



LOS ALAMOS

Student Services Newsletter

JANUARY 2026

2025 PAWS AWARD WINNERS

UNM-Los Alamos would like to honor the four recipients of Phi Theta Kappa’s 2025 PAWS (People Appreciate Wonderful Staff) Award. Recipients were nominated by the student body, then selected by members of PTK. They selected one staff member and three faculty members: Robin Kelly, Chemistry Lecturer III; Lori Tepley, registrar; Tiffany Trent, adjunct instructor of English; and Gina Peterson, adjunct instructor of mathematics. Since we have recently featured Dr. Kelly in the newsletter, we will profile the latter three winners this month.

PAWS AWARD WINNER

LORI TEPLEY



Lori has worked for UNM-Los Alamos for six years, and this is her first time winning the PAWS Award.

Lori moved here from Broomfield, Colorado. Before that, she had lived in California, China, and Arizona. She earned her BA in English from the University of Southern California. She had mostly been involved in church work before deciding to come to Los Alamos when her

husband was awarded a contract at LANL. He is now employed there full-time, and she plans to work here until he retires.

Lori says that her goal is “to provide good customer service. I want to make a process that can be very scary a little more manageable.” To do that, she works hard to understand UNM policies. “The better I know the rules, the better I can guide our students.” Even though working in registration requires an attention to detail, Lori sees herself as a big-picture person: “My job is really soft-skill work. I just want to help people.”

In addition to her work here, Lori works at Pajarito Ski Hill during the winter. She also volunteers in the nursery at her church.

Lori currently has one dog, Skippy, who is a 15-year-old chihuahua / Jack Russell mix. Even though he is slowing down a little, he can still jump like a champion.



Lori in the Grand Canyon

Lori raised four children here, and they all graduated from Los Alamos High School. She is currently planning for the marriage of her second daughter, which is going to take place in Santa Fe.

FOLLOW US



PAWS AWARD WINNER GINA PETERSON



Originally from the Chicago area, Gina first came to New Mexico to attend New Mexico Tech. She met her husband there, and they moved to Los Alamos when he was recruited by LANL.

Gina teaches Foundational Math and Intermediate Algebra. She

spends a lot of time helping each student, since they arrive with very different academic backgrounds. She says, "I want to make sure that students with different educational backgrounds can move onto higher-level math with confidence."

Gina enjoys hiking in the area around her house on North Mesa. She has an active dog who likes going with her.

Gina listens to a variety of music, but her favorite artist is Amy Grant.

Besides teaching, Gina is a lactation consultant who works with a number of mothers, most of them first-time parents.

She also busies herself with her children. She is currently homeschooling two of them, and the other three are in college. On the weekends, she works with the "Little Flowers," a Catholic girl's club.

Congratulations to Gina for being recognized as a 2025 PAWS Award winner.



IMPORTANT DATES

January 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, campus closed

January 20: Spring classes begin

January 30: Last day to add sections and change credit hours on LoboWEB.

February 6: Last day to drop with a "W" grade and receive 100% tuition refund on LoboWEB

March 15 - 22: Spring break. No classes, but the campus is open.

March 23: Start of second-half-semester classes

April 18: Last day to drop without dean's permission on LoboWEB

May 8: Last day to drop with Dean's permission

May 11 - 16: Final exams

May 15: Commencement!

WRITING CLUB

UNM-Los Alamos Writing Club typically meets every Thursday at 2:00 pm in Room B-20, which is downstairs from the library. We have enjoyed a variety of writing challenges, such as writing short stories, poems, and songs. We also talk about longer works that people are creating, such as novels and poetry collections.

Writers of all levels are welcome. Also, we are open to staff, faculty, students, and members of the community.

You can come even if you only have an idea of something to write, or if you just want to read what other people are working on.

We are also open to reading academic work.

If you have any questions, please email Jef Bateman at jbateman1@unm.edu.



PAWS AWARD WINNER TIFFANY TRENT



Tiffany Trent is the newest employee to receive a PAWS Award, having taught here for two years. In addition to teaching here, she also teaches for Southern New Hampshire University's Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program.

Tiffany lives in the Jemez, and she moved here

from Blacksburg, Virginia when her husband got a job at LANL.

Tiffany has had an adventurous life, dedicating much of her life to wildlife preservation. For years she helped her husband trap and tag bears in the Chinese hinterland for conservation research, and she worked as the English language editor-in-chief for Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden in Hong Kong.

Tiffany is a successful author. She has published eight young adult fantasy novels, and she is currently working on a series of adult romantasy novels that she plans to self-publish.

At home, Tiffany has two children who attend school in Los Alamos. She also has a small menagerie consisting of two dogs, four cats, and two guinea pigs.

Tiffany is recovering from extensive ankle surgery, so she doesn't get out to the woods as frequently as she would like. Still, she is learning about local birds and mushrooms.

Tiffany musical taste is very eclectic, including "everything from Appalachian folk ballads to the latest K-Pop."

We are honored to have such an accomplished person teaching on our campus. Congratulations to Tiffany for being selected for the PAWS Award!



Tiffany and her husband, Andrew Trent, hiking Tent Rocks

CIC INTERNSHIP FOR SPRING

Socrates is quoted as saying, "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new." As we start a new year, try something new and apply for an internship this semester. You'll gain professional experience, build your resume, and earn a \$900 stipend. Come to Student Services today to speak with Brittany Carpenter about one of a dozen available internships in Spring 2026.

Also, please consider coming to the CIC Meet and Greet on Wednesday, January 28 from 11:30 am-12:30 pm in Room 230 (see attached flyer).

You can contact Brittany Carpenter at brcarpenter@unm.edu.



WELCOME INGRID GOLDSMITH BACK TO UNM-LA



UNM-Los Alamos Student Services is pleased to welcome Ingrid Goldsmith back to our campus after a 10-month absence while she ran a family members' animal facility. She is working as a Senior Student Enrollment Specialist. Ingrid says, "I am the first stop for all students interested in attending our college. I handle admissions, transcripts, and

dual credit students (high school students interested in taking college courses before graduating)."

Ingrid spent her early years in the Jemez, and her family moved to Los Alamos when it was time for her to start school. She was educated at Los Alamos Public Schools and graduated from Los Alamos High. While there, she was active with Olions as a theater technician. She loves the theater, and she enjoyed being part of the performance without having to be on stage.

After high school, she came to UNM-Los Alamos, where she earned an AA in Pre-Business Administration. From here, she moved on to Northern New Mexico College, where she earned a BBA in Business and Management. She says, "The whole time I was in college, I had one goal—to graduate with zero debt." That being said, she also values the education she received, claiming that "it gave me the tools required to manage a business. They really delved into the skills required to succeed."

Now that she is back, Ingrid says her goal for her job is "to make myself more known and available to students."



Outside of work, Ingrid dreams one day of being self-sufficient. She says, "My hobbies, such as gardening and cultivating sourdough, all relate to this dream. I love knowing where my food comes from, and I don't like relying on a system to provide groceries. I am always learning

more about gardening and producing food, and I hope that one day I will be able to provide for myself."

Along with caring for her garden, she spends much of her time with her two dogs – Buford, her 15-year-old pug, and Koda, her 3-year-old Malinois mutt – embracing a hands-on lifestyle that reflects her love for home, learning, and independence.

Please come by to welcome Ingrid back, or you can email her at igoldsmith@unm.edu.



ADA STATEMENT

The University of New Mexico-Los Alamos is committed to the recognition and the proactive pursuit of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The University makes reasonable accommodation for religious observances, national origin practices of a student and to the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified student, unless such accommodations have the end result of fundamentally altering a program or service or placing an undue hardship on the operation of the University. Qualified students with disabilities should contact Student Services for information regarding accommodations in the academic and/or employment setting. If you have a special need and require an auxiliary aide and/or service, please contact Student Services at (505) 662-5919.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY PROFILE: DANNELLE KIRVEN



We observe Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 19. This year, we would like to honor native New Mexican and former UNM employee Dannelle M. Kirven, who is carrying on the legacy of Dr. King as the current Executive Director of the New Mexico Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission.

Dannelle is originally from Clovis. She was recruited to The University of New Mexico as a participant in the African-American Student Services Summer Bridge Program. She participated in the program only because they agreed to let her take some time away to go to a J. Cole concert. Once she met the staff at AASS, she was blown away. She tells us, "I liked the school, but that Summer Bridge program tipped the scale. What they did to make me feel that I was welcome and that I had a place at UNM was amazing. I loved the program so much that, as soon as I was approved for work study, I went and asked if I could work for them."

Dannelle says, "I really saw myself as a mentor, as someone whose job was to be as welcoming as the people who organized the Summer Bridge program that I participated in."

Dannelle's passion for public service led her to seek election as a senator for the Associated Students at The University of New Mexico. In the spring of 2016, she became a member of her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc, for which she still does volunteer work. Dannelle was also a member of a Black Student Alliance and worked with her peers to address the climate at UNM for Black students. Their efforts led to the creation of the UNM Black Living Learning Community.

Dannelle was able to parlay her student position into a full-time job, eventually transitioning to be the department's Professional Support Intern during her final semester in 2019. She would later be promoted to the role of Senior Student Success Specialist. Altogether, she spent nearly 10 years working for AASS at UNM. In 2021, she was selected as the New Professional of the Year by the National Association for Black Cultural Centers because of her work uplifting historically marginalized communities.

Dannelle earned her MBA from UNM in 2024, and she was selected as the Executive Director of the Commission in 2025.

The New Mexico Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission was created to "bring Dr. King's message of nonviolent social action to all citizens of New Mexico." Dannelle's goal for the organization is to have a presence in every county in the state and to coordinate efforts with The King Center, a national organization based in Atlanta.

Dannelle obviously has a busy schedule, but she tries to go to the Blue Hole once a year. She also enjoys flying kites and spending time with her nieces and nephews. She is a big fan of *Grey's Anatomy* and has rewatched series several times. Another passion that has helped her in her job is designing flyers and other promotional materials.

UNM-LA Student Services thanks Dannelle for her service to our state. The best way to reach out to Dannelle is by email: dannelle.kirven@mlkjrc.nm.gov.



Dannelle at Meredith Grey's house in Seattle.

WELCOME BACK STUDENTS

Ring in the new semester with us!

Wednesday, January 28

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Building 2, Student Center



Enjoy **FREE** cookies and UNM-LA swag!

We hope to see you all there!

BE SURE TO ALSO CHECK OUT THE
CIC MEET & GREET

Building 2, Room 230



11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Grab some pizza and meet with local
businesses offering Spring Internships!

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Services is a central hub of information for prospective, current, and former students to find assistance and answers to questions about admissions, financial aid, registration, academic advising, career services, and other resources on campus.



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Admissions

The Office of Admissions can help if you have questions or are ready to apply to UNM-Los Alamos. The Office of Admissions can provide application instructions for degree-seeking, non-degree, dual credit/concurrent, international, senior, or transfer students. Complete details can be found on the Admissions page: losalamos.unm.edu/admissions.

Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid provides information on financial resources available to degree-seeking students. These resources may include scholarships, grants, and loans from the federal or state government, independent organizations, and/or UNM-LA itself. UNM-LA determines financial aid eligibility from the FAFSA, so please take time to file this document online every year. Don't assume you are ineligible—there are many opportunities to pursue.

Enrollment Services

The Office of Enrollment Services at UNM-LA processes high school and other college transcripts of current and former students. The registrar can also answer questions about dual credit and concurrent enrollment, VA benefits, and graduation requirements.

Academic Advising & Student Success

Academic advisors can provide guidance through the admission process, degree and course selection, and registration. Advisors also assist with changing a major, following up instructors' early alerts, filing graduation petitions, and planning for baccalaureate work. Advisors can also help resolve registration errors. Degree-seeking students must meet with an advisor before registering for each semester to check that their chosen classes will continue to make progress toward their degrees and to have their advising hold lifted. The Director of Student Affairs coordinates ADA accommodation services for students, and oversees academic advisement, student retention, and success initiatives.

Career Services

Student Services offers career services to assist students with self-exploration, selecting a major, and opportunities for gaining experience in their chosen fields. Career services also include resume reviews, internship connections, job fairs, quantifying or translating skills, sharing job postings, and building connections between employers and our students.