



## WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUE

August 10, 2011

**Tom Popejoy** is one of UNM's most beloved and visionary past presidents. As the first native New Mexican to preside over the University of New Mexico, he led from 1948 until 1968. The following passage is taken from the UNM archives, "One of Popejoy's first acts as President was to appoint a Committee on University Aims and Objectives," (a strategic planning committee before it was known as such). "This Committee advised that UNM could serve the citizens of the State by carrying out four objectives: (1) providing general education so students could develop their personal aspirations and attain a liberal-arts education; (2) providing special and professional education in scholarly or technical fields; (3) emphasizing faculty scholarship and research to make contributions to learning; and (4) offering adult education and general cultural programs to enrich the lives of New Mexicans." His words ring as true today as when they were first spoken in his "Second-Class Citizenship" address to the State Convention of the American Legion, in Carlsbad NM, July 15, 1962. Dr. Lee Rickard provided me with the following quote from Popejoy, "I want you and other citizens to be proud of your University; proud because it aspires to higher quality; proud because it wants to serve the State and Nation in these desperate hours of survival; proud because it wants to find the truth wherever it may be. The light of truth in a free society is the torch for our survival." To learn more about this remarkable leader and other UNM presidents and history, visit <http://elibrary.unm.edu/unmarchv/UniversityHistory.php>.

**The Office of Institutional Research (OIR)** is one of many critical Academic Affairs administrative support units. OIR serves as the central repository for UNM data and is responsible for supplying this data to institutional administrators, state-wide leaders, as well as to IPEDS (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>), the primary national data repository about colleges and universities. In our renewed effort to disseminate information, OIR will soon provide the UNM community with access to a database that will allow broad access to a variety of data. In the meantime, and for more information about OIR and its resources, see <http://www.unm.edu/~oir/>.

**Honors College:** A Task Force was appointed by the Provost in the Fall of 2010 and charged with examining the possibility of transforming the UNM Honors Program into an Honors College. Led by Professors Roger Schluntz and Michael Thomas, the Task Force unanimously supported the establishment of an Honors College at the University of New Mexico. More specifically, support for this initiative includes the perspective that, "An Honors College would form an academic community by bringing UNM's best undergraduate students and finest faculty together, fostering advanced and interdisciplinary study. This community would have available a designated residence hall and social programs that support its academic goals. The Honors College should offer the most committed students at UNM a more intense and inspiring academic environment than is available elsewhere. Built on the current Honors Program, the new College will have the authority to admit students who are otherwise admitted to the University, and such admission will provide the opportunity to live in the separate Honors College residence. The Honors College will also be able to endorse undergraduate degrees granted by the University (as the current Honors Program does) when students meet the academic requirements established by the College. Finally, the College will be given the status necessary to demonstrate its importance to the University in attracting the best students from New Mexico and elsewhere." In

response to this recommendation, Senior Vice Provost Michael Dougher will lead the discussion on how to implement the Task Force recommendations in the coming year.

**Feedback:** My own research in Electrical Engineering is in the general area of control systems, which is a subset of mathematical system theory that, I believe, can be tied to the “control system” of a University. A central concept of control systems is one of “feedback.” To gather feedback is to measure an output quantity, then to process it, and inject back to the input of the system. Feedback has some magical properties: negative feedback can help stabilize an unstable systems (as the output increases, the input is reduced) and positive feedback can create oscillations and runaway behavior. The Feedback phenomenon exists everywhere from biology, to engineering, to economics. Most surprisingly, feedback works even when we do not know the interworking of the system. That is why a good teacher probes the understanding of his/her students by asking questions, and why we can drive a car by monitoring our speedometer and the traffic around us. It is also why, in order to understand how the university is doing, and in order to correct for mistakes administrators are sure to make, we always need feedback from the many distributed sensors around campus (students, faculty, and staff). It is also why the state of New Mexico will soon be adjusting funding to the university by monitoring output measures. I promise to discuss this more in a future communiqué.

**Unique Programs at UNM:** Comprising a laudable history of 31 years at UNM, the Arita Porcelain Program, which was formerly housed in the College of Education Art Education Program, has recently relocated to the College of Fine Arts, Art and Art History Department. It thrives under the leadership of Professor Kathryne Cyman, who has lead the program and taught Art here since 1991. Having the Arita Pottery Program at UNM makes us the only University outside of Japan where the study and practice of this particular art of porcelain takes place. This program facilitates multiple opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges because there is a history of international exchange and travel between UNM students and ceramic artists, community members and official dignitaries in Japan. It is recognized by and has the support of Japan’s ‘National Living Treasure’ – Sensei Manji Inoue. Through the Arita Program, UNM has also made important connections with New Mexico Pueblo potters. For example, in 2005 the program sponsored by 14th generation Japanese ceramic artist an artist in residence, Masato Mizokami, who worked closely with Clarence Cruz, MFA, Ceramics UNM, and is a member of Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo.

A PDF version of this communiqué is available at: <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>

Sincerely,



Chaouki Abdallah  
Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs