



## Deputy University Counsel for Health Affairs

### Leadership Profile

March 2026

*Prepared by Werner Boel, LL.M. and Roxana Woudstra*

The logo for WittKieffer, consisting of the name 'WittKieffer' in a white, italicized, sans-serif font, positioned in the bottom left corner of a dark teal rectangular area. The background of this area features a decorative pattern of thin, light blue lines that curve and flow across the space.

*WittKieffer*

## Content

<b>The Opportunity</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>Organization Overview</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>Position Summary</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Candidate Qualifications</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>The Community</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>Procedure for Candidacy</b>	<b>09</b>

## The Opportunity

The University of New Mexico (UNM) is seeking candidates for the role of Deputy University Counsel for Health Affairs (DUC) to join the legal team within the Office of University Counsel.

Reporting to and under the general direction of the General Counsel, the DUC manages the legal team within the University's Health Sciences Center and assists the General Counsel with legal, strategic, and governance issues across all operations of the University. The DUC performs complex legal work for the highest levels of University administration, especially in the area of health law, and represents or oversees the representation of the University in legal proceedings. The DUC will analyze legal and regulatory issues related to all aspects of the University's healthcare operations, including but not limited to hospital operations; EMTALA compliance; medical staff self-governance; Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement; managed care contracting; physician services contracting; health-care decision-making; healthcare information privacy and security; and patient safety and quality; and develops and/or reviews institutional policies. The DUC also analyzes legal and regulatory issues pertaining to basic and human subjects research (including clinical trials compliance) and animal research and oversees contracting with respect to these matters. The DUC will be expected to advise management on strategic transaction approaches and deal structures for a growing academic health center operation. The DUC develops strategy for and has oversight of the team of attorneys and staff who manage medical malpractice claims and litigation. In addition, the DUC oversees, coordinates, and trains attorneys and professional staff, and may perform the duties of the General Counsel during the absence of and upon request of the General Counsel.

Founded in 1889, The University of New Mexico (UNM) is the state's flagship institution, spanning nearly 800 acres along historic Route 66 in Albuquerque. Its Pueblo Revival architecture reflects the region's cultural heritage. UNM also operates branch campuses in Gallup, Los Alamos, Taos, and Valencia County, plus an HSC extension campus in Rio Rancho—home to the UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center. The University's libraries, museums, galleries, and performance spaces serve as major cultural assets. A federally designated Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institution, UNM enrolled more than 25,000 students across its main, branch, and HSC campuses in Spring 2025. Its faculty includes National Academy members, National Academy of Inventors Fellows, 60+ Fulbright awardees, and numerous fellows of major professional societies. The UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC) is the state's largest integrated health care, research, and education system, providing advanced care to New Mexico's diverse population. The UNM School of Medicine ranks 16th nationally in Primary Care (2023), the nursing-midwifery program ranks 11th, the BSN program places in the top 10% nationwide, and the College of Pharmacy ranks 43rd in the country. UNM is the largest academic employer in New Mexico and has more than 200,000 alumni worldwide.

UNM Hospital (UNMH) was established in 1952 to serve Bernalillo County and Native American communities. Today it is New Mexico's only academic medical center and home to the state's sole Level I trauma center, dedicated Children's Hospital, NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Children's Psychiatric Center. The UNMH system employs nearly 8,000 people and, in FY2025, recorded over 98,000 ER visits, nearly 3,000 births, 28,000 inpatient admissions, and 660,000 outpatient visits. Recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* in seven specialty areas, UNMH is also designated a Baby Friendly Hospital and a Family Friendly employer.

The ideal candidate will be an experienced, results-oriented legal expert with a track record of success leading people and teams in a complex academic medical center or integrated health system. Candidates will possess strong emotional and social intelligence to develop meaningful relationships at all levels of the organization. The successful candidate must have excellent academic credentials, a law degree from an ABA accredited school of law, membership New Mexico State Bar, or member in good standing of the State Bar of another state or District of Columbia, with the ability to become licensed in the state of New Mexico upon assumption of the position. In addition, candidates will possess an outstanding record of achievement with at least ten years of relevant experience as an attorney supporting hospitals, physicians and other healthcare providers. Prior supervisory experience and experience with hospital operations, compliance, hospital-physician contracting, physician engagement or alignment and health care-related transactions is preferred. Information about how to nominate a candidate or to apply for this opportunity may be found later in this document in the section titled "[Procedure for Candidacy](#)."

## About The University of New Mexico

Founded in 1889 as New Mexico's flagship institution, with a total enrollment of over 26,000 students (44 percent Hispanic and 14 percent Native American) across multiple campuses, the University of New Mexico now occupies nearly 800 acres near old Route 66 in the heart of Albuquerque, a city of more than 900,000 people. From the magnificent mesas to the west, past the banks of the historic Rio Grande to the Sandia Mountains to the east, Albuquerque is a blend of culture and cuisine, styles and stories, people, pursuits and panoramas.

As the state's premier institution of higher learning and provider of health care, the University of New Mexico promotes discovery, generates intellectual and cultural contributions, honors academic values, and fosters an educated, healthy, and economically vigorous New Mexico.

The University has branch campuses in Gallup, Los Alamos, Taos, and Valencia County, plus an HSC extension campus in Rio Rancho, also home to the UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center. UNM's libraries, museums, galleries, and performance spaces are rich cultural resources for the state. UNM is a federally designated Hispanic-serving institution. As a Minority Serving Institution, the University represents a cross-section of cultures and backgrounds. In Spring of 2025, [more than 25,000 students attended](#) the main, branch and HSC campuses and education centers. UNM offers 94 baccalaureate, 71 masters and 37 doctoral degrees. Home to the [Lobos](#) and contenders in the Mountain West Conference, UNM athletics draw fans from all over. The University Arena or "The Pit" is one of college basketball's most famous and recognizable buildings. In fact, The Pit was ranked 5th by the Travel Channel as one of the best college basketball venues. UNM boasts an outstanding faculty that has included four National Academy of Sciences/ Engineering Members, six National Academy of Inventors Fellows, 60+ Fulbright scholar program awardees, and several fellows of national and international associations and societies. Faculty publish in major peer reviewed professional journals, including The New England Journal of Medicine, American Historical Review, and Nature, and with top-tier academic presses such as University of Chicago Press and Cambridge University Press. As publicly oriented scholars, UNM professors share their expertise in local and national media outlets from The Albuquerque Journal to The New Yorker.

UNM is the largest academic employer in the state, including employees of University Hospitals. It has more than 200,000 alumni with Lobos in every state and more than 2,400 alumni outside the U.S. UNM is a place where cutting-edge research and creative endeavors flourish. As a very high research activity (R1) institution, UNM research injects millions of dollars into New Mexico's economy, funds new advancements in health care, and augments teaching—giving students valuable hands-on training in state-of-the art laboratories.

### UNM Health Sciences Center

The UNM's Health Sciences Center (HSC) is a leader in providing health care to a uniquely diverse population. Our team—from physicians and nurses to professors and leadership—is dedicated to making sure all New Mexicans have access to quality, cutting-edge health care when and where they need it. The HSC is the state's largest integrated health care treatment, research and education organization. In 2022, U.S. News and World Report ranked the UNM School of Medicine 16<sup>th</sup> nationally in "2023 Best Medical Schools: Primary Care." UNM's nursing-midwifery program ranks 11<sup>th</sup> nationally for "Best Midwifery Program" and UNM's bachelor of science in nursing is also recognized as the 67<sup>th</sup> best in the nation, placing it in the top 10% of ranked BSN programs. UNM College of Pharmacy ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> nationally for "Best Pharmacy Schools".

The HSC is thriving in an increasingly challenging biomedical research landscape, having attracted \$200 million in extramural funding. Funding success is a tribute to the inspired work of UNM faculty, students and staff, who continue to break new ground in so many areas and have done a terrific job of putting UNM on the map as a center of research and innovation. This achievement caps more than a decade of continual growth in extramural funding and highlights our focus on developing major new discoveries that improve the health and well-being of New Mexicans.

## UNM Hospital

[The University of New Mexico Hospital](#) was founded in 1952, when Bernalillo County and the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (today the Indian Health Service) combined to create a hospital to serve the health care needs of both the County and the Native American population. That hospital today is a clinical delivery system that not only serves the entire state of New Mexico through its 618-bed Lomas campus, 72-bed SRMC campus and outpatient clinics, but also is the only academic medical center in the state. Containing New Mexico's only Level 1 trauma center, only dedicated Children's Hospital, only NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the state's Children's Psychiatric Center, the clinical delivery system employs nearly 8,000 people. In FY2025, UNM Hospitals had over 98,000 emergency room visits, nearly 3,000 births, and more than 28,000 inpatient admissions, with more than 660,000 outpatient visits in the hospitals and their clinics. In 2025, UNMH was recognized as a high-performing hospital by US News & World Report in seven specialty areas, and has been repeatedly recognized as both a Baby Friendly Hospital and a Family Friendly employer. Additionally, UNMH is the first NIH-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center and award-winning Advanced Care Stroke Center. UNMH receives about \$90 million annually from Bernalillo County property taxes subject to voter renewal of a mill levy every eight years. These funds support care for tens of thousands of people in need annually.

UNMH aspires to be the destination for all New Mexicans seeking the highest quality, most specialized, innovative and respectful patient care. UNMH remains deeply rooted in service, teaching and being the employer of choice for talented health care professionals, with the mission of providing exceptional care for all of New Mexico through compassion, learning and discovery

## Leadership

### President Garnett S. Stokes



Garnett S. Stokes was installed as the 23rd president of The University of New Mexico on May 12, 2018. She is the first woman to hold the post in the University's history.

A tireless advocate for a transformative student experience, an empowered faculty, and a campus culture of continuous improvement, Stokes brings to New Mexico's premiere R1 university more than four decades of experience and enthusiasm—as well as the unflagging energy needed to ensure the University of New Mexico thrives as a great place to work, live, and learn.

Shortly after taking office in 2018, Stokes journeyed on an unprecedented statewide listening tour, covering 4,300 miles as she travelled through all 33 of New Mexico's diverse counties. Her meetings with thousands of New Mexicans—hearing their stories and learning of their hopes and expectations—helped frame her immediate presidential priorities of promoting campus safety, supporting student veterans, and advancing the University's mission of world-class research. Stokes continues to hold regular office hours, routinely engaging with faculty, staff, and students for their input and commentary.

Under Stokes's leadership, UNM has embarked on a journey of academic excellence, self-reflection, and collaborative problem-solving to identify effective ways to make the University of New Mexico a better and more engaging place to learn, work, and live. Since her arrival, UNM has received the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, a designation that indicates institutional commitment to community engagement, and one of only 119 institutions to earn such a designation. UNM is also among the highest number of Fulbright awardees in the country.

Prior to her arrival at UNM, Stokes served as Interim Chancellor, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Missouri and was Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Interim President at Florida State University. She has also been a faculty member, Chair of the Department of Psychology, and Dean of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Georgia.

A first-generation college graduate, Stokes earned her B.A. in psychology from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Georgia in industrial/organizational psychology. For nearly three decades, she served as a professor in the psychology department at the University of Georgia, including seven years as Dean of UGA's Franklin College of Arts and Sciences.

## Position Summary

Under the general direction of the General Counsel, the Deputy University Counsel for Health Affairs manages the legal team within the University's Health Sciences Center and assists the General Counsel with legal, strategic, and governance issues across all operations of the University. Performs complex legal work for the highest levels of University administration, especially in the area of health law, and represents or oversees the representation of the University in legal proceedings.

### Reporting Relationships

The Deputy University Counsel for Health Affairs manages a team of six attorneys.

### Responsibilities

The successful Deputy University Counsel for Health Affairs candidate will:

- Lead, mentor, and develop a high-performing legal team, fostering growth, and collaboration.
- Define and communicate a clear vision aligned with organizational goals, inspiring team engagement and accountability. Manage legal department workflows, prioritize matters, and allocate resources efficiently.
- Recruit, retain, and support a diverse and effective legal staff through coaching, feedback, and performance management.
- Drive change through transparent communication and cross-functional collaboration. Communicate complex legal issues clearly to both legal and non-legal stakeholders.
- Advise senior leadership on legal risks and regulatory compliance, including HIPAA, Stark Law, Anti-Kickback Statute, and Medicare/Medicaid.
- Provide legal support for mergers, acquisitions, joint ventures, and strategic partnerships.
- Partner with compliance teams to develop policies that mitigate legal risk and ensure adherence to healthcare laws. Facilitate compliance with evolving federal and state healthcare regulations and industry standards.
- Oversee the drafting, negotiation, and review of complex contracts, including provider and payer agreements. Identify opportunities for cost savings and operational improvements within the legal function.
- Develop and maintain relationships with local courts and local and state governmental entities.
- Provide input to and oversight of legal analysis of legislative initiatives with impact on the Health Sciences Center.

## Candidate Qualifications

### Education/Certification

- A J.D. or LL.B is required
- Member of NM State Bar, or member in good standing of the State Bar of another state or District of Columbia, with the ability to become licensed in the state of New Mexico upon assumption of the position.

### Knowledge and Work Experience

- 10 years of experience directly related to the duties and responsibilities specified.
- Strong knowledge of human resources principles, policies, and procedures.
- Comprehensive understanding of laws and regulations impacting university operations.
- Familiarity with judicial systems and legal procedures.
- Knowledge of organizational structures, workflows, and institutional processes.
- Proficiency in legal research principles and methodologies.
- Understanding of institutional policies, procedures, and regulatory environments.
- Expertise in contract law, including antitrust and healthcare consolidation regulations.
- Knowledge of legal documentation standards and requirements.
- Experience in designing, documenting, and managing strategic financing and acquisition transactions within academic healthcare systems.
- Knowledge of Academic Healthcare Facilities - Faculty: Affairs, Contracts, etc; Clinical Operations & Oversight

### Leadership Skills and Competencies

- Exceptional verbal and written communication; adept at working with diverse constituencies.
- Ability to foster a cooperative and collaborative work environment.
- Provide sound legal advice and counsel to senior university officials, particularly on healthcare-related issues.
- Analyze and interpret complex legal matters; develop and implement effective strategies and solutions.
- Represent university officials in litigation and administrative proceedings.
- Draft legal documents, including pleadings, briefs, affidavits, and position statements.
- Ability to stand in for University Counsel as needed.
- Supervise and train employees; organize, prioritize, and schedule work assignments.
- Manage legal services operations, including budgeting and planning.

- Oversee and coordinate work of legal professionals, paraprofessionals, and consultants.
- Employee development and performance management skills.
- Strong organizing and coordinating abilities.
- Skilled in negotiation and conflict resolution.
- Assess training needs; design and facilitate seminars and in-service programs.

### Conditions of Employment

- Employees in this job title are subject to the terms and conditions of an employment contract. Employment contracts are typically subject to review and renewal on an annual basis.
- A successful candidate who is not a member of the NM State Bar is required to obtain a Public Employee Limited License issued by the NM Supreme Court.
- Employees who provide services or work in patient care or clinical areas are required to be in compliance with the University's influenza vaccination requirement.



## The Community

### Albuquerque, New Mexico



Albuquerque's affordable living, diverse dining scene, outdoor recreational activities, accessible day trips, and wellness options create a compelling environment for those seeking a balanced and engaging lifestyle. The city's cost of living is 4% lower than the national average, a benefit that extends to housing, where the median home price remains attractively below the U.S. average. This economic advantage is coupled with lower property and state income taxes, making Albuquerque an appealing place for professionals seeking a high quality of life without the high costs.

The culinary landscape in Albuquerque is a tapestry of flavors deeply influenced by Indigenous, New Mexican, and Spanish cuisines. Dining out can range from sampling the famed New Mexican Chile in red and green varieties to exploring innovative dishes at upscale restaurants. The city's love for its unique culinary culture is evident in its numerous food festivals and markets, offering an endless array of dining experiences.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Albuquerque's proximity to ski resorts, such as the nearby Sandia Mountains, provides a winter playground for all ages. The skiing opportunities here cater to both beginners and seasoned enthusiasts, making it a perfect family outing. Beyond the slopes, the city's numerous parks, bike trails, and the Rio Grande provide endless outdoor activities, from picnics to kayaking, fostering a healthy, active lifestyle.

Albuquerque is ideally located for memorable day trips. Destinations such as Santa Fe, with its historic adobe landmarks and vibrant arts scene, and the Jemez Springs area, known for its natural hot springs and beautiful mountain scenery, are within easy reach. These excursions provide a refreshing break from the urban environment and an opportunity to immerse oneself in the natural and cultural richness of New Mexico.

Destinations like the Petroglyph National Monument offer a glimpse into ancient history, while the Bandelier National Monument and the Valles Caldera National Preserve allow visitors to explore stunning natural landscapes and learn about the region's cultural heritage.

Wellness and relaxation are also a cornerstone of the Albuquerque experience, with a selection of spas that leverage the tranquil desert setting to provide a serene retreat. From luxury spa resorts offering a full range of treatments to more intimate settings incorporating traditional Native American healing techniques, there are ample opportunities for rejuvenation.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.visitalbuquerque.org/> or <https://www.newmexico.org/>

---

## Procedure for Candidacy

Applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. This search will be conducted with respect to the confidentiality of candidates; references will not be contacted without prior knowledge and approval of the candidate. The search process is underway and will continue until the position is filled. Interested parties can apply directly through the [WittKieffer Candidate Portal](#), or by sending resumes, nominations, and inquiries to Werner Boel and Roxana Woudstra via email: [rwoudstra@wittkieffer.com](mailto:rwoudstra@wittkieffer.com)

**Werner Boel, LL.M**

**Senior Partner**

**678.302.1559**

**Roxana Woudstra**

**Senior Associate**

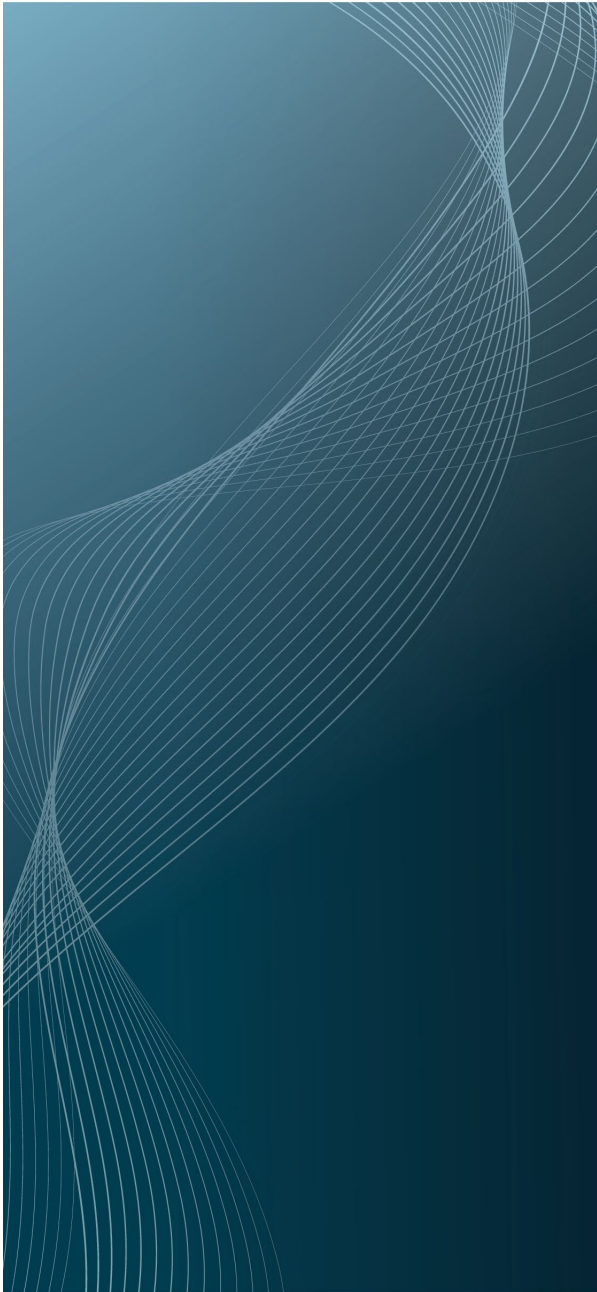
**781.564.2638**

*The University of New Mexico is committed to hiring and retaining a diverse workforce. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer, making decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, or any other protected class.*

*The University of New Mexico requires all regular staff positions successfully pass a pre-employment background check. This may include, but is not limited to, a criminal history background check, New Mexico Department of Health fingerprint screening, New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department fingerprint screening, verification of education credentials, and/or verification of prior employment. For more information about background checks, visit <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3280.html>. Refer to <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3200.html> for a definition of Regular Staff.*

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from University of New Mexico documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

All images and logos used in this leadership profile were attained from University of New Mexico and/or are owned by Witt/Kieffer Inc. via Getty Images.



WittKieffer is the premier executive search and advisory firm developing inclusive, impactful leadership teams for organizations that improve quality of life. For more than 50 years, we have operated exclusively at the intersection of not-for-profit and for-profit healthcare delivery, science, and education – the Quality of Life Ecosystem. Through our expert executive search services as well as our Professional Search, Interim Leadership, and Leadership Advisory solutions, we strengthen organizations that make the world better.

Visit [WittKieffer.com](https://www.WittKieffer.com) to learn more.

*WittKieffer*