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Students design the city of the future

The 2019-20 Future City competition which took place on January 11 saw 43 middle-school teams from across New Mexico compete at the UNM School of Architecture and Engineering. The competition encourages students to imagine, research, design, and build cities of the future that address a particular sustainability issue. This year's theme was clean water, and students had to choose a threat to their city's water supply and design a resilient system to maintain a reliable supply of water.

Northern New Mexico students were well-represented, with 24 teams from ten schools in the region taking part. Participants completed three steps: designing a city on the computer using the SIM City software, writing an essay and abstract about the city, and then making a scale model of the city and presenting it to a panel of engineer judges on the day of the competition. Volunteers from the Laboratory mentored several teams on their projects, and another Lab volunteer served as a judge.

Patrick Duran joins Laboratory as economic development outreach specialist

We welcome Patrick Duran to the Community Partnerships Office at the Laboratory. Patrick is the new Community Outreach Specialist for economic development, working with regional businesses and economic development organizations in supporting a diversified economy in Northern New Mexico. Patrick, a native of Northern New Mexico and a graduate of Pojoaque High School, spent the last decade on the staff of Congressman Ben Ray Lujan, working with constituents throughout Northern New Mexico and serving as a liaison for economic development, higher education and the national laboratories. Prior to working for Congressman Lujan, he worked for Arizona State University for over a decade in several capacities including as the founding Program Director for the Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative, one of the first programs in the nation to offer experiential learning with comprehensive support and tools for college students to launch their own ventures.

"It's a very exciting time to join this world-class institution that is just down the road from where I grew up," says Patrick. "I look forward to collaborating with the region's stakeholders and our communities to find smart and practical ways to build on partnership and opportunities that drive economic growth in our region."

STEAM Day brings science to the Roundhouse

The Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation showcased science, technology, engineering, art and Math (STEAM) at the Roundhouse January 22. Two dozen educational organizations from across the state provided hands-on STEAM activities for all ages, and community leaders and advocates addressed the importance of STEAM education and career development to the state at a news conference. Speakers included Bill McCamley, Cabinet Secretary for the Department Workforce Solutions, Gwen Perea Warniment, Deputy Secretary of Education, and Laboratory scientist Harshini Mukundan (shown above). “Statistics indicate that stereotypes that scientists are only white men deter many students from STEM as early as kindergarten, but personal connections with scientists who defy those stereotypes can stimulate young minds,” said Mukundan, who is also an IF/THEN Ambassador for the American Association for the Advancement of Science. “We need more STEM mentors and programs across New Mexico. Those personal connections are the place to start.” Mukundan was also interviewed about the importance of creativity in science careers by the student journalists of [True Kids 1](#), an educational nonprofit providing New Mexico youth with media skills and covering topics relevant to teens.

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