Five questions for Constance Staley[1]

[2]

When she was 22, Constance Staley moved to Colorado Springs with her husband, whose first job in the Air Force was teaching Air Force Academy cadets to fly. She loved Colorado. As a child of a military family, she spent her early years in Europe, and the Colorado mountains reminded her of her home in Salzburg, Austria. Several years later, her husband joined the faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy. While he earned a master's and doctorate in English on the University of Colorado Boulder campus, Constance earned graduate degrees in linguistics and communication.

"Our two young daughters, who are now established professionals, have since thanked us for 'allowing them' to go to graduate school with us. Our home was always filled with stimulating ideas and invigorating conversations about literature, art, music, science -- you name it -- and learning became a way of life for all of us."

Those years in in Colorado Springs "allowed me to establish a career at UCCS, helping to build our fledgling campus, which then consisted of a few buildings and a dirt parking lot, into the booming, thoroughly impressive place it is today."

Staley is a professor in the Department of Communication, teaching undergraduate courses in business communication, conflict management, professional speaking, and a graduate seminar in training and development.

Except for brief excursions -- designing and delivering management and supervisory training for an East Coast Fortune 500 company and teaching as a Fulbright Scholar in the former Soviet Union – she has spent her entire career at UCCS. "Along with our chancellor, I was a founding member of the communication department, and while earning my Ph.D., I commuted back and forth -- taking classes in Boulder and teaching four or five classes a semester in Colorado Springs. Those were the days!"

Staley has directed the UCCS Freshman Seminar Program for 20 years, or approximately half of her career. She's also a prolific author and conducts organizational training; her honors include an "Outstanding Teacher Award," which she won in 2000.

1. How did you choose this career path?

Going to 10 schools in 12 years as a military child, I had what I consider to be a superb education, one filled with many first-hand, multicultural experiences. My teachers were highly talented, but it wasn't individuals who shaped my career path, it was my passions. I took a course in Greek and Latin derivatives in high school and a consuming linguistics course as an undergraduate that helped me realize my true love of language. I vowed that I would continue my graduate work in linguistics, which I did. I then decided to pursue a Ph.D. in communication because I thought the breadth of the discipline might offer more applications and opportunities. Interestingly, as a college freshman, my speech professor asked me to stay after class one day. He recommended that I consider speech as a major. I politely responded by asking "Whatever for?" and chose a "practical" major my parents had recommended.

Ultimately, he was right. While all faculty believe their disciplines to be the most fascinating things on the planet, my thousands of students over the years have convinced me that mine actually is! Communication is imminently applicable, and students realize that the quality of their communication affects the quality of their lives. I now give workshops or keynote presentations at 15 to 20 campuses or conferences per year, and I'm passionate about speaking before audiences of faculty or students. Besides the words of wisdom from my speech professor as a freshman, I realize that my passion for communication began in fifth grade when our teacher required us to give a 10-minute speech to our peers every week and a 30-minute speech once a month. I consider those early learning experiences to be fortuitous preparation for what I now love to do.

I became interested in Freshman Seminar at UCCS because my husband was teaching ID 101: Introduction to Intellectual Inquiry (now, Freshman Seminar) after his Air Force career ended, and he invited his freshmen to our home for breakfast for their last class. As I listened to the students talk about the impact the course had on them, I realized that my classes lacked the collaborative learning community they had created. That one event changed the course of my career. I began teaching Freshman Seminar and soon thereafter began directing our program, and I began to

speak and write about teaching and learning, and about motivating and engaging students. My current research foci have allowed me to put my original passion for the communication discipline to good use.

2. What is the mission of the Freshman Seminar and how has it changed over the years? How are classes selected?

The idea for a first-year seminar came from a faculty retention committee in 1990, and the original seed funding was provided to the individual campuses by a former systemwide president. UCCS was a young campus with an entrepreneurial spirit, and the program began to grow under the leadership of Professor Tim Tregarthen from the Department of Economics. I took over the directorship from him a few years later.

Simply put, the mission of the program is tri-fold: to help students develop their academic, personal and (campus) community goals. However, since the UCCS faculty voted to include Freshman Seminar in our recent General Education revision as the Gateway to General Education course, its mission will now include specific, articulated goals reflected in the revision plan. This fall, approximately 85 percent of entering first-time freshmen elected to take a Freshman Seminar course. Next fall, all first-time freshmen will enroll in a Freshman Seminar course.

All the courses will meet general education goals relating to critical and creative thinking, academic professionalism, information literacy, and oral communication. However, the courses will still “meet students where they are” and help them transition into the academic challenges of university life, both in terms of the cognitive domain and the array of noncognitive variables that get in the way of learning.

They will still be compelling multidisciplinary courses that generate excitement and pique curiosity. instead of titling a course “Courtship Rituals in Modern American Society,” it might be called “The Mating Game,” even though the content is identical. Sometimes the ideas for classes “come to me” at random moments because my Freshman Seminar radar is always operating, and sometimes individuals or groups of faculty come to me with an idea. Since most of the courses are thematic, I look for disciplinary connections when inviting faculty to teach. For example, we once had a Freshman Seminar called “Trial and Error,” a course about major historical trials, some of which contained “mistakes” made either by the prosecution or the defense, or trials that resulted in a verdict which has since been reversed. We teamed faculty from history, psychology, English, and theater. At the end of the course, the students reenacted a famous trial. Hands-on, realistic learning experiences like these have an enduring impact.

As a group of instructors focused on 18-year-olds transitioning from high school, Freshman Seminar instructors have learned a great deal about what it takes to engage today’s digital natives and what constitutes an active, creative, academically robust learning experience. And the great thing about Freshman Seminar is the vibrant faculty development that prepares instructors to teach, and the opportunity to learn from other faculty in teaching teams of two to four individuals from other disciplines.

This fall, 93 of us will work with approximately 1,400 first-year students in 29 different courses with multiple sections. As the program has grown, we have expanded the types of courses we create; some are now more related to majors, and some are related to the professional schools and career fields. We spend two full days with our students before other classes begin, and then continue weekly class sessions for 11 weeks. Once the semester begins, half our class time is “common time,” with all the sections studying a particular topic meeting together, and half the time is spent in small groups of fifteen with an instructor and a Junior Teaching Assistant (JTA).

In the early days of Freshman Seminar, we tried to balance each course by inviting one faculty member each from arts/humanities, social science, and natural science to teach together. But because of student demand and rapid growth, we have had to leave those exact specifications behind and adopt a more general multidisciplinary approach.

3. You've written several books detailing how to be successful in college. What advice do you give to students?

Come January, I will have published 13 books, most of which are about college success. My most recent books have a carefully chosen title, “FOCUS,” because I think that’s a big challenge for many students. Although I’m an avid technology fan, I also know that multi-tasking is a myth. The research is mounting, and most researchers agree that

what appears to be multi-tasking is really switch-tasking. When a student working a set of math problems constantly bounces out to answer texts, check Facebook "likes," tweet random thoughts, and post photos on Instagram, his academic performance suffers, and it will take him a significant amount of time (often 25 minutes or more) to repeatedly reconnect with his original math task.

Attempting to multi-task results in errors, lost time, and stress. Today's college students are digital natives; technology has always been a part of their lives, and they've spent many hours attached to an electronic device, which, researchers fear, may be impacting their social skills. These students often say they prefer texting to talking. My books are about strategies to help students do their academic best by learning how to focus on their academic priorities. It's about knowing when to zoom in and focus and knowing how to handle distractions.

Literally thousands of students over the years have taught me to connect with them in the classroom in ways that are very "organic" and creative -- ways that are very different from what I did for many years as a traditional lecturer. And these active learning strategies are used throughout my textbooks, which heightens their appeal to students.

4. What are some of your favorite outside activities?

Free time is in short supply for me, but any free time I have is dedicated to my family. I enjoy relaxing at my cabin in the mountains with my fly-fisherman husband, playing games with my boy-girl grandtwins, and giving my 89-year-old mother, who lives far away, her "tuck-in" phone call every evening. Other than that, life for me is a blank canvas, and I love to decorate it -- by illustrating my presentations with artful PowerPoint, visiting art museums in every international city I visit, or decorating my home with meaningful art.

5. Do you have a motto that you live by?

I have always tried to model the importance of having passion for what you do, such that it warrants your very best effort, and it doesn't even seem like work! I was a first-generation college student with no educational role models, but I have always had a strong work ethic. What I love about my work at UCCS is not only getting to teach alongside some of the best people on campus or work with bright, creative students, but I truly value the way my career has "come together." My discipline-based teaching informs my research on teaching and learning which I apply to my writing which is connected to my faculty development work across the country which informs my Freshman Seminar work at UCCS. The common elements are students, teaching, and learning. I research those things, write about them, speak about them, practice them -- and continue to learn myself. I sometimes close presentations with Andrew Carnegie's famous quote, "My heart is in the work," and for me, nothing could be more true.

Photos courtesy of UCCS

On-the-job problem solving recognized at University of Colorado[3]

CU administrators recently recognized several employees across the system who drew on experience and imagination to generate new ways of working smarter and faster at their campuses.

CU Shared Practices (CUSP) is a recognition program aimed at encouraging, recognizing and rewarding new ideas and processes that provide positive changes – fiscal and otherwise – on job performance. An initiative of the Office of University Controller, CUSP takes inspiration from the work of the President's Task Force on Efficiency, established by President Bruce D. Benson as a means of encouraging smarter business practices.

From 12 successful submissions to this year's contest, seven entries from individuals or teams received cash awards and presented their work at a recognition event Friday at CU system administration offices in Denver.

Research personnel from the CU Anschutz Medical Campus discussed their laboratory mopping system evaluation.

Grand Prize, $1,500:

The Laboratory Mopping System Evaluation Team, Jori Lesczynski, Michelle Wallace, Jamie Tackett and Laura Richardson, University of Colorado Denver – Research personnel responsible for the vivarium at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus recognized that the chemicals and labor required to clean the vivarium were becoming quite costly. They took it upon themselves to conduct a scientific analysis of the entire cleaning operation and the associated costs and environmental impacts. Using what they learned, they were able to conduct a comparative analysis of alternative cleaning systems, and chose a new system that has saved the university 3,900 hours of labor (roughly equal to $108,000), 619 gallons of chemicals (or about $8,366), and 40,794 gallons of water per year.

Three $1,000 awards were issued for the following submissions:

Robert Dixon and Eric DenBraber answered questions about the virtual desktop system.

Creating a Virtual Desktop Environment, Robert Dixon, CU-Boulder – Dixon is the Information Technology Director for Housing and Dining Services on the Boulder campus. For this large department of more than 600 employees, IT maintains 177 databases, including 25 critical business database systems, using 500 computers, 200 laptops and 100 tablets. Over the last three years, Housing IT built and deployed a Virtual Desktop infrastructure, replacing almost all of the computers with a virtual desktop client that consists of a 2-inch, solid-state box. By running only one version of the software, it has eliminated the need for support staff fixing and replacing PCs. It allows department staff to be mobile, using a tablet or laptop to access large, powerful system databases. Deploying this virtualized desktop environment has resulted in significant energy savings, reduced time and number of personnel required for IT administration, and lower equipment costs.
Cynthia Norton of UCCS presents a laboratory registration program during Friday's event.

Video-based Training, David Nicoll and Joshua Firestone, CU-Boulder – Employees of the College of Arts and Sciences Financial Services Center, Nicoll and Firestone recognized the need for more efficient and effective training delivery for staff. Because personnel are constantly shifting, and because of the difficulties inherent in scheduling classes that everyone can attend at one time, they decided to create a training video that would be available to all employees online, and could be accessed at employees' convenience. By using this low-cost technology to deliver training to their employees, these individuals are able to provide better service to their departments, better utilize their time and the trainees' time, and continuously update and improve the video.
Leonard Dinegar and Bob Kuehler learn more about CUSP efforts at Friday's event.

Process Mapping, Kathy Illian and Leah Lleras, CU Anschutz Medical Campus – These employees of the Department of Neurology also recognized training deficiencies within their department, especially when employee turnover led to lost institutional knowledge. So they created color-coded maps and diagrams illustrating the steps involved in each critical work process of their department, including diagrams to illustrate how those processes flow. They have found that these highly visual maps lessen the learning curve for new employees and provide a more effective means of conveying information. These maps are reviewed on an ongoing basis, so that process changes and/or improvements may be incorporated into the diagrams. The process maps are living documents of the work done by their department and serve to preserve the institutional knowledge that is so often lost when employees leave or are transferred.
Three $500 awards are going to these submissions:

Online Capstone Scheduling Form, Eric Howell, CU Denver – Conceived and designed by Howell, an IT technician at the School of Public Affairs, this online form allows students to schedule their capstone presentations online and to reserve any media equipment required for these presentations. The online process has improved the capstone scheduling process by eliminating the completion and processing of paperwork. It also allows for better coordination of time and resources.
Research Administrators Meetings, Carolyn James, CU-Boulder – James initiated informal peer group meetings for discussion of timely issues relevant to administering sponsored research projects and contracts. Meetings often include a panel discussion with experts internal and external to the group. Members are able to share best practices and discuss how they go about work in their home units. The RAM member email list is available 24/7 for consultation

and advice. The need for expert administration of sponsored projects and awards is paramount, and the ongoing activities and contributions of RAM help increase the level of professionalism within the ranks of research administration.

School of Medicine Administrative Professional Development Toolbox, Cheryl Welch, Madeline Sembrat, Lisa Stanford, Chris Scanlan, Peggy McIntosh and Terri Carrothers, CU Anschutz Medical Campus – Like Research Administrators Meetings, this submission addresses the need for ongoing discussion and improved consistency of practice. The toolbox was conceived by a group that identified knowledge deficits throughout the campus in the areas of HR hiring, salary setting, multiple components of pay, finance, procurement, contracting, sensitive expenditures, School of Medicine policies, ICR policies and fiscal reporting, among others. To counteract this, they developed this monthly training program in which they present topics that are timely, important and help to address these knowledge deficits. The goal is to increase knowledge, reduce mistakes, enhance fiscal compliance and provide employees with the tools to do their jobs better.

For more on these shared practices and CUSP, please visit http://www.cu.edu/controller/initiatives/cusp/[8]

Design plans, environmental evaluation move forward on I-225 light rail[9]

Click for larger image

A new alignment of the Interstate 225 light rail line along Fitzsimons Parkway drew concern from some residents about potential effects to parking and nearby trails and wildlife, while others said they look forward to the line's convenient transit option.

About 60 people attended an RTD FasTracks information meeting Aug. 21 at North Middle School in Aurora. Most of the residents live in Morris Heights, a neighborhood just north of Fitzsimons Parkway and east of Peoria Street.

This fall, engineers and planners will identify and mitigate any impacts to the Fitzsimons Parkway site, and will present their findings to the RTD Board of Directors and the public later this year.

In late June, the RTD Board of Directors voted 14-1 to realign the light rail line to run along Fitzsimons Parkway[11] rather than cut across the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus along Montview Boulevard as originally planned. The 10.5-mile line, which will travel between the existing Nine Mile Station and the future Peoria Station, providing connections to the Anschutz Medical Campus, is under construction and will open in 2016.

The realignment decision followed the board's receipt of letters by CU President Bruce Benson and Lilly Marks, executive vice chancellor of the Anschutz Medical Campus and CU's vice president for health affairs. They explained that running light rail down Montview would be problematic for several reasons, including cost, safety and science. Studies of other universities with light rail systems nearby showed the lines can adversely impact sensitive medical equipment on campus.

The parkway, which connects Peoria Street on the west side of the Anschutz Medical Campus to Colfax Avenue on the south, became the preferred route for light rail. The exact location of the Fitzsimons Parkway station, which will serve the Anschutz Medical Campus, will be determined through a collaborative effort between the University of Colorado, city of Aurora and the Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority (FRA), said Chuck Culig, RTD FasTracks' I-225 Rail Line project manager.

Some Morris Heights residents said they're worried that transit users will park in their neighborhood to reach the walk-up Fitzsimons station, the exact location of which will be determined through a collaborative effort between the University of Colorado, the city of Aurora, FRA and public input. An Aurora planning official explained that the city is developing a parking management program to address potential parking impacts of the I-225 light rail line. He noted

that the city will use a combination of strategies, including residential permit parking and on-street meters, to deter commuters from parking in residential areas.

Other notable aspects of the Fitzsimons Parkway alignment and platform:
Station platform will be about 400 feet in length; Light rail right-of-way will be about 36 feet across; Median along Fitzsimons Parkway in front of the station will be narrowed; Rail will run on the north side of Fitzsimons Parkway to ensure safe pedestrian access; The line will cross over Peoria Street via a bridge and travel north along the west side of Peoria until it meets the future Peoria Station at Smith Road; The station will accommodate a bus and shuttle drive-up area; and Being studied is the possibility of university and FRA partners adding a parking facility -- either surface lot or parking garage -- to the south of Fitzsimons Parkway, across from the station.
A comprehensive transportation plan is underway as part of the Anschutz Medical Campus master plan. The plan includes a campus circulator that would connect the new Fitzsimons station and key locations, including CU Anschutz, University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado.

A nearby resident suggested that the station feature windbreaks and shelters for transit riders. Several residents asked how the shuttle would work and whether it would attract riders.

Michael Del Giudice, director of Institutional Planning at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus, said the university has studied transit circulators at other urban institutions nationwide. "What we have seen at other places is that ridership increases over time, just like it has in Denver," he said. "If it's convenient and it can get you to your destination, ridership increases."

Partners that include the university, FRA and the hospitals on the Anschutz Medical Campus will be involved in working out a sitewide shuttle plan, Del Giudice said. "Whatever shuttle system happens, it has to be a collaborative effort."

An environmental evaluation is being performed during the next month to study potential wildlife impacts, as Sand Creek Greenway runs alongside Fitzsimons Parkway to the north and east.

Culig said planners and designers will minimize impacts to the Sand Creek bike trail.

"Where we need to realign the bike path or re-establish it, we will make those efforts," he said. As for decisions regarding nearby parking, connector transit to the Fitzsimons Station, a possible pedestrian bridge over Peoria Street and other issues, "Things will evolve as the campus develops."

Anschutz Medical Campus currently encompasses 22,000 employees and visitors daily and, after full build out, is expected to grow to more than 50,000. One meeting participant said RTD is to be commended for forward-thinking approaches to the region's transit needs: "And all of these good people who are concerned about their homes, I can tell them they're going to grow in value" after the light rail line opens, he said. "Their community will grow and be even better than it was before. I can tell you from experience that that's what usually happens."

The public is encouraged to comment on the process through Friday. Learn more about the realignment presentation [12], the preferred realignment[13] and the project[13]. Comments can be submitted at the FasTracks website[14], via email at I-225@rtd-fastracks.com[15] or by calling the construction information line at 720-863-8505.

Faculty Council wants greater detail from CU Health Trust[16]

The CU Faculty Council last week voted in favor of a motion asking that university leadership direct auditors to assemble more detailed reporting about the finances of the CU Health and Welfare Trust[17], which funds health benefits for employees and eligible dependents of CU, University of Colorado Hospital and University Physicians Inc.

The motion was introduced by the Budget Committee, and voted on by the council at its Aug. 22 meeting at 1800 Grant St. Committee chair Bruce Neumann presented the motion and discussed the impetus for it.

“The health of the Trust is good,” Neumann said. “What I’m suggesting would help future blips.”

For example, he said, auditors might determine that the Trust’s financial statements be issued more often – monthly rather than quarterly. “I’m not saying that’s the fix, but maybe the auditors would say that.”

The text of the motion:

Budget Committee Proposal on Fiscal Management of the Health Trust 2012-13, 8-19-13

The Budget Committee of Faculty Council is concerned about the fiscal management of the Health Trust, particularly the significant increase in accounts receivable and the corresponding decrease in reserve funds during the Second and Third Quarter of the prior fiscal year. While the problem may be alleviated at present, it is essential to ask the Trust auditors and the CU auditors (same firm) to further examine issues #1 & #4 as part of their audit processes and include the results in their management letter, and we request the Trust accounting staff and/or CU Internal Audit staff to consolidate or assemble data on issues #2 and #3 and provide such data to the auditors, the Budget Committee, UBAB, the Health Trust, Faculty and Staff Councils:
Internal control and accounting policies (and especially revenue recognition policies). Liquidity and solvency issues during the period January-June, 2013. Please identify the number of days that reserves were below actuarial limits, and categorize the amounts of shortages into quartiles. Please graph the shortages and provide means and standard deviations and medians for each quartile. Calculate the estimated loss of interest or other earnings that were lost because the investment balances were so low during most of the fiscal year. Overall assessment of the Health Trust's fiscal health and likelihood that it will not encounter similar problems in the future. We are not asking for an assessment of medical risks, but rather an assessment of financial strength based on financial statement indicators.
We request Faculty Council to support this request and communicate it to the President and relevant Vice-Presidents (including the CU Trustees).

Submitted by Chair, Bruce R. Neumann, Ph.D.

Council member Pam Laird noted that the council’s role is simply advisory in the matter, and that the motion doesn’t require action. “All we can do is say that it seems like a reasonable thing … that we’re interested in encouraging an enhanced audit.”

Said council member John McDowell, “These do not seem like unreasonable suggestions to me.”

Neumann also discussed the Trust[18] during the systemwide Staff Council’s meeting earlier this month.

In other business at last week’s Faculty Council meeting, the first of the academic year:
The council heard a presentation on the new CU For Colorado initiative, which launched over the summer.[19] Michele McKinney of University Relations demonstrated the website[20], which features a searchable database of more than 200 CU outreach efforts in communities across the state. “This helps build our brand in the state,” she said. Council Chair Melinda Piket-May called it “great PR,” and asked that any faculty who work in outreach capacities with people in the community review the site and help spread the word. Kirsten Schuchman of Government Relations summarized the 2013 legislative session at the state Capitol, and looked ahead to the 2014 session. A bill that sought to pave the way for community colleges to offer several four-year degrees was defeated in the last session; it is expected to return in revised form early next year. CU leaders continue to ask that a process be put in place to determine specific need before community colleges be allowed to expand their roles. Dates for two systemwide symposiums were announced: CU Women Succeeding[21], the 12th Annual Professional Development Symposium, will be Feb. 27-28, 2014, at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. The Student Retention Symposium will be Nov. 8, 2013, at CU-Boulder. Plans for the GLBTI Symposium are yet to be determined while interest is gauged. Council member Joanne Addison said funding for the event is in place, but without a systemwide GLBTI committee for the time being, campus GLBTI organizations will be asked whether they want to proceed with the event. Communications Committee chair Mark Malone said the group is looking to rebuild membership from the campuses. He suggested that faculty members interested in internal

communication and providing input to CU Connections should contact him[22].

Buffalo Bicycle Classic promises variety of courses for all abilities[23]

[24]
If the distance and difficulty of Colorado's organized bicycling events is any guide, a 100-mile bicycle ride is not, for many riders, quite tough enough.

That's one reason the 11th annual Buffalo Bicycle Classic's[24] longest route will go farther and climb more than any of the event's courses so far. [25]
The "Buff Epic" will span 110 miles and ascend a total of 6,250 feet. It retraces much of the most mountainous section of Stage 6 of the 2012 USA Pro Cycling Challenge.

Scheduled for Sept. 8, the Elevations Credit Union Buffalo Bicycle Classic raises scholarship funds for high-performing University of Colorado Boulder students who qualify for financial aid.

The epic century ride will start on campus, ascend Boulder Canyon to Nederland, follow the Peak to Peak Highway past Ward, descend St. Vrain Canyon to Lyons, head north to Carter Lake and turn south to return to Boulder.

During the Buff Epic, Boulder Canyon's westbound lane will be closed to traffic from 7 a.m. to approximately 9:30 a.m. Male and female riders in five age groups will compete for polka-dotted jerseys, signifying their climbing prowess. They will be judged by their times on the ascent of a 13.5-mile section from the base of Boulder Canyon to Barker Reservoir.

Times will be measured by individual riders' GPS devices and recorded on Strava.com. While there is the canyon competition, ride organizers emphasize, the Buffalo Bicycle Classic is not a race but a ride for those of all strength and ability levels.

The 2013 Buffalo Bicycle Classic includes its traditional courses that cater to all cycling abilities: These courses include the 70-mile, 50-mile, 35-mile and 14-mile Little Buff family-friendly community ride.

"As always, the Buffalo Bicycle Classic accommodates riders of every ability," said Todd Gleeson, former dean of the CU-Boulder College of Arts and Sciences and one of the ride's founders. Gleeson, a professor of integrative physiology, directs CU-Boulder's new Health Professions Residential Academic Program.

[26]
Since 2003, the Buffalo Bicycle Classic has raised more than $1.8 million for scholarships and has funded about 800 scholarships.

Chris Kerns, who graduated cum laude in anthropology from CU-Boulder in 2005, is one of those scholarship recipients. He is finishing a doctorate in archaeology at the University of Southampton, England, and he figures he's one of a relative few scholarship recipients who have completed the Buff Bike Classic century ride.

"Any opportunity to support deserving students in their academic endeavors is absolutely worth it. Great young minds can achieve amazing things as long as they get the support necessary to further their goals," Kerns said. "The scholarship from the Buffalo Bicycle Classic is one way in which to support and inspire students to succeed and accomplish amazing things."

Scholarship recipients are selected based on grade-point average and financial need. They cannot apply for the scholarship and don't know they are being considered until they learn they have won. All net proceeds go toward scholarships, and a portion of the registration fee is tax-deductible.

For more information on the Buffalo Bicycle Classic, see http://www.buffalobicycleclassic.com[24]. To see a 2012 CU Foundation video of scholarship recipients discussing what the scholarship meant to them, see http://youtu.be/Pj1l_ihaA8w[27]. To watch CU Cycling team members ride a time trial of the Boulder Canyon segment of the Buff Epic, see http://youtu.be/Pj1l_ihaA8w[27]. To see the fastest times so far on the Buffalo Bicycle Classic Boulder Canyon climb, see http://app.strava.com/segments/1822933[28].

Shockley-Zalabak to freshmen: 'Embrace uncertainty'[29]
UCCS Chancellor Shockley-Zalabak addresses the Convocation audience
– Photos by Jeff Foster and Tom Kimmell
UCCS Chancellor Shockley-Zalabak addresses the Convocation audience– Photos by Jeff Foster and Tom Kimmell

Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak told the members of the Class of 2017 to embrace uncertainty during Freshman Convocation Aug. 21.

In a departure from recent years, Shockley-Zalabak took the podium to address the record-breaking freshman class and a sprinkling of parents. In a 20-minute address, she cited statistics, shared personal anecdotes, and quotations from both famous and obscure philosophers, all in an effort to combine serious messages with fun.

"One of my favorite philosophers – NHL great Wayne Gretzky – said: 'You miss 100 percent of the shots you never take,'" Shockley-Zalabak said. "In other words, not risking may be safe but also produces less in potential opportunity."

Shockley-Zalabak encouraged the students to make no small plans and to embrace uncertainty, sharing her own challenges of losing a parent while a teenager, her husband later in life, and drawing more than a few smiles when she explained her selection of a college major.

"The line for undecided majors was really, really long," Shockley-Zalabak said of her undergraduate enrollment experience. "The line for communication majors was shorter so I picked it."

Students heard examples of successful UCCS alumni, wrote their dreams on a notecard, and later placed the cards on five-foot-tall UCCS block letters on the pedestrian spine lined with applauding faculty and staff members. Everyone received sunglasses, in part to block the afternoon sun but also to highlight the bright futures ahead.

"Never give in, never give in, never, never, never – in nothing great or small, large or petty," Shockley-Zalabak told the students, quoting Winston Churchill. "Never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense.

Giant U-C-C-S letters lined the Spine. Students were asked to write their goals on a sticker to place on the letters R. "Dan" Dandapani, dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science, lounges in the second "C"

First block party on campus set for Sept. 20[32]

[33]
The CU Anschutz Medical Campus seems to have it all. The campus includes the University of Colorado's professional health schools, University of Colorado Hospital, Children's Hospital Colorado, University Physicians Inc. and any number of centers and organizations. But, there's been one thing missing - a campuswide tradition.

So, on Sept. 20 a new event may fill that void with the inaugural Anschutz Block Party.

Big idea

“The idea of an Anschutz campus event has been on my mind for a while,” explained Lilly Marks, vice president for health affairs at the University of Colorado and executive vice chancellor for the Anschutz Medical Campus, "something that pulls everyone together on this new and wonderful campus, from students to faculty to staff at CU and the hospitals here that we partner with. When I mentioned it at a meeting a few months ago, a few others nodded their heads and suddenly we were planning.”

Block party plans

A planning committee -- including all the campus entities, representatives from the city of Aurora and local businesses including the Zephyr Lounge -- was quickly put together. Student leaders also were consulted and the details started falling into place.

The Anschutz Block Party will be held on the south side of Building 500 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 20.

Aurora Court will be closed to traffic north of 17th Avenue, making room for live music, food vendors, activities and interactive booths.

Details, details

Food vendors will include restaurants from the surrounding Aurora neighborhood and the campus as well as food trucks. The invited bands are Dogs in the Yard featuring CU faculty member Dr. Dan Bessesen, The Belle Jar with Ph.D. candidate Courtney Wilson and award-winning local blues band The Delta Sonics.

Additional entertainment will be provided by Kim Robards Dance and the Aurora Symphony. There are plenty of activities planned, too, to keep everybody busy—games, massages, exercise classes and more.

F-U-N

“We want this event to be fun for everyone,” Marks said, “and with the food and music and booths, I’m sure it will be. We also hope it’s a reminder that we all share a campus that is remarkable. We get visitors from all over the country who come here to learn how we do things. The block party can serve as a reminder that the Anschutz Medical Campus is a special place.”

Tradition

Marks anticipates a great event. “So great that it becomes an annual tradition that reaches more and more people in our campus community and the Aurora neighborhood around us.”

So, mark the date on your calendar, Sept. 20, and be part of an exciting, new tradition.

Campus celebrates 40th anniversary, start of academic year with far-out party[34]

[35]

[36]

Students peaced out as hippies, staff members channeled disco divas and neighborhood residents sported neon-framed sunglasses. Everyone got their groove on Aug. 22 at the '70s-themed Block Party.

CU Denver, which became an independent institution in 1973, boogied into the new academic year with a flashy party that took bell-bottomed revelers back to the decade when our university became official. The second-annual Block Party, on Lawrence Street between 14th and 15th streets, rocked with music, food, a tie-dye station, games and, of course, pet rocks.

Karen Fennell, wearing a psychedelic sundress and groovy beads, got a CU Denver temporary tattoo at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences[37] booth. "I think it's really important to do something that's fun but also gives people a chance to get involved and show their spirit for CU Denver," said Fennell, executive assistant to the dean in CLAS.

[38]
All the schools and colleges hosted booths on the block, but CLAS, having a knack for history, decked out its booth with a display that chronicled CU Denver's 40-year history[39]. Brooke Gladstone and Jarett Zuboy, both graduate students in history, put the display together, with Gladstone compiling the photos and Zuboy the narrative benchmarks.

"Doing this research, it was real interesting to see the transformation that has happened to the university," Gladstone said. "It now has a much grander scale, and it's become a successful urban university. To be right in the middle of a city like this and to have an identity, it's great."

The tie-dye station was a hit, drawing hordes of students who got creative with their designs. "I wanted to put a flower in the middle of my shirt," said Zihao Deng, a freshman studying information systems. "I used the red dye for that. This is a lot of fun."

[40]
Music was performed by MIX a cappella, a CU Denver singing group, as well as A Band in Pictures and Boogie Machine[41]. Block partygoers could choose from a dozen food trucks and then work off calories at the mobile ropes course and a rock climbing wall.

Plenty of people sported clashing-color outfits for the '70s costume contest, and the face-painting booth was a popular stop for the kids.

Business School Dean Sueann Ambron enjoyed the Block Party atmosphere. It was just a year ago that the event debuted in conjunction with the grand opening of the new CU Denver Business School[42] at 1475 Lawrence St. "I think this is good for the schools and it's good for the university and it's good for the community," she said. "We ought to party once in a while. It's about new beginnings."

[43]
The Popes, who live just a block away, enjoyed a family outing during the noon hour. Sampling the food, music and entertainment were Jessica, Bob and 13-month-old Luna Blue.

"This is awesome," said Jessica. Bob added, "It just represents the cultural aspect of what goes on downtown. The university is our neighbor, so it's great that they have a party for everyone."

While last year's inaugural Block Party drew hundreds, this year's theme-oriented bash appeared to bring out more than 1,000 revelers over the three hours. The event is one of the many fun events coming up[44] in the next several weeks to launch the new academic year.

"I think it's an absolutely wonderful idea for our campus to bring everyone together like this," said Rachel Cornelius, a coordinator in the School of Education and Human Development[45].

Cornelius then flashed a peace sign and pranced off to the costume contest in a skin-tight white disco outfit that would make John Travolta envious.

CU study relies on twins and their parents to understand height-IQ connection[46]

The fact that taller people also tend to be slightly smarter is due in roughly equal parts to two phenomena—the same genes affect both traits and taller people are more likely than average to mate with smarter people and vice versa—according to a study led by the University of Colorado Boulder.

The study did not find that environmental factors contributed to the connection between being taller and being smarter, both traits that people tend to find attractive.

The modest correlation between height and IQ has been documented in multiple studies stretching back to the 1970s. But the reasons for the relationship between the two traits has not been well understood.

The technique developed by the researchers at CU-Boulder to tease out those reasons may open the door for scientists to better understand why other sexually selected traits—characteristics that individuals find desirable in mates—tend to be linked. People who are attractive because of one trait tend to have other attractive traits as well.

“Not just in humans but also in animals, you see that traits that are sexually attractive tend to be correlated,” said Matthew Keller, assistant professor of psychology and neuroscience at CU-Boulder and lead author of the study appearing in the journal PLOS Genetics. “So if you have animals that are high on one sexually selected trait they are often high on other ones, too. And the question has always been, ‘What’s the cause of that?’ And it has always been very difficult to tease apart the two potential genetic reasons that those could be related.”

The key to the technique developed by Keller, also a fellow at CU-Boulder’s Institute for Behavioral Genetics, and his colleagues is using data collected about fraternal twins, identical twins and, importantly, their parents.

It has been common in the past to use information about identical twins and fraternal twins to determine whether a particular trait is inherited, caused by environmental factors or affected by some combination of both. This kind of twin study assumes that each twin grows up with the same environmental factors as his or her sibling.

If a trait that’s present in one twin is just as often present in the other — regardless of whether the twins are fraternal or identical — then the trait is likely caused by environmental conditions. On the other hand, if a trait is generally found in both identical twins but only in one of a set of fraternal twins, it’s likely that the trait is inherited, since identical twins have the same genetic material but fraternal twins do not.

Similar studies also can be done for linked traits, such as height and IQ. But while scientists could determine that a pair of traits is passed down genetically, they could not further resolve whether inherited traits were linked due to the same genes influencing both traits, called “pleiotropy,” or because people who have those traits are more likely to mate with each other, known as “assortative mating.”

The new CU-Boulder study solves this problem by including the parents of twins in its analysis. While this has occasionally been done in the past for single traits, information on parents has not previously been used to shed light on why two traits are genetically correlated. In part, that’s because existing twin registries, where information for heritability studies is drawn, don’t often contain information on the parents.

Additionally, creating the computer programs that are necessary to crunch the data for multiple traits from twins and their parents in order to understand environmental effects and both types of genetic effects is difficult.

“These designs have never taken off because they’re very difficult to code,” Keller said. “It’s a challenge. They’re very complicated models.”

For this study, the research team used data collected from 7,905 individuals — including twins and their parents — by the Colorado Twin Registry at CU-Boulder and the Queensland Twin Registry at the Queensland Institute of Medical

Research in Australia.

Keller and his colleagues found that for the twins in their study, the correlation between height and IQ was not impacted by environmental conditions. Though Keller cautions that in societies where there is more nutritional variation among families, environmental factors could come into play.

The research team found that pleiotropy and assortative mating were about equally responsible for the genetic connection between height and IQ.

“It does look like there are genes that influence both height and IQ,” Keller said. “At the same time, it also looks like people who are taller are slightly more likely to choose mates who are smarter and vice versa. Such mate choice causes ‘IQ genes’ and ‘tall genes’ to become statistically associated with one another. There are a lot of exceptions, but there’s a statistical relationship that does happen more than would be expected by chance.”

Now that the CU-Boulder team has built a computer model that is capable of disentangling the causes for linked traits, Keller said he hopes twin registries will begin to collect more data from parents and that other people in the field take advantage of the model.

Regensteiner receives mentorship award[47]

Regensteiner, right, and Huebschmann

Judy Regensteiner, professor of medicine at the University of Colorado’s School of Medicine, was awarded the Outstanding Research Mentor Award for 2013 by the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CCTSI) Clinical Science Graduate Program. The award is based on student nominations.

Said Amy Huebschmann, one of Regensteiner’s mentees, “Judy has clearly exemplified the following twin characteristics of an outstanding mentor: encouraging my scientific development and providing altruistic support of my career. In the nine years since Judy and I began working together, she has shepherded me from curious primary care clinician to a K-award funded clinician-scientist. She has taught me the clear scientific thinking and writing necessary to write nine successful research grants and to publish 14 manuscripts, and I credit much of my scientific success to her training.”

Hauser book recognized with national award[49]

Gerard A. Hauser, professor of communication at the CU-Boulder, has received the James A. Winans and Herbert A. Wichelns Memorial Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Rhetoric and Public Address from the National Communication Association (NCA). Hauser earned the award for scholarship that was published from April through March of the previous year.

Hauser won the honor for his book, “Prisoners of Conscience: Moral Vernaculars of Political Agency.” Published by the University of South Carolina Press, “Prisoners of Conscience” draws on both classical and contemporary rhetorical theories to analyze how prisoners of conscience use rhetoric to exert their agency and to expose the weaknesses of the state that has imprisoned them. Hauser‘s analysis of what he calls the “thick moral vernacular of human rights” includes case studies of Robben Island Prison in South Africa, the Barashevo prison camp in Siberia, Maze prison in Northern Ireland, and Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq to offer insights on methods such as parrhesia, passive resistance,

indirection, and bodily display under torture as ways in which prisoners of conscience resist.

The award and fund were established by students, colleagues and admirers of the two distinguished Cornell University professors. Hauser will be presented the award during NCA's 99th Annual Convention, Nov. 21-24, in Washington, D.C. The National Communication Association (NCA) advances communication as the discipline that studies all forms, modes, media and consequences of communication through humanistic, social scientific, and aesthetic inquiry.

Asakawa photo takes national award[50]

[51]
Glenn Asakawa, associate director of photo and video in University Communications at CU-Boulder, won an award of excellence in the 2013 UCDA National Design competition for his cover photo "Wind Engineers."

The photo appeared in the most recent CU?Engineering magazine in April. This is the third UCDA national award for Asakawa, an alumnus of CU-Boulder.

Keränen guest edits journal[52]

[53]
Lisa Keränen, associate professor of communication at the University of Colorado Denver, guest edited "Inventing the Future: The Rhetorics of Science, Technology, and Medicine," a special issue of "POROI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Rhetorical Analysis and Invention."

The issue included 17 commissioned essays by leading scholars who study the rhetoric of science, technology and medicine. The project began as a daylong National Communication Association (NCA) preconference that Keränen organized to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology (ARST), of which she now serves as president.

The publication of the issue coincided with the release of a series of digital interviews with many of the authors.

Gan among group receiving grants for radiation oncology work[54]

Gregory Gan, a resident in oncology at the Anschutz Medical Campus, is one of seven leading researchers who received a total of $675,000 in awards and grants to advance radiation oncology research. The awards were given by the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO).

The ASTRO Resident/Fellows in Radiation Oncology Research Seed Grant awards $25,000 for one-year projects to residents and fellows who are planning to pursue careers focusing on basic science or clinical research in the radiation oncology sciences.

Gan is examining the Hedgehog Pathway, which is involved in maintenance and regeneration of adult tissues, and radiation therapy resistance in head and neck cancer. His research examines whether the DNA damage response

pathway effects GLI1 nuclear translocation following radiation therapy and whether Hedgehog Pathway inhibition of tumor stroma/microenvironment contributes to enhanced tumor control following radiation therapy in vivo.

Gan and the other recipients will be recognized at ASTRO's 55th Annual Meeting, Sept. 22-25, at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Fall biometric screenings coming soon[55]

There are more than 50 reasons for members of the CU Health Plan to register for a free, fall health screening, but the most compelling is simple: Knowledge is key to improving or preventing serious health problems.

That's been the resounding message from participants of Be Colorado's past fall biometric screenings, says Mark Gelband, director of Be Colorado, the wellness program within the CU Health Plan. The screenings have prompted people to schedule immediate follow-up appointments with their doctors, overhaul their diets to reduce dangerously high cholesterol levels and incorporate more movement into their daily activity. In short, these health screenings help save lives.

If that's not motivation enough for the thousands of CU Health Plan participants on all four CU campuses and at 1800 Grant St. to take advantage of the 19 screenings — which include blood, cholesterol, height and weight tests, and flu shots — event coordinators have a few enticing carrots to offer:
New this year: Spouses and partners on the CU Health Plan are welcome to take the free tests and get free flu shots.
Want a test that's not included in this free workup? No problem; participants can take advantage of blood typing, vitamin D, blood count and **various other tests at discounted rates**. By participating and taking control of your health, Be Colorado will enter your name **into a raffle for one of 50 Fitbit Zip activity-tracking devices**. Winners can use the devices to track their movement and participation in Be Colorado MOVE., the fitness component of the wellness program.
If you're on the CU Health Plan, register for one of the screenings, Sept. 24-Nov. 7, at www.BeColorado.org[56]. The site includes detailed instructions on how to register, a calendar of the screenings and downloadable forms to complete before you arrive.

Call for proposals: President's Fund for the Humanities Grants[57]

The System Office of Academic Affairs is pleased to solicit proposals for the fall 2013 President's Fund for the Humanities grants.[58]

The President's Fund for the Humanities (PFH) was established to preserve a balance in the university's programs of education and research by giving special attention to the humanities. Proposals might include: seminars in humanistic studies; public programs in the humanities; innovative teaching in the humanities; or requests for lectures or exhibits by visiting scholars. The fund might also support projects that involve interdisciplinary teaching, increase the visibility of the humanities, emphasize humanistic values or address special social problems in a humanistic context.

Projects selected for funding are restricted to a maximum PFH award of $3,000.

Proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Nov. 1.

Please submit your proposal as one electronic file to AcademicAffairs@cu.edu[59]

An advisory board composed of faculty representatives from each campus will consider the proposals and make recommendations to President Benson for funding. Find proposal requirements, guidelines and additional information.

Additional inquiries may be directed to Thomas Spahr, Academic Planning, Programs and Policy Analyst, at 303-860-5623 or Thomas.Spahr@cu.edu[60].

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-questions-constance-staley[2] https://connections.cu.edu/file/5q-stayley1png [3] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/job-problem-solving-recognized-university-colorado[4] https://connections.cu.edu/news/on-the-job-problem-solving-recognized-at-university-of-colorado/cusp5[5] https://connections.cu.edu/news/on-the-job-problem-solving-recognized-at-university-of-colorado/cusp2[6] https://connections.cu.edu/news/on-the-job-problem-solving-recognized-at-university-of-colorado/cusp1[7] https://connections.cu.edu/news/on-the-job-problem-solving-recognized-at-university-of-colorado/cusp3[8] https://www.cu.edu/controller/initiatives/cusp/[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/design-plans-environmental-evaluation-move-forward-i-225-light-rail[10] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/amc_plan.png[11] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/newsroom/newsreleases/Pages/RTD-Board-approves-light-rail-realignment-to-Fitzsimons-Parkway.aspx[12] http://www.rtd-fastracks.com/media/uploads/i225/I-225_Fitzsimons_Preferred_Alignment_Information_Meeting_82113.pdf[13] http://www.rtd-fastracks.com/i225_122[14] http://www.fastracks-comments.com/public/comment.aspx?project=i225[15] mailto:I-225@rtd-fastracks.com[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-wants-greater-detail-cu-health-trust[17] https://www.cusys.edu/trust/[18] https://connections.cu.edu/news/staff-council-looks-to-improve-communication-increase-collaboration[19] https://connections.cu.edu/news/cus-outreach-across-the-state-showcased-in-new-initiative[20] https://www.cusys.edu/forcolorado/[21] https://www.cu.edu/facultycouncil/womens-symposium/index.html[22] mailto:mmalone@uccs.edu[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/buffalo-bicycle-classic-promises-variety-courses-all-abilities[24] http://www.buffalobicycleclassic.com/[25] https://connections.cu.edu/file/bbcepicpng[26] https://connections.cu.edu/file/bbc1png[27] http://youtu.be/Pj1l_ihaA8w[28] http://app.strava.com/segments/1822933[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/shockley-zalabak-freshmen-%E2%80%98embrace-uncertainty%E2%80%99[30] https://connections.cu.edu/file/uccs1png-0[31] https://connections.cu.edu/file/uccsbottompng-0[32] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/first-block-party-campus-set-sept-20[33] https://connections.cu.edu/file/anschutz1png[34] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-academic-year-far-out-party[35] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-of-academic-year-with-far-out-party/ucd_top[36] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-of-academic-year-with-far-out-party/ucd2-3[37] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/CLAS/Pages/CLAS.aspx[38] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-of-academic-year-with-far-out-party/ucd1-3[39] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/denver/Pages/40th-Anniversary.aspx[40] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-of-academic-year-with-far-out-party/ucd4[41] http://boogiemachine.com/[42] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/newsroom/newsreleases/Pages/University-celebrates-grand-opening-of-Business-School.aspx[43] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/campus-celebrates-40th-anniversary-start-of-academic-year-with-far-out-party/ucd3-2[44] http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/housing/prospective-students/Pages/CU%20Launch%21%20New%20Student%20Welcome.aspx[45] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/SchoolOfEducation/Pages/home.aspx[46] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-study-relies-twins-and-their-parents-understand-height-iq-connection[47] https://connections.cu.edu/people/regensteiner-receives-mentorship-award[48] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/people_regensteiner.png[49]

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