




Office of the Chancellor

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DATE: January 22, 2020
TO: All NMSU employees
FROM: Dan Arvizu, Chancellor 
SUBJECT: Vice President for University Advancement

Today, I'm pleased to announce that Derek Dictson has been named as NMSU's new vice president for University Advancement, effective April 1.

Derek is an excellent fundraiser, a talented leader and has a long history with NMSU. As a university system, we have high aspirations for our University Advancement office, particularly when it comes to helping our students succeed and taking our research, outreach, and university athletics efforts to the next level. I'm confident he will help us in achieving these goals.

Derek had served as senior director of development and principal gift officer at Auburn University. There, he served as chief development officer for the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, leading a team of eight development officers and eight coordinators, administrators, and specialists. He previously served as director of development, senior director of development, and business unit manager for the Texas A&M Foundation.

He has nearly two decades of professional experience in the public and private sector, including 17 years of nonprofit fundraising and management experience. He has a master's of public service and administration degree from Texas A&M and a bachelor's degree in agricultural business and economics from NMSU. Derek met his wife, Nikki, while both were students at NMSU.

I also want to announce that Leslie Cervantes, NMSU's associate vice president for alumni and donor relations, will serve as interim vice president for University Advancement until Derek's arrival. Cervantes, also an NMSU graduate, has worked at the university since 2015. She previously served as chief of staff for Las Cruces Public Schools, having also served in community relations roles for the school district and as executive director of the Las Cruces Public Schools Foundation.

Please join me in congratulating Leslie and welcoming Derek back to NMSU!