

Academic Dispatch

September 3, 2020

Labor Day, and a Long Way to Go

On June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed the act that recognized Labor Day, the first Monday in September, as a federal holiday celebrating the work and contributions of laborers in the United States. UNM benefits from the work of our many faculty and staff whose energy, effort, and intellect drive forward our agendas of research, learning and impact. Monday will be a day to remember their effort with gratitude. From me to all who work at UNM: thank you.

“We are challenged on every hand to work untiringly to achieve excellence in our lifework. Not all men are called to specialized or professional jobs; even fewer rise to the heights of genius in the arts and sciences; many are called to be laborers in factories, fields, and streets. But no work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”
Martin Luther King, *Strength to Love*, 1963

This weekend is an opportunity for all of us, students as well as faculty and staff, to break from our everyday efforts and recover some of our emotional and physical energy for the next stage of our year of learning and creation. But this time of rest also poses risks. Before he retired in August, Paul Roth, then Executive Vice President and Chancellor of the UNM Health Science Center, warned us of “COVID fatigue,” the relaxing of our guard and premature loosening of our COVID safe practices.

We can manage the SARS-CoV-2 virus using the practices that the State of New Mexico and UNM have put into place. If we continue to wear our masks, practice social distancing, maintain hand hygiene, and screen for symptoms, then I protect you, you protect me. Please don't let the pleasures of a three-day weekend drive from your mind the importance of continued vigilance in the face of COVID.

University Secretary

I am excited to announce the appointment Dr. Nancy Middlebrook as the new University Secretary for the University of New Mexico. The University Secretary is a key official at UNM, overseeing the administrative support for faculty governance – especially the Faculty Senate, the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, and the Committee on Governance. The Secretary also creates the key ceremonial events of university life, including Convocation for first year students (sadly absent this year), and Commencement (awaiting a time when we can again gather in throngs!). Dr. Middlebrook brings a wealth of experience to the role, both from her time at UNM, where she has served in many and varied roles, and from the President's



Dr. Nancy Middlebrook,
University Secretary.

Office at Eastern New Mexico University. She has BBA, MBA, and Doctoral degrees from Texas Tech University. At UNM she has worked with many and varied offices, including UNM Online, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of Institutional Analytics.

Dean of Honors College

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Diane Marshall as the interim dean of the UNM Honors College. Prof. Marshall brings many skills to this role. A Professor of Biology, she is an accomplished scholar, teacher, and an experienced administrator. She has served in a number of roles, including undergraduate advisor and later associate chair for Biology. She has a broad focus on the undergraduate experience, including in supporting minority student access to research careers. She has previously participated in the academic program review of the Honors College, and recently agreed to chair the task force on honors that we formed last spring, and which will continue this fall. Prof. Marshall will continue half-time in her role as associate dean for instruction and curriculum in Arts and Sciences, and take on the interim dean role half-time as well.



Dr. Diane Marshall, Interim Dean of the UNM Honors College.

Thanks to you all for all you are doing for UNM, for each other, and for our New Mexico communities and families. Please, Lobos, wear your masks. And remember: while masks are horrible chin guards, they are great when covering the mouth *and* nose!

James Paul Holloway

Professor of Nuclear Engineering

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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