



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



July 10, 2023

Good afternoon, Lobos --

At The University of New Mexico, we often say that “each of us defines all of us”—and when it comes to our exceptional faculty, this has never been truer. Each week seems to bring more news about the accomplishments of our Lobo faculty, who make The University of New Mexico such an extraordinary institution. I am proud that UNM remains a place where we as a pack can celebrate the achievements of our individual Lobos.

As always, there are almost too many remarkable achievements to count, but I’ll mention just a few from these past weeks--beginning with the recent announcement that **Eric Lang**, an assistant professor of nuclear engineering, will be serving as the [principal investigator on two new projects funded with grants of more than \\$1 million from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Nuclear Energy University Programs](#). The first project, in collaboration with Los Alamos National Laboratory, involves moderating neutrons in microreactors; the second involves improvements in the existing hot cell of UNM’s reactor, resulting in new research capabilities campuswide. Congratulations to Professor Lang on these exciting projects, which are great not only for our university, but for our state as well. As U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich noted, these investments “are further proof that New Mexico remains at the heart of important advances in nuclear technologies.”

Also of great importance to our state and our state heritage is work being done by Associate Professor **Damián Vergara Wilson** who, as the coordinator of the Spanish as a Heritage Language Program at The University of New Mexico, is working to [preserve and document the unique dialect of our region, which is in danger of dying with each passing generation](#). With its creative conjugations and use of indigenous terms, many in our state still speak a Spanish that sounds like nothing else—and Professor Wilson is part of effort to save a dialect that dates back more than 400 years. You can read more about his efforts and ongoing challenges in the [New York Times](#), and in related articles at [The Associated Press](#) and [Telemundo](#).

Finally, our College of Education & Human Sciences (COEHS) continues to be home to some of the finest educators anywhere, and I’m particularly proud of the strides our faculty are making in the important field of Special Education. Recently, [two of our COEHS faculty in the Special Education Department were recognized nationally](#) at the 147th Annual Meeting of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), with Assistant Professor **Sarah Carlson** receiving the Jim Thompson Early Career Scholarship and Distinguished Professor **Ruth Luckasson** earning the AAIDD Presidential Award for her outstanding leadership at the state, regional, and national levels. Congratulations to both on this esteemed recognition.

These are only a few of the remarkable achievements of our extraordinary faculty, and I continue to appreciate the work of our entire academic team. Your innovation, compassion and professionalism are a true reflection of our objectives as a university and make us all proud to be Lobos.

## Stevenson Named Head of Human Resources

A familiar face has been selected to take the helm at Human Resources, as Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration Teresa Costantinidis, after a thorough national search, named [Kevin Stevenson as UNM's Vice President for Human Resources & Chief Human Resources Officer \(CHRO\)](#). Stevenson, who has served UNM in a variety of leadership roles since 2005, has been an assistant vice president for Human Resources since September 2021, following the departure of Vice President Dorothy Anderson. As CHRO, he will manage the various component activities of UNM's Human Resources Department, ensuring that all HR programs and initiatives are integrated and effective in supporting the mission, goals, and objectives of the institution. It is a pleasure to welcome him to his new position.

## UNM-Taos Wins Big by Giving Big

As part of our 2023 [UNM Big Give](#)--which raised more than \$800,000 for the Lobo community—I proposed a little competition among our colleges and branch campuses: namely, the five units with the highest proportional rates of participation would receive an additional \$2,500 to be incorporated into their final fundraising totals. [The winner was our UNM-Taos campus](#), followed by the UNM Health Sciences Library and Informatics Center, UNM Honors College, UNM Intercollegiate Athletics, and UNM College of Pharmacy. Congratulations to our northernmost campus, and my thanks to our other four winners for their commitment to our community. As UNM-Taos Chancellor Gutierrez noted, “all hands on deck’ means that all hands are important and valued equally in making a difference for our students and our community.” I couldn’t agree more.

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

Garnett S. Stokes  
President