



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



July 3, 2023

Good afternoon, Lobos --

Tomorrow is Independence Day, and I want to wish everyone a safe and happy Fourth of July as we celebrate 247 years of American independence.

No matter how you celebrate the occasion, I hope you'll take a moment to reflect on how very fortunate we are that nearly two and a half centuries ago, our country's independence was declared, based on the principles of liberty, freedom and democracy that still unite us a nation. It's also a great opportunity to reflect on the true meaning of our citizenship and the tenets upon which it is founded—liberty, equality and opportunity. Courage gives us the voice to speak freely; imagination drives us to create new pathways to prosperity; and unbeatable determination empowers us to be better as a people under any circumstances.

UNM will be closed in observance of tomorrow's federal holiday, so enjoy your day off!

OVPR Welcomes New Associate Vice President

Last week, our dynamic and innovative [Office of the Vice President for Research](#) welcomed [new Associate Vice President Omathanu "Om" Perumal](#), who comes to The University of New Mexico from South Dakota State University, where he most recently served as associate dean for research. Perumal will also have a faculty home appointment in our College of Pharmacy, providing even more opportunities for creative cross-campus collaborations. Welcome to UNM, Dr. Perumal; we are delighted to have you here.

Chancellor Appoints New Dean of Instruction at UNM-Gallup

Longtime Lobo faculty member **John Zimmerman**, a professor of Fine Art at UNM-Gallup, where he is also chair of the Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Division, has been appointed by Chancellor Sabrina Ezzell as [UNM-Gallup's new dean of instruction](#). Professor Zimmerman will replace Dan Primožic, who has served as dean for the past five years and is stepping down at the end of June to return to teaching. Congratulations to Professor Zimmerman on his new role at UNM-Gallup, and my thanks to Professor Primožic for his five years of service as dean.

Advance at UNM Announces 9 Women in STEM Award Winners

The Women in STEM awards, hosted by Advance at UNM in collaboration with the UNM Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Research, [recently announced the nine faculty members](#) who will be honored with the 2023 Women in STEM awards.

The recipients this year are: **Lisa Barrow**, an assistant professor in Biology; **Jessica Feezell**, associate professor in Political Science; **Adriana Molina Garzon**, assistant professor in Public Administration; **Kathy Kambic**, associate professor in Landscape Architecture; **Sunaina Shenoy**, assistant professor in Special Education; **Erin Wilkinson**, associate professor in Linguistics; **Lindsay Worthington**, associate professor

in Earth and Planetary Sciences; **Rosa Vallejos Yopán**, associate professor in Linguistics; and **Heng Zuo**, assistant professor in Mechanical Engineering.

I am so proud of these women and their thoughtful proposals that are enhancing our communities and improving our planet. Congratulations to our winners and my thanks, as always, to Julia Fulghum, director of [Advance at UNM](#), for all the work she and her team do to encourage and reward women in science.

Interim Deans Named for Honors, University College, Graduate Studies

Provost James Holloway recently named [interim deans for the Honors College, University College, and Graduate Studies](#), ensuring seamless leadership in these areas as we launch national searches for each of these critical positions later this summer. A familiar face will oversee the Honors College, as Professor **Leslie Donovan**, who has been associated with the Honors program since the 1990s, will serve as interim dean, effective immediately. At University College, **David Weiss**, an associate professor in the Communication & Journalism Department, also immediately begins his term as interim dean, while **Maria Lane**, a professor in the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, as well as a recent Presidential Teaching Fellow, will serve as interim dean for Graduate Studies beginning August 7. I appreciate the leadership of these exceptional faculty members; The University of New Mexico is fortunate to have such talented faculty overseeing these academic units during this transitional period.

UNM Honors Six New Distinguished Professors

Speaking of talented faculty: every year, we ask our faculty to let us know who inspires them, both as colleagues and as scholars. From a flurry of enthusiastic nominations, and after a rigorous nomination and review process, a select number of professors are honored by The University of New Mexico with the title of Distinguished Professor, a distinction awarded to those who have demonstrated outstanding achievements and who are nationally and internationally renowned as scholars. It is, in fact, the highest distinction that we bestow upon our faculty.

This year, we have the honor of [elevating six faculty to these elite ranks](#), representing a wide and colorful variety of knowledge, expertise, and experience from across our colleges and campuses. Congratulations to the following professors: Professor **Ivan Deutch**, Department of Physics & Astronomy; Professor **Pavel Lushnikov**, Department of Mathematics & Statistics; Professor **Jennifer Rudgers** Department of Biology; Professor **C. William Shuttleworth**, Department of Neurology, School of Medicine; Professor **Felisa Smith**, Department of Biology; and Professor **John Stormont**, Department of Civil, Construction & Environmental Engineering.

Congratulations to our 2023 honorees. You are an inspiration to The University of New Mexico community and a credit to Lobos everywhere.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President