

# UNM

# medicine

fall 2020

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## Dear Friends,

Becoming the dean of The University of New Mexico School of Medicine is such an incredible honor. While I had pictured what it might be like to be in this role when Dr. Roth announced his retirement a year or so ago, I never could have imagined it would be in the middle of a global pandemic. I also never could have imagined how inspired I would be by our learners, faculty and staff who rose and continue to rise every day to this challenge with such deep commitment to our patients and to each other in something we have never experienced or known to this degree in our lives and careers.

When I was a little girl I remember going on house calls with my father, a physician in the small Louisiana town where we lived. Watching his compassion and personalization of medicine, along with his deep commitment to our whole community is what inspired me to go into the field. While over my career I have had moments that have renewed my passion, there has been none as great as what I have seen during this pandemic.

Whether it be our COVID educational block that was set up in the spring, the learners who volunteered in every possible way and continued their education in ways they hadn't imagined, the residents who have provided exceptional care while learning, the faculty who stepped in and stepped up to care for patients outside their normal practice and continued to teach, or the incredible work of our researchers who did their part to help identify new treatments and try and find a cure for this terrible virus, I continued to see the commitment to our calling grow exponentially across our school and health system.

I also saw commitment to critical and long-standing issues ignited and renewed. The conversations and work that have occurred and must continue to occur in diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism cannot be underestimated and the passion to be part of the solution to racial injustice is deep. We are taking a close look at ourselves individually and collectively.

I hope you will be inspired by what you read in this edition of UNM Medicine. I also hope that, if you are in a position to do so, you consider contributing to the School of Medicine through the UNM Foundation. Your contribution helps sponsor medical school students, helps us improve our learning environment and allows us to continue to serve the people of New Mexico.

May you be blessed and stay safe during this time. Take care of yourself and check in on those you love virtually. Each of you is a critical piece of the collective us. Please also make a plan to get yourself and your loved ones vaccinated when it is available in your area.

We will get through this together, and I truly believe we will come out stronger. You are all in my thoughts and heart.

With warm regards,



**Martha Cole McGrew, MD**  
Interim Dean  
UNM School of Medicine





# GME GROWTH

## Graduate Medical Education Program Expands Leadership

By Michael Haederle

The Graduate Medical Education (GME) program at The University of New Mexico School of Medicine has undergone reorganization and seen the appointment of new leadership to better serve the school's residents and fellows.

Earlier this year, **Joanna Fair, MD, PhD**, was named senior associate dean to lead the office, which oversees the training of more than 630 residents and fellows in more than 60 clinical programs to ensure that they comply with requirements of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and other accrediting organizations.

As UNM's "designated institutional official," Fair serves as the University's primary point of contact with the ACGME. She ensures that each residency and fellowship program maintains compliance with accreditation standards, including compiling a required annual report to the ACGME.

Fair, who previously served as associate dean for GME, reports directly to Interim Dean Martha Cole McGrew, MD.

As part of the reorganization, **Gena Dunivan, MD**, becomes associate dean. She previously served as assistant dean for GME and serves as the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery fellowship program director.

In her new role, Dunivan, an associate professor in Obstetrics & Gynecology, will manage the Program Review Committee and the GME Operations Committee, lead quality improvement and patient safety educational initiatives and work to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

**James Reese Jr., MD**, will take Dunivan's place as assistant dean for GME. He also serves as the Child Neurology Residency program director and has a master's degree in educational leadership. His primary roles include leading the Duty Hours Task Force, as well as developing resident/fellow educational opportunities and program director mentorship.

Finally, **Hollie Medina** has joined the office as operations manager. She most recently served as Medical Education Program Specialist in the Department of Radiology, and has served as a member of the GME Program Review Committee and on special reviews.

"We're working on augmenting our resources here in the office to be able to better support graduate medical education at UNM," said Fair, who is an associate professor in the Department of Radiology.

"We have recognized that the intensity of efforts required to make sure that we are creating the best educational experience for our GME learners – residents and fellows – with burgeoning accreditation requirements is growing our role."

The GME office oversees salaries and benefits for residents and fellows, Fair said, adding, "More important is oversight over all of their educational and clinical training programs."

In the past year, the School of Medicine added a new residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and fellowships in the vascular neurology (stroke), addiction medicine and complex general surgical oncology, she said.

Fair, who graduated medical school at Washington University in St. Louis before coming to UNM in 2003 for her radiology residency, joined the faculty in 2009. "GME at UNM has been a major part of my passion, because I trained here and this place made me who I am as a physician today," she said. ▼

# RESEARCH REALIGNMENT

**Nancy Kanagy Chairs Department of Cell Biology & Physiology**

**Tom Resta Named Senior Associate Dean for Research Education**

**Laura Gonzalez Bosc Leads Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program**

**T**he UNM School of Medicine's research education mission is operating under new leadership as longtime colleagues take on new roles.

**Nancy L. Kanagy, PhD**, a professor in the Department of Cell Biology & Physiology who served as head of the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program (BSGP) and senior associate dean for research education, relinquished those duties to become her department's next chair.

When she assumed leadership of the department July 1, taking over from Oscar Bizzozero, PhD, upon his retirement, Kanagy handed off her responsibilities to two colleagues in Cell Biology & Physiology. **Tom Resta, PhD**, now serves as senior associate dean for research education, while **Laura V. Gonzalez Bosc, PhD**, directs the BSGP.

"Dr. Kanagy is an outstanding researcher with an impressive record of dedicated service to the university and her department," said Interim Dean Martha Cole McGrew, MD. "She is a mentor who inspires students in their pursuit of knowledge."

Most faculty in the department fall into one of two research groups: vascular physiology or cancer biology, Kanagy noted. "I'm looking forward to building bridges between these two groups."

Kanagy completed her PhD in pharmacology at Michigan State University and conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Michigan before coming to UNM in 1995. Her research has primarily focused on vascular physiology, hypertension and blood pressure control. Kanagy has also measured the effects of chronic oxygen deprivation in people suffering from sleep apnea and studied how exposure to diesel exhaust impairs coronary artery function.

Resta said he is looking forward to heading the School of Medicine's research education program. "I have witnessed and contributed to the evolution of our research education programs since their inception, and am excited to have the opportunity to lead the continued growth and success of biomedical research education at UNM," he said.

Resta received his PhD in 1995 from UNM and remained on as a postdoctoral fellow before joining the Cell Biology & Physiology faculty as a research assistant professor in 1998. He was promoted to professor in 2012. His research has focused on the mechanisms of pulmonary hypertension associated with chronic obstructive lung diseases, sleep apnea and high altitude exposure.

In 2017 Resta was presented the William G. Dail Award for his contributions as a teacher, mentor and leader in the medical and graduate education programs. He was awarded the Faculty Research Excellence Award for Basic Science Research, the highest research recognition award bestowed by the UNM Health Sciences Center.

Gonzalez Bosc, who received her PhD from the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina in 2000, focuses her research on pulmonary hypertension, hypoxia, inflammation and vascular physiology. She also chairs UNM's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and directs the Cardiovascular and Metabolic Disease Signature Program. ▼



# Changing of the Guard

## John Russell Steps Down as Chair of Surgery

**J**ohn Russell, MD, professor and longtime chair of The University of New Mexico Department of Surgery, will step down at the end of the year.

Russell, who grew the department significantly during his 14-year tenure, said serving as chair “has been the greatest professional honor of my career, but it is now time for new leadership.”

Russell said he was proud of the department’s maturation on his watch and its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The greatest asset of UNM Surgery is its people – faculty, residents and fellows,

advanced practice providers and staff,” Russell said. “Their commitment to the unique mission of UNM, to serve all New Mexicans in clinical care, education and research, has been extraordinary and personally gratifying.”

**John Marek, MD**, professor and vice chair for clinical affairs, will become interim chair on January 1. A specialist in vascular surgery, Marek joined the UNM faculty in 1996.

“Dr. Marek has been working closely with Dr. Russell as the vice chair, is very familiar with the aspirations and operations of the department, and is widely respected within the department,

the School of Medicine and the Health System,” said Interim Dean Martha Cole McGrew, MD. “I am delighted to be working with Dr. Marek and I am certain of his commitment to embrace this role and move the department forward.”

Russell joined UNM in 2004 after 23 years on the University of Connecticut surgical faculty and was appointed chair in July 2006. Russell voiced plans to stay on in a mentoring capacity. ▼

### at a glance

## It Takes a Brain Surgeon: Meic Schmidt Assumes Neurosurgery Chair



When Meic Schmidt, MD, MBA, took over as chair of the UNM School of Medicine Department of Neurosurgery earlier this year he knew the department needed rebuilding in key areas.

“We have well-trained faculty members in pretty much all the sub-specialty areas in neurosurgery,” he said. But with the planned launch of the Nene and Jamie Koch Movement Disorders Center there would also be the need for a neurosurgical specialist trained to insert electrodes through the skull for deep brain stimulation, a key treatment for Parkinson’s patients and others.

Hiring new faculty would also be a major step toward regaining accreditation of the department’s residency program, he says. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education withdrew its accreditation in 2019, citing a number of deficiencies.

Schmidt, who trained at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and completed fellowships at the University of California, San Francisco, spent 14 years at the University of Utah, eventually becoming vice-chair of Neurosurgery. He later served as chair of Neurosurgery at New York Medical College and director of the Department of Neurosurgery at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, N.Y.

He has high praise for the state-of-the-art Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit in UNM Hospital’s Barbara and Bill Richardson Pavilion. “This is probably the best ICU I’ve ever seen,” he says. But it’s UNM’s faculty and staff who make the real difference, Schmidt said. “There are a lot of people who are driven to make this a better place.” ▼

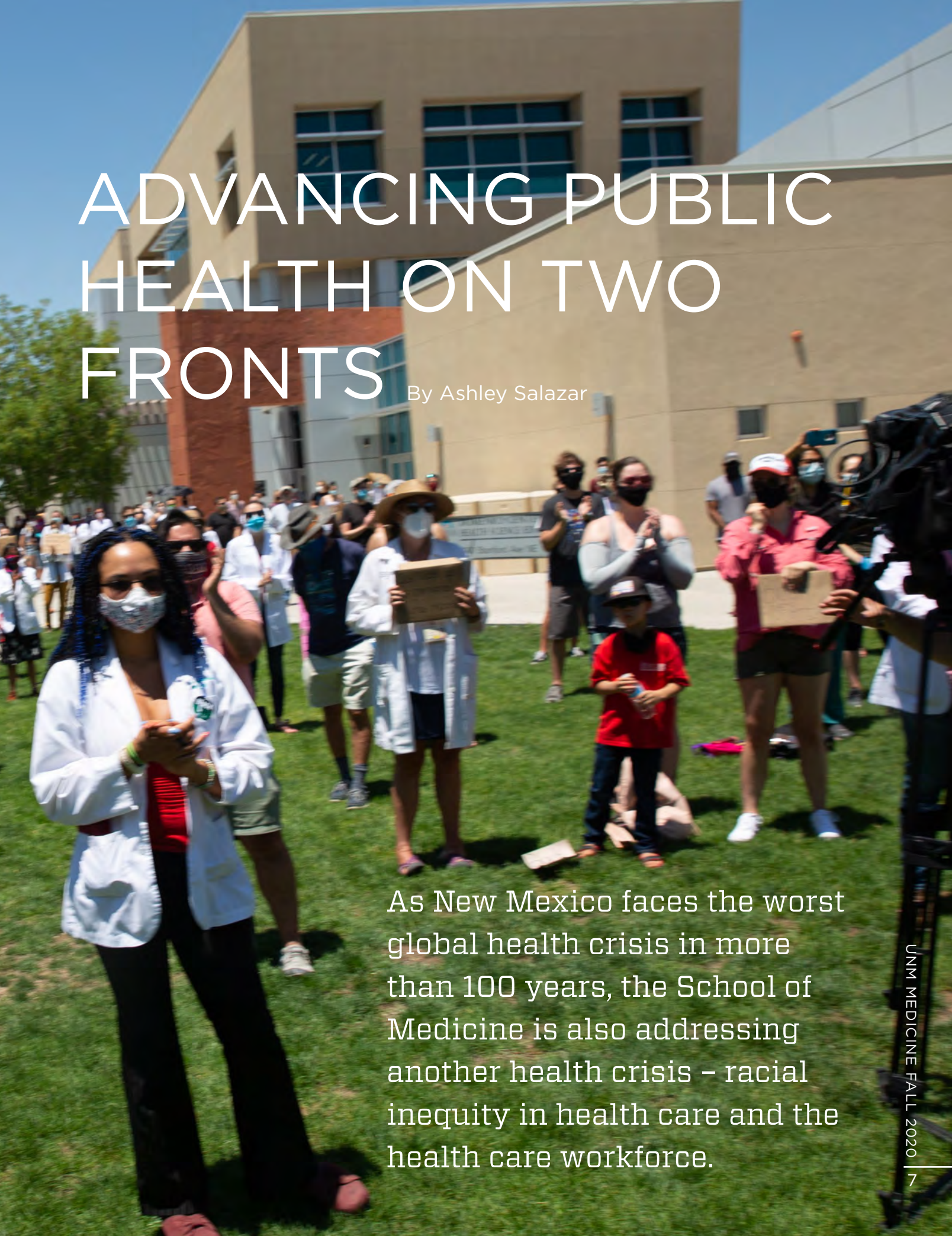
# RISING to the CHALLENGE





# ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH ON TWO FRONTS

By Ashley Salazar



As New Mexico faces the worst global health crisis in more than 100 years, the School of Medicine is also addressing another health crisis – racial inequity in health care and the health care workforce.

**A**s New Mexico faces the worst global health crisis in more than 100 years, the School of Medicine is also addressing another health crisis – racial inequity in health care and the health care workforce.

Interim Dean Martha Cole McGrew, MD, is working with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion leaders, faculty, staff and learners to create a path forward to address these critical issues.

The pandemic has posed unique challenges in the School of Medicine and the UNM Health System. McGrew and her team needed to ensure the continuation of services, education and research while keeping students learning and prioritizing community, student, faculty and staff safety. It has been especially important to work with community preceptors, as much medical education takes place in the community, as well as within the health system.

Together with the leadership team, the newly named Interim Dean made the necessary changes to move classes to virtual delivery, put clinical rotations on hiatus and bring the school's admissions interview process online. This mirrored work being done in medical schools all over our country, although each has its unique needs and methods.

McGrew says she is proud of how the school and the UNM Health System responded to the crisis. "We have not run out of personal protective equipment and we have figured out ways to continue education for our students," she says. "It doesn't look like what any of us imagined for medical school, health professions or biomedical sciences education."

UNM learners, who have a deep commitment to improving health care for all, eagerly embrace McGrew's goal of achieving better health equity. Newly formed groups, like White Coats for

Black and Indigenous Lives, have already influenced the UNM Health Sciences Center to form "super groups" to systematically address inequity and opportunities for culture change. McGrew believes that opportunity is key.

"Historically, racial inequity and social determinants have often not allowed some learners to be as prepared as they could be to enter professional schools," McGrew says. "It has nothing to do with ability or intelligence. These are awesome learners who have been resilient in the face of inequity."

**“We can change the curriculum, but we have to change the culture and prepare people better to become faculty and role models for learners. We also have to ensure that when we are hiring for leadership positions that we are providing opportunity.”**

J.P. Sanchez, MD, MPH, newly appointed as executive officer for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the School of Medicine, says COVID-19 is another reminder of how certain groups, in particular racial and ethnic minority groups, endure increased disease morbidity and mortality. "As our health care workforce provides education and treatment for our patients and surrounding communities, we are concurrently working to support the physical and mental well-being of the medical school's community members," Sanchez says.



UNM is not the only medical school being asked to assess itself. In her conversations with other deans across the nation, McGrew is hearing that learners nationwide are asking the same of their institutions and medicine and health care in general.

“Some schools are not yet as far along as we are,” she says, “but every school is starting from where they are and moving to the next place. I am hoping that we use this time as a catalyst to be what I think we all envision this country to be: a place of deep love and respect and of opportunity for everyone.”

Even with strong, experienced leaders, the challenges posed by the novel coronavirus proved to be unpredictable, and no one, including McGrew, felt fully prepared.

“We talk about our “opaque” crystal ball. We can model things out, but it’s unpredictable,” McGrew says. “We have to look at national guidance from groups like the Association of American Medical Colleges, as well as local and state guidance and our own institutional needs and somehow put that all together to make the best possible choice for the best number of people that we can.”

Through the challenges, McGrew has been inspired by her colleagues and learners. “People deserve gratitude and recognition for the way they are stepping up in this time,” she says. “There are not enough words to express what everyone at the HSC and the Health System are doing during these crises. The resilience, flexibility and commitment to calling is beyond remarkable. And, COVID fatigue is real.”

McGrew also sees the pandemic as a learning experience for all faculty and learners and leadership.

“If we really believe that what we want to do is improve health and health care, then we have no choice but to be in this together,” she says. “We need to find the best solutions, set aside our egos and silos and biases, and come together for better health equity – all the things that are going to make us healthier as a country.” And we can’t do it in a vacuum. We have to work with our colleagues in education, law, business, public safety and our community.”

Despite the challenges facing the School of Medicine this year, McGrew is encouraged by a spike in a special set of numbers.

“We have seen admissions applications for medical schools across the country go up by 17 percent,” she says. “It shows that there are those who have seen the crises of COVID and racism and want to make an impact in health, despite the challenges we currently face, and I am really energized by that. Every day, I am inspired by our students and residents. They are our future and I am certain we are in good hands.”

Photography by Allan Stone

June 4, 2020

White Coats for Black and Indigenous Lives Die-In

Hundreds of masked demonstrators in white coats, green scrubs and street clothes gathered six feet apart for a “die-in” on the UNM Health Sciences campus to highlight anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism embedded in the health care system. Demonstrators and speakers honored the memory of George Floyd, denounced police brutality and white supremacy in medicine, and demanded change in their institution. Participants representing every facet of the UNM HSC community - students, faculty, staff, residents, fellows, patients and community partners - were united in their call for social and racial justice.



# Campus Homecoming



Ashley Salazar Returns to Her Roots as Chief Advancement & External Relations Officer

By Amanda Gardner

Photo by Bridgette W. Jones

## Call it kismet.

One of the top administrative positions in The University of New Mexico School of Medicine became vacant just as Albuquerque native Ashley Salazar was ready to come home after nine years living and working in the Sunflower State.

Salazar isn't in Kansas anymore. Instead, she's in Fitz Hall, where she serves as Chief Advancement and Alumni relations Officer and Director of the Office of Community Faculty.

"This is the one position that I found that was going to drive me forward in my career," says Salazar, who started her job in early January, just after Winter Break. "It was the right job. All of my experience culminated to prepare me for this and it also was a step forward in my career."

Salazar spent the past nine years working at Garden City Community College in Garden City, a small town in southwest Kansas. Salazar's husband, Nick, had taken a job there as women's basketball coach right after Ashley graduated from UNM with a bachelor's degrees in 2011. (Salazar later received her master's at Northern Arizona University.)

She followed him out of state, working first as an educational talent search advisor for the Federal TRIO Program. In that capacity, she recruited underrepresented and at-risk students to the college.

"That's where I got my start in education," says Salazar. "It fed my passion for first-generation students like myself."

Salazar soon moved into management at Garden City, spending the last year and a half as director of public relations and marketing, where she oversaw the creative services and print-shop departments. Then Nick applied to and was accepted into the PhD program in sports administration at UNM.

"I had my hopes for going back to UNM," she says. "I'm a Lobo. I wanted to be considered for a job either working with alumni or people, and in this role I have my hand in everything."

Salazar has deep roots in New Mexico. Born and raised in the Duke City, she attended Del Norte High School. Her husband's family, all Lobos, have acted as mentors.

"My husband's family is very much a part of why I am where I am. Nick's late grandfather was former representative Nick Salazar, the longest-serving representative in the New Mexico House of Representatives."

Salazar's own connection to UNM also goes way back. Her paternal grandmother, who immigrated from El Salvador, still works as a custodian in Johnson Center and encouraged all of her grandchildren to exercise. Salazar remembers waiting for her grandma in the Johnson Center hallway.

In her new position, Salazar's role "is to help guide advancement and alumni relations in strategy and planning. I do a lot of relationship building with alumni and with faculty, as well as with administration here at the School of Medicine and the (UNM) Foundation."

Salazar has already been traveling around the state and the nation to visit various stakeholders.

**“A big focus for us is to make relationships in rural communities, so that our students have the opportunity to experience rural medicine and so they may make a choice to return to rural communities, because New Mexico needs them.”**

# EXERCISE in EDUCATION

## UNM Division of Physical Therapy Gains New Orthopaedic Residency Program By Amanda Gardner

**W**hen Jimmy Minner, PT, DPT, SCS, a 2010 graduate of UNM's physical therapy doctoral program, decided to pursue a post-graduate residency, he had to relocate 1,500 miles away to fulfill his dream. At the time, there were simply no physical therapy residency programs in New Mexico.

"I was definitely surprised how few programs there were, even in the Western region," says Minner, who completed his residency in South Carolina and is now one of three sport-certified specialists at Langford Physical Therapy in Albuquerque.

Minner was the first of fewer than 10 UNM program graduates to pursue specialist residencies, each of whom had to go out of state.

All that changes this year with the introduction of a new UNM Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Residency Program, the first in New Mexico.

"This allows our students who are home-grown to stay here and be specialists," says Adam Walsh, PT, DPT, an assistant professor in UNM's Division of Physical Therapy and program coordinator of the new residency program.

It has been a dream almost two decades in the making for Beth Moody Jones, PT, DPT, EdD, associate professor and division chief. The goal, she says, is not only to train more specialists in a state that desperately needs them, but also to nurture more clinical instructors who can in turn train more physical therapists.

"There hasn't been a pathway to mentor up-and-coming faculty," Jones says, adding that Minner will serve as one such mentor in the new program.

The Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Residency Program selected three participants for the residency's first year. Each will be assigned to one of three local clinics: Langford, ATI Physical Therapy or Armada Physical Therapy.

The residency is currently a candidate program and, if all goes well, will gain accreditation in June 2021, says Walsh, who is also a board-certified sports clinical specialist.

The division hopes to add more residencies in the future, which means more specialists in the pipeline. "The idea is that this will run smoothly and will expand," Walsh says. "Neurology would be the place to go first, then potentially sports, maybe pediatrics. They are desperately needed in New Mexico."

““ This allows our students who are home-grown to stay here and be specialists.””

With the new program in place, UNM joins a growing nationwide trend. While residencies in the field began in the late 1990s, “the number has exploded in the past six to eight years,” Walsh says.

New Mexico lags not only in number of residencies, but also in number of both generalist and specialist physical therapists, a shortage the new residency program hopes to address. New Mexico has only 3.67 physical therapists for every 10,000 population, versus 6.5 for the nation, according to a 2018 article in the *Journal of Physiotherapy*. That gives it one of the lowest physical therapist-to-population ratios in the country, Jones says.

More physical therapists would also help address the acute dearth of primary care physicians in the state.

“We are an access point,” Jones says. “We do differential diagnosis. We can get people to other types of care.” And physical therapy has proven to be more effective at treating pain than opioid painkillers, whose abuse has become a national public health concern.

The residency program will benefit students as well. Minner says he not only gained knowledge, skills and confidence through his residency, he also boosted his earnings and gained more of a leadership position in his field.

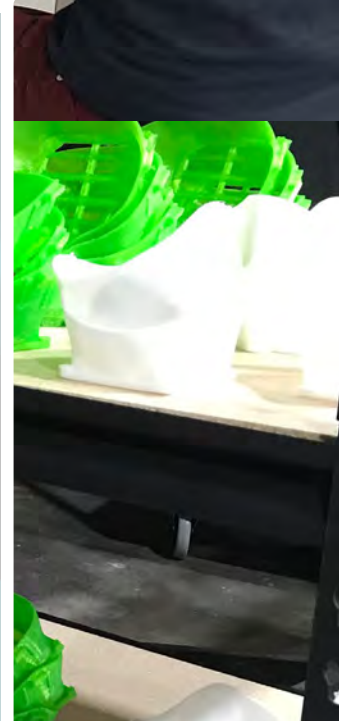
Would he have stayed in New Mexico had an appropriate residency been available?

“I was born and raised here and I love it here,” says Minner, who was a javelin thrower as a UNM undergraduate and now plays competitive doubles sand volleyball. “I think if I would have had an option closer to home I probably would have stayed.” ▼



# Grassroots Innovation

Christina Salas Brings National Attention to UNM with 3D Printed Mask Production







It's common knowledge that face masks are one of the most critically needed pieces of personal protection equipment in the COVID-19 pandemic. While UNM providers and health care workers are thankfully well stocked, other sites across New Mexico have faced low supplies and high demand for them as their cases surged.

Christina Salas, PhD, an assistant professor of Orthopaedic Biomechanics in the School of Medicine's Department of Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation, was determined to remedy that.

Salas and her research team, in collaboration with The University of New Mexico School of Engineering, led a game-changing effort to alleviate personal protective equipment shortages throughout New Mexico by harnessing the 3D printing technology she uses in her normal instruction.

Since their first meeting in March 2020, Salas and her team have printed and delivered thousands of face masks and shields to areas with an abundance of COVID-19 cases.

With approval from the state's Medical Advisory Team, they delivered equipment to Gallup and other parts of McKinley County, which experienced the largest spikes in COVID-19 cases and deaths in New Mexico early on in the pandemic.

The efforts garnered notice from local media and press, and were celebrated by UNM President Garnett S. Stokes and Paul B. Roth, MD, MS, then-Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine.

Most recently, Salas is a recipient of the "Angels Among Us" award from the *Albuquerque Journal* and was recognized as one of the "50 Badass Women of 2020" by *InStyle Magazine*, an award previously given to women such as U.S. Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi and Jane Goodall.

Salas is a recipient of the "Angels Among Us" award from the *Albuquerque Journal* and is recognized as one of the "50 Badass Women of 2020" by *InStyle Magazine*

# GIVING

School of  
Medicine  
Philanthropy  
Figures  
2019-2020



**\$658,863**

in scholarships awarded



**675**

unique donors

**2,316**

total # of gifts

**\$6.3m**

in gift commitments

# by the numbers



## ENDOWMENTS

**\$712.2k**

in gifts

**\$68.1m**

current total

## BEQUEST PLEDGES

**\$6m**

in pledges

**7**

new

**\$46.5m**

est. total value



## DEAN'S FUND

**\$22.3k**

in gifts

# An Extraordinary Mentor

## Angela Wandinger-Ness Earns Presidential Honors

By Ashley Salazar

**A**ngela Wandinger-Ness, PhD, Endowed Professor of Pathology and associate director of Education, Training and Mentoring at the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center, is the 2020 recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mentoring in Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine, an award that comes with \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation and a certificate signed by the President of the United States.

For Wandinger-Ness, the award and its perks complement the rewards of mentoring students. As a mentor for more than 270 learners at various stages in their educational journey, she says that the benefits of mentorship are mutual.

“It is very rewarding because I can see their successes and watch what they do and how they put the things they learn together,” Wandinger-Ness says. “I learn a lot myself, and I really like learning new things.”

Her mentorship activities may vary by person. Sometimes she works closely with students, developing relationships in the laboratory and following their careers after they have left the University. On other occasions, she simply provides quick, honest feedback via email. Then there are moments when Wandinger-Ness serves as “a connector,” seeing an opportunity that fits well with a mentee’s goals and personality and sharing information with them.

“Whether they act on it or not is their own thing, but I offer the information and support,” she says.

Over the years, Wandinger-Ness has seen how mentorship at a uniquely collaborative university like UNM can benefit the entire state. In New Mexico, health care systems, industry and medical communities employ UNM graduates, those who have honed their skills through mentor relationships at UNM, many of whom she is able to list by name as her own former mentees.

Supporting the medical workforce in New Mexico is a key part of the mission of the UNM School of Medicine, a focus that drives programmatic efforts to use mentorship as a means to increase effectiveness.

One such program is the Research Education Office’s Undergraduate Pipeline Network (UPN), directed by Jennifer Gillette, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Pathology. The UPN provides a summer of research experience and mentorship as well as \$5,000 stipends to students who develop the skills and experience needed to apply for and succeed in post-baccalaureate education. Faculty mentors value the program’s ability to ignite research passions and foster relationships between students and mentors, ultimately leading many students to select UNM for continued research.

Many program recruits are from Native American or Hispanic backgrounds, evidence of the School of Medicine’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Research faculty support for the UPN is strong because, as Wandinger-Ness explains, faculty see “Gillette’s beautiful track record [in] bringing these trainees back to our educational programs at UNM.” In fact, many of the faculty invest their own funds, and, according to Wandinger-Ness, “We get a big return on that investment.”

You can help to support mentorship at the School of Medicine within the Undergraduate Pipeline Network program and other research initiatives within the Research Education Office by giving through the UNM Foundation. ▼





# Attention Must Be Paid

UNM School of Medicine Class of 2020 Experiences First-Ever Virtual Convocation By Ashley Salazar

This year's graduation season was unlike any other for schools across the nation and much of the world, and the UNM School of Medicine was no exception.

The COVID-19 pandemic altered how the class of 2020 would celebrate some of its most important milestones. Rather than celebrating with classmates, family, friends and mentors at their sides, graduates would have these experiences virtually.

The first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic forced School of Medicine leaders to make the difficult decision to cancel the school's 2020 Match Day celebration. For Doctor of Medicine candidates, Match Day is a tradition that is arguably more anticipated and emotionally charged than convocation.

Nevertheless, they wanted to ensure that, though in a different form, 2020's convocation ceremonies would still happen and still be meaningful.

With feedback from the class, the Office of Medical Student Affairs and the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations developed a plan for a safe sequence of outdoor/distance events and virtual ceremonies to provide these new health care providers with a proper celebration of their accomplishments.

These efforts culminated in a unique opportunity for graduates to feel individually appreciated while remaining physically apart.

First, the MD graduates participated in a drive-through graduation celebration.

Dozens of masked well-wishers lined up at 6-foot increments along the street to celebrate the class by ringing cow bells, waving pom-poms and holding up homemade signs that read, "Way to Go, Grad" and "Congratulations MD 2020!"

At the front of the caravan of vehicles, graduates received parting gifts in silver tote bags emblazoned with “UNM SOM 2020” artwork. Inside were celebratory wine glasses, locally sourced margarita mix, chips, salsa, a party banner, balloons and a gift card.

In the virtual convocation, Zoom replaced the stage and Facebook and YouTube became the auditorium. Applause and cheers and the sights of packed theater seats and camera flashes were replaced with likes, emoji and chat messages of love and congratulations.

MD graduates gathered virtually with family and friends from across the country to watch the MD convocation video ceremony. Paul B. Roth, MD, MS, then-dean of the School of Medicine, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, Executive Vice Dean Martha Cole McGrew, MD, were joined by student speakers and congratulations from each of the school’s departments.

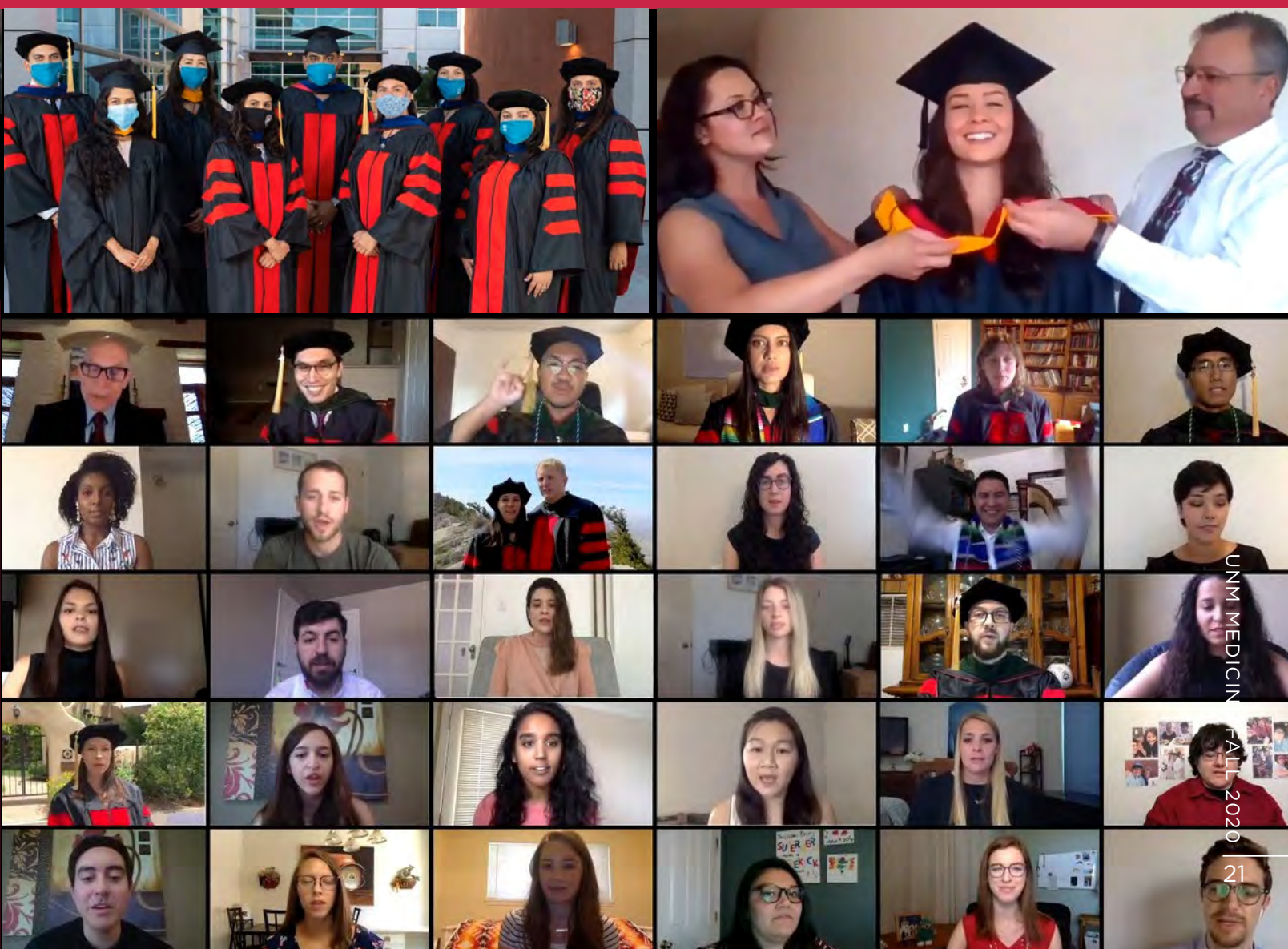
Building upon the success of the first virtual convocation, additional School of Medicine degree programs have followed suit.

The Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program held its convocation ceremony for MS and PhD graduates live via Zoom in August while their family and friends watched it stream on social media. Graduates were hooded in real time, some by their masked mentors outdoors or in a lab, and some by their parents or significant others at home.

The Division of Physical Therapy also held its ceremony via Zoom and the Physician Assistant program is holding a virtual ceremony in December 2020.

These are not the graduations that anyone expected or hoped for, but the School of Medicine continues to come together to celebrate and make these major milestones in our students’ lives as special and safe as possible.

And when graduation returns to normal, there just might be some new traditions from 2020 that will stick around. 🎓







# Legacy of Leadership

## Robert “Reg” Strickland, MD, Endowed Chair Created

By Amanda Gardner

When Robert “Reg” Strickland, MD, first arrived in Albuquerque in 1972 to set up a new gastroenterology division at the UNM School of Medicine, the price of gas was 35 cents a gallon, the medical library occupied a former 7-Up bottling plant, the Cancer Center had just started construction and he had only one other full-time faculty member working with him.

And, he writes in his memoir, *Journey Down A Road Less Traveled: My Life and Career on Two Continents*, he expected to stay no more than five years,

Nearly half a century later, with the price of gas no longer at 35 cents, the entire School of Medicine has transformed, in no small part because of Strickland’s contributions, both as GI division head, then as chair of Internal Medicine. This year, the School honored Strickland with the creation of an endowed chair in his name to enhance the science of digestive disease.

“Reg is someone who’s had a lifetime of service at the institution,” says Mark Unruh, MD, the current chair of Internal Medicine, who spearheaded the effort to create an endowed chair. “His impact is not just here but in the community.”

Born and raised in Adelaide, Australia, Strickland received his medical degree from the University of Adelaide, then went on to do postdoctoral clinical research in both the U.S. and Down Under. In 1972, he was recruited to Albuquerque, arriving with wife Marg and three young children. The family spent their first week in the Duke City at the Hiway House Motel on Central Avenue.

During his 16-year tenure, the GI division became nationally renowned for both teaching and research. It was a much-needed specialty in New Mexico, which sees more than its share of GI issues. “We see lots of alcoholic liver disease and alcoholic pancreatitis,” says current division chief Gulshan Parasher, MD.

As head of the department, Strickland himself “became the ‘Face of Academic Gastroenterology’ for New Mexico in all academic, clinical, educational and research interactions,” said Phil Eaton, MD, emeritus executive vice president for UNM Health Sciences, during testimony supporting the creation of the endowed chair.

In 1988, Strickland became the third chair of Internal Medicine, the University’s largest department. During his 12 years in that role, the department doubled the number of faculty, trainees and support staff, boosted the number of female faculty from 5% in 1988 to 30% in 2000 and opened a clinical trials center. Strickland also oversaw the relocation of the expanded department from 7 South to a larger space on the fifth floor – all this while authoring more than 140 scholarly publications, most focused on stomach inflammation.

Although Strickland formally retired in 2001, he remains active training fellows.

Parasher will be the first faculty member to hold the endowed position. He is trained in specialized endoscopic ultrasound techniques, which no one in New Mexico was doing when he first arrived in 2002. His main goals as the first Robert “Reg” Strickland Endowed Chair are to carry on Strickland’s academic mission.

“I want to promote cutting-edge research, support the existing research staff and give them opportunities to do more research,” he says. The group focuses on research into GI cancers and gut inflammation.

“It’s a great feeling. I feel honored to be carrying that title,” Parasher says from his fifth-floor office, where Reg Strickland’s legacy carries on. ▼



## Board Report

### UNM SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Phillips, MD '01 (President)  
Nate Roybal, MD '07 (Vice President)  
Mario Pacheco, MD '86 (Past President)  
Alisha Parada, MD '08 (Treasurer)  
Lawrence Andrade, MD '00  
Manuel Archuleta, MD '73  
Valerie Carrejo, MD '04  
Dion Gallant, MD '99  
Angela Gallegos-Macias, MD '02  
Albert Kwan, MD '83  
Mario Leyba, MD '04  
Margaret McCreery, MD '74  
Robert Melendez, '08  
Daphne Olsen, '17  
Valerie Romero-Leggott, MD '92  
Linda Stogner, MD '83

### STUDENT & RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Deanna Gonzales, MS '21  
Jessica K. Benally, MS '22

### EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

Martha Cole McGrew, MD  
Interim Dean, UNM School of Medicine

### ADVANCEMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

#### CHIEF ADVANCEMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS OFFICER

Ashley Salazar  
MARKETING MANAGER  
Bridgette Wagner Jones

#### PROGRAM MANAGER

Erika Anderson  
PROGRAM SPECIALIST  
Ryan Niemi

#### EVENTS PLANNER

Ruth Morgan  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
Ashley Hatcher

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Alumni Relations  
MSC 08 4720 • Fitz Hall #182B  
1 University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001  
505.272.5112

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# president's letter

Dear Friends,

This year has brought with it many changes to the traditions and processes typically hosted by the UNM School of Medicine Alumni Association. Our board meetings have gone virtual, thanks to Zoom, where we make decisions about how events and projects must adapt to our changing world. It is wonderful to see that not only is the association able to continue much of its work, but also the many ways the reach of the good that the association does has been extended.

The “Nook” has been reimagined until this pandemic is safely behind us. The coffee and snacks station the association sponsors for students and residents now takes the form of gift cards to local coffee shops, delivered via email.

Once again, the association’s annual White Coat Campaign succeeded in providing custom embroidered white coats and UNM Bookstore gift certificates to all 98 students of the UNM MD class of 2024. The traditional White Coat distribution event was reimagined to provide a safe, socially-distant (but still fun!) environment for the class.

Third- and fourth-year scholarship applications and reviews went virtual by way of a new and improved online reading and scoring system. Eleven students were awarded scholarships and are highlighted in this issue of *UNM Medicine*. Also highlighted are our 2020 Alumnae of the Year: Biatrix Barrera, MD and Francine Gaillour, MD. Be sure to read about these amazing physicians and their significant accomplishments.

Although many things have been different in 2020, the association’s board of directors continues to be proud of the involvement we have had in providing 159 “Serve NM” gift packages to UNM School of Medicine alumni in years one, two and three of their residencies here in New Mexico, and more than 115 “Nuevo Boxes” to alumni serving in residencies across the United States. This year, more than ever, these dedicated and passionate new physicians need to know how much we care and support them.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt daily life, the association is also happy to provide emergency student loans to medical students and house staff. A total of \$3,000 has been loaned out to those in need so far this year.

The association also redirected some of the Nook’s funds to support “Snacks on Service,” a program providing healthy snacks and drinks to UNM medical residents and fellows working on the front lines at UNM Hospital. The association was also able to support the School of Medicine’s Office for Professional Well-Being’s efforts to incentivize wellness survey submissions by providing cash prizes for residents and fellows whose departments reached 75 percent participation.

It gives me great pleasure to keep all UNM School of Medicine alumni abreast of the ways that our alumni association continues to make an impact. As always, the association wishes to support you as alumni and is eager to further engage with you. If you are interested in becoming part of the association board and/or if you would like to visit with the Office of Advancement and Alumni Relations staff or myself, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Phillips, MD '01

Professor and Associate Chair of Community and Family Medicine  
President, Alumni Association  
UNM School of Medicine

# Congratulations

## 2020 Alumni Awardees



**Distinguished Alumna**  
**Biatrix Barrera, MD**  
Class of 2010

Biatrix Barrera is an obstetrician/gynecologist at Presbyterian Española, where she is passionate about working with rural and underserved populations. She focuses on improving patient and newborn outcomes through encouraging evidence-based breastfeeding techniques. She has also worked to improve access to long-acting reversible contraception.



**Distinguished Alumna**  
**Francine Gaillour, MD, MBA**  
Class of 1981

Francine Gaillour aims to build a coaching culture in health care, so she founded the Physician Coaching Institute. Her goal is to help women and minorities become physician leaders. Earlier in her career, Gaillour led teams that developed the earliest models of electronic medical records and clinical data analytics. Her articles have appeared in numerous national publications.



**Leonard Napolitano, PhD Award**  
**Paul B. Roth, MD, MS**  
Residency Class of 1978

Paul Roth spent his entire career working to improve the health of New Mexicans. He served as UNM's Chancellor for Health Sciences for 14 years and Dean of the School of Medicine for 26 years. He also founded the UNM Center for Disaster Medicine and created the nation's first civilian Disaster Medical Assistance Team. He formed the La Tierra Sagrada Society in 2003 as a scholarship organization that has provided more than \$1 million in student scholarships across the health professions.

### ABOUT THE AWARDS

The true measure of the UNM School of Medicine's greatness is found in the achievements of its alumni. The **Distinguished Alumnus Award** recognizes an alumnus who has made significant contributions to society, and whose accomplishments, affiliations and career exemplifies the School of Medicine's legacy of excellence.

**Leonard Napolitano** was the School of Medicine's third dean, whose many contributions included development of the nationally recognized Primary Care Curriculum. The award recognizes an alumnus who has built strong public and private partnerships while advocating for the School of Medicine through innovation and commitment to education.

## 2020 Visionary Sites of the Year

### Protect New Mexico

Protect NM is a student group that collects donated personal protective equipment and distributes it to essential workers who desperately need it. They partnered with Little Sister of the Poor to provide personal protective equipment in Gallup.

### NM Department of Health

The New Mexico Department of Health has been essential this year in keeping everyone up to date with the latest coronavirus developments and advice.

### New Mexico Medical Society

The New Mexico Medical Society provided support, communication and resources for New Mexico physicians that have been essential in these difficult times.

### ABOUT THE AWARD

**Visionary Site of the Year** awards recognize New Mexico health systems that embody the mission of the UNM School of Medicine in their dedication to education, creating a diverse network of health care professionals and providing compassionate care to all New Mexicans.

# 2020 Alumni Association Scholars

In 2020, the UNM School of Medicine Alumni Association distributed \$25 thousand in scholarships to fourth-year medical students.



**Tristan Adams**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“Healthy, empowered patients make for healthy communities, and healthy communities make for a vibrant, strong, and productive society. I look forward to being a physician who accelerates this change, and I thank you for helping me in my endeavor to accomplish these goals.”*



**Aakriti Mishra**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“I’ve learned that continuing to volunteer and work with the community is extremely important because it doesn’t let me lose sight of the reason I chose medicine. It helps me remember that spending a few extra moments with a patient and trying to understand where other people come from can make all the difference.”*



**Deanna Gonzalez**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“Every leadership role, group, organization, and interaction with my patients has guided my path to becoming a physician while reminding me of why I have chosen this path. I strive to provide compassionate and culturally competent care to those who have little means of receiving it, while bridging language and cultural gaps often seen in medicine.”*



**Shannen Ramey**

MD Class of 2021 | Fort Calhoun, Neb.  
*“I would like to dedicate aspects of my career towards providing services to those who experience barriers to access. I believe that I can achieve this by physically working in underserved communities and by providing outreach clinics to rural areas.”*



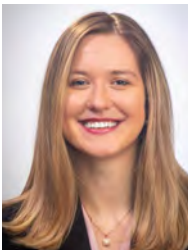
**Andrew Goumas**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“I’m planning on going into anesthesiology in the coming year, and this money will go toward my applications and making sure the interview process for me runs as smoothly as possible.”*



**Niharika Ravichandran**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“I am filled with gratitude as I embark on my final year. In the past three years, I have strengthened my connection with this community that I call my home. As a future Ob-Gyn, I feel empowered to continue serving the people that have shaped my journey.”*



**Anastasia Haponyuk**

MD Class of 2021 | Las Cruces, N.M.  
*“Our state desperately needs compassionate, dedicated physicians with a strong basis in addiction medicine, and I would be honored to help dissipate this health disparity.”*



**Mingma Sherpa**

MD Class of 2021 | Kathmandu, Nepal  
*“I am committed to my education and the health care field, and I’m one step closer to reaching my dream of being a physician thanks to your continued support”*



**Amber Lalla**

MD Class of 2021 | Las Cruces, N.M.  
*“This scholarship will help me cover my residency application fees as I apply to my first job as a physician and future OBGYN. It’s been a privilege to be able to train here and learn how I can be the best physician for my community here in New Mexico.”*



**Diane Sun**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“I pledge to provide patient-centered care and fight for health and social justice for all my fellow New Mexicans.”*



**Priscilla Mendoza**

MD Class of 2021 | Albuquerque, N.M.  
*“I firmly believe that my ability to be at this point in my life is because people believed in me from a young age. This scholarship is proof that I still have people rooting for me to succeed, even behind the scenes.”*



# WHEN YOU GIVE, YOU BELONG.

ANY SCHOLARSHIP • ANY AMOUNT

*La Tierra Sagrada*  
SOCIETY

## Serve the Present, Shape the Future

La Tierra Sagrada Society is dedicated to serving the present and shaping the future of health care by providing need-based scholarships to students in the UNM School of Medicine. One hundred percent of contributions go directly toward funding scholarships and growing the scholarship endowment. A donation for scholarships at any level begins your partnership and includes voting privileges and event invitations. When you give, you belong!

### SUPPORTER

Any gift in any amount to a School of Medicine scholarship fund is valued and recognized by the La Tierra Sagrada Society. Donors to LTSS for any of these scholarships are called "Supporting Donors." When you give, you belong.

### CHERRY

With an annual gift of \$1-\$999, you will be listed as a Cherry Donor in the scholarship dinner program.

### TURQUOISE

With an annual gift of \$1,000-\$2,499, you will be listed as a Turquoise Donor in the scholarship dinner program.

### SILVER

With an annual gift of \$2,500-\$4,999, you will be listed as a Silver Donor in the scholarship dinner program. \*Gifts of \$2,500 or more to the Physician Assistant, Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy programs receive a named scholarship.

### GOLD

With an annual gift of \$5,000-\$24,999, you will be listed as a Gold Donor in the scholarship dinner program. \*Gifts of \$5,000 or more to the MD program receive a named scholarship.

### ENDOWMENT

With a gift of \$25,000 or greater, you establish a named endowed scholarship to be awarded annually and you will be listed in the scholarship dinner program as an Endowment Donor.

## 2020 La Tierra Sagrada Society Scholars

*In 2020, the La Tierra Sagrada Society distributed more than \$150 thousand in scholarships to students in UNM's Medical Doctorate, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant and Occupational Therapy programs.*

### DALAN ABREU

PT Class of 2022 - LTSS Physical Therapy Scholarship

### DANIELA ARMENDARIZ

MD Class of 2022 - Krinsky Benson Family Endowed Scholarship

### HOLLY BACA

PA Class of 2022 - LTSS Physician Assistant Scholarship

### KATI BAILLIE

MD Class of 2022 - Drs. Teodora and Konstantin Konstantinova Endowed Scholarship

### PROMISE BOOD

MD Class of 2023 - Zimmerman Family Endowed Scholarship

### DOROTHY BOWERS WU

MD Class of 2023 - Jeffrey Doll & Linda Novy-Doll Endowed Scholarship

### LUCRETIA DURAN

PT Class of 2021 - Agnes Faggart Bussiere and Gregory F. Bussiere Endowed Scholarship

### STEPHEN ESGUERRA

MD Class of 2022 - North Family Endowed Scholarship

### KATHRYNE FOOS

MD Class of 2023 - Morrison Greaves Family Endowed Scholarship

### JOAQUIN GARCIA

MD Class of 2023 - Mary Ann Anamosa Endowed Scholarship

### SEAN GRAY

OT Class of 2021 - LTSS Occupational Therapy Scholarship

### KRISTA HOUMPHENG

MD Class of 2023 - Peggy and Michael Pollay, MD, Endowed Scholarship

### JONATHAN HULSE

MD Class of 2023 - Obenshain Family Endowed Scholarship

### MIKAELA LAZAR

PT Class of 2021 - Peterkin Family Scholarship for Physical Therapy

### JOLENE LOBO

MD Class of 2021 - Shelton and Maxine Cole Endowed Scholarship

### MOLLY LUKES

OT Class of 2021 - Peterkin Family Scholarship for Occupational Therapy

### AVANIKA MAHAJAN

MD Class of 2022 - Glassheim Family Foundation Endowed Scholarship

### RUSHI MANKAD

MD Class of 2022 - Ogawa Family Endowed Scholarship

### DESTINIE MARQUEZ

MD Class of 2022 - Espey Endowed Scholarship

### TYLER MASON

OT Class of 2021 - LTSS Occupational Therapy Scholarship

### JARED MCBROOM

PA Class of 2021 - Robert & Ella Loftfield Endowed Scholarship

### RACHEL MNUK

MD Class of 2022 - Thornburg Family Endowed Scholarship

### GAELAN MONTOYA

MD Class of 2023 - Robert L. Milne, MD, and Ann DeHart, MD, Endowed Scholarship

### JAMES O'HORA

MD Class of 2022 - Thomas M. Holmes, MD, Endowed Scholarship

### NANCY ORDUNO VILLA

MD Class of 2022 - Greater Albuquerque Medical Association Scholarship

### SABAH OSMANI

MD Class of 2022 - Dr. C. Pardue & Marjorie Bunch Family Endowed Scholarship

### RAYLEE OTERO-BELL

MD Class of 2023 - Robert & Ella Loftfield Endowed Scholarship

### JOHANN PACHECO

MD Class of 2022 - John & Priscilla Gaillour Memorial Endowed Scholarship

### ALEXANDER PHILLIPS

PT Class of 2021 - LTSS Physical Therapy Scholarship (\$2,500)

### VERONICA PIERCE

MD Class of 2022 - Susan M. Scott & Gilbert "Mick" Plazola Endowed Scholarship

### ANDREW SANCHEZ

MD Class of 2022 - Laura Likar, MD, Endowed Scholarship

### JACOB SANCHEZ

MD Class of 2023 - Zimmerman Family Endowed Scholarship

### JAMES SCHLAVIN

PT Class of 2021 - LTSS Physical Therapy Scholarship

### JENNIFER THOMPSON

MD Class of 2022 - Kenneth D Fennell Endowed Scholarship

### MEAGEN TWYEFFORT

MD Class of 2022 - Joseph A. Gorvetzian, MD, and Nancy A. Croker, MD, Endowed Scholarship

# in memoriam

## HOUSE STAFF ALUMNI

**Dany S. BouRaad, MD**, died March 14, 2019, after a long illness. He was a graduate of Brooklyn Technology High School and The George Washington University and completed a psychiatry residency at UNM. His many friends, coworkers and family will remember and miss him for his sense of humor, resiliency, intelligence and kindness. Faculty and colleagues at UNM recognized him with the Roadrunner Award for community service and advocacy. He is survived by his mother, Elizabeth Pestronk BouRaad, father, Mahmoud Sleiman BouRaad, and grandmother Judith Pestronk.

**Neal Hoyt Fellers, MD**, died on April 9, 2019. He was born on Dec. 25, 1950, in Hobbs, N.M., to Hoyt and Ida Harriette (Hair) Fellers. He attended Baylor College of Medicine, graduating with his MD in 1975 with “high honors.” Neal carried out five years of postdoctoral study at the UNM School of Medicine, gaining board certification in internal medicine and pulmonary diseases, and for 20 years he was also board certified in critical care and geriatrics. Neal married Gloria Wilcox on June 28, 1980. He joined the Greeley, Colo., Medical Clinic in 1980 and practiced pulmonary, critical care and general internal medicine there through mid-2004, when he and Gloria moved to Alamogordo. Neal practiced in Alamogordo as a pulmonary consultant, and in recent years, as a hospitalist at Gerald Champion Regional Medical Center. Survivors include his wife, Gloria, and his brothers, Harold Bruce Fellers of Lubbock, Texas, and Clifford Allen Fellers of Odessa, Texas.

**Michael John Frederikson, MD**, died on May 21, 2019.

**Dennis “Denny” Preston Gordon, MD**, died on May 1, 2020. He was born on Feb. 6, 1939, in Durango, Colo. to Gilbert and Mary (Tananbaum) Gordon. Dennis graduated from the University of Colorado Medical School in 1965. He completed his internship at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago and residency/fellowship training at UNM, the U.S. Army Medical Corps and the University of Louisville. Dennis served in the Army from 1967 to 1968, where he worked to save lives as a surgeon in a MASH unit during the Vietnam War. Dennis spent almost five decades as a respected orthopaedic surgeon in Las Vegas, Nev. In addition to his private practice, Dennis also worked at Valley, Sunrise and the VA Hospital. He acted as chief of staff for Valley Hospital from 1984 to 1989 and served on the Valley Hospital Board of Governors from 1989 to 1997.

**Stephen Gregg, MD**, died on Aug. 7, 2020. He attended Stanford University, graduating in three years, and was subsequently accepted into the Stanford School of Medicine. After graduating medical school, he and his wife Marilyn moved to Baltimore, where he began a residency at Johns Hopkins University before being drafted and spending three years in the Army in Germany. Later, they settled with their five children, Stephen, Joseph, Jessica, Lisa and Laura, in New Mexico, where Stephen completed his medical training at UNM. Later in his life he married Nancy Nunnally. He is survived by his brother, his five children, 12 grandchildren, his nieces and many friends and family who loved him very much.

**Gayla Jean Herbel, MD**, died on April 3, 2019.

**Stanley J. Mosier, MD**, died on Sept. 6, 2019. Stan was born outside Hoxie, Kan., on Dec. 14, 1942. He spent an internship year at UNM. Stan was a family physician for 43 years and was known by his patients for his compassion and exemplary care. He was passionate about teaching, serving as a director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at Wesley Hospital from 1972-1980, and was recognized by the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians with the Kansas Exemplary Teacher Award in 2010.

**David H. Munger, MD**, died on June 24, 2020. He was born in Milwaukee, Wis., on Jan. 23, 1936. David graduated from Northwestern University medical school but did his undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin and Iowa State University. David spent two years in the Public Health Service on the Navajo Reservation and finished his orthopedic surgery training at UNM. He became medical director and chief surgeon of Carrie Tingley Children’s Hospital in New Mexico and was in this position for seven years. He belonged to many medical organizations and received numerous coveted awards. In 1977 he and his family moved to Tubac, Ariz. He worked at St. Joseph’s Hospital in the emergency department for 15 years.

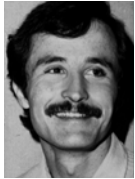
**Phillip Ould Rawlings, MD**, died on May 16, 2020. He was born in Montgomery, Ala., on May 27, 1977. Phillip is survived by his parents Phillip Ould and Gloria Derrick Rawlings of Montgomery. He was a graduate of The Montgomery Academy and Davidson College in Davidson, N.C. Phillip went on to graduate from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine. He completed his residency in family medicine at UNM and practiced at Providence Hospital in Mobile, Ala.

**Mark Reininga, MD**, died on Nov. 15, 2019. Mark was born in Evansville, Ind., to Warren and Gussie Reininga in 1948. After a year at Ohio University, he joined the U.S. Navy, where he served as a medic in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. In 1981, he graduated from medical school at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. After completing his residency at UNM, he started his career in the National Health Service Corps, and went on to work as a family practice doctor for under-resourced communities in Wisconsin, Ohio and New Mexico. He worked in prisons and drug treatment facilities and took loving care of people with mental illness.

**Kenneth Raymond Roth, MD**, died on March 19, 2019. He suffered from primary progressive aphasia, a degenerative brain disease. Ken was born in Kankakee, Ill., on Oct. 1, 1935. He graduated from Florida Southern College, and was the first person in his family to attend college. He obtained his MD from Marquette University School of Medicine (now the Medical College of Wisconsin) in 1963. He completed his internship at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Phoenix, served in the U.S. Navy, and completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at UNM and at the Baylor School of Medicine in Houston. While at Baylor, Ken had a fellowship with Dr. Paul Harrington, who set him on a journey of caring for patients with scoliosis and other spinal and orthopaedic difficulties. Ken was in private practice for more than 27 years in Redlands, Mt. Shasta and Escondido, Calif. He was an assistant professor at Loma Linda University Medical School, where he taught residents in pediatric orthopaedic surgery.

**William Toomy, MD**, died on June 7, 2019 at The Blue Ridge Christian Home in Raphine, Va. Bill was born Aug. 3, 1935 in Hoboken, N.J., son of the late William James and Marion Josephine (MacMillan) Toomy. In 1963 Bill graduated from The George Washington University School of Medicine in Washington, D.C. He completed an internship at the Medical College of Virginia. His internal medicine residencies were completed at the Jersey Shore Medical Center in Neptune N.J. and UNM, where he served as chief resident.

## MD ALUMNI



**Clifton Brasher, MD '80**, died on Oct. 29, 2019.



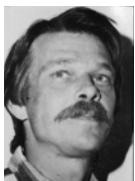
**Garon Coriz, MD '13**, died on June 13, 2019, following a climbing accident. He completed medical school at UNM in 2013, followed by graduation from the University of Utah family medicine residency in 2016. After residency, he went to practice in rural Salina, Utah, working for the North Sevier Medical Clinic with Intermountain Health Care. He had recently returned to New Mexico to work at a clinic in Kewa Pueblo.



**Ana DeVilliers Gutierrez, MD '89**, died on Sept. 1, 2019, after a battle with cancer. She was born in Fusagasuga, Colombia. She earned a medical degree from UNM in 1989, completed an internship at Massachusetts General Hospital, and a residency in neurosurgery at SUNY-Buffalo, becoming a neurosurgeon in 1997, a time when there were only 68 female neurosurgeons in the U.S. She worked for Memorial Medical Center until 2013 and was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church since 1997.



**Glenn L. Gallemore, MD '69**, died in May of 2018.



**Gordon Allen "Gordy" Hall, MD '78**, died on May 1, 2020. "Gordy" was born in Mason City, Iowa, on March 1, 1942 to Elliot and Irene (Roth) Hall. Gordy enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1961, faithfully serving his country while stationed in Japan as a navigator-bombardier during the early years of the Vietnam War. After his honorable discharge in 1966, he attended UNM, where he earned his master of science degree in anthropology. His interest in physical anthropology led to the pursuit of his MD in emergency medicine. He served as an emergency room physician in Michigan, Wisconsin, Connecticut and Taos, N.M.



**Ron L. Harvey, MD '70**, died on April 20, 2019. Dr. Harvey was born in Phoenix. He studied medicine at the University of Arizona and UNM, before moving to Japan to serve on the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission in 1973 for the Public Health Service. He later served as a pathologist in Palm Springs, Calif., for 14 years before moving the family to Prescott, Ariz., in 1990. There he served as pathologist and County Medical Examiner at Yavapai Regional Medical Center up until his first retirement in 2001. He went on to achieve an MBA in hospital administration and continued to practice part-time in other hospitals and labs around Arizona, as well as serving on the board of both YRMC and West Yavapai Guidance Clinic.



**Gregory David Healow, MD '81**, died on Jan. 1 2020. David Gregory Healow was born on April 28, 1950, in Billings, Mont. While in medical school at UNM, he completed his commercial pilot rating and flew for Crown Airlines on the weekends. He completed his residency at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., in June 1983, specializing in anesthesiology. Then practiced medicine in Billings until his death.



**John Gordon Odell, MD '96**, died on Aug. 26, 2020. He was born in Albuquerque on Feb. 5, 1974. He attended Eldorado High School and UNM, earning his medical degree from the School of Medicine. For the majority of his career, he served as a hospitalist at Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs.



**Joseph Henry Saiers, MD '70**, died on Feb. 13, 2019. He was born Dec. 17, 1944, in Hondo, Texas, to Edward and Mary (Bader) Saiers. Hank graduated with honors from the UNM School of Medicine in 1970, interned at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco and served his residency in oncology/hematology at UNM, following which he became board certified in both. He worked and taught at the Albuquerque Veterans Affairs Medical Center as chief of oncology and at UNM. He retired as chief of Medicine from the VA in 2004.



**James Allan Stoeckel, MD '78**, died on May 18, 2019. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1942. He graduated from Concordia Lutheran Seminary in 1968 and served as an ordained Lutheran minister for six years. Following his love for science and medicine, he went on to pursue an MD from the UNM School of Medicine in 1978. After graduating, he chose to specialize in ophthalmology, and joined a practice in Port Arthur, Texas, in 1983. He served the surrounding community until 2005.

*continued on page 30*

## in memoriam

## FACULTY

**Alice Cushing, MD**, died in November 2019. She began her medical career as a surgeon in the 1950s, but ultimately found her home as a pediatrician, becoming the first Pediatrics resident in the UNM School of Medicine. She joined the department's faculty after graduation and specialized in infectious disease. She maintained a grant-funded research laboratory and served as chairperson of the Department of Pediatrics, retiring in 1995.

**George Edward Kennedy III, MD '78**, died on Sept. 13, 2020. He was born March 29, 1946, in Gallup, N.M. After three years of college, he joined the Army and volunteered to serve in Vietnam. Later, he bought a house near UNM and completed a degree in pharmacy. He was accepted into the second class at the UNM School of Medicine, after which he became a Navy flight surgeon. He later practiced medicine in Gallup, Roswell and Albuquerque. He served as chief of staff at Rehoboth Medical Center, where he was honored as Physician of the Year in 1992. He later joined the New Mexico National Guard and volunteered for four tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. The majority of his medical service was spent in Albuquerque, serving in emergency medicine at both Presbyterian Hospital and UNM Hospital. He also served as New Mexico's Surgeon General from 2009-2010. Following his retirement in 2014, he served as a mentor with the UNM School of Medicine Learning Communities and touched the lives of many aspiring doctors.

**Ralph C. Williams, MD**, died on Feb. 2, 2020. He was a world-renowned doctor, professor and scientist, as well as husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. His artwork will live on. He is preceded in death by his bride, Mary, and his sons John and Fred. His surviving children are Cathy Williams of Albuquerque, Mike Williams of Austin, Texas, and Ann Wall of Overland, Kan. He will be missed greatly and remembered often.

**Julia Goodin, MD**, died on April 12, 2019, from a rapidly progressive undetermined illness. She was born on March 10, 1957, in Columbia, Ky., and made the most of her 62 years. She traveled the world, became a captain in the U.S. Naval Reserves, and recently retired as the medical examiner for the state of Tennessee. She received an associate of arts degree from Lindsey Wilson College, a B.S. from Western Kentucky University and an MD from the University of Kentucky. She completed a four-year residency at Vanderbilt University and a one-year fellowship in forensic pathology at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore, Md. She served as the chief medical examiner in Iowa and Alabama, assistant medical examiner in Nashville, and associate medical investigator for New Mexico. She also taught medical students, residents and forensic fellows, authored several papers and made numerous presentations on subjects, such as "Sports-Related Sudden Death." She performed more than 4,000 autopsies and supervised many more. She also testified as an expert witness in more than 150 court cases. She loved her husband, Dave Haugen, who preceded her in death, as did her father, Vitus Jack Goodin. Survivors include her mother, Geneva Goodin, brother Jackie Goodin (Barbara), two sisters, Cindy Lawrence (John) and Vicky Goodin, and her best friend, Susan Garcia.

**Russell D. Snyder, MD**, died on May 22, 2019, from complications of Alzheimer's disease. Born in Philadelphia, he grew up on the campus of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, where his father was a professor. He attended Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania medical school. He interned at Bryn Mawr Hospital and did his residency at the University of Colorado. This was interrupted by a two-year stint in the Army, which sent him to Heidelberg, Germany. He later completed his residency and, in 1967, accepted a job at the UNM School of Medicine. He was the first pediatric neurologist in the state and for many years, the only one at UNM. He served on more than 30 committees or boards at UNM, chairing several and was an examiner for the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology for 36 years. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Child Neurology Society in 2010. He was well-known to his students and colleagues for the "Snyderisms" he gave during grand rounds at the hospital. He was pre-deceased by his wife, Alicia, in 2016 and is survived by his son, Phillip, of Albuquerque, his daughter Christine Cumpston (Rusty), of Monte Sereno, Calif., and two grandsons.



# class acts



**Nathan Huff, MD '17**  
and **Ashley Huff, MD '17**

Crazy things happen when an OB/GYN wife teaches her orthopaedic surgeon hubby how to do an abdominal ultrasound. Baby Huff coming in 2021.

**Shawna Young, MD '17**, has joined San Juan Health Partners Pediatrics. She performed her pediatric residency training at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine. As a member of the Navajo Nation, she is an advocate for Native American health and wants to empower Native American families to promote the health of the next generation.

**Patrick Gilligan, MD '14**, has joined Lovelace Medical Group. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at UNM and in 2019 he was named Orthopedic Resident Instructor of the Year. He then finished his fellowship in Adult Reconstruction at West Virginia University School of Medicine. He is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

**Dion Gallant, MD '99**, Clinical program medical director for primary care and a family medicine practitioner for the Presbyterian Medical Group, has been elected president of the New Mexico Medical Society. Gallant follows the many New Mexico physicians who have held this role going back to the early 1900s. He will guide efforts in patient advocacy, medical malpractice stability and reform, as well as physician and provider unity and support.

Congratulations to residents **Christian Mateo Garcia, MD '18** and **Ashley Huff, MD '17** for the national honor of being named 2020 Building the Next Generation of Academic Pre-Faculty Awardees.



**Dr. Sanjeev Arora**  
**2019 New Mexico Distinguished Public Service Award**

A Distinguished Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine,

Dr. Arora created Project ECHO in 2003, introducing telementoring to improve care for New Mexicans with hepatitis C. Today, Project ECHO helps disseminate knowledge to primary care providers to help treat patients with curable diseases. Project ECHO has expanded worldwide to cover more than 60 disease areas and complex issues with 256 academic hubs. Approximately 600 projects are ongoing in 34 countries.



**Leslie Erin Strickler, DO, House Staff - Faculty**

Dr. Strickler was awarded a 2019 State of New Mexico humanitarian award for her work in child abuse. She oversees two child abuse clinics, including the Child Abuse Response Team, founded in 2004.

**Chuck Wiggins, PhD**, director of the New Mexico Tumor Registry, was recently honored by the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries with its Calum S. Muir Memorial Award. The prestigious award honors those who have made substantive and outstanding contributions to the field of cancer surveillance.



**C. Fernando Valenzuela, MD**, Regents' Professor in the UNM School of Medicine Department of Neurosciences, has been named one of 100 Inspiring Hispanic/Latinx Scientists in America by Cell Mentor, an online imprint in the Cell Press family of scientific journals.

# a passion for knowledge, A REASON FOR GIVING

By Ashley Salazar

When Jeffrey Gorvetzian passed away in late 2019, his family chose to remember him in a special way. Jeff's brother, former UNM School of Medicine Fellow in Infectious Disease, Joseph A. Gorvetzian, MD, and Joe's wife, Nancy Croker, MD, established the Jeffrey Michael Gorvetzian Endowed Professor of Biomedical Research Excellence in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology.

Not a doctor himself, Jeff had an incredible thirst for knowledge and a related passion for using what he learned to improve his own quality of life. Joe and Nancy fondly recalled long, highly detailed discussions with Jeff on medical topics, prompted, in part, by Jeff's own health struggles with obesity and heart disease. Jeff went so far as to take biochemistry and cell biology courses to develop an understanding of the underlying science. Remarkably, he applied that understanding to his situation and, over several years, lost over 100 pounds and largely corrected his heart function.

In the course of his studies, Jeff became interested in autophagy, nutrigenomics and other processes at the cellular level. This led Nancy to introduce her brother-in-law to the work of UNM's Autophagy, Inflammation and Metabolism Center. Jeff spoke on several occasions about making a contribution to help advance these fields of research that helped him improve his own health. Joe says that his brother, "Would have been honored to be the sponsor of this endowed professorship, and we are proud to be able to create this in his name. He will be greatly missed."

While Jeff lived most of his life in Texas, Joe and Nancy met during residency at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center in Phoenix, landed in Albuquerque for Joe's fellowship, established a home, raised three children and became members of the local community and the UNM family. Joe, who went to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine continues to practice in the area of Infectious Disease. Nancy, a graduate of Indiana University School of Medicine, practiced in Albuquerque as a pediatrician prior to retiring a few years ago. Their son Joseph "Joey" Gorvetzian, MD, graduated from the UNM School of Medicine in 2019. Joey's experience further enhanced the family's ties to the school because they all recognized how important UNM was to the community. Joe and Nancy began supporting La Tierra Sagrada in 2014 and created an endowed scholarship fund in 2015.

The family is pleased that Dr. Bryce Chackerian, Joey's first School of Medicine block mentor, is the first recipient of the Gorvetzian Professorship and that his academic activities will be supported by the fund for a five-year period. Chackerian and Gorvetzian are both Armenian names and everyone is tickled at that serendipitous start to the family's newly established fund.

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**You can further biomedical research in the School of Medicine  
by donating to the new Jeffrey Michael Gorvetzian Endowed Professor  
of Biomedical Research Excellence fund.**

**Visit the UNM Foundation [unmfund.org](http://unmfund.org) for details.**

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The UNM School of Medicine delivers world class research education to the next generation of innovators and visionaries in the biomedical, translational and clinical sciences. Join us as we advance health care in New Mexico and beyond.



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For more information or to discuss additional ways you can support research education at the UNM School of Medicine, please contact Ashley Salazar at 505.410.5589 or [ASMSalazar@salud.unm.edu](mailto:ASMSalazar@salud.unm.edu)



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A large, blue-tinted photograph of an agave plant covered in snow, serving as the background for the lower half of the page. The plant's long, pointed leaves are layered, and the snow is piled on top of them. In the background, a white car and a building are partially visible under a snowy sky.

**Wishing you and yours  
good health this holiday  
season and much joy in  
the new year.**

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