



# Academic Dispatch

**November 1, 2019**

## **Students as creators and explorers**

Creation and discovery are key and distinguishing features of the UNM mission. For students, this means that your instructors are pushing the boundaries of knowledge and are creators of cultural artifacts that challenge us and move our communities forward. Conversely, it means that many of our students are themselves makers and creators of new knowledge.

Working with faculty in the Anderson School of Management, a research team of over 30 students produced the book "[Outside the Margins](#)," a work that uses text, image, and graphic design to bring attention to the global refugee crisis and its political, climactic, and economic progenitors. This "collaborative book of art" explores the implication of identity where the world is divided into "us" and "them." Fundamentally, "Outside the Margins" relates the tight interconnectedness of all of us across the globe, and makes clear that any of us could face displacement and be forced to choose flight in the middle of the night, urgently needing to answer the question, "what shall I take with me?"

Students at UNM are crossing boundaries, constructing understanding, and creating new hope through novel discoveries. This is what makes UNM different — this core of discovery is what we are about. We must do this work at the highest level and with the full engagement of our students, because we owe it to society to discover the ideas that will build understanding and positive impact. My own experience as a researcher has made clear that developing new ideas is enhanced by the presence of young learners, and that the learning of all is enriched by the interaction of our faculty and students engaged together in a process of discovery.

"Outside the Margins" paints a bleak picture, detailing a crisis of such magnitude it can make our individual agency or capacity seem powerless to change it. But I see its creation as an optimistic act. It proposes art-based educational systems for refugee children to support their self-determination and expressive ability. It is a step, a contribution. This is the goal of the research enterprise — to develop, step-by-step, the ideas that will, collectively and over time, create the agency and the capacity to act in support of our communities, both here in New Mexico and across the globe. The collective imagination and contribution of our students is critical to this pursuit.

Next week some of this student-created work will be on display at the [Shared Knowledge Conference](#). Graduate students will be [sharing their discoveries](#) via poster presentations and the LoboBITES lightning talks. This conference will take place next Thursday, Nov. 7, 2019, with posters at Hodgin Hall from 2-3:45 p.m., and the LoboBITES talks in the Centennial Engineering auditorium from 4-5 p.m., with a

reception to follow. The Shared Knowledge Conference provides an excellent opportunity to see UNM research and appreciate the contributions of students as creators and explorers in the world of ideas.

**Dr. James Paul Holloway**

**Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

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