Allen builds roots for sustainable diversity[1]
[2]

For Brenda Allen, professional and personal growth does not stop at just one juncture.

Just take a peek at her career: She started as an assistant professor beginning her research, assumed various administrative roles, then helped to build sustainable initiatives as vice chancellor of diversity and inclusion for CU Denver l Anschutz Medical Campus.

Allen is one of two recipients of the 2017 Excellence in Leadership Award[3], which is given to an alumnus of the systemwide Excellence in Leadership Program[4] (ELP). The award recognizes exemplary leadership at the university in one or more areas: leadership of organizations, departments or teams; leadership of projects, programs and/or research; fiscal management and/or fundraising; and student instruction. Allen was recognized for her contributions to the field of diversity and inclusion, along with her dedication to CU.

Her career began after receiving her Ph.D. in organizational communication from Howard University. In 1989, Allen was recruited to CU Boulder as an assistant professor. There, her academic focus made a shift.

“I was intrigued when I got there, at what I later learned would be called identity politics, and assumptions people had about me and my area of scholarship,” Allen said. “People assumed I did research on gender and intercultural communication because I am a black woman. Intrigued by this dynamic, I switched my focus of scholarship from computer-mediated communication to social identity and power dynamics in higher education.”

Growing and thriving off this assumption, Allen transferred to CU Denver in 2001 as an associate professor of communication and became formally involved in leadership positions. She chaired the communication department from 2003 to 2007 and became associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences from 2007 to 2012.

“In all of those roles, I was continuing to gain experience and hone my expertise in diversity and inclusion work, and I began to delve into leadership concerning diversity and inclusion,” Allen said.

While honing her skills and research, Allen embraced the opportunity to complete the ELP in 2007.

“I appreciated both engaging and interacting with colleagues as well as benefiting from the expertise and from the learning experience of solely focusing on leadership in really valuable ways,” she said.

Allen’s expertise and commitment to diversity efforts led to her promotion to associate vice chancellor of diversity and inclusion for CU Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus in 2012 and vice chancellor in 2016.

Allen summarizes her leadership skills with a three-prong catchphrase she dubs “the three S’s”: strategic, systemic and sustainable. Crediting her work in organizational communication, Allen believes that to truly transform an organization, we must be intentional and deliberate to make change that lasts.

This philosophy is making an impact on the university, with centers and people now adopting the approach. Examples of this method are evident throughout the university, with the creation of an Office of Equity for CU Denver | Anschutz, a Bias Response Task Force in place for campus search committees and a Diversity and Inclusion Action Agenda for the School of Dental Medicine, to name a few.

Her most recent accomplishment is a grassroots effort for undocumented CU students. Responding to recent DACA changes in 2015, Allen addressed staff and faculty concerns by establishing the Undocumented Student Services Program at CU Denver.

“Anybody that we form a formal relationship with – whether they are students, employees or external to our campus – we owe them respect. We owe them our support,” she said. “In this case, this plays out in our staff and faculty who saw a need and wanted to provide formalized assistance to undocumented students.”

This program, now a formalized resource for CU Denver and CU Anschutz students, offers services from DACA applications to immigration resources. Faculty and staff also may volunteer their time as advocates for these students. Recently, Allen strategically helped to advocate for using the CU Student Relief Fund to support students who needed to renew DACA applications.

Her influence does not stop there. Allen also takes the time to provide mentorship for many women on the Denver and Anschutz campuses.

“Her program that she called ‘womentoring’ helped to provide junior and senior faculty and staff members on the campuses with tools for ensuring they possess the skills and confidence to contribute to the University of Colorado in a multitude of ways,” said Denise Kassebaum, professor and dean of the School of Dental Medicine.

Just ask Cerise Hunt, a doctoral student whom Allen mentored on becoming an effective and inclusive leader in her new leadership role.

“Dr. Allen is first and foremost a remarkable mentor who has helped guide my professional and academic journey,” said Hunt, who is now the director of the Center for Public Health Practice and instructor at the Colorado School of Public Health. “She is easily accessible and readily accommodates nontraditional students, such as myself, who work full-time. I have and continue to benefit immeasurably from her advisement, mentorship and teaching.”

While CU has continued to build and strengthen its diversity and inclusion efforts, solidifying its diverse culture is Allen’s next step.

“We have to engage these issues – not as just a one-time thing or by being reactionary, but rather by taking a proactive approach embedded in the institution’s culture, policies and procedures,” Allen said.

PERA puzzle, Title IX changes among issues affecting CU at Capitol[5]

Reform of the Colorado Public Employees’ Retirement Association (PERA), changes to Title IX, the opioid epidemic and teacher shortage are among the issues posing ramifications for the University of Colorado and its faculty and staff this legislative session.

Lawmakers on Wednesday convened at the Capitol for the start of the 2018 Colorado General Assembly.

CU’s State Relations team has worked over the interim to continue cultivating relationships with legislators and promote the endeavors of each of the CU campuses through tours, meetings and outreach activities in legislative districts. The work is critical to the university’s Government Relations efforts during the 120-day session.

The team will work to support funding increases for higher education, CU’s legislative priorities and also navigate through legislation that will affect the institution.

“We are excited to embark on the 2018 legislative session and we look forward to working with our friends in the legislature on both sides of the aisle on issues that are important to CU,” said Tanya Kelly-Bowry, vice president, Office of Government Relations. “We will be running key legislation to benefit the CU system and will also work on key funding initiatives that are made possible by the critical Hospital Provider Fee Enterprise legislation that passed last year, SB 17-267.

“With a minimum of 500 bills introduced each session, we also look forward to working with our campus stakeholders to collect feedback and engage in the policy making process.”

Kelly-Bowry expressed thanks to Gov. John Hickenlooper for his continued support of higher education that was announced in his budget request in November.[6]

The request included an overall increase for higher education in FY 2018-19 of $86.9 million, or 9.7 percent. The total includes $56.8 million for governing boards to be allocated through the state's funding formula. CU would receive about $18.9 million, or about a 10 percent increase.

The request also includes important increases for capital construction, including $12.3 million for the CU Anschutz Center for Personalized Medicine and Behavioral Health (ranked No. 10) and $15.1 million for Level 1 controlled maintenance.

Government Relations will be working closely with Todd Saliman, vice president and chief financial officer, and his team to support the governor's request. However, there are several other budget pressures and policy issues that will need to be worked out during the legislative session that might still affect the final higher education allocation, such as transportation and infrastructure needs, health care, and PERA solvency. Because of CU's lobbying efforts on the Hospital Provider Fee bill last year, there is more money available.

Upcoming legislative policy issues include:
Colorado Public Employees' Retirement Association reform – PERA's unfunded liabilities are more than $32 billion, and more than 550,000 Coloradans – including 15,000 CU employees – rely on the state's pension rather than Social Security. The governor's office, PERA and other stakeholders have submitted proposals to address the solvency issues. The issue presents significant budget pressure – especially for state agencies and state employees – that must be addressed. CU will be actively engaged in the issue. **Title IX reform** – As the federal government works on new Title IX guidance, there are efforts to codify Title IX processes involving sexual misconduct investigations into state law. **Opioid epidemic** – The bipartisan Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders Interim Study Committee met frequently throughout the summer and fall to discuss measures that would address the growing opioid epidemic in Colorado. The committee is submitting six bills, including one with funding for the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention at the CU Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; it would provide education and training initiatives to practitioners. **Teacher Shortage Issues –** The governor's budget request also includes $10 million for teacher preparation initiatives in rural areas that are deeply affected by the teacher shortage. CU's Colleges of Education already are engaged in important work with these communities. CU will work with stakeholders on the funding allocation. Government Relations will be working with CU education deans, rural schools and community colleges on this issue.
University employees may engage with legislation through various associations or personal interests, which is an important part of the public policy process, the Government Relations team notes. Endeavors that are outside of CU's official priorities or through Government Relations must be done on personal time. Please see the CU lobbying policy [7] for more information.

CU's MOOC and specialization offerings leap forward[8]

New year brings 13 systemwide policy changes[9]

The Office of Policy and Efficiency (OPE) has announced changes to 13 Administrative Policy Statements (one rescission, seven revisions and five new) from the Academic/Research and Human Resources areas.
Rescission 1.1023-Restricted, Proprietary and Classified Research Revisions 2.1008-Procedures for the Establishment of Institutes (Formerly, Procedures for the Establishment of Centers, Institutes, Laboratories and Bureaus) 3.1019-Degree Program Review (Formerly, Implementation of Regent Policy on Program Review) 4.1026-Roles and Responsibilities of Department Chairs 5.5013-Acting and Interim Appointments for University Staff Positions 6.5022-Exemptions from the State Personnel System 7.5023-Letters of Offer for University Staff 8.5026-Alternate Work Arrangements for Classified Staff and University Staff New 9.1038-New Degree Program Approval 10.1039-Degree Revocation 11.1040-Gainful Employment Certificate Approval for Inclusion in the CCHE Higher Education Funding

Formula 12.1041-Approval of Academic Units 13.5056-University Staff Recruitment
These changes were reviewed by the campus chancellors and approved by President Bruce Benson and are effective as of Jan. 1, 2018.

For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[10].

For additional information on system policies, go to: http://www.cu.edu/ope[11].

Many of these changes are related to the formal review of the Regent Laws and Policies. For more information, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview[12].

Changes to Regent Law (Article) 4 take effect[13]

Changes to Article 4: Organization of the Academic Units and the Regent policies relating to the organization of academic units at the university took effect on Jan. 1, 2018.

The Board of Regents approved the changes on June 15. However, because the changes required the development of some new Administrative Policy Statements (APSs) and revisions to some existing APSs, the implementation of the approved revisions to Article and Policy 4 was delayed until the APS work could be completed.

Following a full review process, the president recently approved four new APSs (1038[14], 1039[15], 1040[16], 1041[17]), revisions to three existing APSs (1008[18], 1019[19], 1026[20]), and the elimination of one APS (1023[21]).

The revised Article 4: Academic Organization and Program Planning[22], new Regent Policies 4A and 4B[23], and all associated changes to APSs took effect on Jan. 1.

For a list of the highlights of the changes that will most directly affect campus policies and practices, click here[24].

For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[25].

CU's laugh track: Examining the science of being funny [26]

Ancient Beasts of Australia: Did humans wipe them out? To CU scientist Giff Miller, it sure looks that way [27]

Experts to convene Grain School on campus [28]

A salute to saloons: Booze runs in the veins of Denver's history [29]

Staff Council pitches in for community [30]

Herrera named campus chief diversity officer [31]

Caruthers, Gold named 2017 National Academy of Inventors fellows [32]

Piket-May discusses student-nonprofit partnership on podcast [33]

Dunn to present at AEI conference Jan. 16 [34]

CU Study: Medicaid Expansion States, Like Colorado, Less Likely To See Hospitals Close[35]

Birds develop PTSD-like stress responses from oil and gas noise pollution, CU Boulder study says[36]

Coloradans seeking more school funding inch closer to 2018 ballot[37]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/allen-builds-roots-sustainable-diversity[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/b-allen_e.jpg[3] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/two-honored-excellence-leadership-luncheon-and-lecture[4] http://www.cu.edu/employee-services/leadership/elp[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/pera-puzzle-title-ix-changes-among-issues-affecting-cu-capitol[6] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/governor-proposes-97-percent-funding-increase-higher-education[7] https://www.cu.edu/sites/default/files/2009.pdf[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-s-mooc-and-specialization-offerings-leap-forward[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-year-brings-13-systemwide-policy-changes[10] https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[11] http://www.cu.edu/ope[12] https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/changes-regent-law-article-4-take-effect[14] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1038[15] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1039[16] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1040[17] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1041[18] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1008[19] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1019[20] http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1026[21]

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https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[26] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-s-laugh-track-examining-science-being-funny[27] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/ancient-beasts-australia-did-humans-wipe-them-out-cu-scientist-giff-miller-it-sure-looks-way[28] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/experts-convene-grain-school-campus[29]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/salute-saloons-booze-runs-veins-denver-s-history[30]
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https://connections.cu.edu/itn/cu-study-medicaid-expansion-states-colorado-less-likely-see-hospitals-close[36]
https://connections.cu.edu/itn/birds-develop-ptsd-stress-responses-oil-and-gas-noise-pollution-cu-boulder-study-says[37] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/coloradans-seeking-more-school-funding-inch-closer-2018-ballot