

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

NMJC

New Mexico Junior College





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

Sixty Years Later, the Mission Remains the Same -

In the fall of 1966, New Mexico Junior College welcomed its first students to campus. Sixty years later, much has changed, from the student names and fashions to the ever-evolving campus itself. Yet one thing remains constant: the excitement of new beginnings. As in those earliest days, the campus is alive with activity. Buildings rise, faculty and staff help students find their way, and a new generation arrives with dreams, goals, and boundless potential. Six decades after opening its doors, NMJC continues to embody the same spirit of opportunity, optimism, and transformation that defined its very first year.

NMJC exists for a simple reason: to help people succeed through learning. Whether that means giving a student a leg up through Dual Credit classes, preparing a recent high school graduate for a career, helping a working adult gain new skills, or providing affordable access to higher education close to home, our focus has always been on serving the people of Lea County and southeastern New Mexico

We are proud of our open-door mission. We welcome students from all backgrounds and walks of life, giving them the opportunity to pursue their goals and build a better future. At the same time, opportunity must be matched with excellence. Our faculty and staff work hard to ensure students receive a quality education that prepares them for the challenges of today's workforce and tomorrow's economy.

Affordability remains one of the biggest concerns for families considering college. At NMJC, we understand that every dollar matters. That is why we continue working to keep education accessible through competitive tuition rates, financial aid opportunities, and scholarships. More importantly, we focus on ensuring students earn credentials that lead to meaningful careers and long-term economic opportunity. The value of higher education is measured not only by a diploma but by the doors it opens.

Our region depends on a skilled workforce, and NMJC plays a critical role in developing that talent. From healthcare and energy to transportation, law enforcement, and technical trades, our programs are designed to meet real workforce needs. The graduates who leave our classrooms strengthen local businesses, support essential industries, and contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

The impact extends far beyond our campus. NMJC contributes significantly to the local economy and supports hundreds of jobs throughout Lea County. More importantly, our graduates remain here, raising families, leading businesses, serving communities, and investing in the future of southeastern New Mexico.

At the end of the day, our success is measured by the success of our students and our community. We remain committed to providing an education that creates opportunity, strengthens our workforce, and helps ensure a prosperous future for Lea County and the State of New Mexico.

That is our mission. That is our commitment. That is NMJC.

Warm regards,

Cathy Mitchell,
Interim President, New Mexico Junior College

Academic Success

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ACADEMIC SUCCESS

NMJC strengthened its foundation for continued growth and success through three major institutional initiatives. The College successfully completed its Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaffirmation of accreditation, with the next comprehensive reaffirmation scheduled for 2035–2036, affirming NMJC's commitment to academic quality, accountability, student success, and continuous improvement.

NMJC also completed a new 2026–2031 Strategic Plan, establishing measurable priorities and accountability measures to guide the College's next five years. Complementing this effort, a new Facilities Master Plan provides a long-term vision for campus growth, modernization, renovations, infrastructure, and future construction—ensuring NMJC's physical resources continue to support student success, institutional priorities, and the needs of the communities it serves.



NEW MEXICO JUNIOR COLLEGE HAS BEEN SELECTED AS A 2026 GREAT COLLEGES TO WORK FOR® BY GREAT COLLEGES TO WORK FOR.

Academics

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ACADEMICS

The Instructional Unit advanced academic innovation and strengthened learning environments throughout 2026. Heidel Hall renovations were completed, providing modern laboratory, classroom, and lecture hall spaces equipped with updated technology, expanded collaborative learning areas, and an outdoor courtyard designed to enhance the student experience.

Faculty also focused on improving student success and access. English and Mathematics faculty collaborated to develop a new co-requisite model, reducing the need for traditional prerequisite coursework and creating a more efficient pathway for students. In preparation for the continued evolution of education, NMJC developed “Using AI @ NMJC,” a new student training course launching campus-wide in Fall 2026 to help students responsibly and effectively use artificial intelligence as a learning tool. NMJC also hosted NM Launch: New Mexico Math Task Force Southeast Region, bringing together representatives from Lea County school districts, NMJC, Eastern New Mexico University, and the New Mexico Public Education Department to strengthen K–16 math alignment and improve student achievement.











Athletics

New Mexico Junior College Athletics enjoyed another outstanding year of competition and achievement in 2025-26, with Thunderbird teams earning national championships, national runner-up finishes, All-American honors, and appearances at NJCAA national championships across multiple sports. NMJC student-athletes demonstrated excellence on the court, field, track, course, and arena, highlighted by two NJCAA Outdoor Track & Field national team championships, strong national finishes in golf, cross country and half marathon, a return to the NJCAA Men's Basketball Championship for the first time since 2014, and a national championship appearance for Women's Basketball. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of NMJC's student-athletes and coaches and the continued strength of Thunderbird Athletics.





NMJC ATHLETICS 2025–26 HIGHLIGHTS

VOLLEYBALL

- Finished 14–16
- Finished 6th in conference

CROSS COUNTRY & HALF MARATHON

Men

- Finished 7th at NJCAA Cross Country Nationals
- Finished 3rd at the NJCAA Half Marathon Championship

Women

- Finished 7th at NJCAA Cross Country Nationals
- Finished 6th at the NJCAA Half Marathon Championship

TRACK & FIELD

Men's Indoor/Outdoor

- 2026 NJCAA Outdoor National Champions
- Indoor National Runner-Up
- Earned 9 individual national championships and 25 individual All-American honors across both seasons.

Women's Indoor/Outdoor

- 2026 NJCAA Outdoor National Champions
- Indoor National Runner-Up
- Earned 2 individual national championships and 31 individual All-American honors across both seasons.

BASKETBALL

Men

- Finished 27–7
- Earned the program's first NJCAA DI National Championship appearance since 2014 and advanced to the second round

Women

- Finished 27–7
- Advanced to the NJCAA DI National Championship game
- Defeated the No. 1 team in the nation twice

Awards:

- Jada Graves - WBCA Two-Year College Player of the Year, NJCAA Second-Team All-American honors





NMJC ATHLETICS 2025–26 HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

GOLF

Men

- Ranked No. 13 nationally
- Finished 12th at the NJCAA DI National Championship
- Recorded 3 team and 5 individual top-five finishes, including 1 individual champion

Women

- Ranked No. 6 nationally
- Finished 5th at the NJCAA DI National Championship
- Recorded 9 team and 12 individual top-five finishes
- Tova Sandren placed 4th nationally, the highest individual finish in program history, earning NJCAA First-Team All-American honors

BASEBALL

- Finished 35–20 (21–15)
- Tied for 4th in the WJCAC

Standouts:

- Jesus Mejias - First-Team All-WJCAC and All-Region V honors
- Roman Trinidad - First-Team All-WJCAC and All-Region V honors

RODEO

Men

- Earned 7 individual event victories
- Teagan Taylor-Roukema - Caprock Region Team Roping title, qualified for the CNFR
- Treyden Gonzales - Caprock Region Tie Down Roping Reserve Champion, qualified for the CNFR

Women

- Won the Clarendon College and WT A&M College Rodeos
- Quincy Montoya - Caprock Region All-Around, finished as CNFR Reserve All-Around National Champion








NATIONAL CHAMPION
WOMEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD DIVISION I
2026
COACH

Construction

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CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

NMJC continued its significant investment in campus infrastructure and facilities throughout 2026. Major projects completed during the year included the Western Heritage Museum exterior improvements, Phase One of the Site Improvement Project, the Baseball Press Box, Heidel Hall, and new air handlers in Pannell Library and Bob Moran Hall. These projects addressed critical facility needs, improved campus safety and accessibility, enhanced energy efficiency, and provided expanded and modernized spaces for students, academic programs, and athletics. Each completed project was delivered on schedule and within budget.

The College also advanced several major projects that are currently underway, including Phase Two of the Site Improvement Project, a new Horse Show Barn, the Loop Utility Road, the Agriculture Education Building, an addition to the Indoor Rodeo Arena, and the demolition of the former hospital. Collectively, these projects represent a continued commitment to long-term campus development and to providing exceptional facilities that support NMJC's students, programs, and community.

$1,576,881
WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENTS; COMPLETED JANUARY 2026

$10,003,418
PHASE ONE SITE IMPROVEMENTS; COMPLETED JULY 2026

20 FEET
HEIGHT OF NEW BASEBALL PRESS BOX

$1,997,070
BASEBALL PRESS BOX; COMPLETED MAY 2026

$21,251,071
HEIDEL HALL; COMPLETED MAY 2026 AFTER A TWO-YEAR PROJECT

$1,700,000
NEW AIR HANDLERS IN PANNELL LIBRARY AND BOB MORAN HALL; COMPLETED SUMMER 2026

$21,000,000
PHASE TWO SITE IMPROVEMENTS; SCHEDULED COMPLETION SEPTEMBER 22, 2027

$9,000,000
NEW HORSE SHOW BARN; SCHEDULED COMPLETION NOVEMBER 20, 2026

$11,000,000
NEW LOOP UTILITY ROAD; EXPECTED COMPLETION APRIL 6, 2027

$9,000,000
NEW AGRICULTURE EDUCATION BUILDING; SCHEDULED COMPLETION MARCH 2, 2027

$11,000,000
INDOOR RODEO ARENA ADDITION; SCHEDULED COMPLETION MAY 31, 2027

December 15, 2026
SCHEDULED COMPLETION OF FORMER HOSPITAL DEMOLITION

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Western Heritage Museum



WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Western Heritage Museum (WHM) and Lea County Cowboy Hall of Fame (LCCHF) welcomed 8,300 visitors throughout the year, offering engaging exhibits, educational programs, and family-focused events. Highlights included the staff-created Under Pressure: An Exploration of Oil and Gas in the Permian Basin exhibit, which explored the region's petroleum history and its impact on Lea County, featuring authentic core and oil samples and the story of local inventor J.E. Bowden and his pioneering Satellite Automatic Driller technology.

In conjunction with the NMJC Foundation and Marketing Departments, WHM hosted over 130 students from the NSEP camps; ranging from ages 6 – 19 years old.

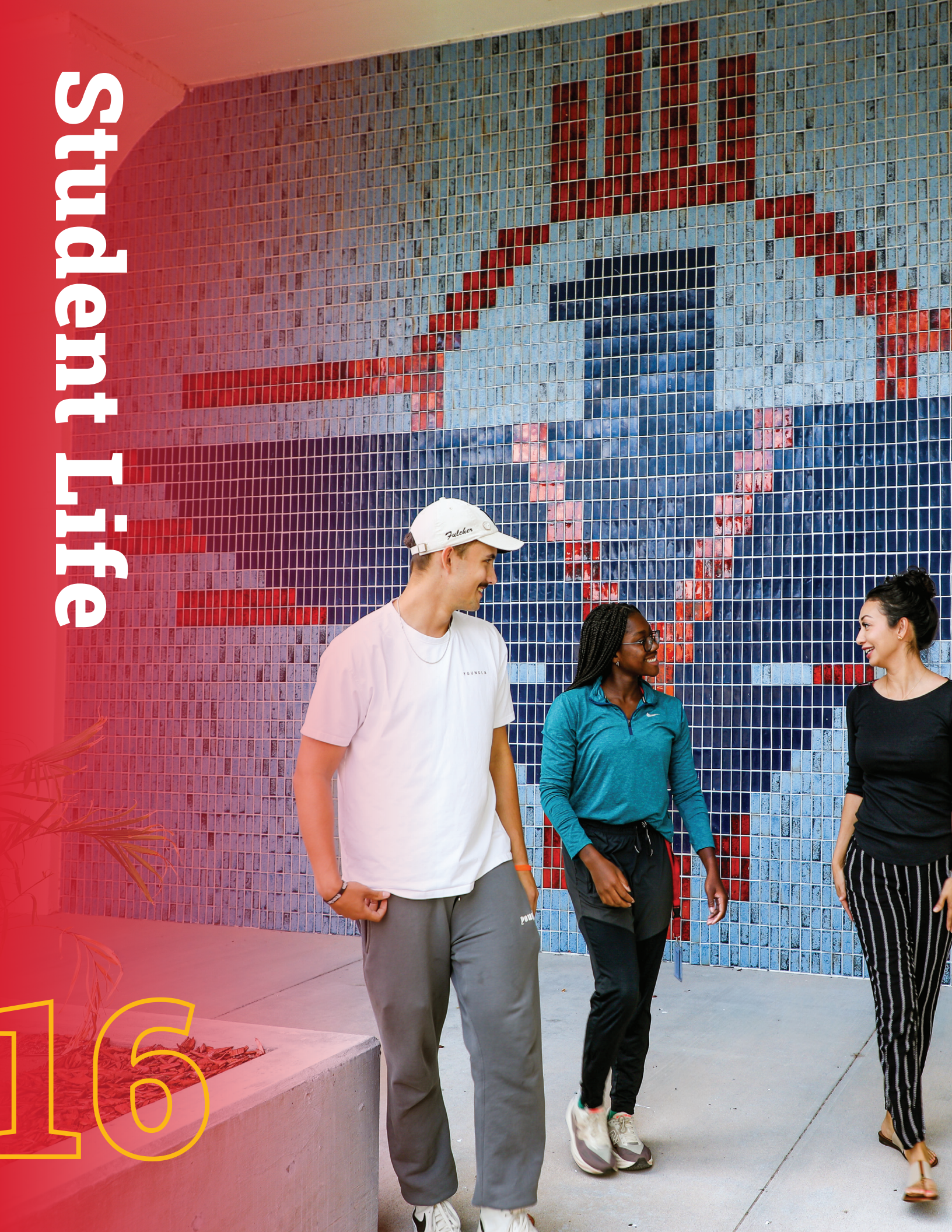
The museum also continued its popular holiday tradition with Museum on Ice, featuring a synthetic ice rink that provided a fun, family-friendly experience for visitors of all ages. The rink attracted families, homeschool groups, athletic teams, and NMJC students, creating new opportunities for campus and community engagement during the holiday season.

8,300

VISITORS WELCOMED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



Student Life









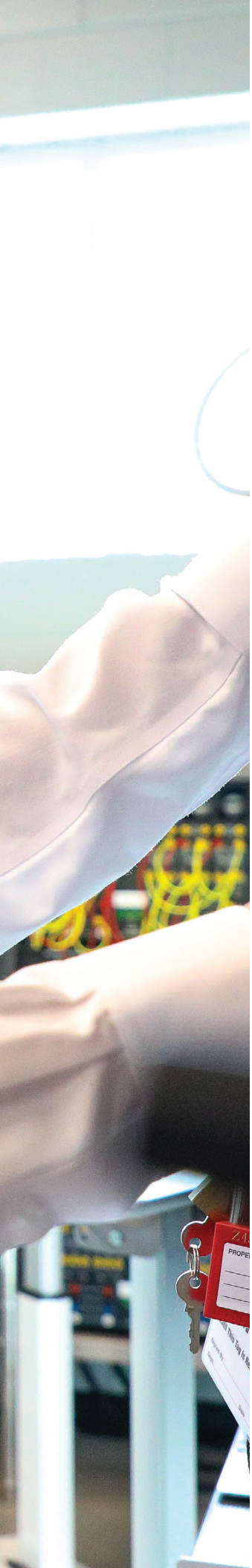
STUDENT LIFE

Throughout the 2025–2026 academic year, NMJC Student Life remained dedicated to creating engaging, vibrant, and inclusive experiences that fostered connection, belonging, wellness, and community among students. A diverse calendar of programs, from silent dance parties, cultural celebrations, and Paint & Sip events to the Suicide Prevention Campus Walk, World Autism Awareness Day sensory-friendly activities, and Earth Day Plant-a-Flower. These various and diverse events provided students with opportunities to connect, learn, celebrate diverse cultures, and promote personal well-being. Entertainment, education, and meaningful awareness initiatives were intentionally balanced to appeal to students with a wide range of interests and backgrounds.

The year's programming included CORE Bash and housing move-in activities; Mexico Independence Day celebrations; Constitution Day; health and wellness events; Red Ribbon Week; the Clothesline Project; campus-wide Trick-or-Treat; Cafecito & Conchas; Casino Nights; Martin Luther King-themed Bingo; Black History Month Trivia; Women's Appreciation Day and Women's March; Around the World Week; and graduation preparation activities. Additional events such as Vision Boards, Pool Tournaments, Stuff-a-Plush, Family Feud Nutrition Month, an Egg Hunt, and Grad Cap Decorating added opportunities for creativity, recreation, and student engagement. Collectively, these programs strengthened the student experience and contributed to a welcoming and connected NMJC campus community.

Workforce Development

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FY26 marked significant growth and investment in Workforce Development. The 25,000-square-foot Steve McCleery Industrial Training Center opened in July 2025, expanding training in Oil & Gas, Automation, and Lineman Utility careers. A $1.038 million investment from the Permian Strategic Partnership expanded CDL training, helping 94 students from 12 communities earn their Class A CDL. NMJC also awarded $473,000 in workforce scholarships to 319 students across 17 programs in just eight months. Since October 2024, more than $1.146 million in scholarships has supported 700 students through NM GRO Fund and PSP funding.

Training programs continued to demonstrate strong outcomes and industry demand. CDL students achieved a 97% first-time pass rate and 100% overall pass rate on skills testing, while nearly 80% of Lease Operator Training completers secured high-wage employment within three months. Continuing Education received the Rural Community College Alliance Workforce Innovation Award for its English for the Workplace: CDL Training program. Adult Education achieved a 97% retention rate and its highest number of high school equivalency graduates in 13 years. Workforce Development also welcomed more than 20 community and industry groups, expanded Automation and Lineman training, increased third-party event rentals by 50%, and continued supporting entrepreneurs through the Small Business Development Center.

100%
OVERALL CDL SKILLS-TEST PASS RATE

97%
ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT RETENTION RATE

80%
LEASE OPERATOR TRAINING COMPLETERS SECURING HIGH-WAGE EMPLOYMENT WITHIN THREE MONTHS

25,000 SQ. FT
STEVE MCCLEERY INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTER OPENED IN JULY 2025

13 YEARS
HIGHEST NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY GRADUATES



NSEP: Automotive Engineering, Technology & Design

2017



NSEP: AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

With a class of 17 students coming to learn about the automotive engineering, technology, and design industry, this NSEP class was yet another success! This year completes the fifth summer of NSEP at New Mexico Junior College and the program is showing to be a gateway for many students to feel like NMJC is their home. The last two cohorts of NSEP have provided NMJC with 100% retention of students eligible for college to come to NMJC upon their high school graduation, or enrollment of dual-credit courses.

“NSEP has become a wonderful opportunity for area youth to get hands-on, engaging STEAM experiences that can lead to a love of learning and potential future careers in STEAM fields," said NMJC Vice President for Advancement, Rachel Gallagher. “It's been wonderful to be a part of this amazing program and see the community's interest and participation in this program grow. We are so grateful to our community members that come out to support this program and the incredible funding partnerships with Chevron and McGary-Regan Foundation that also make this happen."

The group is already gearing up for the sixth summer by looking forward to offering a summer camp focused on Human & Animal Biology. This will likely incorporate how ‘life’ works and what careers and opportunities are available to students who major in this science field.

NSEP MINIS & NSEP RISING STARS: PALEONTOLOGY

To reach younger learners, NMJC introduced NSEP Minis, one- and two-day camps for ages 6–8 and 9–12. Led by NMJC faculty and Western Heritage Museum staff, these sessions encouraged early engagement with STEAM concepts through fun, age-appropriate projects.

“These mini camps plant the seed of curiosity," said Rachel Gallagher, Vice President for Advancement. “They help children see themselves as future scientists, creators, and problem-solvers."

From shark dissections to coding challenges, NSEP and NSEP Minis continue to embody NMJC's mission: making education exciting, inclusive, and transformative for learners of all ages.





NMJC Foundation

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NMJC FOUNDATION

The NMJC Foundation celebrated a record-breaking year of student support and community investment in FY26. The Foundation awarded nearly $500,000 in scholarships to more than 400 students, establishing records in both scholarship dollars and students served. The annual Scholarship Gala also reached a historic milestone, raising a record $201,000 to support student scholarships and educational opportunities. More than a fundraising event, the Gala served as a celebration of the community's investment in NMJC students, bringing together donors, alumni, community leaders, faculty, staff, and students. The evening showcased the many individuals, businesses, and organizations that believe in the transformative power of education and are helping NMJC students pursue their academic and career goals. The Gala also highlighted the strength of campus-community collaboration, with contributions from Urenco USA, Chevron, and Coterra Energy, as well as support from NMJC's Entertainment Music Technology, Athletics, Cosmetology, SkillsUSA, and Lea County Event Center teams. Through these partnerships, the Gala strengthened connections across the campus and community while generating critical resources that directly benefit students.

The 2026 NMJC Foundation Annual Golf Tournament generated a record $76,677, marking the sixth consecutive year of record growth. Since 2019, tournament proceeds have increased more than 180%, from $27,183 to $76,677. The tournament has become a signature community event supporting scholarships, academic programs, and student resources. NMJC alumna Kyleigh McGowan and her brother, Bryson McGowan, captured first place for the third consecutive year.



The Foundation's momentum extended beyond its signature fundraising events through new gifts and partnerships that created lasting opportunities for students. The Scholarship Gala and Golf Tournament generated more than $277,000 combined, while a $15,000 endowed scholarship from the Lea County Sheriff's Posse will provide perpetual support for NMJC students. Devon Energy contributed nearly $43,000 toward workforce training and equipment, helping provide students with access to modern, industry-relevant training. Together, these investments demonstrate the continued generosity of NMJC's donors, alumni, business partners, and community supporters and their commitment to student success throughout Lea County and southeastern New Mexico.

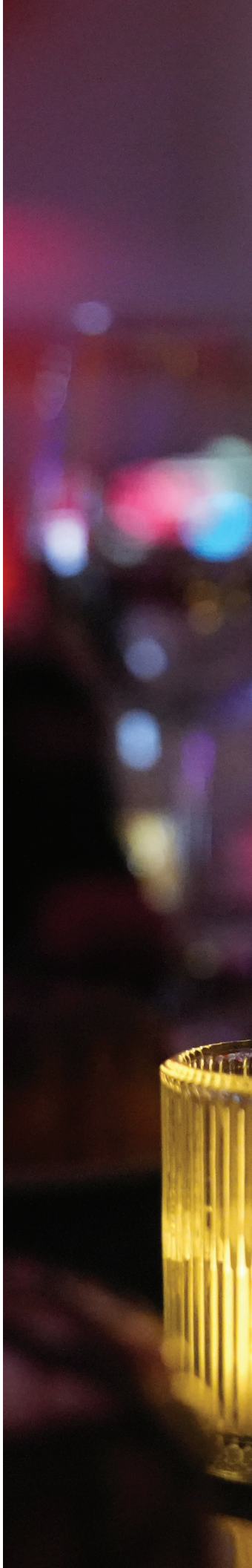
$500,000
NEAR TOTAL AWARDED IN STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

400+
STUDENTS
RECEIVED FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

$201,000
RECORD AMOUNT RAISED AT THE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

$76,677
RECORD PROCEEDS FROM THE 2026 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT






19th Annual
NMJC Foundation
Scholarship
Gala
Friday, February 27, 2026
at 6 pm
Ron Black Gym, Caster Activity Center
NMJC Campus
Chevron
NMJC
FOUNDATION



NMJC

New Mexico Junior College