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# Preparing for the Presidency

Robert G. Frank

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## **Preparing for the Presidency**

Posted February 16, 2012

Robert G. Frank

Dear students, colleagues and friends:

I returned last week to the UNM campus to begin the work of listening and gaining an understanding of the current institutional landscape and the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead. I met with members of the faculty, staff council representatives, UNM Foundation members and individual Regents. I traveled to Santa Fe, where I met with various state leaders and addressed attendees of the Hispano Roundtable's annual legislative event.

I was thrilled to see the progress the Math faculty has made in developing programs to help entering students with weak math skills. Improving math skills has a ripple effect across the University; more students are retained and graduate, plus the career options for an individual student expand when they are not handicapped by math deficiencies.

In Santa Fe, I met with Governor Martinez. I have now met with her twice since I was selected as incoming President. We had a general conversation about her hopes for higher education and how the University of New Mexico can best serve the state. I also had the chance to spend time with the Senate Majority Leader, Michael Sanchez. During my time in Santa Fe, I got to see the University's Government Relations group, led by Marc Saavedra, in action. UNM clearly has a strong presence in the Roundhouse and a very good team. At the kind invitation of Chairman Ralph Arellanes of the New Mexico Hispano Roundtable, I was introduced at the 18th Annual Tribute to Hispano Legislators, honoring Hispano state leaders, veterans and other individuals who have made a difference in the community.

I continue to work closely with President Schmidly, whose strong commitment to a successful transition continues to underscore my faith in maintaining the stability and momentum of the University during this time. I will be coming back to UNM over the next few months to continue developing relationships and listening to the various voices of the University.

In our four-day whirlwind visit, my wife, Janet, and I were able to chat with many staff and faculty at UNM and in the community (these were really long days!). We were both impressed by the enthusiasm for the University of New Mexico and the extraordinary optimism apparent when people spoke of where the University was headed.

As I transition into the presidency, I am ready to work hard to help lead this dynamic place and advance our critical mission as the state's flagship university, becoming fully engaged in the intellectual and cultural life of our institution.

We look forward to our arrival in May and are honored to be a part of the Lobo community. I have much to learn and, I hope, much to offer as we work together for the future of the University of New Mexico.