“Receiving my degree from NMSU led to my dream of working on wildlife refuges, and what has been some of the greatest experiences of my life. I think it is important to try and give other NMSU students starting their careers in wildlife science the same opportunities I had.” Kevin Cobble

Kevin Cobble, who received a Bachelor’s Degree in Wildlife Science from NMSU in 1978, has a lot of family ties to the university. His oldest daughter followed in his footsteps with a degree in Wildlife Science, as well as his two older brothers and his mother, who earned her Master’s Degree at NMSU. While his father didn’t graduate from NMSU, he was a professor of Mechanical Engineering.

Kevin used his degree to do what he is passionate about. Currently he serves as the Refuge Manager at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. Since graduating from NMSU, Kevin has worked both at fish hatcheries and wildlife refuges in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. He began his career with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as a temporary employee after graduation, and then worked his way up the ranks.

Previously, as refuge manager of the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge, Kevin worked with White Sands Missile Range, across agency and state lines, to lead the restoration of the desert bighorn sheep population to over 100, allowing it to be de-listed from the State Endangered Species List. Kevin also led oryx and salt cedar control efforts at the refuge, while helping to conduct a research project with mule deer. After converting to solar and wind energy generation at the San Andres headquarters complex, Kevin and the San Andres National Wildlife Refuge won an award for energy conservation and were honored in a public ceremony at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

Throughout his career, Kevin did not stay far from NMSU, hiring wildlife science students from NMSU to provide valuable job experience working for the US Fish & Wildlife Service. In addition, he sought funding for wildlife research projects involving numerous wildlife science undergraduates and graduates attending NMSU.
College of Arts and Sciences

Fine Arts and Humanities

George Mendoza ‘78

“I have been working with Dr. Boje’s students at NMSU for nearly seven years. I really enjoy working with young people who are so brilliant and knowledgeable about marketing and running a business. These students have performed small miracles for me in my art and design business!” George Mendoza

George Mendoza has a lot of history at NMSU. He received his Bachelor of Individualized Studies in 1978. Since graduating, he has stayed connected by running as an unofficial team member for the NMSU track team under Coach Art Morgan for 12 years. He also produced two nationally aired PBS documentary films with KRWG TV, and produced two films with Robert Duvall and Mark Medoff.

From 1985 to 1993, George, who developed a rare disease that led to legal blindness at age 15, worked as Director for NMSU Disabled Student Services.

Having a passion for words, George wrote his first book, Running Toward the Light: The George Mendoza Story, after running the 1980 and 1984 para-Olympics. Recently, George wrote Colors of the Wind, relaying through words what he calls ‘kaleidoscope eyes,’ the rich colors he sees floating and swirling around him.

While George is a talented wordsmith, he is best known for his art, which is featured in a Smithsonian traveling art exhibit as well as in various museums and galleries throughout the country. Currently he is working to open the George Mendoza Art Museum with help from Dr. David Boje, a distinguished professor in the College of Business. He is also a guest lecturer for Dr. Boje’s small business consulting class and works with the students on marketing Colors of the Wind. George stays involved at NMSU because he likes working with young people on various projects.

His daughter, Maria G. Mendoza, and son, Michael G. Mendoza, are graduates of NMSU. Maria is now an attorney in Washington D.C. and Michael is an accountant in Washington D.C.
“My first view of the campus was when we drove in from I-10 and got off on University Avenue a week before classes were to start. I knew NMSU was an Ag school but was a little taken aback. At that time the campus fields had a herd of cows and we didn’t see many students. It wasn’t until we got closer to the start of classes before I was convinced that the number of students outnumbered the cows.” Dr. Mary Hockaday

Dr. Mary Hockaday has had a very successful career in science; a career she says grew with NMSU experiences that contributed to her abilities.

Mary is the Associate Director for Experimental Physical Sciences, one of nine technical directorates at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). She received her Bachelor of Science in Physics, with Distinction, from the University of Hawaii in 1980. From NMSU, she received her Master of Science in Physics in 1984 and her Ph.D. in Physics in 1986.

In 1986, Mary joined the Fast Transient Plasma Group at LANL as its only female experimentalist fielding and developing x-ray diagnostics for underground nuclear tests at the Nevada Test Site (NTS). In 2006, she was named Deputy Associate Director of Weapons Physics and Program Director for Science and Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) and High Yield Campaigns. Mary served as LANL’s Institutional Deputy for the National Ignition Campaign and was the first Chairman of the National ICF Executives Committee. She also serves on the American Physical Society’s Committee on the Status of Women in Physics.

Despite her dedication to her field, Mary has not wandered far from NMSU. She is a member of the NMSU Department of Physics Advisory Committee and manages the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center, which oversees subcontracts with the NMSU Department of Physics. Mary helped secure logistical support for the 10th Los Alamos Neutron Science Center Neutron School, which is funded through an NMSU-based grant from the National Science Foundation.

Mary’s husband Robert Hockaday received his master’s degree from NMSU. The couple has three children: Laura, Katie, and Bobby. Katie is pursuing her second degree from NMSU.
“NMSU, with its affordable tuition and dedicated faculty that saw teaching not merely as an occupation but as a vocation, made it possible for me to secure a quality education at a reasonable price. When I think of some of the best memories of my growing-up years and some of the life-long friends I’ve met, all of those thoughts return to Las Cruces and to NMSU.” John E. Kramer

When John Kramer, ’88, earned his Bachelor of Arts in Journalism 26 years ago, he knew he wanted to stay involved with NMSU.

“The university afforded me the skills I needed to enjoy a successful career and, following the example of so many I met there who were either classmates, professors, or part of the administration, I continually look to see how I may be of service to others.”

Now the Vice President for Communications at the Institute for Justice, where he works to protect the constitutional rights of all Americans, John has provided financial contributions to NMSU’s scholarship programs over the years and has returned several times to lecture on public relations tactics for undergraduate classes. He is also working with the university and the national headquarters of Theta Chi Fraternity to get the Gamma Nu Chapter of Theta Chi re-chartered at NMSU. He says the idea that those actions added up to a life others consider distinguished just rekindles his desire to work harder and do better, offering a helping hand to others as a partial repayment to those who helped him get where he is today.

John is most grateful for the support of four people: His mother, who raised nine kids on her own after the early passing of his father; his wife, Holly, who he says is the love, inspiration, and driving force in his life; Dr. J. Sean McCleneghan, who nominated John and mentored him during and after his days at NMSU; and his brother, Pete, who showed him the importance and joy of being social.

John is not alone when it comes to sharing Aggie pride. His family members Joseph Kramer, Mary Kramer, Elizabeth (Kramer) Quirk, Thérèse Kramer, and Peter Kramer also graduated from NMSU.
Robert ‘Bobby’ Lutz ’73, ’75

“In my opinion, New Mexico State University better prepared me for the workplace than the education received by any of my peers.” Bobby Lutz

Bobby Lutz came from Oklahoma to NMSU to play golf after meeting with Aggie golf coach Herb Wimberly. Now, 45 years later, Bobby credits much of his success to Coaches Wimberly and Mickey Clute and the education he received at NMSU.

At NMSU Bobby earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1973 and an MBA in 1975. While at NMSU he was a member of the golf team from 1969 – 1973, a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity, a founding member of Beta Alpha Psi, the honorary accounting fraternity, and a student senator from the College of Business.

Lutz, a businessman in Dallas, Texas, re-connected with NMSU through a phone call from a student working in the Aggie Pride Call Center. He is now giving back in several different ways. Bobby and his wife Rebecca have created scholarships for students in the College of Business, with a preference to members of the NMSU Men’s Golf Team. In addition, Bobby and Rebecca give to the College of Business as specific needs arise.

Bobby has served as “Executive-In-Residence” for the College of Business in both 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. During those years he visited campus every month. He presented to classes, mentored students, met with faculty and provided one-on-one consultations for aspiring entrepreneurs at the Arrowhead Center.

Bobby currently serves on the NMSU Foundation Board, the College of Business Advisory Council and the Arrowhead Advisory Council.
College of Education

Barbara Hubbard ‘70

“My husband, H. Peirce Hubbard allowed me to be me! There was many a night that he had to play both ‘mom’ and ‘dad’ as events kept me from early morning to the wee hours of the next morning in the building.” Barbara Hubbard

Barbara Hubbard has played many roles since coming to NMSU in 1964 as an instructor in Physical Education. She was named Assistant to the Athletic Director in 1966 and opened the doors of the Pan American Center in 1968, operating it with a student staff in the early years. She earned her Master’s in Education in 1970 and served as the Aggies Cheerleading sponsor for 20 years. However, she is probably best known as the Director of Special Events from 1975-1996, and continues to serve as a consultant to them.

While many world-renown artists performed in the Pan Am Center during Barbara’s tenure, she feels the greatest production was the first visit by Bob Hope to the Pan Am to honor military members. The longest POW in captivity (Commander Alvarez) welcomed him to the “Ship,” the USS Hope built by students in the middle of the arena. All military personnel were invited and the house was full. There wasn’t a dry eye when Commander Alvarez and all of the service personnel welcomed Bob aboard.

Through her work with special events and the A.C.T.S. program, Barbara has established 15 scholarships to benefit students studying in performing arts or entertainment management fields. She keeps creating new endowments because, in her words, “The students are our future.”

In 2007 the university recognized her many contributions to the present and future of NMSU by awarding her an honorary doctorate degree.
Gregory Fulfer earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Engineering Technology in 1984, and has devoted much of his time to building businesses, raising a family, and working to expand economic development opportunities in New Mexico.

Gregg has been active in efforts to diversify the economic base in southeastern New Mexico, particularly with respect to attracting new businesses that will create and retain high tech employment opportunities for NMSU’s graduating engineering students. Governor Susanna Martinez appointed Gregg to serve on the New Mexico Economic Development Commission and to the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board. Gregg is a founding member and Vice-Chairman of a national organization, America’s Counties for Energy Independence, and serves as the Board Chairman of the Lea County Board of County Commissioners.

Gregg, as a founding board member of New Horizons Research Foundation, has pursued an interest in developing technologies that can be commercialized and manufactured in New Mexico. Gregg’s interest in research to foster economic development has lead him to support produced water research, a byproduct of the oil and gas industry, by Dr. Pei Xu, assistant professor of civil engineering at NMSU.

Gregg is married to Kim, ‘83, and they have two children: Kristin, married to Cody Abel, and Kayla married to Emmanuel Lujan, and seven grandchildren. Gregg’s parents are Billie and Henry Fulfer (deceased 2013) and Kim’s parents are Bobbie and Senator Carroll Leavell.
Dr. Christopher Ledingham ’01, ’04

“By keeping a connection with the institution, one has the ability to show the closeness of the NMSU family. I have kept in contact with some of my former professors who have become my mentors, and I have forged new professional relationships with colleagues who have moved to NMSU in recent years since my departure.” Dr. Christopher Ledingham

Dr. Christopher Ledingham received his Bachelor of Community Health Education in 2001 and his Master of Public Health in Community Health Education in 2004 at NMSU.

He currently serves as an Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Brownsville in the Department of Health and Human Performance, after continuing his education to receive a Ph.D. His service to the industry is impressive, he serves as a member of the College of Education Research Council, is Co-Chair of the Health Professions Academic Workgroup for Project South Texas and in the Department of Health and Human Performance he serves as Chair of the Department Assessment Committee and Undergraduate Program Chair.

Since graduating from NMSU, Christopher has become highly regarded in the College of Health and Social Services. He has shared as a visiting speaker in classes, and he mentors HSS students. He has also invested in the continued success of the Department of Public Health Sciences.

The College of HSS is not surprised of his success. As a student, he went above and beyond expectations, and since graduating he has shown current students the benefits of having a degree from NMSU, and the many ways his education has assisted him along his path to success.

“I did not start out as a community health major, I had dreams of becoming a doctor, then I switched to nursing. After a meeting with my advisor, Carol McAllister, who suggested I think about community health as my major, I reluctantly signed up for a class with Dr. Jeffery Brandon. It was in that first class with Dr. Brandon that I realized I had finally found the right field that seemed to fit with what I wanted to do with my career.”