

An Essential Guide to Reaching Out to UNM Alumni

Here are resources available to help departments communicate with their alumni.

Why You Should Contact Alumni

Your graduates want to hear from you – their department/program. Your graduates are proud of their work and degree. They want to be proud of their program and hear about the success of its students, faculty and research. They want to feel connected with the part of the University with which they are most closely associated. When you stay in touch with your graduates, it builds their pride in their degree and increases the capacity for your program to expand.

When alumni are engaged, they are more likely to financially support your programs. Communication from you is key to developing this relationship.

How Should You Communicate With Your Alumni?

As you consider ways to communicate with your alumni, consider these things:

- Do you have a staff member who can add coordinating this communication to current responsibilities?
- How many alumni do you have and want to contact?
- How often can you and your staff identify and write content to share?
- What types of events, stories or information would you like to share with your alums?
- What type of budget do you have if you want to design, print and send mail to your alumni?

Ways to Promote Your Department and Its Successes

There are resources available to you on campus to help you share your department /program message. Do you have a great story about a student, faculty member or alum? There are many professionals within UNM who are looking for these stories to share. If you can send information about the individual, their accomplishment and why it's important to the field of study, department, UNM or the larger community, they may be able to assist in writing a profile, promoting the accomplishment within UNM, promoting the accomplishment with local, regional, national or industry media, and/or sharing the information on a website or through social media.

Contact these departments to share your stories:

- University Communication & Marketing (UCAM)
<http://ucam.unm.edu/news-services/submit-story.html>
<http://marcomm.unm.edu/branding-support/notable-people.html>
<http://unmproud.unm.edu/nominate-a-lobo/>
- UNM Alumni Association alumni@unm.edu or mirageeditor@unm.edu
- UNM Foundation marcom@unmfund.org

Deciding If You Should Create a Newsletter

Creating and editing a formal newsletter can seem like a daunting task. Yet, your alumni appreciate hearing about their program, professors, research, awards, events, and classmates. Sharing this information creates pride in their degree, the program, and the University. Typical newsletters include faculty and emeritus faculty updates, undergraduate and graduate information, awards, research breakthroughs, featured alumni stories, department events, a message from the dean or department chair, and thanks to donors or volunteers. Because of the labor intensive nature of a newsletter and the costs associated with printed newsletters, often a department can produce only one newsletter per year. While the UNM Arts & Sciences Development Office & UNM Foundation cannot staff the production of department newsletters, there are other resources available to you.

Deciding To Send a Printed Piece or Not

Typical print newsletters are time consuming to write, design, proof and print. Print and postage can be costly depending on how many alumni you are sending it to, how much your newsletter weighs and if you send it first-class. (Some newsletters can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars to print!) Instead, we encourage departments to:

- Post current information and announcements on your department's website.
- Send short announcements to alumni with links to full stories on your website via Broadcast Emails.

What is a "Broadcast Email"?

Broadcast Emails are emails that are sent to many individuals at once and comply with federal "CAN-SPAM Act" requirements. This tool is offered by the UNM Alumni Association and staffed by the UNM Foundation. It is simple to request through an online request form (<https://www.unmfund.org/broadcast-email-request-form/>). Depending on your resources, you can provide information (links, photos, and content) and the Foundation staff will create an electronic email or you can provide the HTML code for the Foundation staff to upload within the Broadcast Email system. (If you provide the HTML code, please contact the Foundation Marketing & Communication staff in advance for instructions and best practices.) We recommend identifying a staff person who can be the point of contact for submitting all your broadcast email requests and answering questions about the request as needed. This will help streamline the process.

Suggestions on What to Send to Your Alumni

Instead of a long, formal newsletter, consider a series of briefer, timelier messages. Many departments are now using Broadcast Emails to send a brief note from the Dean or Chair with a couple of good photos and links to more detailed information on the department's website. The Foundation Communication & Marketing office has a few examples for these shorter communications to help you identify ways to share this information with your audience.

There are certain times of the year you may want to consider sending your alumni information through email messages, announcements, etc.

- Back to School or Homecoming in the Fall
- The New Year or Lobo Day (UNM's birthday is celebrated on February 28)
- Graduation and end of year in May
- Faculty retirement celebrations and state or national conferences
- Lectures or other events hosted by your department
- Faculty and/or student awards/accomplishments
- Promote a volunteer opportunity (such as guest speakers or mentors) to your alumni and reengage them in your department's activities
- Promote a scholarship, research fund, or faculty fund to your alumni and encourage financial support (Request an online giving page at: <https://www.unmfund.org/online-giving-fund-request-form/>)

It is recommended that each department works with their school or college to find ways that messages can be included in larger distributions, rather than several emails going to smaller groups.

Many alumni are unaware they can give back to their department with financial support. If you have a scholarship, research fund, or faculty fund that you would like to encourage your alumni to give to, you can work with your development staff to create or update an online giving page for a fund within your department and promote those opportunities for giving in your alumni communications.

About Alumni Information

The UNM Alumni Association/Alumni Relations Office and the UNM Foundation regularly maintain and update the alumni database with alumni information, including name, degrees, graduation years, contact information and, when available, employment, student, and/or alumni activities. The alumni database has current contact information for over 192,000 UNM alumni. We continually work to update this data through National Change of Address (NCOA) updates and other methods.

If you are concerned about your alumni not receiving a Broadcast Email or how many of your alumni have a mailing address, the Alumni office or the Arts & Sciences Development Staff can provide a data breakdown showing how many of your department or program alumni have an email address on file and how many only have mailing addresses. If you choose to, you can send a printed item to those alumni without an email address on file.

This list is available to staff for review when needed and as requested. For more information about how to request an alumni list and the guidelines for list usage, please email: advancehelp@unmfund.org

Contact Information

For more information or for assistance, please contact the following individuals:

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