



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



*October 11, 2021*

Good afternoon, Lobos -

Today, as we celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day—and as we close in on the end of Hispanic Heritage Month this Friday—I encourage all Lobos to reflect on, and find strength in, our unique culture here at The University of New Mexico. The University of New Mexico, founded in 1889, sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico—Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache—since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations, and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

UNM is very fortunate to benefit from the students, faculty, and staff who come from New Mexico's 23 tribal nations--including 19 Pueblos, 3 Apache Tribes and the Navajo Nation—and the many more who come to us from tribes beyond the borders of our state. Each of these sovereign tribes and nations reflect distinctive cultures and impact, and a timelessness we see reflected in our Native students as well. We take pride in recruiting Native students, and in providing campus resources like American Indian Student Services to help ensure our Native students have access to the support they need to ensure they arrive here as enthusiastic students and leave as proud Lobo graduates and alumni. We are honored to have you at The University of New Mexico.

The University of New Mexico is also proud to be a Hispanic Serving Institution, with over 40% of our student body identifying as Latinx, Latino, Chicano or Hispanic. Our students come from communities not only across New Mexico and the Southwest, but around the world, bringing their culture and language to our campus and our community. They make us stronger, smarter, and more interesting—there's a reason we have a nationally-recognized Chicana & Chicano Studies program that's the envy of the nation; our faculty are passionate about what they do, and our students bring to it their boundless energy, lived experiences, curiosity, and enthusiasm.

And our diversity goes well beyond our Native American and Hispanic populations. It is my privilege to lead the incredibly vibrant Lobo community of nearly 25,000 students and 10,000 faculty and staff. We find strength in our differences, and unity in our uniqueness. This is part of who we are as Lobos.

## **Lobo Researchers Leading the Way on Opioid Studies**

With opioid addiction devastating communities across our state and nation—including some of our poorest and most rural populations—finding treatment, and answers have never been more critical. Two studies at The University of New Mexico are looking at new and innovative approaches to care, including treatment for newborns exposed to opioids in utero.

As part of the Substance Use Disorder Grand Challenges, researchers at UNM's Center on Alcohol, Substance Use and Addiction (CASAA) received a [grant for more than \\$10 million from the National Institutes of Health for the creation of a treatment and recovery center, the Integrative Management of Chronic Pain and Opioid use disorder for Whole Recovery \(UNM IMPOWR\) Center](#). The new center will focus on innovative ways to help people overcome experiences with chronic pain or opioid use, with one trial looking expressly at Indigenous communities.

We are also fortunate to have our Health Sciences Center participating in a [national study on the care and treatment of opioid-exposed newborns experiencing neonatal withdrawal syndrome](#). With the support provided by a two-year, \$445,000 grant award from the National Institutes of Health's Helping to End Addiction Long-Term (HEAL) Initiative, Lobo researchers are comparing the effectiveness of three medications used to help wean infants from an opioid dependency.

This is the kind of innovative and compassionate research that is one of the hallmarks of our status as the state's premier R1 institution, and I couldn't be prouder of our researchers for looking for solutions to a critical, and heartbreaking, national problem.

### **Rooney Honored by International Development Council**

I was delighted to learn that Dr. Cynthia Rooney, Chancellor of UNM-Los Alamos, recently [received the prestigious Institutional Leadership Award from the International Economic Development Council \(IEDC\)](#) at the IEDC annual conference in Nashville, Tenn. The Institutional Leadership Award recognizes a leader of a community institution who has significantly contributed to his or her region in support of economic development—something Dr. Rooney does daily through her passion for education and her service to her communities. With Dr. Rooney at the helm, UNM-LA continues to be an anchor institution within Los Alamos, creating lifelong learning opportunities for students and shaping a path to success. My warmest congratulations to Chancellor Rooney for this well-deserved recognition.

### **Celebrating Our Outstanding Lobo Supervisors**

At the heart of The University of New Mexico's long-standing mission to provide students with a world-class education, conduct top-tier research, and deliver quality, compassionate health care is our extraordinary and talented employees. Our outstanding staff makes every day memorable and successful, and this week, we're honoring two Outstanding Supervisors for their exemplary service to UNM and the UNM community (spoiler: I'll be listing the winners at the end of this paragraph). Every Lobo is invited to join in recognizing these Lobo leaders at [a virtual ceremony on Friday, October 15, at 1:30 p.m. on Zoom](#). Congratulations to this year's honorees, Sever Bordeianu of the College of University Libraries & Learning Sciences (CULLS), and Sarah Shrum Davis of the Emerging Infections Programs, UNM Office of Community Health. Your leadership is clearly inspiring!

### **Ombuds Services Explore Options to Resolve Conflict Together**

In 2018, the American Bar Association declared the second Thursday of October Ombuds Day to recognize the ombuds profession, which has existed for centuries. In honor of the occasion, I would like to recognize the great work being done by the [UNM Ombuds Services for Staff](#), which serves our

campus by providing confidential informal dispute resolution for UNM employees. Conflict is inevitable in an organization as large as ours, especially under the many strains imposed by the pandemic, and it is important to offer alternatives that focus on people and recognize the value of effective forms of communication. This year, Ombuds Day is on Thursday, October 14, and Ombuds Services is inviting staff to [schedule](#) their own informal, and private ombuds visit. Similar services are available for [UNM faculty](#) and [graduate students](#) as well.

### **Forbes Names UNM Among Best Employers in New Mexico**

I've always believed that UNM should be known as a great place to learn, work, and live, and now Forbes Magazine has made it official by [naming The University of New Mexico as one of the top three best employers in New Mexico](#). The latest list ranks 1,330 employers that received the most recommendations from employees, [taking into consideration a number of factors](#), including how employers handled a global pandemic. Our designation by Forbes is a direct reflection of the remarkable work our employees do every day, and I am especially grateful for how successfully you all adapted to working, and living, under the restrictive conditions imposed by the pandemic. You make us the world-class institution we are, and I appreciate all of you!

### **Campus Interviews Scheduled for Dean of the School of Law Candidates**

I am pleased to announce that Provost Holloway has invited [four finalists to participate in interviews for the position of Dean of the School of Law](#), during the weeks of October 18-29, 2021. During their visits, these finalists will meet with faculty, staff, students, community and alumni. Additionally, all four candidates will hold an open presentation to the campus community. [The open presentations can be attended both in person or via Zoom](#), and I hope you'll join us in meeting with these exceptional candidates and providing your feedback as we search for our next Dean.

### **Lobo Living Room Features Anderson Dean**

There are exciting things going on at the Anderson School of Management (ASM) under the leadership of Dean Mitzi M. Montoya, and the UNM Alumni Association wants you to hear all about it as part of [the next Lobo Living Room on Thursday, October 21 at 6:30 p.m.](#) Dean Montoya will provide an update on ASM's recent partnership with Albuquerque Economic Development (AED), as part of a larger vision to combine the energy and ingenuity of community business leaders, policymakers, educators, nonprofits and stakeholders to work collectively toward achieving inclusive prosperity. I'm thrilled we're able to [bring this event to you in person](#), but Lobo Living Rooms are also available to attend over Zoom.

### **SHAC Flu Clinic an Enormous Success**

Finally, I want to thank everyone at Student Health and Counseling (SHAC), and their campus and community partners, who made our first flu shot clinic of the fall such an overwhelming success. In two days, SHAC administered more than 1,800 flu vaccines at its clinic on the main campus, which is a testament to the great coordination and teamwork of all involved. I was pleased to be among those vaccinated! If you missed it, we'll be offering [three more clinics in late October and early November](#).

Please remember to keep wearing masks indoors at all times in UNM facilities and follow all appropriate

signage. As always, I appreciate your continued care and diligence in looking out for yourselves and our pack.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes  
President