



Carol C. Linder, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
New Mexico Economic and Rural Development Committee
Wednesday, October 12, 2016 9:00 AM

In my opening remarks I will touch on the many relationships and active partnerships Highlands engages in to increase opportunities for our students and meet our HU Vision 2020 Strategic Goals of ***achieving academic excellence, academic integration and student success*** and ***being a community partner***:

- The institutionalization of our award winning Achieving in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (ARMAS) in Education Student Support Center <http://armasineducation.com/>. The goal of the ARMAS center is to provide comprehensive support and supplemental instruction in gateway courses to STEM students as they work toward their academic and professional goals.
- The ARMAS Center has received several USDA grants to partner in providing student research projects and internships within the Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (housed on the NMHU campus), Denver Zoo Rio Mora Wildlife Refuge, Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, Pritzlaff Ranch, Valles Caldera National Preserve, Fort Union National Monument, US Forest Service, and US Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Joe Zebrowski, visiting professor of Forestry and GIS laboratory administrator, serves as our 0.25 FTE liaison to the Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge, fostering partnerships and grants. Faculty and students use the refuge for research and other training opportunities. It has also been used as a meeting center.
- Native American students from all 22 New Mexico tribes and the Navajo Nation will have better access to education at Highlands University thanks to scholarships the university provides. The 69 full-tuition scholarships per year are part of a memorandum of understanding between Highlands and New Mexico's tribal leaders and the that was on Sept. 27. The MOU continues through 2020.
- Successful Higher Education Endowment Fund initiative called HU-HIPS that yielded a total endowment of \$750,000 and is focused on the development and implementation of high-impact practices (HIPs) on our campus: "*HU-HIPS: A comprehensive Faculty Development Program*" will focus on faculty and professional staff development specifically geared to improve and expand High

Impact educational Practices (HIPs), which in turn, will increase student retention and engagement, particularly in the Stem-H majors.”

- As a sub-awardee of the NMSU Alliance for Minority Participation, undergraduate research scholars at NMHU receive stipends to participate in research with faculty (8-10 each year).
- NMHU Faculty success in obtaining New Mexico Experimental Program to Stimulate Research meeting (EPSCoR, <http://www.nmepscor.org/>) grant funding and excellent student participation in NM-EPSCoR student conferences. In the past 4 years NMHU students have presented more research posters than any other university in the state.
- Many STEM internships are coordinated through ARMAS. Staff strive to create a caring community for students and to empower them to realize their full potential through emphasis on critical thinking, teamwork, communication, effective study habits, and setting and achieving goals. The LANL Foundation has supported community internships and STEM initiatives and many of our NMHU Alumni are highly successful in obtaining positions with LANL upon graduation from both undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- NMHU has received an endowment from the LANL foundation which will support outreach and student support in Computer Science and related areas.
- Outreach initiatives – NMHU is expanding on existing MOUs with new developments with Cuba and Puerto Rico. A faculty exchange between NMHU and the CEMARNA (Centro de Estudios de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales) at the University of Pinar del Rio in Cuba is planned for the fall 2016 with plans to collaborate on research and a student exchange program. NMHU Professor of English Dr. Donna Woodford-Gormley, coordinating with Mateo Garcés-Valencia at University of Puerto-Rico – Arecibo has created a First-Year Experience Learning Community called Bridging Cultures: Using Shakespeare as a Common Language.
- NMHU faculty engaging students in international research and classroom opportunities. For example, Dr. Jesus Rivas and Dr. Sarah Corey-Rivas have twice taken students on anaconda research expeditions to Venezuela, funded in part by the NMHU Foundation as well as taking students enrolled in field ecology and conservation biology courses on field trips to Mexico. Also, Dr. Michael Petronis and Dr. Jennifer Lindline have made several geology research trips to Europe with students, including a trip summer 2016 to the Czech Republic.
- International Service Group local service and medical campaign to Antigua, Guatemala in May 2016 (four May 2016 graduates accompanied by myself and Elizabeth Ratzlaff, ARMAS director)
- The Facundo Valdez School of Social Work training healthcare professionals with undergraduate and graduate cohorts on the main campus as well as at our centers (Albuquerque, Farmington, Rio Rancho, and Santa Fe) as well as in the southeast portion of the state through our Roswell location.

- The Indigenous Knowledge Center established in October 2015 within the Facundo Valdez School of Social Work. The center's mission is to strive to value, cultivate and promote indigenous ways of knowing, while also providing enriching diverse academic learning experiences and engaging students in rigorous scholarship and research. The center serves students from New Mexico pueblos, the Four Corners tribes of the Navajo and Southern Ute, and the Mescalero Apache. While the Indigenous Knowledge Center will be based at the main Highlands campus in Las Vegas, it will be connected to the university's statewide centers through onsite faculty as well as online course delivery.
- The NMHU online BSN Nursing Program has made it possible for current RNs to obtain a BSN while continuing to work full-time. This population of students will have, for the first time, an opportunity to apply for funds that will allow them to participate in activities and experiences directly related to their profession.
- Current partnership with the Las Vegas-San Miguel Economic Development. The LV-SM EDC currently housed on the NMHU campus and is providing incubator space for new initiatives that may serve as hosts for interns.
- Mariano Ulibarri, HU media arts graduate and leader in the national maker space movement, was invited by the White House invited to share his expertise at an Aug. 24, 2016 Nation of Makers meeting.
- The Software Systems Design Program within Media Arts and Technology offer unique high impact experiences for students at the Natural History Museum and other venues across the state.
- The career services center provides free resources and assistance for NMHU students and graduates in developing effective job search skills, career planning, and locating employment opportunities including summer internships and research programs, part-time jobs and career employment. Career Services does not secure employment for students, but rather provides valuable resources and training to conduct effective employment searches. Career services has most recently partnered with our Human Resources department to increase our ability to offer student employment on campus.