

Brandi Wells-Stone, PhD C.V.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership

New Mexico State University

Dissertation Title: *Black Women's Experiences Directing Black Culture Centers Using Sista Circle Methodology*

Master of Public Administration

University of New Mexico

Passed with Distinction

Bachelor of Arts: Political Science & Criminology

University of New Mexico

Summa Cum Laude

Professional Education

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Enlace Mid-Level Leadership Program

McKinsey & Company Executive Leadership Program

ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of New Mexico, African American Student Services

Flagship, Public Research University, High Activity | Minority Serving, Hispanic Serving Institution | 24,000+ students

Director &	Jan 2020 – Present
Special Advisor to the President on African American Affairs	
Interim Director	Jan 2019 – Dec 2019
Program Specialist	Aug 2017 – Jan 2019
Sr. Student Program Advisor	Jun 2016 – Aug 2017
Professional Support Intern	Jan 2015 – Jun 2016

Executive Leadership & Administration

- Direct daily operations for a student services department serving over 600 students annually, including personnel management, fiscal oversight, assessment, compliance, and divisional reporting.
- Supervise and mentor 3 professional staff, 10 student employees, and 1–3 graduate assistants through structured onboarding, leadership development, and training grounded in student development theory, high-impact practices, and community engagement.
- Cultivate professional advancement and succession planning among staff, supporting career progression into leadership roles across higher education and government sectors.
- Manage a \$700,000 annual budget and drive resource development through instructional and general funds, state appropriations, student fees, donor engagement, and grant acquisition.
- Led development of a five-year department strategic plan centered on belonging, connection, and intersectional student experiences, including gender-responsive and diasporic approaches to student engagement and success.

- Cultivate and sustain partnerships with more than 20 community, civic, and state organizations to support educational access, community engagement, and pipeline initiatives across New Mexico.
- Led annual recruitment and outreach initiatives in partnership with New Mexico school districts, Office of African American Affairs, and the New Mexico Public Education Department to strengthen recruitment pathways to the University of New Mexico.
- Co-chaired UNM's First Generation Forward initiative through NASPA, convening faculty and staff to support institutional alignment around first-generation student success and maintaining engagement with the national network.
- Prepare annual institutional and legislative reports on Black student recruitment, retention, graduation, and campus climate for university leadership and state stakeholders.

Student Success and Retention Strategies

- Advance equity-informed student support practices that center belonging, retention, and holistic student development within culturally responsive frameworks.
- Collaborate across academic affairs, student affairs, and athletics to align student success initiatives and co-curricular learning experiences.
- Designed and implemented multi-tiered retention initiatives, including mentoring, academic and career coaching, LLC development, and cultural learning programs, achieving an 89% average return or graduation rate among students engaged in AASS programming (based on internal assessment data 2020-2025)
- Developed and executed targeted recruitment initiatives to increase the number of Black students enrolled at UNM through various programs, including college visits, as well as STEAM-H pipeline and bridge programs.
- Collaborated with University College to develop a first-year experience course, specifically designed to support the unique experiences of Black students at UNM.
- Collaborated with Africana Studies to develop an intro to Africana Studies summer bridge course and an upper division Black student movement course.
- Developed an undergraduate research program focused on critical qualitative approaches through a University Innovation Alliance (UIA) grant, which was awarded the most innovative cultural center program of the year through the Association of Black Culture Centers' Kuumba recognition (2023)
- Built a partnership with a local community restorative justice (RJ) trainer to offer RJ circle training to the Division of Student Affairs and implemented a culture of student-designed community space guidelines.
- Contributed to programming for student housing and student-centered spaces, including living learning communities and cultural engagement events hosted in partnership with auxiliaries.
- Utilized student development theory to establish, evaluate, and revise co-curricular programs, with a focus on student success and retention.
- Serve as an on-campus advisor and assist in the identity, professional, and leadership development of various chartered student organizations and serve as a Campus Authority, as outlined by the Clery Act.
- Support students of concern as a primary member of the CARE team and develop intervention plans as necessary.

Institutional and Community Partnerships

- Strengthened partnership with UNM Athletics through integrated student engagement initiatives, including First-Year Experience course collaboration, Homecoming programming, and cultural celebration events designed to enhance campus and community engagement.

- Expanded international engagement opportunities through partnership with the University of the West Indies, Antigua campus, and collaboration with the UNM Global Engagement Office's Faculty Led Instructor Programs (FLIP) to increase students' access to study abroad.
- Facilitate transition and engagement efforts between graduating students and the UNM Black Alumni Chapter by serving as an ex officio board member and advancing year-round alumni-student engagement initiatives, including expanded Homecoming programming.
- Partner with the UNM Health Sciences Center to coordinate mentorship and pipeline programming supporting student matriculation into STEAM-H and health professions pathways.
- Serve as a liaison between the University and Black communities across New Mexico, cultivating partnerships in education, public service, health, workforce development, and economic development initiatives.
- Established a partnership with New Mexico State University Black Programs to support cross-campus collaboration and student engagement initiatives across New Mexico institutions.

Assessment and Strategic Planning

- Contribute to two priority areas of the Division of Student Affairs, *Innovating the Student Experience* Strategic Plan, as a co-driver for *Objective 3.3*. Integrate principles of inclusive excellence and evidence-based mentoring practices into staff training and professional development, and *Objective 4.1*. Embrace UNM's identity as a minority-serving institution through coordinated communication, programming, and outreach that strengthen a sense of belonging, agency, and cultural relevancy for all students.
- Serve on the Rural Student Data Team to develop shared definitions of rurality, disaggregate student success data, and inform student affairs practice.
- Participate in the development and refinement of student engagement and CRM-informed systems to enhance coordinated student support and retention strategies, primarily through Lobo Check-in and Student Hub. Co-led early collaboration effort of several student support offices to explore the implementation of a unified "Lobo Check In" data system for tracking student engagement.
- Currently facilitating department CAS review aligned with Multicultural Standards, to strengthen AASS internal assessment and strategic planning.
- Support the Division of Student Affairs Program Planning Officer as a reviewer for the First Gen-Survey and Report (2026).
- Served as a PI for a university-wide, IRB-approved Black Student Belonging project, a mixed-methods assessment of Black student belonging using survey and photovoice methodology.
- Co-led the Reimagining Student Affairs Initiative to restructure divisional strategy and alignment as UNM sought to onboard a new Vice President of Student Affairs.

Resource Development

- Partner with the UNM Foundation to develop funding strategies for AASS, including the establishment of four scholarships and a recent \$15,000 endowed award (2025 – 2026).
- Consistently engaged with UNM Big Give Day, developing promotional materials specific to the AASS student community, resulting in funds raised annually.
- Secured a 174% increase in state appropriations to the department from 2021 to 2024.
- Increased AASS SFRB fund allocations by about 211% between 2020 to 2026.
- Secured over \$70,000 in external grant funding for mentoring and research initiatives (New Mexico Black Leadership Council and University Innovation Alliance grants)

Key Accomplishments & Strategic Initiatives

- Institutionalized an annual Homecoming step/stroll showcase and tailgate experience that advanced culturally affirming student engagement, strengthened alumni-student relationships, and attracted more than 600 attendees in 2025.
- Initiated and co-led the creation of the Afro Hair Shop, aligned with SAMSHA's dimensions of wellness, New Mexico policy, and entrepreneurship to serve as a location in AASS where students can braid and loc hair, and engage in "micro-programming" without licensure requirements.
- Supported students in the successful establishment and chartering of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) at UNM, advancing the formal recognition of Historically Black Greek life on campus for the first time while building upon a longstanding student presence dating to 1965.
- Co-constructed the first iteration of the Black Labor Acknowledgment through a Fall 2022 First-Year Experience (FYEX) course, translating classroom-based student inquiry into an institutional framework later refined in collaboration with faculty and campus partners.
- Developed the Ubuntu Undergraduate Research Program, recognized for innovation in cultural center programming by the Association for Black Cultural Centers.
- Hosted the National Association for Black Culture Centers Conference, supporting national convening and institutional visibility in cultural center work.
- Designed and implemented the first university-wide digital Black archive (touchscreen display) in collaboration with the Information Technologies team
- Developed a statewide high school BSU leadership and pre-college exposure conference.

University of New Mexico, Division for Change and Empowerment

DiCE Leadership & FEMDAC Intern

Aug 2022 – Dec 2023

Executive Leadership & Administration

- Co-Chair of the University Alza Council convening of administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

Student Success and Retention Strategies

- Supported the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Mentoring Black Excellence grant to create STEM equity experiences for undergraduate first-year students connected to African American Student Services Summer Bridge Program, including IRB-approved data collection and analysis.
- Participated in the Feminist Decoloniality as Care (FEMDAC) research initiative, collaborating with South African and U.S. Black scholars on culturally responsive and decolonial research practices that supported international research partnerships and interdisciplinary project development.

Assessment and Strategic Planning

- Served as a Co-Principal Investigator for the UNM Campus Climate surveys for Faculty, Staff, and Students.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND MENTORING

Adjunct Faculty, University of New Mexico

AFST 399 Black Student Movements

FYEX 1110 Black Minds Matter, University College

FYEX 1110 Intro to UNM, University College

Spring 2026

Fall 2019 - Present

Summer 2020

Project Assistant / Graduate Assistant Mentorship

- Mentor 1–3 doctoral students annually supporting assessment projects and undergraduate research curriculum development, resulting in two co-authored manuscripts.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Journal Publications

- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Zerai, A., Neely, T. (2026). Conceptualizing Anti-Blackness at a Hispanic-Serving Research University. *Social Sciences* 15(3), 151. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci15030151>
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Rodriguez, S. (2025). Centering Ubuntu to Build Research Confidence and Joyful Collaborations. *Feminist Pedagogy*.
- **Stone, B.** (2023). Serving in Black spaces of the institution: A decolonial Black feminist autoethnography. *Agenda*, 1-13.

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

- *Ayala, C., Wells-Stone, B., Rodriguez, S. (Forthcoming 2026) "There's no Place Like Home": Decentering the whiteness and Creating a Homeplace for Black students at HSIs*
- **Wells-Stone, B.** (2022). Is the Door Half-Opened or Half-Closed? In Neely, T., Montanez, M (Eds.) *Advancing a Career After Black Culture Center Work*. In *Dismantling Constructs of Whiteness in Higher Education* (pp. 121-133). Routledge.
- *Ballard, J., Wells-Stone, B (Forthcoming 2027). Decolonizing culture center archives: A collaborative autoethnographic approach*

Book Chapters

- **Wells-Stone, B.**, (Forthcoming 2026). Beyond PWI Perspectives: An Afro-Latina BCC Director's Journey in Supporting Afro-Latinidad

Publications in Progress

- **Wells-Stone, B.** (journal manuscript in review). "I have Unfinished Business Here, But Also, Why Should I Care?" Understanding the Nuances of Working in Crisis within Black Cultural Centers
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Daniel, D.K., Lanier, T.F. (abstract submitted). Redefining Access: The Role of Black Cultural Centers in Collegiate Mental Health
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Kirven, D.M. (journal manuscript in progress). The Dilemma of Operating as a "University within a University"
- Zuniga, T., **Wells-Stone, B.** (journal manuscript in progress). Intersectional Servingness: But what does that have to do with ME?

Selected Presentations

- Assata Zerai, **Wells-Stone, B.**, Tryphenia Peale-Eady, Skahan, M., & Otaño-Gracia, N. I. (2026). *Elevating Experiences of Black Students at Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Intersectional Identities and Agentic Responses to Structural Constraints*. National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- **Wells-Stone, B.** (2026). "Joyful Black Centered Archiving in Black Cultural Centers." Plenary session: *Applying the Sankofa Principle: Black Futures in Higher Education, Spiritual Life, and the Arts*. With Assata Zerai, Teresa Y. Neely, and Tryphenia Peale-Eady. Black Information Futures Conference, Seattle, WA.

- **Wells-Stone, B.**, (2025). *Culture center directors as first responders to institutional silence: Grief, rituals, and action plans*, Association of Black Culture Centers, Virtual webinar
- Ballard, J., **Wells-Stone, B.** (2024). *Decolonizing culture center archives: A collaborative autoethnographic approach*. Association of Black Sociologists, Montreal, Canada
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Ballard, J. (2023). *Bigger than you, bigger than me, bigger than the picture they painted us to be: Decolonizing BCC archives*, Association of Black Culture Centers, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Chibanga, M. (2023). *Lessons learned from developing a Black Living Learning Community*, NASPA NM State Conference, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Villar, J., Blue Sky-Hill, J., Gollete, U. (2023). *Advancing first generation student success*, Advisor Institute, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Villar, J. (2022). *Building a first gen forward New Mexico*, Diversity Summit, University of New Mexico Albuquerque, NM.
- **Stone, B.** (2020) *Lock up: Post Pledging in the office*, Association of Black Culture Centers National Conference, UNC-Wilmington, NC

Paper Presentations

- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Kirven, D.M. (2025) *The dilemma of operating as a university within a university*, Association of Black Sociologists Annual Conference, Memphis, TN
- **Wells-Stone, B.** (2023) *Serving in Black Spaces of the Institution: A Black feminist autoethnography*, African Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- **Wells-Stone, B.**, Daniel, D., (2023) *A Narrative of Black Women Experiences as Chief Diversity Officers*, AERA Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.

GRANTS

PI: **Stone, B.** Michael & Susan Dell Foundation's Driving Transformational Improvement in Black Student Success. Project Title: "Ubuntu Research Program" \$50,000. Grant Award Cycle: 2023-2024.

PI: **Stone, B.** New Mexico Black Leadership Council Chisholm Table, Project Title: "Black Research 101" \$40,000 Grant Award Cycle: 2022-2024.

PI: **Stone, B.** City of Albuquerque, Black Community Engagement Office Grant. Project Title: "It Takes a Village Mentoring" \$7,000 Grant Award Cycle: 2021.

SELECTED UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, AND ENGAGEMENT

Rural Student Data Team

Jan 2026 – Present

Support developing a shared definition of "rural" with Student Affairs, examine and disaggregate student success outcomes, and provide findings to inform student affairs practice.

Policy Equity & Inclusion Taskforce

Jan 2023 – May 2025

Review UNM Administrative Policy Handbook to ensure all university-wide policies are in alignment with a DEI lens and provide recommendations to the University Policy Officer and Administration for suggested revisions.

NASPA First Generation Forward – Co-Chair

June 2022- Dec 2024

Serve as the liaison to ensure that UNM hits the benchmark metrics for advancing first generation support on our campus in alignment with University and NASPA goals.

UNM Alza Council – Co Chair

Aug 2022 – May 2026

Co-Chair the UNM Diversity Council and assist in setting meeting priorities and restorative engagement of committee members. Also assist as a co-PI in rolling out the campus climate survey for UNM faculty, staff, and students.

Campus Assessment and Response Education (CARE) Team

2022 – Present

Assist the UNM Community in managing student behavior that causes concerns for faculty, staff and students at the University of New Mexico.

Provost Committee on Advising (PCA)

2020 – Present

Collaborate amongst leadership of academic colleges and integrated student affairs units to discuss high impact practices, assessment, and efficiencies for ensuring academic advisement for student success.

UNM Census Complete Count Committee

2019 – Sep 2020

Oversee the distribution of information to the campus community about the Census. Ensure all students living in UNM on-campus housing are counted once and discuss ways that the UNM community can support statewide efforts for a complete count.

Title IX Task Force

Mar 2019 – 2021

Develop recommendations for supportive measures and resources in preparation of Title IX regulation changes to support and assist students, staff, and faculty at UNM.

UNM Seal Committee

2019 – Jun 2021

Develop an implementation process to solicit new designs for the UNM Seal, review submissions, and make recommendations to the Office of the President for presentation to the Board of Regents.

UNM Health Sciences Center PATH Advisory Committee

Dec 2018 – Present

Provide recommendations and assistance to the HSC PATH Emerging Health Leaders Program as it pertains to recruitment and selection, activities, and accommodations for emerging Black STEM scholars in this bridge program.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Secretary & Assistant Editor, Association of Black Culture Centers (ABCC) Nov 2019 – Present

NUFP Region IV-West Coordinator, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Region IV-West July 2024 - 2026

NUFP Assessment Co-Chair, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) May 2025 - 2026

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American College Personnel Association (ACPA)

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Association for Black Culture Centers (ABCC)

Association of Black Sociologists (ABS)

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)

SELECTED COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, & ENGAGEMENT

Advisory Board Member, New Mexico Race Amity Project, Feb 2026 - Present

State Commissioner, New Mexico Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission, Nov 2024 - Present

Advisory Board Member, NM Public Education Department, Black Education Act Committee Oct 2022- Present

Board Member, City of Albuquerque Black Advisory Council, April 2026- Present

Research Member, NM Black Central Organizing Committee Sept 2020- Present

Co-wrote the Status of Black Women in New Mexico report for a NM state agency

Board Member, City of Albuquerque Library Advisory Board July 2020 – 2023

Basileus, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. – Omega Alpha Zeta Chapter