



From the Office of the President

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Greetings NMT Faculty, Staff, and Students,

Welcome back to what I hope will be a productive and successful Spring '18 semester. I hope you've all returned rested, rejuvenated, and ready to take on what will surely be a semester filled with outstanding research, hard work, and discovery.

The New Mexico State Legislature officially went into session on Tuesday, Jan. 16, at noon. This being a 30-day session, the session's intended focus is on the finances of New Mexico, as opposed to a 60-day session, which also focuses on big policy issues. As President of New Mexico Tech, I'm spending the majority of the legislative session in Santa Fe, shepherding bills of importance to higher education, and specifically to our university.

The first week of the session was highlighted by Governor Susanna Martinez's state of the state address, in which the Governor indicated the amount of anticipated new revenue is \$330 million, as compared to the original \$199 million estimated by the Legislative Finance Committee in December. This upturn in revenue will most likely enable higher education to avoid cuts for the first time in two years. In fact, higher education may see a slight increase in funding. Governor Martinez also spoke to the value of STEM education and has made it one of her top priorities.

The Council of University Presidents is pursuing a 4% redistribution and 2% overall increase in new base revenue to the formula, which will help the vast majority of universities (including NMT) and community colleges experience a budget increase in the next fiscal year. We are hopeful for a 1.5% increase in compensation for all state employees, including higher education staff and faculty. In addition we are working on our single General Obligation Bond request, \$7.1 million for the renovation of Brown Hall.

I welcome NMT faculty, staff and students to celebrate New Mexico Tech Day at the legislature on February 5. This event will include a visit from New Mexico's former U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, who will be on hand to receive the 2018 Earth Science Achievement Award in Public Policy from the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources at New Mexico Tech.

If you or anyone from your department plans to be in Santa Fe visiting either the state capitol building or a legislator, please email David Manzano, NMT's Director of Government Affairs (david.manzano@nmt.edu) in advance so we can prepare for your visit and provide any pertinent information that may contribute to your trip.

I wish you all a fruitful and prosperous Spring '18 semester. Let's make the next four months our best yet.

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Stephen Wells
New Mexico Tech President