Supercomputing Challenge Board Meeting

September 22, 2026

AGENDA:

- Establish Quorum (1800)

- *Charlene Arias, retired Sandia National Laboratories, Vice President
- *Ron Davis, ABBA Technologies
- *Creighton Edington, Rural Education Advancement Program – REAP
- *Alan Friedman, Treasurer, Santa Fe
- *Elizabeth Knowles, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
- *Thomas Robey, Gaia Environmental Sciences
- *Mario Serna, retired Air Force, *President
- *Tim Thomas, Sandia National Laboratories Kaley Woelfel, AV, Secretary
- * Melany Cordova, Executive Director
- * David Kratzer (Prior Executive Director)
  - Richard Barrett, retired Sandia National Laboratories
  - Thomas Bowles, retired Chief Scientist, Los Alamos National Laboratory
  - Lupe Montoya, Westwind Lee Rand, Sun Mountain Capital

Review / Approve of previous board meeting minutes
https://supercomputingchallenge.org/board/260805-BOD-Minutes.pdf

- Staff update for the board

- Kickoff Prep: Registration is now at 73 students, 20 teachers, 20 schools.
- About 20 will not attend the kickoff.
- One student attending challenge had a parent in the challenge.
- 2 participants in the challenge are now teaching.
- A few all-girl groups.
- Melany wants Board to engage and go to schools in person.

- Treasurer status

David Kratzer reported:

- Used $57k of the $200k at NMT.
    - $12k for stipends for STI
    - Several STI participants registered. Best return rate on STI of many years.
    - PayPal account will be shifted to Nusenda at some point
- Sandia has not come through with the $10k

Fundraising status

- Waiting for $10k Sandia funds
- LANL for $50k
- Need to reach NM STEM Innovation for some potential funding.
- For future years, president Jackson agreed to put it in as a 3-year allocation this fall. This would give a feeling of continuity.

- Around the room: Introduction of the board to Melany with any offers / ideas on how they can help advance the challenge

- Tom Robey – Website design to help build portals
- Char – Karen and Patty reach out to her. She helps with a lot. Will not be at kick off. She is in ABQ, but from northern New Mexico. She will travel.
- Alan Friedman: Melany can count on me for administrative and finance support. I also have a few connections in academia (mostly elsewhere, but some in New Mexico)
- Melany Request from the Board: Post flyers: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LEMUq-wng855UKV4loIAI4S7NjgMamPh?usp=drive_link
- Elizabeth Knowles. "Ely": Prof of Comp Sci and NMT. CS Buzz camp. Bring in 100s of junior high school students. It gives her a network of kids and students. Located in Socorro. Out of town for kick off? Maybe Sunday.
- Tim Thomas: PhD in high-energy particle nuclear physics. Lots of computing. Great at promoting!

Re engage Businesses (Lupe)

- Char: Westwind may provide funding. We need to present to them. Why isn't supercomputing challenge going to Westwind? Need
- The Supercomputing Challenge Overview PPT that David has used is available at: https://supercomputingchallenge.org/board/overview.pptx
- Tim: Who are our customers? Donation sources each have different goals

Web Site Portals (Tom)

- Business Portals on the website were demo'd. Students can self identify goals (Internships, etc). Sponsors can enter info for internships.
- Feedback was it is strong, but some moderation will be critical. College updates may not have the teams to do the updates?
- Carlos (doing the web site) can refine it further.
- When we ask business for funding, we can use these tools to build a relationship.

Send Students to the Conference

- SC in November would be the target.
- Char: Slots exist for the conference, but we are running late. Char will register a few slots for Supercomputing.

Potential for a Committee to focus on outreach to businesses:

- Board Expectations: (https://supercomputingchallenge.org/board/BOARD_RESPONSIBILITIES_AND_SKILL_SETS_NEEDED.doc)

-- MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ?

- Brainstorm In-person board social near the Kick-off event?

- Potential: Ron Davis (ABBA) has hosted in-person board events.
- A possibility is before kick-off (Friday, 6 pm at NMT Cafeteria?, with Follow-on at Ely Knowles place…)

- Adjourned (1930)

EVENTS TO BE TRACKING:

- Website upgraded! https://supercomputingchallenge.org/

- 20 Sept : Was Deadline for registration:

- 10-11 Oct: Kick off at NMT

- Board Website has been updated: https://supercomputingchallenge.org/board/

New Topics:

Hello Mario

I'm traveling today, however I would like to bring up a discussion idea that Char shared with me. I think she has come up with a great idea and not previously done. It's to meet with the local business such as Westwind and re-introducing this program. Short PowerPoint presentation on who we are and what is needed from the community in regard to funding, technology etc. most importantly ensure these companies that we will track where the monies or technology is provided &provide an annual or semiannual report. In turn we can help fundraise from larger equipment manufacturers that we have relationships with such as HP etc.

Thank you

Lupe' Montoya

Since Lupé brings this up this is a good time to discuss the website. This is a bit long but I have to get into the background of the website before addressing Lupé's comment.

A couple of years ago I built a new Supercomputing Challenge website. David Kratzer had a functioning website that worked well for students but it was in raw HTML which meant that he was the only one that could update it and maintain it. Also, since we were looking

for funding we needed a website front page that was not directed at the students (giving them instructions on uploading final reports, etc.) but at the general public selling the Supercomputing Challenge, especially to those funding the program.

David, Carlos and I met in May and I went over the setup of the current server and website and handed everything over to Carlos. He seems to be doing great taking over the server and website. Of course, he will make changes and the new Executive Director and staff (and Board) will have their own changes in the direction of the Supercomputing Challenge. As a volunteer I had limited time but I wanted to build in capabilities that might be used in the future. We now have a paid position and Carlos has done a great job making the website more polished.

The first requirement was to give the website a GUI so any of the staff could edit the pages. David was doing all the updates but the executive director has more important things to do like getting funding and reaching out to schools and businesses. Although there is now a GUI the staff still has not taken responsibility for editing the web pages. Carlos says he will work on getting the staff trained.

The website has a public facing front page. There is a portal for students and another one for teachers. Once they have registered for an account and they log in they go to their portals. Their portals have information about deadlines, instructions for uploading documents, etc. The student role and the teacher role also give them certain privileges such as being able to upload or review documents. The teacher portal can also feature information that applies to them like sessions for teachers at the kickoff and the SSTI summer teacher instruction.

There is a portal for judges. When judges log in they are taken to their portal with instructions on judging and a list of the projects with information about whether projects have been reviewed or not. Judges can review the document and for most documents they can give feedback. They can also mark the document as reviewed.

While these portals are currently being used I built in a couple more portals for future possible use and one of them is relevant to the suggestion by Lupé and Char. There is a

portal for businesses. While we offer scholarships another possibility is getting students internships. One of the ways to get funding is to show that we are developing talent for New Mexico national labs and businesses. Internships not only help students financially but also get work experience. For businesses it helps them develop and recruit talent from New Mexico high schools. The students have a field where they can indicate what they are interested in for an internship. Businesses can list the internships they have available. Businesses can view the appropriate information about the students and what they are looking for and the projects they have done for the Supercomputing Challenge. While the capability for a business portal is built into the website Melany (and staff) would need to decide to use it and Carlos would need to test it and get it working as desired.

There is one more portal that is a bit more of a stretch but I built it in as a future possibility. This portal is a portal for colleges. One of the problems we have with college applications is the emphasis by colleges (especially private ones) is to get as many students to apply and then reject as many as they can. This way they can achieve a low acceptance rate which raises their ranking. This means students may have to apply to a lot of schools. I think a much better approach is for colleges and students to establish discussions and work on getting the best fit for the student and college. The website allows students to write up what they are looking for in a college. Colleges can post information and links to the appropriate information on their website for students in the Challenge. Colleges can look at the projects that students have done in the Supercomputing Challenge. It may be difficult to get colleges to sign up for an account but we probably could get local colleges to sign up for accounts. There is one advantage that we have that might get colleges interested and that is we have a high number of minorities in New Mexico and it would help colleges improve their geographical and racial diversity especially in a time when other ways of achieving this goal is under attack.

One portal that I did not include in the website is for members of the board. But Carlos could add that I guess if it is desired. I am not sure what it would include. Perhaps past minutes of board meetings?

While I built these possibilities into the website they do not have to be used and those that are used will be changed over time. It is up to the Executive Director and staff (and Board) to decide what they want to use and what changes they want to make. I tried to make the

website flexible and anticipate what might be needed. I hope that this gives enough background in the website to help with discussions at the board meeting.

- Tom Robey