleasant to be outside exploring our beautiful campus, I'm back again to tell you how much I appreciate the continued vigilance and diligence you've all shown when it comes to following our campus health and safety protocols. On my regular walks around campus with my husband Jeff, I continue to see mask-wearing and careful physical distancing as faculty, students, and staff alike lounge on the grounds of the Duck Pond, study outside the SUB or enjoy any of the [great outdoor places to meditate or get fit at UNM](#). Together, we're continuing to work responsibly to [Bring Back the Pack](#), and I'm grateful for your compassion and discipline.

Please also remember to keep responding to your morning screening e-mails, and regularly check our [coronavirus FAQ](#) and the [UNM COVID-19 dashboard](#) for the latest information. We are very fortunate our numbers still look good, and that's largely because all of you are taking this matter so seriously. Thank you.

But there's more good news to share as well. We've now had a chance to look at our enrollment numbers for Fall 2020, and I'm delighted to note that at our Albuquerque campus, [our entering freshman class of 2,788 students reflects a significant increase of 7.56 percent over the Fall 2019 freshman class](#), as well as an increasingly diverse student body. Among the class of 2024, we are seeing a 15 percent increase in American Indian students, a 19 percent increase in African American students, and a 7.5 percent increase in Hispanic students compared with last year.

Along with these encouraging enrollment numbers, I'm pleased to report that [UNM has moved up 31 spots to number 187 in this year's U.S. News and World Report's "Best Colleges" rankings](#). We also had five additional programs/schools ranked among the top in the nation, including our 90th ranked undergraduate engineering program, the only engineering program in the state to rank in the top 100. We were also lauded for our social mobility, our computer science and business programs, and recognized as one of the nation's top 100 public schools. Our rankings remain the highest among all New Mexico colleges and universities—a testament to the hard work, creativity, and commitment of our students, faculty, and staff.

Again, my thanks to all of you for making The University of New Mexico a great place to work, live, study, and succeed. Together, we're all making a difference.

## **ASUNM and GPSA Seeking Candidates for Next Student Regent**

ASUNM and GPSA are presently searching for candidates to submit for consideration for the position of the [UNM Student Regent](#), one of seven full voting members of the Board of Regents, with the same rights and responsibilities as other Board members. Interested students should [submit an application](#) to the appropriate

student government office before midnight on Wednesday, September 23. ASUNM and GPSA will forward their recommendations to my office by September 30, and it will then my honor to review the list of finalists and forward recommendations to the governor for her consideration and appointment of the new regent. This is a great opportunity for student involvement and leadership, and I look forward to receiving the list of candidates.

## **Voter Registration Day is September 22**

September 22 is nationally recognized as Voter Registration Day, a day for spotlighting the importance of registering to vote in the upcoming general election, which takes place this year on Tuesday, November 3. With October 6 on the calendar as the last day to register to vote in New Mexico, [UNM Athletics is holding a voter registration event](#) this Tuesday, September 22 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at The Pit. New Mexico voters are not only choosing the president and their elected representatives on this year's ballot, but have the opportunity to vote on a number of important state and local initiatives as well, including [GO Bonds C](#) for Higher Education and B for Libraries, both which would provide UNM and other state colleges and universities with the resources they need to ensure student success. Voting is both your right and your responsibility as a citizen; get registered today.

## **Faculty SAFE to Host Virtual Townhall on New Title IX Reporting**

Recent changes to federal Title IX law require colleges and universities to update their reporting policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment. This Friday, Faculty for Sexual Assault Free Environment (SAFE) at UNM, the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) and the Division for Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are sponsoring a virtual townhall to discuss how the new Title IX policies will work, and explore what new training and communication may be necessary. The session will also include a panel discussion about efforts at the state and federal levels to improve support for those who experience sexual harassment. [This webinar discussion](#) takes place Friday, September 25 from noon to 1:30 p.m. Please join us for this important conversation.

## **Reminder: Please Join us Thursday for a Virtual Townhall on Campus Safety**

As we begin the search for our new chief of the UNM Police Department, we invite the entire UNM community to [join us for a virtual townhall to discuss promising practices in UNM campus safety](#). The virtual townhall, hosted by the Division for Equity & Inclusion, will be held on Thursday, September 24, from 4 to 5:30 pm and registration is required. We want to hear your concerns about public safety and policing on our campus; please join us for this critical conversation.

## **UNM News Series Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month**

National Hispanic Heritage Month continues through October 15, and the UNM Newsroom is celebrating the occasion with a weekly series of articles and features on the culture, history, traditions, and contributions of Hispanics in New Mexico. [The first piece in the series](#) looks at several major historical events dating back to Coronado's expedition to our region in the 16th century—only a few of the major events that shaped our state's unique history and culture. The series continues through the middle of October.

## **Remembering Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

Like so many others, I was deeply saddened by the news of the [passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg](#) on Friday night at the age of 87. We have lost one of our greatest champions for equality and a

powerful inspiration to be true to yourself and your beliefs. “Fight for the things you care about,” she once wrote, “but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.” Those are words to live by, and I aspire to them every day. The world is a better place for having had the benefit of her incredible intellect, her wise words, and her strong example of respectful and collegial leadership. Let’s hope her lessons are not lost in contending with the deeply divided society we currently face.

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes  
President