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2020-04-13 A Message from Chancellor Roth

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HEALTH SCIENCES

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A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

As of this afternoon, 1,345 New Mexicans have tested positive for the novel coronavirus and 31 patients have died. Nearly 32,000 tests have been administered. Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

Social distancing feels unnatural – because it is. We humans have a born need for close connection and physical proximity with one another. But as an infection control strategy social distancing is essential, because it works. We are starting to see positive signs of its success throughout the U.S.

The policies in effect here at the Health Sciences Center align with Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham’s core message encouraging social distancing: If you are Tier 2 employee, whose presence on campus is not classified as essential, you should be working from home.

I want to thank our colleagues at Project ECHO for providing training to more than 3,000 frontline COVID-19 health care workers in New Mexico. Project ECHO, and their partners around the world, have collectively trained an estimated 175,000 health care providers in more than 100 countries to support the COVID-19 response.

Project ECHO is also rapidly disseminating best practices to community providers working around the state. Ongoing programs include supporting the state’s first responders, two weekly virtual “office hours” that provide an opportunity to ask questions of HSC infectious disease experts, a critical care ECHO, and a broader COVID-19 ECHO, offered in English and Spanish.

Congratulations are due to Karin High, PhD, professor and vice chair for research in the Department of Anesthesiology & Critical Care Medicine, and assistant research

professor Sascha Alles, PhD, whose research submission – Brain-Penetrant scFv Antibody Block of P2X4 Receptor for the Treatment of Chronic Pain – was recommended for funding by the Department of Defense Office of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs.

This will be a new five-year, \$1.5 million DOD grant, reports Anesthesiology chair Hugh Martin, MD. “I’m quite excited to congratulate our research team for being funded for the next five years,” he writes. “Impressive!”

This is vitally important research. Their dedication makes us all proud.

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