

Dates to Remember:

15th Annual Employee
Recognition Awards
Ceremony April 17, 2014
@ 7:30 - Student Union
Ballroom

Spring Recess—April 18

Administrative Assistants'
Day—April 23

Memorial Day—May 26

Commencement Schedule
HU-Rio Rancho-May 8,
2014 @ 6 p.m.
HU-Farmington-May 10,
2014 @ 9 a.m.
HU Main Campus- May
10, 2014 @ 2 p.m.

Staff Advisory Senate
Meetings: Monthly -TBA

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

In the Spotlight	1
Dates to Remember	
From the Desk of Staff Senate President	2
Spotlight - continued	3
Look Who's New	4
Look Who's New –	5
Look Who's New – continued	6
Announcements	7
Cirque Zuma Zuma	8
Staff Senate Elections	9
Congratulations	10
Staff Senate Advisory and Newsletter Com- mittee	12

The Pony Express



VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

JANUARY – MARCH 2014



SPOTLIGHT



Left to right, top to bottom: Tori Miller - Social Work Secretary, Sharon Doom - Education Specialist, Eileen Salazar - Administrative Specialist, Gilbert "Buddy" Rivera - Center Director, Amanda Segobia - Center Secretary, and Victor Trujillo - Interactive Television Coordinator.

A message from... Farmington Center

Established 17 years ago in Farmington, New Mexico, the NMHU Farmington/ Four Corners Center is a proud member of the Cowboy family. The Center was established as a partner to San Juan College to fill the need for a university in the Four Corners region. Though several universities have provided higher education programs to the area over the years, only Highlands and UNM have endured the test of time with a focus on the needs of the area and commitment to this corner of the Land of Enchantment.

The Center caters to the non-traditional student that is typically a few years older than the average student in Las Vegas, works full or part-time, and may support a family.

continued on page 3

STAFF SENATE UPDATES

From the desk of Margaret Gonzales, Staff Senate President

- Suggestion boxes are available at the following locations on campus:
Student Union Building, Felix Martinez Building, Rodgers Administration Building, Donnelly Library and Ivan Hilton Building.
- All FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS and guests are encouraged to submit constructive suggestions/ comments. Collected monthly, these comments are gathered, separated by area, and forwarded to the appropriate individuals. *Comments/ suggestions deemed inappropriate or in bad taste will not be forwarded.*
- Staff Senate elections are coming up in May. There will be at a minimum, the following vacancies: Technical/ Skilled (1), Service/Maintenance (2), Clerical (3), Professional (4).
- As is customary, all staff are highly encouraged to attend our scheduled meetings. These meetings are generally held during the academic year on the third Tuesday of the month at 10:30 am . Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17, 2014 at 10:30 am.
- Many thanks to all who participated in the recent Customer Service Training sponsored by the Staff Senate. We had upward of 200 people attend the training. Additionally, Staff Senate is sponsoring an Active Shooter Training on Friday, March 21 at 1:30 pm in Slinger Hall 100. All are welcome to attend.
- The Senate is busy working on the following issues pursuant to comments received from the suggestion boxes and/or in response to your inquiries:
 - a) Hay Group Study—What's next? When will new position descriptions be made available?
 - b) Safety concerns
 - c) HR/EEOC/Affirmative Action concerns
 - d) Better signage across campus and within buildings
 - e) Preventive vaccinations
 - f) Email/voice-mail concerns

While it may seem that some of these items have appeared for quite some time now, please be advised that these issues are important and often take time. We want to ensure that each of these items is addressed properly and will keep addressing them until they are resolved.

Please visit the Staff Senate link on the Highlands website for updates on any of the above information and/or minutes from each of the meetings. Staff Senate Advisory newsletters are also posted on the website.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU, AS A STAFF MEMBER, MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE INFORMED. GET INVOLVED WITH STAFF SENATE TODAY!

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Continued from page 1 - SPOTLIGHT NEWS - Farmington Center

Approximately 75% of the students are female and nearly one-third is Native American (predominantly Navajo). Over the years, the Farmington Center has enrolled over 2,000 students and has, thus far, graduated about 1,000 students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Center offers undergraduate programs in Business Administration, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Psychology, as well as Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education. Additionally, graduate programs in Business, Special Education, Social Work, Counseling, Curriculum & Instruction, and Educational Leadership are available.

The typical semester has about 180-220 enrolled students that are served by six staff members, five full-time faculty, and 20-25 adjuncts. Though each student has a unique background, most come to Highlands as undergraduate students with their Associate’s degrees earned at San Juan College or Diné College. Others enroll at the Center after having moved to the area due to work relocation. Because of the vast mining, oil, and gas development in the region, there is a consistent influx of new residents to the area.

The Farmington/Four Corners staff includes Center Director, Gilbert “Buddy” Rivera; Education Specialist, Sharon Doom who primarily supports the School of Education; Administrative Specialist, Eileen Salazar who serves as the local liaison for Business Office, Financial Aid, Scholarship, and Registrar matters; Center Secretary, Amanda Segobia, who is the receptionist and supports the Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Business programs; Social Work Secretary, Tori Miller who primarily supports the Social Work programs; and Interactive Television Coordinator, Victor Trujillo who interacts with Educational Outreach Services to keep the distance education programs operating properly.

The Four Corners area has a diverse landscape that offers fishing and rafting in the lush river valleys of the Animas, La Plata, and San Juan Rivers; boating on the expansive Navajo Lake; motorized desert fun; and of course, mountain sports in the San Juan Mountains of southern Colorado.

The NMHU Farmington/Four Corners family is happy and proud to extend the Cowboy territory to northwestern New Mexico. Please feel free to stop by and say hello when travels bring you to Farmington.

- Gilbert “Buddy” Rivera, Center Director





MVD is offering NMHU license plates and NMHU vanity license plates.

Support NMHU and get yours today!

Quotes to Live by:

“We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same.”

-Anne Frank

Or

“It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.”

-Rainer Maria Rilke

Or

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome.”

-Booker T. Washington

Look Who's New! NEW HIRES

A Great Big Hearty Welcome to:

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Teresita Aguilar is the new provost and vice president of academic affairs at New Mexico Highlands University.

She replaces Gilbert Rivera, the university's former vice president of academic affairs who retired in December 2013 after many years of service to the university.



Aguilar, a former graduate dean in the Office of Graduate Studies at the University of New Mexico from 2002 – 2005, brings a wealth of academic and administrative higher education experience to her new position at Highlands.

Most recently, she directed the Center for Mexican American Studies and Research at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio from 2010 – 2013. From 2005 – 2010, she served as OLLU's dean of the School of Professional Studies and the Worden School of Social Work.

“Dr. Aguilar has a distinguished record of more than 25 years of higher education experience as both a professor and administrator,” said Highlands University President Jim Fries. “She is a highly respected national leader in multicultural education and student success.

“I expect Dr. Aguilar will bring a very solid and collaborative leadership style to the provost's position,” Fries said.

In previous positions, Aguilar served as associate dean in the College of Education and Integrative Studies at California State Polytechnic University – Pomona from 2000 – 2002.

Her tenure at the University of Nebraska from 1991 – 2000 included various responsibilities. Aguilar developed and taught in a Multicultural Education Program, was chair of the Graduate Program, and vice chair of the Center for Curriculum and Instruction.

Aguilar has also taught as a faculty member at Arizona State University and the University of New Mexico. She has published extensively in scholarly journals in the United States and internationally, with a focus on multicultural education, student success, and more.

“A major goal for me is to create initiatives that will enhance and improve graduation rates,” Aguilar said. “This begins with a comprehensive analysis of current policies,

continued on page 5

New Hires continued

Continued from page 4—Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

practices and data that have an impact on retention and graduation.”

She will also begin meeting one-on-one with all full-time faculty.

“At a small university you can work with faculty in a more meaningful way. I respect diverse faculty views and have a strong commitment to inclusion, integrity, respect and vision. When we collectively put our heads together at Highlands, we will have a deeper understanding and appreciation for defining student success,” Aguilar said.

She added that she wants to maximize resources and collaboration across academic disciplines.

Aguilar said she was also drawn to Highlands because of its student demographics and accessibility to an affordable public education.

“The student population is a matter of immense importance to me. Highlands has a significant number of Hispanic students and first-generation college students. I get that because I was first generation myself.

“When you’re a first-generation college student you’re essentially entering a foreign land. The question is how do we collectively help translate that foreign experience to students and their families in ways that foster student success?” Aguilar said.

She is committed to increasing graduation rates for every student demographic group at the university, including the growing number of nontraditional students.

The Texas native earned her Ph.D. in higher education from the University of North Texas in Denton, where she also completed her M.S.

Aguilar calls herself Tex-Mex-Czech, with three grandparents from Mexico and one grandmother from the Czech Republic. She is bilingual.

Aguilar is glad to be back in the Land of Enchantment.

“I feel at home in New Mexico, and am drawn spiritually to the mountains and desert,” she said.

continued on page 6



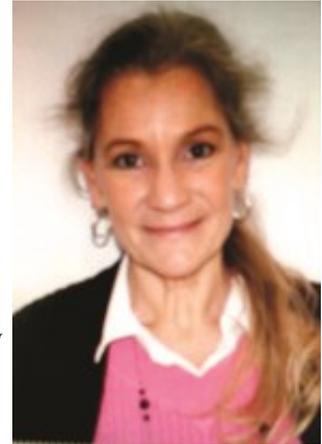
New Hires continued

continued from page 5 - New hires

From the School of Education, Office of Field Experiences

On October 1, 2013, Marlane Alarid was named director of the Office of Field Experiences for the School of Education. She brings to the position over twenty-five years of experience in public education.

After completing her bachelor of arts in Elementary Education in 1990, with minors in History and Bilingual Education at New Mexico Highlands University, Marlane began her teaching career with the Albuquerque Public Schools, and continued teaching at Las Vegas City Schools and West Las Vegas Schools. By 1999, Marlane had earned a master of arts in Curriculum and Instruction from Highlands. Marlane retired from her career in public school teaching as a social studies and mathematics middle school teacher.



After a brief retirement, Marlane returned to the field of education at Luna Community College, teaching courses like Introduction to Teaching; Health, Safety and Nutrition; and Mathematics for the Elementary Teacher. A new door opened at Highlands where Marlane embarked on a path to make the Office of Field Experiences responsive to students' needs, making sure that students are receiving appropriate training and mentoring to become competent practicing teachers. "There is no position more gratifying than mine where I see the joy of student teachers embarking on their final path to fully licensed and practicing teachers," Marlane said.

If you have any questions or ideas about Field Experiences, please feel free to contact Marlane Alarid at malarid@nmhu.edu or call 505-454-3108.

Facilities would like to welcome their new employees:

Roy Bonney, Grounds
 Russell Pacheco, Grounds
 Phillip Montoya, Grounds
 Anthony Gallegos, Grounds
 Billy Tafoya, Custodian
 Christopher Valdez, Custodian
 Vincent Vigil, Custodian
 Benjamin Riley, Custodian



ANNOUNCEMENTS

NMHU Police Department

Chief Donato Sena would like to inform all Highlands students and staff that their office has begun to step up enforcement in the following areas:

Parking Violations

1. Handicap accessible parking spaces on HU premises will be enforced. Any vehicle parking in a posted space must display a valid license plate or permit issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles per state statute.
2. Fire lanes. These areas are for emergency vehicles only. Violators will be cited and the vehicle may be towed at the owner's expense.
3. Yellow zone and signs posted "No Parking". Violators will be cited.
4. Abandoned vehicles. All vehicles that appear to be abandoned or inoperative will be tagged with a notice. If there is not response to the tag, the vehicle will be towed at the owner's expense.
5. Traffic violations:
 - a) Stop signs
 - b) Speeding
 - c) Driving while intoxicated
 - d) Any traffic violation on campus
6. Municipal Criminal ordinances:
 - a) Liquor violations—anyone under the age of 21 will be cited and/or arrested.
 - b) Possession of marijuana/drug paraphernalia: All violators will be cited and/or arrested.

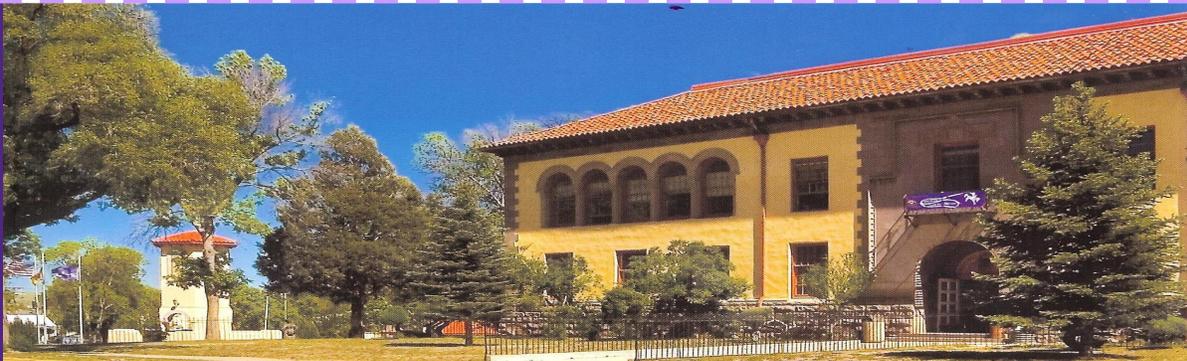


Chief Sena would also like to remind all students and staff that Highlands is an alcohol and drug free school and there are no weapons allowed on school property.

Campus Police is working hard at making our community a safer environment to live, work and learn.

If you have any questions for Chief Sena or any of his staff, they can be reached at 505-454-3278.

From the Chief's Office



Cirque Zuma Zuma

In celebration of Black History Month, the Office of Campus Life sponsored Cirque Zuma Zuma from Africa on Feb. 4, in the university's historic Ilfeld Auditorium.

Cirque Zuma Zuma is the only performance troupe of its kind in the world and has toured for sell-out crowds in Europe, Australia and the United States. The performance at Highlands was

Often described as an African-style Cirque Soleil, Zuma Zuma showcases African culture through rhythmic high-energy performances in dance, acrobatics, tumbling, limbo, singing, and more.

A live musical score of traditional African music is an integral part of the Zuma Zuma show, along with elaborate costumes.

"Kenyan John Jacob's idea to establish Cirque Zuma Zuma was brilliant," said Margaret Gonzales, Campus Life director. "We are truly excited and honored to bring this superb African performance arts troupe to our campus and the Las Vegas community. It is sure to be a night to remember."

Jacob founded Zuma Zuma in 2005 and is its producer. At 15, Jacob escaped poverty by touring the world as a skilled acrobat and circus performer. During his travels, he never saw an African circus show and made good on his goal of establishing one for artists from his continent.

"The thought of our rich African continent brings to mind at once mysticism, magic and excitement," Jacob said. "We are the cradle of all cultures, the ultimate source for music, dance and ritual."

Today, Jacob recruits talented performers from across Africa for Zuma Zuma and opened a training school in Kenya for the artists. His company includes 120 performers, with about 12 traveling for each show.

Historically, acrobatic, tumbling and limbo feats are deeply rooted in African culture, often taking place at celebrations and weddings.



Staff Senate Elections

Staff Senate elections are coming up in May. There will be at a minimum, the following vacancies:

Technical/Skilled (1)

Service/Maintenance (2)

Clerical (3)

Professional (4)

The following is the proposed timeline for the elections:

April 28 - call for nominations

May 12 - nominations due

May 13 – campaigning begins

May 19 - campaigning ends

Absentee voting - May 29 through 23

May 27 and 28 - voting

If you are a member of any of these groups and are interested in serving on staff senate, please consider running for a seat. Staff at off-site centers are strongly encouraged to consider running for Staff Senate as well. The main campus and would welcome your input.

**15th Annual
Employee
Recognition Awards
Ceremony
April 17, 2014 @ 7:30 am
Student Union
Ballroom**



CONGRATULATIONS!

Student Union Achieves LEED Gold for Green Building Practices

Las Vegas, N.M - New Mexico Highlands University's new Student Union Building was certified as LEED Gold for its state-of-the-art green building features like ground-source technology to help heat and cool the building and large computerized external shades that maximize natural light while helping regulate building temperature.

The 67,000-square-foot student union opened in Spring 2013 at the northwest corner of National Avenue and 8th St. This February, the U.S. Green Building Council gave the building its top certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

Highlands University's track record for green building and remodeling practices garnered four other LEED certifications over the past several years. In 2012, Highlands was the only university in the state to be honored for sustainable building practices by *New Mexico Business Weekly*.

"The student union is an exceptionally innovative green building success story that assures energy and water efficiencies, while providing an outstanding indoor and outdoor aesthetic experience for the campus and larger community," said Sylvia Baca, interim facilities and planning director. "The building is filled with natural light and is a pleasant environment to study, work, eat, shop and visit."

Some green highlights of the student union include:

- Ground source geexchange technology helps heat and cool the building, saving 30.9 percent in the typical electric and gas costs for a building of its size that doesn't employ this cutting-edge technology.
- Computerized external metal sunshades for the expansive south and west glass windows maximize natural light and help maintain a steady temperature.
- Low-flow plumbing fixtures conserve 41.3 percent of the potable water used in the bathrooms, while a 30,000-gallon underground cistern is used for the drought-tolerant landscaping.
- 96.8 percent of the total waste generated onsite during construction was recycled, including metal, concrete, wood, gypsum board, and more.
- 23 percent of the building was constructed using recycled materials.

Baca said that because of the student union's energy efficiency, in 2013 the university received a \$26,806 rebate from Public Service Company of New Mexico as part of PNM's incentive program for reducing electrical usage.

"The student union continues our university's ongoing commitment to ensure that all new construction and remodels are designed to LEED standards to reduce environmental impact and save energy," said Jim Fries, Highlands University president. "Sustainability is a great example of doing the right thing and doing things right, all at the same time."

Fries noted that the university initiated a campus-wide Sustainability Program in 2007 under the leadership of Mari-sol Greene, the facilities and planning director at the time.

continued on page 11

Continued from page 10 - Student Union

Since then, other university buildings receiving LEED Gold include major remodeling projects for the Felix Martinez Building, Lora Shields Building, and the Natatorium, the swimming pool.

In 2010, the Highlands Viles & Crimmins Residence Hall was the first university dormitory in the state to earn the LEED Silver certification. The 100,000-square-foot state-of-the-art residence hall opened in 2009.

Studio Southwest Architects and Diamond Schmitt Architects designed the Student Union Building in a joint venture. The project architects are Rich Braun, a principal with Studio Southwest, and Martin Davidson, a principal with Diamond Schmitt.

The contemporary three-story design is organized around a central atrium. It uses brick as the building base, with full-height glazed glass panels providing ample natural light for the main public spaces and the offices. A Corten steel panel system along the exterior perimeter completes the building skin.

Franken Construction completed the Student Union Building.

“Another fantastic sustainability feature of the student union is that because its skin is made up of the Corten steel, windows and brick, it won’t require external painting, which is toxic to the environment,” Baca said.

The student union includes a dining facility for the residence halls, ballroom, flexible theater space that can also be used for lectures and dances, executive boardroom for campus governance groups, campus bookstore, campus post office, computer lab, two classrooms, conference space, game room, Einstein Bros. Bagels, and a convenience store.

The building also houses university offices for Campus Life, Housing, International Education Center, Native American Student Services, Campus Violence Prevention Program, and student government.

One design highlight is a skywalk that connects the student union to the adjacent Donnelly Library.

“The student union is the heart of our campus, and its high-visibility location makes it a bridge between Highlands and the Las Vegas community,” Fries said.



We Would Enjoy Hearing From You. Let us know all the great things that happen while at work.

Please send in your ideas, stories, photos, questions and requests. We want to hear about what is important to you. Submit to any Staff Senate Newsletter committee member.

Read past issues online at: http://www.nmhu.edu/Staff_Senate.

IN MEMORIUM

Alumna and long-time employee, Debra Aragon passed away. She was a beloved member of the Highlands athletic community and could frequently be seen at all sporting events.

Debbie started her career at Highlands in 1981 in the Admissions Office. In 1992 she moved on to an administrative assistant position in the Registrar’s Office and remained until 1985. After leaving Highlands to pursue other career interests, Debbie returned to Highlands in 1996 to work for Athletics and held that position until moving to Exercise and Sport Sciences in the fall of 2013. In addition to her everyday duties, she would go above and beyond to give her support to student-athletes.

While at Highlands, Debbie served on many committees including Staff Senate, Employee Recognition and Homecoming. To relax, she loved to do crafts, cooking, gardening and other outdoor activities.

Debbie is survived by her beloved husband Clarence, sons Brandon and Jared and daughter Serena.

She was born in Rantoul, Illinois to the late Charles Cozens and Elaine Goodson.

The Highlands University Foundation has set up a scholarship in Debbie’s name. If you’d like to contribute, please contact Darlene Chavez at the Foundation at dmchavez@nmhu.edu or 505-454-3223.



Staff Advisory Senate

- Margaret Gonzales - President 454-3495
- Kimberly Blea - Vice President 454-3445
- Darlene R. Tapia - Parliamentarian 454-3272
- Alexis Duran - Secretary 454-3315
- Dominic Chavez - Treasurer 426-2108
- Doris Gallegos - Member 454-3168
- Richard Griego - Member 454-3260
- Tina Clayton - Member 454-3058
- Debbie Aragon - Member
- Vacant - Member
- Vacant - Member
- Vacant - Member

Please feel free to contact any of the above members directly with questions, comments, or general feedback.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to hearing from you!

Staff Senate Newsletter Committee

- Darlene R. Tapia - Chair 454-3272
- Doris Gallegos - Vice Chair 454-3168
- Yvonne Duran - Member 454-3020
- Carolina Martínez - Member 454-3269
- Prescilla Ortega-Mathis - Member 454-3311
- Wendy Quintana - Member 454-3387
- Irene Romero - Member 454-3499

Please contact any of the above Newsletter Committee members with any ideas you would like to see in the next issue of “The Pony Express.”

Be on the look out for our next quarterly issue at the end of June!