



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
September 16, 2021 at 9:00am**

**Regents of New Mexico State University**

Chair Ammu Devasthali, Vice Chair Dina Chacón-Reitzel, Secretary/Treasurer Arsenio Romero, Christopher T. Saucedo, Neal Bitsie

**Non-Voting Advisory Members** - ASNMSU President Mathew Madrid, Faculty Senate Chair Julia Parra, Employee Council Chair Joseph Almaguer

**University Officials** - Chancellor Dan E. Arvizu, Ph.D., President John D. Floros, Ph.D., Provost Carol Parker, J.D., Vice Chancellor Ruth A. Johnston, Ph.D., Senior Vice President Andrew Burke, Ed.D., General Counsel Roy Collins III, J.D.

**MINUTES**

The Board of Regents meeting is available by webcast through the link at <https://panopto.nmsu.edu/bor/>

**A. Call to Order, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

The Board of Regents met in the Board Room of the Educational Services Center at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico on September 16, 2021. Chairwoman Devasthali called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

**Pledge of Allegiance, Cadet Dzaki Sukarno**

Cadet Dzaki Sukarno lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Cadet Sukarno is studying Agricultural Business with an emphasis in Agricultural Marketing. Cadet Sukarno is minoring in Aerospace Studies through the ROTC.

**1. Introductions**

**Introduction of Teresa Maria Linda Scholtz, Vice President of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, President John Floros, Ph.D.**

President Floros introduced the new Vice President for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, Dr. Teresa Maria Linda Scholtz. Vice President Scholtz comes from the University of California in Santa Cruz as the Chief Diversity Officer and has extensive experience in academia, first as a faculty member, then as an administrator. Vice President Scholtz joined NMSU on August 1, 2021. Vice President Scholtz will lead NMSU in their efforts in equity, inclusion, and diversity.

Vice President Scholtz added that NMSU is well positioned as a land grant institution as well as a Hispanic and minority serving institution to work with the state and communities in higher education. Vice President Scholtz noted that in the past year and a half faculty are requesting more professional education in this area to ensure that they are best serving their students. Vice President Scholtz also noted the importance of how we think about students with disabilities and returning military students because all of those identities intersect. NMSU is well positioned to talk as a system about what it means to be serving as well as how to diversify faculty on campus. As work on 4.1 of the Strategic Diversity Plan is being done, they will be thinking about data that informs the work they have ahead of them as well as data that they need to collect to help inform the Strategic Diversity Plan and the data that they will need to collect as they are working through the

action plans to ensure that they are leading students towards social mobility and success.

**2. Confirmation of Quorum, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

The Chief of Staff confirmed the quorum and took the roll call.

Chairwoman Devasthali, Regent Chacón-Reitzel, Regent Romero, Regent Bitsie, Chancellor Arvizu, and President Floros were present in the Board room.

Virtually present were:

Regent Saucedo

Provost Parker

Vice Chancellor Johnston

Vice President Burke

General Counsel Collins

**3. Approval of the Agenda, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Regent Chacón-Reitzel moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Regent Romero. All were in favor and none opposed. The motion passed.

**4. Public Comment, Associate Vice President Justin Bannister**

Associate Vice President Bannister reported that no one had signed up for public comment.

**B. Approval of the Minutes, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**1. Regular Meeting May 14, 2021 Deferred**

**2. Special Meeting June 16, 2021**

Regent Chacón-Reitzel made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Regent Bitsie seconded the motion. All were in favor and none opposed. The motion passed.

**3. Regents' Orientation June 22-23, 2021**

Regent Romero made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Regent Chacón-Reitzel seconded the motion. All were in favor and none opposed. The motion passed.

**C. Awards and Recognitions, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**1. Proclamation Recognizing Shane Cunico for Completing the 2021 Tour Divide, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Chairwoman Devasthali described Shane Cunico's accomplishment of the 2021 Tour Divide and read the proclamation.

WHEREAS, Shane Cunico has faithfully served New Mexico State University's Physical Science Laboratory as a subject matter expert in electronic warfare for nearly two years; and

WHEREAS, Cunico along with retired New Mexico Department of Agriculture Standards and Consumer Services Division Director, Raymond Johnson, competed in the 2021 Tour Divide - an annual self-supported cycling race that follows the world's longest continuous mountain bike trail from the Canadian border to southern New Mexico and;

WHEREAS, on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021, Cunico began the approximate 2,500-mile tumultuous journey from Eureka, Montana to Antelope Wells, New Mexico. Throughout the race, he bore harsh weather conditions and experienced more than 200,000 feet of elevation gain and loss while traveling across five U.S. states; and

WHEREAS, in a great test of endurance, discipline and resilience, Cunico completed the 2021 Tour Divide, arriving in Antelope Wells, New Mexico 31 days after his grand departure.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED in official session that the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University recognizes and celebrates Shane Cunico for the spectacular achievement of completing the 2021 Tour Divide.

PROCLAIMED, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021, in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

**2. Proclamation Recognizing Raymond Johnson for Completing the 2021 Tour Divide, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Chairwoman Devasthali described Raymond Johnson's accomplishment of the 2021 Tour Divide and read the proclamation.

WHEREAS, Raymond Johnson spent 26 years faithfully serving the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) as an inspector, assistant division director and division director of NMDA's Standards and Consumer Services Division before his retirement in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Johnson along with Shane Cunico, NMSU Physical Science Laboratory subject matter expert in electronic warfare, competed in the 2021 Tour Divide - an annual self-supported cycling race that follows the world's longest continuous mountain bike trail from the Canadian border to southern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, on the 11th day of June 2021, Johnson began the approximate 2,500-mile tumultuous journey from Eureka, Montana to Antelope Wells, New Mexico. Throughout the race, he bore harsh weather conditions and experienced more than 200,000 feet of elevation gain and loss while traveling across five U.S. states; and

WHEREAS, in a great test of endurance, discipline and resilience, Johnson completed the 2021 Tour Divide, arriving in Antelope Wells, New Mexico 31 days after his grand departure.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED in official session that the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University recognizes and celebrates former NMDA employee, Raymond Johnson for the spectacular achievement of completing the 2021 Tour Divide.

PROCLAIMED, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021, in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

**D. Regent Committee Reports**

**1. Real Estate Committee Report, Regent Dina Chacón-Reitzel**

Regent Chacón-Reitzel reported that the Regents Real Estate Committee and Aggie Development Incorporated (ADI) board met once since the last update was provided to the Board of Regents. On August 26, the committee reviewed several capital outlay projects from Facilities and Services that is on the consent agenda, including items G-2 through G-7. The Real Estate Committee also recommended bringing forward a couple of utility easements renewals for board approval as agenda items G-8 and G-9.

There was significant discussion about a couple of items that are on the agenda for the board's approval, including a purchase agreement for the Santa Fe ranch, which is item G-10, and a proposal to apply 100% of the rental income from Pattern Energy for Fiscal year 2022 and 2023 to the Corona Range and Livestock

Research Center for capital improvements. This is item G-11 on your agenda.

The Real Estate Committee recommended that all of these items be brought before the board for consideration.

During the ADI meeting on August 25, the board of directors was provided with several updates regarding potential real estate transactions, but no items from ADI are being brought forward to the board for consideration.

There were no questions about the report.

## **2. Audit and Risk Committee Report, *Regent Ammu Devasthali***

Regent Devasthali reported that the Regents Audit and Risk Committee met twice since the last report to the Board on May 14, 2021. The first meeting occurred on May 26 and the purpose of the meeting was to hold the external audit entrance conference. Moss Adams conducted the entrance conference and provided an overview of the audit process and introduced the committee to members of their team. The roles and responsibilities of the auditor, the audit committee, and management were discussed and a timeline was provided. The final presentation of the audit to the Audit Committee is expected by mid-October and the submission of the audit to the New Mexico Office of the State Auditor is expected by November 1.

Also, during the May 26 meeting, Clifton Larson Allen (CLA), which is NMSU's co-sourced internal audit partner, provided an overview of Enterprise Risk Management and described the internal audit project plan and reviewed some current projects. Finally, the internal audit team provided the internal audit annual report.

The second meeting occurred on August 25 and the committee heard a series of presentations from different NMSU departments about activities conducted in their respective areas. The first presentation was a report from the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) that focused on changes made by OIE that resulted from updated Title IX regulations that occurred last year. Also, there was an update from Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) regarding the ongoing efforts to strengthen cybersecurity at NMSU. CLA also provided an update on the Internal Audit Plan and updates on the status of current projects. The committee welcomed Interim Chief Audit Officer, Rick Rivas, to his first audit and risk committee meeting and he provided an overview of current internal auditor projects.

There were no questions about the report.

## **3. Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee Report, *Regent Christopher Saucedo***

Regent Saucedo reported that the Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee met once on August 25, 2021. Three areas were covered. The first was a report by Provost Parker on faculty compensation. The report was an update on two separate analysis that are underway. The first will be an internal analysis of compensation rates to determine whether all faculty are receiving comparable pay for comparable work. The second, which is also underway, but not yet complete, is an external comparison of NMSU FY 2021 compensation rates with those of other similar public research universities to ascertain whether and NMSU's current faculty salaries are competitive in the marketplace. The second area that they covered was discussed by Vice President Burke, who gave an informative presentation regarding enrollment by residency and tuition waiver status. Finally, Government and Community Relations office presented a FY 23 Non-I&G budget request, which they reviewed and recommended that it be presented to the Board for consideration of approval.

There were no questions about the report.

## **4. Student Success Committee Report, *Regent Arsenio Romero***

Regent Romero reported that the Regents Student Success Committee met twice on May 27, 2021 and August 26, 2021, since the last report to the board. At the May 27 meeting they welcomed a new member to the committee, Amy Himelright, who serves as Director of Mental Health and Academic Counseling at Las Cruces Public Schools. Regent Romero appreciated the chair's appointment of Ms. Himelright to fill the vacancy for a community member seat. At this meeting there were several updates provided about the college merger and also about enrollment and campus life for Fall 2021. Community colleges provided update reports.

At the August 26 meeting, Vice President Scott gave a report regarding enrollment and discussed some recruitment and retention strategies with the committee. DACC President Torres reported that their enrollment head count is down by 8%. DACC is hiring Success Coaches who will advocate for students and help them navigate the university system. The Alamogordo campus headcount enrollment is down by 2.9%. They recently received \$3 million in a Title V grant to be used over the next 5 years. They have two Student Success Coaches and are hiring a third. To help address the needs that the pandemic has presented, they are bringing back mental health resources to campus. The Carlsbad campus headcount enrollment is up by 7.8%. Their focus has been on improving customer service for their student body as well as building engagement with students. The Carlsbad campus is starting a food pantry. Enrollment at the Grants campus is up by 7.9%.

Vice President Scott provided a report on academic advising and the scholarship process. Different types of aid were discussed, including the different forms of tuition waivers. As was reported at that time, enrollment is 4% lower this fall semester than last fall semester. Most of the drop is from the traditional freshmen population. The graduate student population has remained the same; however, the non-traditional adult learner population is growing. Enrollment for NMSU-O is up by 12.8%. The Student Success office is in the process of a re-recruiting campaign in which they continually reach out to students who have left in hopes to recruit them back. There were 62% of students who received aid. Most scholarships are technological or through the Foundation. The Student Success office is in process of centralizing advising for undergraduate students.

There were no questions about the report.

## **E. Advisory Member Reports**

### **1. NMSU Faculty Senate Report, Chair Julia Parra**

Faculty Senate Chair Parra reported that Faculty Senate held a New Senator Orientation and the first full senate meeting of the year on September 2, 2021. Faculty Senate Chair Parra thanked Chairwoman Devasthali for accepting the invitation to join them. Proposition 1-21/22 was introduced, which is a proposal to amend Administration Policy Rule 4.61 Transfer Credit for Prior Learning. Also, they all participated in the Building a Shared Governance Mindset activities and shared that information. They heard the compensation packet projects update. Faculty Senate committees are working on their current assignments as well as a visioning what the revised structure is going to look like moving forward. Input related to that is welcomed.

There were no questions about the report.

### **2. Associated Students of NMSU Report, President Mathew Madrid**

President Madrid reported that ASNMSU had 20 Crimson Kickoff events in the month of August to help set students off on the right foot to begin the semester with energy and enthusiasm to be back on campus. Those events were coordinated by more than 10 departments and offices across the campus. Between all of those events, there were 2,600 students who participated. The student body has demonstrated a lot of enthusiasm to be back on campus and engaged in student events. Their current focus is on homecoming as it approaches.

There were no questions about the report.

### **3. NMSU Employee Council Report, Chair Joseph Almaguer**

Employee Council Chair Almaguer reported that they have had 2 Employee Council meetings this academic year; one on August 12, 2021 and the other on September 9, 2021. At the meeting on August 12, they met with Vice President Scholtz. Members gave feedback on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The date for the Employee Appreciation Picnic has been set for October 14, 2021. Employee Council extends their invitation to the Board of Regents to attend. There have been multiple discussions among faculty and staff on compensation and benefits. Employee Council is underway with their compensation study, which will be completed in December 2021. Also, they are in the process of a benefits review, which will be completed within 60 days to be presented to President Floros.

There were no questions about the report.

## **F. Affiliated Entity Reports**

### **1. Aggie Development Inc. Report, President & CEO Scott Eschenbrenner**

President Eschenbrenner reported that the Aggie Development Board met on August 26. They went over 3 items. The first item was the Maverick Convenient Store Project. According to Maverick's update, they have completed approximately 2/3 of their civil plans. They expect to have their traffic impact analysis study completed tomorrow. They are having challenges with getting engineers for their ultra-survey. ADI has approved the site plan and will assist Maverick with their permitting process with New Mexico Department of Transportation. The 120-day feasibility period will be up on October 9<sup>th</sup>; however, an extension period is expected because of the challenges with the ultra-survey. The Director of Golf, Jason White, gave a presentation. They had a robust discussion regarding the southern access road for the parcel because it would be close to one of the greens on the golf course. They've been working with Director White on ideas how to solve that problem. They'll move through that closer as they move past the feasibility period. There are several benefits that will come out of it. First, they will pick up an extra 2 acres of developable land that is high above the golf course. The funding will come out of Aggie Development infrastructure funds that they have remaining from sales of other lands. The senior community partner, Trilogy, pulled out of their project. They had been working with him for 3 years. They sited challenges with COVID-19 and starting a new project 1,500 miles away from where their primary focus is in their four-state region. President Eschenbrenner reported that he has been in conversation with one of their former board members, Bill Sherriff, who has initiated conversations with other partners, some that are located within the region. They are excited about the opportunity and hopeful that this will pave the way with another relationship and continue those efforts. Trilogy stated that they are willing to pass on all their due diligence information to any other interested parties. Lastly, they are working on a letter of intent and have moved through the ground lease phase, which is for a 3,500 square foot parcel land off of Triviz and next to the Sleep Inn Hotel.

There were no questions about the report.

### **2. NMSU Foundation Report, Vice President Derek Dictson**

Vice President Dictson reported that this has been a good year for the endowment, giving and investments. The last report from their investment advisor was August 11, 2021. The balance of the long-term investment pool, which comprise our endowment, was almost \$227 million. That was up by slightly more than \$54 million from June 30, 2020 when it was valued at \$172.7 million. The annualized returns for the past several years is listed in the report. The year-to-date net return for 2021 has been 13%. The one year analyzed return for FY 21 was 31% and since inception in 1983 the endowment is grown an annualized rate of 8.72%. Over the past several months, the Foundation Board and Investment committee has gone through an extensive search for an investment advisor. They selected Angeles Investment Advisors to serve as the Outsource Chief Investment Advisor, effective yesterday, September 15, 2021. Fundraising across the country is going very

well and NMSU is following along with that. They measure their fundraising results based on calendar year. As of today, they have raised \$25.6 million for 2021. It's comprised of 17,000 gifts from 5,000 donors. The average donor has given slightly more than \$5,000 this year. The largest gift was in the amount of \$2.9 million. In 2019, they raised almost \$24 million. In 2020, they raised \$18 million. NMSU has approximately \$31 million in available spendable gift funds that could be utilized immediately. Approximately \$3.8 million of that is spendable for scholarship funding. The Foundation will be hosting some in person homecoming activities this year on September 24 and 25, 2021, which includes the homecoming parade, Golden Aggies Celebration, Alumni tailgate, Distinguished Alumni Awards Banquet, and other events.

Chairwoman Devasthali asked, "Do you have a development officer that's based in Albuquerque?"

Vice President Dictson replied, "Yes, ma'am. We certainly do. Connor Adams joined us in January of this year. He was previously at the University of New Mexico and the Bosque School. He is full time based out of Albuquerque."

Chairwoman Devasthali asked, "Ok, and that is working out well in terms of outreach?"

Vice President Dictson answered, "Yes, we have a tremendous number of alumni and donors up there, so it's nice to have someone within easy driving distance."

Chairwoman Devasthali responded, "Great, thank you. Thank you for your report."

There were no other questions about the report.

### **3. Arrowhead Center Inc. Report, Director & CEO Kathryn Hansen**

Director Hansen reported that the Arrowhead goals align with NMSU LEADS 2025. They enhance entrepreneurial experiential learning K through 16, align with LEADS Goal 1, engage with private and public sector to increase participation in NMSU research and innovation, Goal 2. They offer services and programs across the state and region supporting LEADS Goal 3. They strive to operate efficiently and effectively supporting LEADS Goal 4 for a robust university system.

The Arrowhead Center held a Native Innoventure Ag camp this summer, which helped native youth create sheep and cattle ranch management plans. They partnered with the NMSU Indian Resource Development in the College of ACES and the Vet Teaching Hospital at Navajo Tech to do these camps. They will be holding two similar camps next summer. Arrowhead is working with the Colleges of Engineering and ACES to integrate entrepreneurship and the various classes and learning venues. Arrowhead has a partnership with the College of Engineering Ag Innovation Space. They have been helpful in letting them design and develop prototypes for startup ventures and experience design and development experience for students. Pictured in the report, are two prototypes developed in the Aggie Innovation space. These are inventions from 2 NMSU students. Another new opportunity is the Nusenda Fintech Lab, supported by a recent gift of 1.5 million to Arrowhead, which was part of a larger gift to NMSU. This lab will serve as an incubator for financial technology or known as Fintech Innovations and will encourage student innovators and entrepreneurs in this field. Highlights from their entrepreneurship outreach efforts include their Sprint business accelerators. They ran 5 of them this summer: Energy sprint, Native American sprint, Outdoor Rec sprint, Women's Entrepreneur sprint and a General Business sprint in Las Cruces. All of these sprints emphasize customer discovery and helping the participants to pivot to validate their customer base or to pivot their products. Design and construction activities in Arrowhead Park include work on a new building, which will serve as the Burrell Library and Student Services building. There is ongoing construction at the El Paso Electric Solar project. There will be a ribbon cutting event for this solar project. It is scheduled for September 23, 2021. Design is underway for the Dona Ana Community College Creative Media Technology building as well as the roads and utilities funded by the Economic Development administration. Included in the report is one of their Arrowhead Innovation fund portfolio companies called Build with Robots. It's growing and is located in Albuquerque. They've grown

from 2 to 17 employees and they have their robots, which do sanitizing at the Sunport airport in Albuquerque. They have done an economic impact analysis on Arrowhead, their programs and assets, such as the park. They're completing their report they're for FY21 as well as analyzing their individual programs and their contribution to their impact. Also, they have open applications for the 2021 Entrepreneur Hall of Fame Award for alumni. They were awarded a \$600,000 grant from the Minority Business Development Agency, so they can continue and expand their work in supporting Native American businesses in New Mexico.

There were no questions about the report.

G. **Consent Items**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

1. **Non-I&G Funding Requests**, *Associate Vice President Ricardo Rel*
2. **NMSU Alamogordo: Physical Plant Building Renovations**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
3. **NMSU Grants: Martinez Hall Renovations, Exterior Stucco**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
4. **Las Cruces: Agricultural Science Center Renovations**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
5. **Las Cruces: Economic Development Administration (EDA) Arrowhead Park Development Roadway**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
6. **Las Cruces: Pan American Center Lounge and Suites**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
7. **Las Cruces: Zone 2200 Medium Voltage Infrastructure Improvements**, *University Architect Heather Watenpaugh*
8. **El Paso Electric Easement Renewal at Doña Ana Community College in Sunland Park**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*
9. **El Paso Electric Easement Renewal at Pan AM Plaza Shopping Center**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*
10. **Santa Fe Ranch Purchase Agreement**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*
11. **Corona Ranch Revenue Agreement**, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*
12. **Temporary Investments Report for the Quarter ended 06/30/2021**, *Senior Vice President Andrew J. Burke*
13. **Disposition/Deletion of Property**, *Senior Vice President Andrew J. Burke*
14. **Proposal for naming room 103 in the Animal Nutrition and Feed Manufacturing Facility, the Ruttle-Hallford Office**, *Vice President University Advancement Derek Dictson*

Regent Chacón-Reitzel made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Regent Romero seconded the motion. None were opposed. The motion passed.

H. **Action Items**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

1. **None**

I. **Informational Items**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

1. **Summary of Revisions to the Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU (ARP) for the period May 15, 2021 – September 10, 2021**, *General Counsel Roy Collins, III*

Chairwoman Devasthali stated that the report is a summary of revisions to the ARP. This report was submitted in advance of the meeting. General Counsel Collins and Associate General Counsel Lisa Warren



were present to answer any questions. There were no questions about the report.

**2. 2021-2022 Doña Ana County Head Start Continuation Grant Application, *Principal Investigator Magdalena Pando***

Chairwoman Devasthali stated that the continuation grant application was provided in advance of the meeting. Dr. Magdalena Pando was present to answer any questions. There were no questions about the report.

**J. Report from the New Mexico Department of Agriculture to the Regents of New Mexico State University (Board of Agriculture), *Cabinet Secretary & Director Jeff Witte***

Secretary and Director Witte acknowledged the accomplishments of Shane Cunico and Raymond Johnson.

Secretary and Director Witte thanked the regents and Chancellor Arvizu for the Tour of the Vet Diagnostics Laboratory. They enjoyed showcasing the operation and hosting guests.

Ag Day will be during homecoming. They are partnering with NMSU Foundation, alumni, College of Aces, and the Department of Agriculture. They expect a big turnout for the event and invite the regents to attend. They will have a kickoff at noon and hospitality tent that will serve food. There will be 30 to 40 booths and activities. College students will be showcasing some other activities as well.

NMDA's metrology lab has been recognized as Mass Echelon 1 designation. NMDA is 1 of 8 in the nation. Director Witte acknowledged the work of Clay Ivy and Ryan Rust in obtaining the designation. NMDA has been participating in a program that Governor Lujan announced to help the chili harvest, Chili Labor and Incentive Program. The program is being administered through NMSU. Thus far, they have paid out \$420,000 to 1,004 employees. The program is beneficial in getting chili out of the fields and in consumers' hands. Last weekend, NMDA hosted The Battle of the Salsas contest at the fair. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner went to Bossy Gourmet, 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to 505 Green Chili Hot, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Gilly Loco Ghost Peppers. On Monday, NMDA hosted the Green Chili Cheeseburger Challenge. The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner went to Oso Grill in Capitan, NM and 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to Big Mike's Burgers and More from Belen, NM.

Regent Chacón-Reitzel extended a thank you to Secretary and Director Witte for hosting the Tour for the Vet Diagnostics Laboratory. In addition to the tour, his able leadership in handling the very important vet lab.

Chairwoman Devasthali and Regent Romero also extended a thank you to Secretary and Director Witte for hosting the Tour for the Vet Diagnostics Laboratory.

**K. Report from the NMSU System Chancellor to the Regents of New Mexico State University, *Chancellor Dan E. Arvizu***

Chancellor Arvizu recognized that this month is Hispanic Heritage Month as well as homecoming next week. On September 21 at 2pm, Chancellor Arvizu will deliver the State of the University System Address. Chancellor Arvizu will cover the topics, 'Where we are' and 'Where we're going.' The ribbon cutting for the El Paso Electric Aggie Power Project will be on Thursday at 1pm. Also, there will be alumni events, a distinguished alumni event, and the Golden Aggie luncheon. A new Energy Economy Lecture Series will kickoff next week. Their first speaker is Kelly Tomblin, the CEO of El Paso Electric. CEO Tomblin will give her perspectives on local electricity, technology, and where the industry is headed. Also scheduled for next week are alumni meetings, advisory board meetings as well as other meetings. Chancellor Arvizu asked Vice Chancellor Johnston to give an update on COVID.

Vice Chancellor Johnston reported that masking indoors is critical since Governor Lujan extended the mask mandate. Everyone on campus has been following the indoor mask mandate and many are wearing their mask outdoors as well. There are 33 active cases across the system. All of them are at either the main campus or DACC. COVID information is communicated through the weekly newsletter and website that is updated daily. The plan,

self-reporting, direction, and reporting issues or concerns are included on the website. Vice Chancellor Johnston said, "We now have a policy, 16.32, that's provisional that gives the health and safety protocols for what we're going to do now that we are mandating vaccines and/or weekly testing for those who choose not to get vaccinated. That's going to be very, very important as we go into October. The due date is September 30 for the upload of the vax card and I'll talk about that in just a minute. And then, we go into the world of compliance. This is a condition of employment that people need to do this, like many other places." Vice Chancellor Johnston continued stated that there is a new application, as of yesterday, where people can upload their vaccination card. You take a picture of your card and upload it. There were 500 submitted yesterday, which was the first day, by the end of the day. Vice Chancellor Johnston continued by saying, "The testing piece is effective as of September 30<sup>th</sup> and what we'll be doing is asking people to show proof of negative test every Thursday by midnight because on Fridays, we will have people reviewing the reports; someone in the Dean of Students office and someone in HR and then providing information, so that we can follow up with people. There's a progressive discipline process in place for both the students as well as the faculty and staff." There is restriction information for visitors as well as vendors, so that everyone is staying safe. That is being communicated on a regular basis. There is a lot of information flowing. Questions, concerns or complaints can be sent to [covid19@nmsu.edu](mailto:covid19@nmsu.edu). They address those e-mails immediately and work very closely with the Pandemic Action Team, the Emergency COVID Team and with the support team who manages all the different aspects. Vice Chancellor Johnston closed by saying, "We're going to keep our attitudes up and keep our Aggies safe."

Regent Chacón-Reitzel asked if the 33 active cases are being tracked whether they are vaccinated or unvaccinated. Vice Chancellor Johnston answered that they are tracking whether they are vaccinated or unvaccinated. There are some breakthrough cases. Most cases are students, athletes, and residents in the resident halls.

Regent Bitsie asked how many students and employees have been vaccinated. Vice Chancellor Johnston answered that they do not know because they haven't collected the vaccination cards.

Regent Bitsie went on to ask what the plan of action is for students and employees who do not test for 2 weeks. Vice Chancellor Johnston stated that the Dean of Students will be handling all of the student issues. They will be reviewing the report and there's a progressive discipline. The first will be a warning. The second will go all the way up until someone is suspended, potentially for the rest of the semester. For employees, the action will be similar. There's a progressive discipline. Policy ARP 16.32 gives the progressive discipline, health and safety protocols, and the specific nature of how they will deal with discipline or non-compliance.

President Floros commented to that topic, there will be a difference between how students and employees are treated, including student employees. Chancellor Arvizu added, "We did think well and hard about the difference between our staff and our employees and they are actually very similar to state employees. Obviously, the governor has taken a position on that, as has the federal government. So, we're trying to stay in the mainstream of what other institutions are doing and we're close to what the general consensus is on how to approach both employees and, in our case, students. When we talk about students, we think of that a little bit differently. We pay employees. Students pay us. So, there's a there's a difference in the way you should approach that and we're trying to be as user friendly as possible, recognizing all of the complications and the changes in front of us. We're trying to stay very close to what the science is telling us and trying to be in compliance with the various authorities that we have to consider, if not to follow. So, if there's a deviation from one of those, either a CDC and FDA or a Department of Health of their guidance they're providing, we will come back and inform you of the kinds of things that we're considering. Generally speaking we're pretty close to the central part of where higher ED institutions are and it's different from state to state. We're trying to stay very well coordinated, certainly those in New Mexico, but also, I think the across our region."

There were no further questions in regard to COVID.

Chancellor Arvizu reported that last week was census date. Overall, NMSU's enrollment is down by approximately 3% across the system. Most of the drop is at the main campus and DACC. However, the three branch campuses'

enrollment is up. At-risk students are disproportionately affected by the pandemic. At-risk student enrollment is down significantly; whereas, the non-at-risk students are up. It's a significant difference. Chancellor Arvizu asked President Floros to give an update about the main campus.

President Floros said, "Thank you Chancellor, Madam Chair, members of the board. I want to paint a picture for you as to how things are going right now on our main campus in Las Cruces. I'll be the first to admit that this is a very different year. We're getting close to 2 years in the pandemic. When we started our fall semester, there were a lot of mixed signals that we were getting. We had a lot of people that were angry, apprehensive, fearful, hesitant to come back and some of those were our students, some of those were our faculty, and some of those were staff. I think with a lot of effort and help, we managed to convince most people that we have the tools to combat the pandemic. We have the ability to safely conduct our businesses in terms of teaching, in terms of research, and in terms of outreach and extension. So, we did come back and I want to thank you for allowing us to bring our students back this fall as, as it is the case in many places throughout the country. We are now into almost a month into our semester and what I hear from faculty, staff and students is a shift from fear and apprehension and stress to, although there still is stress, fear and apprehension, but there's a lot more excitement, positivity and optimism at this point, than what we were seeing earlier. Students are definitely excited to be back and I heard many, many stories from our faculty that they see that excitement in their classrooms. They feel the excitement as they have those students back in face to face classes. One faculty told me that this is the first time in his career, and he has been with us for 25 years now, that after his lecture students didn't actually leave, but they gathered around. They came up to him and wanted to introduce themselves. There's a huge element of being within groups and within colleagues and with other students and rubbing shoulders with faculty at this point. So, I think our semester is going well in terms of teaching. I think a lot of that excitement is really winning over the apprehension and the fear, but it is pretty tough. It has been tough on our faculty, staff, and tougher on our students. We are seeing a lot more mental health problems than we have ever seen before. We're putting a lot of effort into addressing many of those issues. We have a lot of things that we're doing now that we didn't do before; trying to make progress towards our strategic plan and trying to work within the pandemic restrictions has been very tough on a lot of people."

President Floros continued to say, "Here's a quick story from parents of one of our students. This letter came to me about three days ago. It's about one of our freshmen students that started down here. The family is from northern New Mexico and they decided to send their son here. They were convinced that this is the right place for them and their son. On the first day of classes, unfortunately, he was in a car accident. A lot of things happen from that point on. The letter was written to thank the university for taking good care of their son, for being there for him and small things such as, buying books and handing them to the son. They are convinced that it was the right choice. This semester he will have to continue from home. He won't be here, but next semester he's planning to be back again. I just want to tell you that we have a lot of hard-working people and a lot of hard-working faculty and staff that make this place special. This is why our students feel at home. This is why we all say that we're a family and that letter truly epitomized what that means in my mind. I want to thank the parents who took the time to write that letter. It's just one example of many such stories that I have received. What that tells me is that hard work of a lot of people out there is paying off. We are welcoming our students back. They do feel good. Faculty are finding ways to do their job as well as ever. Two rankings came out, one from Forbes and the other from US News, and both of them are ranking NMSU higher than ever before. As a matter of fact, Forbes has ranked NMSU much higher than UNM and NMTech. Now, there is a significant difference within those two rankings. Forbes is primarily based on Student Success and Social Mobility. So, take pride in that because we are doing a lot better than anybody else in the state in helping our students advance. The US News report is based on more of a traditional reputational financial type of approach and they're ranking us higher. This is evidence that we're making progress in every part of our strategic plan; student success, social mobility, research. We don't have the final numbers yet, but we expect to see another increase in our research enterprise in terms of size, but also in terms of quality. Our outreach and extension and economic development efforts are finally starting to pay off. A lot of positive things."

President Floros reported that the reduction in enrollment was not as significant as they had anticipated. Census date numbers show that the main campus was down by 2.3%. President Floros reported that they are putting a lot of effort into diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as improving IT and HR services. Provost Parker is doing a survey regarding faculty compensation. A similar study is being done with staff compensation. The state is fully aware that NMSU's compensation is not where it is supposed to be. All of the universities have come together with the state and are hopeful that next year's state budget will increase. The faculty compensation study compares NMSU faculty compensation with R1 and R2 peer institutions. In this study, they're using the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile and below comparison, rather than the average. NMSU is falling short of reaching that. NMSU has invested \$2.3 million to improve compensation this fiscal year. A million of that went as cost of living increases that NMSU gave this past year. NMSU included \$400,000 in promotional increases from one rank to another as well as \$100,000 in rotation. NMSU also included \$850,000 in market competitive adjustments. They hope to be able to continue bringing faculty compensation up, but it will take millions of dollars to become competitive with colleagues of other universities and a lot more to become an R1 institution.

Regent Romero commented by saying, "Maybe just a statement, Madam Chair, if I may. I just want to agree with everything that you're talking about. It is one thing that we've been able to all of us together and create an environment where students can come here and have a wonderful education, but it's quite another to be able to create an environment where they're safe and secure. We talked about it being a family environment. That is so true that we are here to take care of each other. We're here to support each other through the good times and the bad. So, I just want to echo that and say thank you for those comments, President."

Chairwoman Devasthali said, "I do want to say thank you very much President Floros for all the work that's being done across the system, but especially here at NMSU on campus and trying to keep our students, our faculty and staff safe. I know how much effort has gone into that, just under COVID. So, thank you. Also, 2.3 is not at all bad considering where we were last year and how things were going. We would definitely like to see that improve, but I think you have to take credit for at least bringing it up to it's 2.3. So, thank you."

President Floros stated, "Thank you Madam Chair. I do want to pass that credit on to people that actually did the work. Ruth Johnston has done a lot of work in trying to keep our campus safe and the rest of the campuses safe with a lot of people working as a part of several groups to help identify issues and resolve those issues as quickly as we can. Renay Scott, our VP for Success, is working very hard with all of her people to not only attract and bring prospective students here, but also to keep the ones we have here to come back because that's where that 2.3 that we dropped. It's across the board. Some of it is because of the lower freshmen class, but quite a bit of it is because our sophomores, juniors, and seniors didn't come back. Our guess is that many of those kids thought they could take a year off and see how things are going. So, we're hoping as the pandemic moves on to a different phase and if we become a little safer, we believe that a lot of those students will come back."

Chairwoman Devasthali stated that looking at our peer institutions that are R1 and what their faculty compensation looks like is important. NMSU is dependent on state appropriations. Without an increase in state appropriations it will be really hard to bring faculty salaries up.

President Floros agreed with Chairwoman Devasthali and stated that they, along with the other 7 public universities have agreed on that point. They want the state to take that seriously. To have a better higher education, they need better faculty and staff compensations because they're losing good people to other places.

Chancellor Arvizu reported that enrollment at the branch campuses are up. Alamogordo is up by 0.5%, which is 5 students. Carlsbad is up by 13.1%, which is 158 students. Grants is up by 11.3%, which is 78 students. A couple of graphics from DACC shows at-risk student enrollment, which includes low income, first generation, and students with children at home, is down by 40-45% from last year. While, the non-at-risk student enrollment is up by 10%. This demonstrates the difference in those who can continue to those who can't.

Chancellor Arvizu continued to report that each of those campuses have positive things going on. NMSU is going through a transition with Carlsbad, which is going positively. At the Grants campus, the big push is economic

development. Chancellor Arvizu stated that everywhere they go, when they talk to legislators and business communities, everyone cares about jobs, recovering from the pandemic, and how do we diversify, especially to places that have been hit hard by changes, transitions, in particularly to a low carbon energy economy, which nationally is an objective; however, it disproportionately affects some communities. NMSU needs to be attentive and supportive to those transitions. Through NMSU's partnership with Tri-State, they manage that many co-ops and immunities in the state that deal with energy and distribution of electricity. This allows for consideration of a controlled environment indoor farming approach. It affects water and energy usage, the entrepreneurial spirit of creating new businesses, local health, specifically regarding food deserts.

Chancellor Arvizu reported that after the latest revenue estimates for this next year is that the economy, specifically oil and gas, has come back more quickly than anyone anticipated. Therefore, there is a significant amount of revenues that could be expected for the next fiscal year. Many legislators, Speaker of the House, President Pro Tem of the Senate, and other key legislators who are on the legislative Finance and Appropriations Committee have stated to 'ask for what you want,' not 'what you need.' Chancellor Arvizu stated that staff and faculty, in particular, compensation is their number one priority and they want the flexibility from the state to allocate the money according to their priorities and the way in which they can manage staff and faculty. The second priority is deferred maintenance. There are several buildings that cost more to maintain, than to tear them down and build a new one. The master plan is important to help guide their direction. One of the ways to deal with that is that the capital outlay process would be refined and more strategic.

Chancellor Arvizu reported that the top three research universities in the state, NMSU, UNM, and NMTech believe that they have not been fully funded the way they should be. It is in part due to an understanding of the importance of research, economic development, and creating the opportunities for entrepreneurs to take technologies into the marketplace. There are a couple of things that can be done to address this issue. There is an endowment fund that allows them to offer faculty packages, which allows ways to attract more faculty. The other option is a significant amount within a pool of money for the universities as a collective research set of institutions in New Mexico to go after federal money, which they know is coming. They would have to have a financial business plan.

President Floros reported that graduate and post-doctorate numbers are up, which indicates a much more research operation. Also, research expenditures are up. President Floros gave credit to Vice President of Research and the Dean of the Graduate School as well as the deans and faculty from all of the colleges. Without their hard work, they wouldn't have the progress that they have today.

Chancellor Arvizu continued stating that it's important to get state support. Collectively, as a set of universities, it's more possible to obtain money through 'regional hubs,' which are \$10 million for 10 years, than it would be individually.

Chancellor Arvizu reported that the Governor is pushing the Opportunity Scholarship. The Governor is focused on supporting individuals who are low income and unable to go to college. NMSU is focused on how to support that. It's consistent NMSU's direction. Hopefully the discussion in Santa Fe will have a positive outcome that focuses on higher education and research because those areas would serve the state well since their focus is jobs, economic development, and aligning curricula with businesses that are established in New Mexico.

Chairwoman Devasthali asked President Floros what the research expenditure amount is. President Floros replied that it is just over \$110 million. Chairwoman Devasthali also asked how many doctoral degrees is projected to be awarded for the fall and spring semesters. President Floros does not have that number at this time. As of right now, NMSU has 47 post-doctoral researches for 2021, when a few years ago there were only 18.

Chairwoman Devasthali asked Chancellor Arvizu what can the NMSU system do to promote the Opportunity Scholarship and is there a plan apart from what CUP is doing. Chancellor Arvizu reported that it is on the agenda with CUP. The three organizations that are part of the higher education community; research institutions and comprehensive (CUP), branch campuses, and the independent community colleges are providing input regarding

the Opportunity Scholarship. Branch campuses and independent community colleges are primarily focused on two-year degrees. Comprehensive colleges and CUP are focused on four-year degrees. They are looking at the impacts of different types of opportunity. What they have not been able to do in the first two years of discussions opportunity is to set aside enough money to cover all the students that are in need. It's a question of 'how do you apply those in a way where those students who have the greatest need get the greatest benefit. That discussion is not complete. The economics and the actual financial case in each of those scenarios have not been fully developed.

President Floros reported that in answer to her previous question about doctoral degrees this year, NMSU has awarded 658 degrees for master's students, 16 Education Specialist, and 126 Ph.Ds.

L. **Announcements and Comments**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

1. **"Guns Up" – Good News for NMSU!**

Regent Chacón-Reitzel commends the students and faculty for their cooperation and tenacity this semester. Everyone is contributing and cooperating. Guns Up!

Regent Romero said that the campus is beautiful. The buildings, classrooms, grounds are amazing and beautiful. A huge Guns Up to facilities, maintenance, and ground crews. They have done an amazing job to make sure that this campus was ready for students to come back and have gone above and beyond. It's a beautiful campus! Guns Up to them! He also recognized the new thing on campus, the Kiwibots.

Regent Saucedo gave a Guns Up to the Grants campus and the invitation last week for the opening of the Food Research Facility. It was remarkable he enjoyed it. Guns Up to the Grants campus, College of Engineering, and College of ACES. It was fantastic! Thank you!

Chairwoman Devasthali recognized the Kiwibots. Chairwoman Devasthali gave a Guns Up to the women's soccer team. They started off the season doing very well, 4-0. "They are playing today and will knock it out of the park. They are playing under lights now. Thank you, former senator, Mary Kay Papen, for that. Guns Up for our Women's Soccer Team! Go Aggies!"

Regent Bitsie gave a Guns Up to professors, Dr. Terry Armstrong, Dr. Frannie Miller, Dr. Ramesh Chinnasamy, Dr. Meghan Downes, Dr. Guram Bezhanishvili, Dr. Vassilios Papavassiliou, and Dr. Gabriel Garcia and all the NMSU faculty. Regent Bitsie recognized these 7 professors specifically because these are the people he interacts with on a day to day basis. They teach him or he works with them. These professors are prime examples of what President Floros said. They read the classroom, can tell when their students are too stressed or too overwhelmed, who adjusted and are not extremely stringent and have adapted along with the course of the pandemic. Regent Bitsie said he's seen sympathy and humility from these professors. It's heartwarming to know that the faculty and staff at NMSU really do care. All faculty and staff, Guns Up!

Chancellor Arvizu gave a Guns Up to the Aggie Innovation Space for the phenomenal transformation of their facility and what it can be for the future as well as their senate, representative, and corporate supporters.

President Floros gave a Guns Up to Aggie Health and Wellness as well as their Housing staff. They have been tirelessly for almost 2 years now and have doubled their efforts since students are back, particularly with all the issues of mental health, psychological, and counseling for students. Guns Up to the Housing staff, in particular for the dorms. Guns Up!

**M. Upcoming Board of Regents Meetings, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**1. Proposed Dates:**

- **October 11, 2021 at 1 PM** – Board of Regents Special Meeting
- **December 10, 2021 at 9 AM** – Board of Regents Regular Meeting

Chairwoman Devasthali announced that the Board of Regents Special Meeting will be on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 1pm and that the Board of Regents Regular Meeting is proposed for December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 9am; however, it may be rescheduled due to commencement events the same day.

**N. Adjournment, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

Regent Romero motioned to adjourn the meeting. Regent Bitsie seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:11am.

**Meeting Minutes Approved on December 9, 2021 by the New Mexico State University Board of Regents.**



Ammu Devasthali  
Board of Regents Chair



Arsenio Romero  
Board of Regents Secretary/Treasurer