

# UNM GSA

## NEWSLETTER

### Co-President's Note

Ian and I have been working with Department Chair Richard Rand to improve the graduate student experience. We've been focused on the following issues and are happy to report that we feel good progress is being made. First, there have been attempts made to rebalance TA workloads between graders and lab TAs more equitably and we have been advocating for better tracking of TA workloads in the future. In addition, we have been pushing for better training, clearer expectations, and improved access to resources. If you are still struggling with an unfair workload (such as due to a difference in enrollment in sections), contact James Thomas (jthomas@unm.edu) and contact out to us so we can work to fix the issue in future semesters. Second, we have been working to improve teaching of core graduate classes.

Finally, we have been endeavoring to improve communication between the department and graduate students and foster a more inclusive and welcoming department culture. In the upcoming months, there will be opportunities for grad students to get involved by talking with the Physics and Astronomy's Graduate Committee as well as helping to draft a graduate student climate survey with ADVANCE at UNM. We also want to have as strong a showing as possible at the prospective students day in early March and are counting on all of you to make it happen. As always, feel free to reach out to us with any comments, questions, or concerns. Wishing you a productive and pleasant spring semester. -Piper

2022 Halloween  
group costume  
winners: "The  
Fourier  
Transformers" by  
Grant Block and  
Kellen Malone



### GPSA Updates:

**1** GPSA has requested a recurring amount of 5 million dollars from the New Mexico State Legislature to amend the Graduate Scholarship Act! Award recipients can be awarded up to, but no more than, 100% of tuition and fees per semester.

**2** Solar Panels Installation on the UNM Student Union Building: GPSA is planning to pursue and secure \$350,000 in funding to install solar panels on the roof of the Student Union Building.

~ Duncan & Shane



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### Union Updates

Hey everyone! I'm here with a quick update from the United Graduate Workers, the union of and for grad workers here at UNM. As you may know, the union has a new contract with the university! Whether or not you're a member, there are some benefits that apply across the board, including a raise for all TAs and RAs (depending on funding). This raise hopefully affected your January paychecks, but it should certainly affect your February rate. For TAs, the salary update was processed without a revised contract due to the fear of overloading LoboWeb. For RAs, check with your supervisor to see whether they were able to provide it. The department worked hard to inform supervisors of ways to get RAs their money, and it wasn't left as a matter of preference for the supervisor - you should have gotten it if possible. As one of the elected representatives in the union, it's my privilege to represent you all through any grievances. If you have any issues at all with the new contract, please reach out to me. Additionally, we'll be running a steward election this semester to get more folks trained in handling grievances, etc. For now, please consider signing a union card! Email me to learn how: [ibirdwell@unm.edu](mailto:ibirdwell@unm.edu). Thank you!

2022 Halloween  
individual costume  
winner: "Whole  
Milk" by Shane Li



### Upcoming events

#### GSA Biweekly

- 🍷 02/10 at Tractor Brewing
- 🍷 02/24 at Bow & Arrow Brewing

#### Astronomy on Tap

- 🍺 02/27 at Marble Brewing

### Haven't joined our discord yet?



Are you trying to get to know your classmates, find hiking buddies, coordinate a study group, or find a place to live? Join our discord server by clicking [this link](#)

