



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



March 4, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos--

March is Women's History Month, a time to reflect on the extraordinary contributions of women throughout history and celebrate their indelible impact on society. This month provides us with a dedicated opportunity to honor the trailblazers, visionaries, and everyday heroes who have shaped our world.

At The University of New Mexico, we recognize the invaluable role that women play in our success and growth. Although women have been on the front lines of our history for as long as we've been a nation, many of their achievements remain anonymous or uncredited to this day, still awaiting the writers and researchers who will discover them and tell their stories. At The University of New Mexico, we're writing those stories every day through the many inspiring women we call our students, mentors, colleagues, and leaders.

It is also worth celebrating some of the many programs and resources we offer at UNM to support and promote women. Our [UNM Women's Resource Center](#), for example, has been advocating for and empowering women since its founding in 1972. We are fortunate to have our [Advance at UNM](#) program, which champions the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women and other underrepresented groups in STEM. We are also home to the [Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Program](#), one of the oldest of its kind in the nation, as well as the [UNM Feminist Research Institute](#), dedicated to scholarship on women, gender, and sexuality.

As always, The UNM Department of Anthropology has created a [comprehensive website](#) of related UNM organizations, events, and scholars, as well as background on Women's History Month, and a sampling of research, news, organizations, and even Ted Talks. I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on the contributions of women in our history and in our own lives.

Advance at UNM Explores Free Speech and Productive Dialogue on Campus

[Advance at UNM](#), along with [Academic Affairs](#), the [Center for Teaching & Learning](#) and the [UNM School of Law](#), are hosting two events for UNM faculty and staff to help understand the current free speech climate and consider best practices for making sure campus conversations stay civil. A [March 19 webinar](#), *Academic Freedom on Campus: Professional and Personal Reflections*, will feature the Chair of the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee and UNM Constitutional law scholars who will offer guidance on these topics. A [March 29 workshop](#), *Talking Across Differences: Creating Conditions for Productive Dialogue*, will provide ways for faculty and staff to have conversations on campus and beyond, including through a restorative justice lens. This workshop will be led by Mikhail Lyubansky, and staff from the Center for Teaching & Learning will help facilitate discussions and answer questions about CTL support for the development of community agreements. [Learn more](#) and register for these important events.

Optical Science and Engineering Celebrates 40 Years

The University of New Mexico's Optical Science and Engineering (OSE) Program [commemorates its 40th anniversary on March 7-8](#) with two days of special events and speakers. Since its establishment in 1983, our OSE Program has produced more than 270 PhD graduates and maintains strong collaborations with institutions like Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratories. The anniversary celebration underscores the program's crucial role in advancing optics, photonics, and cutting-edge technologies. Some events require registration, so [be sure to RSVP](#).

Lobo Researchers Explore Working Conditions for Oil and Gas Workers

The University of New Mexico's Center for Social Policy (CSP) and the College of Population Health (COPH) have conducted a [comprehensive study on the challenges faced by New Mexico's oil and gas workers](#). Framed by our [Just Transition to Green Energy Grand Challenge](#), Lobo researchers explored conditions currently faced by oil and gas workers to inform workforce training as the state moves toward cleaner forms of energy. [Their report](#) found that workers suffered from a higher rate of accidents and fatalities—due in part to prolonged work hours and proximity to heavy machinery—and recommended increasing investments in safety nets and adult education programs, as well as prioritizing safer working conditions. My thanks to our team for their invaluable research; as the state navigates its transition to clean energy, this report spotlights the critical importance of inclusive strategies and support for affected communities.

Thank You For Attending the State of the University

I want to thank everyone who attended my annual State of the University speech today in the Student Union Building, and the more than 250 who joined the livestream. It was a privilege to reflect on the past year and to look to our future as Lobos with pride and optimism. If you didn't get a chance to attend in person, my entire presentation is available to watch online, either [on my website](#) or on [UNM's YouTube Channel](#).

Spring Break and Spring Forward

Spring Break begins next Monday, March 11, and continues through Friday, March 15. To our students, congratulations on your successes during the first half of the spring semester. I hope you take time to enjoy yourselves and relax next week before coming back and finishing strong. And don't forget to set your clocks forward one hour when you go to bed on Saturday night; it's the beginning of Daylight Saving Time.

And Finally...

For the latest on Lobo research, be sure to check out the most recent episode of our ["It's \(Probably\) Not Rocket Science" Podcast](#), wherever you get your podcasts.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President