

In January 2018, with the best interests of the university in mind, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMT) Board of Regents, NMT President Dr. Stephen G. Wells, and the NMT Research Foundation approved an updated draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and presented it to the New Mexico Tech Alumni Association (NMTAA) on February 27, 2018. After prior consultation with the NMTAA, NMT had determined that the proposed MOA was necessary in order to (1) strengthen a positive working relationship among the university, the NMTAA, and the NMT Research Foundation and (2) to ensure a shared vision and common goals among the three entities that are all focused on the success of NMT, its faculty and its students.

In preparation for the proposed new (2018) MOA, NMT reviewed best practices among universities and their supporting entities and consulted with numerous alumni. The new MOA would have provided more support to the NMTAA; created an effective, positive working relationship among NMT, the New Mexico Tech Foundation, and the NMTAA; and helped achieve the vision and goals of NMT's administration. Under the proposed 2018 MOA, the NMTAA would have remained a separate entity; however, for financial accounting and auditing purposes, would have become a component unit of NMT (similar to the relationships between NMT and the NMT Research Foundation or the NMT University Research Park Corporation that exist to benefit NMT). The 2018 MOA would also have incorporated the NMT Research Foundation as a key participant to strengthen relations and align the fundraising goals of the University and the NMTAA.

After NMT presented the proposed MOA to the NMTAA, the NMTAA responded that "any substantive discussion" would be "premature" and that the draft agreement "proposes a variety of significant changes which appear to alter the fundamental aspects of the NMTAA purpose, operation, and organization." NMT responded by clarifying that under the proposed MOA, the NMTAA would remain a separate 501(c)(3) entity but would become a component unit of NMT for the benefit of the university. Although the NMTAA offered approaches to address current issues and improving relations under the 2014 MOA, NMTAA leadership did not address the proposed 2018 MOA, which was developed specifically to enhance an effective working relationship. Questions raised by President Wells, such as including members from the NMT Research Foundation as the 2018 MOA was designed as a combined effort on behalf of the university, were never addressed by NMTAA representatives. Subsequent correspondence and social media exchanges indicate that the NMTAA prefers to remain an "independent" entity and that agreements should focus on what is the "most beneficial course for the Association."

Based on the NMTAA's lack of substantive response to the proposed new MOA, on June 29, 2018, the NMT Board of Regents unanimously voted to exercise the termination option provided in the 2014 MOA between NMT and the NMTAA. In light of the Regents' vote, NMT President Wells sent a letter to NMTAA President Kenneth Silsbee to give notice that, pursuant to Section 4.5 of the 2014 MOA, NMT was exercising its option to terminate the 2014 MOA effective as of September 3, 2018.

NMT's proposed 2018 MOA, and the subsequent termination of the 2014 MOA, is designed to strengthen university relations with all alumni, our most valued assets and supporters, and to provide an effective structure for building and growing those relationships. The NMTAA has existed over two university administrations but has not measurably helped NMT achieve its vision and mission or provided the collaborative effort to support the university and its students and faculty. The proposed MOA was carefully researched and crafted to (a) reflect best practices among a university, a foundation, and an alumni base, and to (b) bring the NMTAA, the NMT Research Foundation, and NMT into an appropriate and functional relationship to help the university move forward. The draft was completed with the help of university legal counsel and supported unanimously by the Board of Regents and the NMT Research Foundation. Based upon NMTAA responses, it has become evident that the purpose of the NMTAA is not in alignment with the vision of NMT, the Board of Regents and the NMT Research Foundation, which is to provide the level of support to the university, faculty and students so that all can excel.

NMT is building the type of broad support to carry the university into the next decade and beyond. This endeavor requires the strongest collaboration among the NMT Research Foundation, the university and its alumni base.

President Wells came to NMT with a vision and has been steadily accomplishing his goals with the regents' and university's support. A strong focus on Tech's alumni has been a priority from day one. Over the past two years he has worked with the NMT Research Foundation to strengthen NMT's Office for Advancement and Alumni Relations. Five new staff members have been hired, including a new position of Alumni Relations Manager. A new Alumni Relations program, housed in the NMT Office for Advancement and Alumni Relations, will be rolling out new outreach efforts, new programs and will be more visible than ever before. Our alumni are the pride of NMT and NMT is proud to finally have the ability to pay them the homage they deserve.

You'll be hearing more about these efforts in the weeks and months to come. In the meantime, the most effective way to stay up to date with upcoming alumni events, links to national and local news stories, and other NMT-specific items of interest is via our Alumni Interaction Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/NMTAlumniInteraction/>

President Wells continues to have a larger vision for NMT which involves strengthening our support for students, faculty, and alumni. He views our Tech family as intricately entwined, with each facet instrumental to the ongoing success and growth of NMT. It is his expectation that the new Alumni Relations program will demonstrate his highest regard for our esteemed alumni. Your opinion matters. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions.