



*December 9, 2023*

Good afternoon Lobos –

Congratulations to the nearly 2,600 Lobos who are receiving their degrees across our campuses this week as graduates of our Summer and Fall Classes of 2024! Through dedication and hard work, our graduates have achieved this incredible major milestone and are **an inspiration to us all**. As you move from Lobo students to graduates this week—and thus **join the illustrious ranks of our Lobo Alumni**--know that the entire Lobo community is proud of you.



This is an exciting week for our Lobo graduates and for their friends and families who have supported them along the way, and we thank you for choosing The University of New Mexico for this leg of your life's journey. Your time here as scholars, researchers, athletes, artists, leaders, and more helps make UNM a special place where each of us truly defines all of us. I hope you will continue to strive for excellence, look for adventure, and use your energy, spirit, and knowledge to make a difference.

**Commencement for the Fall and Summer Class of 2024 is set for this Friday, December 13**, beginning at 6p.m. in The Pit, with our **graduate students celebrating the evening before**. I am excited about sharing this momentous occasion with you and hearing from commencement speaker Doug Campbell, founder and former CEO of the innovative companies Solid Power and Roccor, LLC, as well as a proud Lobo alumnus. I'm also very much looking forward to this year's graduate commencement speaker, Lillian Montoya, president and CEO of Christus St. Vincent health system in north central New Mexico—and the hospital's first female CEO since the original Sisters of Charity founded the hospital in 1865.

Congratulations to our Class of 2024! Whatever the future may bring, and wherever you may go in life, know that The University of New Mexico is always here for you.

### **Good Luck with Finals!**

With finals week underway for the semester, I expect that most of our students will be busy with exams, finishing projects and papers, and preparing for the upcoming winter break. Good luck this week, Lobos; you've worked hard to get here, and you're nearly done.

As always, if you find yourself feeling stressed out, look for support from our comprehensive mental health services and resource and advocacy centers. You can also access the TimelyCare app, which can be used 24/7 to access free virtual care and medical providers, who can assist with a wide range of conditions, from sinus infections to anxiety—and all without the need for insurance. Download the app so you'll have it at your fingertips the moment you need it.

### **Daniel A. Jones Named as General Counsel**

Following an extensive national search, I am pleased to announce the **appointment of Daniel A. Jones as The University of New Mexico's new general counsel**, effective February 24, 2025. Jones comes to UNM

from Florida Atlantic University, where he served as vice president for Legal Affairs and General Counsel, providing legal and policy advice to Florida Atlantic's board of trustees and university president, managing university-wide litigation, and assisting in compliance operations. He was also an assistant attorney general for the State of Florida and served as a staff judge advocate attorney for the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps. Jones's extensive background and his proven track record of leadership makes him an ideal fit for our institution, and I am confident that his unique combination of talent and experience will serve UNM well. I appreciate the work of our search committee, led by Regent Bill Payne and UNM Law School Dean Camille Carey, in bringing Jones to our institution, and I look forward to formally welcoming him aboard in February.



### Work by Lobo Architecture Professor Featured at MOMA

Some exciting news from the School of Architecture, as UNM Professor of Architecture Chris Cornelius recently had his [groundbreaking work acquired by the Museum of Modern Art](#) (MOMA), where it will be added to the [iconic museum's](#) permanent collection for Architecture and Design. Cornelius, the first Indigenous person trained as an architect to be featured in the MOMA's collection, was honored with the [selection of several drawings from his 2014 Radio Free Alcatraz project, and his model "Bear,"](#) all of which are being featured in the exhibition [Down to Earth](#), which opened in New York in late November. Congratulations to Professor Cornelius—hailed by Robert González, Dean of the UNM School of Architecture and Planning, as “a central voice of a new generation of designers”—for this landmark achievement.

### UNM Co-Founds New Statewide Artificial Intelligence (AI) Consortium

The University of New Mexico is pleased to be a [founding member of the New Mexico Artificial Intelligence Consortium](#), a collaboration of key state institutions that aims to advance AI research, education, and economic opportunities in New Mexico. Working with Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories and our colleagues at New Mexico's other higher education institutions, we're leveraging our expertise in high-performance computing, AI security, and workforce training to position New Mexico as a leader in trustworthy AI development. This is an exciting effort that will help create an AI ecosystem that addresses challenges and concerns about AI nationally while also promoting job creation and economic diversification locally. We are very proud to be part of this innovative collaboration.

## Lobo Nursing Professor Elected President of WICHE

Congratulations to [Barbara Damron, a professor at UNM's College of Nursing, who was recently elected chair of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education](#) (WICHE), which makes her the first nurse, and one of a few select Lobos, to hold the position. As a consortium of institutions across the Western United States, WICHE addresses education and workforce challenges through collaboration, which will provide Damron with an ideal opportunity to draw on her diverse experiences in healthcare, government, and education to advance WICHE's mission and expand access and opportunities for students across the region. Congratulations on your election, Professor Damron, and for notching up yet another amazing achievement both for you and for our Lobo nurses.

## Come Back in 2025 to a Staff Appreciation Breakfast

Mark your calendars now for a special event in the first week of January, when [UNM Staff Council hosts a staff appreciation breakfast on Monday, January 6, 2025](#), from 7 to 10 a.m. in the Student Union Building. The celebration will feature breakfast burritos as well as opportunities to learn more about key staff benefits such as tuition remission and health care from our experts at Human Resources. It will be a great way to kick off the new year.



## Be Prepared for Setbacks During Winter Break

Over the Winter Break, which goes into effect from December 23, 2024, through January 1, 2025, [many of UNM's unoccupied buildings will have their building temperatures "setback"](#) as part of our ongoing efforts to reduce energy consumption under our [UNM 2040 sustainability goals](#). Those entering buildings during the break may notice cooler hallways, classrooms, and offices. Please note, however, that all healthcare facilities and research laboratories will remain unaffected.

## See You in 2025!

This is my final weekly message for 2024; I'll be back with my next message on Monday, January 6, 2025. As the year comes to an end, I want to thank you all for being a part of The University of New Mexico community. My husband Jeff and I wish you all a happy winter break, a wonderful holiday season, and a peaceful, joy-filled, and prosperous new year.

Have a great week, good luck with finals and let's go, Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes  
President