



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

For immediate release  
September 02, 2005

Contact: Gilbert Gallegos  
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2217

### **Governor Bill Richardson working with New Mexico colleges and universities to assist students from the Gulf Coast**

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson and Higher Education Secretary Beverlee McClure announced today that they are working with New Mexico colleges and universities to provide special consideration for victims of Hurricane Katrina who want to continue their higher education.

According to data released by the State Higher Education Executives Organization (SHEEO), about 75,000 students in Louisiana and 15,000 students in Mississippi are unable to continue their high education studies due to the disruption of Hurricane Katrina.

Governor Richardson and Secretary McClure have contacted university and college presidents, the Council of University Presidents and the New Mexico Association of Community Colleges, to encourage and coordinate efforts to offer special assistance, such as waivers of registration fees or delays of tuition payments, for students who want to transfer to New Mexico universities or take classes through distance education.

“The disaster in these states has left many students who were enrolled in colleges and universities without alternatives to continue their higher education studies,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “I am asking New Mexico institutions to offer assistance as these students begin to look for new opportunities to go back to school.”

“I commend the colleges and universities are already taking the initiative and offering assistance to victims,” said Dr. Beverlee McClure. “I encourage others to follow suit. I am reaching out to assist any institution to make it as easy as possible for victims to take advantage of our higher education system.”

New Mexico State University is offering a variety of incentives, including:

- 1) Waiver of late registration fees and extension of add/drop dates;
- 2) Six-month delay in payment of tuition and fees;
- 3) Waiver of out-of-state tuition;
- 4) Simplified NMSU application with extension of transcripts and other requirements for six months, including acceptance of the NMSU non-degree application;
- 5) Special assistance to find housing in Las Cruces or near other campuses in the NMSU system for those attending one of our community colleges;
- 6) Additional considerations as permitted by the State of New Mexico;

New Mexico Highlands University has offered students from the Gulf Coast region use of its facilities and campus in Las Vegas to serve as a refuge until the damage to their universities can be remediated. Students are also welcome to enroll for classes on the campus, so that their education continues uninterrupted.

#30#