



Strong partnerships with our northern New Mexico neighbors

November 1, 2014



I was pleased to participate in the Rio Arriba Leadership Summit on October 8 in Española, which was sponsored by the Rio Arriba County Commission. I came away with a renewed appreciation for how important Los Alamos National Laboratory's partnerships are with Rio Arriba and the surrounding counties in improving the quality of education, expanding community giving in northern New Mexico and diversifying the economy.

Compared with other less isolated, more water-rich and economically robust areas of the country, northern New Mexico faces a unique mix of challenges. To meet these challenges, it is incumbent on all of us to work together and rely on our respective strengths for a healthier, more economically vibrant New Mexico. I was encouraged by the energy that I saw at the Summit by northern New Mexico's community and institutional leaders who strive for continuous improvement in the region.

The Laboratory pledges to stay engaged, be supportive of these initiatives and be a partner in economic vitality.

In 2013, the Laboratory purchased more than \$32 million in products and services from Rio Arriba County businesses alone, and the over 1,500 Laboratory employees from Rio Arriba County earned more than \$133 million in salaries. Furthermore, Lab employees and retirees provided over 35,000 volunteer hours to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and nonprofit programs in Rio Arriba County that same year, and we have awarded close to \$600,000 in scholarship funds to Rio Arriba County students since 2007. Our contributions have been sustained and significant.

Additional contributions come from the LANS Board of Governors, who recently approved \$3 million in support of education, economic development and community giving in northern New Mexico for yet another year. This action demonstrates our bond with the community, its people and businesses.

I am proud of the Laboratory's work with its neighbors to strengthen education, help diversify the economy and raise our collective quality of life. I am personally committed to extending that work and supporting promising new efforts from the community – such as the recent Rio Arriba Leadership Summit.

- *Charles F. McMillan*

Los Alamos National Laboratory

www.lanl.gov

(505) 667-7000

Los Alamos, NM

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