

May 7, 2009

Dear NMSU Community:

It is time to wrap-up the academic year and I thought it would be appropriate to provide you with a brief state-of-the-institution report. I am proud of the university that the Board of Regents asked me to lead and represent during the last ten months. Please allow me to take a moment to outline some of the major accomplishments that have characterized this period:

1. NMSU registered record student enrollment numbers in each of our five campuses during the Fall and Spring semesters, breaking the mark of 31,000 students for the first time in our history.

2. NMSU fared very well in this year's state legislative session, a unique 60-day session that included consideration of two annual budgets. Consistent with our #1 institutional priority, the final appropriations bill for the next fiscal year fully funded the workload formula, with a positive impact for all our campuses.

Moreover, in a year of significant cuts, we protected the NMSU budget. The final approved bill reduced overall spending for the NMSU system by 1.9 percent. In comparison, some of our sister institutions received cuts of up to 5.4 percent.

3. The Severance Tax Bond Projects included \$5.5 million for the Center for the Arts, the largest single allocation for any institution of higher education this year and the 4<sup>th</sup> largest statewide.

4. The 2008 General Obligation Bond was supported by the voters of New Mexico, bringing \$33 million in capital projects for NMSU. An additional \$20 million was approved for NMSU Dona Ana Community College in the 2009 Local General Obligation Bond.

5. Our total sponsored research awards have gone up from \$152 M to \$166 million; this is an increase of 9.2% over the previous year. For the current fiscal year (till May 2009), research submissions have gone up by 24% in dollars requested (from \$278 to \$346 million) and by 12% in number of proposals submitted (from 771 to 866).

6. There was a significant improvement in the National Science Foundation ranking for Research and Development (R&D) expenditures over the previous year. Chemistry has moved up from 80<sup>th</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> and Physical Sciences has moved up from 82<sup>nd</sup> to 55<sup>th</sup> among all institutions. We now rank in the top 11% in R&D expenditures among U.S. institutions. Engineering research productivity (including the Physical Science Lab) was recently ranked #10 in the nation. In terms of federal R&D, NMSU has moved up from the 126<sup>th</sup> to 97<sup>th</sup> spot among all institutions.

7. In spite of the economic turmoil of the last ten months, \$11 million in private funds were raised towards the \$225 million goal of our Comprehensive Campaign. At this moment, the total exceeds \$208 million, with the potential of generous gifts in advanced stages of cultivation.

8. Guided by the Mercer study, NMSU completed and implemented the initial funding phase of equity-based salary increases. With input provided by representative groups, compensation adjustments for faculty and staff were effectuated. In a year when institutions around the nation were experiencing cuts and furloughs, we recognized and rewarded our employees. Compensation for executive administration did not receive an adjustment.

9. On the heels of a very successful accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) that resulted in a full-term accreditation for the first time in our history, our self-study report and supporting materials were chosen to be showcased last April at the HLC Annual Meeting in Chicago.

10. NMSU formalized its partnership with Barnes and Noble Booksellers, in a transaction in which the university kept the interests of faculty, students, and staff at the center of our negotiations.

11. NMSU Athletics excelled in sports competitions and in academic performance. During the academic year, NMSU teams won the WAC Women's Volleyball Championship, the WAC Men's Golf Tournament, and the NMSU Women's Rodeo, among other distinctions.

12. NMSU consolidated internationalization initiatives, including an active presence in global events and culminating with the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua. The MoU will make possible the offering of a joint doctoral degree in Civil Engineering, the first one of its kind.

13. NMSU actively promoted and capitalized on the strengths of being a system by, each semester, bringing together faculty and staff from all five NMSU campuses to discuss common challenges and opportunities. In addition, we instituted open forums in each of our community colleges and in the NMSU-Las Cruces academic colleges. In these forums, our Central Administration leadership team presented a state-of-the-system message and received input.

14. NMSU declared 2009 as "The Year of Sustainability." The declaration impels our units to work together towards the attainment of shared goals for a sustainable university. Initiatives have already included numerous conferences and symposia on sustainability-related topics, Special Topic classes and workshops, creation of unit-specific "green" plans, and a wide variety of public events sponsored by departments, many in collaboration with the City of Las Cruces.

15. NMSU has initiated a consultative process to identify cost-containment measures. The first step in producing a steering plan has been to survey the faculty, student and staff about possible ways in which the institution can identify and implement targeted savings in key areas.

16. NMSU strengthened the relationship with K-12 programs throughout the state. In addition to leading the state in the number of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) projects, we collaborated in activities aimed at the promotion of educational attainment and workforce development.

17. In order to provide university management with more efficient practices and philosophy, key executive groups were organized or reformed, including the new University Executive Council and the President's Council.

18. Pending approval by the NMSU Board of Regents and New Mexico Higher Education, the institution will expand operations in the NMSU Albuquerque Center. The Center will serve the Northern New Mexico constituents by offering unique academic programs such as Criminal Justice and Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism.

19. As Interim President, I created "Amazing Aggies," a system-wide program to recognize and showcase individuals who are models of excellence at NMSU.

20. I also initiated the "Monday Morning Memos," informative weekly emails with system-wide circulation.

During the last ten months, the faculty, students, staff, alumni, elected officials, benefactors and friends of New Mexico State University have been absolutely crucial to our success as an institution. They have truly inspired me to be a servant leader and to lead with a style based on consensus-building, transparency and respect.

I am confident that, with the help of many, we have managed New Mexico State University with responsibility and efficiency. Moreover, I feel satisfied that we have done our very best to fulfill our mission as a land-grant institution, providing the people of the State of New Mexico with access, affordability and excellence in education.

I will always be grateful to the NMSU community, the people of New Mexico, and the Board of Regents for the opportunity to serve this wonderful institution.

All the best,

Waded Cruzado