9-11-2007

President's Report, 9/11/2007

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Just over three weeks ago, our students converged on UNM for the fall semester, and I cannot adequately describe to you what a change that brings to our campus. Everyone moves a little faster, thinks a lot harder and is reminded daily that student success is what we are all about.

At today’s meeting, UNM’s interim Vice President for Enrollment Management and his team will provide a full report on fall enrollment numbers on main campus, at the branches and through Extended University. Preliminary figures showed more than 25,700 students on main campus accounting for 300,400 student credit hours. Both of these numbers are close to the figures from the Fall 2006 semester.

UNM is holding its own in the face of declining high school graduation rates and declining numbers of students taking the ACT. However, we will have to significantly ramp up our retention rates and attract more transfer and out-of-state students in order to assure our formula funding remains secure.

If you’ve followed recent news reports, the beginning of the fall semester brought on a rash of incidents that led to the emergency suspensions of three of our campus fraternities. I’ve been told this is unprecedented, but I will tell you that behavior such as that which led to the suspensions cannot and will not be tolerated at UNM. I don’t want the entire Greek system to be condemned by the actions of a few. However, I do expect to see a major turnaround in how certain organizations handle themselves if they are to continue to have a home on this campus.

I’ve charged a task force, led by Executive Vice President for Administration David Harris, to review the conduct of the Greek Life system at UNM. The Greek system espouses the values of service and community, and the university expects all of its fraternities and sororities to put their values into practice. The long-term recommendations of the task force will be reported by the end of the semester.

The Princeton Review, while naming UNM one of the best 366 colleges in the country, referenced a much-publicized student survey that gave our faculty some poor ratings. However, the most recent National Survey of Student Engagement, a scientific instrument designed to measure institutional performance and improvement, suggests that we have improved in this area over the last few years though there is work still to be done. We will continue to examine this issue and plan for more improvement.

Hours after we last met, I joined CNM President Kathie Winograd in signing a memorandum of agreement to work together to provide higher education, career development, skill development and lifelong learning opportunities for the citizens of New Mexico. Our two institutions also pledge to work together on the higher education needs of Rio Rancho.

I’ve also spent a couple of days in Taos, visiting our branch campus, the D.H. Lawrence Ranch, our wonderful Harwood Museum and Taos Pueblo, as well as addressing a meeting of the Legislative Education Study Committee. I am excited about the great progress being made at UNM-Taos by director Kate O’Neill and her talented team. This was my first visit to one of the branches. Next up is Gallup September 18-19.

Our fall has started with a flourish. Let’s keep the positive momentum going.
President David J. Schmidly spearheaded a new partnership between New Mexico’s flagship research university and the leading community college in the state. UNM and Central New Mexico Community College will work together to provide higher education, career development, skill development and lifelong learning opportunities for the citizens of New Mexico under a memorandum of agreement approved by the UNM Board of Regents and the Governing Board of CNM. UNM and CNM will also work together to provide for the higher education needs of Rio Rancho, including jointly establishing a Rio Rancho campus.

The goal of UNM’s Title V project, “Improving Campus Climate for Hispanic Students,” is to increase retention and graduation rates of Hispanic students by collaborating with staff and faculty in creating student engagement. The program is focused on three initiatives: recruitment and retention of Hispanic faculty, providing student mentoring in math and English classes, and MAPS (Multiple Academic Pathways for Students), a tool to navigate the academic, social and cultural support programs available on campus.

The U.S. Department of Education funds the Title V grant in the amount of $2.8 million over five years. Grant funding began in October 2006.

Inaugural activities span full week

David J. Schmidly will be officially installed as UNM’s 20th president during a ceremony Sunday, Oct. 7, at 2:30 p.m. in Popejoy Hall. UNM’s tradition of installing or investing presidents dates back to 1912.

A weeklong series of events will showcase UNM’s contributions in the areas of community service, sustainable environments, health policy, research and innovation, athletics, arts and culture. The theme is “Connect,” which illustrates President Schmidly’s commitment to build and enhance connections between the university and communities.

Building community through engagement

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Lobo Energy teams with national energy expert for UNM energy conservation

Lobo Energy, Inc. recently entered into a contract with energy conservation expert Energy Education, Inc. to implement an energy conservation program at UNM.

According to EEI estimates, UNM could expect projected savings in excess of $50 million over the next 10 years – a 20 percent savings.

The agreement with EEI will support the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, of which President David J. Schmidly was one of the original signatories in June.

Senator Pete Domenici, was on campus to dedicate Phase 1 of Domenici Education Center for Health Science Education
Roth honored as distinguished alum

The George Washington University Alumni Association has selected Paul Roth, M.D., UNM executive vice president for health sciences, for its Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award. This is one of the university's most prestigious honors and is in special recognition of Roth's professional accomplishments since his graduation. The award will be presented Sept. 28 during Alumni Reunion Week.

UNMH teams with community partners to diversify N.M. nurses

A partnership between Con Alma Health Foundation, UNM Hospitals Nursing Division, and the New Mexico Community Foundation has been selected for Partners Investing in Nursing’s Future, a nationwide program that addresses the nursing shortage. A grant of $250,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Northwest Health Foundation was awarded to Con Alma Health Foundation, the largest health foundation in New Mexico.

Project DIVERSITY, a pilot program, is designed to increase the number of ethnically diverse nurses in N.M. through a collaborative recruitment, nurse-student mentoring, and tutoring initiative targeting 60 middle and high school students of color.

Kaufman named Five Star Doctor

Arthur Kaufman, HSC vice president for community health and chair of the UNM School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine, was recently voted the second recipient of Five Star Doctor – WONCA International Award of Excellence in Health Care. The award is given to one recipient worldwide once every three years out of an eligible field of more than 200,000 general practitioners and family physicians.

Five UNM faculty promoted to distinguished professor

Five professors have been promoted to the rank of UNM distinguished professor. Distinguished professors are individuals who have demonstrated outstanding achievements and are nationally and internationally renowned as scholars. The 2007-08 inductees are: David Craven, Abhaya Datye, Larry Davis, Linda B. Hall, and Deepak Kapur.
New at 2007 Lobo football

Lobo football offers fans new ways to howl this season.

The 1st Community Bank Lobo Football Fan Fest, located in Tailgate Lot 1 northeast of University Stadium, features free live music, food vendors, kids' activities, a 72-foot obstacle course, and a viewing tent to watch other college football games.

Lobo Prowl features the Lobo football team unloading at Fan Fest two and a half hours before kickoff and walking through the tailgate lot to the locker room.

The Rocky Mountain RV Overnight Lot is adjacent to Fan Fest and will open at 5 p.m. the day before each home game.

UNM Student Tailgate will be in the southeast corner of Tailgate Lot 2 and is open to all students with current ID.

New concessions feature green chile stew, Dakota buffalo burgers and new hot and cold-weather food and drink items.

Lobos 65th in Director’s Cup

UNM finished 65th in the nation in the 2006-07 United States Sports Academy Director’s Cup, a ranking that measures a school’s overall athletics success. It’s the Lobos’ 13th finish in the top-100 in 14 years of the Cup, and the 10th time that UNM has been among the top 65 schools nationally.

President’s Report