

Dec 6th 2019

Dear President Stokes,

As the flagship institution of education in New Mexico, UNM has the opportunity to be on the forefront of climate justice by equipping its students with the knowledge, skills and experience to respond to the ever-growing challenges posed by the climate crisis. We all need to work together to nurture a habitable planet for future generations, and to play our part in building a greener and cleaner future for all.

As you know, the scientific community recently warned that we only have a decade to drastically reduce our carbon emissions or face the existential threat of runaway climate disruption. In New Mexico, we are already experiencing the impacts of climate change including worsening droughts, water scarcity, and wildfires. Around the world the devastating impacts of climate change include agricultural disruption that undermines vulnerable economies forcing massive human migrations, increasing storm severity that destroys infrastructure, geopolitical instability, and loss of biodiversity leading to the collapse of the very ecosystems we depend upon for human civilization. In short climate change poses an unprecedented existential threat to humanity, and the time to act is now.

Despite decades of warnings from the scientific community about the impending threat of climate change, and mounting evidence of the physical, economic, social, and ecological consequences of a warming planet, almost no meaningful progress has been made to address this threat. We procrastinate at our own peril, and we must work together to develop solutions that will preserve a habitable environment for future generations.

In keeping with UNM's mission to "provide services that enhance New Mexicans' quality of life and promote economic development," and to provide "services directly to the City and State" this institution has a responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all New Mexico residents who will be negatively impacted by climate change. As an integral part of our local community, and as an institution invested with resources to improve the lives of all New Mexicans, UNM has a social and ethical responsibility to help guide the transition into a new future in a just and equitable way.

LEAF demands that UNM Declare a Climate Emergency as a response to the severity and urgency of this crisis.

This demand advises three clear and distinct goals:

- 1) **Regenerative Campus** - Create a carbon free and waste free campus. This includes 100% renewable energy and a zero waste campus by 2030.

- 2) **Invest in Environmentally Aware Education and Research** - Invest in educational programs that empower students to understand their role in facilitating a just and equitable transition to a new energy economy. Develop curricula and infrastructure that prioritizes innovative research to help New Mexico prepare for the negative impacts of climate change and accelerate the transition to an economy free of fossil fuels that benefits all New Mexicans.

- 3) **Divest from Fossil Fuels** - The Regents of the University should permanently eliminate all funds that invest in fossil fuels their portfolio by 2025. UNM cannot claim to promote the interests of its students while investing in fossil fuel companies and economic systems that jeopardize their future.

We would like to meet with you by Jan 30th to discuss how UNM can achieve these three goals and become a leader in the fight to avert climate chaos. Thank you for taking an active interest in safeguarding our future and we look forward to working with you as we transition towards a more just, habitable and safe planet.

Signed,
UNM LEAF (Leaders for Environmental Action and Foresight)