



## PRESS RELEASE

# “Hoops for Hope” Legislative Basketball Game Raises Money for UNM Cancer Center

*Annual fundraiser pits the New Mexico Senate against the House*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**February 21, 2013 — Albuquerque, NM (UNM Cancer Center)** — New Mexico State Senators and Representatives usually work together but on March 1, 2013, they will go head-to-head in the annual “Hoops for Hope” legislative basketball game. The game, which pits the House “Aggies” against the Senate “Lobos,” raises awareness and money for cancer treatment and research. All proceeds benefit the University of New Mexico Cancer Center.

“We serve the people of New Mexico,” explains Cheryl Willman, MD, Director and CEO of the UNM Cancer Center. The UNM Cancer Center is the official cancer center of New Mexico and one of just 67 National Cancer Institute-designated centers in the United States. It is only one of three NCI-designated facilities to treat patients regardless of their ability to pay for treatment. In 2012, it provided over \$4 million in uncompensated care. So, although the UNM Cancer Center garnered over \$65 million in research funding during its latest fiscal year, it depends upon state funding and private donations to cover cancer treatment for all New Mexicans.

“The ‘Hoops 4 Hope’ event is fun for everyone involved, but it is also an important source of support for the UNM Cancer Center,” says Dr. Willman. Last year’s game raised over \$26,000. Dr. Willman adds, “the proceeds help us to deliver the cutting-edge, compassionate care that all New Mexicans deserve.”

The annual game has benefitted the UNM Cancer Center since 2004, when lawmakers decided to use it as a fundraiser in honor of Representative Ray Ruiz. Representative Ruiz died of lung cancer that year. More recently, House Speaker Ben Luján lost his long battle with lung cancer late last year. Speaker Luján was a strong supporter of—and a patient at—the UNM Cancer Center.

“We are deeply grateful to New Mexico’s legislators for their unwavering commitment to fighting cancer in our state,” says Dr. Willman. “‘Hoops 4 Hope’ is just one facet of that commitment.”

### **About the Game**

The “Hoops 4 Hope” legislative basketball game will be held in the Santa Fe High School Gymnasium, 2100 Yucca Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Tip-off is at 7:00 P.M. Tickets are \$5 at the door or in advance in Room 125 of the Capitol. For questions, contact Billy Gupton at 505-480-9316. All proceeds benefit the UNM Cancer Center.

**About the UNM Cancer Center**

The UNM Cancer Center is the Official Cancer Center of New Mexico and the only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center in the state. One of just 67 NCI-designated cancer centers nationwide, the UNM Cancer Center is recognized for its scientific excellence, contributions to cancer research and delivery of medical advances to patients and their families. Annual federal and private funding of over \$65 million supports the UNM Cancer Center's research programs. The UNM Cancer Center treats more than 65 percent of the adults and virtually all of the children in New Mexico affected by cancer, from every county in the state. It is home to New Mexico's largest team of board-certified oncology physicians and research scientists, representing every cancer specialty and hailing from prestigious institutions such as MD Anderson, Johns Hopkins and the Mayo Clinic. Through its partnership with Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces, the UNM Cancer Center brings world-class cancer care to the southern part of the state; its collaborative clinical programs in Santa Fe and Farmington serve northern New Mexico. The UNM Cancer Center also supports several community outreach programs to make cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment available to every New Mexican. Learn more at [www.cancer.unm.edu](http://www.cancer.unm.edu).

**UNM Cancer Center contact information**

Dorothy Hornbeck, JKPR, (505) 340-5929, [dhornbeck@jameskorenchen.com](mailto:dhornbeck@jameskorenchen.com)

Michele Sequeira, UNM Cancer Center, (505) 925-0486, [msequeira@salud.unm.edu](mailto:msequeira@salud.unm.edu)

###