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President's Weekly Perspective, 2008_07_21

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Monday Morning Message - July 21, 2008

Good morning.

For the past year, this university's theme has been to "Connect." We got to know one another, we established partnerships with CNM and other institutions, we secured our presence in Rio Rancho and we connected with communities all across New Mexico.

This coming year, I propose that UNM focus on the theme "Communicate." Failure to communicate has been our greatest weakness this past year. Embracing open and honest communication will prove to be our greatest strength.

UNM's executive team spent a day communicating last week. We focused our thoughts around the following challenge: The greatest opportunity for excellence at UNM is to produce from the unique mix of New Mexico's diverse population the workforce, leaders, health care providers and scholars that will contribute to the social and economic vitality of our state, region and nation. I'd like you all to think about this goal in the coming days, weeks and months. It is one that is worth pursuing, but we'll be successful only if everyone pulls together in that pursuit.

The Advance (remember, we don't have "retreats") discussion was enlivened with the views of the new members of the executive team, including our new Provost, Chief Information Officer and Vice Presidents for Enrollment Management and for Equity and Inclusion. It was great to see everyone join together – new and veteran faces alike – with a vitality that promises greatness for the future of UNM.

You may have heard that our student-athletes achieved a combined GPA of 3.11 for the 2008 spring semester. Not only is that a school record, but also it was the biggest improvement in GPA from semester to semester in the past 20 years. This is an academic achievement we all can celebrate, because it shows that the hard work of the faculty, students, coaches, advisors and mentors has paid off. Congratulations to you all.

This coming Saturday, approximately 3,000 APS students will descend on the Pit to pick up new backpacks filled with school supplies. You'll recall UNM students and student-athletes joined students from Highland High and Albuquerque High in stuffing the backpacks as part of a research service-learning project. It's been a great experience and grand collaboration for everyone involved.

I'll be spending the next few days with family. I hope you too take the opportunity to rest and refresh for the coming year.

Have a great week.

David J. Schmidly