

VISION



“Building tomorrow’s mathematicians, engineers and scientists...today!”

Summer Issue, 2016

www.nmmesa.org

National Championship is Evidence of NM MESA Progress

Toney Begay
Executive Director

Hello, from New Mexico Mathematics, Engineering, Science and Achievement (NM MESA)!

This is a great summer! WE ARE THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS of MESA USA!



This is another example of the achievements made by our NM MESA program. Through our students and advisors from Deming (both high and middle schools), we are

a great example of a “results-achieving” program.

Indeed, NM MESA has done it again. NM MESA has changed its expectations and raised the bar for our students and they have come through with national titles. We demonstrate that now we are able to produce students knowledgeable in coding, programming, and mechanical engineering and how to prepare for workforce careers. NM MESA has done it again.

We are now gearing up for the 2016-/2017 school year with staff professional development. We realize if we expect our students and advisors to learn computer programming, coding, and mechanical engineering, we have to know it also. So we have scheduled training for our staff to enhance their knowledge and skills in these areas. Many of the other MESA states (Washington, California, Oregon, Utah, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Arizona) are shooting to de-throne New Mexico MESA this upcoming year. However, we are planning otherwise as our staff retreat this summer was extremely beneficial to our organization’s vision and preparation for the year. It showed us where we have to improve to better serve our stakeholders. Our Board of Directors has accepted our Strategic Plan and we are moving forward in implementing the plan. The biggest challenge NM MESA faces today is fund raising. We are not the only ones. But we will strive to obtain the resources and maintain and exceed our fund raising goals.

So come along with NM MESA. It’s a fabulous ride! We are “Making Tomorrow Today”. Thank you.

National Champions!!

Red Mountain MS and Deming HS Sweep Performance Events, Dominate MESA USA to Claim Double Title

Terry Ramirez
SW Coordinator

A national championship is the highest honor one can achieve in MESA competition. And for the first time in history, New Mexico students claim victory to both the middle school and high school national titles at the MESA USA National Engineering Competition in Ogden, Utah, June 23-25.

The victory is extra sweet as the titles go to students from the same community as MS Champ Red Mountain Middle School and HS Champ Deming High School are both part of Deming Public Schools. The national triumphs follow state titles the teams earned in April making for an extraordinary finish to the 2015-2016 school year.

The Red Mountain Middle School students are Adrianna Darrow, Alejandra Orosco and Kaitlyn Warczinski, along with their advisor Monika Velez.

The Deming High School team of Robbie Lee Perket, Antoni Varela and David Velez made it a clean sweep in their respective division.

During the school year both schools were tasked with the challenge of designing a low-cost prosthetic arm to compete in MESA's Prosthetic Arm Challenge 2.0. The arm must be controlled by Arduino programming and related components. The students had a physical competition to demonstrate their prosthetic arms’ abilities in predetermined tasks. The students also

completed and were judged on a technical paper, an academic poster and an oral presentation.

Both teams had several tasks during their physical performance competitions, with the high school having an additional task. The first task was object relocation; moving selected items into and out of a bin as quickly as possible and placing it in a

components. DHS placed second in the Oral Presentation component and took first in all device components, Object Relocation, Distance Accuracy, Dexterity, and Design Efficiency. Both teams brought home a total of six medals, including national gold in this year’s MESA USA Prosthetic Arm Challenge 2.0.

One of the middle school team mem-



Photos by Terry Ramirez

New Mexico MESA claims both Middle School and High School MESA USA National Championships with the Deming Red Mountain Middle School and Deming High School teams. Representing the RMMS team in the front row (l to r) are Alejandra Orosco, Kaitlyn Warczinski and Adrianna Darrow. The back row includes RMMS Advisor Monika Velez, DHS team members Robbie Perket, David Velez, Antoni Varela and DHS Advisor David Jaramillo. The two teams combined for first place medals in seven categories.

predetermined area. The second task was distance accuracy; each team must pick up and throw bean bags into a scoring area once again as quickly as possible. The dexterity competition was unique for high school competitors. During this challenge students had to thread nuts onto bolts of varying sizes from 8 to 16 millimeters. An additional component of the competition was design efficiency. This would take into consideration weight and cost in relationship to performance in each of the physical events.

Red Mountain Middle and Deming High teams won three and four categories respectively within their respective divisions. RMMS was third in the Technical Paper, and Academic Poster components, and placed first in the Object Relocation, Distance Accuracy, and Design Efficiency

bers, Alejandra Orosco, will be an entering eighth grader at RMMS in the fall and is the current president of their club. She said, "It was nerve-wracking and very exciting to see our hard work pay off".

The students had prepared during spring break, weekends and after school to get ready for both the state and national MESA USA contests. Such dedication was worth it according to teammate Adriana Darrow, who had competed in Nationals the previous year as a 7th grader, when the team earned third place overall. “It felt really good to come back and win it all!”

Kaitlyn Warczinski, also entering 8th grade this coming year, was simply very happy to represent New Mexico and “en-

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National Champions

joyed the whole trip, including the lagoon adventure!”

These girls had the help of veteran advisor Monika Velez, co-advisor G u y l a Miller and the RMMS administration. The strength of the program is evident by the fact that the school has qualified a team to compete in Nationals for the last four years in a row! The countless hours the team invested into the MESA program and competition came to fruition this summer, as it was the first time they placed in so many categories. Winning gold was a bonus!

David Velez, Deming High School sophomore, remembered how the team’s MESA Regional Coordinator, Terry Ramirez told him, “It’s your year- robotics and prosthetics, the combination, your experience and if you dedicate yourselves, you’ll have it!”

Teammates

Robbie Lee Perkett and Antoni Varela were new to the team in Deming this year. They embraced the competition and made it a priority to practice every chance they had.

Advisor David Jaramillo said, “After two years of coming so close to winning, I was extremely excited to make it this far. Coming here (Nationals) has really confirmed in me the importance of the program and STEM in general. The concepts and skills learned in MESA are some of the most valuable tools students can learn to help be successful in life.”

The DHS MESA Club is very active and, like RRMS, has a supportive administration that supports the many activities and competitive endeavors of the MESA club. Entire award listings are as follows:

Middle School division



TECHNICAL PAPER
1st: California

2nd: Utah
3rd: New Mexico
ORAL PRESENTATION
1st: California
2nd: Maryland
3rd: Pennsylvania
POSTER DISPLAY
1st: Arizona
2nd: Oregon
3rd: New Mexico

PERFORMANCE

OBJECT RELOCATION
1st: New Mexico
2nd: California
3rd: Maryland
DISTANCE ACCURACY
1st: New Mexico
2nd: Arizona

3rd: California
DEVICE EFFICIENCY
1st: New Mexico
2nd: Arizona
3rd: California



High School division

TECHNICAL PAPER
1st: California
2nd: Utah
3rd: Arizona
ORAL PRESENTATION
1st: California
2nd: New Mexico
3rd: Washington
POSTER DISPLAY
1st: Arizona
2nd: Maryland
3rd: Utah

PERFORMANCE
OBJECT RELOCATION
1st: New Mexico
2nd: Arizona
3rd: Oregon

DISTANCE ACCURACY
1st: New Mexico
2nd: California
3rd: Pennsylvania
DEXTERITY
1st: New Mexico
2nd: Pennsylvania
3rd: Arizona
DEVICE EFFICIENCY
1st New Mexico
2nd: Pennsylvania
3rd: California

Overall Winners

MIDDLE SCHOOL
1st: New Mexico
2nd: California
3rd: Arizona
HIGH SCHOOL
1st: New Mexico
2nd: California
3rd: Pennsylvania

Deming Schools Sweep State MESA USA Event

Betty Chancey
SE Regional Coordinator

Deming Public Schools dominated the MESA USA Statewide Competition in Roswell in April as Red Mountain Middle School won the Middle School division while Deming High School bested the high school category Both teams beat the top five in their respective classifications after qualifying from a pool of more than 30 applicant teams.

A Distance Accuracy Event which allowed students one minute to pick up Bean Bags and toss them accurately into scoring zones.

An Object Relocation Event which required teams to pick up 5 to 10 items- ranging from a water bottle to a notebook- and move them individually from one location to another – then return them to the starting point in the fastest time possible. They had a maximum allowable time of one minute.



Photo by Rick Cole

David Velez of Deming HS uses his team’s prosthetic arm to thread nuts onto bolts during the NM MESA USA Championship. Velez tallied a maximum score of 300 while teammates Antoni Varela, Robbie Perket, MESA Coordinators Betty Chancey and Shawndean Smith and a Roswell newspaper photographer watch.

In conjunction with the success of the event, New Mexico MESA, our schools and students would like to thank New Mexico Military Institute for once again hosting the State MESA USA competition. As always, the facilities were amazing and the staff could not have been more helpful! Their continued support of MESA and our students is greatly appreciated.

We would also like to thank Leprino Foods, Xcel Energy and ENMU-R for providing great volunteer judges for this event!! Volunteer judges were Robert Perea, C. V. Harris, Nick Kakaras , Sheriff Britt Snyder, Chief Deputy Shane Baker, Rollah Aston, Tammy West, Robin Cassidy, Keith Berry, Dr. Van Herd and Adele Hartman. These competitions cannot be provided without the time and expertise of these volunteers. They are great role models for our students! Thank you for volunteering your time and expertise for this event!!!!

Teams received points in seven different categories.

State MESA USA HIGH SCHOOL Overall & Individual Event Winners

Team	Overall	Distance	Relocation	Efficiency	Paper	Oral	Poster	Dexterity
Deming HS	1st	1st	1st	1st	3rd	3rd	4th	1st
Mayfield HS	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd	2nd	1st	3rd	3rd
Carlsbad HS	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd

The Dexterity Event was for High Schools only. Students had two minutes to put three bolts into slots in a wooden board and then attach three nuts .

Design Efficiency Points were calculated using factors from the Performance events, the weight of the arm in relation to other performance results.

They also competed in three other competitions: A Technical Paper, a Poster Display, and an Oral Presentation to explain their project.

The 1st Place winner in the High School and Middle School Overall points are the two teams that will represent New Mexico MESA programs at the National Competition this June in Ogden, Utah.

Again, congratulations go to:

*Deming High School - the 1st Place High School Overall winner

*Red Mountain Middle School from Deming - the 1st Place Middle School Overall winner

Complete score results are available at www.nmmesa.org.

Like a Well-Oiled Machine, New Mexico MESA Is Ready for MESA USA 2017!

Anita Gonzales

State Events Coordinator

The 2017 National Engineering MESA USA Design Competition will be hosted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania June 21-24, 2017. To determine which teams will represent New Mexico, our qualifier will be the 2017 MESA Day Competitions. New this year, all

teams attending MESA Day will compete in all segments of the MESA USA competition: Physical Performance, Oral Presentation, Academic Poster, and Technical Paper and these events will be our only Statewide Academic Competition. The events will be the second and final year of the Prosthetic Arm Challenge (2.1) in which student teams design a

prosthetic arm that is powered by Arduino programming and hardware.

Over the last few weeks the MESA USA Rules Committee has been dedicated to updating the current rules for further clarity. The majority of the content remains the same as last year, but there are minor changes. Following are some changes for MESA USA:

1. Rules about the usage of Arduino and the wrists, hands, and fingers are clarified.
2. Slight modifications were made to the tasks to encourage teams to design more for accuracy in task completion.
3. Eliminated the use of the tri-fold display and are requiring teams to print their posters with the help of their state offices.

2016 Loyalty Award

Linda Andrews
Deputy Director

The Loyalty Award journey that was described in the previous newsletter is in its last phase. Graduating seniors from 2016 are busy getting ready for college but are still making time to submit the necessary paperwork for their Loyalty Awards: submitting the last Loyalty Award Upload Form on the NM MESA website and attaching a copy of their college schedules.

Regional Coordinators have requested official transcripts for the eligible seniors and those are arriving daily from registrars. The deadline to have all of these submitted is September 4, 2016. Checks will be mailed the following week for those seniors who met all requirements.

Rising seniors graduating in 2017 will need the new Loyalty Award information which will be available on the NM MESA website on August 15, 2016. Due dates and how to submit documents will change so be sure to look on the website for the new information.



Photo by Rick Cole
West Mesa HS graduate Brenda Salas is one of more than 100 MESA students eligible for a 2016 Loyalty Award IF they complete all paperwork.

The NM MESA Loyalty Award is to award those students who have achieved academic success and attained certain levels of participation during their membership with the NM MESA program. It encourages students to participate in the interactive NM MESA program, such as competitions and community service, as they prepare for college and careers in STEM. From middle school to high school, students are earning points towards the Loyalty Award and may be awarded up to \$1000. As it is often said, the journey is its own reward, especially for the NM MESA Loyalty Award!

NM MESA Announces Recipients of the Dr. Arthur H. Guenther Advisor Achievement Award

Nicholas Kunz
NC Regional Coordinator

NM MESA has selected recipients of the 2016 Dr. Arthur H. Guenther Advisor Achievement Award. Serri Grube and Alysyn Merrill are this year's outstanding MESA advisors! Each of these fine educators will receive \$100 from MESA as a token of appreciation.

Serri Grube joined the MESA team at Valley High School in Albuquerque 13 years ago. This coming academic year will be her 21st as a teacher! When asked for examples of how she has seen her MESA program make a difference in the lives of students, Serri lists, "Having students [who are] so appreciative of the Loyalty Award and feeling accomplished in all their activities, taking students to colleges like NM



Serri Grube

Highlands or NMSU and seeing students realize their potential for being college bound, watching students create projects for MESA Day, and feeling success and experiencing growth with team members. I am really proud to be a MESA sponsor and I hope to continue as long as I am teaching."

Alysyn Merrill began as a MESA advisor at Gallup High School five years ago and is inspired by the passion of her young students. "I discovered that students really just needed

someone there to encourage them and sign them up for activities. They do the rest!!" But Alysyn does much more than just pro-



Alysyn Merrill

viding encouragement. She has attended numerous Senior Incentive Field Trips, including a trip to Texas in which the group visited Johnson space center, the neutral buoyancy lab, and the beach. Alysyn says, "I love the MESA program and have worked at helping students maximize their loyalty awards. We had our largest group of students qualify and apply for the loyalty award this year."

Award selection was based on performance and demonstrated excellence in STEM education. This year's recipients were selected after a committee review of specific MESA activity data. All criteria related to the quality and amount of opportunities for learning provided for MESA students, as well as the advisor's participation in each of those events.



Photo by Rick Cole

The New Mexico MESA staff gathers for a group photo during their corporate retreat at Angel Fire in June. From left to right, Deputy Director Linda Andrews, West Regional Coordinator Shawndean Smith, NO RC Alejandra Carmona-Cruz, CO RC Rick Cole, NC RC Nick Kunz, Executive Director Toney Begay, State Events Coordinator Anita Gonzales, CI RC Kimi Allen-Scheerer, SW RC Terry Ramirez, SE RC Betty Chancey, Bookkeeper Helena Kirkwood. The retreat focused on evaluation of 2015-2016 and planning for 2016-2017.

Fresh Air and Fresh Vision at the 2016 NM MESA Staff Retreat

Helena Kirkwood
NM MESA Accounting Technician

This year, in June, we were extremely fortunate to spend three days in the beautiful Lodge at Angel Fire Resort in Northern New Mexico. We gathered to prepare for the coming FY17 school year and to ensure we continue to serve our Advisors, Students, and Stakeholders well.

I look forward to our Staff Retreat each year as our offices are all in different cities around the state (Las Cruces, Roswell, Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Gallup, and Albuquerque) and I seldom spend time in close proximity with my colleagues. We all arrived from our respective locations at lunchtime on Monday. The Legends Grill at the resort had prepared a wonderful BBQ for us. After that we began our meetings and presentations.

All three days were jam-packed with reviewing our work from last year and planning our events for next year. Each region presented their work for the past year and prepared a PowerPoint for their 2017 cal-

endar of events. We had productive and engaging meetings each day culminating in a Program of Events for next year for all of our events (regional, statewide, and national) while managing at the same time to enjoy each other and the beautiful area.

We had dinner one evening at a local eatery, H2 Uptown, and after dinner we presented awards to staff who were celebrating their three, five, and 10 year anniversaries with NM MESA. Another day we had lunch on top of the mountain after riding the chair lift to the top. That was exciting, the weather was fabulous, and the views awesome while we conducted an afternoon meeting at over 10,000 feet! Later that evening we had campfires and s'mores, all while continuing our discussions and planning.

Due to budget constraints, we are tentatively planning next summer's Annual Staff Retreat in the Albuquerque office. In the future, I hope we can find the resources to stage a retreat at a remote location as these are great get-aways and I love spending time with the MESA Familia!

Teacher Summer Camp: First Year Success

Kimi Allen-Scheerer
CI Regional Coordinator

This June, 28 teachers from a variety of schools and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related fields participated in a STEAM (STEM + Art) Ready! Teachers Summer Camp series based in Albuquerque. This small and conversational professional development series was generated by NM MESA, Inc., to help get teachers experiential STEM education in the Albuquerque area as well as to obtain feedback about linking classroom content with off-campus excursions in the community.

Over two weeks, a series of seven PD opportunities were offered to Albuquerque metro area teachers. The PD series included the following: Bosque Hike, Sandia Crest Tram Experience, Intel Tour, BioPark Bugarium, UNM Build Your Student Tour, Robots 3D & EpSCOR and Climate Change Exhibit.



Photos by Rick Cole

The fun of Kimi Scheerer in action.



The goal of offering and involving NM MESA teachers continued professional development outside of the traditional school year to increase the diversity of students who are successful in STEM education through engaging summer STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) activities was met.

Similar programs offered by the College Board, the Advanced Placement programs, ISEF, New Mexico Tech and a host of other universities have had similar results according to participant surveys. The common theme to each of these extra-curricular engagements is revealing to teachers the many ways they can utilize local resources to enhance STEM education.

As the coordinator, I noted that the teachers involved seem to enjoy the community engagement, camaraderie of sharing experiences and the importance of being asked to consider their students, classroom experiences and opinions. This series of programs was designed to be educational while also community and networking oriented.

Planning for Success in an Ever-Changing Life

NM MESA Statewide Program Coordinator Anita Gonzales Makes the Most of Opportunities

Rick Cole

CO Regional Coordinator

Life does not always go as planned. Indeed, sometimes what is unplanned becomes the ideal path for one's life.

Such is the case in multiple ways for New Mexico MESA Statewide Program Coordinator Anita Gonzales. She didn't plan to live in Las Vegas, NM, but she has lived there the past 13 years – virtually all of her adult life. She also thought she would never marry a man from Las Vegas, but on August 19 she will celebrate 10 years of marriage to LV native Adrian Gonzales, Head Coach of the West Las Vegas High School football team. While attending West Mesa High School, her career choice was to do environmental or civil engineering. But her aspirations changed to “event planning and management,” and she has been planning and coordinating MESA events now for more than 12 years.

“A lot of circumstances combined to get me where I am at today,” explained the former Anita Gallegos. “The events of my life brought me to this job, to my family and to where I live.”

Anita is not necessarily a proponent of the philosophy that “destiny” made her



Photo by Rick Cole

Anita addresses competitors at the NM MESA USA Contest.

life. But undoubtedly her destiny has been and is being shaped by a plethora of decisions and events which she controls and many more that she does not.

No one gets to choose to whom and where he/she is born. But Anita was born in Las Vegas with deep roots on both sides of her family in northern New Mexico. Both her mother, Lucille Lopez, and father, Dr. Clarence Gallegos, can trace their ancestry back several generations in northern NM and ultimately to Spain. Indeed, part of her father's forebears left Spain because they were Jews being persecuted by the Catholic Inquisition nearly 300 years ago.

However, shortly after Anita was born, her family moved to Nashville, Tennessee so that her father could study medicine at Meharry Medical School. However, she found herself back in Las Vegas when her parents got divorced and mom moved “back home”. She even attended first grade in Las Vegas before moving to Albuquerque after her mother married Ross White. She has an older sister Juliette and a younger brother Jonathan.

“I have so many memories of being with my relatives in Las Vegas. We were there a lot on the weekends and we would practically live up there in the summers. I especially remember living with my Gal-



Photos courtesy of Anita Gonzales

Adrian, Curtis and Anita Gonzales enjoy a day in the mountains near Las Vegas.

legos grandparents and how much fun we had on their ranch. We got to do a lot of fun things and my Grandma Gallegos, who was a teacher, helped me to learn how to read so well that I was able to start school a year early and then half way through kindergarten, I was passed to first grade.”

As a result, Anita was essentially two years younger than her classmates growing up and graduating from high school at 16.

“I attended Alamosa Elementary School, Truman Middle School and West Mesa

High School where I was always the baby among my classmates,” noted Anita. “I had a good support system and was easy going so that I got along with most everybody.”

Partly by her choice and also through the urging of her parents, Anita participated in MESA at Truman MS, where she earned MESA Student of the Year honors, and West Mesa HS through her sophomore year.

“I really loved being in MESA,” said Anita. “But the responsibilities of cheerleading, other clubs, and summer jobs kept me so busy that I decided to quit after 10th grade. Little did I know that I would work for MESA in the future.”

What Anita did know is that she wanted to go to college on a scholarship. Undeterred by some pressure from family and friends to confine her choices to NM universities, Anita also applied to college and for scholarships at Arizona State University, Colorado State University and Texas A & M. Anita received a good scholarship offer from Texas A & M, so she opted to become an Aggie.

“I didn't know a soul at Texas A & M,” Anita recalls. “But I went to an early orientation and fell in love with it. I became a college freshman at 17 years of age almost a thousand miles from home.”

Anita notes that, like so many first-year college students, the learning curve was steep both on content and how to learn. It took a few years for Anita to learn that managing events could be a career, so she majored in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Science. She was active in school organi-

zations and was thoroughly enjoying life as an Aggie. She even got to do two summer internships in Washington, D.C. planning events for the Association of Trial Lawyers.

But, as mentioned earlier, life does not always go as planned, and circumstances brought Anita back to Las Vegas. While

studying at NMHU, Anita became a NM MESA Intern on the NMHU campus in January, 2003 and continued in this position until May, 2004

when she graduated and was hired as the NM MESA North Regional Coordinator, also at NMHU. Anita's knack for event management was quickly evident, and as NM MESA continued to grow and expand, the position of Statewide Events Coordinator, housed at NMHU, was created just for her in January, 2008. Anita even did double duty as North Regional Coordinator and Statewide Events Coordinator between January and May of 2008.

Eight years later, NM MESA has one of the best statewide events programs in the nation and Anita is primarily responsible for such success.

“This job is a good mix of my skill sets and my interests,” says Anita in describing the one vocation of her adult life. “I have a passion for MESA, the position, the advisors, the students and for education.”

To enhance her skills and abilities, Anita completed an MBA at NMHU in 2008 so that she could serve NM MESA even better.

“I would love for MESA to continue to strive and in the future to beef up our current programs, strengthen the organization financially, bring back summer enrichment and expand field trip options,” Anita explained. “NM MESA is one of the premier (MESA) programs, a program to be modeled after. We are unique in having the Loyalty Award, SIFT (senior incentive field trip) and emphasis on community service and leadership. We are national champions (MESA USA) this year because of a long-term commitment to emphasize excellence in competition as well as everything else

we do.”

Anita is responsible for coordinating custom-designed annual visits of MESA students to New Mexico Tech and New Mexico Highlands University. She also manages annual MESA involvement in the Alliance of Minority Professionals (AMP) Conference at New Mexico State University each Fall as well as the Oil and Gas Conference, MESA Day at the NM Legislature, the academic MESA Day competition, the state MESA USA qualifier event, NM participation in the MESA USA National Championship, various staff trainings, fund raising and a host of other tasks “that come up.”

It was while striving for excellence as a lifeguard at the Las Vegas City Recreation Center in 2003 that Anita struck up a friendship with Adrian Gonzales, who was as assistant football coach with Las Vegas Robertson High School working the rec center weight room for the summer. They went on their first date August 19 of that year, were married exactly three years later and were blessed with son, Curtis, five years after that.

“Even though I had kind of told myself that I would never marry a man from Las



Curtis and Anita snuggle on one of many family outings.

Vegas, Adrian was the best fit,” reflected Anita. “We became such good friends and had so much in common in our love for Vegas, our family connections and our passion for education. Even though I'm a football widow part of the year and he is a MESA widow at times, we love our life together in Las Vegas.”

This includes living in a charming home on family property just outside of town. But because Anita knows that life doesn't always go as planned, she realizes that circumstances and events can change even the most well-intentioned and stable of plans.

“Adrian is a football coach at his alma mater (West Las Vegas HS); once a Don, always a Don. MESA is the only career I've ever had. And Curtis has such a great support system and is thriving,” Anita elucidates with a gleam in her eyes. “But opportunities are limited in Vegas. We'll see what the future brings.”

Serendipity could describe how Anita Gonzales became a wife, mom and MESA Coordinator in Las Vegas. But she has also achieved these dreams through dedication to family, loyalty to a cause and passion for all that is excellent. The future of NM MESA events planning is demonstrably in good hands with Anita Gonzales at the helm, regardless of circumstances.

West Region to Have Many Workshops and Trainings

Shawndeana Smith
West Coordinator

With the summer coming to an end, the West Region is gearing up for another exciting year of STEM activities and field trips. There will be some awesome opportunities for NM MESA students to engage in throughout the year!

The semester will start off with some hands on workshops with Sandia Labs. Workshops will include Lego kits, robotics, rockets, bridge building and math games. There will be workshops held across the West Region after enough students are recruited at the beginning of the school year.

There are a few state events students will be able to attend as well which include the Oil and Gas Day in Artesia and the New Mexico Highlands College Night in Las Vegas, which are open to high school students across the state.

NM MESA students this year will have an opportunity to take part in some leadership events that will prepare them for this year's MESA Day Competition in the spring. Leadership events will be held at



Shawndeana Smith...Cool.

each school where the West Region Coordinator will conduct some hands on workshops and team building activities. Students will gain great tools and resources to enhance their knowledge about the competitions being held at MESA Day.

Once all of the West schools are prepared and ready to test their knowledge for entering MESA Day, the West Region will host a mini competition in early 2017 before MESA Day. All students will participate in a one-day event when they will also be able to take a campus tour and also engage in more STEM activities at a local college campus of their choice.

The West Region Coordinator is looking forward to a great year of working with the Gallup McKinley County Schools, Grants Cibola Schools, Bloomfield Municipal Schools and the Navajo Preparatory High School to promote the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math areas of education. There will be various opportunities for students to be proactive and absorb as much knowledge as possible. 2016 will be a great year to be a NM MESA student!

North Central Region Making Big Plans

Nicholas Kunz
NC Coordinator

NM MESA's North Central Region is working hard on plans for the coming school year! All NC Region schools will start the year with the two day North Central Region Community Kickoff event at the Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge. Students will participate in a variety of workshops and lectures relating to careers in conservation and biology, and will complete a collaborative service learning project at the refuge. And of course, fun team-building and games while teachers attend the Regional Advisor Meeting.

As fall approaches, and students settle in to the year, they will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of interactive workshops at their schools. Two highlights include Ancient Mayan and Chinese Mathematics, and a STEAM workshop that teaches evaluation of the world through

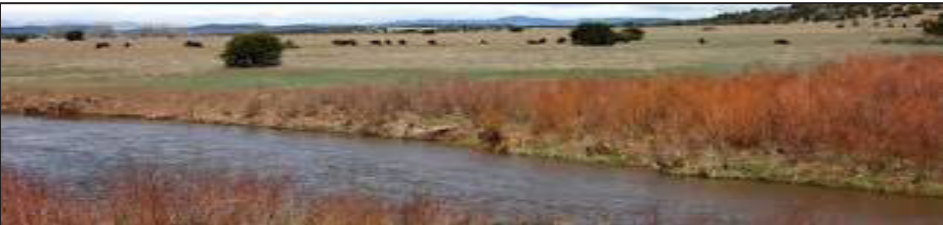


Photo courtesy of US Fish & Wildlife Service

The NC Region begins its school year with workshops at the Rio Mora Refuge.



Photo Courtesy of East Mountain High School

East Mountain High School is the school of CI Male Student of the Year Dalton DeBerry.

CI Has Many Outstanding Students

Kimi Allen-Scheerer
CI Coordinator

The hectic urban lifestyle of the school year in the Central Inner region tends to slow down with the heat of the summer in the city. However, there are still a lot of activities and events that illustrate our STEM connections over the seasonal break. Some highlights as we finished up the 2015-2016 school year include our Central Inner Outstanding Student of the Year awardee's, Dalton DeBerry (East Mountain High School) and Maribel Cardiel (South Valley Academy). Dalton's MESA Advisor, Marie Booth, shared the following "Dalton is passionate about many things... he was the first [MESA] member to offer his help and support. He is respectful towards everyone he meets and all the teachers adore him." Maribel's MESA Advisor, Sariah Bujanda, noted that "as [MESA club] president, she has led the group with planning, activities, and worked diligently to place at the MESA Day competition". Both students received an electronic tablet from NM MESA Inc. to help further their educational careers!

Congratulations to both Maribel and Dalton who lead the way in representing the stars of our Central Inner region. Addition-

al students that were nominated for leadership, academic integrity and outstanding contributions to their school MESA programs include: Daryl Justin Krawic (South Valley Academy), Johnathan Hobson (Del Norte HS), Corey Pearson & Michael Patterson (Valley High School), Breanne Kidner (East Mountain High School), Jacob Martinez & Maria Salazar (Albuquerque High School) and Natalie Yonemoto (NexGen Academy).

Other students had the chance to learn and engage at Explora in partnership with MESA to help teens connect with the community. High School students Melinda Clibon (NexGen Academy) and Parker Randolph (Albuquerque High School) joined the Computer Game Development program. They had the chance to use STEM and the Arts to learn and apply computer science, visual design and storytelling for game creation. Middle School students Marco Felix and Nick Cummings (both from Garfield Middle School) participated in the Arduino Adventure program. They both learned the art of tinkering and prototyping while crossing into the processing language of Arduino. We can barely wait to see what these youths will come up with for our MESA competition this year!



Photo courtesy of South Valley Academy

South Valley Academy is the school of CI Female Student of the Year Maribel Cardiel.

SE Region Participates and Wins in a Host of Activities;

Nicholas Brown of Portales High School Profiled as Exemplary MESA Student

Betty Chancey
SE Regional Coordinator

The SE Region had a very busy and rewarding Spring Semester and Summer of 2016. Since January 1st, SE schools received recognition for participation in the following:

Competitions and Fieldtrips: SE Rally, Legislative Fieldtrip, Regional Science Olympiad, Vex Robotics, UNM PNM State Math Competition

MESA Day Statewide Competition: Carlsbad Intermediate School's teams won 1st and 3rd place overall. In the MESA USA Qualifying event they won 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Carlsbad HS won 3rd place.

SUPER COMPUTING: Portales HS students Nick Brown & Chris Leap won 2nd Place Overall at Los Alamos Super Computing Challenge and won the Technical Writing Award as well.

MESA USA State Competition: Carlsbad Intermediate School teams won 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place

Carlsbad High School won 3rd place

RoboRave International: The Southeast Region was well represented at this event.

Service Learning Activities: The many SE Region schools participated in activities to raise funds to purchase prosthetic legs for LIMBS International. Carlsbad High School raised enough funds to purchase three legs and Mt. View Middle School

was able to purchase two legs. Each leg cost \$300 to purchase. The students were so excited to realize they were able to change the life of other individuals!

Other Service Learning included Roswell Zoo improvements, water chemistry projects, macroinvertebrates & filtering plants studies, working with Senior Citizen groups and homes and many other great projects.

Other News: Nathan Christensen – (Carlsbad High School Senior) is the recipient of the \$20,000 Devon Achievement Award. This award will cover four years of his college expenses at \$2500 per semester.

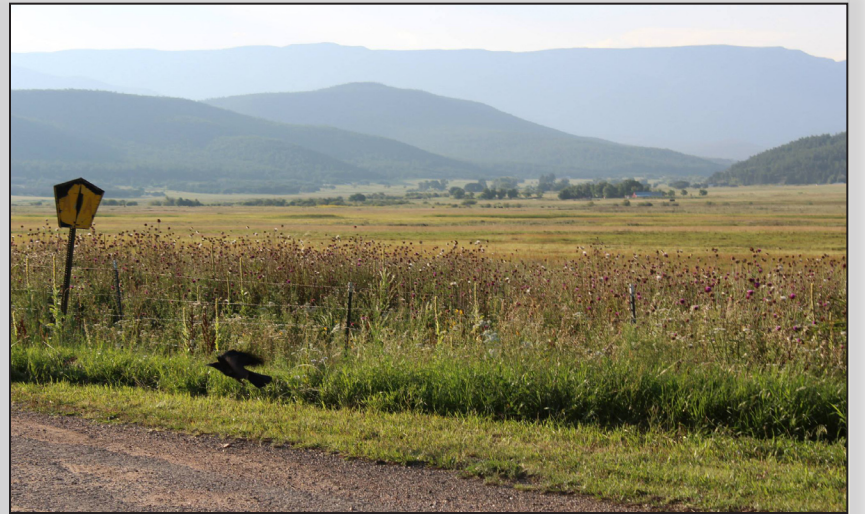
The SE Region student chosen to be

profiled in this Newsletter is NICHOLAS BROWN. Nick is a junior at Portales High School and a fifth- year MESA student. He has been involved in BEST Robotics, Regional Rallies, MESA Days, Los Alamos Supercomputing Challenge and Roborave in addition to many service learning activities, workshops and other fieldtrips. Nick and Chris Leap just won 2nd Place overall at the Los Alamos Super Computing Challenge and they also won the Technical Writing Award. These are first time achievements for a SE student. Last year Nick was RoboRave International's winner of the Fire Fighting Challenge against a team from the Czech Republic. He is also an outstanding computer programmer and has earned 34 hours of college credit.

Even



A sunflower is silhouetted at twilight



The pastoral beauty of Rociada Valley

Summer Beauty by Alejandra

Photos and Text by Alejandra Carmona-Cruz, NO Regional Coordinator

This year, it seemed like it took too long for summer to come and comfort us with warmth as snowstorms blanketed the mountains of northern New Mexico into June. But summer finally arrived and dazzles us with blue skies and pink sunsets, green chile roasting, sunflowers, summer fiestas, biker rallies, low-riders, art festivals, heritage days, La Luz trail hikes, Hermit's Peak exploration, white-water rafting, and for many lucky folks, cooling down in an adobe home. New Mexico summer is a truly beautiful time to experience. Summer is when people and nature get along, no snow fights or fighting against snow; rather a calmer, warmer, and colorful relationship.



Evening calm reflects on a high-country pond.



Ponderosa Pines tower over a fairway at the Pendaries Golf Course.



Wildflowers highlight a valley near Mora.



What is northern New Mexico without low riders?

Texas longhorns recline in a verdant Sangre de Cristo Mountain meadow.



North Region Gives Time and Plans Ahead

Alejandra Carmona-Cruz
NO Regional Coordinator

The 2015-2016 school year in the North Region was another great year with challenges but overwhelming achievements! In northern New Mexico, NM MESA students do not take a break, especially when it has to do with giving back to their communities. West Las Vegas High school is once again setting high standards. In June, students volunteered their time to help out at the Summer Reading Fiesta at Highlands University. In July they hosted a blood drive at the Rough Rider Rally and another in August during Heritage days. We all know summer time is precious for young people and teachers; I give kudos to these students and their advisors, Christina Lovato and John Duran, who share their time to give back. Great Job!

Our end of the year regional advisory meeting brought about many ideas and different discussions for improvement to MESA in the North for the 2016-2017 school year. Our vision is to empower and spark interest in students in careers of engineering, math, science and technology. From our conversations, North Region Advisors came up with different



Photo by Rick Cole
"Standard Alejandra Radiance"

goals. One specific goal is to focus on exposing students to more STEM, through the use of our local resources and professionals in our region. By August we hope to be partnered up with Parachute Factory, a local STEM organization and maker space for youth in Las Vegas, NM. In addition, we have partnered up with Brain Hackers non-profit organization to bring workshops related to neuroscience to schools in Las Vegas and possibly Santa Rosa. A local business, Zitro Technology Solutions, will be donating their time to bring computer programming workshops and knowledge of the latest technology, such as drones. These are a few of the plans in the North along with our continuation to strengthen our relationship with STEM departments at Highlands University and Luna Community College.

North students will be busy this school year, not only engineering prosthetic arms, but also learning about all the STEM fields that surround them. Last but not least, CONGRATULATIONS to all seniors who have graduated and received the Loyalty Award! Good luck in your first year of college and your academic journey!! I invite you to stay on the lookout for pictures and updates of the 2016-2017 school year in our upcoming newsletters.

UNM Main Campus – It’s Big for a Reason

Rick Cole
CO Coordinator

The University of New Mexico Main Campus in Albuquerque is considered the “flagship” university for the state as it is the largest university in terms of enrollment, funding, research, athletics and national and international academic, governmental and business connections.

It is a cosmopolitan campus that consistently averages more than 25,000 students per semester, including students from at least 30 nations at any one time. It is situated on more than 800 acres and is constantly changing, feature six large-scale construction projects with a collective price tag well over \$100 million. Indeed, if one likes to meet lots of different kinds of people in a fast-paced environment, UNM will not disappoint.

UNM has a focused vision to provide students the values, habits of mind, knowledge, and skills that they need to be enlightened citizens, to contribute to the state and national economies, and to lead satisfying lives. This is similar to many universities but at UNM it is done in a distinct style known as “La Vida Lobo” (the Lobo Life – in reference to the high-energy and resourceful mascot of the university).

The reputation of its personnel is world renowned in many instances. Faculty and staff (and for that matter students) are constantly creating, applying and disseminating new knowledge and creative works, applicable to academics and society as a whole in the more than 100 degree programs available. They provide services that enhance New Mexicans' quality of life and promote economic development; and

they advance understanding of the world, its peoples, and cultures. In fact, one of the nation’s leading anthropology museums – The Maxwell – is on campus.

Building on its educational, research, and creative resources, the University provides services directly to the City and State, including health care, social services, policy studies, commercialization of inventions, and cultural events. The UNM Hospital is the only teaching hospital in the state (it is affiliated with the UNM Medical School, the state’s only such institution) featuring a state-of-the-art trauma emergency room that truly serves the entire Land of Enchantment and regions beyond to boot. Its numerous graduate programs and their research endeavors affect virtually every aspect of business, engineering and applied technology. Lobo athletics entertain thousands each year as does the continual flow of theatrical and musical performance presented in the iconic Popejoy Hall.

UNM is located in the heart of New Mexico’s biggest city – Albuquerque – and features all the amenities of a large city: ample shopping, dining and entertainment options of virtually every cultural persuasion are readily available. Public transportation on and off the campus is continuous and reliable in getting one to every corner of the city. Or one can drive his/her own vehicle to anywhere in Albuquerque in less than 30 minutes, barring any major traffic accident or street construction (unfortunately, both of these will be encountered routinely if one drives about the city on a regular basis).

Before making a final decision on college, be sure to include UNM. It is big for a reason. In a word it is “good.”



Photo courtesy of the City of Bayard

Santa Rita Copper Mine, the largest pit mine in NM, helped put Bayard on the map. The CC Snell MESA program helps keep it there.

Veteran Advisor Cindy Lee is as Diverse as Her MESA Achievements

Terry Ramirez
SW Regional Coordinator

Cindy Lee teaches at CC Snell Middle School in Bayard. The 23-year teaching veteran teaches Science Technology, 7th grade Life Science and 8th Grade Forensics Science.

Her favorite activity with NM MESA thus far was going to the 2007 MESA USA National Competition in Baltimore. Three of her students built a trebuchet and won third place overall, a remarkable honor for a team from a struggling mining community in southwest New Mexico. But the productivity continues. This year



Cindy Lee

Lee spearheaded the fundraising for four prosthetic legs for our Service Learning Partner, LIMBS International. Her MESA club has hosted Science Night and Day Competitions at the Cobre District’s four elementary schools and just this last month took her MESA Club students to Tucson.

She has 18 types of animals in her classroom and the greenhouse. This includes a rare African Spur Tortoise. Her students grow strawberries in the school greenhouse and celebrate the “fruits” of their labors with shakes at the end of the semester.

In her spare time she loves to garden, quilt and geocache. She also enjoys camping and hiking.

UNM Gallup Branch is Viable Option for Academics and Career Preparation

Shawndeana Smith
West Coordinator

Students are still in summer vacation mode. However, it is almost time to start preparing for school again. For those students attending college in the Gallup area, one school they may be attending is the UNM Gallup branch. The UNM branch, which hosts NM MESA West Region Coordinator Shawndeana Smith, focuses on being a two-year college, but they do provide bachelor and graduate degree programs.

Throughout the year, the UNM Gallup branch hosts events for students to visit the facility, and they provide information about the services they provide.

In the fall they have scheduled a Workforce Development Workshop for those individuals seeking employment. Resources are provided to those needing assistance to enter the work force. This event also hap-

pens early in the spring.

The UNM Gallup branch also hosts a high school day for surrounding high schools to bring their students on campus to learn about the different aspects of attending college. Students get to tour the facility and sit in on workshops regarding financial aid, admissions and department overviews.

If students aren’t able to attend the high school day at UNM Gallup, the college also hosts an Open House in the Fall and Spring Semester. Any community member can visit the Open House and learn about the different departments and get specific information from admissions.

Dates are not yet set for the mentioned events. But more information can be found at www.gallup.unm.edu at any time.

The college practices and emphasizes good values that include Excellence, Integrity, Diversity, Freedom, and Diversity.



Photo courtesy of UNM - Gallup

The UNM-Gallup Branch offers two and four-year degree programs for students of western New Mexico and eastern Arizona.



Photo by Rick Cole

Rick and Theresa Cole explore the Ruby Range of Colorado to examine both the long-term effects of glaciation and mini-ecosystems associated with tree cloning while also climbing mountains for the sheer fun of it.

Come to CO for Excitement!

Rick Cole
CO Coordinator

I got a phone call from science teacher Jodene Romero on the last day of school in May. She informed me that she was going to be a MESA Advisor for John Adams Middle School next year and wanted to know if I could meet her later in the day to plan for next year. Noting such pro-active zest to lead MESA when most teachers just want vacation, I chuckled, said, “Of course! I’ll be right there” while thinking, “Wow! This summer is off to an awesome start as MESA continues non-stop!”

Ms. Romero is just one of six new advisors who have enthusiastically joined the exciting Central Outer Region to lead MESA programs in the upcoming school year. Also joining are April Chavez, John Adams MS, Danielle Gutierrez, Truman MS, Angela Landavazo, Valencia MS, Lillian Sides, Los Lunas MS and Daryl Saverdra, Socorro HS. All have been introduced to MESA curriculum, trained in MESA protocol and are ready to “rock” their respective programs as school begins.

Training new advisors was only part of the summer fun in CO. Many of the veterans mixed work and play during the break. Cibola’s Bill Siefert and Atrisco Heritage’s Diane Russell and Jo Elwess attended the PED STEM Symposium. John Davies of Los Lunas worked with nanoparticle projects in conjunction with Sandia Labs. West Mesa’s Luisa Castillo took students to national competition in Washington, D.C. while Catrina Lucero of Sarracino Middle School attended a series of workshops in various locales around the state. Ernie Pyle Middle Schools’ Annette Youngren took a student to Space Camp in an experience she describes as “the most intense but worthwhile week of professional development I’ve ever had!”

Lynn Schuler of Truman Middle School fulfilled a life-long dream to tour Iceland while Belen’s Chelsey Servantes lived out childhood adventures exploring Mark Twain’s Hannibal, Missouri with her family. Chris Trueba of Los Lunas spent two months camping on property in Idaho destined to one day become her retirement home. Andrea Jackson enjoyed her best summer yet in spending lots of time with her five-year old son. CO Coordinator Rick Cole attended many planning meetings, worked on lots of projects to get ready for Fiscal Year 2017, harvested lots of fruit, vegetables and honey, but still had plenty of time to hike and climb mountains in New Mexico and Colorado with his beloved Theresa, immediate and ex-

tended family and good friends to boot.

The CO Region heartily welcomes Valencia and Los Lunas Middle Schools on board for the new school year. These two schools are the only new additions to NM MESA this year as budget cuts forced the removal of 14 low-performing schools during the summer. VMS and LLMS were in MESA in the not too distant past and are eager to renew their commitment to excellence in STEM education through MESA.

“I used to be a MESA Advisor at Pecos High School,” explained Sides. “I thoroughly enjoyed it and have been working to get Los Lunas Middle School on board for the past year and a half so I could do it again. We get to have MESA as a class, and so I can hardly wait to see what the kids can do.”

Such excitement is contagious and will undoubtedly invigorate veteran advisors in the region who are already enthused for the new partnerships forged with the United States Forest Service, Tri-Core Labs, UNM Health Sciences Center, Sennheiser, the State Highway Department, Applied Research Associates and the New Mexico State Laboratories. Regional students will get to tour these facilities in addition to receiving guest speakers from these entities. In addition, these organizations are all contributing to forming workshop kits that will be distributed among regional schools during the course of the year.

These activities will be in conjunction with continued focus on preparation for the combined MESA Day and MESA USA competition. After all, the region has the defending MESA Day State Champion from Cibola HS with many other teams chomping at the bit to reach that level of performance.

Cole’s participation in a very productive MESA retreat in June led to several initiatives to increase community engagement between business, academia and various agencies with regional advisors and students to enhance STEM education for all who participate. And, of course, there is nothing like summer to re-energize education. Taking advantage of opportunities to learn and apply science and math on these extra-long days is so rewarding. Be it a sunrise run used to formulate a workshop while exercising the body, a home-grown

breakfast to discuss the meaning of life with family, a morning session testing new equipment, an afternoon meeting with colleagues to collaborate on resources and strategies or a peaceful evening to reflect simply on the wonders of life while playing with grandchildren. All contribute to creating wonderful days of learning and living.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Schuler

Truman MS MESA Advisor Lynn Schuler adorns a jacket in the cool mist of the mighty Gullfoss Falls of Iceland.

MESA Students Should Consider Dual Credit Programs as a Part of Their College Preparation

Rick Cole
CO Coordinator

Options for high school students in 2016 are so much more varied than 60 years ago. Advanced Placement courses had yet to be invented. Nor did the ACT exist. Earning college credit as a high schooler was just a dream.

But as the demand for higher education increased, so did the demand for access and for options to earn college credit before one graduated from high school. Now dual credit programs, courses in which a student can earn both high school and college credit, are accessible at virtually all high schools – public, charter and private. Even isolated high schools in remote communities can offer dual credits to students through distance-learning partnerships (online) with select universities and colleges.

Numerous options are available to New Mexico high school students. Each of the four-year universities in the state has a dual-credit program as do most of the two-year institutions. Courses must be able to apply toward a postsecondary degree or certificate program. Remedial and developmental courses at the college may not be taken for Dual Credit, since they do not count toward a degree or certificate program.

Students need to be aware of the difference between concurrent enrollment and dual enrollment. There are a few differences. Public* and BIE-funded school students do not pay tuition or for textbooks for Dual Credit courses. Dual Credit courses guarantee one both high school and college credit for successful completion. Concurrent enrollment may result in a student earning college credit while in high school, but not necessarily result in a student earning high school credits. In some cases, a high school may give high school credit for concurrent enrollment college classes that the student pays for. This must be verified with counselors at individual high schools.

There are at least three good reasons to consider taking dual credit. One, a student gets to experience a little bit of college while still in high school to help get a head start determining what one wants out of college. Another good reason is one can get some college credits without spending any money or using any financial aid. Finally, one may not feel sufficiently challenged by high school courses; the Dual Credit program can allow one to try some more interesting, satisfying and/or rigorous coursework. Grades earned in dual credit programs will be recorded on both one’s high school and college transcripts.

And taking Dual Credit courses does not prevent students from being eligible for the Legislative Lottery Scholarship. A New Mexico student must obtain a New Mexico high school diploma or New Mexico general education development (GED) diploma, enroll full-time 12 credit hours or more at an eligible New Mexico public college or university, and maintain 2.50

GPA or above during the student’s first academic semester in college to be eligible for the Legislative Lottery Scholarship. When filling out the college admissions applications, a student must indicate they are a “first time freshman”.

Some courses will transfer to other colleges, some will not. The Postsecondary Education Articulation Act of 1978 specifies a core of general education courses that, if taken at any New Mexico public college or university, will transfer to any other New Mexico public college or university. However, courses not part of this core that are obtained at a two year college may not transfer to a four year university, especially if the course was specific to a vocational or degree certificate program.

A student is eligible to do dual credit if they meet certain requirements. These vary from one school to another but basically one is eligible if enrolled in one-half or more of the minimum course requirements approved by the New Mexico Public Education Department or receiving at least three documented contact hours per day. One also has to meet the academic standing established by the high school and the postsecondary institution. This is another reason to check with a high school counselor to verify options.

Because of its location in Albuquerque and its proximity to more than 30 high schools in the metro area, Central New Mexico Community College sets the pace in dual credit enrollment. Indeed, more than 3,000 HS students were enrolled in dual-credit classes with CNM this past year. Dual credit students at CNM can take classes at the 1000 level and higher (with the exception of fitness classes) for which prerequisites are met. More than 100 options are in degree and certification programs are available to students in fields ranging from core academics to health care to computer science and a host of vocational trades, amongst other subjects.

Be aware of how to withdraw from a dual-credit class if one cannot meet the demands of the course. Keep in close contact with a high school counselor and college academic advisor the first few weeks of the class. Each college or university publishes deadlines to drop, add or withdraw from college courses, and one must keep those dates in mind if wishing to drop a course. But remember, if one drops, withdraw from, or fails a Dual Credit course, one still has to make up the high school graduation credit or requirement. If one thinks the class is too difficult, talk with a high school counselor as soon as possible.

To determine if and what kinds of dual credit are available at a particular high school, access the following link provided by the New Mexico Public Education Department: <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/DualCredit/index.html>. Now that the school year is about to begin is the time to check.

Information for this article was provided in part by staff from NM PED and CNM.

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