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# UNM Law Connect

March 2021

## **U.S. News & World Report ranks Clinic #9, UNM Law #11 for Diversity, Natural Resources & Environmental Law (NREL) Program #34**

The U.S. News & World Report rankings came out today and we are thrilled to share that our Law Clinic moved into the top 10, the school was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> for diversity, and the NREL Program held steady at 34<sup>th</sup> for Environmental Law. Not only do these rankings reflect the hard work and dedication of our faculty and students, but they also demonstrate our school's commitment to these programs and the diversity of our state. Please join us in celebrating these well-deserved accolades!



### **Women Making History at UNM Law**

March is Women's History Month and our Law School is not short on history-making alumnae and faculty. Raquel Marquez Frankel was the only woman in the Law School's first entering class in 1947. The following year, Joan Robinson Roberts and Margaret Keiper Dailey enrolled and became the Law School's first female graduates in 1951. In 1962, Justice Mary Walters graduated and went on to become the first female District Court judge in NM, Chief Judge on the NM Court of Appeals, and Justice on the NM Supreme Court. In 1971, Yvonne Knight became the first Native American woman to graduate from our law school. In 1972, Anne Bingaman became the Law School's first female law

professor, and during her time at the Law School played a pivotal role in the adoption of the equal rights amendment in the NM Constitution. In 1973, Justice Petra Jimenez Maes (Ret.) and Patricia Madrid became the first Hispanic women graduates. That same year Pamela Minzner joined the faculty as the 2<sup>nd</sup> female law professor and later went on to become the first female Chief Justice of the NM Supreme Court. In 1974, Barbara Brown Simmons became the first African American woman graduate. By 1977, UNM Law had one of the highest percentages of female students in the country. There have been many other female firsts and trailblazers since then. In 2003, Suellyn Scarnecchia became our first (and only) female dean. See below for alumna Deb Haaland's amazing firsts. Blaze on Law Lobas!

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**We want to feature you in our next newsletter and on social media!**

Share your accomplishments and accolades with the Law School community.  
Contact [Melissa Lobato](#).

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## Student News



### **Erin Marshall to Present at National Birth Rights Bar Association Conference**

3L Erin Marshall's paper *Maternal Mortality in U.S. Federal Policies: Success, Failure, and Opportunity* was selected by the National Birth Rights Bar Association for presentation at their 3rd annual conference. The Childbirth and Law Conference will be held virtually on April 16-17, 2021. Marshall will present with practicing attorneys from around the country on a panel entitled "Birth Justice Policy Outlook."



### **Law Students Provide Insight Into STEM & Law Connections to Society of Women Engineers**

3L Kristen Burby (B.S. Environmental Resource Management) and 2L Samantha Catalano (B.S. Biology) spoke to the UNM Society of Women Engineers in March to encourage STEM students to consider how a legal education could help further their career goals. Burby and Catalano shared their path from STEM training and careers to law school. Professor Sonia Gipson Rankin, who also has a STEM background, joined them in providing connections between law and STEM.



### **UNM Law Clinic Partners with ADOBE Program to Give Previously Incarcerated Youth a Brighter Future**

Students in the Child & Family Justice Clinic are working with the groundbreaking ADOBE Program to respond to the needs of youths who have been incarcerated at the Bernalillo County Youth Services Center ("YSC"). The ADOBE Program provides medical, mental health, navigation, and education services to previously incarcerated teenagers and their families. Through the Child &

Family Justice Clinic, students offer program participants advice for various legal matters, including housing conditions and eviction, public benefits, guardianships, domestic violence,

teen parent custody and child support, and emancipation. The ADOBE Program has been able to reduce the recidivism rate of participants in the program to just 21% compared to the national average of 70%. Read more about the ADOBE Program and our students' involvement [here](#).

## Faculty News

### Recent Faculty Publications:



#### [Professor Vinay Harpalani](#)

[Racial Triangulation, Interest-Convergence, and the Double-Consciousness of Asian Americans](#), Ga. St. U. L. Rev., forthcoming



#### [Professor Joseph A. Schremmer](#)

[Pore Space Property](#), 2021 Utah L. Rev. 1 (2021)

[Crystal Gazing: Foretelling the Next Decade in Oil and Gas Law](#), Rocky Mtn. Min. L. Inst. 5-1 (2020)



#### [Professor Laura Spitz](#)

[The Case for Outside Reverse Veil Piercing in New Mexico](#), 51 N.M. L. Rev. (forthcoming in 2021)

Laura Spitz & Eduardo Peñalver, [Nature's Personhood and Property's Virtues](#), 45 Harv. Env't L. Rev. 67 (2020)

### Recent Appearances:



#### [Professor Maryam Ahranjani](#)

- Presented "School 'Safety' Measures Jump Constitutional Guardrails" during the Feb. 10, 2021 [UNM Lightning Lounge](#)
- Quoted in a [KRWG News](#) story regarding the constitutionality of employers requiring employees to get the COVID 19 vaccine
- Featured in [JustPod podcast](#) regarding the findings of the ABA's Women in Criminal Justice Task Force and her

article "*Toughen Up, Buttercup vs. #TimesUp*," which documents those findings

- Quoted in the [Santa Fe Reporter](#) about the request for change of venue in the trial of the teenager accused in the death of local high school basketball star Fedonta "J.B." White



### Professor Vinay Harpalani

- Quoted in [Voice of America](#) publication regarding the Harvard admissions suit
- Featured in a [Harvard Crimson](#) video regarding the Harvard admissions suit



### Professor Sonia Gipson Rankin

- Interviewed on [NPR's All Things Considered](#) regarding jury selection in the Derek Chauvin trial

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## Alumni News



### Congresswoman Deb Haaland ('06) Becomes First Native American Cabinet Secretary in U.S. History

On March 15, alumna Deb Haaland was confirmed as the first Native American (female or otherwise) to serve in a president's cabinet. As Secretary of Interior,



### Alex Flores ('13) receives NHBA Top Lawyers Under 40 Award

Alex Flores ('13) was named a [2021 Top Lawyer Under 40](#) by the Hispanic National Bar Association. Flores is an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Albuquerque and a Law of War Instructor in the U.S. Marine Corps

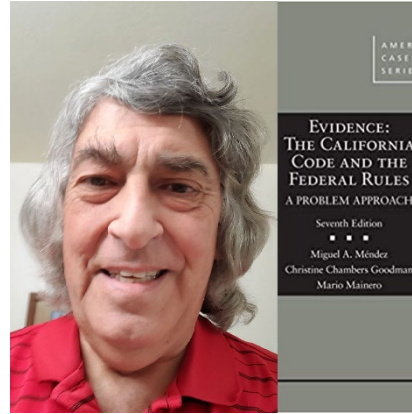
she will oversee public lands, endangered species and natural resources, as well as government-to-government relations between the U.S. and Native American tribes. Haaland also made history in 2018 when she was one of two of the first Native American women to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Be Fierce, Secretary Haaland!



### **Kristin Casper ('09) becomes Interim General Counsel for Greenpeace International**

For over a decade, Kristin Casper has been working with Greenpeace International fighting for climate justice. Casper is the Senior Legal Counsel for Strategic Litigation and recently assumed the role of Interim General Counsel. She has been a part of many successful efforts demanding urgent and ambitious climate action, the rapid transition to renewable energy, and the protection of the right to a healthy environment. You can find out more about Casper and her work [here](#).

Reserves. The Award recognizes Flores for having demonstrated professional excellence, integrity, leadership, commitment to the Hispanic community, and dedication to improving the legal profession. The award was presented during the 2021 HNBA/VIA Corporate Counsel Conference on March 17.



### **Mario Mainero ('80) Publishes Textbook**

Mario Mainero ('80) and co-author Christine Chambers Goodman published *Evidence: The California Code and the Federal Rules, A Problem Approach* (7<sup>th</sup> ed. 2019) ISBN # 978-1-64020-812-4. Mainero is a Professor of Academic Achievement and Executive Director of Bar Preparation and Academic Achievement at the Dale E. Fowler School of Law at Chapman University. You can learn more about Mainero and his career [here](#).

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## Donor News

### **Lisa Curtis ('93) strives to protect and enhance the education and lives of children in New Mexico**

Lisa Curtis has dedicated her career to helping others and is known in the legal community for protecting the rights of children. In 2014, the LK Curtis Children's Fund established the Michael Hart Children's Advocacy Fund Scholarship. The full-tuition scholarship is awarded to law students pursuing careers to benefit and advocate on behalf of children in New Mexico. Through her scholarship, Lisa is preparing the next generation of advocates to fight

for New Mexico's children who face greater educational and socio-economic challenges than most children in the nation. Our thanks to Lisa for supporting our students and improving the lives of children in our state.

## Upcoming Events



### **Social Justice Book Club**

**Thursday, April 1 at 6:00 PM**

**Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents** by Isabel Wilkerson

To sign up for the Social Justice Book Club events, please email [Professor Elizabeth Elia](mailto:elizabeth.elia@unm.edu).



### **Free Animal Law CLE**

**Friday, April 16**

**11:30 AM-1 PM (MST)**

**2021 Legislative Roundup of animal-related legislation**

*This program has been approved by NM MCLE for 1.5 General CLE credits*

Register [here](#).



PRESENT THE 18TH ANNUAL  
**LAW SCHOLARSHIPS CLASSIC**  
FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021  
UNM CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF COURSE

**Friday, June 4, 2021**

**UNM Championship Golf Course**  
Tee Times Available Throughout the Day\*

[Sponsorship & Pricing Details](#)

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Not able to make the tournament in person? You can still be a sponsor and help provide scholarships for students.

Proceeds benefit the UNM Law Alumni/ae Association, which provides over \$75,000 per year in scholarships to UNM Law students.

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