



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



August 26, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos —

I hope you've had a great first week of your Fall 2024 semester. UNM leaders have enjoyed talking with so many of you and hearing your stories about your Lobo experiences. Every day you tell us that The University of New Mexico is a great place to learn, work, and grow. But it's very gratifying to be reminded that, as our state's flagship Research 1 university, we're also used to looking at, and engaging with, the world differently.

UNM is a comprehensive, [Carnegie-designated Research 1 university](#)—one of only 146 in the nation—which means we are considered to have “very high research activity.” What this means in practice is that innovation infuses everything we do, from business to biochemistry, English to engineering. Our diverse research and creative works enable student success, engage local and global communities, foster innovation, and create new knowledge.

Nearly every day, we see our Lobo researchers and research teams leading exciting national initiatives or steering innovative collaboratives. Just last week, the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced that it has awarded [\\$8 million to NM EPSCoR to lead the Research Infrastructure Optimization for New Mexico \(RIO-NM\) project](#), connecting New Mexico's research resources with Emerging Research Institutions. Led by NM EPSCoR director and UNM engineering professor Ganesh Balakrishnan, the project relies on our leadership to guide collaboration among state institutions—including our colleagues at Navajo Technical University—to do something we do very well: enhance research infrastructure, create opportunities for students and faculty, and drive innovation.

Just as exciting, our School of Engineering has been [selected to lead a \\$1.2 million NSF-funded project to establish a Center for Equity in Engineering](#). Guided by Dean Donna Riley, the initiative aims to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion through leadership accountability, cultural integration, and educational reforms. The project plays to our strengths not only as world-class educators of engineers, but also by acknowledging our more than three decades as a leading Hispanic-Serving Institution and our 50-year history of supporting minority students in engineering.

Finally, I think one of the many reasons students choose The University of New Mexico is because they see all this groundbreaking research going on and want to be a part of a project of their own. Recently, [six Lobo undergraduate researchers were awarded scholarships for the Fall 2024 semester](#) by the [Undergraduate Research, Arts & Design Network](#). Their research is as diverse and interesting as our students themselves, covering topics from biology and business leadership to home schooling and Spanish art. Congratulations to this Fall's scholarship winners! We can't wait to see what you do next.

## **New Director at American Indian Student Services**

After a competitive nationwide search, I am pleased to announce that [Andrew Yazzie \(Diné\) has been named as the newest director of UNM American Indian Student Services \(AISS\)](#). This is something of a full-

circle experience for Andrew, as he earned both his Master of Public Administration and bachelor's degree in Family Studies from UNM, where he regularly engaged with the AISS. Yazzie, who previously served as AISS's manager of student success, moves into his new position following the departure of director Pam Agoyo (Cochiti, Kewa, Ohkay Owingeh), who was promoted to executive director for Student Support in July 2023. Congratulations, Andrew; we're delighted to have you guiding AISS and providing vital support to our Native students.

### **Donor Gifts Fund Nurse Residency Scholarships, Rural Nursing**

A generous donation from two Lobo alumni [will give a significant boost to the nurse residency program at UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center \(SRMC\) and will also provide vital support for the rural nursing workforce across our state](#). A \$126,250 donation from Lobos Arishanda and Doug Campbell will be used to create a nurse residency scholarship fund for recruiting and retaining top nursing talent at SRMC; a similar gift of \$126,250 from the Campbells will allow the College of Nursing to expand its training to rural sites throughout our state by providing stipends, housing, travel, and other expenses for students during rural rotations. We are grateful to the Campbells for their support of our nurses and for their compassion for the people of New Mexico as we continue to work together to meet the critical healthcare needs of our communities.

### **Williams Named Interim Director of Athletics**

Last week, I was pleased to [appoint David Williams, currently serving as Assistant Vice President/Deputy Athletic Director, as the Interim Vice President/Director of Athletics](#), effective immediately. David brings more than 30 years of experience in college athletics administration to the post and will maintain our significant forward momentum as we proceed with a national search for a new athletic director following the departure of Eddie Nuñez for the athletic director post at the University of Houston. I appreciate David's leadership as well as his infectious enthusiasm for Lobo athletics.

### **Angled Parking Coming on Campus Blvd.**

Parking on campus will get a little easier, as [back-in angled park will soon be permitted along Campus Blvd.](#) between Stanford and Girard. This will add more than 100 new parking spaces near student housing and will make the loading and off-loading of vehicles easier and safer. Drivers will also have a direct line of sight to cyclists in the roadway, ensuring we can all look out for each other. This new configuration will make parking more convenient and our campus safer, but it will take some time to make the necessary changes to Campus Blvd. for the new parking pattern. Things will likely be ready by mid-October, so please be patient and remember to slow down in the construction zone.

### **Join the Discussion on UNM's Role in Health Care for New Mexico**

As New Mexico's only academic health center, we're proud to provide New Mexicans with high quality, compassionate health care. As we continue to explore the future of healthcare in our state and UNM's role in providing that care and service, your voice is critical. I invite you to participate in a One University Conversation—a dialogue to help us strengthen our commitment to a first-rate education, innovative research, and expanding health services to meet the needs of *all* New Mexicans. Join me and our healthcare leaders in this critical conversation on Wednesday, September 4, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in Student Union

Building Ballrooms A and B. Your input is invaluable as we continue to shape the future of Lobo health, so I hope you'll join the discussion.

### **Labor Day is September 2**

Next Monday, September 2, is Labor Day, which means for many of us, we've got a three-day weekend coming up. I want to take a moment to say thank you to all UNM employees across our campuses and our state and salute all your hard work that goes into making us the University *for* New Mexico. I also know that for many of our essential employees—especially our tireless healthcare providers and staff—Labor Day is another day at work, and not a holiday. So, a special thanks to all of you for your contributions and dedication to keeping our university and our community a safer, stronger, better place.

My next Monday message will arrive in your inboxes on September 9; until then, have a great week, enjoy the coming three-day weekend, and let's go, Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes  
President