Dear Colorado: A CU love letter to our state[1]

[2]

Last year, CU's marketing campaign, Dear Colorado[3], asked Coloradans across the state what they love about Colorado, because chances are what folks love about Colorado, someone at CU is helping to make happen. This year, the campaign will connect what Coloradans love about Colorado with CU students and faculty who share their stories and passions.

Jacqueline's stated love for outdoor adventures is connected to a UCCS and CU Anschutz partnership that drives a hybrid doctor of physical therapy program – so more rural Coloradans can provide and also receive the health care they need to stay active. Jessica's love for the state's flora and fauna gets support from CU Boulder's researchers and their quest to protect the pollinators. Kutlo loves a Colorado craft beer, and that passion is connected to Holidaily Brewing, an award-winning label launched by a CU Denver alumna.

"The Dear Colorado campaign aims to connect CU with all Coloradans in every part of our great state to show them there is a place for them at one of our four campuses," said Danielle Radovich Piper, CU senior vice president for external relations and strategy. "This campaign is unique and fun. I can't wait for the next phase to Love Colorado even more!"

This award-winning campaign has already opened doors to conversations across the state on ways to lower costs, increased access, workforce development and CU's role as a partner in the state's future.

As part of the campaign, more than 165,000 Coloradans have connected with CU in person at events and thousands more have seen its digital presence. The campaign has meaningfully contributed to a rise in positive perceptions among Colorado parents of teens. And 100% of the campaign has been produced in Colorado, with local partners and media buys.

As the campaign effort enters its second year, its storytelling will stay rooted in real people, pride and conversations with Coloradans, as it keeps answering the call, "What do you love about Colorado?"

Click here to see the campaign video.[4]

2025 Outreach Tour embraces San Luis Valley[5]

The 2025 CU Presidential Outreach Tour saw leaders including President Todd Saliman and Regents Nolbert Chavez, Elliott Hood and Ilana Dubin Spiegel visiting Colorado's San Luis Valley. The tour is part of CU's ongoing, year-round commitment to building trust and delivering impact, demonstrating how CU is for all of Colorado.

The July 30-Aug. 1 tour spanned Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla and Rio Grande counties, where CU leaders engaged with K-12 and higher education leaders, nonprofit and civic organizations, and local business representatives to discuss the challenges and opportunities unique to rural southern Colorado, and how CU can be part of the solutions.

"That's our foundational commitment," Saliman said. "We want to be here to educate people so they can get an affordable education and get a valuable degree so they can get a better job when they graduate."

During the tour, CU leaders emphasized how every student has a pathway to success at CU. It's a message backed by data: 86% of Colorado resident applicants are accepted to CU campuses, and nearly half of all resident students graduate with no debt.

"CU puts more money into financial aid from internal resources than the state of Colorado puts into financial aid for all universities and colleges combined," Saliman said of the university's $400 million annual commitment. "We are highly

committed to bringing college within reach for the people of Colorado."

Through programs like CU Promise[6], which fully covers tuition and fees for Colorado students with the greatest financial need, and the CU Boulder Tuition Guarantee[7], CU is making significant investments in affordability and access.

The centerpiece of the tour was the CU event in the San Luis Valley community of Monte Vista. With presentations from CU Boulder, UCCS and CU Denver, the evening provided residents with an opportunity to learn directly from campus leaders about academic programs, admissions and scholarship opportunities.

"We want more people from the (San Luis) Valley at our campuses and that is why we are here," Saliman said. "We have lots of choices for people. We want to make sure that all our campuses have communities where anyone from the state of Colorado can feel welcome."

At the San Luis Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), CU leadership heard how local school districts are partnering to increase student success. In the Centennial School District, discussions highlighted the new Data Science Essentials Certificate Program, developed in collaboration with CU Denver, which provides rural students with a pathway into high-demand careers.

The tour also included meetings with Luis Murillo of the Alamosa School District, focusing on the San Luis Valley Family Center's support for students and families through bilingual services, internet access and educational tools that remove barriers to success.

"I want to make sure students who go through the University of Colorado can lead happy and healthy lives," Saliman said. "The University of Colorado needs to be providing the skills, the training, the resources and the connections that you and I need to find that dream. We want to connect with more Coloradans to make sure that we can do that for as many Coloradans as we can."

As well as meeting with educational institutions, the CU delegation connected with community-based organizations driving meaningful change across the San Luis Valley. At the Boys and Girls Club, the group learned about new programs and facilities supporting youth development, while a visit to the Shooting Stars Cultural and Leadership Center highlighted local efforts to create safe, inclusive spaces for underserved youth. The group also met with the Maestas Commemorative Committee, which honors the historic 1914 lawsuit in Alamosa that challenged the educational segregation of Mexican-American students, which served as an opportunity for CU leaders to explore future collaboration in commemorating the case and advancing equity in education.

Other meetings with the San Luis Valley Resource Development Group, the Attainment Network and the Alamosa Chamber of Commerce focused on the intersection of education and economic development, and how CU can continue to expand its impact in the region.

"We are Colorado's university," Saliman said. "It is our mission to serve the people of Colorado, and all of Colorado's communities."

How CU Boulder is delivering engineering degrees on the Western Slope[8]
[9]

With new degree offerings and enhanced student support efforts, CU Boulder's Engineering Partnership Programs are building on their successes in graduating engineers to solve the problems of the future. The students pursuing degrees are doing so while living on the beautiful Western Slope of Colorado.

When asked, students often describe their experience in one of the programs as being "the best of both worlds."

The programs, in partnership with Colorado Mesa University[10] and Western Colorado University[11], allow students to complete a bachelor's degree in select engineering disciplines from CU Boulder's prestigious College of Engineering and Applied Science (CEAS) without ever setting foot on the Boulder campus.

"Students can earn an engineering degree from CU Boulder at a lower cost while enjoying small class sizes, faculty who are dedicated to undergraduate education, in excellent facilities on a beautiful campus," said Nathan McNeill, CU Boulder Engineering Partnership Program Director in Grand Junction. "Anyone who wants to pursue an engineering degree has a chance here."

For students' first two years, faculty employed by CMU or Western deliver coursework, which is modeled after the main campus curriculum. After completing a simplified admission process, enrollees become CU Boulder students for their junior and senior years. They are then taught by CU Boulder engineering faculty who live and work in Grand Junction (on CMU's campus) or Gunnison (on Western's campus).

The CMU-CU Boulder Engineering Partnership Program[12] will welcome its 17th entering first-year student class in fall 2025. The program began in 2008, with its first graduating class of nine mechanical engineering students in 2012. A bachelor's degree in civil engineering was added in 2016 to address a need for civil engineers in the local Grand Valley. Two years later, in 2018, a third degree in electrical and computer engineering was introduced, ensuring the program could offer the three classical engineering disciplines to partnership students. In total, 343 students have graduated from the CMU-CU Boulder Engineering Partnership Program.

In 2019, in a more rural location on the Western Slope, CU Boulder CEAS partnered with Western in Gunnison to welcome a first-year class of mechanical engineering and computer science students. The Western-CU Boulder Engineering Partnership Program[13] graduated 17 students that first year, and has graduated 67 total between 2023 and 2025. Responding to enrollment trends, CU Boulder CEAS in Gunnison currently offers a mechanical engineering degree, with the computer science degree being phased out. The program will welcome its first class of biomedical engineering students in fall 2025, and aerospace engineering students in fall 2026.

"The program appeals to those seeking a quiet, rural experience," said Rachel Ackerman, senior academic advisor with the Western-CU Boulder Engineering Partnership Program. "It also creates opportunities for rural Colorado residents to study closer to home and gives students from the Front Range cities a chance to explore life in a different part of the state."

Between both campuses, about 150 CU Boulder students are currently in the partnership programs. While most of those students are from the Front Range, many choose employment on the Western Slope after graduation.

Said McNeill, "28% of our total CMU-CU Boulder alumni have worked on the Western Slope. Currently, we have approximately 80 alumni (out of 343 total) employed on the Western Slope. Civil engineering is particularly important to local industry, as about half of civil engineering alumni are currently employed on the Western Slope."

As they meet workforce demand across the state and beyond, these unique programs are poised to continue providing Coloradans with multi-location access to an affordable, high-quality, rigorous engineering education.
By Karen Ganss, associate director of Partnership Programs, CU Boulder College of Engineering and Applied Science

Apply for fall 2025 Tuition Assistance Benefit [14]

Leave-eligible employees must certify paid leave balances by Aug. 31 [15]

CU surgeon removes bladder cancer from Coach Prime[16]

College of Education offers accelerated teaching program[17]

CU Denver develops quantum tool that may lead to gamma-ray lasers and access the multiverse [18]

Are we alone? LASP researchers help NASA tackle the ultimate space science question [19]

Respiratory viruses can wake up breast cancer cells in lungs [20]

Federal transition update: DOJ New DEI Guidance, more[21]

From Aug. 1, this update from CU Federal Relations and Counsel includes information on DOJ New DEI Guidance; OMB Initiative to Block NIH Funds Reversed; Administration Appeal of NIH Grant Termination Ruling; Decreased NIH Research Awards; NEH Grant Cancellations; and CDC Director Confirmation.

Click here to read the post.[22]

From July 25, this update from CU Federal Relations and Counsel includes information on DOD Indirect Cost Preliminary Injunction, ED Implementation of OBBB, College Sports EO, White House AI Action Plan, ED AI Guidance, EPA Scientific Division Elimination, NIH Animal Research Model Grant Clarification, USDA Reorganization, and White House and Columbia Settlement.

Click here to read the post.[23]

For the latest communications and federal memos, please visit the CU System Federal Transitions Updates[24] page.

Sanchez named director of ColoradoSPH Latino Public Health Initiative [25]

Weible named interim dean of the School of Public Affairs [26]

Awards celebrate Early Childhood Education luminaries [27]

Record share of US kindergartners missed required vaccinations last year, ahead of surge in measles cases [28]

A CU Boulder team found new lichen species. They named them after the Indigo Girls[29]

The Great Works: Theatreworks at UCCS Celebrates 50 Years of Risk-Taking[30]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/dear-colorado-cu-love-letter-our-state[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/love_colorado_1228x600_spotlight_web_08-07-2025.png[3] https://lovecolorado.com/[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwyLskNkBbU[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/2025-outreach-tour-embraces-san-luis-valley[6] https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/types-aid/cupromise[7] https://www.colorado.edu/bursar/costs/cu-boulder-tuition-guarantee[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/how-cu-boulder-delivering-engineering-degrees-western-slope[9] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/2024_cmu_me_graduates_with_nathan_mcneill_horiz_crop_engineering_partnerships_08-07-2025.jpeg[10] https://www.coloradomesa.edu/index.html[11] https://western.edu/[12] https://www.coloradomesa.edu/engineering/partnership-program/index.html[13] https://western.edu/department/engineering-partnership-program/[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/apply-fall-2025-tuition-assistance-benefit[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/leave-eligible-employees-must-certify-paid-leave-balances-aug-31-0[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-surgeon-removes-bladder-cancer-coach-prime[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/college-education-offers-accelerated-teaching-program[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-denver-develops-quantum-tool-may-lead-gamma-ray-lasers-and-access-multiverse[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/are-we-alone-lasp-researchers-help-nasa-tackle-ultimate-space-science-question[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/respiratory-viruses-can-wake-breast-cancer-cells-lungs[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/federal-transition-update-doj-new-dei-guidance-more[22] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-8125[23] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-72525[24] https://www.cu.edu/federal-transition-updates[25] https://connections.cu.edu/people/sanchez-named-director-coloradosph-latino-public-health-initiative[26] https://connections.cu.edu/people/weible-named-interim-dean-school-public-affairs[27] https://connections.cu.edu/people/awards-celebrate-early-childhood-education-luminaries[28] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/record-share-us-kindergartners-missed-required-vaccinations-last-year-ahead-surge-measles-cases[29] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/cu-boulder-team-found-new-lichen-species-they-named-them-after-indigo-girls[30] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/great-works-theatreworks-uccs-celebrates-50-years-risk-taking