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2020-04-08 A Message from Chancellor Roth

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HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

As of this afternoon, 865 New Mexicans have tested positive for the novel coronavirus and 16 patients have died. More than 23,000 tests have been administered. Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

While I lament the impact the COVID-19 infection is having on our state, I am struck by how compassionate and resourceful people can be in times of great need. I'd like to share with you a few accounts of how our faculty, staff and students have extended themselves to provide support for our patients, community – and one another.

Hannah Mullaney, a third-year student in our Physical Therapy doctoral program, praised the program's leadership and staff for minimizing disruptions occasioned by the COVID-19 outbreak. Division chief Beth Moody Jones, PT, DPT, EdD, MS, "knows each of us personally and deeply cares about our clinical education," Hannah writes. "That is part of the reason why she hosts weekly all-program check-ins. She gave Zoom accounts to the classroom leaders so that each cohort could stay connected, whether to study or just catch up."

Juliana Anastasoff, MS, is our Health Extension Regional Officer (HERO) in north-central New Mexico. On behalf of the UNM Office for Community Health she has spent years building an extensive regional network to promote community health, which has enabled her to provide her neighbors with critical support during this crisis. You can [read more about her efforts here](#).

Finally, Warren Heffron, MD, professor emeritus and longtime chair in the Department of Family & Community Medicine, wanted to tell me about his family's extraordinary primary care provider, Toni Benton, MD (associate professor in Family & Community Medicine).

“My family doctor called to see how my wife and I were doing on our quarantine and working at home, and if we needed Rx refills etc.,” Warren wrote. “At the end of the call she offered to make a run to Smith’s to pick up this week’s supply of food, since we are senior citizens. I think this exemplifies some of what UNM is all about.”

Dr. Benton’s willingness to go the extra mile for her patients is inspiring. I completely agree with Warren: it very much exemplifies what UNM is all about.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul B. Roth".

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