Across CU, students tap into entrepreneurship resources and achieve marketplace success[1]
[2]

When Alexes Hernandez moved from New Mexico to Colorado Springs in 2020, college was the plan. She didn't expect to also become a business owner with a growing online following.

But with support from UCCS entrepreneurship resources, her product now reaches thousands across TikTok and Instagram.

Hernandez's enterprise grew out of simple frustration with dog bandanas, which she found to be low-quality, high-price pieces.

"They'd get wrinkly, muddy and basically fall apart," she said.

As a high school student on a budget, she couldn't continue to dress up her dog with overpriced bandanas that were easily ruined after one wear. So she started sewing her own. But it wasn't until years later, after volunteering at the National Mill Dog Rescue, that the idea sparked into a real business.

"I wanted to help, but I didn't have the money to donate," Hernandez said. "So I thought, why not start a business and give part of the proceeds to dog rescues?"

In October 2024, Wild Pup & Co. officially launched, with 10% of sales going to a different dog rescue each month.

Joining The Garage at UCCS gave Hernandez the support system she didn't know she needed. The Garage is an entrepreneurial hub, part of the Center for Entrepreneurship[3] on campus, where students meet regularly, set business goals and work with dedicated mentors to refine their ideas.

"It's easy to get stuck in your own head," Hernandez said. "The Garage gave me outside perspectives that helped me think about my business in ways I wouldn't have on my own."

While studying at UCCS, Hernandez balanced classes, custom orders, pop-up markets and a part-time job, showing how student entrepreneurship can start with a simple idea and grow into something that inspires far beyond campus.

Hernandez, an accounting major who earned her bachelor's degree in business earlier this year, recently was accepted to be a vendor for the Goldens in Golden event in February 2026. She's excited about the business opportunity.

"I've never felt like an innovator. I'm just a girl making bandanas and having fun," she said. "But every once in a while, I step back and realize, wait, this is actually something."

More of Hernandez's story is told in the recently published CU Innovation and Entrepreneurship Impact Report for 2024-25.[4] Alongside facts and figures demonstrating the power of CU's innovation engine, the report features several profiles of student entrepreneurs across the four campuses. Student interns, led by the CU system-based Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative team, wrote the stories.

Across CU's four campuses, students engage in innovation and entrepreneurship education that aligns with high-impact, project-based learning, which improves graduation rates and boosts early career earnings, especially for students from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Some of CU's standout programs are: CU Boulder's nationally recognized offerings via the Deming Center for Entrepreneurship or the first-of-its-kind Entrepreneurship Center for Music. Learn more: https://www.colorado.edu/innovate/[5] UCCS' one-of-a-kind Bachelor of Innovation degree[6] and C3 Innovation[7], a hub of multidisciplinary collaboration that connects students, faculty and the community to push the boundaries of research and discovery. CU Denver's statewide-exclusive Master's in Entrepreneurship degree. Learn more: https://business.ucdenver.edu/ms/entrepreneurship[8] CU Anschutz's cutting-edge translational programs through the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute[9] (CCTSI), CU Innovations[10] and the recently launched Healthcare Innovation & Entrepreneurship Initiative[11].

For more, see the 2024-25 Impact Report here: https://www.cu.edu/doc/ie-impact-report-2024-25pdf[4]

- Profile by Pablo Diaz del Castillo

Spring 2026 tuition assistance applications now open[12]

Employees can begin retirement process with new Retirement Ready Application [13]

2025 CU Food Fight nets $90k in donations [14]

Does mental illness have a silver lining? Mounting research says yes [15]

Conference explores ethics surrounding data from wearable tech [16]

From fireflies to medical treatments: CU Denver's chemistry nanomedicine lab turns bright ideas into lifesaving solutions [17]

Federal update: ED dismantling lawsuit, more[18]

From Dec. 5, this update from CU Federal Relations and Counsel includes information on ED Dismantling Lawsuit, ED Foreign Funding Portal, DOJ H-1B Lawsuit Response, State Dept. Screening Update, DOJ In-State Tuition Lawsuit, DOE Reorganization, HHS AI Strategy, NIH Guidance on Extramural Activities, and NDAA Finalization Work.

Click here to read the post.[19]

For the latest communications and federal memos, please visit the CU System Federal Updates and Actions[20] page.

Poe named Director of Faculty Affairs [21]

Turner named Staff Employee of the Month [22]

Eparvier retires after more than three decades at LASP [23]

CU recruiting rural teens for input on new suicide intervention [24]

NASA selects two CU Boulder instruments for Artemis IV mission to the moon[25]

Delayed return of federal jobs data has some Colorado economists concerned[26]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/across-cu-students-tap-entrepreneurship-resources-and-achieve-marketplace-success[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/i_and_e_report_alexes_hernandez_dogs_horiz_crop_cropped_12-12-11-25.jpeg[3] https://business.uccs.edu/resources/entrepreneurship[4] https://www.cu.edu/doc/ie-impact-report-2024-25pdf[5] https://www.colorado.edu/innovate/[6] https://business.uccs.edu/programs/undergraduate/innovation[7] https://c3innovation.uccs.edu/[8] https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbusiness.ucdenver.edu%2Fms%2Fentrepreneurship&data=05%7C02%7Cdedrick%40cu.edu%7C18d1e91acfe44acf860708de133e0abe%7Ce889e28f74d447f287e853732cbbe7ec%7C0%7C0%7C638969354344457796%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=NKADpxDztDV0vTvIBDX75dBb6cw10phHufano0zcIqU%3D&reserved=0[9] https://cctsi.cuanschutz.edu/[10] https://www.cuanschutz.edu/cu-innovations[11] https://www.cuanschutz.edu/cu-innovations/HIE[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/spring-2026-tuition-assistance-applications-now-open[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/employees-can-begin-retirement-process-new-retirement-ready-application[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/2025-cu-food-fight-nets-90k-donations[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/does-mental-illness-have-silver-lining-mounting-research-says-yes[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/conference-explores-ethics-surrounding-data-wearable-tech[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/fireflies-medical-treatments-cu-denver-s-chemistry-nanomedicine-lab-turns-bright-ideas[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/federal-update-ed-dismantling-lawsuit-more[19] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-12525[20] https://www.cu.edu/office-government-relations/federal-relations/federal-updates-and-actions[21] https://connections.cu.edu/people/poe-named-director-faculty-affairs[22] https://connections.cu.edu/people/turner-named-staff-employee-month[23] https://connections.cu.edu/people/eparvier-retires-after-more-three-decades-lasp[24] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/cu-recruiting-rural-teens-input-new-suicide-intervention[25] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/nasa-selects-two-cu-boulder-instruments-artemis-iv-mission-moon[26] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/delayed-return-federal-jobs-data-has-some-colorado-economists-concerned