



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

October 9, 2013

**Why Are There Still So Few Women in Science?** A recent [NY Times article](#) reviews a recent Yale study along with other research on the science gender gap. While minority numbers in the sciences are similarly low, the article attempts to answer the specific issue of lack of STEM degrees awarded to women. “Only one-fifth of physics Ph.D.’s in this country are awarded to women, and only about half of those women are American; of all the physics professors in the United States, only 14 percent are women. The numbers of black and Hispanic scientists are even lower; in a typical year, 13 African-Americans and 20 Latinos of either sex receive Ph.D.’s in physics. The reasons for those shortages are hardly mysterious — many minority students attend secondary schools that leave them too far behind to catch up in science, and the effects of prejudice at every stage of their education are well documented. But what could still be keeping women out of the STEM fields (“STEM” being the current shorthand for “science, technology, engineering and mathematics”), which offer so much in the way of job prospects, prestige, intellectual stimulation and income?” A very telling statement from the article is that the “most powerful determinant of whether a woman goes on in science might be whether anyone encourages her to go on.”

**Lobo Reading Experience Author to Visit UNM:** We are happy to welcome David Shipler, author of “The Working Poor: Invisible in America,” to UNM on Tuesday, Oct. 15 and Wednesday, Oct 16. His book was chosen for this year’s Lobo Reading Experience. On Tuesday, Oct. 15, starting at 3 p.m. in the Student Success Center in Mesa Vista Hall, David Shipler will participate in a panel discussion which is open to the UNM community. Other participants include moderator and journalist Gene Grant; Hakim Bellamy, Albuquerque Poet Laureate; Dr. Veronica Garcia, executive director, New Mexico Voices for Children; Senator Jacob Candelaria; Jenny Metzler, Executive Director for Albuquerque Healthcare for the Homeless; Sovereign Hager, Staff Attorney for Center for Law and Poverty; and Dr. Richard Santos, Professor of Economics at UNM. For information on other Lobo Reading Experience events, you can visit the [Lobo Reading Experience website](#). I would like to extend a special thank you to faculty and students who have participated in the Lobo Reading Experience this year.

**Is a College Degree a Good Deal?** Even judging by the economic return on investment, a college degree remains a good deal according to a [recent article](#) in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. “According to the new report, for college graduates entering the work force, the immediate payoff has slipped a bit. In 2008, males ages 25 to 34 with bachelor’s degrees made 74 percent more in median earnings than did high-school graduates in the same age range; the figure was 79 percent for women. In 2011, however, the difference was only 69 percent for men and 70 percent for women, the report says.”

**The Other SAE:** The UNM Formula Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Racing team ([LOBOMotorSports](#)) is [now ranked](#) 32nd out of 514 schools world wide and 7th out of 133 US schools. Last year we were 52nd and 15<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Since this is a running type score (based on the last 6 competitions entered) it indicates an overall ranking of the program. According to the [LOBOMOTORSports](#) adviser, Professor John Russell of Mechanical Engineering, “Our ranking is due to the continuous improvement and consistency of our teams.”

**Survey on Work-Life Balance:** On Monday, Sept. 30, an online survey about Faculty Life at the University of New Mexico arrived in your inboxes. The survey was sent to UNM main campus faculty members only (no HSC faculty or staff on either side of Lomas) and, so far, we have had a higher than 30 percent response rate. If you have not done so, please complete the survey. Your answers constitute the initial step toward improving the UNM workplace for all of us. The Office of Academic Affairs and the University are committed to using the data to improve policies affecting various aspects of academic life, including faculty development and advancement. In order to motivate you, check out the [recent article](#) on campus relations.

Chaouki Abdallah

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

A PDF version of this communiqué is available at: <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>. Your feedback and input are welcome at: [provost@unm.edu](mailto:provost@unm.edu) or at the electronic town hall: <http://connectu.unm.edu/>. Please also see the Provost's Blog at <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>.