

The Luna Light



"Creating Opportunities for You!"

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Luna's 2018 graduation to be held at Media Arts Auditorium ***Dr. Esmael Valdez to be guest speaker***



Luna Community College 2018 spring graduates will be the first class to utilize the Media Arts Auditorium. The auditorium has a 1,200 seating capacity.

The Luna Community College graduating class of 2018 will be making history on Saturday, May 12—they will be the first to graduate at the new Media Arts Auditorium.

Construction for the auditorium, which was the

second phase of the building, began in January of this year. It includes 750 fixed seats and 450 removable seats. The 1,200-seat capacity is believed to be among the largest, publicly owned venues in northern New Mexico. The total square footage of the

Media Arts Center is 38,000 square feet.

The auditorium is equipped with a state-of-the-art sound system and theatrical lighting. A control room for both sound and

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Media Arts Auditorium...

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lighting is located in the back of the auditorium. Located in the front of the auditorium is a 65 feet wide by 10 feet deep stage. The seating is a school-color teal with the carpet black, charcoal grey and teal.

Luna Physical Plant Manager Matthew Cordova said the total cost of the Media Arts Center is \$10,320,000. Funding for the Media Arts Center came through severance tax and general obligation bonds.

Construction began 12 years ago and the first phase of the Media Arts Center was finished in November 2011. In addition to the auditorium, the facility houses classrooms, offices, an atrium and studios.

“There is a lot of excitement around Luna,” said Cordova. “There is a feeling of accomplishment among both students and staff. There are so many people to thank for this project from area legislators, the legislative finance committee, to the capital projects committee and especially the voters that passed general obligation bonds.”

Cordova said that Luna has held graduation in a tent for at least the last 15 years. Before that,



Dr. Esmael Valdez

graduation was held in an open area at the college.

“I am extremely grateful to Luna for completing our new auditorium in which we will be able to hold our 2018 graduation ceremonies,” says Luna Student Senate President, Jessica Weber. “I am even more excited to be among the first graduating class to utilize this beautiful new auditorium.”

The auditorium will also be used for community events. The current policy for use of facilities is a request has to go through the physical plant and then needs approval from the president.

The guest speaker for this year’s graduation is Dr. Esmael Valdez, who has owned Divine Dental Centre in Las Vegas since 2004 and Divine Dental out of Santa Fe since 2007. Dr. Valdez was born and raised in Mora and

graduated from Mora High School in 1993. In 1999, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree from New Mexico Highlands University. In 2003, Dr. Valdez earned his doctoral degree

from Howard University, College of Dentistry.

The Luna graduation will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 12. Student check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. with a 9 a.m. line up.



The Luna Media Arts Center has a total cost of \$10,320,000.

Luna Community College to offer a Math Bridge 2 Success Program

Luna Community College's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Department is going to offer students a summer mathematics class that bridges two semesters of developmental math classes into one semester. The Bridge 2 Success Mathematics Program is made possible by a grant from Los Alamos National Security, a branch of Los National Laboratory, and is an opportunity for students to bridge the math gap experienced by some students who need help in this area of study.

The class, MATH 102, is a five credit hour class that will be offered this summer semester, which begins June 4 and runs through July 27. "This is a great opportunity for incoming students, such as high school students, to get a jump start on their college studies," said Luna STEM Director Francisco Apodaca. "Many of our incoming students score low

in our placement test, and are then placed in developmental program. This makes it difficult for some students in that it results in at least an extra semester of math classes so it really leads some to drop out of college. With the Bridge 2 Success program, students can get out of the extra class and go on to higher levels of math, which is good for students. Math 102 is a graded class and is transferable to other schools after Luna."

The class MATH 102 is free to the first 30 students that enroll and includes books and the students will visit Los Alamos National Laboratory. For more information, interested students can call (505) 454-2510.

"This is wonderful opportunity for area students to learn and have some fun while at it," said Apodaca.

GOOD NEWS FOR SUMMER STUDENTS!!

Eligible students who enroll at least half-time (6 credits) this summer can receive additional Pell Grant funds!



STOP BY THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE TODAY TO SEE IF YOU QUALIFY AND COMPLETE YOUR SUMMER



INTEREST FORM!



“I chose Luna!”

Sandra Maria Garcia says Luna instructors kind, helpful

Sandra Maria Garcia was born in Las Vegas, N.M., graduated from West Las Vegas High School in 2016 and looks forward to one day earning her degree from Luna Community College.

As many people seem to be gravitating to other cities and other colleges and universities, Garcia does not consider herself a rebel—rather she describes herself as a good kid and refuses to give up on Las Vegas and northern New Mexico.

“Las Vegas is a good place,” says Garcia. “It’s quiet enough to be comfortable and busy enough to keep you occupied. I like to go fishing with my dad. We go everywhere. This summer we want to go fishing in Red River.”

But it’s not about the fish for Garcia. It’s about getting her start at Luna that matters most.

“I like the instructors here,” says Garcia. “They help you, they care, they’re kind. I like the fact that they help us understand the work and not just give you a handout. I prefer an instructor that is interactive with their classes.”



Sandra Maria Garcia is pictured with Luna Interim President Ricky Serna.

Garcia is majoring in general studies but is looking at transferring over to media arts.

“The instructor there Kenneth Bachicha is motivating me to head into that direction,” said Garcia. “He has made me fall in love with Las Vegas again. I’ve taken photography and Photoshop classes with him and it’s nice to see the beautiful scenery Las Vegas offers.”

Bachicha’s influence may have Garcia doing a 180 turn on her original dream—becoming a veterinarian.

“I was always that kid that if we saw a hurt dog on the side of the road, I would beg my parents to stop and let me take it home and get it better,” said Garcia. “But I love photography. Maybe I can do both. With enough determination and head-strength I think I can do it.”

Luna will find out in June if it keeps its accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. This is something that is on Garcia’s mind.

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Sandra Maria Garcia...

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"I would be devastated if I couldn't finish school here at Luna and equally devastated if my cousin Davian wouldn't be able to come here either. He will be graduating from high school this year and he wants to go into culinary arts. It wouldn't be good for either one of us."

Garcia has appreciated what the school has done to keep her informed with Higher Learning Commission issues.

"I'm one of those students who checks my e-mail daily and am always on Facebook to see what Luna posts," says Garcia.

Luna is also special to Garcia because her mom Theresa graduated from this school. Theresa earned a business degree.

"My mom loves that I attend Luna; she knows it's a great place to get an education," says Garcia. "I feel comfortable here at Luna. Between classes there are a lot of places to finish my homework. The library does a good job as do the computer labs."

Garcia would like to walk the graduating line in 2019 or 2020.

"Sandra came into the program last year and is really taking off on learning the software that's needed for media arts," said Luna Media Arts Instructor Kenneth Bachicha. "She is really creative, I look forward to having her as a media arts major. She is the type of student that you want in your classroom."

Garcia wants to learn as much as she can, regardless of the time it takes.

"I want to explore the options that Luna offers," says Garcia. "I don't want to settle. I may still be in school in five years. I'm not in a hurry. I will always look at Luna as giving me a good start. I recommend Luna to other people. There's times that Luna gets a bad rap because of the cost of tuition. I look at Luna as being affordable not cheap. Why go somewhere more expensive, when you can come to Luna? A lot of people see how expensive other colleges are and they end up coming back here."

Luna students Travis Baca, Henry Lopez, and Alvin Korte apply their newly-learned refinishing techniques. Learning hands-on skills is a team effort in the collision repair program.



Luna Community College's Beta Mu Nu Chapter wins several awards

Luna Community College's Phi Theta Kappa Beta Mu Nu Chapter continues to impress.

Under the leadership of Regional Coordinator Dr. Twila Quintana and Regional Coordinator Emeritus Cindy Armijo, the New Mexico Region received recognition on its Five Star Region participation and received one of three regional awards for Excellence in Scholarship.

Luna's Beta Mu Nu Chapter received one of 50 Distinguished College Project Awards. Harain Aldama, Bethany Brafford and Gisela Acosta served on both Luna's Chapter Officer Team and New Mexico Regional Officer Team for 2017-18. Jessica Aldama and Jessey Martinez are serving as Luna Chapter Officers and New Mexico Regional Officers for 2018-19.

Quintana, Armijo, Harain Aldama, Jessica Aldama, Brafford and Martinez attended the PTK Centennial Catalyst in Kansas City, Mo. recently and represented Luna's Beta Mu Nu Chapter and were among 25 representatives of the New Mexico Region. Luna students were highly regarded by Phi Theta Kappa Headquarters staff and many student attendees who looked up to them as Leaders with integrity.



Representing Luna at the PTK Centennial Catalyst in Kansas City, Mo. were Dr. Twila Quintana, Cindy Armijo, Jessey Martinez, Bethany Brafford, Harain Aldama and Gisela Aldama.

"Cindy and I are very proud of the manner they represented Luna Community College and the New Mexico Region of Phi Theta Kappa," said Dr. Quintana. "We all look forward to sharing the knowledge we acquired at Catalyst with our chapter members and the Luna campus community."

Luna Board of Trustees approves salary parity

The Luna Community College Board of Trustees approved a proposal to invest \$316,000 in salary parity adjustments for faculty and staff at its April 23 meeting.

The proposal came following a months-long study which was led by a human resources consultant. The study included an audit of all job descriptions and a salary comparison between Luna employees and similar positions across the region.

More than 70 percent of Luna's faculty and staff will receive a pay increase which will be reflected on their May 4 paycheck.

"The goal was to align the College's salary schedules with those at other, similar institutions in the region," said Interim President Ricky Serna. "We trust the outcome will enhance employee morale, retention and recruitment."

In addition to parity adjustments, all regular staff will

receive a two percent salary increase on July 1, a measure appropriated during the 2018 Legislative Session.

Luna Interim President Ricky Serna said that the college's healthy fund balance is integral to the parity. The College's FY19 budget, which was approved by the Board on April 26, includes an additional 10 full-time positions at the institution.

Adams resigns from Luna Board of Trustees

Luna Community College Board of Trustee Michael Adams resigned effective Tuesday, April 24. Adams, who represents the Las Vegas area, was elected in March 2015.

“We want to thank Mr. Adams for his service and the enthusiasm he brought to the Luna Board,” said Luna Community College Board Chairman Dan Romero.

The College will be seeking individuals interested in filling the vacancy for the Board of Trustees in District 2 (San Miguel County, Las Vegas area). The public is encouraged to view the Luna Website, Luna Facebook as well as local advertisements for additional information. The Board of Trustees holds the authority to fill the vacancy in District 2.

“I will miss the energy that Trustee Adams brought to the Board,” said Luna Community College Interim President Ricky Serna. “He is certainly a visionary and advantageous individual, and I wish him luck in all that he sets out to do.”



Michael Adams



Luna's Nycole Medina throws over teammate Victoria Cordova in Saturday's second game against Midland College. The Lady Rough Riders took one of four games from Midland and finished the season 14-38 overall and 6-22 in the Western Junior College Athletic Conference.



Luna Community College Las Vegas, NM

Board of Trustees District 2 Vacancy

Luna Community College is seeking individuals interested in filling the vacancy for the Board of Trustees in District 2 (San Miguel County, Las Vegas area). The district runs northwest along the Gallinas River up to Montezuma. To be considered for the Board of Trustees, the individual must be over twenty-one years of age, a qualified elector and a resident of the community college district. For further details regarding district maps, visit www.luna.edu.

Individuals must submit a letter of interest and resume to:
Luna Community College
Office of the President
366 Luna Drive
Las Vegas, NM 87701

Packets may also be hand-delivered to the Office of the President.
Letters of interest must be received by Friday, May 25, 2018.

The Board of Trustees holds the authority to fill the vacancy in District 2. Trustees are expected to review applicant packets at their June 12 meeting and interview finalists shortly thereafter. The individual who is selected shall serve until the next community college board election, at which time candidates shall file for and be elected to fill the vacant position to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.



Congratulations to Luna cosmetology and barber students and their models for putting on a great hair show recently. Pictured clockwise are Angelica De La Cruz, Andrea Pauley Andrew Aragon and Ein Parks.

Eugenio Perez IV joins Luna BOT representing District 4



Eugenio Perez IV

Sisneros who resigned on March 7. Perez IV represents District 4 (Guadalupe and a portion of San Miguel County). Perez IV shall serve until the next community college board election, at which time he

Eugenio Perez IV is the newest member of the Luna Community College Board of Trustees. Perez replaces Severiano

shall file for and be elected to fill the vacant position to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

“I’m proud to represent Guadalupe and San Miguel County,” said Perez IV. “I want to help keep Luna vibrant in our area. Luna has made a big investment in Santa Rosa.”

Perez IV is a 1999 Santa Rosa High School graduate. Perez IV earned his welding certificate from Luna in 2004 and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Highlands University in 2006. He is currently a teacher with Academy of Trades Technology, a public charter school in Albuquerque.

He has also taught welding for the Luna Santa Rosa Satellite

“As an educator, I know the importance of a community college education, especially for those students who do not want to attend a four-year university,” said Perez IV. “I’m inspired by working to bringing Luna to the forefront in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). I would like to see Luna bring in a program in both computer numerical control manufacturing and robotic welding. The job market is heading in this area.”

Perez IV, age 37, is married with three children.