CU community celebrates successes, eyes challenges at Capitol[1]

Faculty, staff and students from across the University of Colorado came together with state leadership and members of the CU Advocates – the grassroots network of supporters from the CU community and beyond – for Tuesday's annual CU Advocacy Day at the Capitol.

With more than 130 people filling the Old Supreme Court Chambers, the event marked record attendance, with most continuing the networking at a legislative reception later at nearby Benson Mineral Group, where President Bruce and Marcy Benson hosted.

Both events were attended by numerous state senators and representatives and current and past members of the Board of Regents.

During the nearly two-hour program at the Capitol, attendees heard from President Benson and other CU leaders, including Tanya Kelly-Bowry, vice president of government relations, and Todd Saliman, vice president of budget and finance.

Making her first appearance at the event was Lt. Gov. Donna Lynne[2], who took the office last May. Formerly a top executive for Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Inc. and Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, she also serves as Chief Operating Officer for the state.

"The most important thing you need to know about me is I am a proud parent of a CU graduate," Lynne said with a smile. "He was smart enough to be a chemical engineer and he received a job offer within three days of graduation."

Her first few months on the job also entailed serving as acting executive director of the Department of Higher Education.

"We know that by 2020, three-quarters of the jobs in Colorado will require some education beyond high school. We're not there yet – we're in the 50s," she said. "As a business person, what I cared most about was, can I find a talented pool of employees? … You can't be successful in Colorado if you don't have jobs. And if you don't have the workforce to meet those needs, you're not going to be successful."

Lynne noted that Gov. Hickenlooper's budget request[3] includes a $20.5 million increase for higher education. Of that increase, of which $3.8 million is for financial aid, CU's four campuses would receive an estimated $7.8 million, an increase of 4 percent over last year's state funding.

"We made sure that universities got a funding increase this year (in the request)," Lynne said. "We know that you could use more – we recognize that." She acknowledged that leaders continue to work on budget challenges, and that the request could undergo changes before approval in March, but said she is hopeful.

During a segment that challenged audience members to separate common higher education myths from truths, Saliman illustrated ways in which the university and student families are challenged by the overall trend of the past 16 years that has seen state funding drop dramatically. He said party politics aren't to blame, though.

"We have great friends on both sides of the aisle who are supportive of higher education," Saliman said. "They just have very few options, because the state budget is so tight."

That reality has led CU to seek greater efficiencies and flexibility at the Legislature for many years.

As for this year's session, which got underway in January and continues into May, Kelly-Bowry told the audience about two early bills that she and the Government Relations team are working on with lawmakers. One of the CU-initiated bills addresses higher education employment contract terms. Term employment contacts currently are limited to six per campus and system; contract lengths also are limited. Sponsored by Sen. Kevin Priola, R-Brighton, this bill would enable more flexibility by exempting contracts for positions funded by revenue from auxiliary activities, such as athletics. At CU, the Board of Regents still would need to approve all contracts.

CU also is supporting a bill that would allow for in-state tuition for Olympic athletes training in Colorado. Sponsored by Rep. Dan Nordberg, R-Colorado Springs, the legislation would broaden existing permissive authority that higher education institutions have in granting in-state tuition rates to certain Olympic athletes training in Colorado Springs. The change also would include Olympic athletes living outside of the city but who are training at an Olympic-sanctioned program, including Paralympics. Institutions would not be required to participate.

The CU Advocates[4] program was represented by Michele McKinney, assistant vice president of advocacy and external relations, and Kimbirly Orr, the current CU Advocate of the Year. Members of the program received thanks and kudos throughout the event.

“To have people like you who believe in and support and advocate for the work of higher educations, especially of the University of Colorado, is something we’re so very grateful for,” said Dorothy Horrell, chancellor of CU Denver. She introduced representatives of the Colorado Center for Community Development[5], an example of one of about 300 CU For Colorado public outreach programs from the four campuses providing community service across the state.

Based in the CU Denver College of Architecture and Planning, the 50-year-old center teams students and faculty with industry professionals in order to provide communities with a wide range of services – from park and recreation planning to downtown revitalization to boosting local food production. Mark Gelernter, dean of the College of Architecture and Planning, estimated that the center has worked on over 2,000 projects for 200 communities, serving 2 million people.

A younger program already making an impact across the state, the Rural Track in the CU School of Medicine at the Anschutz Medical Campus[6] is meeting a critical need in the two-thirds of Colorado considered rural or frontier. Because small, scattered communities are underserved by medical professionals, the Rural Track works to fuel a pipeline of primary care doctors.

“We want to do this because there are so many underserved Coloradans,” said Tom Clagett, a fourth-year student set to graduate in May. He grew up in Littleton but gained exposure to the needs and lifestyle of small towns by following the Rural Track. “Until you see it, until you actually practice rural medicine, you won’t find out if you love it.”

Established in 2005, the track already is ranked sixth in the nation by U.S. News.

Standard registration for dependent tuition benefit now universal[7]

The CU Denver | Anschutz campus recently revised its tuition benefit policy to allow employees’ dependents to enroll in courses during the standard registration period, instead of waiting until the first day of classes.

“We’re happy to be able to strengthen the dependent benefit for our employees, who are our greatest resource,” said CU Anschutz Chancellor Don Elliman.

This change standardizes dependent enrollment on all University of Colorado campuses. It will be implemented as part of a three-year pilot study launching in the fall.

“We’re grateful to our administration and finance team for working out the details so that we can improve this benefit,” said CU Denver Chancellor Dorothy Horrell.

Initial details of the pilot were announced in January[8]. The pilot program was advanced by a task force at the direction of President Bruce Benson and led by chair Susan Szpyrka, senior vice chancellor for administration and finance at UCCS. It was recently was presented to President Benson and all campus chancellors, who approved the implementation.

The full design and procedures of the pilot will be published on the Employee Services Tuition Benefit webpage[9].

Faculty Council begins brainstorming for regents' strategic vision[10]

Members of the CU Faculty Council last week were invited into an ongoing discussion about a new systemwide vision statement, which the Board of Regents hopes to vote on later this year.

Regent Linda Shoemaker chairs the board's strategic planning committee, which first proposed the creation of a strategic vision. She attended the Jan. 26 Faculty Council meeting at 1800 Grant St., where she discussed the process and took notes during brainstorming with the council.

"We will be coming back to you throughout this process," she told the council, which she called "an integral part" of the strategic vision development.

The discussion followed last month's Board of Regents retreat, where regents discussed the matter[11] with system and campus leadership. Shoemaker told the council that the vision statement will build on strategic plans already developed by the campuses without supplanting them.

"It's a time where I and the other regents felt like it would be great to have a document that talks about, what are the common values of this University of Colorado system? Despite the fact that each campus is very distinctive and has a very important role within the system," Shoemaker said.

"The only complaint I have about the existing mission and vision statements is, I think they're a little generic. I would like what we come up with to be something special about Colorado and the University of Colorado system."

Shoemaker said the state must be included in the statement "in a very big way."

"We were one of the founding institutions for the state of Colorado and we share a culture with the state," she said. "We graduate the most four-year students into Colorado. So there is a very close connection between the university and the values held by the state."

Shoemaker also emphasized that the regents can't come up with the vision independently of the campuses. "We need to build on what the campuses tell us."

This month and next, the campuses will host what Shoemaker described as three-hour meetings where groups of faculty, staff and students – chosen by the respective chancellors – will discuss what they believe to be the core values across all CU campuses. They'll also examine the differences.

During an informal brainstorm session, members of the Faculty Council mentioned a wide range of topics and themes: student empowerment, accessibility, intellectual integrity, public trust, global stewardship, community service, resiliency, endurance, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit – even kindness.

The winter meetings on the campuses will result in two-page summaries, which will form the basis for an early document. Stakeholder feedback will continue through the spring, with the regents aiming to vote on a final strategic vision at their July retreat.

Four chancellors make statements on White House immigration order[12]

Leaders at the University of Colorado's four campuses have issued statements in response to the recent executive

order by President Donald Trump temporarily forbidding citizens of seven countries from entering the United States.

Here are brief excerpts and links to their full statements:
CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano:"The University of Colorado depends upon the scholarship that flows across international borders and works to be an institution that is fully inclusive of students and employees of all ethnic backgrounds, national origins and religions in our community." Read the full statement here.[13]
UCCS Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak:"With more than 30 countries represented at UCCS, the world comes to Colorado Springs through UCCS, providing our resident students a truly international experience at home. It is an experience we believe will last students a lifetime in our increasingly global society." Read the full statement here.[14]
CU Denver Chancellor Dorothy Horrell:"We are and will remain unwaveringly committed to providing educational opportunities to students and recruiting faculty and staff without regard to nationality, place of birth or religious beliefs. We stand ready to provide them support and assistance." Read the full statement here.[15]
CU Anschutz Medical Campus Chancellor Don Elliman:"The CU Anschutz community is greatly enriched by, and is committed to, the inclusion of students, faculty, researchers and staff who bring perspective and experience from across the world. Appropriate vetting processes have brought to our campus international students and scholars from all countries and diverse faiths." Read the full statement here.[16]

Call for nominations: UCSC Service Excellence Award[17]

The University of Colorado Staff Council (UCSC) is soliciting nominations of classified and university staff employees for the annual Service Excellence Award.

UCSC is pleased to recognize and reward staff members who have provided outstanding and sustained volunteer service to their campus or the university system, as well, as to community/civic/professional organizations during the past three years. Active involvement in staff events, community engagement opportunities, committee work, social advocacy projects and diversity initiatives will contribute to a nominee's application.

The Service Excellence Award is presented to one qualified person from each campus and system administration, and includes a $1,000 cash award to be presented at the All Staff Council Conference on April 14. Each of the four recipients will be invited to the ceremony, along with his/her nominator, supervisor and one additional guest.

Please visit the UCSC Service Excellence Award web page[18] for more information regarding the award criteria and nomination process.

All nomination forms must be received electronically by 11:59 p.m. Feb. 13.

Submit nominations here: https://www.cu.edu/ucsc/ucsc-service-excellence-award[18]

Trump's pick for Supreme Court a visiting professor at CU Boulder[19]

New initiative to showcase best teaching practices on campus[20]

Enroll in the University Men's Chorus today, no audition required[21]

Chancellor applauds ‘remarkable’ work by faculty and staff[22]

‘Tangible’ showcases work by trio of fiber artists[23]
[24]

“These Things Are Tangible,” an exhibit featuring three contemporary fiber artists, recently opened at the Galleries of Contemporary Art at UCCS.

The exhibit, which was awarded a grant from the CU President’s Fund for the Humanities[25], is on display through March 18 at the campus GOCA1420 location.

The work of Claudia Mastrobuono, Jodi Stevens and Sonya Yong James – independently and collaboratively – is featured. It investigates and pushes the edges of what is possible with sculptural fibers.

Using their medium as a framework, all three artists engage with the concepts of self-discovery, gender and labor, reflecting on an art practice rooted in their experiences as women and makers, as well as the political legacy of fiber art.

GOCA is a regional hub of contemporary art, culture, and conversation. By featuring world-class artists, hosting artist and expert talks, and offering meaningful events, GOCA engages UCCS students, faculty, staff and Pikes Peak Region community members in contemporary culture and life. GOCA is a contemporary arts organization with two galleries, one founded on the UCCS campus in 1981 and a satellite downtown location that opened in 2010 in the Plaza of the Rockies building.

For gallery hours and information on more happenings at GOCA, please see Communique[26].

Comcast contributes $5 million to establish innovative media center [27]

Black-and-gold legacy: CU-educated doctors span generations[28]

White House, SpaceX veteran Larson joining CU Boulder[29]

DeGregori, Ford new leaders at CU Cancer Center[30]

Chavez appointed to scholarship board[31]

Nolbert Chavez, chief of external initiatives at CU Denver and associate vice president for community engagement at CU system, has been appointed to the Colorado Advisory Board of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

The Hispanic Scholarship Fund[32], formerly known as the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund, was founded in 1975. It is the nation's leading provider of scholarships and services designed to give Latino students full access to the opportunity a college education can provide.

"It is my pleasure to welcome Mr. Nolbert Chavez to the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Colorado Advisory Council," said Fidel Vargas, president and CEO of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund. "He is a former scholarship recipient, and his participation and advice will be a tremendous asset to the HSF."

Bakari to present at internationalization conference[33]

Szafir named to Forbes '30 Under 30: Science' list[34]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-community-celebrates-successes-eyes-challenges-capitol[2] https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ltgovernor[3] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/governor-s-budget-proposal-has-good-news-cu-higher-education[4] http://www.cu.edu/cu-advocates[5] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/ArchitecturePlanning/AboutCAP/ResearchCenters/CCCD/Pages/default.aspx[6] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/education/degree_programs/MDProgram/longitudinal/tracks/ruraltrack/Pages/default.aspx[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/standard-registration-dependent-tuition-benefit-now-universal[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/tuition-benefit-options-expand-fall[9] http://click.communications.cu.edu/?qs=0d3862f6e88804bf2f8b56b95dd999bc98b9bb9b226b4285564f6d54459ccdab4c4a90633832c65a[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-begins-brainstorming-regents-strategic-vision[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-begin-work-articulating-vision-statement[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/four-chancellors-make-statements-white-house-immigration-order[13] http://www.colorado.edu/today/2017/01/30/chancellors-corner-how-new-immigration-restrictions-affect-cu-community[14] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=25613[15] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/WhoWeAre/Chancellor/CUDenver/ChancellorsCommunications/Pages/Statement%20on%20Immigration%20Executive%20Orders%2c-1-30-17.aspx[16] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/WhoWeAre/Chancellor/CUAnschutz/ChancellorsCommunications/Pages/Immigration-executive-order-1-31-17.aspx[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/call-nominations-ucsc-service-excellence-award[18] https://www.cu.edu/ucsc/ucsc-service-excellence-award[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/trumps-pick-supreme-court-visiting-professor-cu-boulder[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-initiative-showcase-best-teaching-practices-campus[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/enroll-university-mens-chorus-today-no-audition-required[22] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/chancellor-applauds-remarkable-work-faculty-and-staff[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/tangible-showcases-work-trio-fiber-artists[24] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/uccs_coga-fiber_p.jpg[25] http://www.cu.edu/office-academic-affairs/presidents-fund-humanities[26] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=25422[27]

https://connections.cu.edu/stories/comcast-contributes-5-million-establish-innovative-media-center[28]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/black-and-gold-legacy-cu-educated-doctors-span-generations[29]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/white-house-spacex-veteran-larson-joining-cu-boulder[30]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/degregori-ford-new-leaders-cu-cancer-center[31]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/chavez-appointed-scholarship-board[32] https://www.hsf.net/[33]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/bakari-present-internationalization-conference[34]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/szafir-named-forbes-30-under-30-science-list