



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



August 1, 2022

Good afternoon, Lobos—

I know the unpredictability of the pandemic required many of us to alter plans, cancel vacations, or delay celebrations—and as a result, many Lobo employees saw unused annual leave slowly accumulate with each passing month. Over the last two years, The University of New Mexico has several times temporarily adjusted its leave policies to permit employees to accrue annual leave beyond the normal cap of 252 hours—and as of last Fall, the policy was extended through Summer 2022 to give faculty and staff ample opportunity to use up those extra accrued hours for a vacation or a much-needed break.

As we were reminded by Human Resources late last week, the current leave extension [expires on Wednesday, August 31](#), so be sure to schedule and use any extra hours you may have prior to that date. I genuinely appreciate the sacrifices you've all made since the first case of COVID-19 appeared in New Mexico back in early 2020, and as we prepare for a successful Fall semester more than two years later, I encourage you to use any extra time you may have before our leave policy resets at the end of August.

Lobo Selected to Represent Mountain West for NCAA Woman of the Year

What a showing by Lobo softball player Andrea Howard, who was named not only as [UNM's nominee for NCAA Woman of the Year](#) but was also recently [selected by the Mountain West as our conference's sole nominee](#) for the honor. Andrea is one of [151 athletes nominated and one of only 53 nominees representing NCAA Division I schools](#). The NCAA Woman of the Year Selection Committee will choose 10 nominees from each division to make up the national Top 30 honorees, which will be announced in October. Congratulations, Andrea! We're proud of you.

UNM Brings Lifesaving Equipment to Albuquerque Fire & Rescue

As New Mexico's flagship university—and especially as the state's only teaching hospital—I am always pleased when we can share our skills and resources with community partners. In a new and literally life-saving partnership with Albuquerque Fire Rescue, [The University of New Mexico Hospital is providing a special ambulance-mounted heart-lung bypass machine](#) that can be used to ensure that cardiac arrest patients continue to receive a vital supply of oxygen to the brain as they are sped to the hospital, when every precious second counts. While technical training and appropriate health protocols are still being updated, the program should be fully operational by the first of the year. My thanks to our team at UNMH for their leadership and compassion; you are truly changing and saving lives.

Improvements Begin at Central and Girard

Last week, work began on [transforming one of the most visible, busiest, and understated corners of campus into a welcoming gateway](#), as construction began on improvements at the northwest corner of Central and

Girard. The four-month-long project will involve removing barriers and deteriorating infrastructure, making the corner much safer and welcoming, as well as the installation of the UNM monogram logo, literally making our mark on historic Route 66. I very much appreciate the leadership of the [Associated Students at the University of New Mexico \(ASUNM\)](#), which secured the funding for this much needed improvement to our campus back in 2020.

A Reminder About Masks and Vaccinations

The University of New Mexico continues to recommend that masks be worn indoors at all UNM campuses. Bernalillo, McKinley, Sandoval, and Valencia counties are [presently categorized as “high COVID-19 community levels” by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

This is also your regular reminder that all UNM faculty, staff and students who access campus facilities, housing, programs, services, and activities in person [must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19, subject to limited exemptions, before September 30](#). Please continue to refer to our [Bring Back the Pack website](#) for more information on masking protocols, as well as the vaccination requirement.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President