

The University of New Mexico Foundation Developments

SPRING 2018

ILLUMINATING INJUSTICE

Endowed Professorship to Address Inequity from a Sociological Perspective

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

“**T**he fascination of sociology lies in the fact that its perspective makes us see in a new light the very world in which we have lived all our lives.” This quote from the late Peter Berger, one of the luminaries in the field, greets visitors to the UNM Department of Sociology’s website.

This fascination ignited Dr. Maxine Baca Zinn’s lifelong explorations and inquiries. A Santa Fe native with Spanish and Mexican familial roots, Baca Zinn earned her BA degree in sociology at California State University-Long Beach. During her first week as a UNM graduate student in 1968, she met Peter Berger at a reception; she soon came to the realization that she was truly a sociologist.

“I didn’t understand my place in society and why some people rejected me and others embraced me,” said Baca Zinn. “I wanted to understand my parents and ancestors. I decided that sociology was the answer to all the important questions in the world.”

The recurring themes of Baca Zinn’s work center on issues of social inequality, especially for women, families and communities of color. Her scholarly pursuits led to new perspectives she shared as an acclaimed author, researcher and educator. A long-held desire to support UNM in a meaningful way inspired her to recently establish the first endowed professorship in sociology at the College of Arts and Sciences.



Dr. Maxine Baca Zinn

Baca Zinn appreciates the encouragement and mentoring she received at UNM. “It was a good time to be in sociology,” she said. “Universities were at the forefront of social change; our professors encouraged us to engage in social criticism using sociological research and theory. I was interested in looking at those who are marginalized in society.”

“My professors guided me to do good research,” she added, “and taught me the skills I needed to communicate well with students and the public. I only left UNM because there was no doctoral program.” Baca Zinn received her PhD from the University of Oregon in 1978 and went on to a successful career in academia, eventually joining the sociology department at Michigan State University in 1990, where she was senior research associate at the Julian Samora

Research Institute. Baca Zinn served as president of the Western Social Science Association and received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from the UNM Department of Sociology. Textbooks she created are also a vital part of many curricula.

Baca Zinn always thought she would return to UNM someday. Although she recently retired as professor emerita from Michigan State, and Boston is now her home, in a sense, this endowment fulfills that wish. “There are nationally known sociologists on the faculty at UNM,” she said, “and my hope is that this professorship will support more social inequalities research in this strong department.”

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FROM BOARDROOM TO CLASSROOM

Anderson School Alumnus Helps New Generations Prepare for Business Success

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

After an extraordinary career in the private sector, serving as CEO of nine different companies, James G. (Jim) Ellis delights in bringing his depth of real-world experience into academia. He currently serves as dean of the University of Southern California’s (USC) Marshall School of Business. “When I was first offered an opportunity to teach at USC,” he said, “I found that I loved being with students and contributing to their futures.”

The son of a banker, Ellis grew up doing his homework in his father’s offices, and always knew he would study business. His love of golf and New Mexico’s climate influenced his decision to attend UNM after graduating from Highland High School in Albuquerque. “The golf programs at UNM were really good,” he recalled, “and I could play all year round!”

Ellis earned a BBA degree in 1968 from UNM’s Anderson School of Management (ASM) and his MBA from Harvard in 1970. Although he has lived, worked and traveled far from New Mexico, his connections here remain strong, and his support for ASM unwavering.

The endowed Ellis Family Scholarship Fund benefits ASM undergraduates. In addition, Ellis made a significant gift to the capital campaign for the McKinnon Center for Management that helped build the state-of-the-art learning environment, slated to begin serving students this fall. When ASM invited Ellis to deliver the keynote address at its 2017 Hall of Fame dinner, he was pleased to accept. He also presented the commencement speech at a UNM winter graduation ceremony.

“Jim has never forgotten his roots at UNM,” said ASM Dean Craig White. “His contributions to the School are indicative of his generosity and commitment. They will benefit students for decades to come, through assisting with educational expenses, and providing the quality of facility necessary for an outstanding business education.”

With perspectives gained from his distinguished career, Ellis understands the challenges and opportunities that businesses, students and educators face in a fast-paced world of shifting economic centers, blockchains, crypto-currencies and tax reforms.

“Students learn differently today,” he noted. “Their attention span is different, and they’ve been acclimated to learn in ‘soundbites.’ We have to provide undergraduate education that is relevant and challenging,



Left to right, Brian Sullivan, Jim Ellis and Rob Ellis take a break during a golf outing at Cypress Point Club in Pebble Beach, California, which ranked third on Golf Digest’s America’s 100 Greatest Golf Courses of 2017-18. Brian and Rob are Jim’s sons.
Photo: Courtesy James Ellis

and emphasize critical thinking, because some topics will be outdated by the time they graduate.”

Ellis is passionate about providing access to higher education. “College is where many of us first declared independence from home,” he said. “It was a game changer, and we need to remember that’s still what it is for kids today.”

“In our philanthropy, it is important to allow students who achieve admission to UNM to attend, regardless of their financial situation,” Ellis stated. “Sometimes these students don’t really know how bright they are. And if you have a business here, bring students in as interns,” he advised. “They’ll get an opportunity to see what your business is like, and you’ll get to know them. Your future lies with the kids who study here, want to live here, and look for job opportunities here.” ■

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THE NEXT GENERATION OF GIVERS

Middle School Student Council Fundraises for UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center

BY ANNA ADAMS

The next generation of givers is starting young. For the second year in a row, the Taylor Middle School Student Council in Albuquerque has raised money for breast cancer research at the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center.

“It’s a way to have fun but still raise money for a good cause,” said Lily Rich, a seventh-grader and Student Council member.

Araceli Sias, the seventh-grade Student Council vice president, agreed with her classmate. “I thought our fundraising was really good,” she said. “My mom’s proud of me, especially since she’s a breast cancer doctor.”

Both girls joined the Student Council because they wanted to get more involved in school and have fun with friends. They enjoy brainstorming and carrying out ideas to help their community.

Sueann Miller, sixth-grade social studies teacher and Student Council supervisor, loves seeing her students take on leadership roles.

“Seeing them step out, be bold, and have a voice—it’s exciting to watch them stand for something they believe in,” she said. “So many of them have been touched by cancer of some form. They know



Left to right, Taylor Middle School students Araceli Sias and Lily Rich and teacher Sueann Miller volunteer at Roadrunner Food Bank in Albuquerque. Photo: Courtesy Sueann Miller

somebody in their family or close to their family who has had cancer. They really know that this cause is worthy.”

Students sold pink ribbons during their lunch break during their first year of fundraising. This year it was pink stickers and pins. Their classmates loved it, wearing the stickers on their faces and

adding the pins to lanyards and jackets—a fun way to accessorize while adhering to the school dress code.

The council has undertaken other projects to help improve their school community. They participated in Mix It Up Day, part of an international campaign to encourage students to interact with others not in their usual social groups. The group also has held food drives for Thanksgiving, organized campus cleanups and given fifth-graders tours around the school.

“I’m trying to give them opportunities to see that there are bigger things in the community that you can give back to,” said Miller. “I like working with students who want to be leaders, the ones who step up and show leadership values, do extra work and go above and beyond.”

Miller wants her students to learn that their school experience is what they make of it. She hopes they will continue their fundraising activities for breast cancer research for many years to come.

“The more you’re involved in your community, the more you’re going to get out of it,” she said. “When they have a worthwhile cause and put effort into it, they’re doing their part for good.” ■

WALKING THE TALK

Retiring UNM Foundation Staffer Supports Scholarship Program She Manages

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

Since 1976, nearly 4,300 of New Mexico’s brightest high school seniors have realized their academic aspirations and graduated without the burden of student loans because of UNM’s Presidential Scholarship Program (PSP). Donors may fully sponsor a scholar annually for \$2,600 or contribute to a pool of funds at any giving level. UNM leverages full sponsors’ gifts by a factor of three to provide tuition, fees and books.

Cathy Bunch manages the PSP in her role as director of development in the UNM Foundation’s Office of Annual Giving. As one donor recently remarked to her, “There aren’t many opportunities where you can make a gift and later share a meal with the recipient, to see how your investment is actually doing.”

Return on investment (ROI) is a performance measure evaluating the efficiency of an investment relative to its cost. Applying this to student and graduate success, PSP sponsors receive an extraordinary ROI.

Cathy has immense passion for the program. She and her husband, David, have been sponsors for the past eight years she’s been with the PSP. “This is so important for New Mexico,”

she said. “Rewarding students who excel with an opportunity to attend UNM is a win-win for everyone.”

Sponsors and students meet at a variety of PSP events. “I love working with students, learning about what they want to do in the world,” Cathy said. “It’s exciting for sponsors to watch their students grow, and they may stay in touch for years. We have sponsors all over the country, including PSP alumni committed to showing appreciation for what they received.”

Cathy will retire from the UNM Foundation this summer. David, an elementary school principal, recently retired from Albuquerque Public Schools. “If you want to be a teacher, or attend graduate or medical school, it’s a great advantage not to have debt from your undergraduate degree chasing you,” David stated, “and this program opens doors for outstanding students from smaller towns across New Mexico.”

To celebrate the program’s 40th anniversary in 2016, Cathy resolved to add 40 new scholarships, and exceeded her goal. That wasn’t her only goal; she also encouraged UNM faculty and staff to support the PSP.



UNM Presidential Scholarship Program (PSP) sponsors David and Cathy Bunch pose with their scholar, Cierah Clowe, center, during a playful moment at the 2017 PSP Fall Mixer. Photo: Courtesy Jodi Newton

“If someone is passionate about higher education, it seems like a logical investment to make,” Cathy declared. “It means so much to students to see professors as sponsors. A faculty member may not be able to add a new wing to a college, or a new lab, but they can add exceptional students into their area of study.”

“The PSP is a transformational experience for students,” said Willie Romero, director of Annual Giving. “Cathy is a strong advocate for the program. Her proactive approach forges meaningful connections between sponsors and students.” ■

A GRANDFATHER’S GRATITUDE

Pediatric Nursing Students to Benefit from Endowed Scholarship Fund

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

On Memorial Day weekend in 2016, Alex O. Romero was heading to Taos for a relaxing holiday at his ancestral home, when suddenly something didn’t feel right. “I didn’t know why, but I felt very uncomfortable,” he recalled, “and turned back toward Albuquerque.” Then the phone call came.

Romero’s beloved granddaughters were seriously injured in a horrific car accident. Lilly was 5 years old; Daisy, 3, and Jasmine, 1. He lovingly calls them “my girls.” He credits the skilled medical staff in Pediatrics at UNM Hospital, especially the nurses, for preventing this trauma from becoming a tragedy.

Lilly was in pediatric intensive care, and Jasmine’s tiny body was encased in a cast from the waist down. Distressed family members barely left the hospital for weeks. “Our world was turned upside down,” Romero stated. “There was a time when we weren’t sure Lilly was going to make it. I’ll never forget the passion, commitment and empathy from the nursing staff, and their attention to my girls. They almost became a part of our own family.”

In gratitude for the expert care his granddaughters received, Romero has committed to fund an endowment at the UNM College of Nursing (CON).



Alex O. Romero

The Alex O. Romero Family Fund will benefit nurses and nursing students pursuing baccalaureate or advanced degrees leading to practice in pediatrics.

Since retiring from a successful career in banking, Romero has served in leadership roles at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, the Albuquerque

Hispano Chamber of Commerce and the New Mexico Hispanic Education Advisory Council. He is a champion of higher education, community support for cultural institutions, and economic opportunity. Romero also recently served on the UNM Board of Regents.

“It’s important to me that when everything is over and done with, my legacy is one of community and collaboration,” Romero said. His gift to the CON will support nurses and their important collaborative roles in health care.

“Nurses often see patients and families in crisis, and at their most vulnerable,” noted Dr. Carolyn Montoya, interim dean of the College of Nursing, who is also a longtime Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. “Nurses are valued advocates at times when people may not be thinking clearly, and provide much of the actual 24/7 ongoing care. Mr. Romero’s generous gift will help students interested in caring for children, our most vulnerable patients.”

His girls survived their ordeal, but Romero still remembers the faces and continuity of nursing care at every shift change. “This gift honors the dedication of nurses who take care of families and patients during times of desperation,” he said. “Our family will always be grateful.” ■

UNM People Changing Worlds

TALKING TO NEW MEXICAN’S HEARTS

100.3 The Peak Radiothon Inspires Giving to UNM Children’s Hospital

BY ANNA ADAMS

If you live in the Albuquerque metro area and have spent any time behind the wheel flipping radio stations, you’ve probably tuned in to JTD in the Morning on 100.3 The Peak. Jackie, Tony and Donnie (JTD!) are the well-known voices of the Albuquerque morning commute—and if you’ve ever listened to their show in late February, you’ve no doubt heard their long-running 100.3 The Peak Radiothon Benefiting UNM Children’s Hospital, which will celebrate 15 years in 2019.

Each year, Children’s Miracle Network and 100.3 The Peak produce Radiothon, the hospital’s largest philanthropic event. During their two days broadcasting from UNM Children’s Hospital (UNMCH), Jackie, Tony and Donnie talk about the good the hospital does in the community and share moving stories from patients, including conducting interviews with families and their children.

For the JTD crew, the Radiothon is personal. They have heard from many parents about how the hospital saved their child’s life. All of them have worked on the fundraiser from its beginning.

Jackie and Tony previously worked at another station, which hosted a joint radiothon/telethon. When the married couple decided to move to The Peak, they wanted to bring the fundraiser with them. Donnie was already at The Peak when they arrived.

“He came with the studio,” Jackie joked.

“Jackie was very passionate about our Radiothon experience at the other station and wanted to bring it with her to the Peak,” said Tony. “About a year after we got here, we leapt at the opportunity to do it again.”

“It’s the kids, it’s the families,” Jackie explained. “All sense of professionalism goes out the window when I walk into the hospital. You cannot help but form an attachment to those children.”

Jackie, Tony and Donnie remember all the kids that have been on Radiothon.

“They all stand out in some way,” said Jackie. “There aren’t quite words for how special it is to form these bonds with the kids. To see one of the kids walk in that we haven’t seen in years, and see that they’re well again, you realize how important the hospital is.”

“You can live next door to the same person for years, but you don’t know their name,” said Tony. The kids, however, are different. “You remember their name and story.”

With 14 years’ worth of memorable patient interviews behind her, Jackie said one young patient, Eliana, particularly impressed her with her fearlessness.

“Eliana puts the rest of us to shame. She takes those odds and tells them what to do with themselves,” said Jackie. “But all of the children are special. It’s not like we stop thinking about them when Radiothon is over.”

Tony and Jackie’s three sons have never been patients at UNMCH, but everyone at 100.3 The Peak and its parent company, iHeartMedia, recognizes the fundraiser’s importance.

“Our company has always been very supportive,” said Tony. “We have a lot of co-workers with personal attachments to the hospital. They’re very willing to let us take two days to take over the radio station each day.”

“UNM Children’s Hospital is a place that we truly do believe in,” Tony continued. “Children who are given zero chance come in years later and they’re walking and talking. The hospital truly believes in healing the family. It is really a place that makes these things happen.”

Longtime iHeartMedia Promotions and Marketing Director Ryan Safford, who manages the Radiothon, agrees. “Radiothon isn’t something we do for two days and forget about until next year. When we walk out of UNMCH, we take the kids and their stories with us all year long,” said Ryan.

For many years, Jackie, Tony and Donnie have encouraged businesses and loyal listeners to contribute to the hospital, and they plan to continue doing so for as long as they can. By sharing these children’s stories, they hope to inspire even more people to become involved in Radiothon for years to come. Radiothon has raised more than \$3,380,000 over the past 14 years.

“I would like to thank the UNM Foundation,” said Donnie. “They’ve done a tremendous job in helping the word spread about the event even more.”

“We’ll keep doing it until the hospital asks us politely not to come back,” Jackie said with a smile.

If you missed this year’s Radiothon and would like to contribute, please visit unmfund.org/fund/radiothon/ ■



Tony, Donnie, Jackie (second from the right)—JTD in the Morning—and Ryan Safford (far right) with Julia Grimes (center), director of UNM Children’s Hospital’s Child Life Program, which benefits from the Radiothon. Photo: Courtesy UNM Children’s Hospital

A PERFECT MATCH

Tax Benefit Provides Extra Perk for Tamarind Institute Volunteer-Turned-Donor

BY MICHELLE G. MCRUIZ

During her long career, Lara Johnson didn’t have much time or energy left over for giving back to her community. She deferred that dream until 2016, when she checked off two bucket-list items: Move to New Mexico, where she had long wanted to live; and volunteer for an organization that was well-suited for her talents and interests. From her volunteering grew friendship, trust, and a financial pledge with benefits for both parties.

After settling in, Johnson focused on becoming involved with Tamarind Institute. “I knew about Tamarind from its early days in Los Angeles. I studied printmaking in undergraduate and graduate school, specifically lithography. Tamarind set the gold standard for lithography in the U.S., and maybe the world.” Johnson had aspired to be a print curator, but her career took a different turn. She worked in public relations and marketing for architecture firms, then for an engineering design firm in Maryland. But she never forgot Tamarind’s reputation for quality.



UNM Tamarind Institute volunteer and donor Lara Johnson works with Tamarind’s print inventory. Photo: Noor-un-Nisa Touchon

In spring 2016, Johnson attended an opening at Tamarind. “Diana Gaston [Tamarind’s director] came up to me,” she said. “She didn’t know my face, and we got to talking.” Johnson met with Gaston to discuss potential volunteer work. “I was trained in how to handle prints,” Johnson said, “and I told them I would like to help with tasks they didn’t have time to do or were not top priorities.”

Three days a week, Johnson keeps Tamarind’s large working collection of prints protected and in order. She also assists with exhibitions and special events. “They’re small things,” Johnson said, “but they free up the staff and the students.” After about a year, Johnson decided to give more than just time.

“I was about to reach that age where I had to start taking taxable minimum distributions from my IRA,” said Johnson. But by choosing to make a qualified charitable rollover from some of that distribution, she could avoid paying taxes on the amount of the donation. Johnson committed to a five-year pledge to gift a portion of her IRA withdrawals to Tamarind. As she wishes for Tamarind to eventually benefit beyond her pledge, Johnson has also made an estate gift through her will.

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Illuminating Injustice
(Continued from page 1)

Dr. Sharon Erickson Nepstad, department chair of Sociology at UNM, noted that Baca Zinn’s priorities mesh with the department’s strengths. “At this moment, when our nation struggles to address issues of racism, poverty and sexism,” Nepstad said, “it is more important than ever to be teaching, researching and writing about these matters. We are grateful that Dr. Baca Zinn recognizes our potential to contribute to a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of social inequalities.”

UNM’s diverse student body also includes many first-generation and non-traditional students, and those in need of financial assistance. “Student populations will become more like ours in years to come,” stated College of Arts and Sciences Dean Mark Peceny, “because we are becoming a more ethnically and racially diverse nation, and our society is becoming more inequitable with each passing year. This professorship will help educate the next generations of scholars, public servants and community leaders dedicated to creating a more equitable society, just as Dr. Baca Zinn has done in her own illustrious career.”

In another way, her gift also completes a circle—Baca Zinn’s parents attended UNM in the 1930s, but the Great Depression interrupted their studies; her husband, engineering/graphics teacher Alan L. Zinn, is a UNM alumnus. Baca Zinn’s New Mexico roots inform her conviction that educational institutions are important arenas in which to struggle for social justice. “I am honored to be part of the UNM tradition, doing work that can make for a better world.” ■

A Perfect Match
(Continued from page 3)

“That gives them money to do something special,” she said. “When they asked if I had a preference for how the money would be used, I told them they should spend it as they see fit. But it has to be budgeted somewhere, so Kristine Purrington [senior director of development for the UNM College of Fine Arts] set up the Tamarind Director’s Fund to give Diana discretion for how to use the money every year. I thought it was brilliant. I know these ladies really well now, and I trust them.”

“I’ve never been in a position to do much charitable giving,” Johnson continued, “or had much time or energy to do any volunteering while working. I was certainly not contributing much in any way. Tamarind turned out to be the perfect match. It’s such a special place. They still set the standard, 60 years later.” ■

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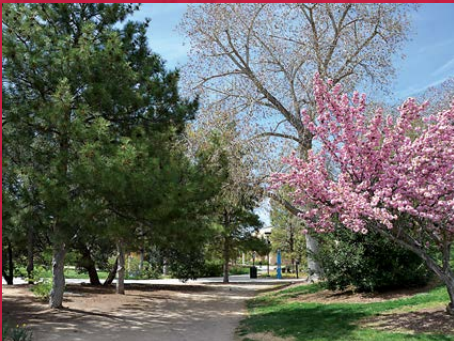


Photo: John Clark

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