Enrollment for Spring Down Slightly from 2011

The University of New Mexico-Gallup has released its enrollment figures for Spring 2012.

Headcount was officially recorded at 2764, as opposed to 2896 for Spring 2011. Credit hours were 26,760, compared to 28,446 for last Spring.

Zeke Garcia, director of Student Services, said part of the reason for the drop is that the college implemented the probation/suspension of students not making academic progress.

“Those students who did not make academic progress on their financial aid contracts were not re-instated on financial aid,” Garcia said.

Honor Society Induction Ceremony

Twenty-one students were inducted into the Beta Tau Psi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society in a ceremony held in February. Please turn to p. 4 for names of inductees and officers.

Scholarship Awardees Honored in First-ever Ceremony

More than 1000 students at UNM-Gallup have received scholarships over the 2011-12 school year. About 200 of those and their families, along with students who are named to the Dean’s List, were honored in a first-ever scholarship ceremony March 28. Scholarship donors also attended.

Scholarship donors for the past year are: Navajo Nation, Zuni 477 Education & Career, American Indian Services, Roads to Achieve a Degree in Science (R.A.D.S.), Johnson Foundation Scholarship, UNMG- Mary Ann Zollinger Memorial Endowment, UNMG- Allene & Leone Rollie Scholarship, UNMG- Nursing Scholarship, UNMG- United Indian Traders, UNMG- Julia Palmer Memorial Scholarship, UNMG- Red Rock Balloon Rally Scholarship, UNMG- RMCHCS Auxiliary Scholarship, UNMG- DCI Scholarship, Soroptimist of Gallup Scholarship, Gates Millennium, First Financial Credit Union, Navajo Nation Oil & Gas, NAVO Corporation- Charles Schwab, Navajo Code Talkers, Old Timers Softball League, St. Katherine Drexel, Navajo Nation Program for Self Reliance, Heard Museum, Julie Helpers Memorial, Continental Divide Electric Corp, Gallup McKinley County Schools- Paul Hanson, Inaugural Miyamura and Hiroshi Miyamura.

Fenessa Dayish, left, received a Johnson Foundation Scholarship for 2011-12. At right is Al Henderson, Entrepreneurial Program instructor.
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S DESK
BY SYLVIA RODRIGUEZ ANDREW

As Spring Unfolds, It’s a Season of ‘Firsts’ for UNMG

I am pleased to announce some exciting developments that will be unfolding over the next few weeks. Among the items I’ll be discussing are a number of “firsts” for UNM-Gallup. What better time to make these announcements than the beginning of Spring?

I’d like to start by mentioning our March 28 ceremony to honor scholarship donors and recipients of more than 50 scholarships. This reception was a first at UNM-Gallup, and we are pleased to have had this opportunity to thank the donors and honor the recipients. (See p. 1 for story.)

Another first: The induction of 21 students into the Beta Tau Psi Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. These students, our first candidates for this national honor society, were inducted during a ceremony in February, and honored with a reception afterward. We are proud of our Honor Society students and look to them to help us lead UNM-Gallup into a new era of academic success.

The topics of student success, retention and the graduation rate are of great concern to everyone in higher education these days. It is not enough to concentrate on head count and filling classrooms; we must ensure that those who enroll — particularly in community colleges where students often need remedial education -- are successful. In response to this need, the Student Retention Task Force and Student Services are launching an exciting pilot initiative with our summer Lobo Camp for first-time freshmen. These students will be put through seven to ten days of a modified college success course so that they will be ready for college-level courses.

Yet another first: A meeting between our Local Board and the UNM Board of Regents. The Regents, according to the Memo of Understanding between UNM and the Gallup community, are to try to meet annually with the UNM-Gallup Board — although until February 11, 2012, this had never happened. We requested this meeting and the Regents agreed to it in the spirit of learning more about the Gallup community and the role of the Branch campus. They have expressed interest in continuing to meet with our Local Board annually as articulated in the Memorandum of Agreement between the UNM Board of Regents and the Local Advisory Board.

And though this is not a first, it’s definitely good news: We will not be recommending a tuition increase for next year. This recommendation was approved at our March board meeting. We have, fortunately, realized a half-million dollar increase in our budget from the Legislature, which means we probably will not have to make the kinds of cuts we’ve experienced over the last couple of years. This increase also means we will not have to resort to tuition hikes to make up for diminished operational funds. The chief academic officers of two-year institutions are taking the lead in developing measurable performance outcomes that are relevant for two-year institutions and branch campuses. The Local Board will of course be voting on the budget at their next meeting on April 18 at our South Campus in Zuni.
TRiO Student Awarded Scholarship

Sophena Bebo has had her share of hard times, but over the last year, she's become cautiously optimistic that things may have turned around. Among other signs that life may be on the upswing: the University of New Mexico-Gallup student was recently notified that she was chosen by the Soroptimist Club to receive a $1000 scholarship as a result of an essay she wrote about overcoming a lifetime of difficulties.

Bebo, a student in the college's TRiO program and the single mother of five children, took several stabs at getting an education over the last decade. For one reason or another she was unable to complete her studies and as the years went by, she began to feel she was too old for school in her mid-30s and was reluctant to start again.

“Fear played a big part in keeping me from enrolling,” she said.

Finally in 2010, she got her courage up, taking the leap and enrolling in for the fall semester. This time around, decided she’d pursue studies in pre-elementary education.

“I always wanted to help children,” she says, adding that she has worked as a substitute teacher and done volunteer work in schools.

By the fall of 2011, she was working on bringing up her skills through the TRiO program, a federally funded student support program that helps many of UNM-Gallup’s succeed at college. Bebo worried about her grades, but by semester’s end, found to her delight that she had passed her classes. This semester, she is feeling a bit more encouraged that she can and will do well.

The struggles that Bebo remembers are common among UNMG students. She has had to contend with domestic violence and alcoholism, as well as overcoming a difficult home life as an adopted child. Although she got through high school successfully, she made some choices she now regrets, including partying and poor choices in partners. But it was writing about that life that helped win her the scholarship that now will help her in her effort to be a successful student and eventually, a self-supporting citizen.

“What I wrote was meant to help other women going through domestic violence and difficult life situations, and overcoming,” she says.

A Pell Grant helps pay tuition and some living expenses, but she is aware that she must maintain her grades at a 2.0 to hold onto the grant and her dreams.

“I would like for other women to know that UNMG is here for the taking, but you have to put in the work,” Bebo says. She also adds, for those now caught up in the spiral of domestic violence and alcoholism, “The choices we make are important. You put yourself in your own situations. Being here has helped me keep my life going in a good direction, even though I did what so many young people are doing now. I didn't know how make the most of my opportunities. But in time, I knew I wanted something better for me and my children. I want to do better for them.”

All Adult Basic Education Programs Moving to North Campus

The Adult Basic Education program at the University of New Mexico-Gallup is well known at its North Campus location at 425 N. 7th St. Less well known is the fact that some ABE activities have been taking place upstairs in Gurley Hall at the Gallup campus for many years. But that is about to change.

“Closing the ABE location at the Gallup campus has been under discussion for a long time,” said Laura Jijon, interim manager of ABE. Final approval for the move was recently given.

The primary reason, says Jijon, is that the North Campus location offers a centralized, more compact environment that helps students stay focused and thus improves their chances for success.

“One of the biggest issues is that our students need structure and self-discipline,” Jijon said. “At the Gallup campus, there are a lot of distractions, and students can become engaged in other things in a way that doesn’t happen at the North campus. We have classrooms, so it’s not an open space. The way the campus is set up offers more of a sense of community and belonging for ABE students. It’s a home away from home for many of them.”

Further, the staff will be able to broaden the schedule of offerings to make the best use of the three classrooms and computer lab. Also ABE staff at the North Campus have developed a keen interest in getting more involved with the North Side community.

The move will most likely be made in June.
Awards from the Johnson Scholarship Foundation have been made to Business Technology students enrolled in the certificate or associate’s degree program at UNM-Gallup for the spring semester. The awards, totaling $10,000 for the semester, are given in support of the Rural Entrepreneur Institute of UNMG. The awardees are Jonathan Arthur, Marshall Arviso, Fenessa Dayish, Magdalena Garcia, Genevieve Lee, Tiffany Toledo, Neil Montano and Kyle Notah. JSF, of West Palm Beach, has been a supporter of the REI at UNM-Gallup since 2009. The foundation requires that the $20,000 award be split in half between fall and spring semesters. A selection committee chooses the recipients from a field of applicants. ...

Elaine Chen, newly hired as a Nursing Advisor, was formerly a Transition Specialist of the Launch program, a Title III grant program at San Juan College for a year. Prior to that she was a Senior Admissions Counselor for the University of Arizona for four years. While with UA, she recruited and served as the main point of contact for high school/community college students in Northeast Arizona. She has a B.A. from Northern Arizona University and an M.A. from the University of Arizona. ...

Four Ceramics students and Ceramics Instructor Alex Kraft traveled in March to Seattle for the National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts conference. The attendees saw a wide variety of work by emerging and established ceramics artists, and heard lectures and saw demonstrations of various techniques. The students raised money for their travels through bake sales and selling tickets to games in the Commons at a table hosted by the Ancient Ceramics Club. ...

Jayme McMahon has been named the director of TRiO, replacing Carol Bartlett, who resigned to accept a position at the Albuquerque campus. McMahon, formerly the education specialist in TRiO, did her undergraduate work at UNM-G and went on to get her Bachelor’s Degree from the Bachelor and Graduate Programs. ...

 Florentin Smarandache, professor of mathematics, gave some scientific presentations in China at the end of December. He was sponsored by Chinese universities and Institutes in Beijing, Xi’an and Shanghai. He also met PhD students from Beijing Jiaotong University and from Northwestern University in Xi’an whose dissertations involve his research of number theory, sensors fusion and neutrosophic logic.

A First: 21 Students Inducted Into Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Twenty-one students were inducted into the newly formed Beta Tau Psi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society at a ceremony in February. The event marked the first time UNM-Gallup students have had the opportunity to join an honor society.

The inductees were: Jonathan Arthur, Sharon Brown, Britney Coonsis, Brian Curley, Gabriel Davis, Arlinda Fatty, El-Dino Henio, Adam Lee, Mercedes Lopez, Michael Madrid, Natalia Pete, Adrian Pioche, Tiffany Shetima, Judith Slade, Thomarita Stewart and Ardell Watchman.

Officers are Tracylyn Yellowhair, president; Marcus Yazzie, vice president; Tabitha Halloc, treasurer; Winterdawn Billie, secretary; and Lacey Romero, public relations secretary.