



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



May 13, 2024

Good afternoon, Lobos--

It was a joy to [celebrate our Class of 2024](#), as we welcomed them to The Pit on Saturday morning as students and saw them leave the building in the afternoon as graduates and [Lobo alumni](#). I saw pride, anticipation, exhilaration—and yes, even some relief—on faces throughout The Pit as students and their families marked the occasion. Congratulations to our Class of 2024! I hope you'll take a moment to check out the stories of some of this year's [Inspiring Graduates](#).

My thanks as well to the countless departments across campus whose untold hours of planning and preparing for the ceremony made the day such a huge success. If you were unable to join the festivities, you can watch the entire celebration on our [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

Lobo Junior Awarded Udall Scholarship

Last week, we learned the exciting news that [University of New Mexico junior Barbara Gutierrez has been awarded a prestigious Udall Scholarship](#). She joins just 54 other scholars, who were chosen out of 406 nominations from 192 institutions. Udall Scholarships are awarded to students for their passion for leadership and public service and for a commitment to Native American nations or to the environment. Gutierrez, a major in emergency medical services, is a member of the Navajo Nation and plans to attend medical school and return to work in her community. She is also engaged in research through the Indigenous Environmental Health Fellowship and Native Health Initiative, which focus on factors influencing the availability of nutritious foods for Navajo Nation residents. Congratulations on your remarkable achievement, Barbara! The entire Lobo community is proud of you.

Audit Finds Strong Culture of Safety at UNM

As an institution, [The University of New Mexico remains committed to the safety and security of the entire Lobo community](#). To assess and enhance the culture of safety, the [Environmental Health and Safety \(EHS\) department](#) recently [completed its audit of our occupational safety culture](#), which focuses on the [overall safety, health, and welfare of faculty, staff, and students at UNM](#). The results revealed a positive baseline on which to build a stronger [culture of safety](#) across UNM and showed that supervisors, lab managers, and peers prioritize safety in their work. There were also areas where we need improvement, but I am encouraged to know that we have a solid foundation upon which our culture of safety can be continuously monitored and improved. UNM remains dedicated to continuously evaluating and refining our approach, ensuring we uphold the highest standards of safety for all who step onto our campus. My thanks to EHS for completing this critical audit.

Finalists Named for Student Union Building Director

Following an extensive national search, [three finalists have been named for consideration for the director for the Student Union Building \(SUB\)](#) in the Division of Student Affairs. This key position leads and

coordinates programs and services of the SUB and collaborates with student organizations and others to ensure programs and facilities support the needs of the campus community and student body. Each finalist will be available at an open forum in the SUB Lobo A&B Rooms from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. The three finalists are **Dennis-Ray Armijo**, Associate Director of the Student Union Building at The University of New Mexico, who will be available on May 15; **Brent Freeman**, Director of Unions, Events and Services at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, who will be available on May 16; and **Z Paul Reynolds**, Director of Waldron Campus Center at Gannon University, who will be available on May 17. Each forum will also be available to attend online.

Staff Appreciation Lunch on May 15

The University of New Mexico is the size of a small city, and it takes thousands of staff members across campus working tirelessly to keep the day-to-day operations of the university moving smoothly and efficiently. As one way of saying thank you, [UNM Staff Council is hosting a Staff Appreciation Green Chile Burger Cookout](#) this Wednesday, May 15, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., at the north end of Cornell Mall, just east of the Student Union Building. The event and the food are free, but [please RSVP](#) to give Staff Council a rough head count. And yes, vegetarian options will be available. On behalf of The University of New Mexico, I want you to know that your work and expertise are appreciated and valued all year round. Thank you for all that you do.

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

Garnett S. Stokes
President