

## Dates to Remember:

Winter Break  
December 23, 2013  
through January 1, 2014

Spring classes begin  
January 13, 2014

Martin Luther King Day  
January 20, 2014  
University closed

Spring begins  
March 20, 2014

Staff Advisory Senate  
Meetings: Monthly -  
Location TBA

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# The Pony Express

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2013

## SPOTLIGHT



From left to right: Alexandria Burnquist, Xena Montoya, Corilia Ortega, Kimberly Blea (bottom), Jana Brown (back), and Latasha Burbank

### *A message from... Campus Violence Prevention Program*

The Campus Violence Prevention Program (CVPP) has several exciting updates. We would like to inform everyone that our office is currently located in Suite 306 in the Student Union Building. The change in location ensures better confidentiality for our students, an issue of high importance given the nature of our work. Additionally, CVPP has hired Corilia Ortega, a full-time Advocacy & Education coordinator. She will be providing direct advocacy services for students, as well as conducting trainings, workshops, and awareness events. Additionally, we'd like to mention that we currently have three new student employees, Xena Montoya, Allie Burnquist, and Latasha Burbank. They each bring many strengths to our team and we appreciate their student perspective concerning our programming.

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# STAFF SENATE UPDATES

## *From the desk of Margaret Gonzales, Staff Senate President*

- Suggestion boxes are available at the following locations on campus:  
Student Union, Felix Martinez Building, Rodgers Administration Building, Donnelly Library (Purple Brew) 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 April. Currently there are vacancies within the Technical/Skilled, Facilities, and clerical membership groups. Additionally, many of our current members will find their term limits up. If you are a member of any of these groups and are interested in serving on staff senate, please consider running for a seat in April. Staff at off-site centers are strongly encouraged to consider running for Staff Senate as well. The main campus would welcome your input!
- As is customary, all staff are highly encouraged to attend our scheduled meetings. These meetings are generally held on the third Tuesday of the month at 10:30 am. Our next meeting is scheduled, however for Wednesday, January 22, 2014 at 10:30 am.
- Staff Senate has been busy working on the following issues pursuant to comments received from the suggestion boxes and/or in response to your inquiries.
  - A) Parking issues on campus
  - B) Hay Group Study—What's next? When will new position descriptions be made available?
  - C) Upcoming Customer Training (possibly the week of January 6, 2104)
  - D) Web site concerns
  - E) Future Retiree Incentives
  - F) Safety concerns/trainings
  - G) HR/EEOC/Affirmative Action concerns
  - H) Better signage across campus and within buildings
  - I) Preventative vaccinations

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 to resolve. We want to ensure that each of these items is addressed properly and we will keep addressing them until they are resolved.

*Continued on page 3*

# DEPARTMENT NEWS

## *Continued from page 1 - SPOTLIGHT NEWS - Campus Violence Prevention Program*

Our program has grown considerably and is equipped to provide advocacy services to our students as well as extend our reach in education and programming. CVPP has acquired additional programming for Suicide Awareness and Prevention. It is our hope to bring information and resources to our students of concern and provide a safe and supportive campus environment.

CVPP has been working closely with Housing, Athletics, and Freshman Forum by providing workshops for residents and students related to themes of suicide, healthy dating, and consent. We intend to have a strong presence on campus and create spaces for students to voice their concerns or ask questions about these important issues.

We are available, upon request, to provide any type of presentation, training, or workshop related to sexual assault/rape, stalking, domestic violence, or suicide. Please contact us with any comments, suggestions, or reservations. Lastly, we invite you to attend any of our events throughout the year as we appreciate your support. We encourage you to email us at [preventviolence@nmhu.edu](mailto:preventviolence@nmhu.edu) or call 454-3445.

– Kimberly Blea, CVPP Director



## *Continued from page 2 From the desk of Margaret Gonzales, Staff Senate President*

The Staff Advisory Senate Staff survey will be available soon.

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!**



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

Support NMHU and get yours today!

## Quotes to Live

by:

*"Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look at what they do when they stick together."*

-Unknown

Or

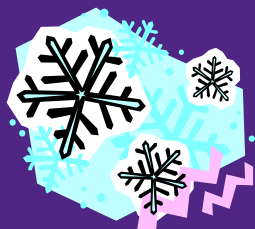
*"Every mile is two in Winter."*

-George Herbert

Or

*"It is the life of the crystal, the architect of the flake, the fire of the frost, the soul of the sunbeam. This crisp air is full of it."*

-John Burroughs,  
"Winter Sunshine"



# Look Who's New! NEW HIRES

## A Great Big Hearty Welcome to:

**Max Baca**, Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration and Government Relations Liaison, is responsible for supporting the administrative and operational functions for the university.

Mr. Max Baca was appointed to the Director of NMHU's Information Technology Department in 1999 where he oversaw and coordinated all administrative, academic, and research computing, technology, telecommunications, wide area networking, local area networking, desktop support, IT security, disaster recovery planning, applications training and support, and records management for the main campus and its six remote centers. During

his term at NMHU, he has worked closely with university leaders in strategic planning and implementation, facilitating decision-making processes, project management, and setting and implementing IT practices for the university. He is a member of the senior leadership team and has served on numerous committees throughout the years. Mr. Baca is a Lobbyist for NMHU and has been for the past decade and is respected within the State for his technical expertise in the State's budget and analysis, funding formula, capital outlay, and state-wide IT initiatives. He has been instrumental in bringing over 15 million to the university in capital outlay and recurring funding.

During his twenty-five year career in higher education, Mr. Baca has taught a few technology courses for NMHU, and was helpful in securing grants from Microsoft, the National Institute of Health (MBRS), and Campus EAI. He is active in regional and national organizations, serving on numerous statewide, regional, and local planning committees and has sat on various governing boards, including Chairmen of NM Technology in Education (NMTIE) and New Mexico Council for Higher Education Computing / Communication Services (CHECS); board member of Innovate Educate New Mexico and the Statewide Learning Management System Executive Team for New Mexico. He has been involved with opening the Rio Rancho Center, the Gene Torres Golf Course, and bringing high speed telecommunication capabilities to the Las Vegas community in the early 1990's. He continues to bring critical IT services to underserved areas in rural New Mexico and was recently recognized by Cisco Corporation for "Building Scalable Network Infrastructures" in rural areas.

Max has over 26 years of professional work experience as:

IT Director, Government Relations Liaison, Network Manager, Special Projects Coordinator at New Mexico Highlands University,

IT Consultant for large deployments of various technologies for several institutions  
Microsoft Active Directory Consultant for Albertson's nation-wide deployment of a pharmacy application for Rocky Mountain Technology Group, and  
Interim Director and Chief Technology Officer at United World College.



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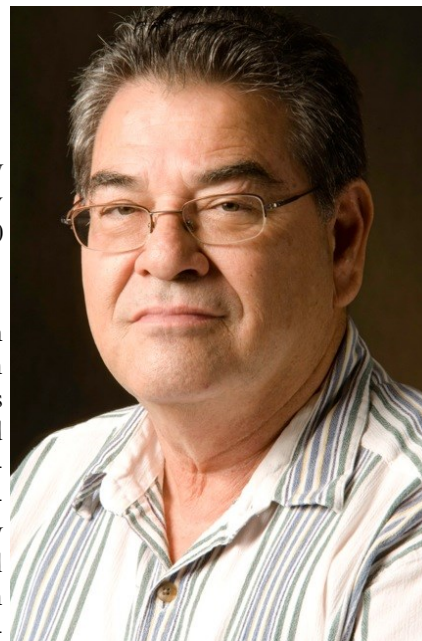
## *Highlands says Good-Bye to:*

Gilbert D. Rivera, Ph.D.  
1973–1996; 2007–2013

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." ~Aristotle

When Dr. Rivera returned to New Mexico Highlands University in 2007, after his retirement in 1996, he intended to stay for a few months. We are lucky that he continued through this year, marking 30 years of service to Highlands and its students, faculty, and staff.

Throughout his tenure at Highlands, excellence in his position of Vice President for Academic Affairs has been the foundation on which Dr. Rivera has accomplished his day-to-day activities; and he has done much! Since his return, through his hard work and diligence and with the help of the Center directors, the faculty, and the deans, Highlands now has 40 articulation agreements with several institutions, including Central New Mexico Community College, Luna Community College, San Juan College, Santa Fe Community College, and Trinidad State Junior College. On the faculty side, he served as chief negotiator in the approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement that governs faculty operations within the university. The number of tenure-track faculty has been increasing progressively. In the Fall Semester 2007, eight new faculty members were hired; this year, there are 31 new faculty members. Of those, 14 are tenure-track faculty.



Additionally, he has seen many students graduate from Highlands. With the added benefits of more transfer opportunities for students and more faculty members to accommodate increased enrollments, he envisions much improved graduation rates. He believes that retaining students at Highlands is a must. He strongly encourages more emphasis on advisement, saying, "Advisement is the cornerstone of retention."

Along with his tenacity in undertaking projects that have brought respect to the university in interaction with other institutions, thus enrolling more students, he has maintained an open-door policy. Not only has he ensured that students are helped as they progress through their programs of study, but he himself has also met with those who encounter problems. In this way, he has helped them complete their studies and, ultimately, realize their dream of achieving graduation and attaining their degree. While it may be necessary to say "no" now and then, students leave his office, understanding that all that can be done for them is being done. Parents, too, have gone away feeling positive about their visit with the VPAA. Many a student/parent has made his or her way back to his office to express gratitude.

His mode of practice is grounded on excellence, consistency, persistence, fairness, compassion, and, importantly, the rules and regulations of his position and the university. He possesses a wealth of knowledge and history on this institution, which he so loves. He has a memory bank that many of us would love to enjoy. His wisdom is revealed in the advice he graciously gives to individuals who seek it.

With his people skills, he has acquired a strong circle of friends and colleagues who respect and admire him. Many individuals have shown their support for Dr. Rivera through the years. In the last few weeks, as his departure fast approaches, many have extended well wishes for a fun and gratifying retirement, but are solemnly dismayed that he will no longer be here to impart with all of us his varied talents and expertise.

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## *Highlands says Good-Bye to:*

*Continued from page 5*

### **Sharon Caballero**

Sharon retired at Thanksgiving after four and a half years as our Foundation Director. Looking back at her accomplishments, she is responsible for rebuilding the foundation office after three years of not having a director, having doubled the foundation's assets from 6 to 12 million dollars, securing the purchase of additional land abutting our Rio Rancho building, creation of many new endowment scholarships, the innovator of the Cowgirl Way honoring female athletes, recreating the annual donor's luncheon, the innovative President's Gala and our birthday celebrations at homecoming this year.

She has no immediate plans for retirement other than spending some time in Hawaii contemplating what to do with the last third of her life.

We already miss you Sharon.

Of her time here, Sharon quotes Frank Sinatra and says "And I did it my way."



### Vickie Sandoval

Vickie will be officially retired as of January 1, 2014 after serving seven years with Advanced Placement New Mexico and more recently as the director. Vickie is known as a kindhearted person. As the director, she works with NM Public Education Department, the College Board and AP Consultants. She represents Highlands with professionalism and thoughtfulness.



During her retirement, Vickie plans to catch up on some much needed rest and spend time with her family.

### ***Dr. Rivera— continued***

Dr. Rivera will always encourage others to "strive for excellence in all they do" and to work hard to succeed in life and help others do the same. As he prepares to leave Highlands physically—but never in spirit—let us continue to offer him well wishes for a fun time as he moves on—like someone recently said—"to enjoy (his) life." He so richly deserves it!

But, if, on January 2, you see him walking in Rodgers Hall, he will probably say that he needs to do one more thing before he leaves. His love for and dedication to Highlands will remain steadfast in his heart.

**Dr. Rivera, we will miss you!**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## CAMPUS SUPPORT KEY TO SUCCESSFUL CAREER FAIR

Outstanding support of New Mexico Highlands University administration, faculty and staff is being credited for the success of Highlands' recent Career & Internship Fair.

The event, coordinated by the NMHU Career Services Center, drew 32 employers and nearly 300 students, which is a record attendance figure. Recruiters visited with students and provided information on career choices, jobs and internships, as well as advice on the job-search process. The fair took place on Nov. 7 at the student union ballroom.

In the weeks leading up to the event, a number of faculty members allowed Career Services staff members into their classrooms to promote the fair and help prepare students. Some also encouraged participation by offering extra credit or making it an assignment to attend. Many student services departments also encouraged their workstudies and program students to attend. President Fries offered his backing as well, urging others on campus to support participation in the event; he sent a global e-mail to that effect.

Career Services hopes to continue strengthening partnerships with faculty and staff to encourage students to use its great services.

"Our services are a critical component of retention efforts, helping to keep students in school by increasing their focus on career goals and their savvy in pursuing them," said Ron Garcia, Director of Career Services.

"All of the employers were very pleased about the great turnout of students and their preparedness for the event," Garcia noted. "The success of this event will help to increase partnerships with employers in recruiting our graduates for career opportunities – the ultimate goal of pursuing a college education."



New Mexico Highlands alumnus Chris Burns, now with Alta Vista Regional Hospital, greets a student at the NMHU Career & Internship Fair on Nov. 7. A number of the recruiters were Highlands alumni.

Ken Baca with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish explains the process for applying for a job with his agency. The career fair featured an array of public and private sector employers as well as several graduate schools.



## *Look Who's New!* NEW HIRES -continued from page 4

Please join us in welcoming two staff members to our Highlands family. Marvin Perea has accepted the position of Advanced Placement New Mexico/Dual Credit Director and Mary Ortega will serve as the APNM Administrative Assistant 1.

**Marvin A. Perea** serves as the new director of Advanced Placement/Dual Credit program with Educational Outreach Services.

Marvin has vast knowledge and years of grant, secondary and post-secondary experience.

He was previously employed by the Upward Bound de Highlands Program as an Academic and Career Advisor (1991-2012) under the direction Alfredo "Chemo" Gallegos, Carlos S. Lovato and David Luna. In addition, he was worked as the Summer Coordinator (2013) of the Supporting Agriculture in Science and Education Program (SASE) under the direction of Dr. Edward Martinez.

Marvin graduated from Highlands in 1989 with a BA in Spanish and Art and an MA in Guidance and Counseling in 1999.

He is married to Diane Anglada Perea and the proud father to Joaquin A. Perea, a fifth grade student at Don Cecilio Martinez Elementary School.

## *Congratulations!*

"I would love to thank my Boss Max for being on great boss at ITS. for taking the time not only to listen but for the many times he cared enough to share his heart with us. He will be greatly missed by me. He has been a blessing. I know he is moving across the street from us but he deserves it. Thank you boss for being one great boss. You will surely be missed. Congratulations!"

Peggy M. Sanchez

### **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 454-3287  
 Vacant - 3 Members

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**

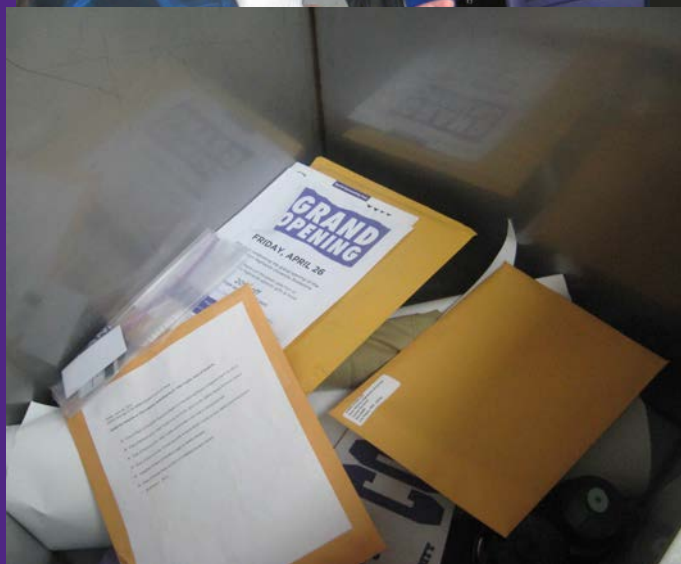
Darlene R. Tapia - Chair 454-3272  
 Doris Gallegos - Vice Chair 454-3168  
 Yvonne Duran - Member 454-3020  
 Carolina Martínez - Member 454-3269  
 Prescilla Ortega-Mathis - Member 454-3311  
 Wendy Quintana - Member 454-3387  
 Irene Romero - Member 454-3499

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 March 2014!



## *Homecoming 2013*



























## *Halloween Fun*





