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**December 15, 2022**

## **A Time of Thanks**

Across the northern hemisphere this is often a time of harvest celebrations, founded in the remembrance of our ancestors who labored in ways different from us to prepare the basic provender of the winter. The harvest time was a moment to reflect on the successes of the year, and prepare for the challenges to come.

In my own labors, there are also many to thank, for UNM is a large enterprise and many are here to ease our efforts and assure the success of our learners and researchers. I cannot thank all by name, but I do thank you all, and embrace the delight that each of us finds from helping others.

It is also a time of reflective sorrow, for some of our community are with us no longer, and others have had their lives dislocated in ways for which none were prepared. As Amanda Gorman writes, “When day comes, we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade? The loss we carry. A sea we must wade.”

Ever it is so in our world: sorrows arrive for some, overlapping with joys arriving for others. I ask you not to discount the one as I focus on the other.

Last week we celebrated over 50 years of Africana Studies at UNM, and rejoiced at the creation this year of a Department of Africana Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, under the inaugural leadership of Professor Kirsten Buick. In my remarks at this occasion, I

noted that the road to this milestone was long – too long, too stony, and too filled with curves. Many helped move Africana Studies along the hard road to reach this next waypoint: a department with a strong research mission. The roadblocks and rocks on the path are themselves demonstrations of the structural challenges that remain in our society. However, last week the focus was rightly on the celebration and on all those whose dedication brought us to this point, and on the giving of thanks for their achievements.

### **Leaders on the Move: Arts & Sciences, Gallup, and Education & Human Sciences**

In the spirit of thanks and success, I will also single out Professor of Physics Arash Mafi. Arash has been a wonderful colleague and has helped many to achieve their dreams while serving as the Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences. Others too have noticed his quality, and so Arash has accepted an offer to become the Inaugural Executive Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Kansas University. KU is welcoming an academic leader of exceptional ability, who can make difficult decisions while also being sure that all have been heard and all perspectives considered. UNM will miss you, Arash. So will I.

I am grateful that Professor Janie Chermak, currently Chair of Economics, has agreed to step into Arash's shoes as interim dean, effective March 1, 2023. Prof. Chermak will serve until into the summer, when we expect the search of dean to bear fruit. The search is underway, and details can be found on the [UNM Executive Search](#) website.

I am thrilled to announce also that Dr. Sabrina Ezzell has accepted the position of Chancellor of UNM Gallup. Sabrina has been a long-time member of the faculty at Gallup, with a distinguished career including service as the Chair of the Education, Health and Human Sciences Division. Most recently she has served as the interim chancellor at Gallup, while we conducted a search for the regular chancellor position. We have all enjoyed the rewards of working with Sabrina, so I am very pleased to see that her candidacy for the role was so strongly supported. Dr. Ezzell holds degrees in Nursing from Eastern New Mexico University, from UNM, and from Northern Arizona University, and earned a Doctorate in Education from Creighton University. Sabrina has tremendous community support in her new role, and has greatly impressed all of us at UNM in her work at UNM-Gallup. I look forward to continuing to have her on our academic leadership team.

In a continued spirit of good will, I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Kris Goodrich has accepted the role of Interim Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences, effective December 16, 2022. Prof. Goodrich has a generous spirit, a desire to bring people together in

common purpose, and a strong sense of the strengths and opportunities for COEHS. Kris joined UNM in 2010 as an assistant professor after earning his doctorate from Syracuse University. He has also spent time working in student affairs at Le Moyne College. He is an accomplished scholar, having authored or co-authored over 60 scholarly publications. Prof. Goodrich has served as chair or interim chair for two different departments in COEHS, and as associate dean for research, providing him with a broad view of the full complexity and richness of the college. Feedback from the search advisory committee and from those who participated in the various public forums also spoke to his enthusiasm and ability to work in a collaborative manner, his respect for others, and his understanding of the role of identity in the lived experiences of individuals. I'm looking forward to working with Kris on this next stage in the development of the College of Education and Human Sciences.

The end of the term draws close, and many of our community are now deep into the exam period. A culmination, albeit a stressful one, of the academic semester for many. Thanks to our faculty and other instructors for their work in bringing these learners to this point in their quest for knowledge, thanks to our students for their dedication to this pursuit, and thanks to our staff for their support of both.

Have a good holiday break, and see you next year!

**James Paul Holloway**

**Professor of Nuclear Engineering**

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

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