Five questions for Lisa Douglas[1]
[2]

A little over one year ago, Lisa Douglas took on a big role at CU South Denver, the new university location designed to appeal to residents in the area as well as employers and other professionals interested in continuing education opportunities. As vice chancellor, Douglas said she has "the unique opportunity to oversee the launch of an exciting enterprise within CU that has tremendous potential in the thriving south metro region of Denver."

CU South Denver includes the Liniger Building, The Wildlife Experience and 14 adjoining acres east of Interstate 25 on Lincoln Avenue in Douglas County. It was a gift from Dave and Gail Liniger and their family; before the donation, the university had leased space in the building.

Douglas is involved with all aspects of the enterprise, from developing academic strategies to reaching out to the community to overseeing daily operations. Her first year in the role, she said, has been "fascinating."

She also is the chief financial officer for the CU Denver campus. "These are two big roles for one person, but actually they fit very well together," she said. "CU South Denver is owned by the CU system, but has delegated management of it to the CU Denver campus. Being CFO for the Denver campus keeps me very connected with the CU Denver leadership and deans, the CFOs of the other campuses, and the CU system offices. I think having both roles has helped CU South Denver not become isolated, which can be a risk with new initiatives."

Douglas has been with the university since 2011 in the role of associate vice chancellor for budget and finance at CU Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus. Before that, she served as budget director and senior director of operations and finance for the Colorado Medicaid department and as the deputy budget director for Gov. Bill Ritter. She has a bachelor's and master's degree in nursing and was a mental health nurse for almost 10 years before working her way into management. The "management duties required strong budgeting skills" and led her to the state roles, and will serve her well at CU South Denver.

"Any new 'business' is under pressure to perform strongly," she said. "CU knew that trying to run a museum, event rental space and community events would be a financial challenge. Adding a new location where all CU campuses can offer courses is also a financial challenge. It has been very helpful to have a background in financial management in order to balance the need for investment with good stewardship of university funds."

CU South Denver does not receive its own tuition, which goes to the CU campus that initiated the course or program.

"We are thankful for the president's support during this startup period with one-time reserves, and CU Denver | Anschutz has contributed significant ongoing funds to the success of CU South Denver. UCCS and Boulder pay rent to use the space for course offerings, and all four campuses contribute their expertise to many programs."

1. What are the top priorities that have been set for CU South Denver?

CU South Denver is a wonderful opportunity that can bring all the campuses in the CU system together. Already we offer a bachelor's degree in nursing, two MBAs aimed at different student populations, certificates in various studies to help the working professional tailor his/her career, and a master of arts degree in political science. Our goals are:
To develop a CU presence through professional development courses, degrees and certificates for working professionals, To encourage current CU students to take convenient courses near where they live, and help future students begin a CU degree, To engage the local community and build upon existing connections through creative events, education, and museum programming, and To support all of CU by being a resource for community learning, higher education, and space needs in south Denver for all four campuses.
Think about it. It all works together: The community connections are a pipeline to a CU education and our CU partners can help us reach a larger community to participate in our activities.

We definitely want to grow on the academic side, especially through full program degrees and certificates. We have an

advisory group called the Collaboration Committee that is composed of representatives from all the campuses. We facilitate the course offerings and make sure the scheduling is correct and classes are complementary. We do this so we aren't just offering random courses. In addition, we've been working with our contacts in the business community to help them identify what they want for their professional development. Currently, some of these businesses are sending their MBA students to the University of Denver and we want them to be aware that we offer MBAs to different types of professionals in their own backyard. Right now, we are in the middle of identifying what types of programs they want and taking those to the campuses and the schools to design class scheduling that works for our community partners.

2. What are some of the challenges you've faced and triumphs you experienced on the way in the past year?

We have been blessed to hire many of the experienced staff of The Wildlife Experience, and to attract experienced CU leaders to be a part of our effective team. Those individuals include Sam Moreno, Maureen Durkin, Joann Brennan and Sondra Meyer, who come from different paths of CU experience. It has been a joy for us to share our program development with the Denver, Boulder, Colorado Springs and Anschutz campuses. These collaborations have helped to mitigate our startup challenges. We are grateful to all the schools and colleges for their partnership, and continue to invite ideas and initiatives that have growth potential at CU South Denver. We have been challenged by some patrons thinking that The Wildlife Experience has closed, but the marketing directors across CU have been a huge support.

3. How does the museum fit into the plans for CU South Denver?

This time of year is a busy time for The Wildlife Experience and CU South Denver. We are focused on holiday programming for the next few weeks. We are your family's destination for fun this holiday break with movies and events for all ages throughout December. Some events/programs[3] include:
Borderlands, a beautiful museum exhibit through the end of December explores the effect of the United States-Mexico border wall on the wildlife and ecosystems in the area. Family Fun Days, a collaboration with CU Boulder's Museum of Natural History and Fiske Planetarium, on Dec. 19 will focus on creating holiday crafts and gifts using the natural world and human culture for inspiration. Adult visitors are able to see "Christmas Vacation" on two evenings in December. The event includes appetizers and drinks. The Frozen Winter Ball for families on Dec. 19 features music, dancing, activities, a snack and hot chocolate, a photo opportunity with a live princess, and includes the classic movie "Frozen" on the big screen. Breakfast with Santa is one of our biggest events, and is scheduled for Dec. 19, 23 and 24.
Other upcoming programs include regular outdoor activities such as archery and astronomy; a new film series in 2016 that includes post-film discussions with public radio film critic and University of Colorado Denver faculty member Howie Movshovitz; and a series of wilderness medicine-focused classes and lectures in partnership with the University of Colorado School of Medicine Division of Wilderness and Emergency Medicine.

4. How has CU South Denver reached out to introduce itself to the surrounding community?

We have made many friends in the south Denver community and are continually working on this critical outreach every day. The South Denver Economic Development Partnership has been very helpful in our efforts to connect with others in the region, and we are active in the South Metro Denver Chamber. We have made presentations at the Lone Tree City Council, met with the Arapahoe County and Douglas County commissioners, attended countless networking events, and we have introduced ourselves to many of the businesses in the south Denver area. Schools and colleges have sponsored "launch" events for CU programs to help community members understand new courses. Merrick & Company, whose headquarters is in Greenwood Village, reports that that there are more engineers per capita in the south Denver corridor than anywhere else in the United States, which suggests there is a big opportunity for CU, especially because of its strength in engineering across campuses. Our chancellors, deans and CU campuses have all been involved in many of these outreach opportunities.

5. Away from your duties at CU, what are some activities that you enjoy?

One of the reasons I was so excited to work at The Wildlife Experience is my own love of the outdoors, travel and the wilderness. I have backpacked solo in Alaska, the Canyonlands, Zion, Big Bend, the Cascades, Death Valley, the Maroon Bells, the Grand Canyon and even the swamps of the Everglades.

In January, I have a trip planned to the rugged and remote Sycamore Canyon Wilderness, Arizona's second-largest canyon (after the Grand Canyon). Almost all of the wilderness area is only accessible by foot. I've hiked in the desert dozens of times and I tried to pick somewhere that is remote enough that I'm less likely to see anyone else the whole time. I research to find areas to get that backcountry, secluded experience.

When I am not in the backcountry, I am usually training to get there, typically by hiking with my husband, Bob, and boxer dog Ky, or you might find me eating Mexican food. I also summited my 19th fourteener this year, most done solo. The most beautiful one I've done is Handies Peak in the San Juans. It's doable for the average hiker but has some of the most beautiful scenery I've seen on any fourteener.
[4]

Potential CU-Boulder Retired Faculty Association gains support[5]

Efforts to pursue the possible establishment of a CU-Boulder Retired Faculty Association are moving forward with the Boulder Faculty Assembly Executive Committee's recent expression of support.

David Kassoy, president of the systemwide CU Retired Faculty Association (CURFA), said the idea has received initial support from CU-Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano. Kassoy said CURFA's Executive Board is likely to meet in January to discuss next steps.

While CURFA is based at CU-Boulder and largely consists of past CU-Boulder faculty, the campus does not have its own assembly that's analogous to those at UCCS and the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. CU Denver also has considered establishing its own RFA.

The matter was one of many topics brought up at this fall's CURFA Business Meeting at the University Memorial Center, CU-Boulder. Also on the agenda at the Nov. 9 meeting:

CURFA grants: Jim Alleman encouraged retired faculty to take advantage of CURFA's Research and Creative Works Awards. The association awards five grants, each for $1,000, annually, with the 2016 application period beginning Jan. 1 and continuing through March 1. The funding may be used for new and continuing research projects by faculty officially retired from CU.

Alleman said he used the grant he received to complete a book, "Demand for Communications Services – Insights and Perspectives." Marjorie McIntosh appeared at the meeting to present her work on the Boulder County Latino History Project[6], which benefited from a CURFA grant.

Application information will be posted at the CURFA website[7].

Skaggs on TABOR: David Skaggs – former lawmaker at the U.S. and Colorado Capitols, former executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education and current adjunct faculty member at the CU School of Law – spoke about the ongoing court case involving Colorado's TABOR Amendment[8]. Skaggs leads the legal team challenging its constitutionality.

Among the challenges posed by TABOR, Skaggs said, is its "bizarre limitation on what the state can spend," tied to inflation and population growth. "It's an ostensibly benign provision, until you realize that the cost of living hugely underestimates the cost of goods and services the state government needs to buy."

Pointing to recent headlines about the proposed state budget for next year and looming cuts for higher education, Skaggs said, “There is more than a thread of cause-and-effect between (TABOR) and real effects on the lives of the people of Colorado.”

Because TABOR requires that any new tax be subject to a vote of the electorate, TABOR “decimates the ability (of elected officials) to do their job.”

As a citizen voting in an election, “you’re not required to think about anybody’s needs but your own,” Skaggs said. “Representatives have to pay attention to other points of view. This isn’t just an act of arbitrary or theoretical dismay…. It goes to the core of the way we organize ourselves as a society.

“The TABOR case is all about understanding our own form of government.”

Study participants needed: Angela Bryan of the CU-Boulder Department of Psychology and Neuroscience gave a presentation on Project FORCE[9] (Fitness, Older adults, and Resting state Connectivity Enhancement). The ongoing study on brain aging is in need of adults age 60 and over who are sedentary. “The biggest problem we have in Boulder is finding anyone who isn’t already exercising,” Bryan said. For information on participating, call 303-492-9549 or email force.researchstudy@gmail.com[10].

Wrongly convicted ‘Central Park Five’ defendant makes gift renaming CU-Boulder’s Innocence Project[11]

Expansive park to grace Tivoli quad[12]

Cannabis and Cancer: Cause, Cure, Conundrum[13]

Alumnus, noted author to lead December commencement[14]

Animals on campus policy gets update[15]

Two CU-Boulder faculty named AAAS fellows for 2015[16]

Valuck testifies in D.C. about opioid epidemic [17]

Leinwand rings bell for Nasdaq[18]
[19]

Leslie Leinwand, Distinguished Professor and chief scientific officer of the BioFrontiers Institute at CU-Boulder, along with a staff member of her company MyoKardia Inc., rang the opening bell for the Nasdaq MarketSite in times Square on Oct. 29.

The occasion celebrated the company's initial public offering. MyoKardia Inc. is a clinical stage biopharmaceutical company that is pioneering a precision medicine approach for the treatment of serious and neglected rare cardiovascular diseases.

Breakfast with Santa[20]

For more info:

Dec. 12: http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december12/[21]

Dec. 19: http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december19/[22]

Dec. 23: http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december23/[23]

Dec. 24: http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december24/[24]

More info on holiday events here: http://southdenver.cu.edu/holidays/[25]

CU Advocacy Program on CU Denver Business School and Legislative Reception[26]

You're invited to a special CU Advocates event spotlighting the CU Denver Business School and featuring a reception with elected officials and CU Denver Chancellor Dorothy Horrell.

You will learn about the Business School's impressive track record of creating innovative and relevant industry-driven programs in partnership with industry leaders such as Encana, Pinnacol Assurance and J.P. Morgan.

You'll also hear about the school's ability to work closely with businesses resulting in targeted workforce development - helping students get jobs and contributing to the growth of our regional economy. The event is brought to you by the CU Advocates program in the Office of the President and the CU Denver Business School. Register here.[27]

Thousands show up in Colorado Springs to honor life of UCCS Officer Swasey[28]

Edward Snowden to speak at CU-Boulder via video chat on Feb. 16 [29]

University hospital performs first bionic eye transplant in Colorado[30]

Boulder science making its mark at Paris climate talks[31]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/five-questions-lisa-douglas[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/5qs_douglas.jpg[3] http://southdenver.cu.edu/whats-happening/events-programs/[4] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/5qs_douglas_bottom.jpg[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/potential-cu-boulder-retired-faculty-association-gains-support[6] http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/[7] http://www.colorado.edu/RetiredFaculty/[8] http://taborcase.org/[9] http://www.colorado.edu/changelab/force-enhancing-function-later-life[10] mailto:force.researchstudy@gmail.com[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/wrongly-convicted-central-park-five-defendant-makes-gift-renaming-cu-boulder-s-innocence[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/expansive-park-grace-tivoli-quad[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cannabis-and-cancer-cause-cure-conundrum[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/alumnus-noted-author-lead-december-commencement[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/animals-campus-policy-gets-update[16] https://connections.cu.edu/people/two-cu-boulder-faculty-named-aaas-fellows-2015[17] https://connections.cu.edu/people/valuck-testifies-dc-about-opioid-epidemic[18] https://connections.cu.edu/people/leinwand-rings-bell-nasdaq[19] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/p_leinwand-nasdaq.jpg[20] https://connections.cu.edu/events/breakfast-santa[21] http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december12/[22] http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december19/[23] http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december23/[24] http://southdenver.cu.edu/events/event/breakfast-with-santa-december24/[25] http://southdenver.cu.edu/holidays/[26] https://connections.cu.edu/events/cu-advocacy-program-cu-denver-business-school-and-legislative-reception[27] https://secure.www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/UCO/event/showEventForm.jsp?form_id=194992[28] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/thousands-show-colorado-springs-honor-life-uccs-officer-swasey-0[29] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/edward-snowden-speak-cu-boulder-video-chat-feb-16[30] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/university-hospital-performs-first-bionic-eye-transplant-colorado[31] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/boulder-science-making-its-mark-paris-climate-talks