Administrative efficiency: Getting better, with room for improvement[1]

The President's Task Force on Efficiency reached a milestone in November, marking five years since being established by President Bruce Benson. Fresh feedback from the campus communities indicates that plenty of progress toward improved efficiency has been realized – while room for improvement remains in some areas.

The feedback was collected in a March 2013 survey, which now is being summarized for campus and governance groups[2]. At the Jan. 23 Faculty Council meeting at 1800 Grant St., the findings were presented by Leonard Dinegar, senior vice president and chief of staff, and Dan Montez, director of the Office of Policy and Efficiency.

Survey respondents indicated widespread progress has been made in revising, eliminating and simplifying university policies, procedures, and processes, and in how system administration communicates the changes with the CU community. Some 81 percent said they've seen progress in streamlining, and 73 percent have seen improved communication.

The survey also indicates that more work needs to be done in providing appropriate tools and training required by faculty and staff in order to implement policies and procedures, and in increasing cooperation and coordination among system administration and its operating units, campuses and affiliates. About 51 percent of survey respondents reported progress being made in those areas.

The task force summarized three key findings that survey respondents collectively identified:
It is important for system administration to strive to understand campus needs and perspectives and to seek input from the campuses and end-users as policies, procedures or processes are developed. Much progress has been made on policies; now, system administration must focus on process improvement opportunities and challenge the mindset of, "We've always done it that way." System Administration should increase awareness and share information on the system and campus efficiency and effectiveness efforts with leadership and with the campuses, faculty and staff. Everyone across CU can benefit from these efforts, as a great idea on one campus might help another campus.
The survey summary also revisited a list of Top 10 aggravators identified by the campuses in 2009. Of these 10, eight have seen significant improvement, according to between 51 percent and 80 percent of respondents. The remaining two registered lower numbers:
"The administrative burden on campuses is problematic. There are too many requirements for faculty to complete non-academic tasks and the burden placed on staff is unwieldy – we are not staffed to operate at a best-practice level in all areas." Only 41 percent indicated significant improvement since 2009; 59 percent said this area either has not changed or gotten worse since then. "Hiring processes are too cumbersome, time consuming and confusing." Only 47 percent said this area has gotten better since 2009; 53 percent indicated it's the same or worse since then.
The survey also indicated issues of concern can vary greatly when splitting responses of faculty and staff. For instance, Dinegar said, staff members tended to indicate there's not enough training available, while faculty said there's too much required training.

"There's also the issue of how we train," Montez said. "Everyone learns differently. We have a bank of online courses, but not everyone may like that way of learning."

The survey indicated widespread understanding of how the task force has streamlined Administrative Policy Statements (APS): The number of APSs has dropped from 210 to 88 since November 2008; the number of pages in those policies has dwindled from 650 to 270.

"People recognize that we've made a lot of progress on policies, so the next big frontier is process improvements," Montez said. "There's a lot of grassroots efforts going on at campuses, and we're ripe for a lot more work in that area."

Further communication from the survey will be shared in the weeks ahead. Feedback and suggestions for the Office of Policy and Efficiency always may be submitted to its website[3].

Benson: State 'stepping up' with plan to boost higher ed funding by $100 million[4]

In this photo from Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia's (center) Twitter feed, he's joined by CU President Bruce Benson, left, and Colorado Mesa University President Tim Foster at Wednesday's hearing of the Senate Education Committee. All three wore logo pins for CU and Colorado Mesa.

CU President Bruce Benson on Wednesday spoke in support of Senate Bill 1, the state's intent to increase higher education funding by $100 million.

Benson joined Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia and Colorado Mesa University President Tim Foster as the first to speak on the bill at a hearing of the Senate Education Committee.

"We are doing a lot to help ourselves, but the state funding remains critical to us," Benson told the committee, which he also thanked for supporting the bill.

The increase began as a request of Gov. John Hickenlooper in his proposed budget, then was made into a separate bill by the Legislature. Of the $100 million increase, $60 million would go toward institutions' operating costs; the remaining $40 million would be earmarked for student financial aid. CU's share of the $60 million in operating costs would be $16.5 million, or an 11 percent increase over last year.

Garcia called the $100 million proposed increase "a historic investment in higher education."

"It will make higher education more accessible, which is good for the economy," Garcia said.

Senate Bill 1, aka the College Affordability Act, requires an agreement by higher education institutions not to raise tuition any more than 6 percent next year.

"This will help keep tuition increases in check," said Benson, who noted that the CU Board of Regents has final say on tuition increases. "We intend to come in below the 6 percent mark."

Benson said CU's current funding level remains $60 million below the past peak for state funding; he called the proposed increase a helpful step in the right direction, and thanked the state for "stepping up."

Several students, including one each from CU-Boulder and UCCS, also voiced their support of the bill to the committee; no formal action was taken Wednesday.

CU's Government Relations[6] team will continue to monitor the details as Senate Bill 1 moves through the Legislature.

Q&A: Tanya Kelly-Bowry[7]

Tanya Kelly-Bowry, Vice president of government relations

With the 2014 legislative session underway, the Office of Government Relations is front and center at the state Capitol and in Washington, D.C., tracking key pieces of legislation and budget items that have the potential to affect CU and other institutions of higher education.

Here's a Q&A with Tanya Kelly-Bowry, vice president of government relations.

Q: How is the session going so far?

A: We're really excited to get things underway. We had great news this year because Senate Bill 1 was introduced – it includes $100 million in new funding in the governor's budget for higher education.

Q: What does the proposed boost in funding mean for the university, and what does it say about the future?

A: This is the first time in several years we've seen an increase for higher education. It's great that we're seeing a big emphasis placed on higher education by the Legislature. That's really positive, because we've seen so many cuts in recent years.

Q: How do you view the role of Government Relations at the Capitol?

A: We want to be utilized as a resource for policymakers. We make sure we communicate information about key legislation to interested parties across the university. That can range from capital construction projects to plumbing to financial aid to academic research facilities – there's a wide array of subjects. We advocate for more operating dollars and capital construction. We also track and lobby key health care policy legislation.

Our office really serves as a resource to key policy makers: We provide background, fact sheets or expert witnesses on key policies or legislation. We work with faculty, staff and student groups, hosting them at the Capitol. It's our office's pleasure to serve the internal CU community and external policymaker community to make sure CU is represented front and center on policy issues.

Q: How is the tone of discourse at the Capitol different during an election year such as this one?

A: We tend to see many different issues come up in an election year as both Republicans and Democrats are vying to either retain the majority or take back the majority. Currently, both houses and the executive branch are controlled by Democrats. And Gov. Hickenlooper is running for re-election in this cycle. His opponents include state Sen. Greg Brophy, Secretary of State Scott Gessler, former state Sen. Mike Kopp and former U.S. Rep. Tom Tancredo.

Our office has critical ties with both Republicans and Democrats. It is critical that we have support from all entities, no matter who is in the majority.

Q: The community college bill has been of great interest to faculty. What's the latest on Senate Bill 4[9]?

On Tuesday, it passed unamended on second reading in the senate. Sen. Rollie Heath and other legislators expressed appreciation for CU and other institutions working together on a compromise over the interim.

We worked with the community colleges, four-year institutions and the Department of Higher Education and negotiated language that ensures a thorough process by which any four-year degrees at community colleges would be approved.

We will continue to monitor the bill as it moves through the Legislature.

Q: What key dates on the calendar are you anticipating this session?

A: On Feb. 24, we will be featuring our CU-Boulder students in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the opening of the CU in D.C.[10] program's office there, and to launch the year-round academic program. Many of our CU students are legislative aides and interns in Washington and here at the Capitol.

March 17 is CU Advocacy Day here at the Capitol. It will spotlight the importance of Alzheimer's disease research and the featured guest speaker will be Huntington Potter, Ph.D., who is professor of neurology and director of Alzheimer's disease programs at the CU School of Medicine Department of Neurology and Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome.

Faculty Council calls attention to 'uncompensated merit'[11]

The Faculty Council is considering a motion that would express concern over the concept of uncompensated merit, suggesting that salary models at the university are not in line with contemporary market forces.

"Long-serving faculty and exempt professionals are severely disadvantaged by our compensation models that are non-responsive to market forces and that are disjointed with regard to matching the rewards for merit with available funds," reads the proposed motion, which was discussed by the council at its Jan. 23 meeting at 1800 Grant St. "In other words, faculty merit is often the result of long-term uneven outcomes that may not match available funding.

"Faculty with high merit primarily during years of low funding are penalized disproportionately. Some exempt professionals may suffer the same inequities."

The motion was brought to the council by its Budget Committee, which originally referred to the issue as "salary compression." At last week's meeting, Council Chair Melinda Piket-May said the council's Executive Committee preferred the term "uncompensated merit" to "salary compression."

Budget Committee Chair Bruce Neumann, participating in the meeting via phone, said the wording change was acceptable. He said it was important for the motion to move forward as soon as possible in order to allow CU administrators and campus chancellors time to develop and implement a plan before the 2014-15 budget is approved by the Board of Regents in the spring.

The full council voted to advance the motion, but only after the council's Personnel Committee has provided input. That process is underway, with the motion set to return for consideration by the Faculty Council at its March 6 meeting.

In other business at last week's meeting:

- Boulder Faculty Assembly Chair Paul Chinowsky said the group is putting together two committees to review the recent conflict between tenured professor Patti Adler and the campus Office of Discrimination and Harassment. "There's going to be a review of the processes done, to determine if anything wrong happened or not – on both sides," Chinowsky said.

- Council Vice Chair Laura Borgelt said work on updating language in the council's bylaws is continuing. She asked that Faculty Council members with input on the changes provide the information to her at laura.borgelt@ucdenver.edu[12] by Feb. 28.

Major software upgrade to benefit CU business operations[13]

Stay informed

Follow these important links to learn more about the PeopleSoft HCM/FIN 9.2:

Project News[14]HCM news[15]Finance news[16]

Enter your email address under "Subscribe to project news via Email" to receive notifications of new posts by email.

Over the next two years, a major software upgrade promises to improve how CU faculty and staff get paid, track leave, manage financial transactions and perform many other functions.

The PeopleSoft HCM/FIN 9.2 Upgrade project is a collaboration between CU's system administration and campus personnel to enhance and update many aspects of the university's business operations.

When the project goes live in November 2015, HR and Finance users across CU will use new online features, functions and enhancements to help employees consolidate tasks and find support. (Note: As part of the upgrade, HR system's name will change from HRMS to Human Capital Management [HCM].)

To assure the upgraded systems best serve employees' needs, campus users will be asked to give feedback during various stages of the process. These groups will be critical to a successful implementation.

Why is CU upgrading its systems?

CU's current HRMS and Finance systems have not been updated in several years. As a result, we have missed out on functionalities that will help the university be more effective. This upgrade brings systems up to date and lays the foundation for future enhancements.

How can I stay informed about this project?

The project team will keep the CU community informed throughout the upgrade through the PeopleSoft HCM/FIN 9.2 Upgrade project site (http://cu-peoplesoft-upgrade.com/[14]). It provides areas for overall project news[17] as well as dedicated areas for Finance[16] and HCM[15].

High-level project information and updates will be featured in upcoming CU Connections articles and in the CU Resources area of the employee portal (my.cu.edu[18]).

What will happen during the project?

The project comprises five phases: Planning, Development, Testing, Training and Go Live.
[19]

Planning and Design

During this phase, work plans will be created, key users/stakeholders are identified and fit/gap sessions will be conducted with key users to document current and future business and system processes. Functional and technical design documents then will be prepared for the development phase.
Development
Design documents will be approved by key users during this phase. Business and system process gap resolutions will be approved and implementation plans developed. Detailed design documents from the design phase also will be built and system tested.
Testing
All the project pieces will be brought together into a special testing environment to test for errors, bugs and usability, in order to verify that the system meets all the business requirements defined in the design phase. University-wide testers will be asked to provide their feedback and insights during this time.
Training
Users will learn the system guided by targeted training plans. Additionally, new business processes will be finalized.
Go Live
Employees will have access to new, improved tools. We will continue to listen to your feedback about the systems.

[20]

When will we hear more about new features and tools?

Full details about new PeopleSoft tools, features, functions and enhancements will be finalized following the Fit/Gap conclusion in June. The university will provide previews of tools, programs and functionalities to employees throughout the planning and design phase.

- Finance: http://cu-peoplesoft-upgrade.com/category/finance/[16]
- HCM: http://cu-peoplesoft-upgrade.com/category/hcm/[15]

Marion Downs Hearing Center closer to new facility[21]

[22]
Marion Downs turned 100 over the weekend and received an amazing gift. A $1 million donation from the Anschutz Foundation means Downs and the center she funded, Marion Downs Hearing Center (MDHC), are one step closer to a new facility.

The Celebrating the Legacy Awards Gala was held the last weekend of January 2014 to raise money for the facility, located near University of Colorado Hospital on the Anschutz Medical Campus. Including the donation for the Anschutz Foundation, the event raised about $1.5 million. The new building will cost about $10 million.

Entertainer Donny Osmond performed at the gala. Dukes of Hazzard star John Schneider acted as host. The hope is the event will become an annual fundraiser for MDHC and even more of a family affair.

For Justin Osmond, Donny's nephew and director of sponsorships and corporate relations at MDHC, helping people with deafness and hearing loss is personal for him and his family.

After having two sons with profound hearing loss, Justin's grandmother Olive Osmond recognized families need resources and support. Downs, professor emeritus at University of Colorado School of Medicine, led the way for the hearing screening of every newborn baby in the United States.

"Their vision of helping people was fairly similar," said Justin Osmond of his grandmother and Downs, Justin has a hearing loss detected when he was two years-old. "We are hoping to make this an annual event and bring other members of the family here to perform."

The new building will be a premier hearing facility housing education, research and clinical care for people with hearing loss and their families.

"There are 36 million Americans affected by hearing loss in this country," said Sandra Gabbard, PhD, MDHC's executive director. "Approximately 80 percent of those people aren't getting any help. Many of them are withdrawing because they can't hear and they are missing out on precious time with friends and family."

It's expected the new facility will allow MDHC to expand existing programs and create opportunities to serve the deaf and hard of hearing community.

"My grandmother saw a need so she started a foundation to help families get hearing aids for their children," said Justin. "Marion is the pioneer in pediatric audiology. Everybody wants to know her. It's a perfect partnership."

Xcel Energy CEO says energy field more complex and dynamic than ever[23]

Xcel CEO Ben Fowke talks about the energy outlook for 2014 and beyond at CU Denver. Photo by Tyghe Boone-Worthman, marketing coordinator, CU Denver Business School.

Xcel Energy is on track to reduce its carbon emissions by almost 35 percent by 2020 and continues progressive approaches to meeting environmental challenges, customer needs and the demands of today's two-way energy system, CEO Ben Fowke said at CU Denver.

Fowke, who also serves as chairman and president of Xcel Energy, spoke to more than 100 people in the Terrace Room of Lawrence Street Center on Jan. 23. His CEO Briefing, "Energy Outlook: 2014 and Beyond," was sponsored by the CU Denver Business School[25], the Business School's Global Energy Management program[26], and Xcel Energy[27].

Fowke said Xcel Energy operates in eight states, serving 3.4 million electric customers and 1.9 million gas customers. Colorado and Minnesota are the company's largest states, with Colorado alone accounting for 1.4 million electric and 1.3 million gas customers.

Fowke said the energy field is more complex and dynamic than ever. More than ever, he noted, the energy grid must be strong, reliable and ready to respond in a moment's notice to fluctuating energy demands.

With the growth of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, on the grid, "We have to keep working to balance the loads," Fowke said. "We not only have variable demand now, we have variable supply. We need to accommodate that and, frankly, Xcel Energy is a world leader in integrating renewable resources."

Those variable supplies account for why the utility's traditional method of billing and compensating customers who generate their own power -- net metering -- has become outdated. "We still need a grid," he said. "And the problem with net metering, the way it's designed, is that not everybody's paying for the grid. So that means other people have to make up the difference."

As more customers opt for solar rooftops, there will be fewer left to support the grid, which everybody still uses. Xcel Energy is working with stakeholders and the Public Utilities Commission to determine sustainable rates that are fair for customers.

The company has taken a forward-looking approach to renewables, diversifying its portfolio with more solar (it recently added 170 megawatts of utility-scale solar, doubling its rooftop solar from the past decade) and more wind (the No. 1 wind provider in the United States). Xcel Energy is a leader in being opportunistic about expanding renewable portfolios while keeping customer rates competitive, Fowke said.

While Xcel continues to invest in the grid, it is transitioning away from coal -- which is still a low-cost source of energy, especially for existing plants -- toward natural gas. "Natural gas is truly a revolution in America," Fowke said. "It's not just what it can do for utilities, it's the feedstock for the manufacturing processes."

Putting all these elements together, he said, results in a better energy product. "It's cleaner, it's safer, it's more reliable, and, by golly, we're ahead of the game."

The bottom line is that global demand for reliable energy is at an all-time high. Fowke noted that the United States handles energy more efficiently than other nations. The cost for electricity in Germany, for example, is four times higher than the cost of Xcel Energy electricity in Colorado.

"People want the choice of their energy mix, they want conservation programs, they want billing programs," he said. "We're up to the task of giving it to them."

He concluded by saying that everyone has an opinion about energy policy, and the key is to rely on facts and collaboration to set sensible public policy. "It's too important to get wrong," Fowke said. "Let's make sure we have a fair policy in place for everybody. I think we have a great future ahead of us. And for those of you in the energy industry, I think you picked the right career."

Northrop Grumman names campus a Core University Partner[28]

UCCS on Tuesday joined an elite group of universities that will partner with Northrop Grumman Corporation to create an improved pipeline for current and future engineering students and faculty research and development opportunities.

At a 10 a.m. announcement in the University Center, Northrop Grumman officials named UCCS a Core University Partner, a designation extended to only 52 other universities across the nation. The designation means financial support from Northrop Grumman for science, technology, engineering and math programs, expanded internship opportunities for UCCS students, Northrop Grumman-sponsored campus lectures, opportunities for faculty and Northrop engineers to collaborate, career fairs for students, and support for UCCS efforts to encourage youth to consider science-related college majors.

Russ Anarde, corporate lead executive, Northrop Grumman, announced details of the program following a campus tour and meetings with faculty in the College of Engineering and Applied Science.

“Today’s announcement is about tomorrow,” Anarde told a group of mostly College of Engineering and Applied Science faculty and students in the University Center.

In their comments, Anarde and Veronica Nelson, career pathways program manager, Northrop Grumman, emphasized a looming shortage of workers in STEM fields and the need to improve student interest in science-related fields to eventually fill industry and defense-related jobs. About 50 percent of U.S. engineers are nearing retirement, pushing the company to explore new ways to recruit top students. NG employs 1,000 in Colorado Springs and 2,200 people in Colorado.

Nelson emphasized the rigorous examination that led to the Core University Partners designation and praised UCCS for its efforts to encourage undergraduate research experiences and overall student engagement.

“What you do here is a model for universities across the country,” Nelson said.

R. “Dan” Dandapani, dean, College of Engineering and Applied Science, and Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak thanked Northrop Grumman for its support. Shockley-Zalabak cited early efforts by David Packard to form UCCS as an example of the importance of corporate and university partnerships.

In a pre-recorded video message, Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia also praised the partnership between UCCS and Northrop Grumman.

CU-Boulder awarded DARPA cooperative agreement to assess mechanisms of drugs and chemical agents[29]

William Old, assistant research professor, chemistry and biochemistry department, and mass spectrometry and proteomics lab director, BioFrontiers. (Photo courtesy Patrick Campbell/University of Colorado)

The University of Colorado Boulder has been awarded a cooperative agreement worth up to $14.6 million from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop a new technological system to rapidly determine how drugs and biological or chemical agents exert their effects on human cells.

The project, called the Subcellular Pan-Omics for Advanced Rapid Threat Assessment, or SPARTA, will be conducted by an interdisciplinary CU-Boulder team led by Research Assistant Professor William Old of the chemistry and biochemistry department.

DARPA -- an arm of the U.S. Department of Defense -- wants to better understand the biochemical mechanisms at work during cellular exposures to biological or chemical agents to help prevent mortality during potential conflicts. But Old said the research effort also is expected to lead to new, broad-scale techniques to analyze cellular processes for wide societal benefit.

“Traditionally it takes decades to figure out how drugs affect an organism’s biology,” said Old. “Our goal is to rapidly speed up the process, identifying how these compounds work in weeks. This could lower the barriers to developing effective drugs that have minimal side effects.”

Old said the strategy is to comprehensively measure all major classes of biomolecules that respond to any cellular treatment or biological signal within milliseconds to days, which will help determine the key molecular events that mediate cellular responses. The team is developing new microfluidic devices to control and manipulate individual cell components in order to obtain subcellular resolution that will provide new insights into the functions of individual organelles and proteins within cells.

The devices will be integrated with high-end mass spectrometry instrumentation to enable molecular measurement of biological systems at an unprecedented scale.

One example illustrating the complexities of the project is the nerve gas, sarin, the function of which is already known, said Tristan McClure-Begley, a pharmacologist and analytical chemist on the project. Sarin causes a malfunction in a key cellular enzyme used to control muscles, resulting in their overstimulation.

“We know this drug causes negative effects in multiple signaling pathways, but what we lack is a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms that lead to long-term systemic damage in individuals that survive exposure,” said McClure-Begley.

“We believe the technology developed under this program will go far beyond military and commercial applications,” said SPARTA Program Manager Emina Begovic. “We envision powerful applications of these new tools in a biomedical setting. Understanding how cells are affected by bacterial infection, for example, could lead to the development of new treatments.”

The BioFrontiers Institute already houses seven state-of-the-art mass spectrometers, located in the Proteomics and Mass Spectrometry Core Facility directed by Old. Mass spectrometers are powerful tools that can be used to identify the molecular components of a cell by measuring the mass of different molecules within a sample.

This instrumentation is critical for numerous research projects run by faculty at CU- Boulder and local companies. These projects include the search for biomarkers for Alzheimer’s disease and understanding mechanisms of cancer drug resistance in metastatic melanoma, said Old.

While BioFrontiers scientists and students and local biotechnology companies already use the CU facility for biochemical and biomedical research, the purchase of two additional next-generation mass spectrometers at a cost of $2.2 million as part of the DARPA cooperative agreement will greatly enhance and speed up such research activities. BioFrontiers already has pay-per-service agreements with a number of local biotech companies for use of its equipment, including the mass spectrometry facility and a next-generation gene-sequencing facility.

“We will be one of the few institutes in the world to have two of these next-generation state-of-the-art mass spectrometers,” said Old. “This creates a perfect opportunity for us to work more with local companies and increase our number of industrial partnerships. It is especially true for pharmaceutical companies who have a lead on a compound and want to know how it works.”

“There are two avenues of commercialization by CU-Boulder that may occur under the new DARPA cooperative agreement,” said Old. In addition to pay-per-service for industrial partners using BioFrontiers facilities, the CU-Boulder team will be developing new hardware, including the new microfluidic devices to automate a large part of sample preparation.

Other SPARTA team members include Associate Professor Michael Stowell of the molecular, cellular and developmental biology department, Professor Y.C. Lee of the mechanical engineering department, Professor Natalie Ahn, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor in CU-Boulder's chemistry and biochemistry department and Associate Professor Xuedong Liu of the chemistry and biochemistry department.

The team also includes Associate Professor Nichole Reisdorph of the University of Colorado School of Medicine and National Jewish Health in Denver.

BioFrontiers is a revolutionary research and teaching facility opened at CU-Boulder in 2012 to facilitate work on a wide swath of pressing societal challenges ranging from biomedical issues like cancer, heart disease and tissue engineering to the development of new biofuels. The BioFrontiers director is CU-Boulder Nobel laureate and Distinguished Professor Tom Cech, former president of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and current HHMI Medical Investigator.

The facility offers opportunities for researchers and students from multiple disciplines to collaborate on advancing human health and welfare by exploring critical frontiers of biology to further teaching, research and technology at the intersections of the life sciences, physical sciences, math, computational sciences and engineering.

Molnar awarded science prize from Royal Swedish Academy[31]

[32]

Peter Molnar, a professor in geological sciences and a fellow of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences at CU-Boulder, has been awarded the prestigious 2014 Crafoord Prize in Geosciences by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for his groundbreaking research in geophysics and geological sciences.

Molnar was honored for his contributions to the understanding of global plate tectonics, including the deformation of continents and the structure and evolution of mountain ranges. He also was cited for his research on the impact of tectonic processes on ocean-atmosphere circulation and climate.

The $620,000 prize is awarded annually by the Royal Swedish Academy to honor achievements in fields not covered by its better known Nobel Prizes. The Crafoord Prize covers the disciplines of astronomy, mathematics, geosciences and biosciences as a complement to the Nobel Prize disciplines. Only one Crafoord Prize is awarded annually by the academy, on a rotating basis by discipline.

Molnar is considered by many to be an expert on the driving forces behind Earth's plate motions. He has combined geological and geophysical methods with satellite measurements and modeling techniques to provide a new understanding of the formation of mountain ranges and their role in global tectonics. He currently is studying how geological changes in Tibet have affected Asian climate, including the Asian monsoon.

Much of Molnar's research has involved the continental collision between India and Eurasia in the south Asian region, a process that has been occurring for roughly 50 million years and one that involves frequent, large earthquakes in the Himalayas and Tibet.

In addition, Molnar has used an interdisciplinary approach in studying the processes of Earth's crust and mantle, including their influence on climate. His contributions have helped scientists better understand ocean current circulation and its influence on regional and global climate, as well as earthquake risks in the southern Himalayas.

The May 6 prize ceremony at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences will be attended by Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia. The Crafoord Prize was established in 1980 by Holger Crafoord, a Swedish industrialist, and his wife Anna-Greta Crafoord.

Caruthers, Jin honored by National Academy of Sciences[33]

Marvin Caruthers

Two CU-Boulder researchers were among the 15 honored by the National Academy of Sciences for their extraordinary scientific achievements. **Marvin Caruthers**, distinguished professor of chemistry and biochemistry, is the recipient of the NAS Award in Chemical Sciences, and **Deborah Jin**, an adjoint professor of physics, is the recipient of the Comstock Prize in Physics.

Caruthers is being honored for his groundbreaking work on the chemical synthesis of DNA and RNA that made it possible to decode and encode genes and genomes.

Supported by the Merck Company Foundation, the award and $15,000 prize honors innovative research in the chemical sciences that contributes to a better understanding of the natural sciences and to the benefit of humanity.

Deborah Jin

Caruthers has received many past honors, including a 2006 National Medal of Science, the 2005 NAS Award for Chemistry in Service to Society and a 1981 Guggenheim Fellowship.

Jin -- a physicist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and a fellow at JILA, a joint institute of NIST and CU-Boulder—is being honored for landmark experiments that demonstrated quantum degeneracy and the formation of a molecular Bose-Einstein condensate in fermionic atomic gases cooled to less than 100 billionths of a degree above absolute zero using magnetic traps and lasers.

The Comstock Prize, which is awarded about every five years, recognizes a North American resident for a recent innovative discovery or investigation in electricity, magnetism or radiant energy. The prize carries an award of $25,000, plus $25,000 to support the recipient's research.

Jin's numerous past awards include the 2008 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Physics, a 2003 MacArthur Fellowship and the 2013 L'Oreal-UNESCO For Women in Science Award for North America.

Carter receives APA Minority Fellowship Achievement Award[36]

[37]
Debbie R. Carter of the School of Medicine has been honored with the 2014 Jeanne Spurlock Minority Fellowship Achievement Award by the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

This award acknowledges the achievements of former fellows of the Minority Fellowships who have made (or are making) significant contribution(s) to the profession and/or the minority community by working toward the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in mental health and substance abuse care. Carter serves as co-chair of the CU Denver l CU Anschutz Faculty and Staff Multicultural Affairs Committee.

Carter has received many awards in her career serving minority communities and children through psychiatry, including the Dane Prough Award Distinguished Teaching in Child Psychiatry in 2003 and the Clinician of the Year Award from Mental Health Association of Colorado in 1997.

Meaney named executive director of Center for Education on Social Responsibility[38]

[39]

Mark Meaney has been named executive director of the Center for Education on Social Responsibility (CESR) at the Leeds School of Business at CU-Boulder.

Meaney joins CESR from the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley, where he served as a faculty director. He has more than 17 years of experience in higher education and public sector ethics.

Previously, he served as the statewide director of ethics with the Office of the President at the University of California, facilitating development and implementation of ethics programs at the system's 10 campuses, five academic medical centers and the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Prior to joining the University of California, Meaney held a political appointment with Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's administration as chief ethics officer and first deputy director in the Office of Ethics and Compliance.

Meaney's experience in corporate ethics programming spans a number of industries including health care, higher education, global engineering and construction, government contractors, transportation services and nonprofit organizations. He has developed monitoring procedures for multinational corporations in accordance with the United Nations Global Compact guidelines and standards to identify risks and vulnerabilities with respect to harmful work conditions and human rights violations.

"In applying for the position of executive director at CESR, I was drawn to the Leeds Schools' fearless vision to change the global marketplace," said Meaney. "Corporate responsibility and business ethics are woven into the culture through the work of CESR. I am so very excited and consider myself privileged to join an institution of the caliber of the Leeds School of Business."

Meaney graduated from Marquette University with a Ph.D. in philosophy, specializing in applied ethics. In addition to teaching at the Haas School of the University of California, Berkely, he taught corporate responsibility and business ethics at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He has numerous publications in both professional and popular media including a book on professional development for ethics officers.

Chancellor's 2013 Employee of the Year Award recognizes staff excellence[40]

[41]

George Ballinger, **Martha Shernick**, **Larry Drees**, **Jennifer Law**, and **David Kalahar** recently were honored as the 2013 Chancellor's Employees of the Year by the Boulder Campus Staff Council. The five received recognition during halftime at a CU women's basketball game.

Ballinger is director of both parent relations and veteran services. He served for more than 27 years in the United States Air Force before joining CU. Families often describe him as a lifeline, a fountain of encouragement and guidance. Three years ago, he took on the daunting task of converting the CU Parents Association Board of Directors to a Parents Council. The Parents Council was successfully launched this year. Ballinger also built an office and advocacy center for CU's increasing number of veterans and active military. He's a leader on the campus in advocating, organizing and coordinating support services for student veterans.

Drees is the Buff OneCard program director and assistant director of housing and dining services IT, and oversees the IT support desk and the access services groups. He managed and implemented a project to wire residence hall rooms

with a high-speed infrastructure. He often goes out of his way to help departments and serves on a variety of committees. His day-to-day duties include leading an IT support team responsible for more than 600 housing and dining services employees and their 150 laptops, as well as 100 plus mobile devices. For 27 years, he has been committed to improving and supporting the security of CU-Boulder students by working with room keys and Buff Cards. In 2006 he oversaw the transition from one card system to another, and this year, he implemented new smart-card technology.

Kalahar is the adviser and logistics coordinator for CU's Technological Arts and Media Program. He is the sole adviser for this quickly growing program, which began with only 200 students in 2006 and now is home to nearly 700 students with some of the most diverse majors and backgrounds on campus. His colleagues describe him as the heart of TAM. He is the face students see as they enter the program and the attentive listener for any and all problems they encounter. He's also the person who shakes hands with students as they walk across the stage during graduation. While Kalahar is known by many as a friend and mentor, he has also earned a title as the go-to chef in TAM. On his own time and money, he cooks up pots of chili and batches of his famous meatballs for each student registration open house.

Law is the manager of operations for the integrative physiology department. She started with the department in 2000 as an accounting technician and worked with payroll and finance. Since then, she's had her hand on a little bit of everything: numerous budget operations, faculty recruitment and hiring, new employee training, among other projects. She played a vital role in the recent reorganization of the integrative physiology department. New faculty from evolutionary, population, and organismic biology were transferred into integrative physiology, and she made the transition seamless. In recent years, the department grew from 800 students to more than 2,000, and Law managed this unprecedented growth and kept the entire department running smoothly, even through difficult financial times.

Shernick is the program coordinator for the Sewall Residential Academic Program. The job of a program coordinator includes organizing new-student orientations, balancing student and faculty schedules, and organizing events, trips and conferences. She has become a parent to 400 nervous, new students. Her impact on the students at Sewall has been so profound, she remains a significant figure in their lives, even years after they move out. Shernick is committed to the staff and faculty members teaching at Sewall as well. Her remarkable ability to connect with the Sewall community doesn't stop with the students and staff. She also reached out to dining hall and custodial members. She enrolled in Spanish classes to better communicate with the Spanish-speaking custodial members and worked personally with immigrant staff to help them study for citizenship tests. On her own dime, she bought a "citizenship cake" for staff members who gained citizenship.

Dropping names ...[42]

Jennifer Disabato

Marylou Robinson

Eric Olson, professor, College of Business at UCCS, and director, Sport Management Program, was recently elected to the Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau 2014 Board of Directors and Slate of Officers. The Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau was incorporated in 1980 as a private non-profit corporation to promote Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region as a year-round visitor destination. The organization is governed by a board of directors chaired by Alicia McConnell of the U.S. Olympic Committee. Olson will serve alongside Andy Neinas of Echo Canyon River Expeditions, Steve Kanatzar of The Airplane Restaurant, John Rovie of The Broadmoor, Tom Osborne of The Sports Corporation, and David Cannon of the U.S. Air Force Academy. The Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau is the premier marketing organization for Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region (El

Paso, Teller and Fremont Counties). … **Britt Banks** has been appointed as executive director of the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy and the Environment at the University of Colorado Law School. For more than 20 years, Banks has been a leader in the international natural resources sector, as a senior corporate executive, attorney, consultant, researcher and teacher. Most recently, he taught at Tokyo's Waseda University and previously taught at Colorado Law, where he graduated in 1988. He currently serves on the Center's Advisory Council. … **Jennifer Disabato**, College of Nursing at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, recently presented a poster entitled "Improving Transition to Adult Epilepsy Care: Facilitating Team Communication Using Clinical Decision Support in the EMR" at the 67th Annual Meeting of the American Epilepsy Society in Washington, D.C. The abstract also was one of 10 chosen for podium presentation at the Pediatric Highlights Session, and was a recipient of a nursing award. The interdisciplinary work highlighted one aspect of an ongoing quality improvement project funded through a grant from the Children's Hospital QI department and the School of Medicine Dean's Office lead by Disabato with co-investigator **Paul Levisohn**, associate professor at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus and pediatric neurologist at Children's Hospital Colorado. … **Marylou Robinson**, College of Nursing at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, recently submitted an abstract describing the College of Nursing's innovative, interdisciplinary approach to teaching advanced physical assessment, including both nursing practice students and medical students. Robinson's abstract was accepted into The 2nd Annual Educational Scholarship and Innovation Symposium. She will be delivering a podium presentation in February at the Anschutz Medical Campus highlighting Krista Estes and her work with the Advanced Assessment Course.

CU EthicsLine is ready to listen[45]

The CU EthicsLine enables members of the university community to anonymously report suspected violations of the law, or serious or recurring policy violations.

Employees may anonymously report such instances as:
Suspected fiscal misconduct by university employees Violations of federal or state law Serious or recurring violations of university policy in the performance of university duties Gross waste of university funds and property Serious or recurring abuse of university authority (improper conduct)
To contact the CU EthicsLine, call1-800-677-5590 or go to www.EthicsPoint.com[46].

UCAR/NCAR hosting second Communicating Science Workshop[47]

The UCAR-NCAR Communicating Science Program is holding a media workshop, "Science: Becoming the Messenger," the morning of Feb. 20 at FL2 Large Auditorium (Room 1022) and the afternoon of Feb. 20 and Feb. 21 at Center Green in Boulder.

The program is developed to enable staff at all levels and classifications involved in science communication to develop improved skills and capacity to interact with the media. The program involves participants grouping into small teams who work through a series of media activities, including the use of PowerPoint, video preparation and messaging, and blogging.

The session is conducted by three accomplished communicators and trainers: former PBS executive Dan Agan, bestselling science author Chris Mooney and Emmy Award-winning television producer Joe Schreiber. It also will include participation from the UCAR Communications Unit and E&O.

The session is broken into two distinct parts over two days:
Day 1 has a limit of 120 participants and would combine in-depth instruction in communications planning, design, and

implementation with ample coaching sessions in which the workshop's expert leaders work directly with participants to craft their communications strategies and messages. Day 2 is by invitation only and limited to about 15 participants that UCAR/NCAR would select to participate in a more intensive, personal training experience. These attendees would receive one-on-one mentoring in message and presentation design and delivery, and coaching in the nuances and techniques of media interviews.
If interested in attending Day 2, please complete the questions where indicated on the registration form.

Note: There is a limited number of seats available for Day 1. These will be allocated primarily on a first-come basis, so register early to ensure attendance. Also, all participants must commit to the full day as each session builds on the other.

You can register here.[48] Registration deadline is Feb. 18.

'Creativity and Innovation in Research' theme for Postdoc Day[49]

'Creativity and Innovation in Research' is the theme for Postdoctoral Research Day, presented by the CU Postdoctoral Office.

The event is March 14 at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, Research Center 2, Trivisible Room. Abstract submission continues now through Feb. 17.

This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Roberta Ness, dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston. She is the author of "Genius Unmasked" and "Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas."

The agenda includes poster sessions, three selected oral presentations by postdoctoral fellows, a talk by the 2014 postdoctoral mentor of the year, nonacademic career roundtables, and a reception that hosts a musical band headed by Dr. John Kappler. The prizes for poster winners will be awarded during the reception. All postdoctoral fellows/trainees at the University of Colorado Denver and CU Anschutz Medical Campus are invited to participate. Your poster could win you a $1,000 prize.

Faculty, staff and doctoral students are welcome to attend and show support.

For more information or if you are interested in being a judge for the posters, please contact Valerie Saltou at valerie.saltou@ucdenver.edu[50].

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/administrative-efficiency-getting-better-room-improvement[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/PTFE-rpt-2014m02.pdf[3] https://www.cu.edu/policies/feedback.html[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/benson-state-%E2%80%98stepping-up%E2%80%99-plan-boost-higher-ed-funding-100-million[5] https://connections.cu.edu/news/benson-state-stepping-up-with-plan-to-boost-higher-ed-funding-by-100-million/bruce_f-2[6] https://www.cu.edu/governmentrelations[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/qa-tanya-kelly-bowry[8] https://connections.cu.edu/file/tanyapng[9] http://www.leg.sta

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