

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTABILITY
REPORT



Council of University Presidents - November 2023



COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

Membership: Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Northern New Mexico College, The University of New Mexico, and Western New Mexico University

Letter from the Presidents

On behalf of Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Tech, Northern New Mexico College, The University of New Mexico, and Western New Mexico University, the New Mexico Council of University Presidents presents the twenty-sixth annual accountability report.

This report culminates a year-long process that began with careful attention to feedback from numerous constituencies including the Governor's Office, the Legislature, the Higher Education Department, university personnel and students, private sector business leaders, analysts, and others interested in university efforts. The report presents higher education's ongoing efforts to respond to the policies and needs of New Mexico in concert with meeting the extensive accreditation and professional standards required of public universities.

The contents of this report are compiled and formatted by a highly skilled institutional research work group. Great care is taken to assure the accuracy of data derived from consistently applied data definitions. Yet the Council's commitment extends beyond simply reporting data. This report responds to a public imperative for accountability and continuous improvement.

This report demonstrates the resolve of New Mexico's public universities to improve the educational environment in our state as well as the quality of life for all New Mexicans.

Sincerely,

Joseph Shepard, Ph.D.
Chair

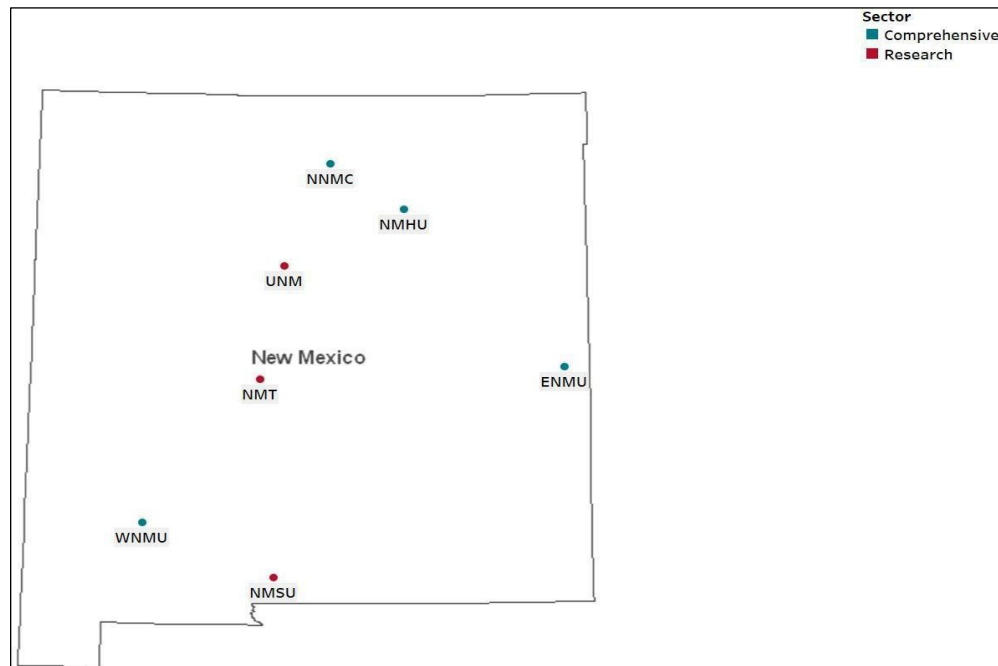
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Higher Education in New Mexico

Seven universities across New Mexico belong to the Council of University Presidents (CUP). Among these seven CUP institutions, three are research institutions (New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech), New Mexico State University, and University of New Mexico), while four are comprehensive institutions (Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, Northern New Mexico College, and Western New Mexico University).

Programs at the seven CUP institutions include vocational-focused programs like plumbing and electrical technology; scientific programs of study in astrophysics, biotechnology, and minerals engineering; programs in the arts and humanities such as film, dance, and dramatic writing; and professional programs in law, medicine, and pharmacy.



Challenges Facing Higher Education in New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment is a state with stunning landscapes, fascinating history, rich culture, and several significant challenges:

- New Mexico ranks 50th in the nation for child well-being for 2022, according to the Annie E Casey Foundation. Our state was ranked 50th in Education, 38th in Healthcare, 44th in Economy, 44th in Infrastructure, 41st in Opportunity, and 47th in Crime and Corrections. (www.usnews.com/news/best-states/new-mexico)
- The median household income in New Mexico in 2021 was \$54,020, which is 21.7% below the national median household income. The overall poverty rate in the state was 17.6% (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: www.census.gov/quickfacts/NM).
- Only 30.5% of New Mexico adults over the age of 24 have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher, compared to the national average of 36%.

These adverse conditions impact our ability to thrive and attract interest from the commercial sector to bring well-paying jobs to the state.

Higher education has a significant role to play in fighting against the various issues that New Mexico is facing. With its vast knowledge and human capital, higher education can help alleviate the state's societal, physical, and economic problems. The Council of University Presidents (CUP) comprises seven public universities in New Mexico. Its mission is to produce knowledge that benefits the state, country, and the planet through teaching, research, and service. The Council focuses on information sharing, collaboration, strategic planning, policy development, and community outreach. It represents university efforts based on shared goals and a shared vision that supports each university's unique strengths. The Council prioritizes student success, economic development, research, public service, and the promotion of the exceptional efforts of university faculty and staff. CUP recognizes that the well-being of the institutions, their faculty, staff, and students, and the broader public of New Mexico are interconnected.

In 2023, the UNM Basic Needs Project conducted a statewide study on basic needs insecurity in higher education, including faculty, staff, and students. The study had over 15,000 participants from across New Mexico, with a 20.5% response rate for faculty and staff and an 11.6% response rate for students. The study included 27 institutions, of which 17 were two-year institutions, seven were four-year institutions, and three were tribal institutions. The study assessed food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness.



The study revealed that individuals of certain ethnicities/races (especially Black and Native American respondents), students aged 25-44, and gender variant and LGBTQ+ individuals experienced significantly higher levels of basic needs insecurity.

<https://basicneeds.unm.edu/statewide-study/index.html>

Despite these obstacles, the seven CUP institutions have managed to enroll an average of 51,271 students annually for the past six years. They have also awarded a total of 60,506 post-secondary credentials, including certificates, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees, during the same period. This is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our institutions to educate and serve the people of New Mexico. In the most recent academic year, CUP institutions granted a total of 12,050 degrees and certificates, out of which 2,009 were in the high-demand fields of nursing, social work, and education. These graduates will become future public servants who will dedicate their careers to improving the lives of New Mexicans by making them healthier and more fulfilling.

Achievements and Economic Development

The institutions of NM CUP have a strong dedication to teaching, public service, and ensuring the success of their students. Our Comprehensive Institutions provide a range of academic programs, including Certificates through Master's degrees, primarily to local students. These institutions also actively contribute to economic development. Our research institutions, on the other hand, provide top-quality graduate programs and research opportunities that support economic growth and development.

Research Universities

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech or NMT) is New Mexico's premiere STEM university and among the best in the nation. Tech was rated the Number 1 Small University in the nation by the New York Times' new college ranking system in the Spring of 2023. NMT has been acknowledged by Niche.com's 2023 College Rankings as New Mexico's Top College, the College with the Best Academics, Best Value College, College with the Best Professors, and New Mexico's Top Public University. NMT is one of the best Hispanic-serving universities in the nation and ranks 1st among public universities in the percentage of bachelor's degree recipients who go on to earn STEM PhDs.

New Mexico Tech performs research in many areas critical to our state's economic future. We currently have six faculty members who hold National Science Foundation CAREER awards, in topics including critical minerals, biology, astrophysics, mechanical and materials engineering. CAREER awards are the most prestigious

given by the NSF, supporting early career researchers who have exceptional potential to be academic role models in research and education.



A major priority of NMT is to contribute to the growth of a robust economic ecosystem within the state of New Mexico. Towards this goal, the university is leading several economic development initiatives that promise to have a major impact on the people and businesses of the state.

To help the state’s universities expand the number of STEM-trained entrepreneurs in the region, New Mexico Tech is leading a state-wide initiative to establish an innovative program to award two-year “translational fellowships” to students with recently-minted STEM PhDs, providing them both financial support and entrepreneurship training to enable them to stay at the university for an additional two years to focus on commercialization of the results of their research.

NMT is leading a coalition of community stakeholders, including the City of Socorro and the Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Association, in applying for a \$50 million US Economic Development Administration (EDA) Re-Compete Pilot Strategy Development Grant in order to address the Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG) within Socorro County. The project plan is being designed to act quickly and decisively to expand and elevate economic development efforts to avoid the catastrophic impacts of rising unemployment, local business losses, local government critical business services cuts, tax revenue contraction, population loss, and a decade of economic contraction while transforming the Socorro Plaza area into a vibrant tech entrepreneurship hub strategically linked to the New Mexico Tech research enterprise.

NMT’s Cybersecurity Center of Excellence is a new initiative to establish a research program and associated workforce training program that will help New Mexico become a leader in cybersecurity economic development, education, research, and workforce training, with a focus on post-quantum data assurance in an era of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), becoming the first university in the nation to establish a workforce pipeline for this critically important emerging field of technology.

Finally, NMT’s research centers make significant contributions to the economic ecosystem in New Mexico as well. Three key center-based projects of note include initiatives underway at the Playas Training and Research Center, the Energetic Materials Research & Testing Center, and the Petroleum Recovery Research Center:

- PTRC - PEACE Project: awarded \$92,980,000; 83 employees
- EMRTC - First Responder Program: awarded \$22,000,000; 30 employees
- PRRC - Permian Basin/Farmington Activities, awarded \$2,208,257; 24 employees

New Mexico State University (NMSU) has partnered with several agencies over the past year as part of its economic development strategy to help grow the local, state, and national economy. One of the drivers of economic development for New Mexico State University is the Arrowhead Center. One of this year's partnerships was a \$1.3 million grant from the United States Economic Development Administration, which awarded the grant to New Mexico State University's Arrowhead Center to address economic challenges experienced in the state. The grant will provide the Arrowhead Center with funding to help its student business incubator and create the New Mexico University Center for Regional Commercialization and Resilience to address the economic challenges unique to New Mexico. Part of the grant will benefit NMSU's Studio G student business incubator by providing training and educational opportunities. The grant will help students and assist research institutions and national laboratories with a platform for commercializing novel technologies.

Another important development for NMSU's Arrowhead Center is a \$2.5 million gift that enhances the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem designed to help NMSU students, entrepreneurs, and researchers grow their ideas and bring them to market. The award is centered in the Hunt Center for Entrepreneurship within



the Arrowhead Center and provides continued support for entrepreneurs who need help with innovative ideas designed to support New Mexico's economy and technology. The Arrowhead Center and its partnerships are important to NMSU's economic development. The center supports several entrepreneurial programs, including the Aggie Shark Tank, an event held at NMSU which is based on the ABC network's Shark Tank, where students get to pitch their ideas to local investors.

Another important program spearheaded by the Arrowhead Center at New Mexico State is its Scale Up New Mexico project. Scale Up New Mexico is focused on technology-based startups with an emphasis on helping three underrepresented populations: women, tribal communities, and rural communities. The program is supported by a \$1.2 million grant and focuses on helping technology-based start-ups with business resources training and technical support to help them

commercialize their start-ups. One of its goals is to promote equity in New Mexico’s economic landscape and diversify the economy.

The Arrowhead Center has also partnered with several other agencies and businesses to assess the economic impact they are making within the state of New Mexico. The Arrowhead Center has co-authored economic impact reports for Spaceport America, The Border Task Force, and Defense sector careers in New Mexico and Arizona.

The University of New Mexico (UNM) has made the top 100 worldwide and U.S. list of universities with the largest number of issued U.S. patents for nine out of the past ten years (recognized by the National Academy of Inventors (NAI) and the Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO)). In 2022, UNM ranked 81st worldwide and 52nd among U.S. universities. The Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities designated UNM an Innovation & Economic Prosperity (IEP) University and named UNM with an IEP Place award.

UNM supports state-wide entrepreneurship through training and mentoring and specifically supports tribal entrepreneurship (through an Economic Development Administration ARPA grant) by providing mentoring, entrepreneurial training opportunities, and resources to Native American entrepreneurs across the state.



Innovate ABQ® is an initiative from the University of New Mexico to take a more prominent role in local and state economic development by developing innovation districts that will be catalysts for substantially growing the innovation economy in New Mexico. Partners of Innovate ABQ® include UNM, the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, Nusenda Credit Union and other partners. UNM sponsors Innovate New Mexico®, a network among the leading technology transfer institutions in the state of New Mexico that promotes research and technology opportunities, startup companies, and economic development resources. UNM also holds annual technology showcases for industry, entrepreneurs, and investors.

Comprehensive Universities

Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) is the largest regional comprehensive university in New Mexico. A federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, ENMU has been recognized nationally for the quality and impact of its academic programs, including being in the top 50% of universities in the social mobility category of the 2022-2023 U.S. News & World's Report's college rankings. ENMU was also ranked in the U.S. News & World Report as one of the top 59 public universities in the West and one of the top 120 regional universities in the West. ENMU provides a broad array of undergraduate and graduate programs and focuses on providing access to education through face-to-face, hybrid, and online education opportunities for students from the region, state, and nation. The University experienced significant growth in 2022-2023, including unprecedented increases in new degree-seeking freshmen (23%), transfers (22%), and graduate (25%) students.

ENMU focuses on meeting the workforce needs of New Mexico and the region. In 2022-2023, ENMU produced 1,330 graduates (bachelor's and master's), including over 200 graduates in the healthcare fields (e.g.,



Communicative Disorders, Counseling, Nursing, and Social Work) and over 250 graduates in Education (e.g., Alternative Licensure, Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary, Special Education, Physical Education, etc.) The University continues to leverage the placement of students in internships/practicums in all fields to enhance student training and connect students to employment. Over 90% of graduates are employed or have been accepted into graduate or professional programs.

New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) is a federally-designated Hispanic-Serving Institution and strives to be a Native American-Serving Institution, with Native American students comprising nearly nine percent of enrollment.

NMHU's College of Arts and Sciences is expanding its degree programs to meet workforce demands and improve student education, resulting in increased enrollment. New programs include a Master of Science in Nursing, a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Conservation, a minor in Social Justice, Master's degrees in Criminology and Cultural Resource Management, and business degrees in a Bachelor of Applied Science and a B.A. in Organizational Leadership and Public Safety. These programs are designed to lead graduates directly to professions, providing career growth opportunities and keeping them in New Mexico.



NMHU is also increasing its Dual Credit program and is working with local high schools including West Las Vegas, Robertson, Mora, Wagon Mound, and Santa Rosa, to offer classes. The university is also actively searching for a coordinator of dual credit.

In addition, NMHU has been successful in obtaining grants and external funding to enhance student learning and research. Through these grants, NMHU has purchased over \$450,000 in new equipment for Biology and Geology students and over \$200,000 in new computers for the Computer Science department. The university has also received grants to support the ARMAS tutoring center and STEM education. Moreover, the university has integrated complex research projects into introductory classes.

NMHU's Department of Forestry offers New Mexico's only four-year Bachelor of Science degree program in Forestry with concentrations in forest management and wildland fire, accredited by the Society of American Foresters. The department houses a National Science Foundation Center of Research Excellence in Science and Technology, conducting research on forest restoration in the Southwest. NMHU also co-founded the New Mexico Reforestation Center, and is building a new facility for it this year.

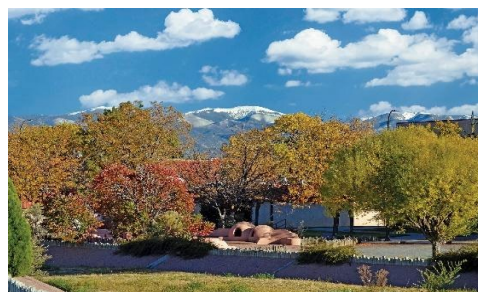
The Foundation finished FY23 with \$2.25M in total revenue and is off to a good start having finished the first year of a potential six-year, \$10M campaign, which is still in the silent phase.

Results from surveying the 2022 NMHU graduating class showed that 75% of undergraduate students were employed within six months of graduation, as were 89% of graduate students.

A NMHED Mental & Behavioral Health Grant for FY 23 funded a Wellness Initiative for Student Health (WISH) pilot project, and a wellness coaching model was implemented as a result during that academic year. Fifty-six percent of project participants were identified as needing advanced care and referred to a therapist at the Student Health Center.

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) continues to be the higher education destination of choice in northern New Mexico, serving both traditional and non-traditional students who are over 80% Hispanic and Indigenous.

In the past year, Northern completed a presidential search, and President Hector Balderas began his first year of service to the college. Under new leadership, Northern has implemented its Soaring to New Heights Strategic Plan 2028, founded on the pillars of transformational student experience, academic excellence, organizational excellence, and strategic partnerships.



Project highlights already underway in these areas include creating a One Stop office for student services, addressing legacy physical and technological infrastructure needs, and creating a food pantry to address student, faculty, and staff basic needs. Northern has also revitalized its demonstration farm, Sostenga, to provide students with educational opportunities in agriculture and agricultural entrepreneurship.

Northern is also expanding its strategic partnerships, entering into Los Alamos National Lab's mentor/protege program to explore ways to provide new student opportunities in the fields of cybersecurity and information technology. Its strategic partnership expansion also includes renewed commitments with trade unions to provide state-of-the-art student experiences and strengthened career pathways in career technical education.

These strategic initiatives come with significantly increased enrollment, with Northern seeing 12% growth in the fall 2023 semester in both student headcount and full-time equivalency. Importantly, this growth is most prominent in Career Technical Education, Teacher Education, Business, and Nursing, all areas of high need for the State of New Mexico.

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) is nestled in the shadows of the 3.3 million-acre Gila National Forest and overlooks the historic town of Silver City since its founding in 1893. WNMU is one of the nation's first Hispanic-Serving Institutions and the state's only Applied Liberal Arts and Sciences university. Home to New Mexico's only forestry/wildlife degree and the southwest region's sole zoology degree, students at WNMU gain the tools for success in and outside of the classroom.

Fall enrollment at WNMU is up by 6% over last fall's enrollment with an increase of 37% with first-time freshmen. Additionally, Hispanic enrollment has also experienced an increase of 10.4% with international students providing a 26.9% increase to the university's overall continued growth. With the university being more responsive to the state's economic needs, WNMU is providing increased opportunities for working adults to earn skills they can take directly into the workforce through meaningful workforce development training.



Home to the NM Center of Excellence for Early Childhood Education, WNMU is setting the bar for early childhood education throughout the state, working to ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their economic or cultural background.

WNMU also recently received a federal Title V grant for \$2.98M to better serve Hispanic learners in communities in ways that would not be possible otherwise.

From its School of Nursing which has been working to train passionate and quality healthcare professionals for more than 80 years, to its nationally recognized School of Business and Social

Work program, WNMU works to provide a world-class education designed to meet the needs of its students and an ever-evolving economy. Online Master's Degrees has ranked WNMU as one of the top online MBA programs in the nation with the Master of Social Work (MSW) program ranked number one by Best College Reviews. And with locations in Deming and Gallup, NM, WNMU continues to provide education and training opportunities accessible statewide and beyond.

Student Success: Completion Rates Continue to Improve

The seven CUP institutions have made great strides in recent years in reducing the time to degree completion. More students are graduating in significantly less time than they were a decade ago. This increase in graduation rates is a direct effect of the resources and efforts invested in our students. Graduation rates are generally reported on a four-, five-, and six-year basis, consistent with many national and federal reporting standards. Four-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in four years or less; five-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate in five years or less and includes those students who graduated within four years; and six-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate in six years or less and includes students who graduated in less than five years. Standard graduation rates reflect only those students who began at their institutions as first-time, full-time freshmen.

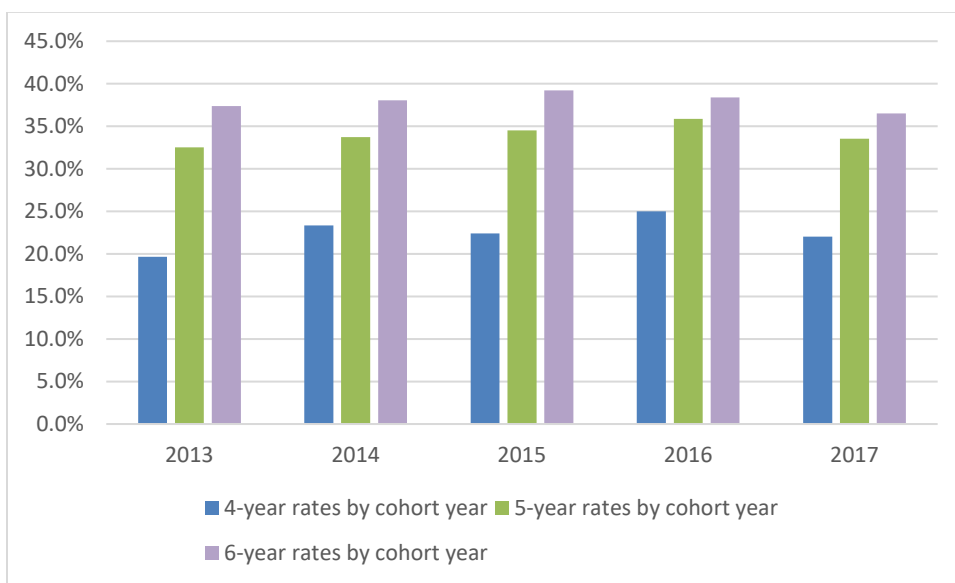


Figure 1: Graduation rates of first-time, full-time freshmen by institution and cohort year.

Degrees in High-Demand Fields

New Mexico has endured chronic shortages of K- 12 teachers in public schools, and our aging population puts strain on our already short-staffed healthcare infrastructure. The multiple waves of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have emphasized the need for growing a well-trained healthcare workforce. Issues such as poverty, substance abuse, and violence have adversely impacted the well-being of many New Mexicans, especially our children. The CUP institutions recognize that higher education has a critical role in training students to work in these fields to help move our state forward.

In the past two years, higher education in New Mexico has increased the numbers of high-demand degrees awarded, as shown in Figure 2, while still navigating complicated safety regulations and state requirements. Each institution has responded to the needs of New Mexicans while prioritizing the safety and health of our students with regard to COVID-19.

High-Demand Degree Programs	Degrees Awarded 2020-21	Degrees Awarded 2021-22	Degrees Awarded 2022-23
<i>Preschool Educators</i> -Associate's Degree	22	20	23
<i>Elementary/Secondary Education</i> -Bachelor's Degree or Alternative Licensure	318	334	452
<i>Education Administration</i> -Master's Degree	75	83	129
<i>Social Work</i> -Bachelor's Degree	186	210	198
<i>Social Work</i> -Master's Degree	335	350	424
<i>Nursing</i> -Associate's Degree	14	12	11
<i>Nursing</i> -Bachelor's Degree	639	674	684
<i>Nursing</i> -Master's Degree	66	81	88
Total	1,655	1,764	2,009

Figure 2: Certificates and degrees awarded in high-demand fields

Figure 3 below shows the counts of all degrees awarded over the past five academic years. The last two columns compare the change in degrees awarded during COVID and after COVID, and we expect graduation numbers to continue to improve.

All Degrees Awarded	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	% Change 2017-2021 (During COVID)	% Change 2021-2022 (Post-COVID)
UG Certificate	78	120	95	122	92	21.8%	-3.2%
Associate's Degree	509	429	464	425	432	-8.8%	-6.9%
Baccalaureate Degree	8,234	7,923	7,662	7,487	7,297	-6.9%	-4.8%
Master's Degree	2,983	2,810	2,465	2,897	3,256	-17.4%	32.1%
Graduate Certificate	198	241	280	407	356	41.4%	27.1%
Education Specialist	65	29	17	18	28	-73.8%	64.7%
PhD Science/Research	340	255	310	395	338	-0.6%	-14.4%
PhD Professional	325	266	328	255	262	-19.4%	2.7%

Figure 3: Counts of degrees awarded by CUP institutions over the past five years

Student Retention

Fall-to-fall retention of first-year undergraduate students is a crucial metric for measuring student success. If retention rates are poor, it can signify that students are facing difficulties and may not complete their studies on time. Several factors can impact retention, including economic conditions, academic readiness, family support, adequate financial aid, and access to student support services. The pandemic certainly affected our retention rates, but they have begun to rebound post-COVID.

Fall 2017- Fall 2018	Fall 2018- Fall 2019	Fall 2019- Fall 2020	Fall 2020- Fall 2021	Fall 2021- Fall 2022	Fall 2022- Fall 2023	5-year change	1-year change
64.7%	65.7%	66.6%	61.3%	64.8%	64.2%	-0.8%	-0.9%

Figure 4: Average third-semester retention rates across all CUP institutions. Data represents the percentage of first-time, full-time freshmen who returned for the fall semester of their second year.

Wrap-Around Services Offered

As our institutions serve a significant number of low-income, first-generation, and academically underprepared students, we recognize the importance of providing individualized student support to help improve their retention rates. To achieve this goal, our institutions have implemented various integrated student retention initiatives.

- Campus-wide student advisement that involves professional staff and faculty in supporting students through their first-year
- Expanded New Student Orientation programs based on best practices in campus engagement and student development
- Strategic enrollment management committees and plans
- Advising assistance from the Financial Aid and Scholarship offices
- Various forms of academic, financial, and mentoring support
- Development and use of Student Coaching Models.

Further, institutions have engaged in programs and strategies to ensure continuity throughout the student experience, from inquiry of a prospective student to admission to retention to graduation. Freshman Experience courses are offered both as stand-alone courses and in integrated learning communities. Many of these courses include modules on financial literacy, health and wellness, and college acclimation. Faculty use early alert notifications that quickly connect students to support services. At-risk students are actively engaged by advisors to identify options and

solutions for success. Supplemental instruction and peer mentoring are available for many freshmen gateway courses, and many students take advantage of free tutoring on campus. Campuses also provide freshman on-campus residency requirements and living-learning communities to further support retention.

Enrollment

Since the implementation of the Opportunity Scholarship Act in 2022, New Mexico has enrolled an additional 6,700 students, resulting in nearly a 7% increase in enrollment over the past two years. Prior to the Opportunity Scholarship, college enrollment in New Mexico was on a decline, similar to the rest of the country. However, during the first semester of the full Opportunity Scholarship last fall, overall college enrollment saw a 4% increase, and the state experienced a 6% increase from spring to spring. This year, comprehensive universities in New Mexico saw the most significant year-over-year enrollment growth at 5.6%, while the state's three research universities, including UNM, NMSU, and NMT, experienced a 3.2% increase. Northern New Mexico College witnessed the highest year-over-year increase in enrollment, with a growth of 12%. The University of New Mexico's first-year class in Fall 2023 was the largest on record, beating out last year's count, which was the second-largest in UNM's history. Additionally, the fully online campus of New Mexico State University, NMSU Global, witnessed a staggering 32.8% increase in student enrollment, with 2,100 new students joining the program.

Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	5-year % change	1-year % change
51,804	50,265	49,049	50,256	52,134	0.6%	3.7%

Figure 5: Total headcount across all CUP institutions by fall semester

The institutions that are part of NM CUP have also been quite successful in helping their students graduate in a shorter period of time. This is evident from the significant improvements in the four-year graduation rate. Students are making good progress toward earning their degrees, which is a positive sign. Graduating within four years means that students won't have to continue attending classes for five or six years after they first enroll, as was the case some ten years ago. These students are able to complete their studies within eight semesters and can then start working or pursuing higher studies.

One challenge to student recruitment is that we offer substantially fewer degree programs than our neighboring states of Arizona, Texas, and Colorado. This lack of programs has the unfortunate effect of drawing many New Mexico students to universities in these nearby states to avail themselves of more degree and career options.

Job availability, especially in STEM fields and higher-paying industries, also draws students out of state after graduation. Although we host two federal research laboratories within our state, our lack of industry and commercial development means that there are not enough well-paying jobs to keep more of our graduates in the state. It also detracts from our ability to recruit students from out of state. We must continue to serve the citizens of New Mexico while also becoming more competitive on a regional and national level in higher education by engaging in strategic growth in programs and offerings. *See Appendix A: Press release from the Governor's Office regarding enrollment increases resulting from the new Opportunity Scholarship.*

Student Diversity

In the 2020 U.S. Census, 47.7% of New Mexico residents identified as Hispanic, and 12.4% as American Indian. The seven CUP institutions strive to recruit and serve a student body that resembles the state we serve. Some of our institutions, owing to their proximity to Pueblos or to specialized academic programs, are renowned for serving an extraordinarily diverse student population. One example of this is the School of Law at the University of New Mexico, which enrolls the greatest percentage of American Indian Juris Doctor students of any law school in the U.S. and is 8th in the country for the percentage of Hispanic Juris Doctor students enrolled. UNM's law school also houses one of the few Indian Law clinical training programs in the country.

New Mexico's higher education is a leader in promoting diversity for academic and public service excellence. For example, Northern NM College's American Indian Student Center (AISC) serves Native American students by collaborating with the community to ensure cultural sensitivity, seeking external resources for student benefit, and providing on-campus services to aid students in their college education and future careers.

While diversity is often considered through the lens of race and ethnicity, higher education institutions also recognize the importance of socioeconomic diversity in their student body. We are working hard to increase social mobility and broaden opportunities for all New Mexicans, regardless of family income and resources.

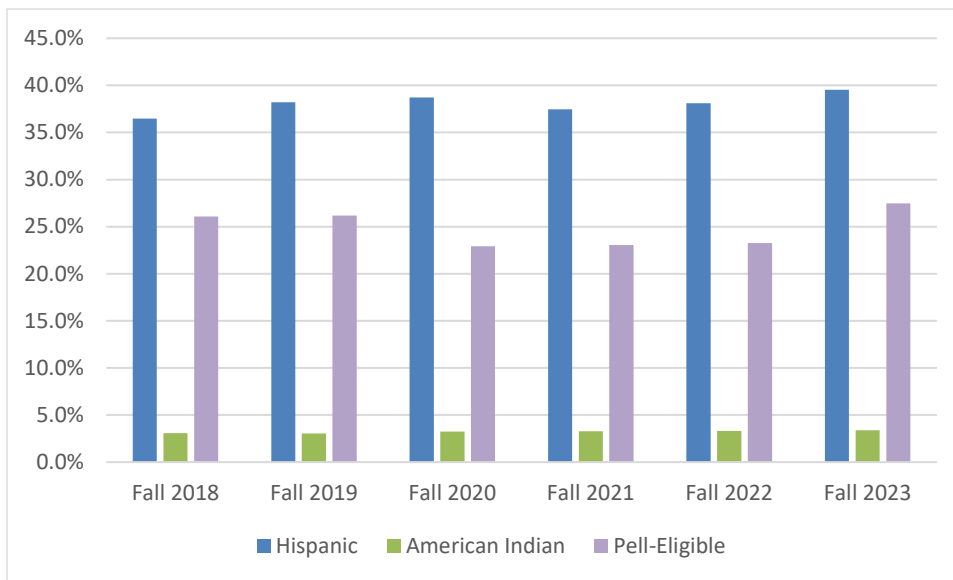


Figure 6: Percentages of Hispanic, American Indian, and Pell-Eligible students enrolled in all CUP institutions

One measure of how accessible an institution is to low-income students is the percentage of their students who receive federal Pell Grants. The Pell Grant program awards \$6,895 annually to low-income students who are pursuing their first associate’s or bachelor’s degree and whose family income is below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines. Over the past ten years, there has been a nationwide decline in both Pell Grant allocations and the number of students receiving Pell Grants. This is explained in part by changes in federal regulations, as well as a rebounding economy post-Great Recession. It’s worth noting here that Pell Grants do not cover the full cost of college, and sadly, even some students who are Pell-eligible decide not to attend college because of wage stagnation and cost increases in higher education that make college seem financially out of reach, even with a Pell Grant.

Transfer Student Success

In today’s higher education landscape, 38% of all college students are transfer students. This means that they initially enrolled at one institution but decided to leave and subsequently enroll

at another higher education institution. Students transfer for a variety of reasons, which may include geographic, time, and financial constraints that keep them from continued attendance at their initial school. Students also frequently transfer from New Mexico's two-year junior colleges to CUP institutions, as shown by Figure 7 below.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
All Transferring In	5393	5298	4389	4545	5344
# from 2-year NM Institutions	2951	2620	2341	2300	2790
% from 2-year NM institutions	55%	49%	53%	51%	52%

Figure 7: Transfer student enrollment across CUP institutions

New Mexico higher education provides opportunities and support to all students, regardless of background. Access to a college education is life-long, and multiple institutions can advance a student’s coursework across time and geographic locations. We remain committed to serving **all** students who transfer to our institutions so that they can be successful in their quest for a bachelor’s degree. We have worked hard to develop and implement similar general education requirements across institutions to help students with the transition into baccalaureate-level study and to ensure transfer students are successfully able to earn bachelor’s degrees at our institutions. In the most recent academic year, transfer students constituted **41%** of all bachelor’s degree recipients at CUP institutions, as shown in Figure 8 below.

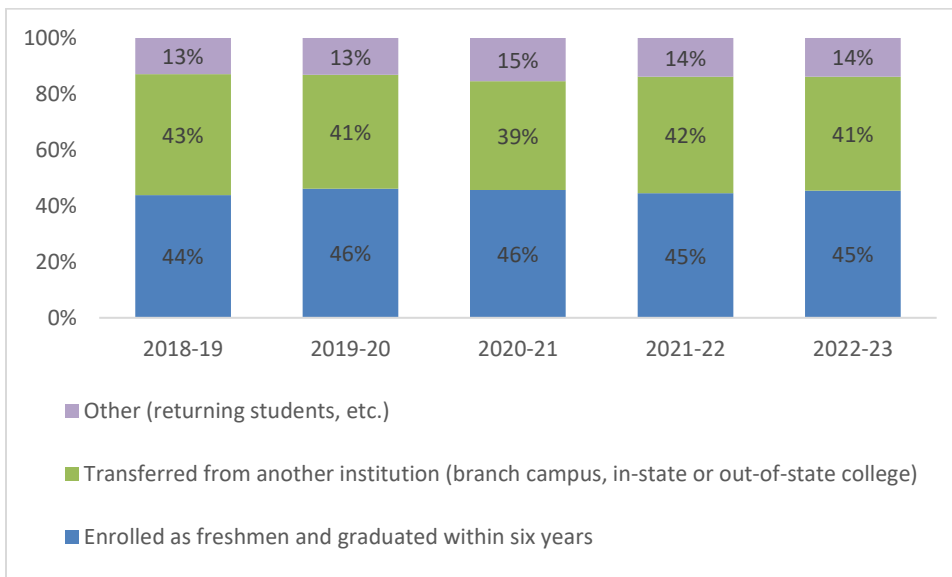


Figure 8: Status of bachelor's degree recipients at entry to graduating institution

College Affordability and Financial Aid

According to College Board data, New Mexico's average tuition costs for in-state residents are among the lowest in the country. This represents a long-standing commitment of higher education institutions in the state to remain accessible to all New Mexicans. Thanks to low tuition combined with generous financial aid packages, NM ranks as one of the lowest states for student debt. (www.forbes.com/advisor/student-loans/average-student-loan-statistics/)

Figure 9 below shows the minimal increase in the average tuition and fees for CUP institutions in New Mexico over the past 6 years, and how CUP institutions' tuition and fees compare to our peers in nearby states.

	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Compared to peers
Research	\$7,363	\$7,706	\$7,941	\$8,080	\$8,927	\$9,007	81.6%
Comprehensives	\$5,844	\$6,007	\$6,153	\$6,229	\$6,650	\$7,067	85.3%
Overall Average	\$6,495	\$6,735	\$6,919	\$7,022	\$7,626	\$7,898	83.9%

Figure 9: Average tuition and fees at CUP institutions, in comparison to peer institutions in other states.

A wide variety of financial aid is available at each CUP institution to help students meet college costs. Grants and scholarships from the institution or the state (such as the NM Legislative Lottery Scholarships) are crucial to many students, as is "Self-Help" aid such as Work-Study and student loans, both federal and private. Note that grants, scholarships, and work-study do not need to be paid back, while student loans do.

The average amount of financial aid awarded to students at CUP institutions has risen over the past six years commensurate with rising costs. Figure 10 shows the average financial aid awarded to students attending NM 4-year institutions between 2017-18 and 2022-23, by institutional type

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Comprehensive Institutions	\$8,706	\$8,901	\$8,778	\$8,313	\$8,437	\$9,613
Research Institutions	\$9,965	\$10,454	\$10,872	\$10,768	\$11,929	\$13,837
Average Award per Recipient	\$9,246	\$9,566	\$9,676	\$9,365	\$9,933	\$11,423

Figure 10: Average financial aid award for undergraduates at CUP institutions

In academic year 2022-23, just over 87% of all undergraduates at CUP institutions received some type of financial aid. Seventy-nine percent of these undergraduates received grants and scholarships, while loans and work-study go to 32% of undergraduates.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Grant and Scholarship Aid (not paid back)	76.4	76.3	77.3	79.1	78.1	79.1
Work Study (must work to earn)	8.1	9.2	9.7	8.4	6.8	8.3
Loans (must be paid back)	39.0	35.4	38.3	32.4	28.3	23.7
NM Legislative Lottery Scholarships	23.3	23.8	25.1	25.4	26.6	22.8
Pell Grants	49.5	47.4	50.0	42.9	42.3	45.1
Any Financial Aid	79.3	78.3	82.8	84.6	85.3	87.1

Figure 11: Percentages of undergraduates receiving financial aid by type of aid. The aid percentages displayed in this table are not mutually exclusive, meaning that students can (and often do) receive a variety of different financial aid types. The last row labeled “Any Aid” is the percentage of students receiving any combination of financial aid (including loans).

The NM Legislative Lottery Scholarship helps over 22% of New Mexico undergraduates at CUP institutions. Because the Lottery Scholarship is not need-based, it can be used to supplement the other types of financial aid that students may receive, and the data in the chart below suggests that students who receive both Pell Grants and the Lottery Scholarship have far better Six-Year Graduation Rates than students who receive only Pell Grants. The Lottery Scholarship has become an important part of the financial aid landscape in New Mexico, and it should continue to be available to all who qualify.

Finally, a word about Pell grants: The NM Higher Education Department (NMHED) considers Pell grant recipients to be “at-risk” students. In the most recent aid year, 45% of all undergraduates who were awarded financial aid at CUP institutions received Pell grants. College affordability remains an issue for many Pell grant recipients, even if tuition expenses are low since students still must pay for books, supplies, food, housing, and other necessary expenses.

Nationwide, students with Pell Grants often have lower graduation rates than students who are not Pell-eligible, as they have often struggled with inadequate academic preparation, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and financial stress. Data from CUP institutions reflect this trend for New Mexico's Pell grant students, but it's important to note that the Lottery Scholarship does have a positive impact on these students' six-year graduation rates, as shown in Figure 12.

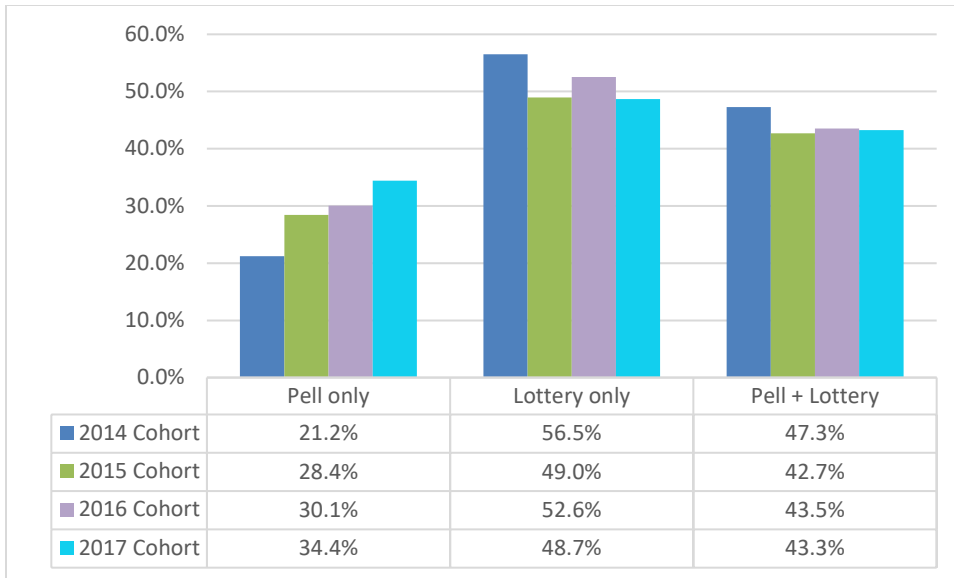


Figure 12: Six-year graduation rates for students receiving Pell, Lottery, and Pell + Lottery aid.

Faculty Headcounts and Salaries

Faculty at our public universities in New Mexico are a committed and diverse group of teachers and researchers who believe in the power of higher education to improve lives. Among our regional peers, the average university has a faculty that is 39.7% female and 6.8% Hispanic. In Fall 2022, the faculty at CUP institutions was **49.7% female** and **15.4% Hispanic**. Research shows that students at all levels are more successful when they have teachers and mentors who more closely resemble them and understand their backgrounds.

When serving a diverse student body, it is especially important that students have sufficient access to faculty members for teaching, mentorship, and undergraduate research opportunities. These kinds of high-impact practices are known to be crucial for student success in college, particularly for students who are first-generation, from under-represented minority groups, or from low-income families. Lower student-faculty ratios provide more individualized attention to students and facilitate greater in-class student participation. CUP institutions have maintained a lower student-faculty ratio over the past five years, and this has resulted in better student outcomes for students at public universities in NM.

Having acknowledged this, however, CUP institutions continue to experience a decline in the numbers of full-time faculty, as shown in Figure 13. This trend has **serious** implications for the future success of New Mexico’s college students.

Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022
3,285	3,197	3,190	3,216	3,186	3,170

Figure 13: Total full-time faculty headcounts at CUP institutions

A decrease in full-time faculty means that students have fewer opportunities to be mentored by top-tier scholars and teachers and have fewer avenues for engaging in research and service-learning activities. Many successful people can point to a particular college professor who invested countless hours to develop them as scholars and professionals, and who saw the extent of their great potential when they were an undergraduate. All New Mexico students deserve access to these meaningful and enriching opportunities.

One factor in the decline in full-time faculty at CUP institutions is faculty compensation. The average increase in faculty salaries across all sectors within the seven CUP institutions from 2018-2022 was 12.2%, which remains below the nationwide cumulative rate of inflation over the same timeframe, which was almost 19%. (www.usinflationcalculator.com/inflation/current-inflation-rates/)

When presented with the opportunity to earn a higher salary and receive more support for research, scholarship, and creative activities, many faculty opt to leave for better opportunities. The most recently-available data on faculty salaries from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Digest of Education Statistics (<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/index.asp>) shows that New Mexico institutions remain at a disadvantage when comparing our faculty salaries to those in surrounding states as well as to the overall US average. In Figure 14 below, Public Doctoral is equivalent to NM's research universities, while Public Master's is equivalent to our comprehensives.

Public Doctoral	2020-21	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Arizona	\$105,731	\$104,474	\$102,502	\$99,911
California	\$130,303	\$124,580	\$118,745	\$114,482
Colorado	\$101,899	\$102,709	\$93,846	\$98,163
Texas	\$106,056	\$103,306	\$101,113	\$96,240
Utah	\$102,055	\$99,528	\$97,276	\$94,857
New Mexico	\$88,213	\$84,768	\$83,429	\$83,539
US Average	\$106,229	\$103,014	\$101,119	\$98,504
Public Master's	2020-21	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Arizona	UNAVAILABLE	\$108,239	\$100,122	\$98,600
California	\$98,434	\$96,157	\$92,906	\$89,206
Colorado	\$71,544	\$70,548	\$68,401	\$68,049
Texas	\$80,085	\$79,046	\$79,523	\$79,019
Utah	\$79,909	\$77,773	\$75,910	\$73,497
New Mexico	\$72,423	\$69,184	\$70,102	\$66,896
US Average	\$83,074	\$81,522	\$80,564	\$78,810

Figure 14: Comparison of average salaries of full-time faculty by location and institution type from Table 316.50 for each digest year. (Data for 2019-20 is not shown here since it was not available from NCES.)

Resource constraints like these continue to make New Mexico universities a less-enticing prospect for these teachers and researchers, and we increase our disadvantage in the higher education market with each faculty departure. Recent across-the-board salary increases given by the New Mexico Legislature have put us in a more competitive position, but there is still more that we can do to enhance our profile. Many of our institutions are also actively competing with industry and national labs for highly educated talent, which makes it even more important that we enhance our ability to attract and retain excellent teachers and researchers.

Finance

Like everything else, it costs money to run universities. In the wake of numerous budget constraints over the years, higher education in New Mexico has found many ways to innovate and be resourceful. This is exemplified best by the improvements in student success outcomes seen across all CUP institutions over the past five years. We find ways to serve our students with excellence while also being mindful of our resource constraints and obligations to the taxpaying public.

It is important to acknowledge that colleges and universities attract external funding from private foundations, federal agencies, and industry to perform research and development projects which can help support programs that drive innovation and enhance the lives of many in New Mexico and beyond. These non-appropriation funds can be used to hire new employees, buy scientific

and other equipment, support graduate students with assistantships, purchase supplies from local vendors, and to develop new products and services for the benefit of the state. However, it should be noted that research funding does not completely support the academic side of our universities, nor does it completely compensate for the reductions that New Mexico universities have continued to experience in their state appropriations since 2008.

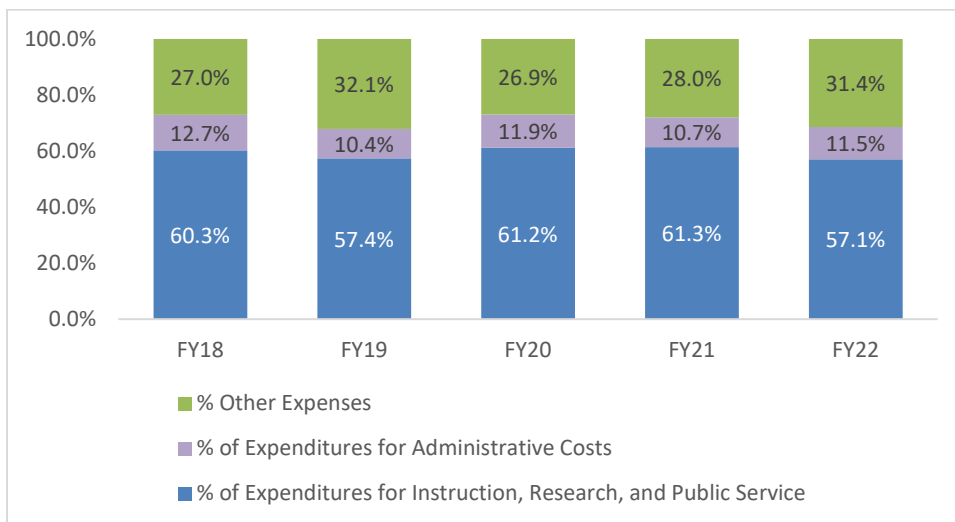


Figure 15: Institutional expenses by type

Administrative costs, such as the costs of personnel and supplies that are administrative in nature and do not have a direct relationship to support students in the program, remain a small percentage of all CUP institutions' budgets. As shown in Figure 15, Instruction, Research, and Public Service costs (frequently referred to as I&G) comprise the largest percentage of expenditures.

Conclusion

Every CUP institution has its own unique mission, student demographics, and history. Our campuses are diverse, ranging from urban to rural, small to large, and focused on research or teaching. What brings us together is our belief in the immense potential of New Mexico and our commitment to help unlock it. Every year, we are proud to see more and more graduates who are eager to utilize their education to give back to their communities and contribute to the state's workforce. We promise to support them every step of the way, and we are grateful to the Legislature for their continued support of our efforts.

APPENDIX A



Office of the Governor
MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 24, 2023

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New Mexico college enrollment on the rise for second year in a row thanks to Opportunity Scholarship
Over 11,000 first-time, full-time students pursuing higher education

SANTA FE – College and university enrollment is up again in New Mexico, according to data released by the Higher Education Department on Tuesday, due in large part to the nation’s most expansive college enrollment program.

Over 110,000 New Mexicans are pursuing career training certificates, associate, bachelor’s and graduate degrees at state public and tribal colleges and universities, an increase of 2.3 percent over last year. Over 11,000 New Mexicans are pursuing higher education for the first time and as full-time students.

“As the tuition-free-college capital of the United States, New Mexico is setting the bar for what it looks like when states support working families, build up the workforce and grow the economy,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “Investing in our young professionals is investing in our future.”

“While the rest of the country grapples with questions about college affordability and access, particularly in the wake of recent Supreme Court decisions, New Mexico stands apart as a state dedicated to opportunity. Every student walking through the doors of our college and university campuses holds the key to our state’s future. We are committed to ensuring they make it to graduation day, into the workforce, and contribute to thriving communities” said Acting Higher Education Secretary **Patricia Trujillo, Ph.D.**

Since the enactment of the Opportunity Scholarship Act in 2022, New Mexico has enrolled an additional 6,700 students, a nearly 7 percent enrollment increase over the last two years.

Prior to the Opportunity Scholarship, New Mexico college enrollment showed steady declines like the rest of the country. During the first semester of the full Opportunity

Scholarship last fall, overall college enrollment jumped by four percent and the state experienced a six percent jump from spring to spring.

This year, New Mexico's comprehensive universities saw the most significant year-over-year enrollment growth at 5.6 percent, followed by branch community colleges at 5 percent. New Mexico's three research universities (UNM, NMSU and New Mexico Tech) and Tribal colleges saw 3.2 percent increases. Navajo Technical University and Northern New Mexico College experienced the highest year-over-year increases at 14.8 percent and 12 percent respectively out of all individual institutions.

Other highlights include the University of New Mexico welcoming its largest freshman class in history for the second consecutive year and New Mexico State University's fully online campus – NMSU Global – adding 2,100 new students, a 32.8 percent increase.

“With the Opportunity Scholarship, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham has taken bold steps to ensure that higher education is within reach for all its residents, particularly those in rural areas who face unique challenges. In a world where college costs are skyrocketing, New Mexico stands out as a model of success. Enrollment numbers are continuing to go up, and it looks as though they aren't stopping,” said **Maureen Hoyler**, Immediate Past President of the Council for Opportunity in Education, a national nonprofit dedicated to furthering the expansion of college opportunities for low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities.

The state's independent community colleges were the only group to show a decline at -1.1 percent compared to last year. This is due in part to Southeast New Mexico College losing enrollment of NMSU online students during the college's transition away from the New Mexico State University System and to enrollment declines at Mesalands Community College.

Since 2022, tuition-free college through the state's Opportunity and Lottery Scholarships has been fully funded for eligible state residents, benefitting nearly 40,000 undergraduate students each year.

The Higher Education Department launched a statewide college recruitment campaign this summer to encourage New Mexicans to enroll in college that featured ads in local movie theaters, newspapers, radio stations, and online. The state also launched ReachHigherNM.com, a one-stop online resource to help prospective students access state scholarship programs and enroll in the state's 29 participating colleges and universities.

New Mexico Universities

Research Universities

New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology.....	Socorro
New Mexico State University.....	Las Cruces
University of New Mexico.....	Albuquerque

Comprehensive Universities

Eastern New Mexico University.....	Portales
New Mexico Highlands University.....	Las Vegas
Northern New Mexico College.....	Española
Western New Mexico University.....	Silver City

Council of University Presidents

Daniel H. López.....	New Mexico Inst. of Mining & Technology
Jay Gogue.....	New Mexico State University
Garnett S. Stokes.....	University of New Mexico
James Johnston.....	Eastern New Mexico University
Samuel Minner.....	New Mexico Highlands University
Hector Balderas.....	Northern New Mexico College
Joseph Shepard (Chair).....	Western New Mexico University

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New Mexico State University

Kate McGowan

Calixto Melero

University of New Mexico

Heather Mechler

Eastern New Mexico University

Brendan Hennessey

New Mexico Highlands University

Heather Tilson

Ivy Romero

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