



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



April 29, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos –

As we prepare to honor and celebrate those students who are about to begin the next chapter of their journeys, this evening we will gather to remember those Lobos whose stories ended too soon. [Our Student Memorial, established as a new tradition at UNM](#) last year, seeks to offer a space for reflection and connection during challenging times. Our purpose here extends beyond mourning; we gather to honor the lives of those we've lost over the past year and celebrate the love they shared. Within our pack, *each of us defines all of us*. Every member holds intrinsic value, contributing to the rich tapestry of our community. And in their absence, let us cherish their memories. Please join me in remembering and celebrating those Lobos we've lost tonight at 6:30 p.m. in the Student Union Building, Ballroom C.

Celebrating AAPI Heritage Month

May is [Asian American and Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Heritage Month](#), a time for us to celebrate and pay tribute to the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have enriched America's history and are instrumental in our nation's success. May was formerly chosen by [a 1992 Act of Congress](#), which noted that the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States in May 1843, and that the transcontinental railroad, which was constructed largely by Chinese immigrants, was completed in May 1869. The AAPI community is a part of the backbone of our nation and remains so to this day. This is especially true at The University of New Mexico, where we are proud to count so many members of the AAPI community among our students, faculty, and staff, and pleased to offer community, support and services through our [AAPI Resource Center](#).

Four Lobos Earn Fulbright Awards

On behalf of the entire Lobo community, I would like to congratulate the [four UNM students and recent graduates who have been chosen to participate in Fulbright programs this year](#), and who will study, conduct research, and teach English abroad as part of the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program. We are so proud of this latest cohort of our growing Fulbright community for their dedication to forging international collaborations to advance research, training and service aimed at addressing some of the world's most pressing challenges. Kudos to Katlin Riley, a recent UNM graduate with a master's degree in elementary education who received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Award to Romania; Leo Williams, a third-year student earning their master's from the College of Fine Arts who received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Award to Bulgaria; Eleonora Edreva, a recent graduate of UNM who earned her Master of Fine Arts in Art & Ecology and received a Fulbright Research Award to Bulgaria; and Davin Tankersley, a 4th year Ph.D. student in the UNM Linguistics Department who received a Fulbright Research Award to Taiwan. I wish you the best of luck as you join your fellow Fulbright awardees in serving more than 140 countries worldwide.

Undergraduate Researchers Shine at UROC 2024

Some of the major benefits of being the state's only Research 1 institution are the everyday opportunities our undergraduate students are afforded to work closely with faculty mentors on innovative research across a wide range of disciplines. Each year, as a part of the [Undergraduate Research Opportunity Conference \(UROC\)](#), students are given the chance to showcase their research and compete in the UROC 180, in which just 180 seconds are provided to them to present their research. Additional categories include research stories, poster presentations, oral presentations, and special group presentations. [At UROC 2024, there were a total of 152 abstracts submitted and 184 students participating in the event.](#) Congratulations to our category winners and each participant for their contributions to advancing discovery.

UNM Anderson Students Place in Top Five in World's Largest Sales Competition

[UNM Anderson School students excelled at the virtual RNMKRS \(pronounced Rainmakers\) international role-play sales competition](#), which focuses on mastering core selling steps, providing invaluable real-time experience through dynamic simulations in the RNMKRS app. Eddie Acosta, Andrew Salazar, and AJ Dille secured second, fourth, and fifth positions, respectively. Competing against over 1,000 students from 47 universities, they showcased exceptional sales talent, earning impressive scores ranging from 9,542 to 9,589 out of a perfect 10,000. Congratulations to our students and many thanks to Dimitri Kapelianis, Associate Professor and Director of the [UNM Sales and Business Development Center](#).

UNM Releases Employee Engagement Survey Results

For the second year, [UNM has collaborated with Gallup to conduct an employee engagement survey](#), gathering feedback from faculty and staff on their workplace experiences. Initial findings show that 44% of UNM employees are "Engaged," which exceeds the national higher education average of 39%. UNM's Engagement Mean, one key measure of overall engagement, is 3.88, placing us in the 44th percentile among higher education institutions. These scores demonstrate areas where we can improve as an institution while also highlighting areas of strength to build upon, both of which are key to progressing on our UNM2040 goal of ensuring a stable and high quality workforce. UNM leadership is committed to sharing tailored survey results with department leaders and working with them to develop tailored action plans based on the data. The strong participation in the survey is very much appreciated, and efforts will continue to enhance the Lobo work experience for all employees.

UNM Health System Recognized Among Top Places to Work in Health Care

[The University of New Mexico Health System](#), which comprises the clinical side of our [UNM Health Sciences Center](#), has garnered prestigious recognition for their commitment to employees and the community. [UNM Health has been named among the Top Places to Work in Healthcare by Becker's Hospital Review in 2024.](#) This recognition underscores UNM Health System's dedication to providing exceptional care while fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment, solidifying its position as a leader in healthcare innovation and compassion in New Mexico.

Open Enrollment Reminder for Employees

For those employees who take advantage of UNM benefits, [open enrollment changes can still be made through May 3](#). This is your annual opportunity to enroll in, cancel, or make changes to your medical, dental, vision, life, and other offered plans, and enroll in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA). Additionally, for those eligible or participating in the VEBA, this is your opportunity to assess your options.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President