Regents postpone vote on concealed carry resolution[1]

A vote on a resolution proposed by University of Colorado regents James Geddes and Sue Sharkey opposing 'gun-free zones' on University of Colorado campuses was postponed indefinitely by the board in a 6-2 vote, essentially killing the measure.

Board of Regents Chair Michael Carrigan, who was not required to vote, abstained.

In a detailed presentation at Wednesday's Board of Regents meeting at UCCS, Geddes, R-Sedalia, and Sharkey, R-Windsor, said the resolution would ensure students' safety, not diminish it. Geddes and Sharkey said establishing areas where concealed-carry permits are not allowed gives criminals permission to act violently, as they know that they will not receive opposition from unarmed citizens.

"The need for self-protection, the right does not evaporate when one walks onto a college campus," Geddes said. "We must take greater responsibility for the protection of our students, our faculty and our staff. These crimes will be diminished by concealed carry."

Sharkey said she understood the emotional issue that guns carry and respects people with differing opinions. However, she said the whistle her daughter received for protection as a student at CU-Boulder was inadequate and insulting.

"Rather than create areas where our students are more vulnerable to harm, I support this resolution as it aims to ensure the University of Colorado will remain safe now and in the future," she said.

The resolution was proposed two days after the Colorado House of Representatives passed a package of four gun control bills. One of them, House Bill 1226, sponsored by Rep. Claire Levy, D-Boulder, would ban concealed weapons in buildings on college campuses. The other gun control bills, which will next be considered by the Senate, would: Limit gun magazines to 15 rounds. Require background checks for all gun transactions. Impose a fee for gun buyers to cover the cost of their background checks.
The proposed Board of Regents resolution stated that the "Regents of the University of Colorado support the right of Colorado citizens to lawfully exercise the right to concealed carry, including on University of Colorado campuses, and oppose the creation of 'gun free zones' that leave law abiding citizens vulnerable to harm."

CU-Boulder officials unveil $170 million athletic facilities upgrade proposal[2]

Coach Mike MacIntyre

University of Colorado Boulder Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano, Athletic Director Mike Bohn and new head football coach Mike MacIntyre last month unveiled a $170 million, multi-year proposal to upgrade CU-Boulder's football facilities before the Intercollegiate Athletics subcommittee of the CU Board of Regents at the board's meeting in Colorado Springs.

CU will rely on $50 million in private support to execute the project, and a significant effort to raise funds from donors will now begin to support it. In addition, other athletic revenue sources will be used to finance this major initiative.

"This plan represents a carefully conceived, strategic investment in our future in the Pac-12 Conference," Bohn said. "It will position us to attract the best student-athletes in the nation. It will improve the performance of our student-athletes on the field and in the classroom, and it will enhance our fan experience."

The first element will consist of a new academic center that will boost student-athletes' already substantial progress in

the classroom. The new facility will provide focus for student-athletes by moving study areas to a new complex beneath the east stands, away from the distractions of the Dal Ward Athletic Center. Additionally, as part of the project's first element, the north side of Folsom Field's east stands will be supported against the shifting ground beneath it, improving safety for fans and visitors.

The second element will significantly expand Dal Ward to consolidate football operations, bring together coaches and student-athletes from a number of sports, and provide more physical resources for all in one unified space.

The third element of the plan establishes a permanent indoor practice facility adjacent to outdoor practice fields north of Boulder Creek, creating a year-round practice complex, easing traffic congestion off of Arapahoe Avenue with new streets and transportation enhancements, and forming a new plaza-like entrance to campus from the north.

The plan also includes a study to redevelop family housing that now sits west of Folsom Street and south of Arapahoe. The university has for several years been re-envisioning the possibilities of a more modern family housing complex with greater appeal for residents and greater density to make more efficient use of space.

The final element of the football athletics redevelopment project includes redevelopment of the Folsom Field west-side stands.

Future enhancements not included in the initial cost estimate are planned at the Coors Events Center to further improve the student-athlete and fan experience there.
DiStefano heralded the plan, saying it "balances equally our commitment to the academic success of our student-athletes, the comfort and safety of our fans and the long-term success of our combined coaching staffs."

"This affirms our institutional values, and positions us well as we move ahead in the finest conference in the country," DiStefano added.

CU President Bruce Benson said the project marks a bold new era of partnership with donors, alumni, fans and stakeholders.

"Intercollegiate athletics is the front porch of the university," Benson said. "This plan will help bring people from across Colorado and around the country together in support of CU, and it will challenge all of us as donors, alumni and fans to work together to make this vision a reality."

MacIntyre said the support from every level of the university – from fans and donors to the athletic director, the chancellor and the president – was gratifying to him and to CU's other coaches and players.

"This is a strong commitment to success by the president, the chancellor and the university as a whole," MacIntyre said. "These facilities will represent to our current and future players the dual commitments to excellence, and to be successful year-in and year-out, at the University of Colorado. The entire university community wants to sustain excellence in everything we do, and at the same time, keep moving forward. This commitment represents both of these desires."

During the committee meeting, MacIntyre told regents that the proposal is key for the success of the football program.

"We're going to win in football at Colorado. But for us to do what everybody here wants us to do, we have to move forward," said MacIntyre, who pointed to recent, big-budget football stadium and facilities expansions at Pac-12 schools.

"Our facility is good, but to do what we want to do consistently, we've got to do something. All of this has to move forward – and move forward pretty fast."

Pay raises, tuition benefit in spotlight at Staff Council meeting[4]

Members of the University of Colorado Staff Council[5] met last week for a mostly information meeting at the University of Colorado Denver where they heard updates on the merit pay system, the CU Advocates[6] program, state funding for higher education, and Boulder's administrative leave policy that addresses school and volunteer activities.

Gov. John Hickenlooper's budget recommendations for 2013-14 include pay changes for classified employees. The governor asked for a 1.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and a pool of funds equivalent to 1.5 percent of payroll to reward top performers. (The Joint Budget Committee later recommended that the COLA increase be 2 percent.) The state also wants to ensure that employee salaries are at least in the minimum range of the prevailing market.

"Once you are at market pay, if you are a competent performer, than you are being paid appropriately for your job," said E. Jill Pollock, vice president for employee and information services. Extraordinary performances would be eligible for merit increase pay that may or may not add to base-building pay.

While the university isn't required to follow the state's merit plan if approved by the legislature, Pollock said, "We are choosing to follow it because we think it's a good one. This will be the first time classified staff have received an increase in four years."

Pollock also discussed tuition benefit recommendations that were received from staff and faculty councils. Both councils said improvements to the benefit might include:
A 50 percent discount on tuition for employees and dependents up to 18 hours of credit, or alternatively, to increase the number of waived hours to 12 each year. (The current benefit is nine hours.) In addition, Boulder campus benefits should apply to any time of the year, regardless of full- or part-time status. Allowing employees and dependents to register before the first day of classes Allowing the benefit to be used at continuing education or other higher ed institutions Allowing dependents to use benefits at any CU campus
Staff council also recommended: fees charged for taking classes be eliminated, some extended study programs be included in the program, other family members (besides dependents) be allowed to use the benefit and unused credits be allowed to roll over.

Faculty council also suggested that when both parents are employed by CU, a single dependent could use both benefits or up to 18 credits per year, and dependents could use the credits toward graduate-level courses. (Currently, only employees can use the credits for those classes.)

Pollock said she will talk with university financial officers in March about the benefit, and acknowledged that some proposals, including offering discounted fees for classes, are a possible discussion point.

She said a total compensation package for employees -- usually salary and benefits -- might also include other rewards, especially professional development, including tuition benefits. "There's no reason why we couldn't differentiate ourselves by being the learning institution for employees as well as students."

One impediment to enhanced benefits is a tight budget as the state continues to face funding challenges. The state is experiencing declining revenue and increasing costs, said Todd Saliman, vice president and chief financial officer for the university. That means funding for all categories – including higher education – is at risk.

Currently, 5.3 percent of CU's budget comes from the state, an amount that most likely will decrease in coming years. A University of Denver study painted a bleak picture of future funding and an upcoming CU study likely will reach the same conclusions, he said.

"We get less money than our peers and that has made it challenging for us. Because state support is inadequate, it pushes the burden to tuition."

Twenty years ago, students and families paid one-third the cost of tuition with state funding making up the remainder. Today, the numbers are reversed.

Not everyone understands the value the university brings to the state, Michele McKinney told the group. McKinney is the external affairs and advocacy director for the university. She oversees the year-and-a-half old CU Advocates program, which works to educate residents about the contributions CU makes to the state, nation and world. Currently, 2,100 volunteers – 1,600 in Colorado – participate in the program.

The university is one of the largest employers in the state, brings in millions of dollars of research funding, produces 60 percent of all graduate work in Colorado, and promotes educational opportunities through financial aid -- $600 million last year.

Staff council also heard from Pakou Cha, the manager of the Office of Labor Relations[7] on the Boulder campus, concerning employee volunteer leave.

At several previous meetings, the council had discussed conducting a systemwide service project but discovered that not all campuses provide volunteer leave opportunities for staff.

Cha said state personnel board rules allow the appointing authority to grant administrative leave for reasons deemed good for the state. The Boulder campus has determined that parental assistance in school activities (including parent-teacher conferences) and volunteer work fit the category. Classified employees receive up to 18 hours per year of leave, with 16 of those being paid leave.

Colorado Springs does not grant leave for volunteer work, and both system administration and Denver/Anschutz campus employees are allowed to take a smaller number of hours for service opportunities.

At an upcoming meeting, staff council will discuss whether to push for a consistent university policy regarding paid volunteer hours.

Five questions for Deborah Kenny[8]

[9]
The military has always been a part of Deborah Kenny's life. Her father was a musician in the Air Force and her family lived in Colorado Springs. While in nursing school, she learned that the army would pay for her final two years of study if she joined. She did. She served in a variety of army leadership positions, and through her research roles, including at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, she helped improve patient-care procedures. Over the years, she also received several adjunct appointments at universities and those roles helped prepare her for the next phase of her life.

Retired Lt. Col. Kenny said she left the military in 2009 with "a smorgasbord of studies" and now, as the associate dean of research and professor of graduate nursing at Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Services at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, has returned home and is continuing her research, including studies that examine the effects of war.

She's happy to be back in Colorado, where she can pursue her love of the outdoors. She's a hiker, skier and camper, and she also loves horses. "They'll tell you that I'm horse crazy. Both are true. I love horses and I'm crazy. I recently had a bad fall and got hurt pretty badly. But I'm going to get back on my horse." One of her latest adventures is gem hunting. "There are lots of gems in Colorado but I'm not going to tell you where they are. I've found some really good ones. I have a 15-carat topaz that I need to get cut."

Her one regret, she says, is never having had the privilege to deploy. "Only veterans will understand this. It's like training for the Super Bowl and sitting on the sidelines." While colleagues were in Iraq and Afghanistan, she remained stateside. "On the other hand, being at Walter Reed, I was involved in the care of service members. I can say with all

honesty that these young kids who were injured were the best human beings I've had the honor to meet. We need to be proud of these young men and women because they signed a blank check and some of them paid a heavy price. Some of them paid the ultimate price."

1. Tell me about your time serving in the military.

I spent 24 years in the military and I did a lot of things. I was chief nurse of a combat support hospital at Fort Bliss, Texas, head nurse of the hematology oncology ward at Fitzsimmons, and a research nurse at Walter Reed Hospital. My final job before coming to UCCS was as the executive director of the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program (TSNRP). The TSNRP basically got $6 million in earmarks every year to provide nurses with research money because there were no other funding avenues. One of my goals was to get the program permanently funded. I was able to accomplish that right as I was leaving in 2009. I achieved that goal and am very proud of that.

As a research nurse at Walter Reed, I was involved in a variety of studies. One looked at using PDAs for medics to help them study so they didn't have to worry about carrying heavy books around. We found a significant increase – not in test scores – but in their ability to pass the course the first time. If the medics don't pass the first time, they are recycled through the class again and it's expensive. We got them to a 95 percent pass rate.

In another, I collaborated with a nurse researcher at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda and we developed a program for evidence-based practice. We had returning soldiers who survived horrific injuries only to die of blood clots. We implemented a DVT (deep vein thrombosis) risk assessment for all service members. Nurses performed the assessments and doctors were able to institute the appropriate treatment to help patients survive.

Every assignment had its ups and downs. I loved being chief nurse of a combat support hospital. I really liked the field stuff, playing GI Joe, going through the obstacle course, doing the land navigation with maps because we didn't have GPS. What I learned the most about, and what was taught either formally or inadvertently, was leadership. When you are in the military, you're expected to be a leader from day one.

2. Some of your current research concerns women veterans and homelessness. What have your studies uncovered?

When you do a literature search for studies on women veterans, you find very few, and the information is lumped in with males and not differentiated. Those studies are data driven and quantitative, but I wanted to know these women's stories. In a pilot study, we've interviewed some women who ended up in shelters. These women have multiple issues and need individually tailored help. The cookie cutter approach the Veterans Administration seems to be taking with them isn't working. The women we talked to had pretty horrific backgrounds, including some who had used the military as an escape. We need to recognize they are good at covering up their issues and we need to figure out how to help them while they are in the military. In addition, transitioning from the military to civilian life is not easy: you go from complete structure to no structure. Think about it: Women in the military, especially in the line units, hang out with guys – cussing, smoking, doing guy things. Shucks, I smoked cigars when I was in the field. You come out into civilian life and try to get a job, and you are used to acting like a guy so you don't know how to be a professional woman.

I've also done a couple of studies on caregiver fatigue in nurses. In the first study, we looked at four groups of nurses: 1) Those who deployed, 2) Those not deployed but caring for soldiers, 3) Those who didn't deploy and were not caring for soldiers, and 4) reservists called into duty. Those who deployed and those who were caring for soldiers had the same symptoms: compassion fatigue, secondary traumatization and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Those caring for soldiers had prolonged, personal exposures to the injured and listened to their stories and the devastating effect the injuries had on them. For instance, there was the kid who lost both arms and his eyesight. How do you expect him to work his prostheses? Here's a 20-some-year-old who will be dependent for the rest of his life so you can imagine the moral angst surrounding the quality of his life.

Working with the Tri-Service team, I am also doing research on nurses to find out how they developed clinical knowledge when they deploy. For instance, you might have an Ob/Gyn nurse working in ER. Over the course of eight years, we interviewed more than 500 nurses and 75 injured service members. We learned so much more than their skill development: We learned about the mass casualty processes and how nurses put aside personal feelings to

ethically care for enemies who had just killed their comrades, how they coped with leaving kids and families behind, and how they dealt with caring for these service members who had survived massive injuries they never would have lived through in previous wars, and the different case management systems in each military branch.

3. What was your reaction to the announcement that women in the military will be allowed into combat roles?

I have mixed feelings. If you talk with any woman who has deployed recently, they'd say, "What? Women aren't allowed in combat?" We've had women in combat situations throughout both these wars, even medical personnel -- defending themselves, defending their buddies, sometimes even protecting the enemy. When injured enemies were being cared for on the hospital ships or in the combat support hospitals, the nurses protected them by giving them the best care possible, and also sometimes having to protect them from the incoming fire at the combat support hospitals or the rockets being fired overhead.

These women have gotten hurt and killed alongside their male counterparts; they come back with mental health issues at a rate even higher than male counterparts. There is no front line anymore; it's very blurred. The enemy doesn't have a boundary. The difference is in semantics. We already have women in combat support and combat service support, so now they will be in jobs that are direct combat. The downrange environment is fraught with problems. Can you imagine having to meet hygiene needs lying under a truck because you don't want the guys to see you? Or trying to keep up with the guys while you're carrying a pack that is a higher percentage of your body weight than a guy's? There are some women who can outdo the guys, and women are just as patriotic and some are just as tough as the guys.

4. Do you have a special reminder of your time in the military?

I have a framed flag and certificate that was given to me by a friend who had the flag flown over Afghanistan in my honor while she was there. I like it because it's the closest I'll ever get to deploying. I'm willing to bet if I ever unfolded that flag, sand would fall out of it because they had to put up with so much dust over there. It's just a reminder of the sacrifice the service members make when they sign on that dotted line.

5. Who are your heroes?

My parents were my heroes. My dad was 36 and I was 14 when he suffered a severe head injury in a car accident. He wasn't expected to make it, and when he did, they said he would be in coma for the rest of this life. And when he started coming out of the coma, they were really surprised. What we went through as a family was really ugly, but we came out as better people. We had a role model that let nothing get him down. He had a huge sense of humor and got his speech back by telling the same stupid jokes over and over again. He almost got back to normal. He taught us to never give up because we could always reach higher. He was a well-known musician. When I once asked him what he thought his life would have been like had he not had his head injury, his response was, "I don't bother to think about the 'what ifs,' only the 'what is' and deal with it." That's kind of my motto.

From my mom I learned the domestic stuff. Every fall she would sit me and my sister down with yarn and knitting needles and we'd make slippers and take them to the orphanage that was here. I also learned resilience from her. She had to make it through my dad's head injury and other things. My parents always lived the values they wanted us to have.

Chancellor Don Elliman loses 'interim' from title[10]

Chancellor Don Elliman

CU Denver l Anschutz Medical Campus Interim Chancellor Don Elliman's title is a little shorter after the CU Board of Regents voted Wednesday to waive the chancellor search. The move paved the way for CU President Bruce D.

Benson to remove the “interim” from Elliman’s title and appoint him chancellor.

The regents unanimously approved waiving the chancellor search and complimented Elliman on his work at the university the past year.

“You have added a great deal of wisdom and valuable insights to the university and I appreciate you dedicating your time and talent to the university,” Chair Michael Carrigan told Elliman. “And we’re glad we don’t have to spend as high as $100,000 on the search.”

Benson thanked the board for waiving the search, then immediately appointed Elliman as chancellor of the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus.

Benson had conducted a series of campus forums earlier this month, speaking to nine governance groups and key campus constituents on the CU Denver downtown campus and Anschutz Medical Campus about making Elliman the permanent chancellor.

“There were no negative comments about Don Elliman,” Benson said.

Said Elliman, “I am thrilled to have the opportunity. It’s an honor to be associated with the University of Colorado and the CU campuses. I wake up in the morning excited about going to work. . . . I can’t think of another job I would rather have.”

Elliman was chosen interim chancellor last February after Interim Chancellor Jerry Wartgow announced his retirement. Elliman has filled such high-profile positions as the state's chief operating officer, director of the Office of Economic Development and executive director of the Charles C. Gates Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Biology at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. Additionally, he had a 30-year career in publishing with Time Inc. (serving as president of Sports Illustrated and publisher of People) and was president of Ascent Sports, then-owner of the Denver Nuggets, Colorado Avalanche and Pepsi Center.

In other action on Wednesday, the first day of a two-day board meeting at UCCS:
The board voted to approve the establishment of a new Ph.D. degree in Comparative Ethnic Studies at CU-Boulder.The board voted 7-1 in favor; Regent Vice Chair Sue Sharkey, R-Windsor, voted no. Chair Michael Carrigan was not required to vote and abstained.“I want to be more convinced that a program we’re bringing forward specifically meets job demands,” Sharkey said before the vote.Sharkey and Regent James Geddes, R-Sedalia, had asked for the degree to be removed from the meeting’s consent agenda so that there could be discussion.“I support the concept, but I’m concerned about the balance of intellectual exchange in that department and others,” Geddes said before voting in favor of the new degree.“I express my concern in hopes the department chairman will look into this and provide us with a description of his department, and where his professors stand on issues, so we’ll get some understanding and flavor of whether or not balance exists.”
The board also voted in favor of new master’s and Ph.D. degree programs in Materials Science and Engineering at CU-Boulder; they passed 8-0, with Carrigan again abstaining.
During the regular report from the Faculty Council, Chair Melinda Piket-May told the board that high acceptance rates for student applications is one reason faculty members fear top-tier students might be avoiding CU campuses.“Faculty are concerned about recruiting quality vs. quantity in terms of students,” Piket-May said.She pointed to an 87 percent admittance rate at CU-Boulder as evidence of a problem.Some board members, however, took exception with the generalization.“Our students aren’t smart enough? Is that really what you’re saying?” asked Regent Stephen Ludwig, D-Denver.Piket-May said faculty have the impression that “we’re accepting almost anyone who applies,” and that many students are not prepared for a college curriculum.
“I find that a very bold statement, and I find it very troubling that you’re saying the overall quality of our students has decreased rapidly,” Ludwig said.

CU-Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano said the university does admit a high percentage of students, but that they all meet the minimum requirements of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. He said CU-Boulder’s new Esteemed Scholars program is aimed at recruiting the top Colorado students who might otherwise leave the state for higher education.

Regent Steve Bosley, R-Broomfield, said the Faculty Council should have approached CU chancellors with such concerns before raising the issue at a Board of Regents meeting.

Regent James Geddes, R-Sedalia, said he wants to know more about the issue and determine “why this is happening.”

Jay Dedrick contributed to this report.

CU Advocates to learn inside story of CU budget[12]

Brian Burnett, vice chancellor, Administration and Finance at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Brian Burnett, vice chancellor, Administration and Finance at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, likes to quiz audiences unfamiliar with the CU budget about the level of state support they believe the university receives.

The answers – often in the 30 to 50 percent range – usually draw a wishful smile before the explanation begins.

“Perceptions and reality haven’t kept up,” Burnett said recently. “We have to do a better job of explaining to the public how the university is funded and the changing role of who pays for the cost of post-secondary education in our state.”

Burnett and Todd Saliman, vice president and chief financial officer for the CU system, will explain the CU budget to a group of university alumni and friends beginning at 4 p.m. Wednesday in University Center 116. The event is open to faculty and staff.

Recently, Burnett shared the results of his doctoral dissertation tracing the history of state funding for higher education in Colorado with a reporter from The Wall Street Journal. The reporter used the data to tell the story of CU’s funding and the shift from 1985, when 37 percent of the university’s budget came from the state of Colorado, to 5 percent this year. In 1970, Colorado was sixth in the nation for funding of higher education. In 2012, Colorado ranked 48 of 50 states in per capita state higher education funding.

Sharing the message about CU’s budget, and encouraging community leaders to share it with elected officials, is a goal of the CU Advocates program, the sponsor of the Wednesday event. Saliman is expected to provide insight on Colorado’s and CU’s fiscal forecast as well as funding trends for public higher education. Both Saliman and Burnett will share how CU spends its money and efforts to keep the university running efficiently and remain affordable for students.

For more information about the CU Advocates, visit http://www.cu.edu/cuadvocates[14]. To attend the event, contact Michele McKinney, Office of the President, 303-860-5622 or michele.mckinney@cu.edu[15]. Online registration is available at http://www.cusys.edu/cuadvocates/2013_02-27_uccs-funding-in-focus.html[16]

Epidemic of prescription drug ODs inspires new training program[17]

[18]
A new training program to help stem the epidemic of opioid prescription-related overdoses and unintentional deaths has won the endorsement of the Colorado Medical Society and COPIC, a medical malpractice provider.

The program, offered by the Colorado School of Public Health[19], is an online course that gives Colorado health care

providers guidelines on managing patients with chronic, non-cancer related pain.

“The goal of this private-public initiative is to help improve practice, address the epidemic of opioid prescription-associated health problems and improve care,” said Alfred Gilchrist, CEO of the Colorado Medical Society.

The Opioid Crisis: Guidelines and Tools for Improving Chronic Pain Management[20] is the first course of its kind in Colorado to offer online training and tools that target the opioid abuse epidemic. The course was developed by the school’s Center for Worker Health and Environment[21] in partnership with chronic pain experts and members of Colorado’s insurance community.

Along with its online training, the course website[20] provides clinician-oriented resources, including links to the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP), tools for assessing patients’ level of functioning, surveys to assess the risk for potential addiction, and calculators for estimating the dose of opioids being taken by patients, among others.

COPIC announced that it is awarding COPIC points, which result in discounts on medical malpractice premiums, for clinicians who complete the training.

At the same time, Pinnacol Assurance, a major provider of workers’ compensation insurance in Colorado, announced the course as a requirement for all SelectNet members; the company’s network of clinicians who provide care for injured workers.

“The Colorado medical community has stepped up its efforts to address this epidemic,” said professor Lee Newman, M.D., M.A., and director of the Center for Worker Health and Environment. “The state Department of Labor adopted treatment guidelines for the care of these patients who suffer from pain. Now physicians can readily access the information they need to be providing that new standard of care.”

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, nearly 82 people die each day from unintentional overdoses of opioid medication. To tackle this public health challenge, the online training instructs clinicians on the evidence-based state and federal guidelines for managing chronic pain. The course targets health care providers, including physicians, nurses and specialists, who treat chronic pain patients.

The course was developed with the support of an unrestricted educational grant from Pinnacol Assurance. Additional support came from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Hollis Family Trust.

Amphibian study shows how biodiversity can protect against disease[22]

Pieter Johnson from the University of Colorado Boulder and Laura Guderyahn from the city of Gresham's Natural Resource Program observe malformed red-legged frogs in an urban pond near Portland, Ore. Photo courtesy of Dave Herasimtschuk / Freshwaters Illustrated.

The richer the assortment of amphibian species living in a pond, the more protection that community of frogs, toads and salamanders has against a parasitic infection that can cause severe deformities, including the growth of extra legs, according to a new study by the University of Colorado Boulder.

The findings, published Feb. 14 in the journal Nature, support the idea that greater biodiversity in larger-scale ecosystems, such as forests or grasslands, may also provide greater protection against diseases, including those that attack humans. For example, a larger number of mammal species in an area may curb cases of Lyme disease, while a larger number of bird species may slow the spread of West Nile virus.

“How biodiversity affects the risk of infectious diseases, including those of humans and wildlife, has become an

increasingly important question," said Pieter Johnson, an assistant professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and lead author of the study. "But as it turns out, solidly testing these linkages with realistic experiments has proven very challenging in most systems."

Researchers have struggled to design comprehensive studies that could illuminate the possible connection between disease transmission and the number of species living in complex ecosystems. Part of the problem is simply the enormous number of organisms that may need to be sampled and the vast areas over which those organisms may roam.

The new CU-Boulder study overcomes that problem by studying smaller, easier-to-sample ecosystems. Johnson and his team visited hundreds of ponds in California, recording the types of amphibians living there as well as the number of snails infected by the pathogen Ribeiroia ondatrae. Snails are an intermediate host used by the parasite during part of its life cycle.

"One of the great challenges in studying the diversity-disease link has been collecting data from enough replicate systems to differentiate the influence of diversity from background 'noise,' " Johnson said. "By collecting data from hundreds of ponds and thousands of amphibian hosts, our group was able to provide a rigorous test of this hypothesis, which has relevance to a wide range of disease systems."

Johnson's team buttressed its field observations both with laboratory tests designed to measure how prone to infection each amphibian species is and by creating pond replicas outside using large plastic tubs stocked with tadpoles that were exposed to a known number of parasites. All of the experiments told the same story, Johnson said. Greater biodiversity reduced the number of successful amphibian infections and the number of deformed frogs.

In all, the CU-Boulder researchers spent three years sampling 345 wetlands and recording malformations — which include missing, misshapen or extra sets of hind legs — caused by parasitic infections in 24,215 amphibians. They also cataloged 17,516 snails. The results showed that ponds with half a dozen amphibian species had a 78 percent reduction in parasite transmission compared to ponds with just one amphibian species. The research team also set up experiments in the lab and outdoors using 40 artificial ponds, each stocked with 60 amphibians and 5,000 parasites.

The reason for the decline in parasitic infections as biodiversity increases is likely related to the fact that ponds add amphibian species in a predictable pattern, with the first species to appear being the most prone to infection and the later species to appear being the least prone. For example, the research team found that in a pond with just one type of amphibian, that amphibian was almost always the Pacific chorus frog, a creature that is able to rapidly reproduce and quickly colonize wetland habitats, but which is also especially vulnerable to infection and parasite-induced deformities.

On the other hand, the California tiger salamander was typically one of the last species to be added to a pond community and also one of the most resistant to parasitic infection. Therefore, in a pond with greater biodiversity, parasites have a higher chance of encountering an amphibian that is resistant to infection, lowering the overall success rate of transmission between infected snails and amphibians.

This same pattern — of less diverse communities being made up of species that are more susceptible to disease infection — may well play out in more complex ecosystems as well, Johnson said. That's because species that disperse quickly across ecosystems appear to trade off the ability to quickly reproduce with the ability to develop disease resistance.

"This research reaches the surprising conclusion that the entire set of species in a community affects the susceptibility to disease," said Doug Levey, program director in the National Science Foundation's Division of Environmental Biology, which helped fund the research. "Biodiversity matters."

The sheer magnitude of the recent study also reinforces the connection between deformed frogs and parasitic infection, Johnson said. Beginning in the mid-1990s reports of frogs with extra, missing or misshapen legs skyrocketed, attracting widespread attention in the media and motivating scientists to try to figure out the cause. Johnson was among the researchers who found evidence of a link between infection with Ribeiroia and frog deformities, though the apparent rise in reports of deformations, and its underlying cause, remains controversial.

While the new study has implications beyond parasitic infections in amphibians, it does not mean that an increase in biodiversity always results in a decrease in disease, Johnson cautioned. Other factors also affect rates of disease transmission. For example, a large number of mosquitoes hatching in a particular year will increase the risk of contracting West Nile virus, even if there has been an increase in the biodiversity of the bird population. Birds act as "reservoir hosts" for West Nile virus, harboring the pathogen indefinitely with no ill effects and passing the pathogen onto mosquitoes.

"Our results indicate that higher diversity reduces the success of pathogens in moving between hosts," Johnson said. "Nonetheless, if infection pressure is high, for instance in a year with high abundance of vectors, there will still be a significant risk of disease; biodiversity will simply function to dampen transmission success."

CU-Boulder graduate students Dan Preston and Katie Richgels co-authored the study along with Jason Hoverman, a former postdoctoral researcher in Johnson's lab who is now an assistant professor at Purdue. The research was funded by NSF, the National Geographic Society and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

To view photos and a video about the research, visit http://freshwatersillustrated.org/link/AmphibianDeformities[24].

Study: 'Tough love' needed to turn around low-performing schools[25]

[26]
Few positive results have been documented from school turnaround models that rely on coaching, increased educator training or focusing on new programs, a report from the Buechner Institute for Governance[27] at the School of Public Affairs[28] at the University of Colorado Denver has found.

The report, which was commissioned by the Turnaround Study Group, a coalition of foundations and advocacy groups working toward education reform, found the more incremental models of turnarounds have limited data and none show dramatic success.

Instead, the report, "Turnarounds in Colorado: Partnering for Innovative Reform in a Local Control State,"[29] found that to turn around low-performing schools, a "fundamental disruption in the culture and practices of the school" is required.

The authors of the report, Paul Teske, dean of the School of Public Affairs, and Kelly Hupfeld, associate dean, analyzed school turnaround strategies in Louisiana, Tennessee, Michigan, Indiana, Connecticut and Delaware. They presented their findings last week to the Colorado Board of Education.

"Turning around schools that have been failing for years is a huge challenge for Colorado and its school districts," Hupfeld said, "but it's the necessary final step if schools are to be truly held accountable for serving students."

An estimated 14,000 students in Colorado attend schools that the Colorado Department of Education has assigned its lowest category of performance, "Turnaround Plans." Another 67,000 students attend schools in the second-lowest category, "Priority Improvement."

The department also assigns performance ratings for school districts and 26 percent of Colorado students are in districts that have received the two lowest ratings. The report notes that lack of funding poses a major challenge for Colorado schools and concludes, "To reverse the trend of chronically low-performing schools, Coloradans must muster the political will, make the financial investment, and brace for the tough love that is necessary to successfully turn them around." An executive summary[30] also is available online.

Auraria Library hosting exhibit on World War II Japanese-American internment camps[31]

[32]

[33]
The Auraria Library is hosting a special exhibit through March 20 commemorating the lives of Japanese Americans who were detained during World War II in a southeast Colorado camp in the city of Granada, known as the Amache Japanese Internment Camp.

“Connecting the Pieces: Dialogues About the Amache Archaeology Collection” is displayed in the Auraria Library on the first floor. Free and open to the public, the exhibit opened Tuesday, which is the Japanese-American Internment Day of Remembrance.

Also called the Grenada Relocation Center, the World War II camp was in operation from August 1942 through October 1945 to provide housing for Japanese-Americans who were displaced from the West Coast to Colorado. Camp Amache housed more than 7,500 people, two-thirds of whom were American citizens.

The exhibition, originally compiled and designed by anthropology students at the University of Denver[34], already has been displayed at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs campus at the Heller Center for the Arts and Humanities in October 2012. Included in the artifacts on display are items found from archaeological excavations at the camp, which are paired with stories told by the survivors and their families.

Auraria Library owns six manuscript collections[35] related to Camp Amache. Some of the photographs, yearbooks, letters and other objects that were once part of the social fabric of the camp will be displayed alongside the exhibit.

For more information on the collections or exhibit, please contact Rosemary Evetts[36] or Matthew Mariner[37].

Reed joins CU-Boulder, launches research center on broadband technology and policy[38]

[39]
David Reed, a former CableLabs executive, has joined the Interdisciplinary Telecommunications Program (ITP) at the University of Colorado Boulder as a scholar in residence. Besides teaching and conducting research with graduate students in ITP’s master's and Ph.D. programs, Reed will lead the development of a new research center to investigate the future of the newly forming broadband industry.

Broadband Internet technology is driving the emergence of gigabit networks carrying a vast number of applications and services that can be personalized to fit the interests and needs of individual users.

“David's past experience in managing large R&D projects that helped the cable industry transition to broadband is a perfect fit for developing a new research center in ITP focused on broadband technology and policy research,” said ITP Director Douglas Sicker.

Reed comes to the university after spending almost 20 years as chief technology officer and chief strategy officer at CableLabs, a research consortium of cable television companies.

“Broadband players will continue to transition network architectures and software platforms to adapt to disruptive technologies, which will force new market strategies,” Reed said. “An interdisciplinary center strategically focused on researching the evolution of broadband in close partnership with industry principals will play a valuable role in

understanding the direction of change."

The vision for the center will be to help shape broadband evolution through strategic research that informs technology leaders, strategic planners and policymakers with clear, concise answers to complex, interdisciplinary problems.

The center also will provide opportunities for ITP graduate students to learn about and solve problems in the broadband arena, providing students with a skill set that will be highly desirable to potential employers in the high-tech, broadband sector. Established in 1971, the graduate-level Interdisciplinary Telecommunications Program is a highly integrated and comprehensive program combining technology, policy and business, along with a lab-rich learning environment. It was the first program of its kind, and it continues to lead in cutting-edge education and applied research.

Weiss, Ferguson to chair education task force[40]

Weiss

Ferguson

David Weiss, associate professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and **Jeff Ferguson**, professor, College of Business, will co-chair a University of Colorado Colorado Springs General Education Goals implementation task force.

The two will be tasked with helping implement a plan to have a 24 credit hour across-campus curriculum that supports student learning goals under the categories of "evaluate and create," "know and explore" and "act and interact."

On Nov. 30, campus faculty voted overwhelmingly to implement the UCCS General Education Goals. Andrea Hutchins, president, Faculty Assembly, and associate professor, Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences, said 84 percent of the faculty who cast online ballots on the curriculum model supported it. About 47 percent of the faculty who were eligible to vote participated.

The remaining members of the implementation task force will be recruited and in place soon. The co-chairs plan to include many additional faculty in formulating plans for the separate parts of the curriculum as it was approved. For example, faculty from across campus will join a sub-group from the implementation team to determine how the new advanced core course, a junior-level course that emphasizes the application of knowledge and collaborative learning, will function. The sub-group will bring those ideas back to the full implementation team to become part of the overall structure of the new curriculum.

Ferguson and **Christina Jimenez**, associate professor, Department of History, co-chaired a faculty general education task force and developed the proposal to the faculty. More information is available at http://www.uccs.edu/provost/general-education.html[43].

Denman offers social media insight[44]

Philip Denman, social media and communication specialist, University of Colorado Colorado Springs University Advancement, shared insights into social media as well as UCCS policies and procedures during a Feb. 7 Chancellor's All-Campus Forum.

Denman said social media turns communication into interactive dialogue. “It’s a two-way street of interaction – a way where students can talk to us and we can talk to them. We can provide them information and answer any sort of questions.”

Social media provides an opportunity to showcase the university where students spend time. Denman cited figures showing that 46 percent of high school seniors visit Facebook pages of colleges in which they are interested. Once those students have “liked” that college or university, they can get regular updates and begin to form an impression of the university or get information regarding application deadlines or other details.

Denman cited other uses for social media ranging from customer service to emergency communication as incentive for campus departments to consider using the medium. For example, the class of 2017 has started a Facebook page to share information about subjects ranging from best books to good places to live.

Denman also clarified that while UCCS does not regulate personal use of social media, employees are responsible for what they post on their personal accounts.

Nursing students, instructor deliver valentines to Children’s Hospital[45]

Members of the Student Nurses Association delivered teddy bears to Children’s Hospital on Tuesday. From left: Sue Davis, instructor, Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences; Valerie Walker, senior; Amy Digan, senior; and Kelley Millsap, a Beth El alumnus.

Members of the Student Nurses Association delivered teddy bears to Children’s Hospital on Tuesday. From left: Sue Davis, instructor, Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences; Valerie Walker, senior; Amy Digan, senior; and Kelley Millsap, a Beth El alumnus.

Sue Davis, instructor at Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UCCS, and members of the Student Nurses Association delivered Valentine’s Day presents to patients at Children’s Hospital at Memorial Hospital.

For several weeks, the Student Nurses Association solicited donations for the project. Donors had the option of building a bear themselves or providing money and having a student nurse do the work. Led by Amy Digan, a Beth-El senior and a member of the Student Nurses Association, the group gathered to build holiday cheer for Children’s Hospital patients.

Earlier this month, Digan and Valerie Walker, a Beth-El senior, were assisted by Davis and Kelley Millsap, a Beth-El alumnus, in wheeling cartloads of bears through the hospital. Because of hospital regulations, the Student Nurses Association members were not allowed to deliver the bears directly to patients. Instead, hospital staff and volunteers shared them with patients, some in pediatric intensive care, over the next several days.

Larkin recognized for role in history preservation[47]

[48]

Karin Larkin, curator, Department of Anthropology at CU Denver, was recently recognized for her role in preserving southern Colorado history.

History Colorado presented the department with its Stephen H. Hart Award for its work with the Ludlow Tent Colony

Site during a Feb. 6 ceremony in Denver. From 2001 to 2005, Larkin worked as the project director for the Colorado Coalfield War Archaeology Project at DU.

The awards are named in honor of Steven H. Hart, Colorado's first state historic preservation officer, and cofounder of the Holland and Hart law firm.

In 1914, Ludlow, near Trinidad, was the site of a battle between striking coal miners and Colorado militia where 21 people were killed. The event sparked extensive labor and mine safety reforms across the United States. Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the strike and massacre. A statewide committee is planning events along the Front Range to commemorate these important events.

College Music Society selects Coe for ambassadorship[49]

[50]
Judith Coe, associate professor of music, College of Arts and Media at the University of Colorado Denver, has been chosen by the College Music Society (CMS) to serve as its inaugural ambassador to Ireland.

Coe has been a member of the society for many years and has served as a board member, co-chair and chair of the women's committee, program chair for the International meeting in Ireland in 2001, and as a member of numerous committees (including recent appointments to the International Program and Careers Outside the Academy committees).

"CMS is a wonderful resource for music professors," Coe said, "because of rich cross-disciplinary connections and a deep global exchange of ideas and performance practice that are possible within the academic community and beyond."

CMS identified Coe's strong ties to Ireland and her expertise in the nation's music as a great asset to the program. The organization is increasing its international presence and hopes to use Coe's knowledge, skills and experience to assist others who may be interested in Irish music.

Her interest in Ireland and Irish music began as a teenager and was strengthened with a trip to Ireland in 2000 to attend the International Summer School of Music and Dance in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick. That study, work, and building of professional networks and friendships led to Coe teaching her first class at CU Denver on Irish music and to her U.S. Scholar's Fulbright award in 2006-2007, an experience which Coe described as magical and transformative.

Appointed as a Fulbright Ambassador, 2010-2012 (and now a Fulbright Ambassador Emerita), Coe is teaching, for the second time, a CU Denver Honors and Leadership Program course on Irish Music, Peace, Politics and Popular Culture. Her Fulbright work and subsequent work she did during her 2011 sabbatical as a Visiting Scholar in the Ionad an Bhlascaoid Mhóir/The Blasket Centre in Dunquin, Co. Kerry, Ireland figures largely in Coe's UHL honors teaching and mentoring as well as her applied singing/songwriting teaching in the Music and Entertainment Industry Studies Department. She is working with UHL director, Steve Medema, and UHL students on a developing a UHL Maymester/study abroad opportunity for 2014.

Dropping names...[51]

Johnson

Thenhaus

Langston-Martinez

Ott

Assistant Professor **Heather Johnson**, School of Education and Human Development at CU Denver, has been invited by the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction to present her refereed paper, “Designing Covariation Tasks to Support Students’ Reasoning about Quantities involved in Rate of Change” at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom this July. The forum in Oxford is designed to promote reflection, collaboration, exchange and dissemination of ideas on the teaching and learning of mathematics, from primary to university level. Johnson teaches “Mathematics for Elementary Teachers” as well as “Curriculum and Methods in Secondary Mathematics.” … **Clark Thenhaus**, lecturer in the Department of Architecture and Director of Endemic at CU Denver, received a Special Mentions in the Infrastructural Transformation Category in the d3 Unbuilt Visions 2012 Competition. The program promotes critical debate about architecture and design by acknowledging excellence in unbuilt projects. Thenhaus won for his project “Star Gardens: Purple Hollow,” which considers abandoned silos across the Midwestern U.S. and how they might be re-appropriated as spatial volumes. The abandoned silos are proposed to be fit with a perforated dome composed of 1800 oculi that are derived computationally from constellation pattern alignments. … Denver Mayor Michael Hancock proclaimed Jan. 31, 2013, “Dr. **Donna Langston-Martinez** Day." This designation honors the CU Denver’s ethnic studies professor and department chair’s contributions to the creation of the Denver American Indian Commission and the Colorado Indian Education Foundation, and her ongoing commitment to American Indian students and ethnic studies. … **Brian Ott**, associate professor in communication at CU Denver, published two co-authored essays. The first, in the Western Journal of Communication, explores how media, and specifically film, can be incorporated into the classroom as part of a critical pedagogy. The second, in Critical Methodologies, examines constructions of the West in the Whitney Gallery of Western Art at the Buffalo Bill Museum in Cody, Wyo.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-postpone-vote-concealed-carry-resolution[2]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-boulder-officials-unveil-170-million-athletic-facilities-upgrade-proposal[3]
https://connections.cu.edu/news/cu-boulder-officials-unveil-170-million-athletic-facilities-upgrade-proposal/coach[4]
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https://www.cu.edu/staff/ssc[6] https://www.cusys.edu/cuadvocates/[7] http://hr.colorado.edu/lr/Pages/default.aspx[8]
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https://connections.cu.edu/news/chancellor-don-elliman-loses-interim-from-title/elliman-2[12]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-advocates-learn-inside-story-cu-budget[13]
https://connections.cu.edu/file/uccsburnettpng-0[14] http://cuadvocates.cu.edu/[15]
mailto:michelle.mckinney@cu.edu[16] https://www.cusys.edu/cuadvocates/2013_02-27_uccs-funding-in-focus.html[17]
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https://connections.cu.edu/file/anschutzperscription-ppng[19] http://publichealth.ucdenver.edu/[20] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/centers/maperc/online/Pages/Pain-Management-CME.aspx[21]
http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/centers/maperc/Pages/default.aspx[22]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/amphibian-study-shows-how-biodiversity-can-protect-against-disease[23]

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http://library.auraria.edu/directory/staff/Mariner/Matthew[38] https://connections.cu.edu/people/reed-joins-cu-boulder-launches-research-center-broadband-technology-and-policy[39] https://connections.cu.edu/file/preedpng[40]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/weiss-ferguson-chair-education-task-force[41]
https://connections.cu.edu/file/pweisspng[42] https://connections.cu.edu/file/pfergusonpng[43]
http://www.uccs.edu/provost/general-education.html[44] https://connections.cu.edu/people/denman-offers-social-media-insight[45] https://connections.cu.edu/people/nursing-students-instructor-deliver-valentines-children%E2%80%99s-hospital[46] https://connections.cu.edu/file/pnursing-studentspng[47] https://connections.cu.edu/people/larkin-recognized-role-history-preservation[48] https://connections.cu.edu/people/larkin-recognized-for-role-in-history-preservation/p_larkin[49] https://connections.cu.edu/people/college-music-society-selects-coe-ambassadorship[50]
https://connections.cu.edu/file/pcoepng[51] https://connections.cu.edu/people/dropping-names-60[52]
https://connections.cu.edu/file/p-dnjohnsonpng[53] https://connections.cu.edu/file/p-dnthenhauspng[54]
https://connections.cu.edu/file/p-dnlangston-martinezpng[55] https://connections.cu.edu/file/p-dnottpng