



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



September 30, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos—

One of the most meaningful rights—and responsibilities—associated with representative democracy is the right to vote. For many in our nation's history, voting rights have been hard-won. Today, we can honor those who have marched, fought, and died for those rights by taking to heart our civic duty and obligations to our communities and casting our votes. If you are a student and/or a first-time voter, you represent the trajectory of our country for today and the future, and now is the time to demonstrate the power of informed political participation.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 5, and for New Mexicans, [early in person voting](#) begins next Tuesday, October 8; find your nearest absentee voter site by [entering your address here](#). [New Mexico voters who want an absentee ballot can request one now](#), through October 22. Before you vote, or request an absentee ballot, [check to make sure you're registered to vote, or that your registration is current](#). If you are not a New Mexico resident, find out what you need to do to register and to vote absentee in your state of residence.

This is an important election year, with plenty worth your attention up and down the ballot. Before you vote, you can request a sample of your ballot from the [New Mexico Secretary of State](#). Among the initiatives you'll be asked to consider are a number of our state General Obligation (GO) Bonds, which come before New Mexico voters every two years. GO Bonds are a proven and accepted method of funding brick-and-mortar projects throughout the state.

This year, voters will have an opportunity to pass [GO Bond 3 for Higher Education](#) to help provide New Mexico's colleges, universities and specialty schools with the ability to ensure students have the tools and resources they need to be successful. Among the 40 projects represented by GO Bond 3 are [six for The University of New Mexico](#), including funding for our [Humanities & Social Science Complex](#) and [renovation of our College of Pharmacy](#) in Albuquerque, as well as projects at our [Gallup](#), [Los Alamos](#), [Taos](#), and [Valencia](#) campuses. Voters will also be asked to [consider GO Bond 2](#), which provides more than \$19 million to improve all public libraries, including public school libraries, academic libraries, and tribal libraries statewide. No tax increases are associated with either of these bonds.

This year's ballot also seeks voter approval to extend the [Mill Levy for the University of New Mexico Hospital](#) (UNMH) for an additional eight years, ensuring continued funding until 2032. A Mill Levy is a tax that property owners pay to County government—and the Mill Levy also does not increase taxes. Thanks to the voters of New Mexico, the Mill Levy provided UNM Hospital with over \$120 million in support in 2023, playing a vital role in supporting health care delivery for Bernalillo County.

Finally, I want to bring to your attention an important item on the upcoming ballot: [New Mexico Constitutional Amendment 3](#), concerning the Judicial Nominating Commission, which plays a crucial role in filling vacancies on our state's courts. If passed, Amendment 3 would allow the [dean of UNM's School of Law to appoint a qualified designee](#) to serve on the Judicial Nominating Commission when necessary, providing

much-needed flexibility for our law school's leadership. As the home of the only law school in New Mexico, UNM plays a vital role in shaping the legal landscape of our state, educating the majority of attorneys who practice here, and contributing significantly to our state's legal system. By supporting this amendment, you can help our School of Law continue its mission of providing excellent legal education and serving the needs of our state's judicial system.

Finally, as Election Day nears, chances are also good that you may be involved in a discussion about candidates, politics, and policies, whether it's in person, on social media, or elsewhere. As Lobos, we pride ourselves on embracing and respecting our differences—and not letting those differences define us. As we engage with each other, I ask that we all treat each other respectfully and approach our interactions with curiosity and empathy.

Town Hall Looks at UNM's Role in Expanding Health Care in New Mexico

As New Mexico's only academic health center, we're proud to provide New Mexicans with high quality, compassionate health care. But we are at a critical juncture in our efforts to expand healthcare access to every community in the state; to ensure we continue to provide New Mexicans with the best care possible, it is vital that we engage as One University to discuss the shape of things to come in healthcare education, patient care, research, facilities, and other resources.

All Lobo faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend a [Town Hall meeting](#) on *Expanding UNM's Role in Providing Access to Healthcare for New Mexico*. We'll be talking about how to enhance our programs and facilities to meet the growing demands for healthcare professionals and innovative research solutions. This is your opportunity to contribute ideas and ask the questions that will help shape the future of health education, research, and healthcare in our state. Please join the conversation on Wednesday, October 9, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in Student Union Building Ballroom B, and help shape a healthier future for New Mexico.

Lobo Leadership Academy Completes First Cohort

Last week marked the completion of the [inaugural Lobo Leadership Academy](#), UNM's new manager and supervisor development program. The Lobo Leadership Academy (LLA) is a initiative launched by Human Resources in response to the recently completed Employee Engagement Surveys. The LLA recognizes the critical role that supervisors play in employee engagement and supports our UNM2040 goal to ensure a stable and high-quality workforce. The LLA leads new managers through an in-depth exploration of UNM policies and procedures, alongside critical leadership competencies, to position managers and their teams for success. This marks the culmination of a year-long effort across Human Resources, and I want to thank and congratulate all those involved for bringing this important initiative to fruition.

Midday at the Oasis

This Friday, all Lobos are invited to the grand opening of the Lobo Oasis, a special new space in our Student Union Building, dedicated to relaxation, meditation, and spiritual wellness. Designed to provide students with a quiet retreat, the Oasis is one of our first [Lobo Well-Being Initiatives](#). Please come help celebrate the opening of this first-of-its-kind space on October 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Student Union Building, 3rd Floor, Room 3017.

UNM Gives Campaign Kicks Off October 1

Commitment to community, generosity of spirit, and an endless capacity for kindness are all hallmarks of the Lobo way of life. One of the best ways the Lobo community helps transform lives locally and globally is through our [annual UNM Gives United Way campaign](#), which [begins tomorrow and continues through Saturday, November 30](#). Because of your generosity, last year's campaign raised over \$300,000 for our community, through donations to the [United Way of North Central New Mexico](#).

There will be plenty of opportunities to participate and donate in the coming weeks, including international #GivingTuesday or by casting your vote in the Salsa Showdown where we find UNM's favorite salsa. Every contribution counts and every gift makes a difference; your care and compassion have never been more needed or more appreciated. Thank you for your continued support.

This Week's Podcast Is Actually Rocket Science

We often use rocket science as shorthand for something being difficult, but how hard is it really? In [this week's episode UNM's podcast, It's \(Probably\) Not Rocket Science](#), Fernando "Doc" Aguilar, an Air Force Space Command veteran and the creator of UNM's rocket engineering course, Lobo Launch, explains how rocket science is a bit of a misnomer. Then, UNM alumna Hyein Choi takes us through the perilous journey students faced in launching their own rocket at the [2024 Spaceport America Cup](#) this past summer. You can find the [latest episode](#) wherever you get your podcasts.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President