# Conflict of Interest

## *Electronic Document Quick Reference Guide*

The following quick reference provides guidance for using the Electronic Document Signature (EDS) system for the Conflict of Interest (COI) form submission. Information provided includes:


Section 1: Accessing the EDS system

Section 2: Completing the form as an Employee

Section 3: Completing the form as a Supervisor (Approver)

A. First Level Supervisor Approval Process

B. Second Level Supervisor Approval Process

Section 4: Returning a Document

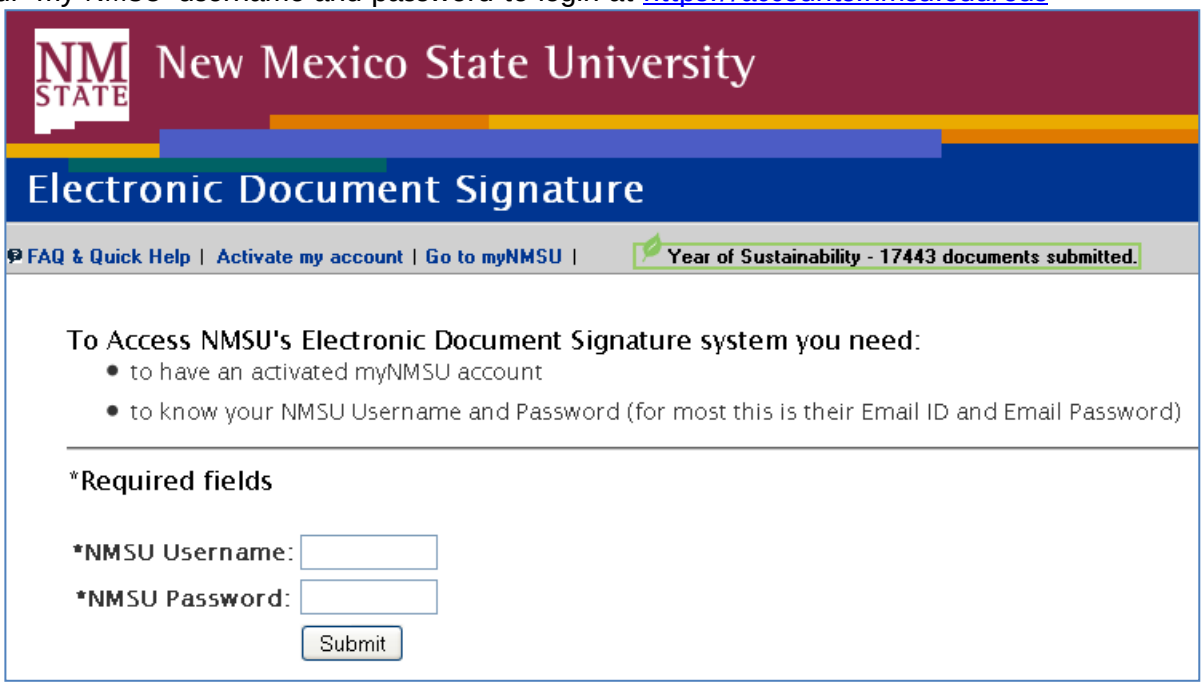
Section 5: Email notifications


The EDS system can be accessed at https://accounts.nmsu.edu/eds and on the HR Services homepage at hr.nmsu.edu/ when the annual HR requirement is in effect.

If you have questions or need assistance in submitting the COI form, please contact the Employee and Labor Relations office at elr@nmsu.edu.

# Section 1: Accessing the EDS system

Use your 'my NMSU' username and password to login at https://accounts.nmsu.edu/eds



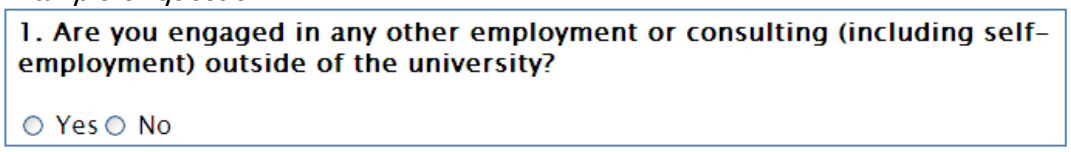

Once logged on to the system, make sure that you are on the "New Document" page.
Under Employee forms, select the most current version of the COI as indicated by the date.

# Section 2: Completing the Form as an Employee

Every regular employee of the university is required to annually complete a Conflict of Interest document at least once a year when requested to by the office of Human Resource Services. Note: For information and guidance regarding conflicts of interest/commitment or perceived conflicts, please refer to NMSU Policy 3.19 and 3.20.

1. Employees must answer all questions in the document. Number 8 is for the employee to declare if he/she is involved in sponsored activities. Answering "yes" to number 8 does not require the form to be routed to a second level supervisor if all other questions have been answered as "no". Second level routing is only required if conflicts of interest are reported.

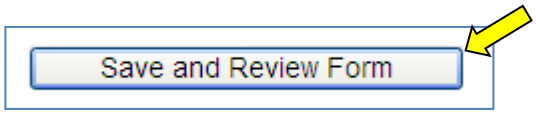
   *Example of question:*

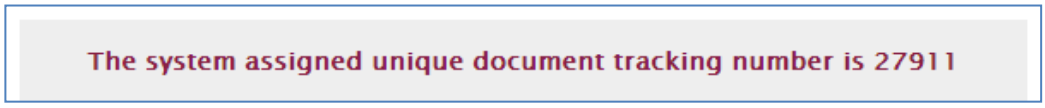
2. Once an employee has completed all questions, s/he must acknowledge that s/he has read and agrees to comply with the NMSU Business Ethics Handbook by clicking on the checkbox.

3. Upon answering all questions and clicking the acknowledgement checkbox, the employee must "Save and Review" his/her document by clicking on the button.

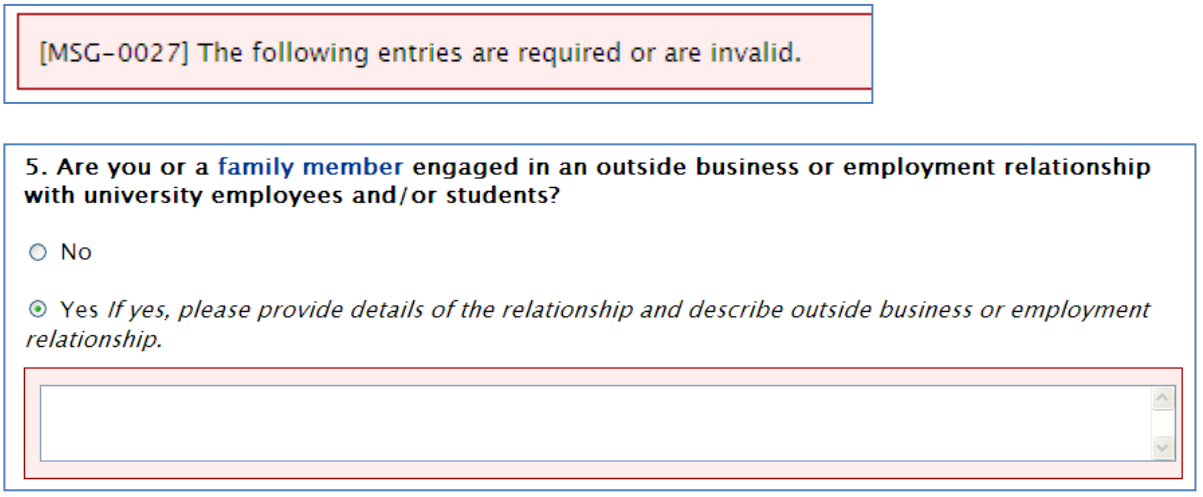
   
   

4. At this time, a document number will be assigned for tracking purposes. It will be seen at the top of the screen, just above the document itself. The employee must review the entries made and proceed to sign the document if all information is correct.

- Employees who answered incorrectly by leaving information out or forgetting to select a radio button will see an error message at the top of his/her screen in pink. S/he should look for the question that has a pink highlight indicating where the information is missing and correct the error.

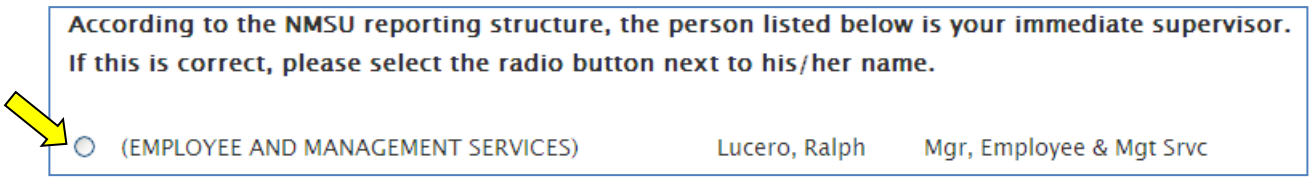
*In the example below, the employee indicated that she had a potential conflict and forgot to include the details in the comment section. The error message appears and the comment box is highlighted.*



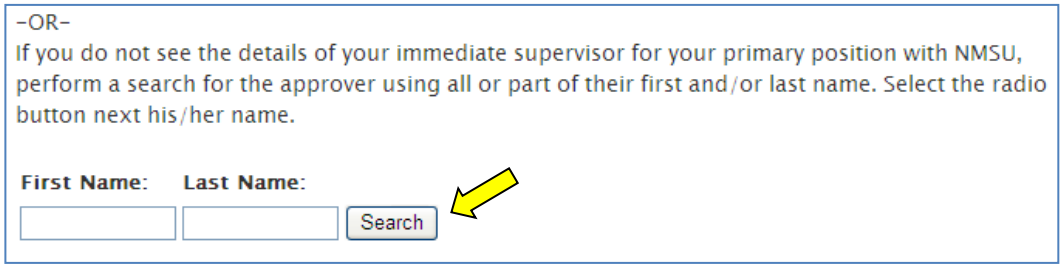

5. When the document is complete and the employee is ready to sign, s/he must click the "Proceed to Electronic Signature>>" button to route the document for approval.

*Note: "<<Go Back and Edit Form" button allows the employee to go back to the document to make changes.*

6. The employee will be presented with a screen which automatically will display the name of his/her supervisor in accordance with the "Reports To" field in Banner. If the supervisor's name that appears is correct, the employee must click the radio button next to the name.

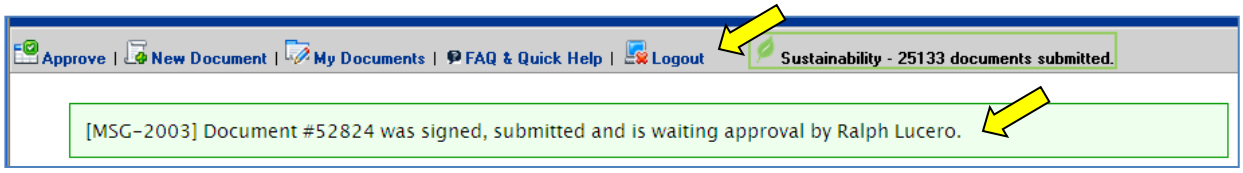


- If the name is not correct, the employee can conduct a search for his/her immediate supervisor by typing the name into the search fields and clicking the search button as shown below.




7. Finally, the employee must click on the "Submit for Further Approval>>" button to complete the document submission.

8. At this point, the submission is complete as indicated by the message in green and the employee should logout.



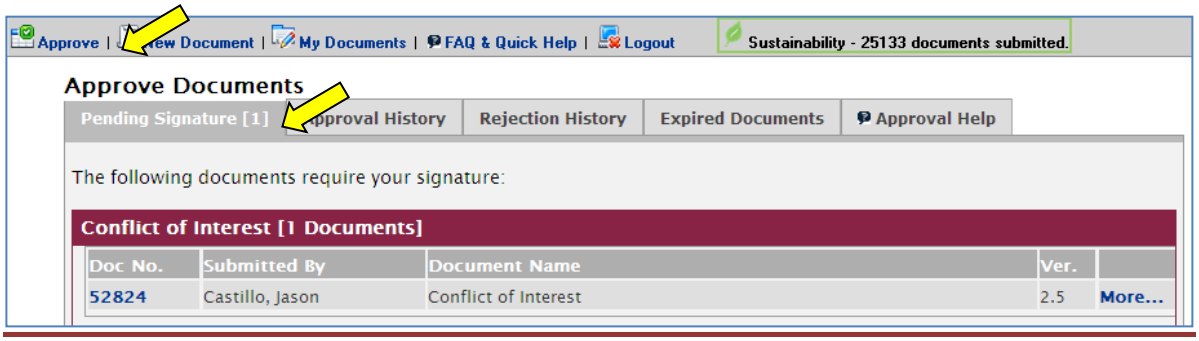

# Section 3: Completing the Form as a Supervisor (Approver)

Please note that disclosure forms submitted containing no conflicts require only one level of review and approval. Disclosure forms submitted containing one or more (real or perceived) conflicts of interest require two levels of review and approval.

## A. First Level Supervisor Approval Process

1. When an employee has completed a COI document and routed it to his/her supervisor, the supervisor will receive an informational email regarding the action that occurred. The supervisor may access the employee's document by clicking on the link inside of the email message. The supervisor will be directed to the login screen as seen in *Section 1 – Accessing the EDS system,* and therefore must log in.

2. If not already directed to the “Approve” section by clicking the link in the email, the supervisor must click on the Approve link in the menu bar and view the documents that are “Pending Signature”.

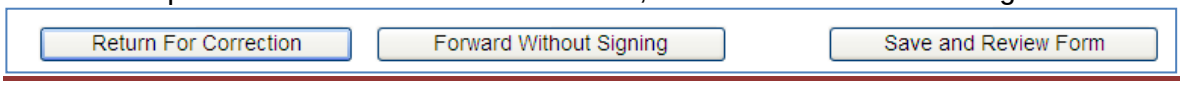



3. To review the employee’s document, click on the document number next to the employee’s name and the document will open on the screen.

4. Review the employee’s comments, if any, depending on if conflicts were reported and type in supervisor comments. If supervisor comments are not entered where required, then an error message will appear requiring that comments be entered.

5. At the bottom of the employee’s form, the supervisor must answer if a conflict of interest or commitment exists and if the employee is involved in sponsored activities.

6. When the supervisor has reviewed the document, he/she can do the following:




a. **Save and Review Form:** This allows the supervisor to advance to accept the document and sign it.

b. **Return for Correction:** If the form requires changes by the employee, the supervisor can return it to the employee with notes requesting him/her to make changes. The employee will receive an email notice indicating that the form has been returned for correction.

c. **Forward Without Signing**: This should be selected only if the supervisor who received the form is NOT the supervisor who should be signing the form. Please note that anytime a document is forwarded, all signature levels are still required by the system.

7. Generally the supervisor will Save and Review the form, then will be presented with these option next:

a. **<<Go Back and Edit Form:** Allows the supervisor to go back to the document and make edits to his/ her comments.

b. **Return for Correction:** If the form requires changes by the employee, the supervisor can return it to the employee with notes requesting him/her to make changes. The employee will receive an email notice indicating that the form has been returned for correction.

c. **Forward Without Signing:** This should be selected only if the supervisor who received the form is NOT the supervisor who should be signing the form. Please note that anytime a document is forwarded, all signature levels are still required by the system.

d. **Reject Document:** This should only be used if the form is completely unacceptable or where the majority of the information provided is incorrect and cannot easily be modified through a return for correction function. Following the rejection of a document, the employee should submit a new document that can be ultimately accepted by his/her supervisors for the year it is required.

e. **Proceed to Electronic Signature >>:** This allows the supervisor to proceed to electronically sign the document, accepting it, and therefore completing the process.

8. If all looks correct, the supervisor should “Proceed to Electronic Signature>>”. The following actions will be presented and the supervisor should “Accept Document”, then click “Accept-Sign and Mark Complete >>”. This concludes the process for the first level supervisor.

*Note: If no conflicts were reported by the employee, then the document is complete. If conflicts were reported, the first level supervisor will see the following options and should select the “Sign and Submit For Further Approval>>” button as the “Accept Document>>” button is not available.*

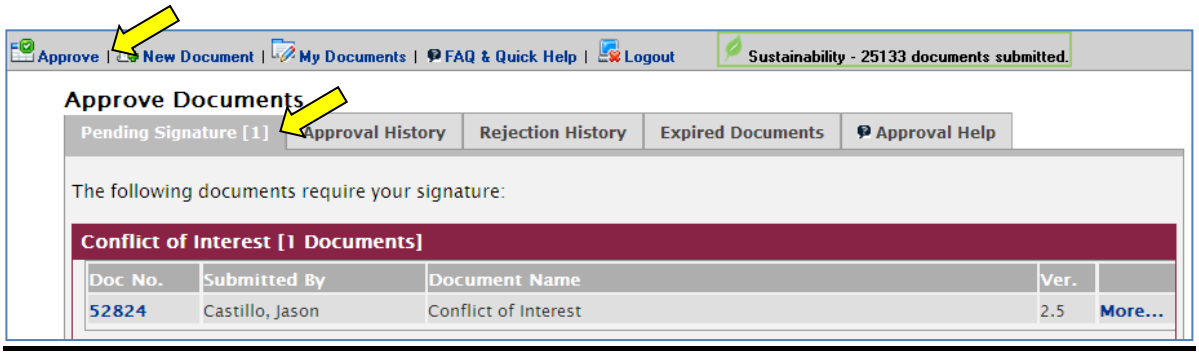
## B. Second Level Supervisor Approval Process

The second level approval process is similar to the routing and options available in the first level supervisor approval process. Second level routing is only required if an employee has answered “yes” indicating that a conflict or perceived conflict exists. This does not include an employee answering “yes” indicating involvement in Sponsored Activities (#8); this question drives specific reporting for the VP for Research office of Integrity and Ethics per federal regulation requirements.

1. The second level supervisor will receive an email notification that a document has been routed for his/her signature when the first level supervisor has signed the document.

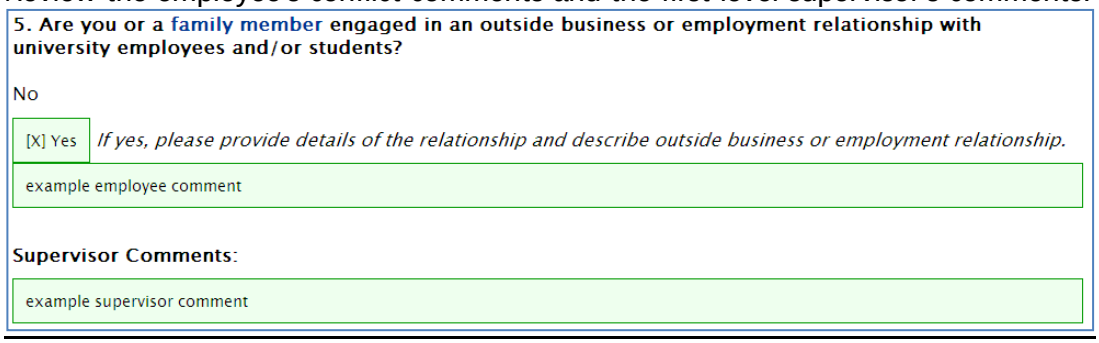
2. The second level supervisor should click the link provided in the email to be directed to the login screen as seen in *Section 1 - Accessing the EDS system*, and therefore must log in.

3. If not already directed to the “Approve” section by clicking the link in the email, the second supervisor must click on the Approve link in the menu bar and view the documents that are “Pending Signature”.

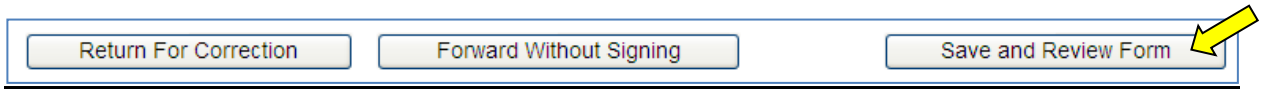


4. To review the employee's document, click on the document number next to the employee's name and the document will open on the screen.

5. Review the employee's conflict comments and the first level supervisor's comments.

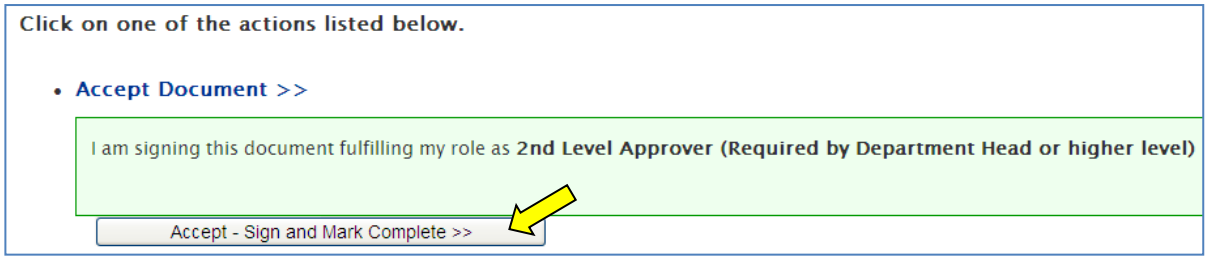



6. Comments are not required by the second level supervisor unless the document will be returned for correction (In this case, the second level supervisor will be provided with a comment box at the end of the process to communicate any changes that are required).
If the document is acceptable, the second level supervisor should click on the "Save and Review Form" button.




7. The second level supervisor will then review the final document and should click on the "Proceed to Electronic Signature" button.

8. Next the supervisor should "Accept Document", then click "Accept- Sign and Mark Complete >>". This concludes the process for the second level supervisor.



*Please note that the second level supervisor has the capabilities to "Return for Correction", "Reject Document", and "Forward Without" Signing.*

a. **Return for Correction:** If the form requires changes by the employee or the first level supervisor, the second level supervisor can select to "Return for Correction". It will route backwards to the first level supervisor who can make changes if necessary at his/her stage or depending on the direction of the second level supervisor, the first level supervisor can also select to "Return for Correction" if the changes need to be made by the employee.

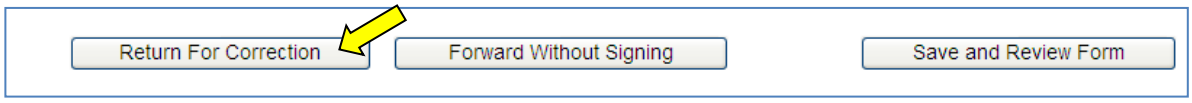
**b. Reject Document:** This should only be used if the form is completely unacceptable or where the majority of the information provided is incorrect and cannot easily be modified through a return for correction function. Following the rejection of a document, the employee should submit a new document that can be ultimately accepted by his/her supervisor/s for the year it is required.

**c. Forward Without Signing:** This should be selected only if the supervisor who received the form is NOT the supervisor who should be signing the form.

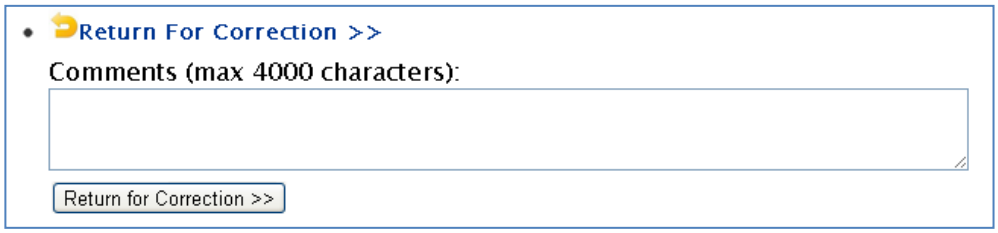
## Section 4: Returning a Document

When returning a document, it will always route backwards so that it moves back to the person who last submitted it. Therefore, if the document is being returned by the First Level Supervisor, it will be routed directly back to the employee who submitted it. If the form is returned by the Second Level Supervisor, it is routed directly back to the First Level Supervisor. The reason for this is so that the First Level Supervisor stays involved in the process and also so that the First Level Supervisor can make corrections to his/her comments if necessary per the direction of the Second Level Supervisor.

1. To return a document that has been submitted, click the "*Return for Correction"* button.




2. The following comment box will appear. This is to be used to communicate the changes that are expected by the employee or first level supervisor.




3. RECIPIENT OF RETURNED DOCUMENT VIEW: When the employee/first level supervisor receives a document that has been returned for correction, he/she will see the return comments in a pink box at the top of the document. These are for instructional/communication use only. These are

not recorded onto the document itself and are not displayed in the PDF. However, these comments are recorded in the application's database therefore they must be relevant and appropriate.

## Section 5: Email Notifications

As documents are routed for review and signature, the person who needs is pending the action will be individual notified via email. Messages will be received from nmsueds-donotreply@nmsu.edu (see example below).

From: nmsueds-donotreply@nmsu.edu
Sent: Mon 9/10/2012 10:37 AM
To: amber01@nmsu.edu
Cc:
Subject: NMSU Electronic Document: COI document number 52824 was submitted.

Hello,

This is an automated email to inform you that a Conflict of Interest document is pending your review. For more information, see document trail below.

Document Number 52824 - submitted by Jason Castillo (Conflict of Interest - Version 2.5)

History:

Signed and submitted to Ralph Lucero (1st Level Approver) on MON 10 SEP, 2012 at 10:36:34 AM.

Status: Pending 1st level approval

You can view the document using the following URL:
http://wwwdev.nmsu.edu/eds/docserve/central/login.php?forwardURL=../repository/coi/coi2.4/coi.php?template_id=224--amp--doc_instance_id=52824--amp--MM_insert=comp_form

Thank you,
NMSU Electronic Document Signature System