

Dr. Sam Minner, President – New Mexico Highlands University

New Mexico Highlands President Sam Minner strongly believes in the transformative impact a university can have on both its students and the surrounding community. As the university's 18th president, Dr. Minner has positioned New Mexico Highlands to confidently meet tomorrow's educational landscape.

Motivated by his personal experience as a first-generation student—his mother was a homemaker, and his father worked as a miner, and a steelworker—Dr. Minner has introduced several initiatives during his three-year tenure as president that have enhanced the quality of Highlands University's academic and cultural standing, including the launch of the university's first terminal degree program in more than 50 years and a campus life initiative that brings nationally recognized performers representing diverse genres to the university.

Believing a strong, vibrant community is essential for a successful university, Dr. Minner serves on two local boards, MainStreet de Las Vegas and the Las Vegas Community Foundation, and has established partnerships with other institutions, nonprofits, government agencies and private businesses to better and more broadly serve the people of New Mexico.

Dr. Minner attended Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, where he earned undergraduate and graduate degrees. He later graduated from the University of Arizona—Tucson where he earned a Ph.D. in cognitive disabilities. Dr. Minner worked as a faculty member at the University of Arizona and later at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky. Missing the Southwest, Dr. Minner returned and took a position at Northern Arizona University where he began his administrative career serving as coordinator of grants in the Center for Excellence in Education (CEE); interim associate executive director of the CEE; Department Chair; and other administrative postings.

Dr. Minner and his wife Joan live in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Joan is a former special education teacher, K-12 administrator, and professor. She is a fierce fiber artist devoting much of her time to knitting, quilting, felting, and other fiber projects. Sam and Joan are parents to one daughter, Brook, who is married and resides in Maine. Brook is the Director of Main Street Bucksport, a nonprofit agency focusing on economic development in the coastal town of Bucksport, Maine. Brook is a graduate of Agnes Scott College, a private women's liberal arts college near Atlanta, GA. Brook and her husband have one child, Mabel, age 9 and all that that implies. Sam and Joan also have a son, Sam Wolfe Minner, an attorney practicing in Santa Fe.

When Dr. Minner is not working, he enjoys any outdoor activity, particularly fly fishing. He also enjoys reading, film, Americana music and spending time with his family and friends.