

*December 2024*

FROM THE DESK OF THE

# Vice President for Research

Lobos,

Another semester in the “books.” Speaking of books, I’ve shared with all of you a few of my reads within my monthly communication. As we’re embarking on our holiday break in just two weeks, I look forward to our time away to dig into a new read – both fiction and non-fiction! Recommendations welcomed!

On that note, I’d like to congratulate all the graduates who will walk across the stage this weekend and close one chapter, only to begin a new journey. I’d also like to thank all of our faculty and staff who take the time to mentor our Lobos! When you create a space for creativity, imagination, vision, and inspiration that’s when true discovery happens. I’ve seen it here in so many laboratories, throughout so many of our galleries, and across so many open landscapes in this beautiful state. Because of this, Lobos, you should be proud of yourselves and the Lobo community we’re building.



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

# December Safety Spotlight

In working to create a positive safety culture, we often talk about finding your “why” for working safely. Typically, you can identify at least one reason for nearly everything you do each day. These include everything from mundane reasons such as habit or money to more complex motivators such as pain avoidance, relationships, or deep-seated biological factors. In performing research, working safely does not always come naturally, so it’s important to identify what drives you to take certain actions and avoid others – to find your “why” for working safely.

Here are three top “whys” for UNM researchers:

1. Family and loved ones – everyone wants to be able to get through their work day safely to enjoy time with the people they love. Keeping in mind others that would be harmed if you are injured on the job may reduce risk taking.
2. Personal health – our physical and mental health and wellbeing should be a big driving factor for safe behavior at work. Working unsafely could lead to injuries that prevent us from participating in the activities that keep us healthy and happy.
3. The Lobo community – protecting our fellow Lobos as well as UNM itself. Many of us recognize that UNM is a major employer and economic driver in New Mexico. Serious accidents that lead to injury, fatalities, and/or significant property damage could result in huge reputational loss, financial burden, layoffs and other negative impacts.

## Research Events

### Fueling a Fair & Just Energy Future

As part of a speaker series, presented by the UNM Grand Challenge Just Transition to Green Energy, Noah Kaufman will give a presentation in the UNM SUB Trailblazer/Spirit Room on Dec. 10 at 4 p.m.

As a founding member of the Resilient Energy Economies Initiative, Kaufman will provide an overview of the initiative’s founding, mission, and ongoing work, which focuses on developing strategies that support fossil fuel-dependent economies as the energy system transforms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Research Celebrations

### R&D Week Wrap

Last month, we celebrated UNM researchers and all your innovations during our third annual Research and Discovery Week. With more than 30 featured events throughout the week including art talks and gallery showcases, keynote presentations, workshops, researcher competitions, and award receptions, it was a busy but fulfilling week where I enjoyed celebrating all of you!

I got to meet so many of our researchers for the very first time and learned something new every day. This included the latest information on NASA’s Artemis III plans to explore the lunar south pole; why publication retractions are on the rise; and how bioinorganic chemists are imaging copper enzymes in their native cell membrane environments. I also was intrigued by our Grand Challenges panelists,

including former Regent Sandra Begay, Representative Gail “Missy” Armstrong, and Patrick Allen, former Secretary of the NM Department of Health, who talked about their views on the biggest challenges facing rural New Mexico. These may find their way into the plans for our new Level 1 Grand Challenges Teams in the coming year. As always, I was honored and humbled by the dedication, passion, and imagination of our researchers and scholars on display every day, but especially during R&D Week!

## Broader Impacts Toolkit Project

I want to highlight two of our staff researchers, Hannah Torres and Hannah Yohalem, whose recent article about research relationships and broader impacts at UNM has been [published](#) in a special issue of the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*.

This work was part of a grant-supported cohort project to implement and evaluate the ARIS Broader Impacts Toolkit. The ARIS Toolkit is a suite of digital documents and interactive web tools designed to provide guidance and effective practices aimed at improving BI outcomes and impacts for researchers and their collaborating partners.

## Research News

### COI Training

My office is excited to announce a new training available in Learning Central – Understanding Conflict of Interest and Commitment in Research.

The 20-minute course is UNM-specific and satisfies all federal COI training requirements, including those for NIH, and is required every four years for all active UNM researchers. The training must be completed by **Jan. 31, 2025**.

This training was prematurely announced in October and we want to thank the **443 researchers** who are out in front of the pack, having already completed the training and provided great feedback! If you have *not* completed the training, it will be assigned in Learning Central. Completion of the COI training also earns one hour of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) certification credit.

### OSP Holiday Planning

As we enter the final two weeks prior to UNM Holiday Break, the Office of Sponsored Projects would like to remind you to please think ahead to critical project deadlines immediate before, during or after break. OSP offices will be **closed** for Winter Break from **Dec. 23 – Jan. 1**.

Please continue to work with our OSP [Appointment Scheduler](#) to schedule your *Comprehensive Project Reviews*. Once appointments fill up, we will try our best to accommodate on a first come first serve basis.

### Institutions around the state unite to create AI Consortium

As interest in artificial intelligence development and economic opportunities continues to grow, institutions across the state have united to create the New Mexico Artificial Intelligence Consortium (NMAIC) to advance the development and understanding of AI and machine learning.

The founding members of the New Mexico AI Consortium believe teamwork will enable New Mexico to play a larger role in the artificial intelligence space. The collaboration includes:

- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Sandia National Laboratories
- The University of New Mexico (UNM)
- New Mexico State University (NMSU)
- New Mexico Institute for Mining and Technology (NM Tech)
- Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) New Mexico Consortium

## Research Technology

What do you get when Lobo Louie visits the center for Stable Isotopes?

A research internship! Stay tuned for more!