PERA rescue plan ready for governor's signature[1]

Legislation that proponents contend is needed to keep the Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA) fund from disintegrating passed the Colorado House on Tuesday, Feb. 16, with a 36-29 vote.

Senate Bill 1 now moves to Gov. Bill Ritter for his signature.

SB1 would decrease members' annual benefits tied to a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), increase contributions by most employees and employers, and increase the age of retirement for most members.

Although contentious, the bill was moved swiftly through the Legislature in order for some provisions of the measure to take effect before March 1, when an annual COLA benefit is scheduled to kick in.

Retired members currently receive a 3.5 percent increase in benefits each year. Out of about 470,000 members of PERA, 90,000 are retirees. SB1 would allow no COLA increase in 2010, while a cap of 2 percent would be in place in future years. If the plan were not fully funded in future years, the amount of the benefit would depend on an inflation calculation.

By not paying out a benefits increase this year, the plan would realize a cash infusion and be on its way to becoming solvent, according to Meredith Williams, PERA's executive director.

PERA has said large payouts and stock market volatility contributed to the fund's dire condition. The plan pays nearly $3 million each month to retirees, and the market crash in 2008 led to a nearly $30 billion decline in assets.

On Feb. 10, the House Finance Committee passed the bill, despite acknowledging that legal battles over the benefits cuts were certain.

"We've heard loud and clear that someone will take this to court," said Rep. Andy Kerr, D-Lakewood.

Retirees and some experts say the change in benefits amounts to a breach of contract.

Projections by PERA show that on its current path, the state division of the retirement plan, which includes the University of Colorado, could run out of money in as little as 16 years. The retirement plan comprises five separately funded divisions: state, judicial, schools (excluding higher education institutions), local government and Denver Public Schools.

Previously the plan was about 70 percent funded, but the economic downturn lowered the rate to about 50 percent. SB1 would restore the plan to 100 percent funded in 30 years. The industry standard for similar plans is 80 percent funded.

While PERA projects a rate of return on investments in 2009 of 15 percent, that money was used to help fund compromises in SB1. As drafted, the bill would not have provided for a COLA increase in 2011. The adopted bill would place a 2 percent cap on COLA benefits in 2011.

Colorado will become the first state in the nation to cut annual benefit increases for retirees to prevent its pension system from going broke. Other states have changed rates of investment, extended amortization plans, or switched to defined contribution plans.

Co-sponsors of SB1, Senate Minority Leader Josh Penry, R-Grand Junction, and Senate President Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, along with Kerr in the House, negotiated the bill for more than eight months.

The full Senate previously had passed the amended bill by a 25-10 vote Feb. 1.

Visit PERA's Web site to find out more about changes[2] made to the draft bill as it moved through the legislative process.

Another measure, HB10-1153, which would have changed the makeup of PERA's 15-member board of trustees to create a majority of trustees who are non-PERA members with experience in certain fields, was tabled indefinitely Feb. 11 in the House State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee.

End of tax exemptions could prove helpful to higher education[3]

Five weeks into this year's session, the Colorado General Assembly has introduced more than 300 bills, some of which continue to demand the attention of the University of Colorado's government affairs team.

On Tuesday, Feb. 16, the House agreed to Senate amendments to a package of eight bills aimed at ending several tax exemptions. Should the package pass, it could result in $130 million to $150 million in revenue for the state next year. Higher education leaders are concerned that without such a revenue stream, the alternative is further cuts in state funding to their institutions.

A bill that would make the existing CollegeInvest nurse teacher loan forgiveness program more attractive to more students has so far passed every vote unanimously. CU has worked with CollegeInvest, other higher education institutions, the governor's office and bill sponsors Rep. Sara Gagliardi, D-Arvada, and Sen. Abel Tapia, D-Pueblo, to extend eligibility requirements for the program. Nursing programs at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and the Anschutz Medical Campus could then promote the incentive as a recruiting tool when hiring new faculty.
CU continues to support a bill that would establish statewide standards for transferring college credits from two-year schools to four-year schools, and between four-year schools. The House Education Committee last week passed the bill; it was scheduled for preliminary consideration this morning by the full House.

Boulder campus ready for its accreditation close-up[4]

Once every 10 years for the past century, the University of Colorado at Boulder has undergone a seemingly routine but vital process: accreditation[5] by the Highe[6][7]
r Learning Commission[6] of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Reaccreditation might seem routine, given that the stamp of approval has been maintained each decade. But the university community still takes seriously the latest lead-up to the site visit by a 14-member reaccreditation team[8], set for Monday, Feb. 22, through Wednesday, Feb. 24.

With reaccreditation, the university confirms that it meets standards maintained by peer institutions, affirms inherently high quality to the public and maintains general confidence in CU and higher education. Federal financial aid only is available to students when an institution is accredited; the status also enables standardized transfer of academic credit.

Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano said the campus has been preparing for the reaccreditation visit for a year and a half, working to compile a 358-page self-study report[9] for the commission.

DiStefano pointed out a significant difference between this current reaccreditation in Boulder and past ones. "What's different this year is that our self-study and reaccreditation are closely intertwined with our strategic plan, Flagship 2030 [10], as we position the campus to be a leading model of the new flagship university of the 21st Â century," he wrote in a letter[11] to the campus community.

The University of Colorado Denver community is at work on its own self-study, set for completion this fall in anticipation of campus reaccreditation next year. For accreditation purposes, UC Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus make up one institution.

Â As part of its Boulder visit, the commission's site team will hold four open forums from 3 to 3:50 p.m. Monday, Feb. 22. The purpose of each forum is to give faculty, staff, students and alumni an opportunity to speak on matters relevant to five evaluation criteria:
Mission and integrity Preparing for the future Student learning and effective teaching Acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge Engagement and service
Forum locations in the UMC are:

Faculty: Center Ballroom
Staff: East Ballroom
Students: West Ballroom
Alumni: Room 235

Other smaller, invitation-only meetings are scheduled[12] throughout the three-day visit.

"Even as the site team members are evaluating the university, we want to take the opportunity to learn all we can from them," DiStefano wrote. "We will look to them for guidance on such issues as helping our constituencies understand and value the quality of our faculty and programs, sustaining that quality with limited state funding and identifying advocates for achieving our vision and potential as a comprehensive research facility."

Two to four weeks after the visit, representatives will submit a draft of their report to the university, which has the opportunity to correct factual errors, said Joey White, senior adviser to the chancellor and project coordinator for reaccreditation. The report is then returned to the commission, which is expected to vote and issue a final decision in April.

New Student Information System embarks on biggest expansion yet[13]

Starting Monday, Feb. 22, financial aid applications for incoming University of Colorado students will be processed using the new Integrated Student Information System (ISIS). The launch initiates the biggest expansion for the new system: Financial aid staffers and anyone involved in any aspect of registration and enrollment will begin using ISIS between now and early May.

Data conversion of class information on some 95,000 students began earlier this month and will continue through early March.

On March 1, financial aid staffers will begin packaging student aid awards and sending award notifications for the 2010-11 academic year. Also on that date, students will be able to use ISIS to view their financial aid status and search the fall 2010 course catalog.

Student registration on the new system will launch with Boulder students on April 5, followed later by Colorado Springs and Denver.

Training on the new system has been ongoing this month; anyone whose duties directly involve ISIS will be contacted about signing up for training.

The new $50 million system will be rolled out in stages through the end of 2010, replacing the 20-year-old system.

Student financials go live in July, followed by financial aid disbursement in August; and transcripts and end-of-term processing between September and December.

For more, see the project's Web site[14].

Five Questions for Joanne Belknap[15]

[16]
For more than 25 years, Joanne Belknap has been an advocate for women, especially those who have been victimized or find themselves in the midst of an inequitable justice system. One of her studies found girls housed in adult prisons despite their minor records; another found that incarcerated girls and boys have disproportionately high rates of self-reported child abuse and trauma. These and some of her other 50 publications were collaborations with graduate students. And that, Belknap says, is one reason why she loves her job as a professor of sociology at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

"What is most exciting is when (students) notice something I've completely missed in a project we're working on." At that point, she says, the participants start to become "peer collaborators rather than professor and student."

Such dedication to research and her students has earned her the 2009 Elizabeth D. Gee Memorial Lectureship Award, which recognizes efforts to advance women in academia, interdisciplinary scholarly contributions and distinguished teaching. The award is named for Gee, a former faculty member in the Health Sciences Center School of Nursing and the late wife of former CU President Gordon Gee.

On Friday, February 26, Belknap will present her research, including her book "The Invisible Woman: Gender, Crime and Justice" at the 2010 CU Women Succeeding Symposium[17].

Belknap also has served on numerous national and local committees and boards. She served for U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno in 1995 as a member of the Task Force on Violence Against Women, and provided expert testimony to the Los Angeles Police Department Warren Christopher Commission regarding the Rodney King police brutality case in 1991. She has been a member of the Denver Domestic Violence Task Force since 1998, and advised then-candidate Barak Obama's Criminal Justice Policy Recommendation Committee through November 2008.

— Cynthia Pasquale

1. You are passionate about preventing violence against women. How did you choose this career path?

I sometimes feel like I was destined to do this work from both my own experiences of victimization and those of other women and girls I've met over my lifetime. I pursued graduate work in criminal justice with the idea that I would work on prison reform and that my work on violence against women would be a "side" and volunteer work. I'm still passionate about prison reform. One of my most recent publications, which won the best article of 2008 in the journal Violence Against Women, is about the extraordinarily high rates of sexual abuse histories of incarcerated women. Much of my work on incarcerated girls, boys and women is about how their trauma and abuse histories are related to their subsequent offenses or being labeled offenders.

2. In your book "Invisible Women," you say there is nothing fair or just about the way women are treated in the "criminal processing" system. Do you believe this could change in the near future?

I do think we have seen some changes. Certainly the implementation of battered women's shelters and rape crises centers, more feminist — male and female — lawyers and judges, and so on, have helped immensely. But we still see far too little in the way of protecting women and their children who are being abused by current or former male partners.

Convictions in acquaintance rape trials are still rare, and victims' real or made-up sexual histories are too often entered into the proceedings.

At the same time, with the implementation of mandatory arrest policies for domestic violence, women were arrested at unprecedented rates for protecting themselves (fighting back), or simply having an abuser tell the police, "I'm the victim." We fail to take girls' victimizations seriously, but when they offend they can be treated at the deepest end of the system. For example, my work with a former graduate student Emily Gaarder focused on girls who were waived to adult court, convicted and were serving time in an adult women's prison. Our study found that many of these girls were in prison for fairly minor crimes and little to no prior record. At the same time, people knew about terrible victimizations the girls were experiencing, mostly in their own homes, but this was ignored by teachers, police and others.

3. After a series of high-profile rape cases at CU, you criticized the university for not having a better prevention model in place. What changes has the university made to help prevent such violence against women?

Scott Adler, a faculty member in the political science department, was hugely instrumental in changing the oversight of the athletics department so that it was consistent with the rest of the university. That cannot be understated. I'm not sure I trust any of the statistics about the rapes of women on campus. I am completely confident that the change in climate from when Gary Barnett was the football coach, to Dan Hawkins, is significantly for the better. Every semester I have football players among the 100 students who take my undergraduate course "Violence Against Women and Girls," which I designed for CU when I came here in 1998.Â Not only do most of these student-athletes have some of the best attendance, they usually sit in the front few rows and are so respectful to the other students — and me. I've had a lot of the women in the classes tell me something to the effect of, "When I saw there were football players in this class, I thought, 'Oh, no!' And then they were so great in here that it gave me a really good feeling about them and the team."

4. What will it take for women to experience equitable treatment in all aspects of their lives?

I certainly don't expect it in my lifetime, if ever, but certainly how we raise kids is important, and this means how we raise our sons as well as our daughters. It's important to raise them with the idea that everyone is equal and deserves respect, although I also think it's important that they learn that not everyone is treated equally even though everyone should be. Our schools and media need to be on board with this, too. Even though a lot of schools are getting better, some are still awful, and don't get me started on the media. The "malestream" (mainstream) sexual objectification of women and girls, and even glorification of violence against women and girls in advertising, television and movies is pervasive, and sends messages that I think we don't even realize we're getting. When women are paid lower wages than men (even with) the same education and experience, which is still common, it keeps women from being equal. Finally, we need to have access to affordable, safe and effective birth control and affordable and safe abortions.

5. Do you find dealing with violence against women an emotionally draining job? Or do you find the possibility of effecting change exhilarating?

Most of the time I find it exhilarating. In terms of teaching, it is so exciting to me that even with a 100-student or larger class, I always have a waiting list. It speaks to how many students want to learn more about this. When I'm working on my research, sometimes it is really depressing. Conducting the interviews with the girls incarcerated in a woman's prison was very draining and enraging. I would feel guilty every day that I left the prison with the girls in there, when I was so relieved to get out after just a day's work. The invisibility of incarcerated children and adults, the invisibility of childhood traumas, the invisibility of women and girls abused by current or former romantic partners, can make me very tired and angry.

The single experience that is most upsetting to me is when my current or former students (or friends) tell me of unjust experiences. Right now I am consumed with the case of Molly Bowers Midyette (convicted in December 2007 of child abuse resulting in the death of her 10-week-old son), working to get her out of prison. To do this kind of work and volunteering, you have to have a good sense of humor and a great support system. I absolutely adore so many of the women and men doing this work, and I have an amazing support system of coworkers, family and friends, including my partner of 18 years, Scott Summers, and our wonderful son, Casey Belknap-Summers.

Want to suggest a faculty or staff member for Five Questions? Please e-mail Jay.Dedrick@cu.edu[18]

Education conference to examine how students learn[19]

How students learn and what that means for faculty members will be the topic of the upcoming President's Teaching Scholars Program (PTSP) conference on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

Several educators from throughout the university system will present sessions March 5 to advance the discussion of the way students learn in the classroom and how professors can capitalize on those methods.

Mary Ann Shea, PTSP director, and CU President Bruce D. Benson will open the one-day conference[20] with a welcome.

Registration[21] for the event, scheduled from 7:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., is free and includes all sessions, refreshments and lunch, at the medical campus, Research 2 Building, P15-2100, Trivisible Room.

Space is limited to 110 attendees. Online registration must be completed by Feb. 25.

Examples of the sessions include "Doubling the learning value of your course with an end-of-semester working retreat," "Teaching back: When 'true speaking' in the classroom is seen as threat" and "How our students learn: Why not ask them?"

Established in 1989 as a presidential initiative, PTSP[22] endorses excellence in teaching by honoring faculty throughout the university who excel in teaching, scholarship and research.

Nominations sought for President's Diversity Award[23]

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2010 President's Diversity Award, which recognizes significant achievements of faculty, staff, students and academic or administrative units toward developing a more culturally diverse, competent and inclusive university community.

Up to four awards of up to $1,000 will be given; awardees will be recognized at the President's Diversity Award Reception in early May.

Nominations are sought in four categories: faculty, staff, student, and academic or administrative unit. Nomination letters should indicate the nominee's category and discuss how the nominee's activity addressed diversity, how the activity was implemented and its outcome.

A committee with representatives from each campus will make selections based on the criteria.

Deadline for nominations[24] is March 19. Submit letters (electronic submissions are welcome) to: Rae Ann Armijo, University of Colorado, 1800 Grant St., Suite 800/35UCA, Denver, CO 80203, or to raeann.armijo@cu.edu[25].

CU-NIST scientists show chemistry possible at ultralow temperatures[26]
Photo by Glenn Asakawa/University of Colorado
University of Colorado at Boulder adjoint professors of physics Deborah Jin, left, and Jun Ye in their cold molecule lab in the JILA building on the CU-Boulder campus.
Photo by Glenn Asakawa/University of ColoradoUniversity of Colorado at Boulder adjoint professors of physics Deborah Jin, left, and Jun Ye in their cold molecule lab in the JILA building on the CU-Boulder campus.

Physicists at JILA on the University of Colorado at Boulder campus have for the first time observed chemical reactions near absolute zero, demonstrating that chemistry is possible at ultralow temperatures and that reaction rates can be controlled using quantum mechanics, the peculiar rules of submicroscopic physics.

The new results and techniques, described in the Feb. 12 issue of Science, will help scientists understand previously unknown aspects of how molecules interact, a key to advancing biology, creating new materials, producing energy and other research areas. The new JILA work also will aid studies of quantum gases (in which particles behave like waves) and exotic physics spanning the quantum and macroscopic worlds. It may provide practical tools for "designer chemistry" and other applications such as precision measurements and quantum computing.

JILA is a joint institute of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and CU-Boulder. A NIST theorist at the Joint Quantum Institute, a collaborative venture of NIST and the University of Maryland, also contributed to the research.

"It's perfectly reasonable to expect that when you go to the ultracold regime there would be no chemistry to speak of," said NIST physicist and CU-Boulder Adjoint Professor Deborah Jin, leader of one JILA group involved in the experiments. "This paper says, no, there's a lot of chemistry going on."

Said NIST physicist and CU-Boulder Adjoint Professor Jun Ye, leader of the second JILA group involved in the research, "We are observing a new fundamental aspect of chemistry — it gives us a new 'knob' to understand and control reactions."

The Science paper is a follow-up to the same research team's 2008 report of the first high-density gas of stable, strongly interacting ultracold molecules, each consisting of two different atoms bonded together (seewww.nist.gov/public_affairs/releases/ultracold_polar_molecules.html[28]). Ultracold molecules are a hot research area because they may offer more diverse insights and applications than ultracold atoms, which scientists have deftly manipulated for more than 20 years.

Co-authors of the Science paper were Silke Ospelkaus, Kang-Kuen Ni, Dajun Wang, Marcio Miranda, Brian Neyenhuis, Goulven Qu'em'ener, Paul Julienne and John Bohn.

The JILA research is supported by NIST, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy.

100 staffers get motivated on Staff Enrichment Day[29]

A trio of speakers reminded classified staff of their worth, the choices they make, and how life requires adapting to change. Close to 100 University of Colorado at Colorado Springs staffers attended Staff Enrichment Day on Feb. 10, partaking of the lectures, lunch and Valentine candy with laughter and camaraderie.

"Do what you believe in and believe in what you do," motivational speaker Janet Mills told the group in the day's first session.

Providers of educational services shape the future. The influence they have on 18- to 24-year-olds is profound and far-reaching, she said, and connections staff make with students can inspire them to succeed.

The staff audience agreed when Mills suggested they were motivated by a passion to serve, rather than a desire to get rich. She provided statistics from the National Center for Education indicating the trend toward increasing numbers of students and the vital need for educational service staff. She noted that current economic conditions have increased student numbers and stress simultaneously, but the passion and excitement that staff feel for what they do is key to surviving the challenges.

It is important, Mills said, for staff members to support, reinforce and complement one another, and be aware of their own self-worth. It is critical for overworked, nervous and stressed-out staff to remember how vital their work is, and draw strength from one another.
"Education is the most important profession there is," Mills said.

Nadyne Guzman, UCCS professor emeriti in the College of Education and president of Infinite Excellence, discussed choices. She said people make one of four choices to address whatever situations involve them. A person chooses, she said, to be happy with a situation, to negotiate a change, to be miserable, or to eliminate the situation, and each choice offers its own series of consequences and repercussions.

Choosing to be happy is reasonably uncomplicated. It calls for acceptance and flexibility, Guzman said, but the other choices are more complex. Negotiating a change in a situation might mean negotiating a compromise with the person responsible for it, or negotiating with one's self to determine the next step. Choosing to be miserable is often the choice people make to maintain the familiar, because they fear the unknown. The choice to eliminate a situation can have drastic consequences as it often means leaving a job, a place, or a person. Yet all choices, she said, are based on an individual's values, beliefs and thoughts.

Terry Schwartz, associate dean, School of Public Affairs, presented "Making the Most of Change," a workshop/presentation that included audience participation. Through a series of assessment exercises, the staff audience measured their individual capacities for resourcefulness, optimism, adventurousness, drive, adaptability, confidence, and tolerance for ambiguity. Each of these elements, she said, influences how we deal with change.

Schwartz stressed that change is an inevitable part of life and defined some of its attributes. Change is a process, not an event. It is accomplished by individuals, is a highly personal experience, and it involves growth in development of feelings and skills. Reasons individuals resist change include comfort with the familiar, fear, feeling powerless, perception that costs outweigh benefits and not having enough information.

UC Denver announces state's first bioengineering department[30]

The University of Colorado Denver announced that it will be home to the first Bioengineering Department in the state, pending Colorado Commission of Higher Education (CCHE) approval March 5.

Bioengineering, a marriage of engineering and medicine, is an application of engineering principles and techniques to medical and biological fields, producing improvements in people's lives such as artificial hands and heart valves, implanted insulin pumps, and medical imaging for diagnostics. The University of Colorado Board of Regents approved the new program Feb. 11.

This new department aims to bring engineers, clinicians and medical researchers together. The UC Denver program will offer interdisciplinary M.S. and Ph.D. programs in bioengineering. Distinctive aspects of the UC Denver program include direct interaction with clinicians and surgeons and a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship. For example, students will learn not only how to design new medical devices but also how to move their innovative ideas and research into clinical development, production and marketing.

The bioengineering program promotes cross-campus collaboration and sharing among different CU campuses, with faculty from UC Denver's College of Engineering and Applied Science, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Medicine and CU-Boulder participating. Faculty and students will spend substantial amounts of time at the medical campus, learning how to translate between clinical and engineering languages. Students entering the program will obtain rigorous, cross-disciplinary training and will be taught by engineers, medical researchers and nationally known clinical faculty.

"The School of Medicine has invested a great deal in this exciting new program," said Richard Krugman, M.D., dean of the University of Colorado School of Medicine and vice chancellor of health affairs. "We look forward to the academic collaborations that will lead to our being able to continue to advance science and improve care."

Robin Shandas, Ph.D., head of the bioengineering department with a joint appointment as research professor of mechanical engineering at CU-Boulder, anticipates five to 15 students in the first year, growing to 50 to 60 graduate students in five years.

"We have worked hard to create a unique multi-disciplinary training program with a design-based focus," Shandas said. "We urge students to ask questions about clinical needs or research gaps and think about how they can use their bioengineering training to address these issues. For example, one of our faculty members is working on a novel dialysis graft made from the patient's own tissue rather than plastics to solve the issues of rejection and short life span of current devices."

Said Robert Davis, dean of the CU-Boulder College of Engineering and Applied Science: "Bioengineering students at UC Denver will be able to take classes at CU-Boulder and do research in the laboratories of our world-renowned faculty. We look forward to this collaboration."

This new program will be a driver of economic development in bioengineering fields (Colorado has more than 150 medical device companies), thus providing economic stimulus to the state as well. Several companies and jobs already have been created because of bioengineering research in Colorado and this program will continue to grow the medical technology industry and research labs in the state.

"In order to meet the demands of future generations and supporters, attract the best students and faculty and generate revenue, there is a vital need to invest in new programs like the Bioengineering Program at UC Denver," said Nien-Yin Chang, Ph.D., dean of the UC Denver College of Engineering and Applied Science.

According to Shandas, "Faculty will generate significant research dollars and grants to support graduate students in the program and related programs. This program is crucial to the retention of the best faculty to whom these resources have been committed, and it's important for recruitment of other faculty in medicine and engineering."

Biomedical entrepreneurship will be an essential component of the program. Students will learn how to start new companies. In the past, students interested in a bioengineering degree had to leave the state to pursue an education. With this program in place, Colorado will keep its talent and attract new talent, including professors and researchers, bringing job creation and new inventions to the state.

Resources have been set aside since 2007 to support the program. An undergraduate degree in bioengineering at UC Denver is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2012.

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Boulder professor awarded NASA medal[32]

Burns

Jack Burns, professor of astrophysical and planetary sciences[34] at the University of Colorado at Boulder, received NASA's Exceptional Service Medal at a January ceremony at NASA Headquarters. Burns was recognized for his service as chair of NASA's Advisory Council's Science Committee. The Exceptional Service Medal is awarded for significant, sustained performance characterized by unusual initiative or creative ability that clearly demonstrates substantial improvements or contributions in engineering, aeronautics, spaceflight, administration, support or space-related endeavors that contribute to NASA's mission.

Veteran administrator leads scholarship development at UC Denver[35]

Scholarships provided through foundations and individuals have been an essential part of college financial aid for generations. To enhance the University of Colorado Denver's scholarship services, scholarship functions in financial aid are being aligned with the Scholarship Resource Office under the direction of **Sharon Harper**, who joined the university on Jan. 19.

A high priority of Harper's position is to oversee the online scholarship application process and strengthen programmatic partnerships with key foundations, said Frank Sanchez, associate vice chancellor of student affairs.

"Ms. Harper is a talented administrator with a proven record of enhancing scholarship services to students," Sanchez said. "Her leadership with the Scholarship Resource Office will be invaluable as we further develop critical financial resources for a growing student community."

Prior to the move, Harper was at CU-Boulder for 12 years in financial aid, most recently as coordinator of scholarship services. In that role, she emphasized working with donors and students to make the scholarship awarding process easier, as well as ensuring the donors' intent was met and funds maximized. Harper has worked extensively with the Daniels Fund, the Boettcher Foundation and the Denver Scholarship Foundation to create an effective student-donor-school relationship.

Professor's blog peeks inside Olympic pantry[36]

Nanna Meyer

Nanna Meyer, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs assistant professor of health sciences and sports dietitian with the United States speed skating team, who was featured in last week's Newsletter, has launched a blog that offers an inside look at the food being served to the team at the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

Meyer, along with two graduate students from the Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Kelly Ping and Jane Taggart, have posted shopping notes, photos, videos and some healthy recipes in the blog[38], Food for the 2010 Olympics.

Breast cancer expert to chair conference[39]

Pepper Schedin, left, and Ginger Borges

Pepper Schedin, professor of medical oncology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, has been elected to chair the 2011 Gordon Mammary Gland Biology Research Conference. She also will co-chair the 2010 conference. Schedin is a world leader in the science of pregnancy-associated breast cancer and young women's breast cancer.

The Gordon Conference focuses on unpublished work and is designed to find the people who are pushing boundaries rather than those with a big body of work. Senior scientists who attend set the tone by fostering an environment of collaboration, cooperation and teambuilding.

Schedin and **Ginger Borges**, associate professor of medical oncology at the school, are the scientific and clinical leaders of the University of Colorado Cancer Center Young Women's Breast Cancer Translational Research Program. They are national experts in pregnancy-associated breast cancer. As a culmination of a decade's work, Schedin, Borges and cancer center members **Scott Lucia** and **Lisa Hines** have a paper in a recent American Journal of Pathology; its abstract is available at the journal's Web site[41].

Denver professor presents research at national conference[42]

Krizek

Kevin J. Krizek, associate professor of planning and design, director of the Active Communities/Transportation (ACT) Research Group, and director of the Ph.D. program in design and planning at the University of Colorado Denver, recently returned from the national meetings of the Transportation Research Board in Washington, D.C.

He presented two papers: one co-authored with Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) Ph.D. student **Eric Stonebraker**, and another on his research related to the Access to Destinations Project. He also chaired the committee meeting on Information and Communication Technologies, presided at two paper sessions, and

was an invited panelist in a separate section exploring the role of social networking, information and communications technology and travel behavior.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/pera-rescue-plan-ready-governors-signature[2] http://www.copera.org/pdf/Misc/2010LegChart1-27.pdf[3] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/end-tax-exemptions-could-prove-helpful-higher-education[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/boulder-campus-ready-its-accreditation-close[5] http://www.colorado.edu/accreditation/[6] http://www.ncacihe.org/[7] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Oldmain1GA-1.jpg[8] http://www.colorado.edu/insidecu/editions/2010/1-26/chancellor.html[9] http://www.colorado.edu/accreditation/downloads/CUBoulderSelfStudy2010.pdf[10] http://www.colorado.edu/flagship2030/[11] http://www.colorado.edu/insidecu/editions/2010/2-9/chancellor.html[12] http://www.colorado.edu/accreditation/process/visit.html[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-student-information-system-embarks-biggest-expansion-yet[14] https://metamorphosis.cu.edu/default.aspx[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-questions-joanne-belknap[16] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/1.jpg[17] https://www.cu.edu/FacultyCouncil/Women/symposium/index.html[18] mailto:Jay.Dedrick@cu.edu[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/education-conference-examine-how-students-learn[20] http://www.colorado.edu/ptsp/conference/documents/program.pdf[21] http://cucs.colorado.edu/confreg/ptsp2010.html[22] http://www.colorado.edu/ptsp/index.html[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/nominations-sought-presidents-diversity-award[24] https://www.cu.edu/articles/upload/Pres%20Diversity%20Award%20Criteria%2010.doc[25] mailto:raeann.armijo@cu.edu[26] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-nist-scientists-show-chemistry-possible-ultralow-temperatures[27] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/ucb_Jin-Yi.jpg[28] http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/releases/ultracold_polar_molecules.html[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/100-staffers-get-motivated-staff-enrichment-day[30] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/uc-denver-announces-states-first-bioengineering-department[31] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/uc-denver-announces-states-first-bioengineering-department-0[32] https://connections.cu.edu/people/boulder-professor-awarded-nasa-medal[33] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/people_Burns.jpg[34] http://www.colorado.edu/catalog/catalog09-10/arts_sciences/astrophysicalandplanetarysciences.html[35] https://connections.cu.edu/people/veteran-administrator-leads-scholarship-development-uc-denver[36] https://connections.cu.edu/people/professors-blog-peeks-inside-olympic-pantry[37] https://connections.cu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/uccs-meyers.jpg[38] http://podcastproducer.uccs.edu/users/rhammon2/[39] https://connections.cu.edu/people/breast-cancer-expert-chair-conference[40] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/people_Schedin-Borges.jpg[41] http://ajp.amjpathol.org/cgi/content/abstract/ajpath.2010.090735v1[42] https://connections.cu.edu/people/denver-professor-presents-research-national-conference[43] https://connections.cu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/people_krizek.jpg