



Building Connections: Join Our Data Community

BY CHARLA OROZCO, OIA DIRECTOR

We are lucky at UNM to be surrounded by incredible data resources—yet, often, these valuable assets remain siloed across various departments and units. The power of data lies not just in its collection, but in how we share and collaborate around it. That's why we're excited to invite you to join our growing Data Community—a space for everyone involved in data-related work across the university.

In April, during Tech Days, I co-hosted a Data Community Roundtable with Elizabeth Kerl from the Office of Assessment and Academic Program Review and Christina Powers from UNM Online to discuss the challenges and opportunities we face when it comes to data and collaboration. One of the key takeaways? The urgent need to build a data community where we can come together to problem-solve common issues. Additionally, there's strong interest in code-sharing and discussions around difficult-to-find data. No matter your role at UNM, these conversations can make a real difference in improving efficiency and breaking down silos.

To foster more of these connections, we're organizing monthly virtual meet-ups where we can share resources, discuss challenges, and help each other solve problems.

The virtual group will meet on the first Thursday of each month from 2:00 to 3:00pm over Teams. These meet-ups are open to everyone, whether you're a seasoned data expert or just starting out. Can't make another meeting? Join the Teams channel and ask your questions in the chat! The goal is to create a welcoming, collaborative environment where we can all learn from one another and move data initiatives forward across the institution with greater ease and efficiency.

We'd love for you to be part of this community and to share your insights and experiences. Your voice and expertise are what will make this community thrive! Please reach out to cehenley@unm.edu if you'd like to join, and I'll send along the invite.



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WHATS NEW IN THE UNM DATA COMMUNITY?

TECH DAYS 2025

[UNM Tech Days](#) was held on April 17th-18th. Charla Orozco and Jing Feng from the OIA contributed to the data track at the event. Charla co-presented “Self-Service Analytics, Part 1: What’s Already Available”, which introduced readily available data sources such as the OIA’s dashboards. Charla also co-hosted Data Community Roundtable to discuss working with data at UNM. Jing presented “Using For-Loops in R for Data Processing”, a hands-on session where the attendees learned the basics of for-loops in R and practiced with some data processing exercises. Jing’s presentation slides, R code and data set used for the exercises can be found [here](#).

WOMEN IN TECH 2025

On February 12th, the [UNM Women in Technology](#) group hosted their annual event with the theme: *Breaking Boundaries: Women Driving Innovation in a Connected World*. In addition to an inspiring lineup of presentations, Charla Orozco delivered a presentation on Empowering Leadership with Analytics, which highlighted the intersection of data and leadership. The event was both engaging and informative, showcasing the incredible women who are driving technological innovation at UNM and in New Mexico. We’re already looking forward to next year’s event and breaking boundaries together this year through continued collaborations!

NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION AND RETENTION 2025

A few of us from OIA had the opportunity to attend the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention ([NMHEAR](#)) Conference in late February here in Albuquerque. It was great to see so many familiar faces from the UNM community presenting, and we truly enjoyed connecting with colleagues from institutions across the state. The event provided valuable insights, and we’re already looking forward to another engaging experience next year!

SAVE THE DATE: June 26th App State Analytics Day - Free Data Viz Professional Development

Every year, the analytics team at Appalachian State organizes [Analytics Day](#), hosted entirely online over Zoom, at no-cost to those who would like to attend. This year, the event will take place on **June 26th from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm ET**. The day-long event features several back-to-back short sessions, varying in length but no longer than 20 minutes. The event focuses on data visualization, particularly in Tableau and PowerBi, and is aimed at all audience levels. We invite anyone interested in data visualization to attend, and if you’re feeling up for it, submit a proposal to present before the May 23rd deadline!

OIA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Zacharia Kibuta recently completed STAT 540 (Regression Analysis) and STAT 561 (Probability Theory & Applications) as part of his preparation for applying to the PhD program in Applied Statistics. This semester, Mr. Kibuta is continuing his studies with STAT 545 (ANOVA & Experimental Design) and STAT 553 (Statistical Inference and its Applications).

Charla Orozco has been appointed the permanent Director of the Office of Institutional Analytics (OIA) after serving as Interim Director for approximately six months. Ms. Orozco recently had a presentation accepted at the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Forum, which will take place in May in Orlando, Florida. She also delivered guest lectures on Data Visualization for both the Master of Public Policy Program and the UNM Evaluation Lab. Additionally, the Orozco family recently moved into a new home in a safe and welcoming neighborhood in Albuquerque.

Monte-Angel Richardson will be presenting at the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) conference in May of 2025 in Orlando, Florida, titled 'Data Reporting and Sharing at Community Colleges: Lessons Learned', presented as a Discussion Group.

Abby Franco recently completed a 5-week hand-building pottery course at Creativity Warehouse through UNM Continuing Education and is looking forward to the next course on the wheel.

Yury Bosin participated in the 66th Annual International Studies Convention, held in Chicago on March 1–2, 2025.

FEATURED STAFF: ABIGALE FRANCO

Abby Franco joined the Office of Institutional Analytics in January 2025, having previously served as an Academic Coordinator in UNM's College of Education and Human Sciences. Abby moved to Albuquerque from Rhode Island in May 2024, but is originally from Northwest Arkansas where she earned her BA and MA in Sociology at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville (Woo Pig!). Professionally, Abby is passionate about social research, data-driven storytelling, and advocacy through knowledge; personally, she loves being outside, starting arts and crafts projects, and spending time with her pets. In the future, Abby hopes to continue pursuing her love of social research through further education and to someday hike a section of the northern Pacific Crest Trail.

