

# THE LUNA LIGHT

NOVEMBER. 4, 2024 VOL. 7 NO. 13

Luna Community College is expected to get significant snowfall this week. Please be sure to sign up for RAVE alerts to stay up to date on school delays or closures due to inclement weather. Sign up using this QR code. Other sources of information are the college's website, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn and local television and radio stations.



We are what we imagine.

N. Scott Momaday



**Yasmin Chavira Alvidrez**  
STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Nominated by: Denise Fox,  
Director of Dental Assisting

"Yasmin drives from Raton to attend the dental assisting program. She takes part in the opportunities that come her way in the program. She's conscientious, studious, kind, and ethical.



IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF  
LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD TRUSTEE DIANNA  
MEDRANO: PAGE 8-9

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

As we welcome the month of November, I hope this message finds you in good spirits. At Luna Community College, we are excited to honor Native American Heritage Month, a time for us to celebrate the contributions of Native American communities to our region and the world. This month also brings a moment of reflection and remembrance as we grieve the loss of our dear Trustee Dianna Medrano, who passed away on October 30 after a long and courageous fight against cancer. Trustee Medrano's dedication to our college and community will forever be cherished. I find comfort in the words of Tsleil-Waututh (Coastal Salish) leader Chief Dan George: "Grief is like a river that flows through us. It can be strong and wild, but it can also be calm and gentle." May we honor Dianna's memory and the strength of our community as we move forward together.

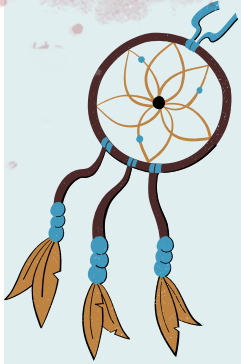


*Dr. Carol Linder*  
Interim President  
LCC

LUNA LIGHT

NOVEMBER 4, 2024

# ELECTION TOMORROW



## The Fascinating Intersection of Native American Heritage Month and the Presidential Election

As we celebrate Native American Heritage Month, it's crucial to recognize the impact of Native American governance on the formation of the United States, particularly the influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the founding fathers.

The Iroquois Confederacy, or Haudenosaunee, is a political union of several tribes, including the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora. This confederacy exemplified principles of democracy, unity, and collective decision-making long before the establishment of the United States. The Great Law of Peace emphasized consensus and individual voices in governance—ideas that resonated with the framers of the Constitution (Parker, 2006).

Founding fathers such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson were inspired by the Iroquois system. Franklin admired how the Confederacy maintained peace among its member nations and suggested that colonists could learn from their unity (Mann, 2006). This influence is evident in the U.S. Constitution's framework of checks and balances and the concept of a union among states.

As we approach the presidential election, this connection serves as a reminder of the diverse influences that have shaped American democracy.



## Luna Employees Can Get Paid Time Off to Vote

Election day is tomorrow, Tuesday, November 5, 2024. We encourage Luna employees to exercise their right to vote. On Election Day employees are granted up to two (2) hours for the purpose of voting. Please request your time off in Workday.

### WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER THE ELECTION *Ensuring Accurate Results*

- County canvass boards review the election results and issue certificates of canvass to the Secretary of State.
- After the county canvass, the Secretary of State's Office performs a canvass of every county's results as a further layer of accuracy and accountability.
- An independent audit of the election results happens after every statewide election to guarantee no discrepancies in the results.
- The State Canvass Board meets three weeks after Election Day (Nov 26) to certify the official results and order any recounts.



[NMVOTE.ORG](https://nmvote.org)

# JOBS, PROMOTIONS & NEW HIRES



Luna Light

November 4, 2024

## Hello from Luna Community College Human Resources!

Hello from Luna Community College Human Resources! We are looking to hire for the following positions: Vice President of Finance and Administration; Information Technology Director; Human Resources Director; Human Resources Administrator; General Maintenance I; Adjunct Instructor in Furniture and Cabinet Making. For information about these and the rest of our openings, please use the QR code above to access Luna's job postings.

## Sharrise Arrelanes Promoted to Comptroller and Budget Director



*Sharrise Arrelanes*  
Comptroller & Budget Director

Luna Community College (LCC) is excited to announce the promotion of Sharrise Arellanes to Comptroller and Budget Director. With nearly a decade of finance experience, Arellanes is ready to lead the college's financial management efforts.

"I am thrilled and a little overwhelmed. But a Comptroller has always been my end goal," she said.

Arellanes began her journey at LCC in 2015 as a cashier after earning her Associates Degree in Business Administration. After three years, she moved to New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU), where she advanced from cashier to Student Accounts Receivable Coordinator, earning a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and starting her MBA in Accounting.

After a year as an accounts receivable specialist in Florida, she returned to LCC in October 2023 as the Budget Administrator.

Looking ahead, Arellanes shared her aspirations: "I'd like to be a Comptroller at a University and eventually be the Vice President for Finance and Administration here at LCC."

## Henry "Hank" Blackwell Named New Interim Director of the WRTC

Luna Community College is excited to announce the appointment of Henry "Hank" Blackwell as the new Interim Director of the Wildlife Resiliency Center (WRTC) during the search for a permanent leader. Previously, Hank served as Chief Consultant for the WRTC, where he played a key role in implementing the USDA NextGen grant by developing curricula, managing public relations, and recruiting Advisory Committee members.

His extensive experience equips him with a deep understanding of the challenges facing the WRTC. With more than 18 years as a Senior Training Specialist at Leidos International, Hank developed critical training programs for national security and counter-terrorism operations, specializing in curricula for first responders.

# JOBS, PROMOTIONS & NEW HIRES



Luna Light

November 4, 2024

## Luna Community College Welcomes Gloria Ortiz as Academic and Career Planning Director



**Gloria Anna Ortiz**  
Academic & Career Planning Director

Luna Community College (LCC) proudly announces the addition of Gloria Anna Ortiz to its team. A lifelong resident of Las Vegas, NM, Gloria is deeply connected to the college, as both of her parents worked for and retired from LCC.

As the third of five children, Ortiz has cultivated strong community ties, which she now aims to strengthen through her role at LCC. A mother of two daughters, Gabriella (Anthony) Frosco and Anasofia (Adrian) Duran, she has witnessed firsthand the impact of LCC, as both of her daughters have attended the college.

Ortiz is a proud second-generation graduate of New Mexico Highlands University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in social work in 2010 and her master's degree in social work in 2011, graduating Summa Cum Laude. She is also a distinguished member of the Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Theta Kappa honor societies and holds a Certificate in Political Studies, which she obtained in 2007.

With extensive experience in community outreach and advocacy, Ortiz brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to her new role.

"I am committed to creating opportunities for success and promoting growth in my community," she said, highlighting her dedication to fostering development in rural northern New Mexico.

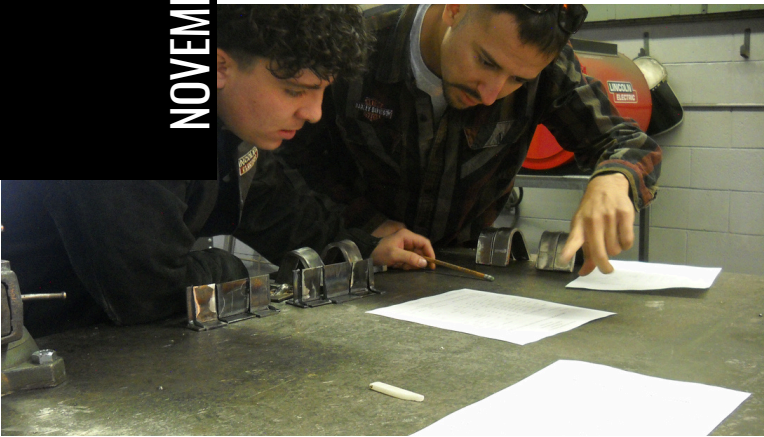
Luna Community College is excited to welcome Ortiz and looks forward to her contributions in enhancing the college's mission and serving its students and community.

## Welcome All New Hires!

Name	Position	Start Date
Brienne Demos	Nursing Clinical Instructor	10/31/24
Johnny Martinez	Contract Education Manager	11/4/24
Anita Baca	Business Manager	11/4/24
Joseph Lucero	Maintenance	11/4/24
Alejandro Montoya	Student Success Specialist	11/4/24
Gloria Ortiz	Academic and Career Planning Director	11/4/24
Xavier Driskill	IT Trainer	11/11/24
Andrea Rosales	Temp PT Pre School Sub Teacher	11/11/24

NOVEMBER 4, 2024

# CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION LUNA LIGHT



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WELDING CERTIFICATE GRADUATES!

- **Elijah Romero**
  - AWS D1.1 FCAW-G Flux-Core Arc Welding, Open Root, 3/8" Steel Structural Plate
- **Aiden Mascarenas**
  - AWS D1.1 SMAW Stick Welding with Backing Bar, 3/8" Steel Structural Plate
- **Javier Montoya**
  - AWS D1.1 SMAW Stick Welding with Backing Bar, 3/8" Steel Structural Plate
  - AWS D1.1 GMAW MIG Welding, 1/8" Tee Steel Structural Plate
- **Diego Romero**
  - AWS D1.1 GMAW MIG Welding, 1/8" Tee Steel Structural Plate
  - AWS D1.1 GTAW TIG Welding, 1/8" Tee Steel Structural plate. LCC
- **Enrique Gonzales**
  - AWS D1.1 GMAW MIG Welding, 1/8" Tee Steel Structural Plate
  - AWS D1.1 SMAW Stick Welding with Backing Bar, 3/8" Steel Structural Plate
- **Adrian Rivera**
  - AWS D1.1 SMAW Stick Welding with Backing Bar, 3/8" Steel Structural Plate

According to the American Welding society, 370,000 new welders are needed in the United States by 2027, with 109,000 more needed this year! Welding is a higher-paying career, with the average salary in New Mexico at nearly \$54,000 per year. Our welding certificate graduates have moved on to careers at Los Alamos National Laboratories, NM Department of Transportation, and multiple other employers. We are grateful for our grant from Los Alamos National Laboratories in partnership with the New Mexico Consortium that has provided funds from the Plutonium Workforce Development Initiative to upgrade equipment, offer more certifications, and hire more faculty.

# HALLOWEEN RECAP 1

The children in our preschool were joined by their families last week for our annual campus-wide Trick-or-Treat! Staff, faculty and students welcomed our youngest community members with candy and good cheer. Check out our Facebook & Instagram for more photos and videos.



# HALLOWEEN RECAP 2

Luna staff, faculty, students hosted a spooktacular Trunk or Treat on our campus for the entire Las Vegas community Halloween afternoon and evening. A wonderful time was had by all. Photos by Cynthia Branch.



# IN MEMORIAM

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IT IS WITH DEEP SORROW THAT WE ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF DIANNA MEDRANO, A CHERISHED AND VALUED MEMBER OF THE LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Dianna Medrano posing with a photo of her father, Levi Alcon, a founding board member of Luna Community College.**

**READ MORE** [—————>](#)



## LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRIEVES THE LOSS OF TRUSTEE AND LONGTIME LEADER DIANNE MEDRANO

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Dianna Medrano, a cherished and valued member of the Luna Community College Board of Trustees, representing District 5 and serving as past Vice Chair. Trustee Medrano passed away on October 30 after a long battle with cancer, surrounded by family and loved ones.

Trustee Medrano was not only a dedicated board member but also a prominent figure in our community and the daughter of Levi Alcon, a founding board member of Luna Community College. Trustee Medrano was also a businesswoman and owner/manager of rental properties in the Las Vegas and Pecos, New Mexico areas. Prior to her role on the LCC board, she served Luna Community College for more than 25 years, and made significant contributions as the Director of Job Placement and later as the Director of the ACCESS Center.

“The Board of Trustees of Luna Community College would like to express our sincere sympathies to the family of Dianne Medano who served as a member of the Board of Trustees and prior to that was a long-time employee of Luna Community College,” said board Chair Dr. Phyllis Martinez. “She brought her business expertise and invaluable perspective to the Luna family we will all miss her. She will not be forgotten.”

During her tenure, Trustee Medrano implemented initiatives that greatly enhanced the educational experience for students, including increasing job placement rates, organizing the first job placement career fair, and launching several important programs such as the Luna Light student paper and the LVTI assessment study.

### Memorial Service:

Friday, November 8, 2024

3pm to 6pm

Rodgers Mortuary

600 Raynolds Ave.

Las Vegas, NM

### Funeral Service

Saturday, November 9, 2024

10 am

Las Vegas Church of Christ

709 Dora Celeste Drive

Las Vegas, NM

In 2004, she played a vital role on the LCC Accreditation Team, contributing to the institution receiving the maximum years of accreditation.

Trustee Medrano’s legacy is one of dedication, service, and an unwavering commitment to the success of our students and the community.

Trustee Medrano is survived by her husband, Rolando Medrano, Sr. and their three sons, Roland, Jr.; Sean (Leticia); Jayvis (Brianna); seven grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

“Trustee Medrano exemplified the spirit of Luna Community College and demonstrated a life-long passion for promoting the success and well-being of our students and the Luna Community,” said Dr. Carol Linder, Interim President of the college. “We grieve her loss and celebrate her legacy.”



**Luna Eats**  
Join us for a healthy meal!

- Free for students
- First serve

**Luna Eats is Canceled This Week Due for Repairs on the Kitchen!**

Students: **FREE.**  
Staff and Faculty \$1.00 only, exact change.  
Purchase a ticket at the cashier's desk in the Admin building and bring to lunch on Tuesday.  
Tickets can be used for any Tuesday lunch.

Thank you to the Luna Strong and CTE programs at Luna for making this possible.