Community event discusses support for regional economy

December 21, 2020

Nearly one hundred community leaders from Northern New Mexico and beyond attended a Laboratory-organized Community Conversation December 15 on the state’s economy, featuring Laboratory Director Thom Mason and New Mexico Cabinet Secretary for Economic Development Alicia J. Keyes.

Key points from Mason’s talk:

- The Laboratory hired 1,152 new employees in 2020, and that rate is expected to continue in 2021.
- Laboratory researchers provided technical assistance to 134 New Mexico businesses in 2020 via the New Mexico Small Business Assistance Program.
- A new initiative helps New Mexico companies qualify for free research and development resources from the Laboratory.
- In January 2021, LANL, Sandia National Laboratories, and Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation are launching the collaborative NM Lab Embedded Entrepreneurship Program.

Mason also highlighted the Laboratory’s workforce pipeline partnerships with local colleges, and its work diversifying its suppliers. This year, the Laboratory had contracts worth $494 million with New Mexico businesses.

Finally, he outlined the funding from Laboratory operator Triad to the Regional Development Corporation for small business micro-grants and no-interest loans.

Secretary Keyes and Deputy Secretary Jon Clark outlined the State’s programs to support businesses in New Mexico (including JTIP and LEDA), and also highlighted the sectors in which the Economic Development Department is working to support growth, including renewable energy, film and television, and biosciences.

“It was great to hear from the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on the reasons for optimism around the New Mexico economy as we look to 2021,” said Kathy Keith, director of the Laboratory’s Community Partnerships Office.

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