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**UNM-LA awarded NSF grant to fund cyber security education**

UNM-Los Alamos has been awarded a \$337,725 three-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for a proposal to "Reinvigorate Information Technology (IT) Education with Cyber Security." Dean of Instruction Dr. Kate Massengale wrote the grant. Dr. Lynne Williams, who has a Ph.D. in cyber security, is the Principal Investigator.

The New Mexico Consortium helped Dr. Massengale initiate this effort by providing training in grant writing. The training was given by Michelle Hall, a professor, and successful grant writer, who now works at NSF. Hall is also the creator of the regional Café Scientifique, which exposes teens to science and technology in innovative ways to attract them to these fields.

"I don't know what we would have done without Michelle's input to how to write NSF grants. She was key to writing our best proposals, and getting funded," Massengale said.

Los Alamos National Security (LANS) is partnering with UNM-LA by providing expertise and the opportunity for UNM-LA students in information technology to become interns when positions are available. Los Alamos County is also partner and has internships available now.

"One thing that spurred me to support such a grant was the input from Russell Nolen, a graduate of UNM-LA, now a UNM-LA adjunct professor, who works at LANS. He is passionate about IT education and its need to change and develop at UNM-LA," said Massengale.

Through this grant, UNM-LA will partner with the University of Tulsa's Cyber Security Education Consortium to bring cutting-edge, tested curriculum to UNM-LA's IT programs, and provide faculty professional development. Specialists at LANS and Los Alamos County will review the curriculum as it is developed to make sure it is providing the right skills for IT workers entering or progressing in the workforce, Massengale said.

"We will be sharing our curriculum with partnering community colleges, including our sister branches UNM-Taos, UNM-Valencia, and others. We hope to improve the pipeline of highly-qualified IT workers and improve the success rates of our students, especially minorities and women," said Massengale

“This is the third NSF grant UNM-LA has received in the last few months, showing that a major agency considers its proposals and resources appropriate to invest in. It is part of my vision to reinvigorate UNM-LA, as it focuses on programs that are important to northern New Mexico. In this case, the program is important to Los Alamos National Laboratory, to the banking industry, and to other businesses that need more highly-trained IT workers. Across the U.S., the need for more highly skilled IT workers is becoming crucial to our security, and to our playing in the global economy. UNM-LA is changing to keep up with a rapidly changing world,” said Massengale.