

FROM THE DESK OF THE  
**Vice President for Research**

*December 2023*

*Lobos,*

*You made it another semester and you should be so proud of the work you've completed, the collaborations you've initiated, and ultimately the research findings you've put out into the world.*

*Take this winter break as an opportunity to relax and spend time with family, friends, and your favorite family pet – I will be spending time with Ginger, my senior rescue dog. It's also the perfect time of year to visit a local bookstore or try a new recipe. Whatever you decide to do, do it with joy and intention to rejuvenate your mind.*

*Over the last year, the UNM Office of the Vice President for Research has expanded our team with several new faces and new types of expertise to advance and serve the UNM research community, including a research translation officer, a director of development, a postdoctoral coordinator, and a training specialist. Although most of our staff is housed on the third floor of Scholes Hall, some team members are located at our second location we call, Basehart. They share a space with our state EPSCoR office on South Campus. Please reach out to the OVPR if you want to learn more about our expansion and research services.*

*Happy Holidays! See you in the New Year!*



Ellen Fisher, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Research  
Professor of Chemistry

## Sustainable Space Research Virtual Open House

Join the Sustainable Space Research Grand Challenge Team for an open house to learn more about all the space research opportunities and work happening in New Mexico.

One of the team's missions is to expand New Mexico's scientific, creative, and economic horizons beyond Earth through university, commercial, and national lab collaboration.

The virtual open house is today at 2 p.m.

## Research Celebrations

### Research and Discovery Week

Last month, we celebrated research at every level during our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual 2023 Research & Discovery Week with a plethora of keynote lectures, workshops, and conferences, as well as lots of hands-on activities for everyone.

I hope everyone took the time to attend at least one event. The goal of R&D Week is not only to showcase the interdisciplinary landscape of UNM research, but to encourage collaboration and connections between our researchers.

### Drones for Ducks

Researchers at UNM, in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Department of the Interior, are working to develop a machine-learning model prototype that can count birds using images taken by drones in a project titled Drones for Ducks.

Christopher Lippitt, associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences and professor in the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, and Rowan Converse, a Ph.D. candidate in the same department, have spent the past three years working to develop an AI model that can distinguish and count the birds in photos taken by drones. This is critical to better understanding migration patterns as well as how populations have been impacted by climate change.

Keep up the amazing work, researchers!

### UNM students contribute to new LWA station

In other news, UNM Department of Physics and Astronomy Distinguished Professor Greg Taylor recently took a group of students to build antennas at the third Long Wavelength Array (LWA) station.

The LWA is a telescope that helps collect radio wave data from celestial bodies. The effort was part of a \$1 million grant received by the department from the Air Force Research Laboratory.

While constructing these antennas students learned about radio astronomy instrumentation and signal analysis. UNM is one of the last remaining university radio observatories where students can be part of every aspect of construction and operations of a radio telescope.

I'm so proud of the mentorship and collaboration happening across campus and the hands-on training that our students receive by being part of this type of experiential learning!



## Research News?

### FaST Deadline Approaching

FaST applications are due Friday, Dec 8.

The FaST program provides tenure-track and tenured faculty with a reduced teaching load to enhance their capacity to bring their research, scholarship, and creative activities to the next level.

UNM main campus tenure-track and tenured faculty in all disciplines are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants must discuss their proposal with their Department Chair before submitting their application.

### GC team convenes community symposium

Last month, the GC team Just Transition to Green Energy convened UNM law school professors and New Mexico politicians to provide a forum to discuss challenges and policies for moving toward a low-carbon economy.

The event featured three panel discussions, and panelists ranged from New Mexico House Speaker Javier Martinez to several community representatives from across the state.



## Did you know?

This mosaic, created by students, is called "Alma Mater," and located outside the SUB. It has grown from the wolf in the sun to include a rendition of the Duke City skyline, the Rio Grande, and even old adobe buildings.