

Lobos,

Congratulations to all of our students graduating next week. Although graduation marks a significant milestone, I know that graduation does not signify the end of the journey in higher education for so many of our student and faculty researchers. Summer is often the season when theses and dissertations are completed, fieldwork begins, performances are honed, and book chapters finally come together – big projects that can feel difficult to advance during the academic year.

The summer months also bring the launch of many exciting summer research programs hosted here on campus. Some of these I've mentioned before, but they are all worth celebrating again. I was recently reminded of my own summer research experience when I was a rising senior in college. Not only did that experience teach me what I really wanted to do next (graduate school), it also taught me what I really didn't want to do (biomedical research). I hope our summer research students get the opportunity to explore and discover both what they love as well as maybe some things they don't like so much!

Since 2021, the UNM Research Opportunities for Science Educators (ROSE) Program has partnered with the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) to bring science teachers from across the state to UNM for a full-time, hands-on summer experience working within established research groups.

There are also lots of opportunities to learn more about quantum information science this summer. This summer, [QU-REACH](#), a collaboration between our Center for High Technology Materials (CHTM) and the Quantum New Mexico Institute (QNM-I) will be hosting students from universities and colleges around the state. [Q-CAMP](#), a partnership between UNM and Sandia National Laboratories is geared toward high school students and educators. This summer we have so many students and researchers working across the quantum universe that their locations are technically undefined. But their enthusiasm is fully measurable!

Whatever you do this summer, do it with purpose; and don't forget to rest and recharge as we prepare for the fall semester. It will be a fun one!

Ellen R. Fisher
UNM Vice President for Research
Professor of Chemistry

Safety Spotlight & Compliance Corner

This month is the perfect opportunity to highlight the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance's (ORIC) Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training. RCR training is a requirement for all researchers (undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty) supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF). If any of your research is supported by the NSF, you must complete RCR training.

ORIC is hosting a full-day RCR training symposium Thursday, June 4 from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., in the Ortega Reading Room. Please register for this training through [Learning Central](#); breakfast and lunch will be provided. There will be more opportunities to complete this requirement this summer and during the fall semester.

RCR training is intended to promote ethical and responsible research practices, including topics such as data management, authorship, peer review, research misconduct, and the responsible use of human and animal subjects. Institutions are responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided and that it aligns with NSF guidelines.

Research News

It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science with VPR Fisher

If you haven't heard, UNM has an award-winning podcast called It's (Probably) Not Rocket Science and this month I'm a guest. It just dropped today, so after you're done reading my monthly newsletter, I encourage you to give it a listen. We chatted about so much including, our diverse research portfolio, the state of UNM research as it stands, federal funding, and what faculty success looks like here at UNM.

I hope you'll tune in for those answers and more!

NM SPARK Scholars

Speaking of faculty success, last month, we announced the newest program that's part of the WeR1 Initiative, New Mexico Scholars Pursuing Advancement, Research, and Knowledge (NM SPARK).

This [initiative supports](#) assistant and associate professors in adapting their scholarship to changing opportunities, establishing new lines of research, and/or developing new research collaborations with outstanding potential to advance the UNM 2040 strategic priorities.

Proposals must be submitted electronically by **May 19** through [InfoReady](#). Email the UNM Faculty Research Development Office at frdo@unm.edu with questions about the application format, process, or the program.

Faculty-Mentored Research Awards

We are also seeking nominees for the 2026 [Faculty-Mentored Research Award](#).

Nominations must be [submitted via InfoReady](#) by **May 29**.

Faculty recipients receive a \$2,500 prize to be awarded as an honorarium or a contribution to their research index. Student recipients receive a \$1,500 cash prize.

If you have any questions or require assistance submitting materials, contact FRDO Director Hannah Torres (hstorres8@unm.edu), or URAD Director Tim Schroeder (timschroeder@unm.edu).

Globally-Engaged Research Awards

Now to a research award category that's deadline has passed so we get to announce and highlight the work of some talented researchers. The Globally-Engaged Research Awards (GERA) recognize faculty and student researchers for exceptional international research and creative works.

This year's honorees include:

Graduate Student Award: Cassidy Tawse-Garcia | Department of Geography & Environmental Studies

Deborah Rifenburg Memorial Undergraduate Award: Riley Jones | Department of Anthropology

Faculty Award: Catherine Rhodes | Department of Anthropology

Reforestation Center

Last month, researchers from UNM traveled north for the groundbreaking of the NM Reforestation Center near Mora, New Mexico. This new center aims to grow 5 million trees a year for post-fire reforestation using seeds gathered from across the southwest.

UNM's center contributions are led by Biology Professor Matt Hurteau, who is also a founding board member of the center, and one of the nation's leading forest fire ecologists. Here at UNM, Hurteau models and tests optimal planting locations to maximize seedling survival after planting. This work has already demonstrated how land managers can increase seedling survival over the current average of 25 percent in the Southwest by planting in select landscape positions.



Research Technology

Huron Suite Update

In March, the Huron Employee Compensation and Compliance (ECC) program, which is replacing our current Banner Effort Certification, went LIVE. In its first month, research staff successfully pre-reviewed 1,375 statements and faculty got a head start on their certifications by completing 499. Pre-reviews were due April 30, and while many are complete, a few remain outstanding. PI's have until May 31 to complete their certifications. Thank you to every Lobo who has taken the time to pre-review and certify statements thus far.

Throughout the month of April, Contract & Grant Accounting hosted weekly "certifier" and "pre-reviewer" trainings on both sides of Lomas. Beginning April 20, weekly office hours were added and will continue through May. Since the launch of the ECC module, we have also shared regular email updates, sometimes 2-3 each week, to help ensure everyone stays informed and supported

As with any new system rollout, a few hiccups have surfaced. We are aware that emails sent from support@ecc.com may be getting flagged as spam. Please note that messages from this address are legitimate and are part of the official automated communications for the new certification process. To avoid missing important updates, we recommend adding support@ecc.com to your safe sender list or contacts.



Research Resources

This month, I'm incredibly honored and equally sad to announce the departure of a dedicated professor and mentor, passionate researcher and administrator, but most important of all, someone I am proud to call a friend, Assistant Vice President for Research Melissa Emery Thompson.

Melissa is leaving UNM for a great opportunity she's earned at Duke University where she'll become the next chair of the Department of Evolutionary Anthropology.

Melissa came to UNM as a postdoctoral fellow in 2008 and she has worn many different hats as a

Lobo in her 18 years. Melissa is a professor of Anthropology and co-directs the Kibale Chimpanzee Project, where she coordinates long-term, non-invasive studies of wild chimpanzee health, behavior, and physiology. When we talk about diverse research across campus, Melissa is a perfect example of a researcher who doesn't stop asking questions.

She has been instrumental in our office overseeing so many of our programs that we launched and reimagined in the last five years including the WeR1 Faculty Success Initiative, Zancada Graduate Fellows Program, the Grand Challenges Program, and Research and Discovery Week. With all these events and programs, Melissa made it her goal to reduce barriers to research participation across the university and promote effective communication between faculty, staff, students, and administration.

Melissa is going to be incredibly missed in our office and around campus. She is an example of a Lobo who makes great impact and leaves behind an incredible legacy. I know, in addition to her research skills and leadership qualities, everyone in our office is going to miss all the thoughtful hand-crafted crocheted gifts we get during the holidays. And I will really miss her overhead smashes on the pickleball court (well maybe not that much!). We wish her nothing but the best and know she will always carry part of UNM wherever she goes! Congrats, Dr. Emery Thompson.