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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

As of this morning, **624** New Mexicans have tested positive for the novel coronavirus and **12** patients have died. More than **19,000** tests have been administered. Visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

While the novel coronavirus doesn't distinguish among its victims, it clearly has a disproportionate impact on the least privileged among us – especially people experiencing homelessness.

As I mentioned last week, **Laura Chanchien Parajon, MD, MPH**, executive director in our Office for Community Health and assistant professor in the Department of Family & Community Medicine, is working to help coordinate medical care in this crisis for folks staying at Albuquerque's Westside Emergency

Housing Center.

A graduate of our School of Medicine and family medicine residency, Laura spent 17 years working with her husband, **David Parajon, MD**, in his native Nicaragua at a faith-affiliated nonprofit that provided health care and prevention in rural communities. There, she gained firsthand experience in dealing with the Zika and H1N1 epidemics.



Dr. Laura Parajon

Since taking on a leadership role at UNM, Laura has also found time over the past year to volunteer at the Westside shelter. With the arrival of COVID-19, she coordinated with local health systems and social service agencies to ensure the shelter's medical clinic is ready.

The shelter houses 450 people, but fortunately no one has yet tested positive. The shelter is now an approved testing site, and all new arrivals have their temperature taken.

"We just all pulled together to see what we could do for the homeless population," Laura says. "The most amazing thing was how, when we're partnered together, we can do so much more."

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the incredible work of our partners at **UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center** in meeting the health care needs of the communities they serve, including the many tribal communities in that area.

Now, more than ever, they are stepping up to meet the challenge. Under CEO **Jamie Silva-**

Steele's leadership, the hospital's frontline health care providers have been doing a tremendous job of caring for their patients while preparing for whatever contingency may arise. They deserve our thanks and respect.

Warm regards,



Paul B. Roth, MD, MS
Chancellor for Health Sciences
CEO, UNM Health System
Dean, UNM School of Medicine



Jamie Silva-Steele,
SRMC CEO