President's Innovation Podcast series debuts with episodes on DEI, groundbreaking science[1]

[2]

A new podcast series takes a sonic dive into the life-changing innovation happening across the University of Colorado's four campuses.

The President's Innovation Podcast is presented by CU on the Air, the collection of podcasts produced by University Relations in the Office of the President.

Innovators within the CU community and elsewhere across Colorado are discovering solutions to society's greatest challenges and breaking through boundaries to explore new frontiers. CU President Mark Kennedy created the President's Innovation Podcast to highlight these exceptional individuals and demonstrate how their work is reaching Colorado, the nation, the world and even outer space.

Kennedy joined one of two recently released episodes that officially launch the series. In "Building CU's Strength Through Diversity,"[3] he and Theodosia Cook, Chief Diversity Officer of the CU system, join host Emily Davies to discuss what it will take for a systemic shift at CU and in the broader community to create sustainable progress for cultural change related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Kennedy recently worked with the CU Foundation to make $5 million available ($1 million for each campus and system administration) to fund the Diversity, Equity and and Inclusion Innovation Fund.

In "Exploring X-ray and Laser Science from Imagination to Application,"[4] Davies speaks with CU Distinguished Professor Margaret Murnane, a fellow at CU Boulder-based JILA. A faculty member in the Department of Physics, Murnane has earned numerous prestigious awards - including a MacArthur "Genius" Award - for her groundbreaking work in ultrafast laser and X-ray science.

Click here[2] to find these episodes of the President's Innovation Podcast and all episodes of CU on the Air[2].

COVID-19 vaccinations to be required of all CU faculty, staff, students[5]
[6]

University of Colorado leadership on Wednesday announced COVID-19 vaccinations will be required of all students, faculty and staff before the start of the fall 2021 semester.

President Mark Kennedy and the four campus chancellors made the announcement in a joint statement[7], which said the decision was made after consulting state and local health departments, the Governor's Office and the Colorado Department of Higher Education, as well as CU scientists, medical experts and COVID advisory committees and task forces on the campuses.

As with established vaccination policies, exemptions may be sought.

"We believe the science around COVID vaccines is clear and compelling," the statement reads. "This decision is good for public health, not only because it will lower rates of infection on our campuses, but also in the communities they call home. It will also allow students, faculty and staff to benefit from the on-campus experience that is critical to academic success and personal growth."

Several other institutions of higher education across the state joined CU in making the same announcement on Wednesday.

The four CU campuses and system administration will provide more detail specific to their communities soon. An FAQ page[8] will be updated as more information becomes available.

“We appreciate all you have done to persevere through the challenges of the pandemic,” the president and chancellors said. “Today’s decision will bring us one step closer to ensuring we continue to deliver a quality CU experience for all.”

Funding, pay equity, DEI among key topics in President Kennedy’s address to Faculty Senate[9] [10]

CU President Mark Kennedy last week appeared before the Faculty Senate, delivering State of the CU System remarks on his efforts to secure funding for CU, plans for addressing pay equity among faculty and staff, and progress and challenges remaining in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

During the April 22 meeting, led by Faculty Council and held virtually, President Kennedy’s presentation[10] also detailed his work engaging with Colorado lawmakers at the state and federal levels to advocate for funding for CU and higher education institutions across the state.

Kennedy thanked faculty for going above and beyond expectations throughout the course of the pandemic, and acknowledged the extra effort required at such a time. In collaboration with the university’s shared governance groups, the president sought vaccination preference for student-facing faculty and staff, 30 days’ notice for return to in-office work, and improvements to the popular tuition benefit, which are being announced this week ahead of a July 1 rollout.

Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Access is one of the four pillars of the systemwide Strategic Plan, the development of which Kennedy provided updates. Two specific groups to be tracked initially for progress are under-represented minorities and veterans. The university will be monitoring the percentages of new faculty and staff hires, as well as students, in those populations.

A Belonging Survey of the CU community is being developed, with a campus-based rollout planned for the fall. During her update later in the meeting, Theodosia Cook, Chief Diversity Officer of the CU system, said she is meeting biweekly with campus leaders regarding the survey. “We are still in editing mode,” she said.

Regarding affordability and student access, one of the Strategic Plan’s four pillars, “We have an equity gap at CU,” Kennedy said. “We want to close that.”

Next month will see the review of recommended goals and action steps by the Strategic Plan’s steering committee, followed by consultation with the regents, who will be presented with the final plan at their July retreat.

Kennedy noted recent key hires in DEI leadership at the system and campus levels, and highlighted the expanded diversity of his cabinet.

“Of the eight individuals I have been involved in hiring, five are women, five are people of color, four are under-represented minorities – and all were the most qualified candidates,” said Kennedy, who also detailed numerous DEI-related actions and supportive funding that he directed.

“As it relates to DEI, we’ve done a lot and we have a lot to do,” Kennedy said. “I look forward to working with you all to achieve that end.”

Faculty Council has long advocated for examination of pay equity across the system. Kennedy directed President’s Initiative Funds to be used for a pay equity analysis, initial results of which he shared at the meeting. The number of faculty and staff determined to be lower-limit outliers for compensation were six at system, 10 at UCCS, 92 at CU

Boulder and 206 at CU Denver l CU Anschutz. As percentages of total faculty and staff, those figures range from .87% to 1.6%.

Communications on the study are set to begin in May. Besides reporting findings, they will detail how inequities are being addressed and steps faculty and staff may take to initiate complaints.

In other business at last week's meeting:
[11]
Faculty Council elected officers for the upcoming academic year: **Mary Coussons-Read**, chair **David Thompson**, vice chair **David Paradis**, secretary Michael Lightner, vice president of Academic Affairs, provided an update on several items, including work that's underway to review university policy (Regent Policy 5.K, supported by APS 1014) as it pertains to intellectual property that is educational material. A systemwide faculty working group and administrative partners has collected findings which will be used to frame a set of principles for evolving the current policy. Further work will continue this summer, though deeper engagement will begin in the fall. The Faculty Council's (Dis)ability and Access Committee, which hadn't been active in recent years, was officially reinstated.

Tuition Assistance Benefit policy update allows for earlier registration[12]
[13]

A new pilot Tuition Assistance Benefit program will allow eligible faculty and staff earlier course registration for most University of Colorado campus programs.

Taking effect for the fall 2021 semester, the change gives employees greater access to CU's robust courses and curriculum, provides more time to prepare for the first day, and invests in the university's workforce.

University of Colorado Staff Council[14], a systemwide governance group, has long advocated for such an improvement to the popular benefit. CU President Mark Kennedy lauded the council's efforts.

"These improvements became a reality in large measure due to ongoing advocacy from the University of Colorado Staff Council," Kennedy said. "We still have progress to make with the tuition benefit and I appreciate that we will have ongoing engagement on the issue."

Eligible employees may receive nine waived credits for eligible courses at any CU campus per academic year. In the 2019-2020 academic year, 2,562 employees[15] used tuition assistance benefit credits.

Details of the benefit vary by campus. Here's a breakdown of policy changes:

Campus of Registration

Undergraduate Registration requirements

Graduate Registration requirements

Wait List

CU Anschutz

May register seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

May register seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

Allowed to wait-list.

CU Denver

Not allowed to register prior to the first day of the course.

May register seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

Allowed to wait-list.

CU Boulder

May register seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

Allowed to wait-list.

CU Colorado Springs

May register seven (7) calendar days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

Allowed to wait-list.
Earlier registration
Faculty and staff using tuition assistance for CU Anschutz, CU Boulder or UCCS undergraduate or graduate courses may register seven days before the start of the semester, or the first day of class, whichever is earlier.

Previously, CU Boulder courses were not open for employee tuition assistance registration until the first day of the semester, and CU Anschutz required registration on the first day of the course. UCCS began allowing registration seven days in advance with the spring 2020 semester. Previously, UCCS adhered to the first-day-of-the-semester rule.

Eligible employees taking graduate courses at CU Denver may register seven days prior to the first day of the semester or the first day of class, whichever is earlier. Undergraduates must still register on the first day of the course.
Wait lists
Faculty and staff attending any CU campus may add themselves to a wait list, if a desired course is full.
Continued Staff Council advocacy
Meeting last week with UCSC leadership, President Kennedy thanked the council for its continued advocacy for the benefit. Staff Council expressed appreciation for these changes, while noting that other tuition benefit issues remain and deserve continued discussion.
Learn more
Dependent tuition assistance policies remain unchanged. Watch for upcoming policy changes to Administrative Policy Statement 5024[16].

Visit the Tuition Assistance Benefit[17] webpage for usage guidelines, campus deadlines, tax implication details and more.

President Kennedy, Government Relations advocating for CU at federal level[18]
[19]

As lawmakers in Washington, D.C., consider priorities for funding in the next fiscal year, leadership at the University of Colorado is advocating for support of the system's educational mission at a critical time.

Regarding the needs of students, CU President Mark Kennedy and the four campus chancellors recently joined the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, and colleges and universities across the state in sending a letter to Colorado's congressional delegation, urging support for doubling the Pell Grant maximum award from $6,495 to $12,990. CU's Federal Team from the Office of Government Relations also

urged Colorado representatives to join a letter circulating to House appropriators in support of doubling Pell.

The April 9 release of President Biden's first budget proposal to Congress officially kicked off appropriations season in the capital. In addition to the Pell letter, CU's Federal Team recently urged Colorado members to join letters to House appropriators in support of some of CU's most important research agency partners, including the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, Department of Defense, National Endowment for the Humanities and others.

At CU's urging, Rep. Joe Neguse is leading a pair of letters in support of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and NASA Space Grant, respectively. Rep. Jason Crow also has agreed to circulate a letter in favor of a proposal endorsed by CU to create a University Consortium for Space Technology Development to support U.S. Space Command.

As more letters circulate, the Federal Team will continue to urge the Colorado delegation to support the priority accounts and projects President Kennedy discussed in his recent meetings with all nine Colorado members of Congress.

"It's important that we continue to engage Colorado's Congressional delegation as the new administration rolls out initiatives," Kennedy said. "They have been supportive of our efforts around students and research."

Earlier this month, the House began the process of accepting community project funding requests – previously known as earmarks – after a 10-year hiatus. CU Anschutz, CU Denver and CU Boulder all have submitted proposals to their respective members requesting funding to support pipeline programming for underserved and first-generation students. Each member of Congress soon will make a determination about whether they will submit these proposals to the Appropriations Committee.

The Biden Administration's major political priorities and funding initiatives continue to unfold. Indicators are found in the president's preliminary budget request, as well as his infrastructure and economic stimulus proposal, the American Jobs Act. Specific details on many federal programs and projects won't be available until Biden releases his full budget request along with the second part of his stimulus, known as the American Families Plan, which will focus on education and health care.

President Biden's preliminary budget requests an additional $14 billion for climate and clean energy efforts across all federal agencies and proposes significant investments in climate research and development – some of which could potentially come to CU. Waleed Abdalati, Ph.D., of CU Boulder's joint institute with NOAA, the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), recently testified before the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis at its first meeting of the current Congress. Rep. Neguse, a member of the panel, introduced professor Abdalati. His testimony emphasized that scientists want to provide decision-makers with the best information possible to inform effective policy that balances the economic, humanitarian and security dimensions of climate change.

CU Faculty Voices: Walking my UCCS history[20]
[21]

Editor's note: This is one in a series of commentaries[22] by CU faculty, presented by the Faculty Council Communications Committee and CU Connections. Learn more here[23] and submit your own column pitch.[24]

By DeLyn Martineau

When I'm on campus, I take a walk outside whenever I can. Over the years, the path has changed, but the scenery hasn't, which is one of the reasons I love walking among the older buildings.

I took my first campus walk in 1984 when I became a student at UCCS. That spring, I turned 18, graduated from high school three days later, and two weeks after that started learning chemistry in a summer class that quickly overwhelmed me. Despite withdrawing in shame, I started as a full-time freshman that fall, and walking the campus grounds became a habit until I transferred to CSU-Pueblo a year later. My dreams have carried images from those walks ever since.

When I was hired as a faculty member in 2016, one of the first things I did was walk the campus, reliving where I took classes and reflecting on how much hadn't changed in over 30 years. I walked past the same scrub oak and tall pines where I had studied as a student and remembered how the sun slanted through the windows of Main Hall on winter afternoons.

On this walk, I looked down and found a penny. I was still grieving the loss of my father-in-law, so I'm sure this was a penny from heaven. Although he knew I had been hired at UCCS, I hadn't started working yet when he passed. When I picked up that penny, I knew he wished me well.

I have retraced this path often and made subtle changes to it over the years. Now, the walk takes me from my office past the library, where I think about how that building wasn't there when I was a student. Moving upward, I pass the Tree of Peace, where, when I looked down once, I found a piece of knapped flint right next to a piece of broken prescription bottle, circa 1900; both had been unearthed when another nearby building was constructed a few years before I was hired.

As I wind my way behind the buildings, I sometimes see a family of hawks flying over the bluff, and I always stop to watch them and take in the moment. Over the years, I have worked as many flights of stairs as I can into my walk. As it is now, my walk takes about 30 minutes and is just over a mile. I turned it into a workout, finding sets of stairs to climb whenever I can. The challenge is to only go up sets of stairs, never down.

During the last five years I have made it a point to set my standards high, to make realistic expectations for myself, and to avoid subjecting myself to too much critical introspection, which I'm especially vulnerable to as I walk. I've worked hard to make my courses rigorous enough to be challenging but simple enough to understand and execute. In 2020, I felt like I had finally hit my stride, but then COVID struck and totally threw me off. With only two days' notice, suddenly I was forced to stay inside my home, where I remained for the next several months. I didn't think it was possible to teach completely remotely until I had to, but now I am so used to remote meetings that I tend to over-schedule them.

Last semester I tried to work on campus as much as I could, and on Nov. 5 I was in my office grading papers. I found myself repeatedly looking over at the name plate on the door of my good friend and mentor across the hall, Michelle Neely. I couldn't stop glancing at it. I finally got up and went for a walk, even though the weather was a bit brisk for my taste, because I couldn't get her off my mind. Later, I found out that she had died that morning.

She always encouraged me to practice mindfulness when I walk, so now that my beloved colleague is gone, I do things much more intentionally: I breathe deeply, I notice details of things around me, I walk with a longer, stronger stride, and I stare incessantly at Pikes Peak. After a year of isolation, it feels good to get outside and walk with a purpose, and these are steps anyone can take every day.

Even though I just got a promotion, I still have some lingering imposter syndrome, which is exacerbated by the fact that I'm isolated from my colleagues due to the pandemic. When I walk the halls of the building alone, I remember the friends I've made here and try to give myself some credit for the good I've done for our program and the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. I remember my former students, some of whom are kind enough to check in with me even though they've progressed well beyond First-Year Rhetoric and Writing.

I think my career at UCCS takes a similar shape to my walking path. It has wound around through the campus, and I try to challenge myself to always go up, never down. I stumble, and I carry a load sometimes, but I continue to be in awe that I am a part of such a wonderful legacy. I look forward to the path I have yet to take.

DeLyn Martineau, M.A., is an instructor in the First-Year Rhetoric and Writing Program at UCCS, where she has taught since 2016. She has taught at the college level since 2008. She is an avid supporter of the veteran community on

campus, where she has co-founded the Veterans Writing Community[25], a place where veterans can tell their stories through writing. She also writes and edits for online literary magazine US Represented[26], where her column focuses on local history and events.

Take your benefits to go with digital ID cards[27]
[28]

If you've ever dug through your wallet searching for your medical insurance or pharmacy ID card – the correct, current ID card – you know this can be a hassle.

Fortunately, CU gives you options to access digital ID cards when you need them – whether you carry your smartphone with you at all times or you want nothing to do with one.

Your phone is your passport to all your medical and pharmacy benefits with digital ID provided by our CU Health Plan insurance providers, using each provider's mobile app as well as saving ID cards to your phone's wallet. Your computer also gives you access to download or print digital ID cards.

Anthem

Anthem is the plan administrator for CU Health Plans Exclusive, High Deductible, Extended and Medicare.

You'll need to register for an Anthem account, then download its Sydney Health mobile app. The Sydney Health app gives you access to your insurance ID card, plus the ability to review your available benefits, search for providers, view your previous claims, ask questions through interactive chat and more.

Visit the Digital Delivery webpage[29] for instructions.

Kaiser

CU Health Plan – Kaiser enrollees can use the Kaiser Permanente mobile app to access a digital copy of your insurance benefit card. You'll need to register for a Kaiser account, then download the mobile app. This card can be used at any Kaiser network health care provider where you need to provide the details of your insurance coverage.

Plus, you can use the website or app to email your doctor's office, view most lab and test results, schedule or cancel routine appointments and more.

Visit the Digital Delivery webpage[29] for instructions.

CVS

Those covered by an Anthem-administered CU health plan will use CVS as their pharmacy provider. The CVS Caremark mobile app gives you access to your pharmacy card, but also offers easy-to-use tools to keep your prescriptions organized, get refill reminders, compare drug costs and more. You can create your online profile and locate the app by visiting caremark.com[30].

Visit the Digital Delivery webpage[29] for instructions.

Delta Dental

Delta Dental of Colorado members do not need physical or digital ID cards to receive care, unless they visit an out-of-network provider or a Delta Dental provider outside of Colorado.

You can sign up for a Delta Dental account and download their mobile app, which will allow you to print member ID cards, check your dental benefits, find a provider, check the status of a claim and more.

Visit the Digital Delivery webpage[29] for instructions.

Digital delivery

Your ID card and benefits aren't the only ways to go digital. You can reduce that pile of unopened mail on the dining room table by signing up for digital delivery[31] of certain documents and notices related to your health coverage.

You can opt-in to digital delivery of IRS Form 1095-C, privacy practice notices, the annual report from CU's Health and Welfare Plan Trust and more. The steps are easy:
Log in to the employee portal[32]. Choose "**My Info and Pay**" from the drop-down menu at the top center of your employee homepage. Click the "**Digital Delivery Options**" tile. Choose from the "**Benefits Notices Delivery**" or "**Form 1095-C Delivery**" menu options along the left side.

Submit a proposal for the COLTT 2021 Conference[33]
[34]

The Colorado Learning and Teaching with Technology (COLTT) Conference is now accepting session proposals for the 2021 event.

COLTT engages participants in learning about teaching practices and technologies, challenging the way they think about both. By attending sessions and hands-on workshops, attendees are able to network and gather effective practices that change the way they teach and learn in classrooms, online, and in virtual environments.

COLTT 2021, which will be held virtually, is set for Aug. 4-5.

What topics are top-of-mind? How will your session will be a venue for exchanging knowledge, skills, and strategies?

Please note: This year's call for proposals prioritizes engagement strategies. It requires a session description, abstract, and learning objectives. As you make a submission, you will be able to exit and reenter the form with your content saved.

Deadline for proposal submissions is May 23. Click here to submit a proposal[35].

Registration for attendees is underway as well.

COLTT is offering a $25 registration fee to cover costs for this year's virtual conference. Registration fees go directly toward covering this year's expenses (including paying staff, and the use of technology like CrowdCompass), as well as next year's COLTT.

COLTT also offers a $135 registration, which helps ensure a sufficient operating budget for the 2022 conference.

Click here for registration and more information[36].

Five takeaways from the 2021 Campus Sustainability Summit [37]

MOSAIC to celebrate new space today with ribbon cutting, livestream [38]

CU Denver mourns the loss of Dean Rebecca Kantor[39]

CU Dental researchers make craniofacial gene discovery [40]

Inniss to become dean of Colorado Law[41]

Limerick elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences[42]

Paxton named 2021 Nurse Educator of the Year [43]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/president-s-innovation-podcast-series-debuts-episodes-dei-groundbreaking-science[2] http://cuontheair.blubrry.net/[3] http://cuontheair.blubrry.net/2021/04/28/building-cus-strength-through-diversity/[4] http://cuontheair.blubrry.net/2021/04/22/exploring-x-ray-and-laser-science-from-imagination-to-application/[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/covid-19-vaccinations-be-required-all-cu-faculty-staff-students[6] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/vaccine-requirement_01.jpg[7] https://president.cu.edu/statements/cu-requires-vaccine-fall-semester-2021[8] https://www.cu.edu/vaccine-requirement[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/funding-pay-equity-dei-among-key-topics-president-kennedy-s-address-faculty-senate[10] https://president.cu.edu/statements/state-system-report[11] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/fc-kennedy-stateoftheuni_leadership.jpg[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/tuition-assistance-benefit-policy-update-allows-earlier-registration[13] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/tution-assist_01.jpg[14] https://www.cu.edu/ucsc[15] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/impact-report[16] https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/5024[17] http://www.cu.edu/tab[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/president-kennedy-government-relations-advocating-cu-federal-level[19] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/federal-level-legislation_01.jpg[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-faculty-voices-walking-my-uccs-history[21] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/cufv_logo_hdr_0.jpg[22] https://connections.cu.edu/tag/cu-faculty-voices[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-invited-contribute-new-cu-connections-commentaries[24] https://connections.cu.edu/cu-faculty-voices[25] https://veteranswritingcommunity.com/[26] https://www.usrepresented.com/author/delynmartineau/[27] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/take-your-benefits-go-digital-id-cards[28] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/digital_id_01.jpg[29] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment/digital-delivery[30] https://www.caremark.com/[31] https://www.cu.edu/employee-

services/benefits-wellness/digital-delivery[32] https://my.cu.edu/[33] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/submit-proposal-coltt-2021-conference[34] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coltt_01.png[35] https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eXJ6FewxZSj9qjs[36] https://www.cu.edu/coltt/coltt-2021-registration[37] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-takeaways-2021-campus-sustainability-summit[38] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/mosaic-celebrate-new-space-today-ribbon-cutting-livestream[39] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-denver-mourns-loss-dean-rebecca-kantor[40] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-dental-researchers-make-craniofacial-gene-discovery[41] https://connections.cu.edu/people/inniss-become-dean-colorado-law[42] https://connections.cu.edu/people/limerick-elected-american-academy-arts-and-sciences[43] https://connections.cu.edu/people/paxton-named-2021-nurse-educator-year