



## Office of the President

MSC 3Z  
New Mexico State University  
P. O. Box 30001  
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001  
575-646-2035, fax: 575-646-6334  
president.torres@nmsu.edu

DATE: May 10, 2024

TO: Our NMSU community

FROM: Mónica Torres, Interim NMSU President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Torres".

SUBJECT: Incident at Hadley Hall

I want to update our community about some events that occurred late yesterday. At around 4:15 in afternoon, a group of pro-Palestinian demonstrators, including students and others, entered NMSU's administration building, Hadley Hall, and re-submitted their list of demands. Approximately 30 minutes later, the group was informed that the building closes for business at 5 p.m. and they would have to leave at that time. After 5 p.m., the group locked arms, chanted, sang and began to live stream their activities and used social media to call for others to join them inside the building. For approximately an hour, the university communicated with the protestors and others who have worked closely with the group to encourage them to leave the building. During this process, an observer who entered the building with protesters wearing a reflective vest was identified and permitted to stay inside and document events. At 5:55 p.m., protestors were informed that they had 10 minutes to leave the building or face arrest and trespassing charges. Some of the protestors elected to leave the building at that time while others remained. NMSU police detained 13 individuals on a variety of charges including misdemeanor criminal trespass, misdemeanor resisting/obstructing an officer, felony battery on a peace officer and felony criminal damage to property. A large window on the west side of the building was broken during the incident. The exterior of the building was also graffitied in multiple locations overnight. Importantly, Hadley Hall has been cleared, cleaned and is open for business today.

Much like other universities around the country, we have seen students, faculty and community members participating in Palestinian solidarity demonstrations on our campus for the past two weeks. We have said from the beginning that people in the U.S. have a Constitutional right to protest peacefully. People do not, however, have a right to interfere with university operations, damage property, or to spit on or strike police officers.

Various university leaders had met with protestors almost daily since April 29 to encourage open dialogue, ensure all voices were being heard and to de-escalate tensions. Our commitment will always be to the safety and security of our community and our campus. We will continue to take the steps necessary to meet that commitment.

It's unfortunate to see the events of yesterday take place, especially during NMSU's commencement season as we celebrate the achievements of our students across the NMSU system. For many of this year's graduates, this is their first time participating in commencement because their high school graduations were canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic. These students have worked so hard, and we have worked to give them the commencement they deserve. Each of our ceremonies will take place, as scheduled, to honor our students.