

# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



*April 18, 2022*

Good afternoon, Lobos —

Later this week, I have the pleasure of attending the UNM Alumni Awards dinner, and I'm reminded again of just how fortunate The University of New Mexico is to have such [supportive and enthusiastic alumni](#). Our more than 200,000 Lobo alums around the globe are truly our ambassadors to the world, bringing our culture of excellence and Lobo pride to their local communities, whether in Spain or Española, Los Angeles or Lordsburg.

They're also regularly paying it forward, going above and beyond to support Lobo students and the University, whether it's working with the UNM Office of Career Services to [provide career advice and mentoring](#), providing [support for scholarships](#), or generously [giving their time and resources to improve our campus and community](#). This Thursday, April 21, for example, the UNM Alumni Association hosts its [2nd Annual STEM Career Fair](#), providing alumni and graduating seniors with the opportunity to learn about career opportunities in New Mexico's STEM industries, and bringing Lobos together with representatives from Sandia National Laboratories, Amentum, TORC Robotics, and more. The fair is virtual, so [register today](#) and you can participate no matter where you may happen to be this Thursday at noon.

The UNM Alumni Association has also partnered with the College of Education and Human Sciences and the College of Arts & Sciences to host several Whistle Stop Tours, where students are invited to a free lunch panel and discussion with notable alumni about the role UNM played in their careers. After the discussion, students will have the opportunity to mingle with panelists to ask further questions on their education, degree, career path, and advice as they embark on their own career path. [The College of Education and Human Sciences panel happens tomorrow](#), April 19, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., while [the College of Arts & Sciences event is next Tuesday](#), April 26, from noon to 1:30 p.m.

As we joyfully head into commencement season for the UNM Class of 2022, I am always proud to hand our students their diplomas and send them out into the world not only as new college graduates, but as Lobos for life.

## **Thinking of the Ruidoso Community**

I have been following the news of the fires in the Ruidoso area with feelings of both sadness and despair for the lives lost, the New Mexicans displaced, and the destruction of more than 6,000 acres in Gavilan Canyon and beyond. I am so thankful for the fire fighters and first responders who continue to fight the fire and support the needs of the Ruidoso community. The hearts of the Lobo community are with all of you.

## **Honors College Junior Wins Truman Scholarship**

Lobos everywhere send their [warmest congratulations to Abrianna Morales for her selection as a prestigious Truman Scholar](#), one of only 58 students in the nation so honored in 2022. Abrianna is a junior Honors College student, majoring in Psychology and Criminology. I am so proud of her accomplishments and her

desire to make a difference in her community. Abrianna is a co-founder of [Sexual Assault Youth Support Network](#), which serves young sexual assault victims by providing support and resources. She plans to pursue a J.D. and Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology/Criminology with an interest in conducting research at the intersection of law, psychology, and criminology. As a Truman Scholar, she will participate in the national [Truman Scholars Leadership Week](#) in May. Congratulations, Abrianna; you truly embody the very best of Lobo excellence.

## **UNM Committed to Accessibility**

At UNM we strive to provide a supportive, inclusive community that ensures our rich educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities are accessible to all Lobos and those who visit our campuses. As we shared last fall, [UNM has been steadily working to improve certain accessibility elements around the campus](#) to align with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) and the Office of Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity (CEEO), which are spearheading this initiative, [have made great progress on prioritizing both physical and online ADA improvements and accessibility issues](#). Please know that if you are a person with a disability that we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate your needs. I would like to thank the many people whose contributions to accessibility have made UNM a more inclusive and accessible teaching, learning, living and working environment.

## **Anderson School of Management & College of Fine Arts Launch MBA in Film & Digital Arts**

With the new season of Better Call Saul premiering today, there's no question that film and television production remains one of New Mexico's fastest-growing industries, bringing more than \$600 million to our state annually. I'm excited, then, that UNM's Anderson School of Management has partnered with the UNM Film & Digital Arts Department to provide [a new MBA track focused on film and digital arts](#) beginning in August 2022. The MBA for Professionals program also allows early career professionals to pursue tracks in education, health care, finance, and general management. Students admitted to the new film and digital arts track will complete the Anderson MBA for Professionals coursework along with 12 credit hours from the UNM Film & Digital Arts Department. I am delighted to see our programs evolve to meet the interests of our students and needs of our economy, and this MBA program is an exciting addition to our academic offerings.

## **Act Locally at the Sustainability Expo**

One of the five goals set forth in [UNM 2040: Opportunity Defined](#), our long-term plan for the future of The University of New Mexico, is a [commitment to long-term sustainability](#)--that is, ensuring we have the necessary human, financial, and physical resources necessary for the achievement of our aspirations, while protecting the natural environment. It's never too late to learn more about a sustainable environment, and this Thursday, the UNM Office of Sustainability, and others, are hosting their [12th Annual Sustainability Expo](#), from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Cornell Mall. Come by to learn more about sustainable practices while enjoying local food and local bands.

## **Forensic Psychology Fellowship Goes Global**

Going online in the face of COVID had an unexpected impact on the UNM Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences' postdoctoral fellowship in forensic psychology: [it went global](#). The Law and Mental Health Lecture series, launched in 2018 to provide instruction largely to lawyers and psychologists to support

the legal system, has seen its list of attendees for its weekly seminars jump from fewer than 20 per week to nearly 700 participants from around the globe. The lecture series allows participants to earn continuing education credits as well as providing forensic psychologists with the most up-to-date information they need to successfully evaluate criminal defendants' competence to stand trial or to testify in court regarding the effects of mental illness, drugs, alcohol, and post-traumatic stress.

### **Use of Increased Maximum Annual Leave Extended**

With many of you hopefully planning for vacation time this summer, I'm happy to announce that the date to use accrued annual leave exceeding 252 hours has been extended from June 30 to August 31, 2022 for faculty and staff on the central, branch and HSC campuses. Annual leave is a vital benefit for maintaining physical and mental well-being. With the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, both individually and as an institution, taking time to recharge has never been more important, and this extension is intended to give our employees the opportunity to use their well-earned leave during the vacation season. You can view your Annual Leave balance in [MyUNM](#). For more details, read the [Temporary Annual Leave Policy](#), and please work with your supervisors to coordinate leave requests while ensuring appropriate coverage in your units.

### **UNM Leadership Updates**

Last week, Lobos faculty, staff, and students had the opportunity to meet with the last of our [three finalists for Vice President for Student Affairs](#), as in-person interviews continued on campus for this vital position. Also completed this week were interviews for the Chancellor of UNM-Valencia, as we work to have this post ready to fill when [Chancellor Alice V. Letteney retires on July 31](#). The provost will be reviewing the UNM community feedback on the candidates and will provide further information on these searches in the coming weeks.

The [national search for a new dean of the School of Engineering is under way](#), following the announcement that Dean Christos Christodoulou is stepping down to return to teaching and research. Dean Christodoulou has graciously agreed to continue to stay in his role until the new dean begins their term in January 2023. Meanwhile, I am pleased to note that the Provost has appointed Dr. Stephanie McIver, director of Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) Counseling Services, as the [interim executive director of SHAC](#). She succeeds Dr. James Wilterding, who will continue to serve on the SHAC leadership team in the role of co-medical director.

### **Ice Cream for the End of the Semester**

It's been a long semester—and with both finals and commencement just around the corner, I know you can use a break. I hope you'll join me and my husband Jeff next Monday, April 25, as we hand out ice cream floats—orange, cream, or root beer floats will be available—at the Cactus Garden at Zimmerman Library starting at 11:30 am. They tend to go fast, so come by as soon as you can—then say hello and take a moment to enjoy a beautiful New Mexico afternoon with your fellow Lobos. Even better, the first 300 students will receive their floats in a commemorative, color-changing cup. This is our first ice cream social since the onset of COVID-19, and Jeff and I are truly excited about seeing you all there.

### **Save the date for UNM2040 Launch**

Since beginning the UNM 2040: Opportunity Defined planning process, [I have been inspired by your enthusiasm and engagement](#), as we have imagined how to apply our shared vision, values and goals to our

own scholarship, research operations and Lobo way of life. We are now ready to launch the plan and dig into the work, and your ongoing participation and commitment are needed more than ever. The kick-off event will be on May 6, from 12 noon - 1:30 pm in SUB Ballrooms B & C, and refreshments will be provided. I will be introducing our goal champions and asking for your interactive participation. For those who can attend in person, the event will be live-streamed and posted to social media - those tuning in remotely will also be offered ways to engage. UNM 2040 represents a true campus-wide collaboration, and I am eager to move into the implementation phase as we make our goals a reality. Please join me and come ready to fully explore how each Lobo can contribute to the goals we have set for ourselves.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes  
President