



## Office of the Chancellor

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DATE: April 5, 2023

TO: Our NMSU Community

FROM: Dan E. Arvizu, Chancellor

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dan E. Arvizu'.

SUBJECT: Last night's demonstration

As many of you are aware, one of our student organizations hosted a talk on Tuesday evening from a controversial pundit and podcaster. A number of people contacted the university to express their concern that this talk would be permitted to take place.

As we told those who contacted us, NMSU encourages free expression and peaceful assembly. The university also realizes that certain speech may have a negative impact on some members of our community. It's written into NMSU policy that the free exchange of ideas is a reflection of the university's public land-grant heritage, interest in diverse points of view, and commitment to excellence in education and research. The freedom of speech is also recognized and protected by the U.S. Constitution. This includes speech that might be offensive or hurtful.

I want to acknowledge that some of the content included in last evening's presentation was offensive and hurtful to members of our community – particularly those in our LGBTQ+ community and their allies. As a show of solidarity with those affected, a large group gathered outside Corbett Center to protest the speaker and express their opposition to the anti-trans messages of that event – an act that was also protected by the constitution. This counter event contained great passion, but also dignity. It also presented an opportunity for discourse – for the sharing and refuting of ideas.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to effectively managing a tense situation. Our staff, including our NMSU Police Department, worked to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Many other staff members, along with faculty and students, volunteered their time to monitor the situation and support efforts to keep the space safe while allowing the exchange of ideas and information. I also want to thank the members of our community who joined us on campus for this and made their voices heard. We expect everyone who visits our campus to express their views peacefully and to respect each other's right to be there, and we saw this happen Tuesday night. I also want to remind everyone that NMSU offers resources to help our community, including walk-in counseling services at the Aggie Health and Wellness Center. Additional resources for LGBTQ+ community members and allies can be found at <https://you.nmsu.edu/>.