



## Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

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Jan. 17, 2023

TO: NMSU faculty, staff, students and administrators

FROM: Ruth A. Johnston, Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer  
Teresa Maria "Linda" Scholz, Vice President for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity

SUBJECT: Affirmative Action functions moving to Equity, Inclusion and Diversity office

To better align New Mexico State University's work on affirmative action with our institutional values and goals regarding equity, inclusion and diversity, we have shifted the reporting structure of those affirmative action functions from Office of Institutional Equity to the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, effective immediately. Gerard Nevarez, currently an equity officer in the Office of Institutional Equity, will oversee these functions, reporting to Dr. Teresa Maria Linda Scholz, our vice president for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity.

This shift will allow us to streamline and simplify our employee search processes, do more to support hiring managers as they engage in good faith efforts to ensure a diverse workforce, and help create environments where our faculty, staff, students, and administrators can thrive.

It's worth acknowledging that the term "affirmative action" may call to mind certain myths and stereotypes related to candidates who are selected for attributes other than their qualifications. But in truth, the goal of affirmative action policy is to expand opportunity, and as a land-grant university and a Hispanic- and minority-serving institution, it's fundamental to our mission. We're seeking to cast the widest possible net to attract strong, vibrant faculty and staff talent that reflects the makeup of our student population and our community.

Our realigned affirmative action unit will engage directly with deans, department heads, administrators, and other managers and leaders across the system to create comprehensive and proactive plans that continue to elevate our ongoing efforts to center servingness and allow our students and employees to thrive. We'll be offering additional training and support to help departments strategically develop their workforce to best serve our students.

If you have questions or would like more information about affirmative action at NMSU, please contact the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity at 575-646-9742 or email Gerard Nevarez at [gerardn7@nmsu.edu](mailto:gerardn7@nmsu.edu).