A partnership to fight Inflammatory Breast Cancer
New Mexico's first and only Tomotherapy System
Our new clinical Cancer Center is rising fast
Profiles of courage and commitment

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Reaching Out
to fight cancer health disparities across New Mexico

Joining forces with M.D. Anderson
A partnership to fight Inflammatory Breast Cancer
Advancing radiation therapy
New Mexico’s first and only Tomotherapy System
On time, under budget
Our new clinical Cancer Center is rising fast
2007 Annual Report
Profiles of courage and commitment
Jennifer Hawthorne, patient care coordinator at University of New Mexico Hospital, breast cancer survivor, Pink Shawl Project participant and Diné Tribe member of the Navajo Nation in front of Shiprock, a volcanic formation in northeastern New Mexico that plays a central role in the Navajo creation myth.

The University of New Mexico Cancer Center is one of only 63 National Cancer Institute-Designated Cancer Centers in the nation. The Official Cancer Center of New Mexico since 1971, the University of New Mexico Cancer Center is the only academic health care facility in the state providing fully integrated, comprehensive cancer diagnosis and treatment. More than 73 doctors representing every cancer specialty work side-by-side at the Cancer Center to develop individualized, compassionate treatment plans. More than 120 nationally-recognized scientists are on the cutting edge of cancer research, assuring that all New Mexicans receive the most advanced, state-of-the-art care and benefit from the fruits of cancer research.

El Oso Sanador or "the healing bear," represents Mudjekeewis – Spirit Keeper of the West, a Native American symbol of responsibility, leadership, teaching and healing. The University of New Mexico Cancer Center has chosen El Oso Sanador as our seal, and as the name of our Donor Society and Magazine, because we are committed to serving those whose lives have been touched by cancer with the power associated with Mudjekeewis: serving with strength, courage, grace and great ability.

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With your tremendous support, The University of New Mexico Cancer Research & Treatment Center has had another amazing year in its journey to be of great service to the people of New Mexico. The UNM Cancer Center, the State of New Mexico’s Official Cancer Center and one of the nation’s 63 premier National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Centers, provides a breadth and depth of cancer care unequalled in New Mexico. Our 73 board-certified oncology physicians, the State’s largest team of cancer experts, provided care to nearly 50% of the adults and virtually all of the children in New Mexico affected by cancer last year, treating over 7,600 cancer patients— from every county, health system and health plan in New Mexico— in more than 84,000 ambulatory clinic visits. Our 120 research scientists, supported by $51 million annually in federal and private research funding, work every day to discover the causes and cures for cancer in world-class research programs and innovative clinical trials.

This issue of El Oso Sanador, including our 2007 Annual Report, highlights major projects that our Center has undertaken this year and our most gracious donors and community supporters. With the unwavering support of the New Mexico Legislature, Governor Bill Richardson, Lt. Governor Diane Denish, UNM, and our community, we broke ground on our new UNM Cancer Treatment & Clinical Research Facility on May 15, 2007 in a beautiful (but windy!) ceremony. Opening in April 2009, this $90 million, five story, 206,000 sq. ft. facility will further advance cancer care in New Mexico in a beautiful and hopeful environment for our patients and their families. As part of our Statewide Cancer Network, the UNM Cancer Center – Las Cruces opened in January 2007 and is experiencing unprecedented growth. Clinics and partnerships are forming in Santa Fe, Farmington, and eastern New Mexico. Because there is no other NCI-Designated Cancer Center within a 600 mile radius of the UNM Cancer Center in Albuquerque, we have a vast area to serve! Special stories highlight our efforts to overcome our region’s tremendous cancer health disparities by developing outreach, education, screening, and patient navigation programs in our Native American communities. An exciting new partnership with the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, funded by a $7 million appropriation of the New Mexico and Texas Legislatures, is focused on developing cures for high risk and inflammatory breast cancers.

All of us at the UNM Cancer Center—over 600 physicians, scientists, nurses, students, and staff—spend each of our waking hours and many of our sleepless nights figuring out how we can bring hope to every New Mexican affected by cancer. With our hard work and the incredible support we receive from you—the patients, friends, donors, and our community—that hope is fast becoming an everlasting reality. Together, we are achieving great things and making a difference. It is to the memory of those who have died and those who are living through cancer that we dedicate our continuing quest to bring hope to all New Mexicans affected by cancer.

With much love, thanks and appreciation,

Cheryl L. Willman, M.D.

The Maurice and Marguerite Liberman Distinguished Chair in Cancer Research
Professor of Pathology and Medicine, UNM School of Medicine
Director & CEO, University of New Mexico Cancer Research & Treatment Center
The University of New Mexico Cancer Center Statewide Network

Reaching out across a vast territory to serve a uniquely diverse population.

Serving a vast geographic region of great beauty, with rich multicultural and multietnic diversity, tremendous scientific resources, and challenging health and socio-economic disparities. The University of New Mexico Cancer Center is dedicated to bringing world-class cancer care to all of the communities in our region and assuring that all New Mexicans benefit from the fruits of cancer research.

The UNM Cancer Center in Albuquerque is the only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Cancer Center within a 600-mile radius. If one superimposes the State of New Mexico on the Eastern Seaboard, there are more than 20 NCI-Designated Cancer Centers in the comparable geographic area that we serve.

As a minority-majority State, over 50% of our patients are ethnic minorities, primarily Hispanic and Native American, with unique cancer patterns and significant cancer disparities. To assure that all New Mexicans can access outstanding cancer care, we are building a statewide network of Cancer Centers and clinics across our diverse region – in Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Farmington, Eastern New Mexico, and some of the most remote regions of our State. We are also working with Tribal and rural communities across New Mexico to deliver cancer education, screening, prevention, and treatment programs.

If an area the size of New Mexico is superimposed on the United States Eastern Seaboard, it covers the territories served by more than 20 NCI-designated cancer centers.

NEW MEXICO STATISTICS

Area: 5th largest state
121,355 square miles

Population: 36th most populous state
1,969,915 residents

Density: 6th most sparsely populated state
1.5 people per square mile

Diversity:
- Hispanic/Latino - 44%
- White - 42.8%
- Native American - 9.8%
- African American - 2.5%
- Asian American - 1.3%

Languages:
- English - 63.3%
- Spanish - 28.8%
- Navajo - 4.1%

Highest percentage of Hispanics in the United States
Second highest percentage of Native Americans in the United States
reaching out to overcome New Mexico’s cancer health disparities

New Mexico is a place like no other. From its windswept plains in the east, endless stretches of desert sand to the south, remote Indian reservations to the west and towering, snow-capped mountains in its northern reaches, New Mexico is vast, diverse and wrapped in beauty.

However, this expansive region contains some of the worst cancer health disparities in the nation. New Mexico’s Hispanics and Native Americans, which make up almost 58 percent of the state’s population, are experiencing dramatic increases in cancer incidence and mortality while their Caucasian counterparts are seeing decreases. Native Americans are particularly hard hit by these disparities. Less likely to be diagnosed in early stages than other ethnic groups, they are almost 70 percent more likely to die from their cancers than non-Hispanic whites.

The UNM Cancer Center is in a unique position to help eliminate these devastating disparities. Situated in the heart of New Mexico, we are tapping into the tremendous scientific and technological capability within the state to design innovative research programs that will determine why these cancer health disparities are occurring. We are expanding clinical programs and screening into rural areas and taking culturally-appropriate education and prevention programs into every pueblo and village. The UNM Cancer Center is committed to making sure that every New Mexican has a fighting chance against cancer.
In most Native American languages, there is no word for cancer. But while just speaking of the disease is thought to bring on death in some tribal communities, cancer is increasing at an alarming rate. It is now the second-leading cause of death in Native American communities and has created one of the worst cancer health disparities of any minority group.

In New Mexico – one of only four states where minorities make up the majority of the population – the number of common cancer cases has been rising among Hispanic and Native American peoples since 2000, while those same cancers have been dropping in the Caucasian population. New Mexico’s Native American community, which makes up almost 10 percent of the state’s population, is particularly hard hit. Even though Native Americans are less likely overall to get cancer than Whites or Hispanics, they are more likely to die of the disease.

“Among the major ethnic groups in the United States, Native Americans have the worst cancer survival rates for the most common cancers. Native Americans are almost 70 percent more likely to die from their cancer than non-Hispanic whites.”

UNM researchers and doctors are partnering with Indian Health Services, the All Indian Pueblo Council, the Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board and the Navajo Nation to look at possible disparity factors that include lifestyle, environment, biology, late-stage diagnosis and access to care.

Marianne Berwick, PhD, leader of the UNM Cancer Center disparities research program, said her team is concentrating on building relationships with Native American communities and understanding cultural differences. “They have a whole different way of looking at cancer,” she said of Native Americans. “If you don’t understand that, you get nowhere.”

Leaders in the Native American community, like Dr. Gayle Diné Chacon, director of the Center for Native American Health, are establishing dialogues with New Mexico tribes. Together, they are finding ways to help their people talk about and understand cancer. “We can’t just jump in and begin talking about clinical trials and research,” Diné Chacon said. “We need to step back and give communities the education, training and information to build informed clinical decision-making capacity.”

Progress is being made. Cancer prevention programs have been implemented in all 19 New Mexico pueblos. Cancer 101, a cancer education program, is reaching into the state’s most remote reservations, and the Pink Shawl Project brings Native American women together to talk about breast cancer. On the following pages, we look at these programs in action.
On an isolated reservation in Northern New Mexico, a group of Native Americans stand in a circle tossing stuffed animals to each other. It looks like a simple game, but what the players are learning could save their lives.

The game teaches the participants about risk factors that could increase their chances of developing cancer. It is part of Cancer 101, a hands-on cancer education program designed to provide basic information about cancer, prevention, screening and treatment tailored specifically to New Mexico’s Native American population. Information is presented in a culturally-relevant way that supports the core values of the people.

“There is a difference in what is important to others and what is valuable to us,” said Michele Suina, program specialist at the University of New Mexico Cancer Center. When cancer education is based on our strengths, then you have people ready to be a part.”

Developed through a partnership between the University of New Mexico Cancer Center and the UNM Center for Native American Health (CNAH), Cancer 101 has been presented in all 19 of the state’s pueblos, the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the Navajo Nation. Since 2005, the program has trained more than 160 Indian community health representatives, many of whom have gone on to conduct additional trainings in their own communities. “I think there’s a dialogue developing around the issue, and we’re getting more requests for trainings,” Suina said. “That’s a huge accomplishment for this program.”

Addressing commonly-held beliefs and dispelling misinformation is a crucial role of Cancer 101. Because fear and a sense of hopelessness can surround cancer, educators work to understand beliefs and make sure that everyone has access to accurate information. “We’re putting it on the table and using those beliefs as our context for our teaching framework,” said Michele Suina, a program specialist at the UNM Cancer Center. “As we are presenting, we can provide information to counter those beliefs. We’re using a lot of dialogue to try to address the issue.”

Dr. Gayle Dine’Chacon, director of CNAH, said the impact of Cancer 101 programs are beginning to be felt in the clinic. “Now we’re seeing individual patients understanding and knowing what the procedures are and what prevention is,” she said.
Many Native Americans associate a cancer diagnosis with death. In fact, the Navajo people describe cancer as “the sore that does not heal.” The perception that cancer is a very intelligent and formidable opponent has led to the belief among some Native Americans that speaking of cancer invites it onto oneself.

A number of New Mexico Native Americans have decided to take up the fight against breast cancer in their communities and give women suffering from the disease a voice. And while the battle is fierce, the warriors are wrapped in soft, pink shawls.

The program makes use of traditional shawls to help Native American women communicate their experiences with breast cancer, learn about the disease and honor survivors.

The Pink Shawl Project, a Native American breast cancer education program, was started in Michigan in 2003 by Lorraine “Punkin” Shananaquet and has since spread to Alaska, Colorado, Wisconsin and Oregon. In February of last year, the Pink Shawl Project launched in New Mexico. Sponsored by the UNM Cancer Center, the New Mexico Cancer Care Alliance, the United Native Council and other New Mexico organizations. The program makes use of traditional shawls to help Native American women communicate their experiences with breast cancer, learn about the disease and honor survivors. The shawls serve as a powerful connection between the known and unknown, closing the gap between traditional healing and modern medicine.

“Native American women are very strong and quiet women who don’t like to reveal their pain,” said Carla Sakiestewa, one of the project’s organizers. “The Pink Shawl event is a silent reminder to them that there are women out there who have been treated with traditional and western medicine and have survived.”

At the New Mexico Pink Shawl Powwow and health fair, traditional healers bless the shawls that women from tribal communities have designed. The shawls are worn by women to identify themselves as survivors or to remember a loved one who has suffered from the disease. Songs and dances are performed to honor survivors.

“Traditionally, shawls are used in Native American communities from the day you’re born until the day you die,” Sakiestewa said. “Pink shawls are significant because breast cancer survivors embellish them with items or color or designs that reflect their struggle and their survival of this illness. In that way, it empowers the person who owns a pink shawl.”

Sakiestewa said the Pink Shawl Powwow is an effective way to educate Native American women about breast cancer because they are familiar with the event. And the shawls show comfort and respect, she said, which puts the women at ease. “The women can wear pink shawls and share their stories,” she said. “It puts them at ease. That’s important because they need to tell their daughters that it’s OK to do a self-exam and to get screenings.”
A new research partnership between the University of Texas – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center and the University of New Mexico Cancer Center brings together some of the best minds in the nation to address the problem of Inflammatory Breast Cancer (IBC). The partnership is the first state-funded IBC research collaboration in the country, and the first to bring together “two prestigious institutions,” according to Dr. Massimo Cristofanilli, director of the IBC Clinic and Research Program at M.D. Anderson.
“We are very excited about the possibilities opened by this collaboration,” Cristofanilli said. “I hope other institutions will feel motivated to follow this new model to study non-IBC breast cancers and possibly other malignancies.”

IBC is a deadly form of breast cancer that can be difficult to detect. Often, the disease has spread to other organs by the time a diagnosis is made. Less than 40 percent of women with IBC survive more than five years.

The M.D. Anderson Cancer Clinic in Houston is home to the nation’s only facility devoted solely to the research, diagnosis and treatment of IBC. The University of New Mexico Cancer Center brings internationally-recognized researchers and scientists to the partnership, as well as an extensive collection of tissue samples from the New Mexico Tumor Registry.

“This historic partnership will bring together some of the best minds in the nation to address the problem of inflammatory breast cancer,” said Dr. Cheryl Willman, director and CEO of the UNM Cancer Center. “We believe this research will translate into better treatment for other types of high-risk breast cancer as well, which claim the lives of far too many women in this region.”

The driving force behind New Mexico’s IBC research funding was Senator Tim Jennings, whose wife, Patty, was initially diagnosed with the disease. During the 2007 legislative session, New Mexico legislators voted unanimously to allocate $3.2 million for the joint research project between M.D. Anderson and the UNM Cancer Center. Texas legislators followed suit with $4 million in matching funds.

After her IBC diagnosis on Christmas Eve, 2004, Patty Jennings quickly learned how lethal the rare form of breast cancer is. “Most women are diagnosed in their 20s,” Patty said. “Often, there’s just one month from the onset of the disease until it’s moved to other organs. The chances of living more than two or three years are very slim.”

Thankfully, Patty soon learned she had been misdiagnosed. Instead of IBC, she had another type of high-risk breast cancer. But Patty did not forget the hundreds of young women whose lives are taken by this deadly disease every year. Unfortunately, the advances that have been made in diagnosing and treating other forms of breast cancer have not extended to IBC. “I was astonished that this disease was not being looked at by anyone,” Patty said. “We had to do something because this is so deadly. There’s not a lot of hope for anybody who gets it.”

Unlike other breast cancers, women with IBC rarely have tumors or lumps that can be detected by mammograms or ultrasounds. Symptoms, which include warmth and swelling in the breast, itching, pain, redness, a change in the color of the areola and thickened areas of skin, are often misdiagnosed as an infection. But better diagnostic tools and treatments could be just around the corner as the nation’s premier cancer experts investigate this deadly disease.

“I think this collaboration will be very important to the people of New Mexico,” Patty said. “If we can save lives and contribute to research, that’s what we want to do.”
The new UNM Cancer Center is rising on time and under budget

For the thousands of New Mexicans who are currently coming to the Cancer Center for treatment, the doors to the new UNM Comprehensive Cancer Treatment and Clinical Research Facility can’t open soon enough.

Last year, UNM Cancer Center doctors treated almost 7,000 patients in 90,000 visits. More than 300 people came to the clinic every day—a clinic that was designed for fewer than 100 daily visits. The center now sees almost 50 percent of New Mexican adults newly diagnosed with cancer and virtually all of the children. Fifty-two percent of the patients come to the center from outside of Bernalillo County.

The new $90 million facility is a 206,000 sq. ft., five-story structure. It will easily accommodate more than 200,000 patient visits every year. Construction began in May, 2007 and will open to patients in April, 2009.

The new UNM Cancer Center will house the latest in cancer treatment technology, including the most advanced radiation therapy and radiosurgery techniques and new, highly sensitive cancer diagnostics. The building will have more than 70 examination rooms, four radiation oncology/radiosurgery vaults and a patient education wing.

May 2002
UNM Board of Regents authorizes the planning and design of a new cancer treatment and clinical research facility.

February 2003
Cigarette tax increases by 71¢, providing $23.4 million in tax exempt bonds for the new building.

November 2003
Rahide, May, Keller, McNamara Architects in Albuquerque and VOA Architects in Chicago are awarded the design contract.

August 2003
New Mexico State Legislature approves $30 million in tax-exempt bonds to finance Phase I of construction.

2004
Planning and design proceeds with input from faculty, staff and patients.

May 2005
UNM regents approve 6.1 acre site for the new facility.

View of the Sandia Mountains from our new center’s rooftop infusion suite.
This beautiful new facility has been designed with the spiritual and emotional needs of patients and their families in mind, with a roof-to-ground light chimney, healing garden, reflecting pool, and caregivers’ lounge. Thirty-two rooftop chemotherapy infusion stations will give patients a dramatic view of the Sandia Mountains while they are undergoing treatment.

“Our mission is to support and treat the whole patient while we are treating the cancer,” said Dr. Cheryl Willman, director and CEO of the

After the soil had been turned to symbolize the beginning of the building project, Dr. Cheryl Willman led the group in a release of live butterflies.

UNM Cancer Center. “Cancer patients have very specific needs, and not all of them are physical. We will provide a safe, warm, healing environment for everyone who comes to the UNM Cancer Center.”

May 15, 2007 was the official groundbreaking ceremony for the new building. Hundreds of state and local officials, community supporters, patients and staff braved high winds to celebrate the momentous and exciting day.

The ceremony included several Native American traditions. First, Amadeo Shije, vice chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council, led the group in a prayer to ask forgiveness of those who would be disturbed by the construction.

“We will ask forgiveness of those lives of animals and insects and those beings that live below the ground whose lives will be affected by the movement of the earth,” he told the crowd before his prayer.

“But we will also give thanks because out of all the displacement and movement, will come hope.”

Then, after the soil had been turned to symbolize the beginning of the building project, Dr. Willman led the group in a release of live butterflies. According to a Native American legend, anyone who desires a wish to come true must capture a butterfly, whisper that wish to it and release it. The butterfly takes the wish to the Great Spirit who, in gratitude for the butterfly’s freedom, grants the wish.

Just before hundreds of butterflies took flight, Dr. Willman said: “To all of those who have been affected by cancer – those who have survived and who have died – to them we dedicate this new facility.”

May 15, 2007

Elizabeth L. Altamirano (left) and Dr. Cheryl Willman at the groundbreaking ceremony.

May 2006

Plans approved by Executive Vice President Dr. Paul Roth (above).

October 2006

UNM Hospital contributes $3.4 million for the imaging wing in the new facility.

August 2005

Regents approve $10 million in UNM system bonds for the new building.

May 2007

Regents give final approval.

Flintco, Inc. is awarded the construction contract.

Flintco, Inc.

May 15, 2007

Hundreds brave high winds to attend the official groundbreaking ceremony.

May 15, 2007

Dr. Cheryl Willman, and representative Tom Anderson release butterflies at the ceremony.

May 15, 2007

Dr. Cheryl Willman with the late Senator Ben Abramson (left) and Speaker of the House Ben Lujan (right) at the ceremony.

August 2007

A fleet of 120 cement trucks pour walls five feet thick for the west radiation oncology vault.
New Mexico state legislators and officials have been overwhelmingly supportive of the construction project, allocating $43.4 million over the last three years for Phase 1 of the building project. During this year’s legislative session, state legislators and Governor Bill Richardson approved the final $17 million general obligation bond that is needed to complete the second and final phase of construction. The money will allow contractors to complete the second floor and build an administrative and patient services wing that will house patient sup-
portive care services, complementary/alternative medicine, physician and nursing offices and clinical trial offices.

Representative Ben Lujan, speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives, said the new facility will be “a world-class cancer center in a world-class home for us here in New Mexico.”

“We are blessed to have these incredible medical people with the gifts to heal,” he said. “I am proud that we can provide the best environment where they can continue their research and train the next generation of health care professionals to overcome New Mexico’s significant health care disparities.”

The late Senator Ben Altamirano expressed his support of the University of New Mexico Cancer Center at the groundbreaking ceremony. “This is an exciting moment for health care here in New Mexico,” Altamirano said with a broad smile. “Funding for cancer research and treatment has come a long way, but we must do more.”

For almost a year now, employees of Flintco, Inc., contractor on the project, have been hard at work on the building. Every morning—sometimes seven days a week—at least 100 workers show up at the site, determined to complete the new UNM Cancer Treatment and Clinical Research facility as quickly as possible.

“Every day that we can shave off the schedule is another day that people can be treated locally,” said Ken Easley, vice president of Flintco. “I know what a hardship it is to have to go out of town or out of state to be treated for cancer. This facility is really needed by the community.”

Flintco employs 35 subcontractors and a total of more than 350 people on the project. The new facility will require 12,000 yards of concrete, 16 semi truck-loads of rebar, 600 tons of steel and a 260-ft. crane. Easley said he has assembled a “crack team” of builders who are highly experienced in building health care facilities across the nation and particularly in New Mexico.

But for most of the construction workers, the project is about much more than nuts and bolts. “Funding for cancer research and treatment has come a long way, but we must do more.”

Almost everyone on the site has had someone they love affected by cancer.

It hits close to home for most of us,” said Dustin Hammon, senior project manager for Flintco. “Whenever you can build a project that has a positive impact like this one, it’s really rewarding.”

On December 12, 2007, more than 300 people endured frosty temperatures to witness a milestone in the construction process. The building’s highest beam was laid in place on the fifth story of the new facility. When workers secured the beam, the waiting crowd below erupted with applause, cheers and whistles. “This is a momentous day,” Hammon said.

When workers secured the highest beam—adorned with a pine tree and an American flag—into its permanent home, the crowd below erupted with applause, cheers and whistles.

“The beam signifies prosperity and good luck. It’s really a milestone.”

After the ceremony, everyone was treated to a steak dinner, courtesy of Flintco, in a recently walled-in room of the new facility. Construction workers and legislators sat side-by-side looking at construction photos. The pride and excitement were palpable.

“This is much more than a building project,” Easley said. “It’s about the health of our families and community.”

New Mexico state legislators and officials have been overwhelmingly supportive of the construction project, allocating $43.4 million over the last three years.
WITH THE FIRST AND ONLY TOMOTHERAPY RADIATION TREATMENT SYSTEM IN NEW MEXICO

In a cheerfully decorated room at the University of New Mexico Cancer Center, a large machine takes center stage. While it may look like just another piece of high-tech medical equipment, the TomoTherapy Hi-Art radiation treatment system represents much, much more for many UNM Cancer Center patients. For those patients, TomoTherapy is their best hope for beating cancer.

The TomoTherapy radiation treatment system is one of the most advanced radiation therapy systems available in the world. One of only 70 machines in the nation, the UNM Cancer Center brought TomoTherapy to New Mexico last fall as part of its commitment to provide world-class cancer treatment to all New Mexicans.

TomoTherapy brings life-saving radiation to patients with tumors next to the spinal cord, optic nerves and brain — tumors that can’t always be treated with conventional radiation therapy. And, because there is almost no radiation leakage to growing, healthy tissue, the TomoTherapy Hi-Art system is a much better option for children who need radiation therapy.

Patients treated with TomoTherapy have fewer side effects and usually need fewer treatments than those who undergo conventional radiation treatment. Instead of the usual 40 to 50 treatments, patients can be successfully treated in just five to 10 sessions.

“Because TomoTherapy treats tumors from innumerable tiny angles, the radiation dosage is constrained to just where we want it and stays out of important organs and tissues,” said Dr. Thomas Schroeder, director of TomoTherapy at the UNM Cancer Center. “This results in less nausea and skin irritation and less risk of long-term complications, which, unfortunately, can happen with standard radiation therapy.”
we’re very happy with how things are going,” Schroeder said. “TomoTherapy has proven to be very effective, and most patients are doing better than they were with traditional therapy. We’re very pleased.”

TomoTherapy works by combining real-time CT scans with hundreds of pinpoint, spiral radiation beams. The machine takes detailed 3-D images before each treatment and then adjusts the beams to accommodate changes in the tumor or differences in the way a patient is positioned. “We’re able to do daily CT verifications so we can visualize and align the patient in all three dimensions,” Schroeder said. “Then we can put the radiation where we want it with great accuracy. This had never been done before TomoTherapy.”

TomoTherapy also delivers radiation in an entirely new way. Conventional radiation therapy sends a few wide beams from a limited number of points, restricting access to tumors and treatment areas. TomoTherapy delivers radiation in a continuous 360-degree spiral around the patient, with the dosage changing as the patient moves through the machine. That means that people who can’t receive conventional radiation therapy because of artificial joints or metal in their body, which block traditional radiation beams, can now receive life-saving precision radiation treatments from the TomoTherapy Hi-Art system. “We’re very happy with how things are going,” Schroeder said. “TomoTherapy has proven to be very effective, and most patients are doing better than they were with traditional therapy. We’re very pleased.”

When Monte Newsom was diagnosed with prostate cancer, he didn’t have many options. Traditional radiation therapy was out of the question because Newsom has two artificial hips. The metal prostheses blocked conventional CT scans from “seeing” his prostate well enough to plan radiation treatments. And, even if treatments could have been planned, the straight, limited number of standard radiation therapy beams would have been diluted and diffused by the metal hips. Newsom, 77, then checked into radiation seeding. He was told he wasn’t a good candidate for the procedure. The only remaining option was to have his prostate removed—a difficult surgery with a long recovery time. “I wasn’t going to have another surgery,” Newsom said. “I’ve had too many.” Fortunately, he heard about the new TomoTherapy Hi-Art radiation machine at the UNM Cancer Center. It proved to be the perfect solution. TomoTherapy’s advanced imaging system produced a clear, three-dimensional picture of the treatment area, in spite of his artificial hips. Continuous spirals of radiation, delivered in a 360-degree radius, reached around the metal prostheses and sent consistent doses of radiation directly to the prostate. Newsom said he has had no side effects from the TomoTherapy treatment. He and his wife recently went on an extended vacation. “I haven’t missed a beat,” he said. “And I didn’t have to have surgery.”
From sweat-soaked senators to rowdy representatives, Lady Lobo hoop heroines to Aggie football all-stars, New Mexico’s finest play hard for the UNM Cancer Center.

A hard-fought basketball game between New Mexico House and Senate members raised a record-breaking $6,054 for the UNM Cancer Center in January. Senators, coached by UNM head football coach Rocky Long, wore Lobo jerseys. Representatives, coached by New Mexico State University President Dr. Michael Martin, wore Aggie jerseys. Organized by legislative consultant Billy Gupton, the game ended with the House winning 35 to 30.

Legislative basketball games have been a staple of legislative sessions for more than 15 years. Hundreds show up every year to watch their elected officials play in what is always a brutal, physical game. “We’re glad to be helping the UNM Cancer Center,” said Rep. Dan Foley, who played in the game. “They are doing an amazing job of helping all New Mexicans.”

Four years ago, legislators decided to use the game as a fund-raiser for the UNM Cancer Center in honor of Representative Ray Ruiz, who died of lung cancer in 2004. Since that time, legislative basketball games have raised a total of $17,700 for the UNM Cancer Center. “When you can put all the politics aside for a great New Mexican like Ray, it’s an honor for all of us,” Foley said.

Before this year’s game, Rep. Eric Youngberg had his suit pants cut off to shorts length—something he was warned would happen if he came to the game in long pants. The pants legs were then auctioned off for almost $700 for the UNM Cancer Center. At halftime, a memorial jersey in honor of the late Sen. Ben Altamirano, who passed away last December, was presented to his grandsons.
On the weekend of September 29, 2007, Las Cruces was bathed in pink. From pink clothes to pink-themed meals and store marquees, the community was caught up in the Aggies Are Tough Enough To Wear Pink football game at New Mexico State University.

Dedicated to promoting breast cancer awareness and raising funds for breast cancer research, the game and other weekend events generated almost $200,000 for Cowboys for Cancer research, a non-profit organization in Las Cruces. Cowboys then donated the money to the UNM Cancer Center to be used for joint research projects between NMSU and the UNM Cancer Center. Combined with the $150,000 raised during their annual roping event and dinner dance in Las Cruces in October, Cowboys for Cancer Research donated more than $350,000 to the UNM Cancer Center in 2007.

In addition to sponsoring the Tough Enough to Wear Pink game, the UNM Cancer Center hosted a cancer education night for Las Cruces community members the night before the game. “No one imagined our event would be what it became,” said June Mumme, wife of NMSU head football coach Hal Mumme and event organizer. “Our success is a tribute to NMSU and the people of Las Cruces.”

Six organizations, who together have contributed more than $5 million to breast cancer research at the UNM Cancer Center, were also honored at halftime: the Stranahan Foundation, the Carl C. Anderson Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation, Cowboys for Cancer Research, the American Cancer Society, the New Mexico Department of Health and the Komen for a Cure Foundation.

UNM President Dr. David Schmidly and former Lady Lobos assistant coach Hazel Tull-Leach had a free-throw competition that raised $2,500 for the UNM Cancer Center. Sponsors were Frontier Restaurant, Golden Pride and Clear Channel Outdoor.

The University of New Mexico Cancer Center sponsored the first-ever Think Pink UNM women’s basketball game in February. The event was dedicated to raising awareness about breast cancer.

Lady Lobo players, coaches and game officials wore pink, as did many in the stands. At halftime, more than 50 breast cancer survivors and their families received a standing ovation from the crowd as they walked onto the court to be honored by Dr. Cheryl Willman, director and CEO of the UNM Cancer Center. “It was nice to be recognized for all the work that goes into being a cancer patient,” said breast cancer survivor Rebecca Cavall. “It takes tremendous strength.”

Getting in the Game: Think Pink

NMSU Aggies put on the pink to bring in almost $200,000 for breast cancer research.
The University of New Mexico Cancer Center is the only cancer center in New Mexico that provides a fully integrated, comprehensive cancer treatment program. We are one of only 63 National Cancer Institute-designated facilities and the official Cancer Center of the State of New Mexico.

Over the last seven years, the UNM Cancer Center has grown tremendously. Last year alone, revenues increased by 31 percent, and the number of patient encounters rose by 17 percent. The UNM Cancer Center now provides world-class cancer care to more than 7,600 New Mexicans and reaches many more through outreach and education programs in some of the most remote areas of the state.

The UNM Cancer Center is the State’s largest team of board-certified oncology physicians. These 73 doctors hail from such prestigious institutions as Sloan-Kettering, M.D. Anderson, and the Mayo Clinic. Surgeons, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and other medical specialists work hand-in-hand to design individualized treatment plans for each patient and to deliver comprehensive, compassionate, culturally sensitive care.

Along with our clinic, our four National Cancer Institute research programs are also growing and thriving. Funding for the Population Sciences, Cancer Health Disparities and Cancer Control Research Program, the Cancer Biology and Biotechnology Program, the Women’s and Hormone-responsive Cancers Research Program and the Hematologic Malignancies Program has increased by 32 percent over the last two years. More research dollars mean scientists can translate even more scientific discoveries into treatments and provide the most promising drugs and therapies to our patients. Our funding increase is especially significant since federal dollars for many cancer research projects are shrinking.

More than 35 percent of patients treated at the UNM Cancer Center are accrued to cancer clinical trials, which include prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment trials. Thirteen percent of patients are accrued to therapeutic studies. More than 50 percent of patients enrolled in trials are minorities.

Our researchers are making significant progress in developing new cancer drugs, genome sequencing, cancer prevention, and cell cycling and signaling. Their work is discussed in detail on the following pages.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2000-2007 UNM CANCER CENTER REPORT CARD</th>
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<td><strong>Net clinic revenues:</strong></td>
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Population Sciences, Cancer Health Disparities & Cancer Control

The Population Sciences, Cancer Health Disparities and Cancer Control program is focused on understanding the unique cancer patterns found in New Mexico’s multi-ethnic populations. Working to prevent cancer by identifying risk factors and developing educational outreach and screening programs, this group’s research on New Mexico’s most common cancers is yielding discoveries that will translate into more effective therapies and prevention strategies for New Mexicans.

Board Native American Research Center for Health focused on the development of culturally appropriate cancer prevention and education programs in New Mexico’s Indian Nation’s, tribal communities, and rural settings; and 3) Project ECHO, a virtual telemedicine, telehealth network.

The program has two multi-disciplinary Clinical Working Groups including Lung Cancer capitalizing on our interactions with the Lovelace Respiratory Institute (LRII) and GI Malignancies. Several program members also actively participate in the Breast Multidisciplinary Working Group, based in the Women’s Cancers Program. Interactions between program members and these working groups are leading to the design of investigator-initiated clinical trials, biomarker development, screening and prevention studies, and community interventions. With the Cancer Biology & Biotechnology Program, this program is investigating polymorphisms in DNA repair pathways in cancer tissues, sequencing of chromosome 6 in melanomas, and developing programmatic grants in skin cancer with many other NCI Cancer Centers.

Leaders:
Marianne Berwick, PhD (far left)
Steven Belinsky, PhD (above)

Clinical Working Group Leaders:
Lung Cancer: Dennie Jones, MD , Richard Crowell, MD
Gastrointestinal Malignancies: Fa-Chyi Lee, MD Yahuda Palt, MD

Program year: 2006 2007
Program members: 37 41
Publications: 63 52
Annual Program Funding (Total Funds): $13,660,507 $16,386,475
Cancer Biology & Biotechnology

The goals of the Cancer Biology & Biotechnology Program are to: 1) study how critical pathways that regulate cell growth and development, such as epigenetic modifications, transcription, cell cycle regulation, and DNA repair, are disrupted in cancer; 2) use biotechnology, nanotechnology, and engineering tools to develop new diagnostic and interventional platforms to model these pathways and molecular interactions in cancer cells; and 3) develop and utilize high-throughput screening, high performance computing and cheminformatics, novel isotopes and imaging, and animal models to discover and validate new targets and therapies for cancer diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.

Program members have significant interactions with the UNM College of Engineering and New Mexico’s National Laboratories. A NSF/NCI IGERT Nanotechnology Training Fellowship Program, one of only four nationwide, supports the training of students and fellows in these areas of science. Projects in collaboration with Sandia National Laboratories focus on nanotechnology and high performance computing while those with Los Alamos National Laboratory focus on the development of novel radioisotopes for cancer imaging and therapy through The New Mexico Center for Isotopes in Medicine. Collaborations with New Mexico State University are focused on the chemistry and synthesis of novel cancer treatment compounds. In order to conduct pre-clinical animal studies for new drug and isotope development and to develop animal model systems for the study of cancer, program members obtained support from the W. M. Keck Foundation to establish a new Shared Resource for small animal modeling and imaging with microPET and NanoSPECT Imaging capabilities.

Many program members collaborate in the key New Mexico Molecular Libraries Screening Center (NMMLSC), one of only 10 such NIH RoadMap Screening Initiatives funded nationwide. NMMLSC is using novel high throughput screening technologies in flow cytometry and cheminformatics to identify new drugs for the treatment of several cancers in collaboration with the other UNM Cancer Center Research Programs as well as other NCI Cancer Centers across the nation. The NMMLSC has issued 9 patents, 6 active licenses, and has developed a new company: Sage Science.
Members of the Women’s and Hormone-Responsive Cancers Research Program are developing clinical trials designed to stop the progression of women’s cancers by interrupting the “cross-talk” between hormones and cells. Resulting in good outcomes for many patients, this science is being translated to the development of new cancer treatments.

This group is also investigating women’s cancer health disparities among minorities, including the increase in mortality rates for Hispanic women with breast cancer.

Leaders:
Jeffrey Griffith, PhD
Kimberly Leslie, MD (far left)
Eric Prossnitz, PhD (above)

Clinical Working Groups Leaders:
Breast Cancer: Melanie Royce, PhD, MD
GYN Oncology: Carolyn Muller, MD & Claire Verschraegen, MD

Program year:
2006
2007

Program members:
26
25

Publications:
63
58

Annual Program Funding (Total Funds):
$4,305,740
$12,559,967
Hematologic Malignancies

The goal of the UNM Cancer Center’s Hematologic Malignancies Research Program is to uncover the causes and develop improved diagnostics and cures for cancers derived from blood cells, including the acute and chronic leukemias, lymphomas, myeloma, and the myelodysplastic syndromes. Program members are engaged in studies to: 1) uncover the transcriptional regulation and development of normal hematopoietic stem cells and to determine how these developmental pathways go awry in blood cell cancers; 2) discover the underlying genomic abnormalities and gene expression patterns of adult and pediatric leukemias in order to better predict patient outcome and identify new targets for therapy; 3) characterize signaling networks in hematopoietic cells and in leukemia model systems using sophisticated imaging and computational tools in collaboration with colleagues from Sandia National Laboratory; and 4) translate their discoveries to new diagnostic tools and therapies that can be implemented into early phase clinical trials at the UNM Cancer Center and within the network of NCI-Designated Cancer Centers.

Program members play leadership roles in the NCI Cooperative Clinical Trials Research Groups [The Children’s Oncology Group and The Southwest Oncology Group] where they lead major research consortia to develop new diagnostics and therapies in leukemia and test these in national clinical trials. Program members also have significant funded collaborations with other NCI Cancer Centers, including The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia at The University of Pennsylvania, and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis. UNM program members developed the NCI’s first TARGET (Therapeutically Applicable Research to Generate Effective Treatments) project using sophisticated genomic technologies to identify underlying mutations and potential new targets for therapy in the 30 percent of children and many adults with leukemia who fail today’s current treatments. These studies have identified specific genes associated with a poor outcome that are particularly prevalent in Hispanic children. Interactive research in the program is funded by several programmatic grants from the NCI [Strategic Partnerships to Evaluate Cancer Gene Signatures, one of only 6 such grants in the nation] and two Specialized Center of Research Grants funded by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. To assure that all New Mexicans receive state-of-the-art care for hematologic malignancies, the UNM Cancer Center has developed a hematopoietic stem cell transplant program through its statewide network.

Leaders:
Bridget Wilson, PhD (above)
Richard Larson, MD, PhD (not pictured)

Clinical Working Group Leaders:
Edward Libby, MD
Stuart Winter, MD

Program year: 2006 2007
Program members: 24 23
Publications: 70 65
Annual Program Funding (Total Funds): $9,950,500 $8,847,125

The UNM Cancer Center’s Hematologic Malignancies Research Program is dedicated to the study and treatment of blood cancers, including leukemias and lymphomas in both adults and children. Members have discovered key genetic markers that will lead to better treatment for the 30 percent of leukemia patients who do not respond to current treatment protocols. The group has also developed a hematopoietic stem cell transplant program so New Mexicans with hematologic cancers have access to the most advanced care.
Melanie E Royce, MD, PhD, is the director of the Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Program and the Hereditary Cancer Assessment Program at the UNM Cancer Center. Royce, who hails from the University of Texas – M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, has built one of the nation’s premier breast cancer programs right here in Albuquerque.

Royce said she has always had an interest in cancer because it is a fascinating and complex disease. She had a personal reason for specializing in breast cancer – she lost a dear cousin to the disease. As a physician and a researcher, she is able to merge her scientific and clinical knowledge to provide the best possible care for her patients.

“At UNM I feel like I make a difference. I’m not just one among many who do the same thing. There is great science going on at UNM including many important clinical trials. With teams of surgeons, radiologists, infusion specialists and other experts focusing on every type of cancer, we can truly provide outstanding multidisciplinary care.”
world-class country and track and field program in his home-town of Indianapolis, unexplained pain suddenly flared up in his foot.

Franklin went to see his longtime physician, who ordered blood tests. The next day, he was diagnosed with AML. Five days later, he checked in for a 40-day stay at the Indiana University Simon Cancer Center.

While physicians and nurses were carefully watching Franklin’s white blood cell counts, he was busy watching out for his team. Franklin stayed in constant phone contact with his budding track stars, running up a $2,500 cell phone bill that month. His gritty determination to coach in the face of AML paid off. That fall, Franklin’s athletes took fourth place at the NCAA Division I Cross Country Championship. He also earned the 2004 NCAA Cross Country Coach of the Year award.

But having cancer had changed Franklin. He became acutely aware that he had spent all of his 39 years within an 80-mile radius. Life suddenly seemed too short to not try something new. A great coaching job at UNM combined with the state-of-the-art care he would receive at the UNM Cancer Center made the decision to move to Albuquerque an easy one for Franklin, his wife and his 15-year-old son.

Franklin, who is close to being declared cancer-free, said he is one of the lucky ones. "Had I not gone through cancer, I probably would not have taken this opportunity because I was very comfortable with where I was," Franklin said. "Everything here has been great. This has been a good decision."

Head UNM track and field coach Joe Franklin said he would never have relocated to Albuquerque if weren’t for the excellent reputation of the UNM Cancer Center.

Having a world class Cancer Center right here in New Mexico means that New Mexicans no longer have to leave home to get the best possible cancer care. And for some people who don’t live here, the University of New Mexico Cancer Center is a reason to relocate.

Joe Franklin said he took the head coaching position of the UNM men’s and women’s track and field teams largely because his oncologist at the Simon Cancer Center in Indiana told him he would get outstanding cancer care here. Franklin had been battling acute myeloid leukemia – a rapidly-progressing form of leukemia – for five years.

"I would not have taken this job if the UNM Cancer Center had not been such a renowned place," Franklin said. "There are people who stay here in New Mexico to go to the UNM Cancer Center instead of going to M.D. Anderson or the Mayo Clinic or wherever. I’m someone who came here to go to the UNM Cancer Center."

Franklin’s decision to move from Indiana to New Mexico last summer has been a great boon to the Lobos athletic program. Under his leadership last season, both the men’s and women’s track teams placed in the NCAA Division I Cross Country Championships for the first time since 1988.

Standing beside the University of New Mexico Lobos track recently, Coach Franklin looked to be the picture of health. But one day five years ago, when he was head coach of Butler University’s cross
The twentieth century was in its infancy when two brothers from Boston were on the verge of making automotive history. Though they didn’t know it at the time, they were also laying the foundation for tremendous charitable giving that, a century later, would reach to the University of New Mexico Cancer Center.

Frank and Robert Stranahan founded the Champion Spark Plug Company in 1910. For decades, the company was the sole supplier of spark plugs to Ford Motor Company. In 1944, the brothers formed the Stranahan Foundation in Toledo, Ohio, with the mission of improving education, health care, culture and community. Today, the brothers’ descendants, including Robert Stranahan and his wife Kelly of Santa Fe, are still generously funding projects throughout the nation.

The University of New Mexico Cancer Center caught the attention of Robert and Kelly five years ago when they heard Dr. Cheryl Willman, the UNM Cancer Center’s director and CEO, speak. The couple was struck by the novel and important work being done at the center, and knew they had to help.

When Robert’s father was diagnosed with cancer, the Stranahans knew they could count on finding world-class care close to home. As one of only 63 National Cancer Institute-designated sites in the nation, the UNM Cancer Center provided Robert’s father with the best treatment possible.

“Not having to fly to Rochester or Houston or L.A. and to be treated where you live is priceless,” Kelly said. “Everybody on the UNM Cancer Center faculty is from somewhere outstanding, and the fact that they want to be here speaks volumes. It’s very impressive.”

Robert, a great-great grandson of Robert Stranahan, grew up in Santa Fe. He is the chief legal counsel for the New Mexico State Land Office. Kelly serves on the boards of several charitable organizations, including the grant committee for the Stranahan Foundation. The couple has three daughters and lives in the same house where Robert grew up.

Like so many other families, the Stranahans have had several loved ones diagnosed with cancer over the years. At the time, some of those family members were forced to look outside New Mexico to get good cancer care. That experience motivated them to partner with the UNM Cancer Center as they built a nationally-recognized program. “We decided that with family members being out here, it would certainly be nice to elevate the programs that we have in New Mexico to the same levels that they have elsewhere,” Robert said.
“We think both my parents would be happy about this program because they both believed in the therapeutic value of art,” Grevey-Hillson said recently.

Granddaughter Lisa and her family say the Arts in Medicine staff work hard to create a positive, nourishing environment for those undergoing treatment and their families, as well as for the center’s professional caregivers. They say that attitude is a reflection of the way Jack Grevey lived his life. “From my grandfather, a Holocaust survivor, we learned how important a positive spirit can be in tough times,” Lisa said. “He knew the importance of maintaining hope and was always optimistic, even facing tragic circumstances.”

Grevey-Hillson said her family sees the Arts in Medicine program as a complementary extension of the warm, personal care patients seem to receive throughout the UNM Cancer Center.

“We have found everyone there to be wonderful,” she said. “When you enter the building, everyone is smiling and helping however they can. We feel very blessed to be even a small part of the Center’s big efforts to create a holistic, supportive environment for all those who walk through their doors.”

For two years, the program has supplied art instructors and materials so patients and their families can create pottery, paintings and other types of art while they are in the clinic.
Eight years ago, Kirt Daniels needed a change. He had been at the same job for 13 years, and he and his wife, Linda, were tired of breathing Los Angeles smog. They packed up all their belongings and headed east to Albuquerque, where Daniels, a radio veteran, took a position as an account manager at Citadel Broadcasting. The couple planned to pursue new careers, fresh air and a healthy lifestyle. An avid fly fisherman, bicyclist and golfer, Daniels was excited to take advantage of all New Mexico had to offer.

Because Daniels was in top physical condition, it was unusual when he developed a cough that wouldn’t go away. After a visit to his general practice physician in 2006, he was given allergy medication and sent home. “I’ve always been acutely aware of my physical condition, and a little voice inside told me it wasn’t an allergy,” Daniels said. The nagging cough kept up, gradually getting worse.

Five months later, Daniels was back in his doctor’s office insisting on more thorough testing. A CAT scan and biopsy brought devastating news. Even though he had never smoked, Daniels was diagnosed with stage III lung cancer.

In shock, Daniels began to research his treatment options. He strongly considered cancer centers in Houston, Denver or Seattle. But after an appointment with Dr. Dennie Jones, a medical oncologist specializing in lung cancer at the UNM Cancer Center, Daniels decided to stay right here in Albuquerque.

“Dr. Jones assured me that the treatment at UNM is some of the best in the country.... He gave me the encouraging news that we were going to fight this and try to go for a cure. I realized that the treatment I would receive here is as good as any I could get.”

But there was more bad news to come. One month after his diagnosis, Daniels’ wife was told she had breast cancer. “It was really quite a one-two punch,” he said. Without hesitation, Linda headed straight to the Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Team at the UNM Cancer Center for treatment.

Inspired by Lance Armstrong’s book, It’s Not About the Bike, Kirt and Linda resolved to keep moving and doing the things they loved. Daniels went on a fly-fishing trip to Belize in between chemotherapy cycles. He also participated in a five-mile breast cancer walk just two days after another treatment. “It had victimized me once, I didn’t want cancer to victimize me twice,” he said. “I think some people tend to want to give up, but you have to fight, and you have to believe that you can make it.”

That fierce determination combined with chemotherapy reduced Daniels’ lung cancer to a single, small tumor which was then treated using our new TomoTherapy state-of-the-art radiation treatment system. The UNM Cancer Center is the only facility in New Mexico to offer TomoTherapy. He is awaiting the final test results, but Daniels and his team of cancer specialists expect a good outcome.

As for Linda, Daniels said, “My wife has been under the treatment of Dr. Anne Marie Wallace and Dr. Melanie Royce – two of the best – and she’s come out of this in absolutely tip-top shape.”

The couple is looking toward the future with determination and hope. “There are no guarantees, but a year ago January, I didn’t think I’d be around four months until I met the doctors at UNM who said, ‘no, this is something we can fight,’” Daniels said. “I am fortunate to be in Albuquerque where I am able to have access to this kind of care.”
Dr. Ian Rabinowitz, MD is the UNM Cancer Center Medical Director and an associate professor in the Department of Medicine. Dr. Rabinowitz considers it a privilege to be a medical oncologist because he can form partnerships and relationships with patients who are courageously facing the formidable challenges of cancer. Dr. Rabinowitz said he chose to practice at the UNM Cancer because the faculty has extensive expertise in both common and rare malignancies – an expertise that rivals some of the leading major cancer centers in the country.

“The dedication and caring of the people who work here continues to amaze me. From the greeter at the front desk to the support staff to the doctors and nurses, there is a common purpose and commitment to do all that we can with a human touch. This facility has developed into the premier cancer institute in New Mexico.”
How to give to the UNM Cancer Center

University of New Mexico Cancer Center donors are exceptional people. From gifts of $1 to $1 million, each dollar is given to ensure that every New Mexican with cancer has access to the best possible care and benefits from the fruits of our cancer research.

Individuals, businesses and foundations who contribute $1,000 or more annually to the UNM Cancer Center are members of the El Oso Sanador Society. This group of supporters is recognized on permanent plaques in the UNM Cancer Center lobby, receive invitations to special events and are recognized in various publications. Giving options include:

Memorial Gifts: A donation made in the name of a friend or loved one is a wonderful way to honor and remember that person’s life. The UNM Cancer Center will notify the honoree’s family of the gift.

Planned Giving: Donors may plan for a future gift by naming the UNM Cancer Center as a beneficiary in wills or by designating proceeds from life insurance, retirement funds or bank accounts. Real estate gifts are also accepted.

Endowments: A lump sum of money can be held by the UNM Foundation to benefit the UNM Cancer Center. Four percent to 5 percent of the interest income on the endowment principle is made available to the Cancer Center each year.

The United Way: Donors may designate all or part of their contribution to the UNM Cancer Center.

Donors may earmark their gifts to go to specific purposes such as research, education or equipment. Gifts may also be designated for specific doctors or types of cancer.

UNM Cancer Center Capital Campaign

The UNM Cancer Center is proud to partner with individuals, businesses and foundations from across New Mexico and the nation to support the construction of the center’s beautiful new 206,000 sq. ft. facility. This group of visionaries is committed to creating a state-of-the-art cancer center that will provide high-quality care for all New Mexicans with cancer.

The cornerstone of the capital building campaign is our Circle of Hope donors. This title is given to the first 10 individuals or groups that give $1 million or more to the building project. Circle of Hope member’s names will be engraved in a large circle prominently displayed in the main lobby of our new Cancer Treatment and Clinical Research Facility. Membership also includes major naming opportunities in the new facility. Additional naming opportunities include:

Gold Level: $500,000 – $999,999
Entrance Sculpture and Fountain; Rooftop Healing Garden; Women’s Cancer and Cancer Risk Assessment Suite

Silver Level: $200,000 – $500,000
West Entry Healing Garden; Multidisciplinary Clinic Waiting Room; Pharmacy; Laboratory Services; Patient Support Services Program

Bronze Level: $50,000 – $199,000
Patient Education and Library; Consultation Rooms; Experimental Therapeutics/Clinical Trials Laboratory; Exam and Treatment Rooms; Family and Supportive Caregivers Lounge; Pastoral Care; Small Waiting Room

For more information on becoming a donor, call the UNM Cancer Center Development Office at 272-2114 or email PCain@salud.unm.edu.
E l O s o s a N a d o r  S p r i n g  2 0 0 8  D o n o r s  U n i v e r s i t y o f N e w M e x i c o C a n c e r C e n t e r  2 0 0 8 D o n o r s e l O s o s a N a d o r  S p r i n g 2 0 0 8  E n d o w m e n t s n Christina Brown Endowment for Cancer Research n Merlina Burke Endowment Fund n Dawn R. Bush Endowment Fund n Shirley L. Anderson Cancer Research Fund n Albert C. Johnson Memorial Fund n Edgerton Endowment Fund n Nancy O. Skinner Fund for Cancer Research n Margaret J. Skelley Fellowship n S. J. and Jerry Asmann Endowed Fund n Nancy G. Stiner Cancer Research Fund n J. S. Traver Endowment Fund n Lee E. Traver Endowment Fund n Jean Louise Johnson Memorial Fund n Hunter M. Kimbrell Fund n Marianne B. Greenway Fund n Dorothy A. Scott Fund n Donald M. Peterson Fund n James P. Korn Endowed Fund n Patricia M. Loring Endowment Fund n LaVonne and Joe Ray Endowment Fund n Joseph E. MacFarlane Endowment Fund n James Smith Endowment Fund n Britt S. Williams Endowment Fund n Daniel J. Traver Endowment Fund for Cancer Research n Special Assistance to Patients n Joanna Mars & Jack Greivy Creative Arts in Media Fund n The Joel H. Miller Memorial Fund n Russell Pflug Jr. & Lilian Helfgott Endowment Fund n F. S. & Jeanne Jackson Endowed Fellowship Fund n Maurice M. Ochs Fund n Barry S. Ochs Endowment Fund n Harold L. Perlman Memorial Endowment Fund n Susan E. Rosen Endowment Fund for Cancer Research n John Keen & Marsha Memorial Cancer Research Fellowship n C. Norris Biddle Endowed Fellowship in Medical Oncology n Joel S. Skinner Fund for Appended Cancer n $ 1,000,000+ Alois L. Antonio Endowment Fund of the Wilma & Wi lma Antonio Society of America n $ 500,000 - 999,999 n Allied Cashiers Society n The Carey Foundation of Santa Fe to Antonio Charitable Foundation Fund n Caswell School Children's Orphanage Fund n The Lengendary Bicycles Fund n New Mexico $50,000 Page Fellowship n Susan G. Komen for the Cure Endowment Fund n The Foundations of Surface Enterprises, LLC n Individuals $5,000 to $9,999 n Corporations, Organizations & Foundations n American Society of Hematology, Inc. n $ 1,000,000+ Alois L. Antonio Endowment Fund of the Wilma & Wilma Antonio Society of America n $ 500,000 - 999,999 n Allied Cashiers Society n The Carey Foundation of Santa Fe to Antonio Charitable Foundation Fund n Caswell School Children's Orphanage Fund n The Lengendary Bicycles Fund n New Mexico $50,000 Page Fellowship n Susan G. Komen for the Cure Endowment Fund n The Foundations of Surface Enterprises, LLC n Individuals $5,000 to $9,999 n Corporations, Organizations & Foundations n American Society of Hematology, Inc. n $ 1,000,000+ Alois L. Antonio Endowment Fund of the Wilma & Wilma Antonio Society of America n $ 500,000 - 999,999 n Allied Cashiers Society n The Carey Foundation of Santa Fe to Antonio Charitable Foundation Fund n Caswell School Children's Orphanage Fund n The Lengendary Bicycles Fund n New Mexico $50,000 Page Fellowship n Susan G. Komen for the Cure Endowment Fund n The Foundations of Surface Enterprises, LLC n Individuals $5,000 to $9,999
Mr. Richard Jackson
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Johnson, Jr.
Mr. Bill Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Kathleen Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Kathleen Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Pamela Jones
Mr. John Jones
Mrs. Kathleen Jones
Mr. and Mrs. John Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Jones
Mr. and Mrs. James Jones
Mr. and Mrs. John Jonas
Mr. and Mrs. John Jonas
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Jonas
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jordan
Mr. and Mrs. John Jordan
Mr. and Mrs. Karen Judge
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Jones
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jones
Ms. Kimberly Kaye
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kelly
Mr. and Mrs. James Kelly
Mr. and Mrs. John Kelly
Ms. Carol Kellman
Ms. and Mrs. John Kellman
Mr. John Kegel
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Saying Goodbye

The State of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico Cancer Center suffered a tremendous loss with the passing of Senator Ben Altamirano of Silver City last December. He was one of the UNM Cancer Center’s most enthusiastic supporters. Altamirano devoted a great deal of time and effort to secure funding for the UNM Cancer Center and its new cancer treatment and clinical research facility.

Altamirano’s service to the state started when he was elected in 1971 to represent Senate District 28, which includes Catron, Grant and Socorro counties. He was the longest-serving member of the legislature. Altamirano was chairman of the powerful Finance Committee until 2005, when he became president of the Senate.

While in office, he found a friend in Marlyn Budke, who was director of the Finance Committee when Altamirano was appointed. Budke, a survivor of tongue cancer and former patient at the UNM Cancer Center, and Altamirano worked together to secure funding for the construction of the new Cancer Center facility. The two also helped the UNM Cancer Center with funding needed to gain the prestigious National Cancer Institute designation in 2005.

“Ben was always a big supporter of higher education and particularly the UNM School of Medicine and the UNM Cancer Center,” Budke said. “It’s wonderful to see that beautiful new facility going up and that the Cancer Center recognized on a national level.”

Senator Altamirano’s tremendous efforts to advance the UNM Cancer Center will long be remembered. “The UNM Cancer Center would not be where it is today if it wasn’t for people like Benny Altamirano,” said Dr. Cheryl Willman, director and CEO of the UNM Cancer Center. “Benny was a wonderful man who truly cared about people with cancer. He will be deeply and profoundly missed.”
A NATIVE AMERICAN LEGEND

Whisper a wish to a butterfly and set it free. It will carry your wish to the Great Spirit who will grant it in gratitude for giving the beautiful butterfly its freedom.