



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



April 8, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos --

The rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being watched closely—with both optimistic intrigue and concern—by academics, administrators, researchers, and students across a wide variety of disciplines and interests. As AI gets smarter and more widely accessible, more questions continue to arise about its use, its impact on academics, and its related moral and ethical implications.

At The University of New Mexico, we've been on the leading edge of AI research and innovation, thanks in no small part to the efforts of [College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences Dean Leo Lo](#), who has emerged as a national leader in thinking about the responsible applications of AI. We also continue to maintain an [AI Resources website](#), helping our students, faculty, and staff evaluate the risks and opportunities involved with AI tools and services.

Over the next year, our College of Arts & Sciences, School of Engineering, and UNM Libraries are engaging the public in these conversations with [a series of events called AI@UNM](#). This month kicks off "AI-April," starting with [a lecture on teaching and working with AI by noted AI expert José Bowen](#), continuing next Wednesday with [presentations on AI and research](#) and, on April 24, [a panel discussion](#) on the impact of AI on public discourse and elections. These events are free and open to the public, with more in store. Keep watching the [Arts & Sciences research website](#) for new events.

This is also a perfect time to [register](#) for [our annual Tech Days](#), which takes place this year on April 25-26 in the Student Union Building. Presented by our [Office of the Chief Information Officer](#), Tech Days provides all Lobo students, faculty and staff with an opportunity to participate in lectures, discussions, and hands-on demonstrations of current and future technological innovations—including AI—at The University of New Mexico. And for the first time, this year's Tech Days will also feature a Career Readiness event for students, including sessions on how to improve your own career branding. Tech Days and the Career Readiness event are free, but [don't forget to register](#) by April 15.

Lobo Collaborative Selected for DEPSCoR Grant

A UNM collaborative team recently [secured part of a \\$17.6 million grant from the Department of Defense's DEPSCoR program](#) to develop intelligent systems using the navigational neural networks of fruit flies. The project, led by assistant professor of Biology Mubarak Hussain Syed with his mentor Francesco Sorrentino, a professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, received \$600,000 in DEPSCoR funding, which aims at promoting research collaboration across academia and the Department of Defense. This year's selection process drew more than 80 proposals, with 25 teams winning funding nationwide. Congratulations to professors Syed and Sorrentino on this accomplishment.

Celebrate Global Fellowship at GEO's Annual International Festival

The University of New Mexico is proud to be home to countless international students from every corner of the planet and, as one of only 46 Fulbright Hispanic Serving Institutions in the nation, embraces its role as

a leader in the global community. Each year, [UNM's Global Education Office \(GEO\) celebrates and supports international fellowship by hosting its annual International Festival](#), which begins on Thursday, April 18, at 10 a.m. on Cornell Mall and continues until 2 p.m. As home to more than 1,300 international students and scholars from 96 countries, UNM and GEO are excited to highlight our global community and cross-cultural awareness with this yearly celebration. Come enjoy live performances and cultural presentations and sample plenty of international cuisines. This event is free and open to the public.

NM Mutual Champions Training Center Honored as a “Best Building”

[Last year's opening](#) of the New Mexico Mutual Champions Training Center provided our Lobo athletes with an opportunity to train together in a state-of-the-art space dedicated to performance training. We knew this was a special space—located in the end zone of University Stadium—but the Association of General Contractors (AGC) New Mexico just confirmed how exceptional it really is by [presenting it with a 2024 Best Buildings Award](#), one of the premier awards in the facilities industry. This year's winning projects will be honored at an awards ceremony and education auction at Sandia Resort on May 17. If you'd like to attend, [tickets are now available](#). Congratulations to our [team of architects, engineers, and contractors](#) for their award-winning vision and work.

Project ECHO Studies Improving Outcomes for Diabetic Patients with Chronic Conditions

In New Mexico, about 12.3 percent of the adult population has been diagnosed with diabetes, with another 36 percent showing higher than normal glucose levels; a shortage of specialists means that patients must often rely on their primary care provider for services. Project ECHO recently announced a new [\\$10.8 million funding award from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#) to study how to help primary care physicians in New Mexico upskill in their treatment of complex diabetes. [This five-year trial](#) will examine whether health care providers who attend ECHO sessions--and who learn specialized care for patients with diabetes and multiple chronic conditions—are successful in lowering blood sugar levels in patients treated at primary care clinics throughout our state.

Coming Up on This Week's Podcast . . .

Less than two weeks ago, the United States Office of Management and Budget announced it would be [combining race and ethnicity questions on all Federal forms](#), but one UNM scholar says the change could impact the ability to research and understand equity issues ranging from poverty to housing discrimination in the U.S. In this episode of *It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science*, Professor of Sociology Nancy López explains intersectionality in research and how the new Federal question format could be a step backwards. As always, you can listen to our podcast on our [website](#), or wherever you get your podcasts.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President