



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



March 20, 2023

Good afternoon, Lobos--

As this year's 60-day legislative session came to a close on Saturday, lawmakers passed the state budget for FY24, which includes a higher-education budget for all institutions statewide of \$1.2 billion, an increase of 18.2% from FY23. It is evident that our lawmakers and state leaders understand how important the investment in higher education is to our state's future. Along with the state's budget, several key bills and appropriations measures are currently under review by Governor Lujan Grisham.

The most significant appropriation affecting all of New Mexico's institutions of higher education is the Opportunity Scholarship, which received generous bipartisan investment. The financial incentives it has afforded students, along with those provided by the established Legislative Lottery Scholarship, have paved the way for substantially greater access to higher education. Last year, across all UNM campuses, more than 11,000 students received more than \$60 million from the Opportunity Scholarship. Our student leaders in ASUNM and GPSA were instrumental in ensuring that the needs and concerns of students were effectively conveyed in Santa Fe, including advocating for the Opportunity Scholarship and the \$10 million appropriated for STEM-H graduate scholarships in New Mexico.

The legislature also approved a \$55 million investment in higher education research, allowing us to bring additional external grant funds into the state and advancing New Mexico by creating knowledge and supporting our economy. As the premier research institution in the state and the only R1, this is critical not only to the work we do but to our ability to recruit and retain outstanding and innovative researchers.

We are incredibly pleased to report that the transformational South Campus Tax Increment Development District (TIDD), a public-public collaboration between UNM, the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and the State of New Mexico, received strong legislative support and has been sent to the Governor's desk for her consideration. I am truly inspired by our shared vision to address critical community challenges by building an educated, healthy and economically vigorous New Mexico.

We are also encouraged by the State's continued support of education and health profession programs. The legislature responded favorably to several UNM-led workforce pipeline initiatives related to teacher education and nursing. Additional UNM-related highlights of the session include increases in Instruction and General (I&G) funding for UNM's central campus, UNM Health & Health Sciences and our branch campuses, including an increase in compensation, reflecting the value for our talented employees. And outside of the overall state budget, the Legislature also increased funding for programs and infrastructure, and I am grateful for their continued investment in the institution and its many stakeholders.

The past two months have been critical to ensuring the ongoing success of our university, and I would like to thank everyone, especially our student leaders, legislators, UNM government relations team, and Council

of University Presidents who worked tirelessly to advocate in Santa Fe for UNM and higher education. Additionally, I am appreciative of the many Lobos who met with and provided information to legislative leaders to keep UNM's priorities top-of-mind and to share how the University continues to provide support to local communities and the state.

I am grateful for the thoughtful consideration the governor and the legislature have given to many UNM priorities and programs and hope to hear of some positive final legislative outcomes soon. Further details will be provided in the coming days and weeks as we move toward our budget summit and legislation is signed by the Governor.

Lobo Researchers Deliver Key Lectures

As New Mexico's only Carnegie-designated Research 1 institution, our curiosity and constant pursuit of new knowledge infuses everything we do at The University of New Mexico. Our commitment to innovation and research spans across all five of our goals articulated in UNM 2040, from advancing opportunities for all New Mexicans to strengthening our university and its local and global impact. I am constantly amazed and excited by the endless possibilities explored by our innovative researchers, and over the next two weeks, you'll have the opportunity to hear from two of them.

On Wednesday, March 22, Vice President for Research Ellen Fisher will present [*The 2023 State of UNM Research*](#), providing an update on the exciting research happening at UNM. The lecture will be in the PAIS Auditorium beginning at 4 p.m. While this is a hybrid event, [registration is required](#).

The following week, on Thursday, March 30, UNM will bestow one of its highest honors on our faculty in recognition of their creative research when we present the Annual Research Lecture, honoring Dr. Vojo Deretic for his work in autophagy. As part of the program, Dr. Deretic will present a lecture spotlighting his innovative work. This hybrid event begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Domenici Auditorium, and [registration is required](#). I hope you'll have the opportunity to listen to one or both of these amazing Lobo researchers.

Women's Resource Center Seeks Nominations for Outstanding New Mexico Women

In honor of Women's History Month, UNM's [Women's Resource Center \(WRC\)](#) wants to help [celebrate the women who inspire you](#). Now through March 24, you can [nominate a notable woman](#) who deserves to be acknowledged for her positive impact. The winner will receive a gift basket and certificate, and all nominees will be honored at a special ceremony at the University Club on March 30. Let WRC know about someone special.

Lobo Student-Athletes Make Us Proud

After an exciting season that saw them exceed expectations and finish the year with a record of 22-12, the Lobo Men's Basketball team made its first post-season appearance since 2014, [playing in the first round of the National Invitational Tournament \(NIT\) in the Pit last week](#). While the loss to Utah Valley meant the end of the season, I know the entire Lobo community is proud of what our team and Coach Richard Pitino have accomplished, bringing joy and excitement to Albuquerque and The Pit. Congratulations on a terrific season, and we'll see you next year.

Congratulations are also in order for our Lobo Women's Basketball team, who returned to the post-season for the third straight year. The Lobos [defeated Northern Arizona University in the first round of the Women's NIT last Thursday](#), before [falling to Washington in a hard-fought second round](#) on Sunday. My thanks to Coach Mike Bradbury and the team for another exciting season.

Finally, I was thrilled to hear that Lobo golfer Lauren Lehigh was [named the Mountain West Women's Golfer of the Week](#). Lauren is the second Lobo golfer to be so honored this season, coming just three weeks after [Myah McDonald was similarly recognized by the Mountain West](#). Congratulations to both of these outstanding golfers and team leaders; the Lobo family is proud of you.

UNM Board of Regents Endorse New UNM Mission Statement

In support of the UNM 2040: Opportunity Defined strategic planning process, The University of New Mexico Board of Regents has endorsed a new UNM Mission Statement that reflects the expectations we have of ourselves to live up to our distinct identity and purpose. The updated Mission Statement has been published in the [Regents' Policy Manual: Foreword, University Administrative Policies and Procedures \(UAP\) 1000: UNM History, Mission, and Organization](#), and [Faculty Handbook A20: Mission Statement](#). I hope you'll take a moment to review the refined mission statement; through our shared mission, each of us continues to define all of us.

Ramadan Begins on Wednesday

Ramadan begins at sundown this Wednesday, March 22, with the arrival of the crescent moon, and ends with Eid al-Fitr on Friday, April 21. *Ramadan Mubarek* to all who observe this holiest of Muslim months and our best wishes to you and your families.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President