



January 27, 2025

Good afternoon Lobos –

Recent national developments regarding changes to law, policies, and regulations have touched our campus in ways that concern many members of our community. And while we know that any new administration will usually bring about a shift in priorities, such changes may also lead to uncertainty. Our leadership team, which includes government relations, and I are keeping a close eye on these changes. We're not just watching; we're analyzing, planning, and preparing for potential impacts.

We are committed to supporting all campus community members, and we are especially aware of our most vulnerable. To our students and colleagues whose work may be directly impacted, we stand with you. You are an integral part of our Lobo pack, and we're here to ensure we support you with the [resources](#) and [services](#) you need. To our researchers and healthcare

providers, you are what make us New Mexico's flagship university in service to bettering our communities. We will work to [support your efforts in discovery](#) and to ensure our patients receive the excellent care they've come to expect from us.

To address these complex issues, we are establishing four task forces focused on inclusive excellence, immigration policy implications, research funding impacts, and patient care considerations. These groups will actively gather and analyze information and provide regular updates and recommendations to me as we move forward.

In our interconnected world, misinformation can spread rapidly, causing unnecessary alarm. Recently, unverified rumors about federal agents on our campus and at our hospital have been circulating through social media and from anonymous sources. I want to address this directly: these claims are currently unfounded. We take your safety and privacy seriously, and we're committed to protecting our community. In such times, I urge you to rely on official university channels for accurate information, think critically about sensational claims, and avoid sharing unverified reports. If you have genuine concerns, please use our established reporting channels. We promise to communicate openly about any confirmed developments affecting our campus.

In times like these, we must stick together. Let's stay informed, support each other, and keep the lines of communication open. Our strength has always been our unity and shared passion for learning and growing together. Thank you for being part of what makes UNM special.

Dr. Mike Richards Appointed EVP of UNM Health Sciences

Last week, I had the privilege of [formally appointing Dr. Mike Richards as Executive Vice President of UNM Health Sciences and CEO of the UNM Health System](#), making official a position he has admirably filled on an interim basis since August 2024. His appointment ensures continuity in leadership and builds upon the momentum he has already generated as he has led the HSC since last summer. It also aligns perfectly



with our strategic goals of creating an inclusive and compassionate community while addressing our state's pressing health care challenges. I am delighted to have Dr. Richards in this position.

Klos in as New Dean of Honors College

Another key post has been filled by the provost with the recent [selection of Naomi Yavneh Klos as the next dean of UNM's Honors College](#). Professor Klos, a longtime honors educator and former president of the National Collegiate Honors Council, comes to us from Loyola University New Orleans where she is presently the Reverend Emmett M. Bienvenu, SJ, Distinguished Chair in Humanities, and Professor of Languages and Cultures. She will begin as dean at UNM on July 1. My thanks to Lobo Professor Leslie Donovan, who has been serving as interim dean of the Honors College since 2023 and will continue in that capacity until the arrival of Professor Klos.



UNM Receives Silver Sustainability Rating

The University of New Mexico has [achieved a prestigious Silver rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System \(STARS\) Version 3.0](#), reaffirming our commitment to environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and community engagement. This distinction, [administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education](#), recognizes our achievements across academics, research, operations, and outreach. [You can read our full report on the AASHE](#)

[website](#). Looking ahead, the new Sustainability Strategic Planning process, consistent with our [Sustainability Goal in UNM 2040](#), will identify key priorities and continue UNM's leadership in sustainable practices, ensuring a bright future for UNM and the greater Lobo community.

Lobo Professors Recognized with Presidential Awards

The White House has [honored University of New Mexico professors Vanessa Svihla and Matthew Lakin with the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers \(PECASE\)](#), the highest U.S. distinction for early-career researchers. Each was nominated by the National Science Foundation (NSF), reflecting the innovative work underlying their NSF CAREER Awards. Professor Svihla's research explores framing agency in making and engineering, where she aims to clarify and design instructional tools and activities that can help students take ownership over their learning; Professor Lakin focuses on robust heterochiral molecular computing in mammalian cells. PECASE fosters the next generation of scientific innovators and honors their exemplary leadership potential in shaping America's scientific future. Congratulations to Professors Svihla and Lakin for this notable achievement.

Major Milestones, New Faces at UNM Foundation

The University of New Mexico and the [UNM Foundation](#) have surpassed a remarkable milestone in our

comprehensive fundraising campaign, raising more than \$400 million over the past four years. This achievement is a testament to the generosity of supporters who understand the vital role education, research, and health care play in shaping lives and communities. On a related note, I am excited to welcome **Deidre Sandvick** to the UNM Foundation as our new Senior Vice President for Development. Her expertise will be pivotal as we continue to grow our annual fundraising efforts—which exceed \$100 million—and prepare for the public phase of our comprehensive campaign.



Save the Date for the 2025 State of the University

Each year, I have the privilege of standing before the Lobo community to deliver my State of the University remarks, a time for reflecting on what we've accomplished over the last year while advancing our mutual hopes, ambitions, and vision for the future of The University of New Mexico. This year, I hope you'll join me in the Student Union Building Ballroom at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, February 21. The speech will also be live-streamed on my website.

Nominate an Inspiring Lobo for the Sarah Belle Brown Award

[Nominations remain open for the Sarah Belle Brown community awards](#), which I have the pleasure of presenting annually to one faculty member, one staff member, and one student to recognize their outstanding service to our community. While this is normally a late fall event, it has been rescheduled for Spring to provide some additional time to tell the story of an amazing Lobo in your community. Nominations are being accepted through Thursday, February 20th at 5 p.m. so please [let me know all about someone who inspires you](#).

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

Garnett S. Stokes

President