Axelrad aims for the stars[1]
[2]

Penina Axelrad is, at heart, a problem-solver.

Her drive to discover creative, elegant solutions has been the hallmark of her career, from earning her Ph.D. in Aeronautics and Astronautics in 1991 from Stanford, to joining the faculty of University of Colorado Boulder's Department of Aerospace Engineering Sciences in 1992, through her accomplished leadership as its chair from 2012-17.

Axelrad is one of two recipients of the 2017 Excellence in Leadership Award[3], 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. Axelrad was recognized for her leadership of the university's Smead Aerospace Engineering Sciences Department and of CU Boulder AeroSpace Ventures.

"Dr. Axelrad's dedicated leadership in support of CU's aerospace research and education missions has been instrumental in building the reputation of CU Boulder and the state of Colorado as world leaders in aerospace," said Abby Benson, assistant vice chancellor for research and innovation.

After completing the ELP program with its 2006-7 class, Axelrad said she felt more connected to the university as a whole. She increased her understanding of how the university is run – particularly its relationship with the Colorado state legislature – and developed negotiation skills that served her well in the ensuing years.

Named AES department chair in 2012, Axelrad oversaw a dramatic expansion of department programs, industry partnerships and opportunities for students. She is especially proud of outstanding new faculty hires and the recognition for excellence that the AES faculty, staff and students have received.

A major component of the expansion of aerospace activities on campus centers on CU Boulder's AeroSpace Ventures [5] (ASV), a collaboration among researchers, students, industry leaders, government partners and entrepreneurs working on space and Earth systems. Building upon her two predecessors' efforts to foster interdepartmental and industry partnerships, Axelrad accelerated this idea in 2013 as chair of the ASV Executive Committee.

When founded, the ASV brought together five of the largest campus units engaged in aerospace-related work: the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Sciences (CIRES), the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics (LASP) and the departments of Aerospace Engineering Sciences, Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, and Astrophysical and Planetary Sciences. The chairs and directors of these units focused on ways to collaborate on research and education initiatives and to be more coordinated in their interactions with aerospace industry and government partnerships. The team also worked closely with six Colorado aerospace companies to bring them into the ASV as founding members.

Axelrad credits former managing director Diane Dimeff with coining the name, and guiding the team to develop and articulate a shared vision for what could be accomplished through the collaboration. This allowed campus leadership to help spread the message to government entities, industry and the outside world.

In the meantime, the group got to better understand each other's priorities and needs. And this yielded many fruitful collaborations among the participating units: hiring junior faculty with strong interdisciplinary skills as ASV faculty, hosting educational and networking opportunities for students, expanding participation to five more departments and programs, and providing significant leadership in the development of campuswide Grand Challenge initiatives.

"The fact that the campus recognizes aerospace as an important theme and is using the ASV collaboration as a model for the development of other interdisciplinary themes is fantastic," Axelrad said.

Another high mark of Axelrad's time as faculty chair was fundraising. Collaborating with her deans and CU Advancement, she was involved in four major gifts totaling $15.6 million. The largest was a $10 million gift from Ann

Smead and Michael Byram, naming her department and being the lead gift for the new AES building on Boulder's East Campus.

She credits the advancement team for helping her understand that the crux of fundraising was finding a shared vision with donors.

"I had the opportunity to work with people who care deeply about CU and really want to make a difference," Axelrad said. "Figuring out how to bring together our ideas for what we want to accomplish, with a prospective donor's goals, to actually make it happen is a truly rewarding experience."

Another highlight was a $3 million Lockheed Martin sponsorship agreement reached in August 2016. Initially, CU was at the table with a request for a brick-and-mortar gift. The company wasn't interested in capital investments but was interested in sponsoring programs in key technical areas for its business interests. So Axelrad and the advancement team pivoted to propose endowment support focused on radio frequency systems for space. Getting to know CU's faculty leaders in this area and others led Lockheed Martin to also establish a master agreement likely to support $1 million annually in university research.

"Penny demands excellence from her colleagues and students, but invests personally in the outcome," said Anne Bishop Shoup, assistant dean for advancement. "In my experience, her steadfast persistence and personal dedication to her department is unmatched across the college. She is an uncommon and impressive servant leader."

Axelrad also led the process through which the new AES building on the East Campus was conceived, approved and realized for groundbreaking on Oct. 26, 2017. Her tenure as chair saw an expansion of faculty from 25 to 37 tenure-track members.

"Her modus operandi is to solicit inputs from all sources, carefully listen, build consensus and take action to achieve results, extended respect to all individuals throughout the process," said Jeffrey M. Forbes, professor emeritus. "Through example, she has cultivated an extraordinary level of collegiality within our department, and, through her actions, she has made us proud to be part of something special."

Axelrad stepped down as chair in 2017, proud of CU Boulder's growing national reputation.

"It is synergistic," Axelrad said. "CU's well-deserved reputation for excellence in aerospace continues to attract top students and faculty. Then they find out about the amazing opportunities to stay in Colorado and contribute to a vibrant aerospace industry and national labs. The combination makes this a very exciting place."

Axelrad tries to encourage young people she meets to picture themselves in that role. Through her work at CU Boulder, she is setting the stage to inspire a new generation of problem-solvers.

"Engineering is a great profession. It brings together science and math and computing, with creativity and problem-solving and innovative design, and, well, all of these things," said Axelrad, who is currently on sabbatical, studying GPS systems as part of a National Research Council Fellowship at the Air Force Research Lab in Albuquerque. "There are so many opportunities to achieve success as an engineer – great compensation, the chance to build new things, and you have a lot of freedom to take your career in the direction you want."

Deadlines approaching for 2018 Boettcher Webb-Waring biomedical research grants[6]

Applications still are being accepted for the 2018 Boettcher Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards[7] program to support research that has a direct impact on human health.
Up to six grants of $235,000 (covering up to three years of research activity) will be awarded to promising, talented, early career investigators at the University of Colorado Awardees will carry the prestigious title of "Boettcher Investigator" Eligible faculty researchers from all four CU campuses are encouraged to apply

For information on how to apply, click here[8].

Please do not contact the Boettcher Foundation directly.

Call for nominations: Staff Council Service Excellence Award[9]

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 individual from each campus and system administration, and includes a $1,000 cash award to be presented at the All Staff Council Conference on April 13. 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[10] for more information regarding the award criteria and nomination process.

All nomination forms must be received electronically by **11:59 p.m.Thursday, Feb. 8**.

Spring tuition waiver benefit online applications due Jan. 31[11]
[12]

Employees and dependents who want to save money on their spring tuition bill must submit their tuition waiver benefit [13] application by Wednesday, Jan. 31.

The University of Colorado's tuition benefit grants waived or discounted college credit hours to qualified CU employees or their eligible dependents for credit-bearing graduate or undergraduate courses.

CU's tuition benefit provides qualified employees with tuition waiver assistance for up to nine credit hours per academic year.

Dependents have two options: attend a CU employee's home campus and receive nine waived credit hours (CU Boulder dependents receive a 30 percent discount) or attend a different CU campus and receive a tuition waiver of $270 per credit hour, up to nine hours.

Note: In order for a verified dependent to use the waiver, the employee must first waive their use of the benefit for the academic year. The Tuition Waiver Benefit applies only to the cost of credit hours. Employees and dependents are responsible for all non-waived tuition, campus student fees and taxes.

Deadlines are approaching: Online applications for the upcoming spring semester are now being accepted by Employee Services through the employee portal[14]. Employees must submit it on their dependents' behalf. Learn how to access the application and submit it here[15].

Forms must be submitted by Wednesday, Jan. 31. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Before using the benefit, employees must complete the following tasks by these deadlines:

1. Apply to the chosen campus as a student before semester begins
CU Boulder: Jan. 2, 2018 CU Denver: Contact Admissions[16] CU Anschutz: Contact your school or college[16] UCCS: Jan. 16, 2018
2. Submit the tuition waiver benefit online applicationby Jan. 31, 2018

3. Register for courses
CU Boulder: Dependents: On their registration day Employees: Jan. 16, 2018 CU Denver: Jan. 16, 2018 CU Anschutz: Jan. 22, 2018 UCCS: Dependents: On their registration day Employees: Jan. 16, 2018
4. Apply for the College Opportunity Fund (COF)
CU Boulder: May 3, 2018 CU Denver|Anschutz: Feb. 28, 2018 UCCS: May 3, 2018
5. Pay fees and non-waived tuition
CU Boulder: Listed on tuition bill CU Denver|Anschutz: Dependents: Feb. 2, 2018 Employees: Feb. 28, 2018 UCCS: Jan. 31, 2018
To learn more about the Tuition Waiver Benefit, policies and upcoming deadlines, visit the Employee Services website [13].

CU supporters to gather with state leaders at Capitol[17]

CU Advocacy Day, an annual opportunity for CU Advocates and guests to engage with state leaders at the Capitol, is set for 3-5 p.m. Jan. 30.

Presented by the CU Advocates program[18] in the Office of the President, the event invites members of the program and guests to hear from higher education leaders, elected officials and CU experts. Attendees will be better prepared to promote the university's educational, research, public service and economic contributions. The program aims to raise awareness about the state's funding outlook and to dispel commonly held myths about CU and public higher education.

Attendees are asked to register in advance[19].

The agenda for CU Advocacy Day, taking place in the Capitol's Old Supreme Court Chambers on the second floor:
3 p.m. Welcome and purpose/objectives of CU Advocacy Day at the Capitol, Michele McKinney, assistant vice president advocacy and external relations, and Tanya Kelly-Bowry, vice president, CU Government Relations CU Advocate of the Year comments, Christina Beck **3:05 p.m.** Importance of CU Advocates voices, CU pride, state funding and beyond, and the important work at the Capitol, Bruce Benson, President **3:15 p.m.** Budget request for higher ed. Value of higher ed to a state's economy. Public perception of public higher ed? Influence public perception. Gov. John Hickenlooper **3:25 p.m.** Legislative Preview for CU, Tanya Kelly-Bowry **3:35 p.m.** CU Myth Busters and Budget Update, Todd Saliman, CU vice president, budget and finance
UNIQUE CENTERS AT CU
3:50 p.m. National Mental Health Innovation Center: Matt Vogl, executive director, CU Anschutz Medical Campus **4:25 p.m.** Center for Western Civilization, Thought and Policy: Robert Kaufman, fifth visiting scholar of conservative thought and policy, CU Boulder **4:45 p.m.** Questions and closing
A special legislative reception follows from 5-7 p.m. providing an opportunity to speak and connect with elected officials. Reception registration is at capacity, but CU Advocacy Day attendees may register to be included on the waitlist.

New scholarship fund supports underrepresented local students at Leeds [20]

Annual campus appreciation reception set for Jan. 25 [21]

Education dean confers master's degree on her daughter [22]

College of Nursing fourth in Best Online Graduate Nursing Programs [23]

Litchfield named new chief financial officer, vice chancellor at UCCS[24]

Doebele named director of CU Cancer Center Thoracic Oncology Research Initiative [25]

Landis receives True West Award [26]

Murphy joins board of directors [27]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/axelrad-aims-stars[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/axelrad_01.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://www.colorado.edu/aerospaceventures/[6] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/deadlines-approaching-2018-boettcher-webb-waring-biomedical-research-grants[7] http://www.cu.edu/boettcher-foundation-webb-waring-biomedical-research-awards[8] https://www.cu.edu/boettcher-foundation-webb-waring-biomedical-research-awards/how-apply[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/call-nominations-staff-council-service-excellence-award[10] http://click.communications.cu.edu/?qs=b67a5461ef2e8f2146eb74699bdcf04d1222f088c353e54318ce138a940288a9428ea8a440ed77f56387976bf33119b55111c10e6f7b65a4[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/spring-tuition-waiver-benefit-online-applications-due-jan-31[12] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/es_tuition-benefit_top.jpg[13] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/benefits/employee-tuition-benefit[14] https://my.cu.edu/[15] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/tuition-benefit-application-forms[16] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about-

us/contact/Pages/default.aspx[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-supporters-gather-state-leaders-capitol[18] https://www.cu.edu/cu-advocates[19] http://www.cvent.com/d/ytq3sd[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-scholarship-fund-supports-underrepresented-local-students-leeds[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/annual-campus-appreciation-reception-set-jan-25[22] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/education-dean-confers-master-s-degree-her-daughter[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/college-nursing-fourth-best-online-graduate-nursing-programs[24] https://connections.cu.edu/people/litchfield-named-new-chief-financial-officer-vice-chancellor-uccs[25] https://connections.cu.edu/people/doebele-named-director-cu-cancer-center-thoracic-oncology-research-initiative[26] https://connections.cu.edu/people/landis-receives-true-west-award[27] https://connections.cu.edu/people/murphy-joins-board-directors