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President's Weekly Perspective, 2008_10_20

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Monday Morning Message - October 20, 2008

Good morning and welcome back.

Let's start off this week recognizing some outstanding individuals associated with the University of New Mexico who were recently awarded the 2008 Distinguished Public Service Award. Dr. Viola Florez, our former interim Provost and Dean of the College of Education and Dr. Renee Ornelas, Director of Para Los Ninos in the UNM Department of Pediatrics, were both recognized as having served our community with great distinction.

Dr. Florez, in addition to her outstanding leadership at UNM, has served as a liaison with government leaders and with business, community and professional organizations interested in improving teacher education, development and education reform.

Dr. Ornelas is a premier advocate for improved diagnoses, treatment and care of children who have been sexually abused. In addition, Dr. Ornelas is one of our highly valued professors at the UNM Health Sciences Center, contributing to our efforts to educate New Mexico's health care workforce.

The New Mexico Distinguished Public Award program is designed to heighten awareness and appreciation of public service, achieving President John F. Kennedy's legacy of drawing "the best and the brightest" to all levels of public service. I am very proud of the work of both these outstanding individuals. On behalf of all of us in the UNM community, we thank you for your service to UNM and to the state as a whole.

It was also announced last week that the UNM School of Medicine was awarded the prestigious Spencer Foreman Award for Outstanding Community Service by the Association of American Medical Colleges. The award honors institutions that have a longstanding institutional commitment to addressing community needs and which have developed exceptional programs that go beyond the traditional role of academic medicine to reach communities.

Since coming to UNM, I have been thoroughly impressed with the outstanding work of our School of Medicine and of the great work of our outstanding colleagues at the Health Sciences Center. UNM has made a commitment to creating healthy New Mexico communities and to providing great service to all pockets of the state. Congratulations are in order for all of the dedicated members of the UNM community who continue to work so hard to improve the lives of the people of this State.

There was more great news to celebrate this weekend at University stadium as our Lobos dominated every inch of the gridiron, culminating in a lopsided, 70-7 victory. I've been able to interact with many of our student-athletes throughout my tenure here and it always amazes me how well they represent our university on the field, in the classroom and throughout the community.

Lastly, this weekend marked the beginning of early voting for the November election. I'm told there was good turnout at the SUB location and I want to remind everybody that you can vote early in the Cochiti Room on the 2nd floor beginning again this Tuesday. There are some important initiatives on the ballot that will go a long way toward ensuring we are able to keep up the good work of the Health Sciences Center and that will help us to continue to support the academic endeavors of all of our students.

Have a great week!

David J. Schmidly