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President's Weekly Perspective, 2008_10_13

David Schmidly

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Monday Morning Message – October 13, 2008

Good morning.

I'd like to start this week with some good news that we can all celebrate. We've talked a lot about the record freshman class. Recent enrollment reports show that we also have historically high retention rates for freshmen coming back for their third semester. Of the 2,855 full-time beginning freshmen who enrolled at UNM in Fall 2007, 77.34 percent returned this Fall. That's up from 74.44 percent just two years ago and is a tribute to the efforts of faculty and staff who work with our students to insure their success.

We were delighted last week when Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio won the Nobel Prize for Literature. He's been a visiting professor here at UNM and has also lived part-time in Albuquerque over the years. He finds this area conducive to his writing – another great reason why this region is so rich in the arts.

Absentee voting for the November 4 general election has begun and early voting begins this Saturday. There will be an early voting location at the SUB, which is a great convenience for the UNM community. I'd like to inform you about two more issues of importance to this university. Bond B has \$11 million in funding for public libraries around the state. University Libraries' share of that funding is necessary so that UNM can provide the books and materials that keep students up to date in their fields of study.

UNM Hospital also has a major issue on the November ballot. Since 1954, the voters of Bernalillo County have supported UNM Hospital operations through a mil levy. Every 8 years this ballot measure goes to the voters, including this year. The voters of Bernalillo County will be asked to renew the ballot measure at its current assessment, which means there will be no tax increase to homeowners to support UNM Hospital. And it is the support from the community that is vital for UNM Hospital to continue its mission.

Finally, there are some events this week that should be of interest to you. El Centro de la Raza hosts the two-day "Immigration Symposium: Dispelling Myths and Raising Awareness," Tuesday and Wednesday, at the SUB. This symposium, which highlights the continual influence of immigration and culture, will present the controversy of immigration through several social, economic and political viewpoints. It will be well worth your time.

I look forward to the Student Town Hall at noon Wednesday in the SUB Atrium. We'll be listening to our students and talking to them about a number of topics.

And for the golfers among you, the 7th annual UNM Golf Fiesta is set for this Friday at the Championship Course. It's open to all UNM students, faculty, staff and alumni. You can call 277-4546 for more information and to register. The deadline is 5 p.m. tomorrow and the event is limited to the first 30 teams that have reservations. So pull a team together and have some fun.

Have a great week.

David J. Schmidly