

9-17-2012

President's Weekly Perspective, 9/17/2012

Robert G. Frank

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/frank_papers

Recommended Citation

Frank, Robert G.. "President's Weekly Perspective, 9/17/2012." (2012). https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/frank_papers/16

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of the President at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in President Frank's Administration by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.



UNM President's Weekly Perspective

Good Morning.

Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) in Tennessee is viewed as most comparable to Sandia National Lab among the national lab system. Sandia National Lab studies bioenergy and biodefense and is funded by the Department of Energy. During my first visit with Senator Jeff Bingaman after I was appointed, he suggested we look to ORNL for ways to improve our relationship with Sandia and the other National Labs in New Mexico.

The University of Tennessee has been working with ORNL since 1943. In 1999, The University of Tennessee partnered with Batelle Corporation to manage ORNL. The partnership has spawned spectacular successes showing what a strong university-laboratory partnership can produce.

Ironically, the University of Tennessee president, Joe DiPietro, and the chancellor of the Knoxville campus, Jimmy Cheek, were both deans with me at the University of Florida. They both also suggested we would benefit from seeing ORNL. We accepted their kind invitation and took a small delegation including Chaouki Abdallah, John McGraw, Andy Ross, Connie Beimer and myself for two days. We found successive governors have shown remarkable vision and willingness to partner with the state's lead institution. Tennessee has created a set aside of \$10 million to fund Governor's chairs. These prestigious, endowed chairs are offered to individuals ORNL and UT jointly select. To be eligible, the candidate must be doing research that is defining research in their field. To date, only eight have been chosen of the ten funded. This was only one idea we learned about during our visit. We will discuss many other ideas our colleagues at UT and ORNL shared with us in the other forums. Many thanks to thanks to them for their for extraordinary generosity.

We went to ORNL because we are peering into the future, and to UNM's role in the economic development of New Mexico. Another important future focus for us is the proposed UNM 96 bed hospital we plan to build at I-25 and Lomas. It's no secret that healthcare has been in a state of transition. If you have ever sought emergency treatment at UNMH, you know our current hospital facility is overwhelmed. One telling indicator is the occupancy rate. The average is 75 percent. At UNMH, our 300 adult medical surgical bed occupancy averages more than 90 percent, which means that if a crisis hits, we have no room to take on an emergency surge of patients. In addition, we also have to face the reality that we have an aging building, no backup facilities, no capacity to manage Level 1 trauma, stroke, cardiac or cancer if the main operating room is compromised. The facility we now operate is more than 50 years old.

Our proposed 96 bed hospital enables us to expand quality care to more New Mexicans. Our Health Sciences Center is a complex and sophisticated multi-layered provider of health care not only to Albuquerque residents, but to New Mexicans from every corner of the state. We are the only Level 1 Trauma Center in New Mexico. Through the Health Sciences Center and the hospital, we provide everything from primary care to emergency services. Our responsibility is to ensure that we are providing access to quality care at an affordable cost, both now and for decades to come. This 96 bed hospital is a vital part of our commitment to a healthy future for New Mexico.

Finally, this week I presented to the Board of Regents the summary finding of the Freeh Report. That report evaluated the breakdown in protocols and governance at Penn State that fostered an environment their Coach Gerald Sandusky abused children for more than a decade. Many of the problems identified in the Freeh Report are specific to Penn State – or at least are not problems here – and many of the report's recommendations are specifically designed to correct problems unique to Penn State. However one of the Penn State problems involved the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. This act is Federal law that requires that students, parents and employees be provided with information to protect themselves from crime in the annual Clery Report released last week. It is important that you know that we are committed to being proactive in preventing crimes on campus. I would also like you to know that we are in the process of thoughtfully examining the recommendations in the Freeh Report for incorporation into UNM. We want to ensure that the culture we have here at UNM is predicated on ethical behavior and respect for every person.

Next week I will report to you on the initial outcomes from our Rainforest in the Desert economic development summit. Until then, have a good week, and Go Lobos!

Bob