A summer steeped in STEM for high school juniors[1]

Seeking ‘capstone experience in academia,’ Kennedy meets CU community[2]

[3]
[4]

Mark Kennedy, finalist for CU president[5], on Monday made his first public appearance in the role, speaking before an audience of staff from system administration and the CU Foundation.

In a forum[6] introduced by Sue Sharkey, chair of the Board of Regents, Kennedy highlighted his experience in business, politics and higher education, and answered questions about his accomplishments and plans for leading CU should the board appoint him.

After Monday’s event at Denver’s Warwick Hotel, Kennedy’s week of introductions at CU continued with forums Tuesday at UCCS[7] and Wednesday at CU Anschutz[8].

Click here[9] for details on forums today at CU Denver and Friday at CU Boulder.

Kennedy, 62, is president of the University of North Dakota. Originally from Minnesota, he served in Congress from 2001-07 after holding leadership posts at major corporations. Experiences from all three of those roles are required of the CU presidency, he said.

In business and academia, he said, “I’ve always checked my politics at the door.” He stressed his belief in the need for collaboration, diversity and inclusiveness in order for a university to thrive. “Life is a game of addition, not subtraction.”

Kennedy’s academic career before UND includes teaching and research at Johns Hopkins and George Washington University, where he directed the Graduate School of Political Management.

The four categories named in the Board of Regents’ strategic vision[10] would drive his agenda at CU, Kennedy said. He would work to set goals, “which will be put together not by me, but by us. … Unless it’s our plan, it’s not going to animate us to achieve the greatest possible outcome.”
[11]

Kennedy said he has “no intention of micromanaging the campuses,” adding that he’d met with the four chancellors earlier on Monday. “They need to have the autonomy to meet their missions.” Collectively, CU must meet the state’s needs.

Kennedy expects he’d devote a significant part of his time fundraising, which he enjoys. “You get a chance to engage successful people.”

As for why he wants to take on the CU job, which President Bruce Benson will depart in July after 11 years, Kennedy said he’s “driven by impact.”

“I have found working in higher education more satisfying than serving in Congress,” he said. “It’s something I’m passionate about, and the scale you can do it at in Colorado is bigger than the scale I can do it now.” He and his wife, Debbie, would like CU to represent “my capstone experience in academia.”

Asked if it’s fair for members of the CU community to ask him questions regarding his voting record in Congress, Kennedy said no.

“Not once has a vote come up in my nine years in academia,” he said. “I’m not running for Congress. The real

question is, how good are you at running a university?"

Attendees of this week's forums are encouraged to submit feedback to the Board of Regents via this online form.[12]

New CU MOOCs now featured on Google Digital Garage[13]
[14]

The University of Colorado is part of a new pilot with Coursera and Google Digital Garage[15], a free learning platform from Grow with Google.

This initiative brings CU's top MOOCs to a new audience of more than 5 million learners in over 60 countries who are looking for soft and technical skill training.

As part of the program, CU's course landing pages are featured on Google Digital Garage. Included are Business Writing[16], Introduction to Cybersecurity for Business[17], Basics of Inclusive Design for Online Education[18], Database Management Essentials[19], Giving Helpful Feedback[20] and other highly rated courses launched by CU. Google Digital Garage directs learners to the Coursera platform.

Coursera's initial pilot with Google includes 51 courses from 23 top university and industry partners. Besides CU, they include Google, IBM and other universities such as Illinois, Michigan and Penn.

A curated set of CU's top courses on the Coursera platform, including those featured on Google Digital Garage, are available at no cost to all current faculty, staff and students at any of the four campuses or system offices. Members of the CU community may enroll in courses, accessed via the training resources option in the campus portals, and earn verified and shareable Coursera certificates of achievement for any courses they complete.

CU's Coursera content and pilots are administered jointly by the Office of Digital Education and Engagement at the University of Colorado system and the Office of Strategic Initiatives at CU Boulder.

CU Innovation and Efficiency Awards celebrate 'Aha!' moments[21]

"Aha!" moments happen everywhere, at all times of the day. Always enlightening, they're frequently channeled into ideas that take hold and grow into bigger things. And, it's especially nice when those moments lead to prizes.

This is where the CU Innovation and Efficiency Awards come in. The program is here to recognize all those "Aha!" moments and reward some of them with cash prizes. As we approach the end of the 2019 program year, which saw 20 very worthy submissions overall, we'd like to thank all who participated and extend some recognition to our 10 semi-finalists who will go on to compete for cash prizes totaling $5,500.

All semi-finalists will be showcased and award winners will be announced during an expo from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 7 at system administration offices, 1800 Grant St., Denver.

UCCS came on strong this year, contributing eight submissions. Three made the finals and all are geared toward easing orientation and registration processes for new students. Hailey Santonastaso, UCCS orientation program coordinator, had her "Aha!" moment when she noticed the "attachment" new students had to their smartphones. Working with Nick Lockwood, director of orientation and new student outreach, Santonastaso identified a mobile app that could be downloaded to phones to assist new students with the orientation process by providing valuable resources and guidance (schedules, campus maps, event information, etc.) at their fingertips.

Lockwood also played a key role in another UCCS submission designed to ease the student orientation and registration process. When the laptops that were used for student orientation and registration reached the end of their useful lives, it was apparent that new technology was needed to improve the registration experience for new students. The laptops were not only bulky and difficult to transport across campus, but also were slow and required intensive maintenance. Lockwood teamed with Greg Williams, OIT director of operations, and Koroush Iranpanah, IT professional, to research available technology and find solutions (Chromebooks) that addressed all these issues and resulted in significant time and money savings.

Elsewhere on the new student experience front, Wellness Center employees Melissa Kuykendall and Chrissie Bailey recognized the need to improve the paper-driven process of collecting student immunization records. By using Medicat software that allowed students to directly upload those records, Kuykendall and Bailey reduced both administrative burden and paper waste, resulting in cost savings and an easier, more convenient method of records collection for staff and students.

Other “Aha!” moments leading to successful and innovative new processes were:

Using Commercial Paper to Fund Construction Projects – A team from Treasury consisting of Treasurer Dan Wilson, Associate Treasurer Charles Cook and Associate Director of Treasury Michelle Travis realized that they could reduce the dollar amount and cost of long-term borrowings by taking advantage of commercial paper (short-term, low-interest notes) to fund the initial phases of construction.

In-House Research Center – Research and academic scholarship are important criteria for promotion of early career clinical faculty, but they are often neglected as these faculty struggle to meet heavy clinical obligations. With the support of Douglas Novins, M.D., director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, employees of the Department of Psychiatry – including Merlin Ariefdjohan, Emmaly Perks and Melissa Sinclair – established an in-house research support center, staffed with qualified research personnel who can assist early career clinical faculty with their research needs. This benefits the university by allowing these faculty members to focus more time on scholarly research.

Asset Inventory Management System – A team consisting of CU Denver’s Thomas Johnston and system administration’s Cal Anderson, Bradley Rieke and Linda Warren joined forces to develop a previously unused PeopleSoft module to create a consistent and efficient centralized asset inventory management system that can be used across all CU campuses. The system resulted in significant time-savings for all aspects of inventory management, plus improved employee satisfaction.

CU Non-Employee Reimbursements – The laborious, paper-driven process of creating reimbursements for non-employees who perform work for the university was overhauled when system employees from the Office of University Controller, UIS and the Procurement Service Center (Cal Anderson, Linda Warren, Adam Rodriguez and Jaime Mendez) collaborated to merge functionalities in PeopleSoft and Concur and automate this process, resulting in faster reimbursements and reduced administrative burden.

Student Hunger and Homelessness Initiatives – Kudos to Coby Wikselaar, Kelly Stritzinger and Tony Robinson from the CU Denver political science department for recognizing that hunger and homelessness affect some students at CU Denver and the Auraria Campus, and for implementing initiatives aimed at identifying and alleviating these issues in an effort to promote student well-being, retention and success.

Autoclave Program for Managing Biohazardous Waste – Denise Donnelly and Mark Garcia from the biological waste management team at CU Anschutz brainstormed to design and implement a program where biohazardous waste is treated using existing campus autoclaves, rather than using a more expensive outside vendor to pick up and transport this waste for treatment. This new program saves money, improves safety and reduces the negative environmental impact of transporting and dumping large amounts of biohazardous waste.

Green Darkroom: Creating a Modern Photography Lab – In other sustainability news, Mariana Vieira, a laboratory coordinator on the CU Boulder campus, recognized the costs and negative environmental effects of chemical waste and excessive water usage in the Visual Arts Complex photography lab, and re-engineered processes to reduce those

impacts by using different chemical solutions and installing water regulators on the faucets.

Other participant ideas submitted this year ranged from improving landscape maintenance at UCCS by adding mulch kits to mowers, to creating an international internship program that uses the experiences and relationships of former CU students (rather than outside vendors) to create a more memorable and meaningful internship program for current students.

All semi-finalists will be showcased and award winners will be announced during an expo from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 7 at system administration offices, 1800 Grant St., Denver. Everyone is welcome to attend, but until then, we encourage you to check out the 2019 submissions at https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/cu-innovation-efficiency-awards-current-submissions[22], and the finalist videos at https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/cu-innovation-efficiency-awards-2019-semi-finalists[23].

Maybe these will inspire an “Aha!” moment of your own.

Open Enrollment: Save on health care, dependent care costs with FSAs, HSAs[24]
[25]

University of Colorado faculty and staff must take one step during Open Enrollment[26]: Re-enrolling in and setting contributions for Health Care and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts. All other plan enrollments will continue if no action is taken during Open Enrollment, which runs until 5 p.m. May 10.

CU offers three plans designed to provide tax advantages and savings to offset health care and dependent care costs: a Health Savings Account, a Health Care Flexible Spending Account and a Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account. Learn a little more about these accounts and how to use them.

What is a Flexible Spending Account[27]?

CU offers two flexible spending accounts:

A Health Care Flexible Spending Account[28] allows an enrollee to set aside up to $2,700 for qualifying medical, dental and vision expenses[29] for the plan year.

A Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account[30] allows an enrollee to put aside up to $5,000 for qualifying child care or adult day care expenses.

This money in a flexible spending account is taken pretax, meaning an account holder will save an amount equal to what they would have been taxed. During Open Enrollment, an employee can choose how much is withdrawn from each paycheck and placed into their account. This money must be spent by the set deadlines or it will be lost.

See the Health Care Flexible Spending Account Fact Sheet[31] and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account Fact Sheet[32] for details on using these plans.

What is a Health Savings Account[33]?

A Health Savings Account is an individual savings account available only to faculty and staff covered by CU’s High Deductible[34] health plan.

This account allows members to select a monthly amount or one-time lump sum to not only save pretax dollars from each paycheck but also invest them. Unlike the flexible spending account, health savings account dollars do not run out at the end of the year and can continually accrue interest over time. For this reason, many enrollees use it to save for health expenses in retirement.

Enrollees can spend this money on qualifying medical, dental and vision expenses[35].

To enroll in a Health Savings Account, employees must be enrolled in the CU Health Plan – High Deductible as the primary member. Unlike an FSA, members do not need to re-enroll in their Health Savings Account each year. Employees covered by CU’s High Deductible plan can enroll in, increase, decrease or stop contributing to their account at any time.

See the Health Savings Account Fact Sheet for details on using these plans.[36]

Ways to save

With both types of accounts, enrollees can save money. Each dollar contributed to one of these accounts reduces your taxable salary for income tax purposes.

What can members use these accounts for?

Examples of Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts qualifying expenses

Acupuncture, adoption fees, counseling, contact lenses and solution, pregnancy tests, surgery (non-cosmetic), first aid kits, dental implants, breastfeeding classes, birth control and more. See all qualifying expenses.[29]

Examples of Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts qualifying expenses

Day care, babysitters, preschool, before- or after-school programs, day camps (as long as the primary purpose is the care and well-being of the child, not for educational/instructional purposes) and more. See all eligible expenses on the dependent tab of this page.[29]

Examples of Health Savings Account qualifying expenses

Physical examinations, weight-loss programs (don't forget CU offers some great programs[37] at no cost to employees), crutches, dental treatment, eyeglasses, pregnancy test kits, breast pumps and supplies, sterilization and more. See the full list.[35]

To see a comprehensive breakdown of the differences between these accounts, check out the HSA v FSA comparison chart[38]. Please note: You cannot contribute to both a Health Care flexible spending account and a health savings account at the same time.

Act by May 10

Health Care and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts require re-enrollment every year during Open Enrollment. For the 2019-20 plan year, Open Enrollment ends at 5 p.m. May 10. Visit CU's Open Enrollment website [39] for more information.

Clean in a flash: CU Boulder, CU Anschutz researchers developing method to remove biofilms [40]

How society is redefining gender[41]

UCCS strengthens focus to educate for today and tomorrow's jobs[42]

Chancellor recognizes urban research and creative activities[43]

20 years after Columbine: What can be done to prevent violence?[44]

Anseth elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences[45]

Mark named CU Anschutz deputy police chief[46]

Cassell named CU Boulder bursar[47]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/summer-steeped-stem-high-school-juniors[2] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/seeking-capstone-experience-academia-kennedy-meets-cu-community[3] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/kennedy_openforum_01.jpg[4] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/kennedy_openforum_02.jpg[5] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/university-colorado-names-mark-r-kennedy-presidential-finalist[6] https://www.facebook.com/UniversityofColoradosystem/videos/1959964404114940/?__tn__=kC-R&eid=ARAW1Repdh1t-oc3tOuSQeYB47ALg0mq13RZIqiI8aKD39PJhjhHmVL2P77PMVV3II3h5jjA-hziFIQg&hc_ref=ARSnLX0TxYI3MlBFSQ2aDpXueuCCUuQq4evHwbNA2Z_Owo2HbJ7sAGKGumyE23eeuVk&__xts__%5b0%5d=68.ARCRzO9_GNgCFJ0Ym4docMPwB5OwLbYNui0JpjnqzgTjp8mC6gQ6gUPjXwa3TeQ7uKnwzesd4NYLuyC22dn8OCgz2IzJO0yVrinhbu2luk2WkQNV728JC8vYGV8Kzp46Ke6vf4gYH-AR_hU43W0IbLfOW9HjAwiFraGYndJAKKhxUZV9Pi6N5iarjpwUDucgagX4wcRgmkSyH463qnlXtSb2k2FLqBRmZl_8otFr2jZUHucUBK2PhM1ISvoLsvx_l6fz9GV-9kzHGU6MSmOibZkwMCmUODER0U-AHp789eAvcqgr51ynzRk-wGMEna5WAekAsRejtQdGjfjG5CN03cvBZ3ehfk2Mlrmbrw[7] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_E6_a6ZzyUc&feature=youtu.be[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlSLctY-MAA&feature=youtu.be[9] https://www.cu.edu/presidential-search/finalist-open-forum-schedule[10] https://www.cu.edu/cu-metrics[11] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/kennedy_openforum_03.jpg[12] https://www.cu.edu/presidential-search/forms/cu-presidential-search-feedback[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-cu-moocs-now-featured-google-digital-garage[14] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/google-dg_top.jpg[15] https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/courses[16] https://www.coursera.org/learn/writing-for-business[17] https://www.coursera.org/learn/intro-cyber-security-business?[18] https://www.coursera.org/learn/inclusive-design[19] https://www.coursera.org/learn/database-management?[20] https://www.coursera.org/learn/feedback?[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-innovation-and-efficiency-awards-celebrate-aha-moments[22] https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/cu-innovation-efficiency-awards-current-submissions[23] https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/cu-innovation-efficiency-awards-2019-semi-finalists[24] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/open-enrollment-save-health-care-dependent-care-costs-fsas-hsas[25] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/fsa_feat.png[26] http://www.cu.edu/oe[27] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment/current-employees/flexible-spending-accounts[28] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment/current-employees/health-care-flexible-spending-account[29] http://www.asiflex.com/EligibleExpenses.aspx[30] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment/current-employees/dependent-care-flexible-spending-account[31] https://www.cu.edu/docs/hcfsa-health-care-flexible-savings-account-fact-sheet[32] https://www.cu.edu/docs/dcfsa-dependent-care-flexible-savings-account-fact-sheet[33] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/benefits-wellness/current-employee/hsa-fsa/health-savings-account[34] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment/current-employees/medical-plans/high-deductible[35]

https://www.optumbank.com/all-products/medical-expenses.html[36] https://www.cu.edu/docs/hsa-health-savings-account-fact-sheet[37] https://www.becolorado.org/program/[38] https://www.cu.edu/docs/hsa-and-hcfsa-comparison-chart[39] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment[40] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/clean-flash-cu-boulder-cu-anschutz-researchers-developing-method-remove-biofilms[41] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/how-society-redefining-gender[42] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/uccs-strengthens-focus-educate-today-and-tomorrow-s-jobs[43] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/chancellor-recognizes-urban-research-and-creative-activities[44] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/20-years-after-columbine-what-can-be-done-prevent-violence[45] https://connections.cu.edu/people/anseth-elected-american-academy-arts-and-sciences[46] https://connections.cu.edu/people/mark-named-cu-anschutz-deputy-police-chief[47] https://connections.cu.edu/people/cassell-named-cu-boulder-bursar