LAW SCHOOL QUIETLY PILING UP NATIONAL RANKINGS

The University of New Mexico School of Law recently was named one of the nation’s best value law schools by the National Jurist, a national magazine for law students. Affordable education, great job prospects and high bar passage rates propelled UNM’s law school into the seventh spot in the nationwide survey.

This accolade was the latest in a string of high national rankings for the law school in 2011. The U.S. News and World Report recently ranked the UNM School of Law as the 10th most popular law school in the nation, placing it in the same league as Yale and Harvard law schools. In a related ranking, U.S. News and World Report ranked the school’s clinical program seventh in the country.

“UNM is one of the most popular law schools in the nation because it is a supportive and inclusive community where there is an emphasis on practical lawyering skills, and students really learn how to be lawyers,” said Susan Mitchell, assistant dean for admissions and financial aid. “This experience is delivered at a relatively affordable tuition, producing a great value for students.”

A few months ago, Hispanic Business magazine listed the UNM School of Law as the fifth best law school in the country for Hispanics. The ranking was based on the number of Hispanic students enrolled, Hispanic faculty members, degrees conferred to Hispanics and progressive programs aimed at securing enrollment of Hispanic students. Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, visited the law school in September.

“The UNM School of Law is an institution that doesn’t only espouse platitudes about being inclusive. Rather, it truly embraces the ideal of providing an inclusive environment where Hispanics and other minorities can excel in a rigorous educational environment,” said Alex Flores, a second-year student and president of the Mexican American Law Student Association. “It has long been a leader and trailblazer in providing such an atmosphere. It was one of the reasons I chose UNM and it has not only met my expectations, it has clearly exceeded them.”

In May, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan gave the commencement address at the law school. It was her first public speaking engagement anywhere after being appointed to the Supreme Court in 2010.

The UNM School of Law is the only law school in New Mexico. About 340 students attend the school, with about 115 enrolled in the first-year class. By design, the school has remained this small in order to provide students a more hands-on learning experience.
and individual attention from professors. Its student-to-faculty ratio of about 10 to 1 is one of the best in the nation.

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