



# The Weekly Communiqué

**May 15, 2019**

We begin this week by reflecting on the untimely deaths of Jon Gray and Jackson Weller. Jon was a 27-year old third-year student at the UNM School of Law. Jackson was a 23-year old UNM undergrad student and a member of the baseball team. Both were members of our Lobo family. Both had every bit of light and future opportunity before them but were taken prematurely in recent weeks. We struggle to make sense of these losses even as we remember Jon and Jackson.

Last week I wrote at length about my assessment of the current state of affairs at the university, including our many areas of strength and our continuing challenges. Our reflections would be incomplete if we did not account for the safety of all UNM students, while also recognizing our human fallibility in the face of loss and acts of senseless violence that strain the bounds of understanding. On behalf of the campus community, I offer our condolences to Jon and Jackson's friends and family. In both cases we have suffered an immeasurable loss.

The news has been all the more poignant and jarring during this time of celebration for the university. Commencement ceremonies were held this weekend, and we joined together to celebrate the accomplishments of all UNM students. We may expand our reflection by focusing on the many people who support the academic mission throughout the year. "Each of us defines all of us," so let us take a moment at the culmination of another academic year to recognize the people that make up the "all of us" and make the Lobo experience possible:

## **College of Education**

In consultation with incoming Provost James Holloway and with President Stokes, and after survey and in-person consultation within the College, I am pleased to appoint Dr. Deborah Rifken as Interim Dean of the College of Education. During this important transition in the College, she will bring a proven record of leadership in the College and of service to UNM students and to the wider New Mexico community. The appointment is effective July 1, 2019. UNM will sorely miss Dean Hector Ochoa as he steps down— but the School will be more than ably led by Interim Dean Rifken in the transition and during the national search for a new Dean. Please join me in celebrating this appointment.

## **UNM Staff**

What would we do without our invaluable staff? I will have the pleasure of speaking at the awards ceremony today for the 2019 Annual Outstanding Staff Awards Reception, which takes place, appropriately, during [Staff Appreciation Week](#). We take this occasion to recognize the staff members in our areas that contribute in innumerable and too often unrecognized ways throughout the year.

### **UNM Faculty**

An equal debt of gratitude is owed to our outstanding faculty, who embody the research, teaching and service missions of the university. The Center for Teaching and Learning presided over [the annual teaching awards](#) earlier this month, recognizing Tamar Ginossar with the 2019-21 Presidential Teaching Fellow, outstanding teachers of the year Bethany Davila and Cristyn Elder, in the Department of English (no strangers to [award-winning work on behalf of students](#)). The ceremony also welcomed “New Teachers of the Year” Noah Painter-Davis, Department of Sociology, and Marygold Walsh-Dilley, Honors College and Department of Geography. The award ceremony recognized many other deserving recipients in a number of categories, including: Shirley Heying, Julianne Newmark, Amy Gore, Debra Nieto, David Paez, Camille Dwyner, Darin Brown, Rueben “Jack” Thomas, Andrea Mays, Jillian Stafford, Patricia Oakley, Diana Habel-Rodriguez, Fares Qeadan, and Virginia Necochea. There is not enough space in this communicate to do justice to their enormous contributions to students and the University. We can, however, express our unequivocal appreciation and admiration for their wholehearted and tireless efforts in pursuit of our collective mission.

### **Celebrating Enrique Lamadrid: 2019 North American Academy of the Spanish Language “Enrique Anderson Imbert” national award**

University of New Mexico Professor Emeritus and Distinguished Professor of Spanish Enrique R. Lamadrid was recently awarded the National Prize “Enrique Anderson Imbert” 2019 of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (ANLE).

<https://news.unm.edu/news/enrique-r-lamadrid-wins-anle-s-2019-enrique-anderson-imberty-national-prize>

### **ADL, Aspen Society Invite Nominations for Civil Society Fellowship Program**

The ADL (Anti-Defamation League) and Aspen Institute have announced the creation of the Civil Society Fellowship to prepare the next generation of community and civic leaders, activists and problem solvers from across the political spectrum. The fellowship seeks candidates between the ages of 25 and 45 who have already demonstrated a capacity to build a community, movement, organization, or an idea. Each class will consist of twenty to twenty-two individuals, and diversity of perspectives is a critical goal. Room and board during sessions and airfare will be covered by the fellowship. The nomination period closes at the end of May 2019, with applications from invited candidates due by the end of June 2019. Class 2019 interviews will take place in July 2019 in select cities across the United States. Cities will be announced once the pool of candidates invited to apply is identified. For more information to submit nominations, visit the Civil Society Fellowship website.

<https://www.civilsocietyfellowship.org/>

### **Honors Engineering Fund**

The Honors College and the School of Engineering are excited and proud to announce the establishment of the Diane and Gordon Meyers Honors Engineering Fund. Diane Myers (deceased) was among the first students enrolled in the Honors Program under its founding director, Dudley Wynn, and Gordon Myers earned his Master’s degree in Engineering from the University of

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New Mexico. It is Mr. Myers's desire that the Diane and Gordon Myers Honors Engineering Fund be used to offer "talented young people the opportunity to augment a strong engineering program with an honors curriculum" that "can significantly strengthen their education." Further, Mr. Gordon believes that "leaders in technology and science benefit significantly from exposure to the types of education provided by the honors programs. And I think the reverse is true—a joint program will lead some very talented honors students into the world of engineering." Mr. Gordon's gift will be used to establish a sequence of pilot Honors and Engineering courses that will begin with an interdisciplinary introduction to engineering course taught by the dean of the School of Engineering, Dr. Christos Christodoulou, as well as with a focused section of one of the Honors College's signature "Legacy" courses, taught by the dean of the Honors College, Dr. Greg Lanier.

**Richard L. Wood**

Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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