



*October 9, 2023*

Good afternoon, Lobos --

Today, as we celebrate [Indigenous Peoples' Day](#), I encourage all Lobos to reflect on, and find strength in, our unique culture and history here in New Mexico and at UNM. For thousands of years, native peoples have lived in the Southwestern United States; today, Native Americans make up nearly 11 percent of our state's population, giving New Mexico the third largest Native population per capita in the country.

When The University of New Mexico officially opened its doors in 1892—three years after our establishment by the New Mexico Territorial Legislature—108 students were enrolled in classes. None of them were Native American; in fact, almost no Native American students attended UNM from 1892 to 1927. That changed beginning with the tenure of President James Zimmerman from 1927 to 1944, and since that time, thousands of Native American students have successfully attended and graduated from The University of New Mexico.

Today, UNM is very fortunate to benefit from the students, faculty, and staff who come to us from New Mexico's 23 tribal nations, including 19 Pueblos, three Apache Tribes and the Navajo Nation, and the many more who come from tribes beyond the borders of our state. We take pride in recruiting Native students, and in providing campus resources like [American Indian Student Services](#) to give our Native students access to the support they need to ensure they arrive here as enthusiastic students and leave as proud Lobo graduates and alumni.

Finally, we also recognize that The University of New Mexico sits at the very heart of Indian Country, and, in particular, on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. Our branch campuses, too, occupy lands of Indigenous people in their respective regions, whether it's the Red Willow People of the Taos Pueblo or the Pueblo of Zuni Nation and Navajo Nation. By respectfully honoring our history through our [Indigenous Peoples' Land and Territory Acknowledgment](#)—we have similar acknowledgments for our campuses in [Taos](#) and [Gallup](#)--we formally, and gratefully, recognize Indigenous Peoples as a vital part of our Lobo DNA.

### **Wrapping Up Hispanic Heritage Month with Excellence Awards at HSC**

Hispanic Heritage Month 2023 officially comes to an end on Sunday, October 15, but there's still plenty to celebrate during this final week. Tomorrow morning at 11 a.m., the UNM Health Sciences Office for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion will present its [Excellence Awards](#), honoring individuals who have exhibited exceptional support of the Latino/a/x, Hispanic, or Spanish-origin communities. There's still time to [register for this in-person event](#). For a comprehensive list of more events and celebrations, please visit [the UNM Department of Anthropology's annual Hispanic Heritage Month website](#).

## Celebrating Twenty Years of Fall Frenzy

Last Friday morning, I had the pleasure of welcoming our students who were participating in the annual ASUNM Fall Frenzy—now celebrating its 20th year—as they worked together to clean up our campus just in time for next week's Homecoming celebrations. It was a great example of our institutional commitment under UNM 2040 to provide a joyful learning environment, but mainly it was a fun and inspiring display of community pride and school spirit. I'm proud of our students for keeping this tradition alive and flourishing for two decades and for setting such a positive example of what true community service and pride in place looks like.

My thanks to everyone at ASUNM and the UNM Student Activities Center who made this event such a success. I also want to give a special thanks to Richard Schorr, Manager, Grounds & Landscaping, in UNM's Environmental Services Division, and his team of more than 30 gardeners, groundskeepers, arborists, turf techs, and equipment operators, who worked for two weeks to prepare for this event. Well done.

## Finalists Announced for VP for Institutional Support Services

Three finalists for the position of [vice president for Institutional Support Services](#) have been announced and have been invited to visit our campus over the next two weeks. Finalist interviews will include open forums and meetings for each candidate with campus administrators and staff beginning Monday, October 9. The three finalists are **Michael Pieper**, from the University of North Dakota, whose open forum was held on campus this afternoon; **Shawna Wolfe**, from Ohio University, whose open forum will be held on Wednesday, October 11, from 1-2 p.m.; and **Robert Robinson**, of Pomona College, whose open forum is scheduled for Monday, October 16, from 1-2 p.m. More information, including full candidate bios, is available on the [Executive Search committee's website](#).

## Experience the Annular Eclipse with Experienced Astronomers

A large swath of New Mexico, including Albuquerque and UNM, is in for some of the best views in the nation of the latest annular eclipse, when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun on Saturday, October 14. UNM's Department of Physics & Astronomy is ready to help the community make the most of the experience by [hosting an Enchanted Eclipse viewing party, starting at 8:30 a.m. out on Johnson Field](#), where you can watch the eclipse with commentary, context, and guidance provided by astronomers from UNM, MIT, and the Air Force Research Laboratory. [This event is free, food and coffee will be available from several local food trucks, and all attendees will receive the solar glasses](#) needed to safely watch the eclipse, culminating in the "ring of fire" effect as the Moon blocks most of the Sun at 10:36 a.m. You can also [pick up your solar glasses in advance at the Physics, Astronomy, and Interdisciplinary Science building](#).

## Nursing Receives \$4M for Midwifery Program

The [University of New Mexico College of Nursing](#), a driving force in training nurse-midwives, has been [awarded a \\$4 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\) for the "Advancing Midwifery Outcomes and Resiliency" initiative](#). Spearheaded by dedicated alumna, nurse, and educator Felina Ortiz, this grant aims to increase the number of diverse nurse-midwives, strengthen

community partnerships, and equip students to address a broader spectrum of maternal healthcare needs. The grant will provide scholarships of up to \$40,000 to support the education of up to 65 students over four years, ensuring UNM's continued contribution of highly qualified nurse-midwives to New Mexico, and beyond.

### **Restore Your Resilience at the Level Up Expo**

UNM Benefits & Employee Wellness, UNM Employee & Organizational Development, UNM Staff Council, HSC Wellness, and the UNM Dean of Students Office are joining forces to offer [the Level Up Expo, two weeks of wellness, enrichment, and professional development](#), providing guidance on new workplace environments, high department turnover, and personal burnout, in addition to issues of grief, loneliness, and health and financial concerns. This year's theme is Restoring Your Resilience, and the expo runs from October 17-26. A full schedule of in-person and online events is available [here](#).

### **Ombuds Services Explore Options to Resolve Conflict Together**

The ombuds profession has existed for centuries, and in 2018, the American Bar Association designated the second Thursday of October as Ombuds Day to acknowledge and celebrate the ombuds role in peacemaking. In honor of Ombuds Day 2023, I would like to recognize the great work being done by the newly consolidated [UNM Ombuds Services](#), which serves our campus by providing Lobos with collaboration and peacemaking. Collaboration is critical and challenging in any organization like ours, and it is important to offer support to people doing this challenging work and to recognize the value of supporting constructive communication. UNM Ombuds Services is a no-barrier, first-stop for UNM staff, faculty, and their co-workers, as well as graduate students seeking guidance, information, and insight from a trusted, skilled neutral party in a setting that is confidential, independent, and informal. This year, Ombuds Day is on Thursday, October 12. Mark the occasion by scheduling your own informal, and private, ombuds visit.

### **Nominate a Lobo for the Sarah Belle Brown Award**

There's still plenty of time to submit nominations for the [Sarah Belle Brown Award](#), which I have the pleasure of presenting annually to one faculty member, one staff member, and one student for outstanding service to the community. Nominations are due by 5 p.m. this Friday, October 13, so [nominate an extraordinary Lobo today](#).

Finally, remember that Fall Break for students is this Thursday and Friday. Enjoy your well-deserved break, and we'll see you on Monday, ready to take on the last half of the Fall 2023 semester.

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

Garnett S. Stokes  
President