



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW MEXICO

Office of the Provost



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

May 7, 2014

**Between Stanford and San Jose State:** The most recent Chronicle of Higher Education issue contains [an article](#) on Stanford University's Ph.D. candidates learning about faculty life at San Jose State University (SJSU). The article compares and contrasts the training and experience of Stanford's Ph.D. students, with the challenges of academic life at a very different institution, no more than 20 miles away. While the article contains many interesting stories, what struck me most is the large gap in their missions and the wide cultural divide between the two institutions. This was most visible in the gulf between their operating budgets, endowments, research budgets, percentage of students receiving Pell grants, and so on. As it so happens, UNM's mission and numbers lie between those of Stanford's and SJSU, and more pointedly, span the complete spectrum between the two institutions. While our percentage of students receiving Pell grants is identical to that of SJSU, our operating budget is closer to that of Stanford. Most of our other numbers fall somewhere in the middle between Stanford and SJSU. It is exactly the breadth of UNM's mission that makes our reach more impactful and more crucial for New Mexico, yet also makes our job more challenging. Meanwhile, we face competition from emerging models that claim to deliver on the promise of higher education – but without the added benefits or costs of research. For example, the University of The People ([UoPeople](#)) “is the world's first non-profit, tuition-free, degree-granting online academic institution dedicated to opening access to higher education globally for all qualified individuals, despite financial, geographic or societal constraints. In February 2014 UoPeople received accreditation from the Distance and Education Training Council, a U.S. Department of Education authorized accrediting agency.” UNM cannot win a race to the price-bottom with such efforts, but rather must assure that our research is world class *and* systematically flows out to benefit our students and the state. The reality is that it does; we all must take responsibility for showing that.

**Auctioning Patents:** As I have been discussing in this space, all sources of funding (state appropriation, tuition, federal funding, private sources) at a public research university are under stress. Penn State recently attempted to generate new funding by auctioning off their patents. The auction [provided more lessons than revenue](#) as “more than 60 parties registered for Penn State's online auction, [but] the university got just one bid on single pair of patents out of 53 batches. The bidder, a company that Penn State has not named, offered the minimum bid, \$10,000.”

**UNM Medical Plans Open Enrollment:** “April 23 was the first day of Open Enrollment! Now through Wednesday, May 14, 2014, as a benefits-eligible employee, you may complete your online medical, dental, vision, life, disability, and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) enrollments. All employees currently enrolled or who wish to enroll in UNM's medical plans must re-enroll in medical coverage to retain coverage effective July 1, 2014.”

**Telling the Student Story:** This semester, Academic Affairs worked with University Communication and Marketing to develop [a student internship](#) to create promotional videos which tell the UNM student story. The premiere of those videos will take place on May 13 at 4:00 p.m. in the SUB Theater. The premiere is open to the public, though RSVPs are encouraged (email [Ethan Rule](#)). The internship was headed by UCAM, and included students from Communication & Journalism and the College of Fine Arts, and those were: Emily Garrity, creative director; Bianca Martinez, multimedia journalist; Eric Barreras, editor; Sean Trauth, sound director; and Marshall Broyles, videographer. The student team did an amazing job in putting together these videos, and I highly encourage you to attend the premiere.

Chaouki Abdallah

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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