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Weekly Message, 1/26/2009

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Good morning.

We now begin the first full week of the legislative session in Santa Fe, and a lot is riding on it – nothing less than the future of our state’s young people and their ability to prepare a better future for all of us.

In the course of our day-to-day work and struggles, it’s easy to forget that we share the noble calling of inspiring excellence in the next generation of New Mexicans. The students we’re privileged to serve will someday find cures for AIDS, cancer and diabetes; they’ll design new and more efficient methods to heat our homes and fuel our cars; they’ll create new jobs in businesses that we can’t even imagine today; and they’ll find better ways for all of us to live and work together in harmony. Most important, they’ll go forward to live happy, satisfying lives as educated men and women.

It’s our job – the job of EACH of us – to communicate that message loud and clear. We may have our individual disagreements, but one thing we all should agree on is that even in a recession, the mission of educating our citizens is too important to be sacrificed. Indeed, it’s especially important in challenging economic times not to take our eyes off this goal, for to reduce our commitment to the next generation is to eat our own seed corn. I’m confident in the enlightened leadership of our Governor and our Legislators to take the long view and do the right thing.

I am proud of our faculty’s outstanding achievements and am always delighted to share those milestones of greatness with the campus. Ravinder K. Jain, a professor in both Electrical and Computer Engineering and in Physics and Astronomy, has been appointed a Fellow in the American Physical Society. This honor, which recognizes Dr. Jain’s outstanding contributions in physics, is only given to a few outstanding members of the Society.

Another of our physicists, Distinguished Professor of Physics Carlton Caves, has been elected an American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow. He’s being recognized for advances in the understanding of physical laws and in quantum information theory. Dr. Caves will be honored at the AAAS annual meeting in Chicago next month.

Anderson School of Management Professor Steven Walsh has once again been named one of the top 50 researchers in the Technology Innovation Management field by Elsevier Limited, a leading publisher of science and health information serving more than 30 million scientists, students and health professionals worldwide. Dr. Walsh has not only won this recognition for each of the past five years, he is also one of only seven researchers who have maintained this status for an entire decade.

I'd also like to celebrate four of our student-athletes who are recipients of the L.F. "Tow" Diehm Inspirational Award and the Leslie Self Inspirational Award. This is the 11th year these awards have been presented to male and female student-athletes in recognition of their leadership, character, determination and commitment to team.

Jeremy Johnson of Albuquerque finished his collegiate career here as one of the greatest long distance runners in UNM history. Former walk-on John Sullivan went from being a virtual unknown to being the third consensus All-America honoree in Lobo football history, setting school and conference records and leading the nation with 29 field goals.

Canadian Tori Clarridge was a four-year academic and athletic All-Mountain West Conference performer for the Lobo women's swim team. She got her degree in Nursing with a 3.65 GPA and currently works in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at UNMH. Finally, Ruidoso native Katie Coronado, as a junior, recorded the highest NCAA Championship finish in UNM women's history, placing second in the javelin at the 2008 Championships. I hope you will join me in taking pride in the character and accomplishments of these UNM Lobos.

Have a good week.

David J. Schmidly