



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

October 8, 2014

Data, and more Data: Consider the [following statement](#) from the University of Minnesota (UMN) Office of Institutional Research: “Universities are unique and complex institutions. Assessing the performance, standing, and progress of such institutions is therefore a challenging endeavor. However, sound strategic decision-making and planning requires placing an institution in context to assess its relative strengths and direction. Comparison groups are an important tool for providing that context. While each institution in a comparison group is a product of its own individual circumstances and environment, a well-chosen group provides benchmarks that can inform policy and resource choices.” UMN has presented a tool to create peer groups and to compare universities across a multitude of factors. As we continue to discuss our tuition, salaries, and Results Oriented Management (ROM) budget metrics, it is critical that we learn from what others are doing. As we construct our own narrative about the value of a UNM degree, we should continue to read the stories others have written.

Resilience: There is much interest these days in the resilience of cities or regions — this is their ability to recover from natural or man-made disasters. For example, New Mexico and Albuquerque may possess some natural resilience due to our geography and weather. Right in our backyard, [Sandia National Laboratories](#) is embarking on a project that “will bring decades of experience solving problems with practical engineering and modeling complex systems to cities around the world under a new agreement to support the [100 Resilient Cities Centennial Challenge](#), pioneered by the [Rockefeller Foundation](#).”

Earth & Planetary Sciences Geoscience Laboratory Dedication: After just over a year of renovation and installation of state-of-the-art equipment, the “Frank D. Gorham Jr. and Maria Kelly Geosciences Teaching Laboratory” was dedicated on Friday, Sept. 26. The project was the result of a generous donation from the Gorham endowment and matching funds from the University. Frank D. Gorham Jr. was a longtime Albuquerque resident and a prominent petroleum geologist with a passion for geology.

The Gorham Endowment supports the educational mission of the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at UNM. The endowment also fosters increased minority participation in the geosciences. In addition to the laboratory and infrastructure improvements, the Gorham Foundation provides support for undergraduate and graduate student research, as well as outreach activities by the students, faculty, and staff of the Department to K-12 programs and informal educational activities.

Rudolfo Anaya: New Mexico author Rudolfo Anaya was recently honored as the second-ever inductee to the [Albuquerque Wall of Fame](#). He is the author of “Bless Me, Ultima,” his best-known book, as well as a number of works that he published during his time teaching at UNM. His induction is a well-deserved honor.

Lobo Reading Experience: Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalist Edward Humes, the author of this year’s [Lobo Reading Experience](#) (LRE) book *Garbology*, will be visiting UNM campus next week. Events include a community panel discussion and appearances at the Celebration of Student Writing and Lobo Living Room. For more information on the times and location of events, please see the [calendar of events](#).

The Center for Teaching Excellence: The Center for Teaching Excellence (formerly OSET) is conducting a needs assessment in an effort to understand how the center can support UNM instructors in their teaching and research roles. The campus-wide online survey was distributed to faculty through email and will close on Oct. 17.

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