

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

Happy 4th of July, Lobos!

Most of you might know me as the UNM vice president for research, but one of my most cherished titles is professor of chemistry. Bear with me – as I nerd out – because July is the month that fireworks fill the sky – a very public display of ancient, fascinating, and just plain cool chemistry.

Did you know that fireworks date back thousands of years and they are all based on pretty simple chemical reactions? The fundamental chemistry of fireworks lies in what is essentially gunpowder, which is a mixture of sulfur and charcoal (as the fuel), and potassium nitrate (as the oxidizer) – collectively, the source of the explosion. Perhaps more interesting is that the various colors are created by the addition of different metal oxides and salts. These compounds are used because they are easily dispersed and have low reactivity; the colors arise from the ability of the different metals to absorb energy and emit photons at different wavelengths or colors. For example, Lobo red is created by using strontium salts, Lobo grey comes from the addition of white hot magnesium and aluminum. Lighter metal oxides and salts give us orange (calcium), yellow (sodium), green (barium), and blue (copper).

Everyone now gets an “A” in summer chemistry!

Lastly, July is also the month that we prepare to return to full strength on campus for the start of the fall semester. I encourage every student, faculty, and staff member to find a way to learn about and take advantage of all the research opportunities as it's a chance to explore, innovate, collaborate, and truly change the world around us.



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

Associate Vice President for Research



We are proud to welcome the newest member of the OVPR, Dr. Omathanu "Om" Perumal.

Perumal comes to UNM from South Dakota State University, where he served as an associate dean for research for two years. During his tenure, he also held positions as the director of the Haarberg Research Center for Drug, Disease, and Delivery, and is a professor of pharmaceuticals in the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Prior to this, Perumal served as the department head for Pharmaceutical Sciences for eight years and director of the Translational Cancer Research Center at South Dakota State University. With more than 18 years of research experience, Perumal specializes in developing new drug delivery systems using various biomaterials.

Welcome to The Pack, Dr. Perumal.

Research News

Lunch with VPR Fisher

I understand the value, knowledge, and perspective our junior faculty bring to an R1 university like UNM, and it's essential that I work with them to understand their needs, concerns, and experiences. That's why I'm excited to announce a series that kicked-off last semester and will continue in the fall, Lunch with VPR Fisher.

Our first lunch included faculty from my home department, Chemistry and included Assistant VPR Melissa Emery Thompson. We are scheduling more lunches with faculty from departments across campus for the fall semester, and we also plan to provide updates on how we are implementing recommendations and insights we gather from the series.



Email us at vpr@unm.edu for details and if your department or program would like to participate in the lunch series.

APLU Conference

Last month, Assistant VPR David Hanson and I traveled to Nova Scotia, Canada for the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities Council on Research annual summer meeting.

The international collaboration brings together researchers, faculty, center directors, administrators, and policymakers from across the globe. This year's conference brought together more than 150 individuals focused on encouraging collaboration between our U.S., Mexican, and Canadian counterparts on shared considerations such as research integrity, graduate student and postdoc experiences, and cross-border partnerships.

AVP Hanson was also part of a panel in a session focused on engaging indigenous students in research across North America. The major themes included discussions of how indigenous perspectives and approaches to research might vary from Western norms. The panel also reviewed how this diversity could help broaden/improve research, strategic and operational considerations of institutional model programs that offer support to partnerships involving indigenous institutions and communities, as well as how engagement in research by indigenous students and faculty can stimulate broader consequences, especially as part of larger internalization efforts.

Research and Discovery Preview



The calendar for this year's 2023 Research and Discovery Week is shaping up to be an exciting one around campus!

There are still opportunities to participate by hosting an event. To ensure that your event is included on our calendar, [please register](#).

R&D Week, Nov 6-12, is a campus-wide event focused on celebrating the excellence and diversity of UNM's research enterprise, while promoting resources and opportunities available to UNM researchers. If you have questions, please contact AVP Melissa Emery Thompson at memery@unm.edu.

Did You Know?

The UNM Department of Anthropology's *Museum of Anthropology* became Albuquerque's first public museum in 1932.

Read more about it [here](#).