

## Luna Rough Riders Face Urgent Housing Shortage as Fall Semester Nears

**LAS VEGAS, NM – July 29, 2025** – With the Fall 2025 semester just around the corner and student-athletes slated to return on August 9, Luna Community College's Rough Rider Athletics program is confronting an unexpected and critical housing shortage. Fifty Luna student-athletes, vital to the program's recent academic and athletic triumphs, are now scrambling to secure accommodations after New Mexico Highlands University unexpectedly canceled signed housing contracts. This abrupt change comes just two weeks before their scheduled move-in date.

This past year, Luna Rough Riders Athletics achieved a remarkable milestone: a 100% graduation rate for its sophomore class, a first in program history. Ninety percent of these graduates successfully transferred to four-year universities, while others entered diverse vocational programs, including the Albuquerque Fire Department Trainee Program, Cosmetology school, the Albuquerque Police Academy, and the U.S. Border Patrol Academy. The program also set a new record with 16 student-athletes earning Region 9 Academic All-Region honors. In 2024, Angelica Ortiz made history as the first Luna student-athlete to be named an All-American by the NJCAA Division I Softball Committee. Ortiz led the nation in RBIs with 119 and home runs with 41, setting new national NJCAA records.

"Our top priority is retaining and accommodating our students, ensuring they have viable housing and food options before classes start on August 18," stated Dr. Carol Linder, President of Luna Community College. "This is a challenging situation, especially given the extremely short notice. We are exploring every possible avenue to support our student-athletes and ensure their success."

For over a decade, Luna students have relied on housing and meal plans at New Mexico Highlands University through a shared commitment, more recently formalized by a Memorandum of Agreement. This sudden change impacts 20 softball players and 30 baseball players, 90% of whom are from New Mexico but outside the local Las Vegas area and depend on college-provided housing.

### Seeking Community Support

While Luna has secured temporary accommodations for students starting August 9, Dr. Linder is actively seeking intermediate and long-term solutions for both housing and meals. Luna has a commercial kitchen and cafeteria, but needs a contractor to provide regular meal services. Luna currently has no on-campus housing facilities and developing on-campus housing typically demands years of planning and significant public-private partnerships.

Dr. Linder has proactively reached out to city and county governments, state representatives, and local businesses and institutions for assistance. She warmly welcomes ideas and offers of support from the community to help overcome this immediate challenge for Luna's dedicated student-athletes.

**Contact:** Dr. Carol Linder President, Luna Community College [clinder@luna.edu](mailto:clinder@luna.edu) with copy to [xeadmin@luna.edu](mailto:xeadmin@luna.edu) or by phone at 505 429-5765 or 505 454-2501.