



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



February 20, 2023

Good afternoon, Lobos --

As New Mexico's only R1 institution, we understand the great importance and responsibility of the research we conduct and apply, and the great impact it can have on improving the lives of our citizens.

Last November, The University of New Mexico, in partnership with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED), was honored to host the launch of a new statewide initiative to research the food and housing needs of students at public colleges and universities in New Mexico and highlight resources devoted to food security at higher education institutions. This comprehensive study builds on [UNM's Basic Needs Project](#), developed in 2020 by a team led by UNM Professor Sarita Cargas, which collected two years of data about food and shelter insecurity in our community.

And now, through Wednesday, March 1, you can help us collect even more information and data on this critical issue by participating in the [Human Rights Survey](#). This survey is part of the [first-in-the-nation statewide study to assess the prevalence of food and housing insecurity among faculty, staff, and students](#). It is the creation of a truly interdisciplinary research team of UNM faculty, staff, and students from the Honors College, College of Education & Human Science's Nutrition and Dietetics Program, College of Population Health, Anderson School of Management, and UNM's School of Law.

Your participation will provide greater context on the health of the workforce in higher education and provide a [greater understanding of food and housing insecurity among our students](#). The data will be used to inform the [Basic Needs Grand Challenge](#) and the creation of evidence-based interventions and will directly impact the daily lives of individuals in communities across our state.

I appreciate your taking part in this survey and helping us to better understand food and housing insecurity across our state. It is in our best interests as educators, administrators, leaders, and human beings to understand the needs of our students, faculty, and staff, and to use that understanding to respond to those needs effectively and compassionately.

Black Alumni Chapter Announces 2023 Trailblazer Award Winners

Over the weekend, The University of New Mexico Black Alumni Chapter [honored the recipients of its 2023 Trailblazer Awards](#), and I am pleased to congratulate Gerald M. Byers, Brandi Stone, and Simone Vann as this year's winners. The Trailblazer Award is given to distinguished Black alumni who are the first to achieve a milestone in their professional position or career, while helping pave the way for other professionals in a similar field. These honorees truly inspire all of us, and their commitment to their passions, their professions, and their communities makes us all proud to be fellow Lobos.

Interdisciplinary Substance Use and Brain Injury Building Officially Opens

It was a thrill to celebrate the formal dedication of the newest addition to The University of New Mexico's health care corridor as [we officially opened the doors to our Interdisciplinary Substance Use and Brain Injury Building](#). As a new wing on the west side of Domenici Hall, this 15,700-square-foot facility provides Lobo health care providers and researchers with the state-of-the-art equipment and resources they need to monitor, stimulate, and simulate brain activity. This place truly reflects so many of our priorities and values as a university, and it's more than just a research facility; it's a home to innovation that will serve all New Mexicans—truly delivering more as we advance our unique brand of compassionate care that will reach into every community in our state.

Be on Alert as We Test Our Emergency Notification Systems

Get ready for a flurry of notifications and activity on Tuesday, February 21, at 11:02 a.m., as [The University of New Mexico will be testing all parts of its emergency notification systems](#) across all campuses. This will include sirens, e-mail, text messaging, social media updates and UNM website notifications. We'll be reminding you again on Tuesday at 10:45 a.m. It's all part of our ongoing effort to [keep our campuses as safe as possible](#).

Virtual Forum on COVID-19 Vaccination Now Available Online

I want to thank everyone who participated in last week's virtual forum on UNM's Administrative Mandate on Required COVID-19 Vaccination. It was an informative session, with more than 200 attendees, and we received plenty of great questions—so many, in fact, that we'll be providing some additional guidance and responding to a list of Frequently Asked Questions. If you were unable to attend the forum, [it is available to watch online](#) in its entirety.

Our next steps will be to reflect on the current recommendations from our Health Protocols Committee and consider the issues brought to leadership by the community, before making the best-informed decision for our University in a timely manner – you can look forward to further communications in the coming weeks. I would like to emphasize that if the mandate is lifted, that in no way precludes us from continuing to support COVID-19 and other vaccination efforts within our community, as well as exploring new policies to keep us all safe and healthy.

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

Garnett S. Stokes

President