Five questions for Carol Runyan[1]

Injury is the leading cause of death for people ages 1 to 45, and has been called the last great plague in America. Because so many youth are affected, injury (including violence) is responsible for more years of potential life lost than heart disease and cancer combined.

But because injuries traditionally have not been addressed fully as part of the public health domain, funding for injury prevention research has been limited.

Carol Runyan is working to change that. She has spent more than 30 years in the injury prevention field and recently was awarded the 2014 Distinguished Career Award from the American Public Health Association's Injury Control and Emergency Health Services (ICEHS) Section. In 2012, she received recognition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as one of the most influential leaders in the field over the past 20 years.

A professor of epidemiology and of community and behavioral health at the Colorado School of Public Health, Runyan also is a professor of pediatrics at the CU School of Medicine on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus and directs Colorado's Pediatric Injury Prevention, Education and Research (PIPER) program, a collaboration of the schools of public health and medicine and Children's Hospital Colorado.

Early in her career, Runyan was interested in both social and biological sciences and the field of public health seemed to be a perfect match for her. She also was interested in adolescent health – including injury. A summer course she took in 1980 sealed the deal.

"I was immediately taken by the clarity of how the field is conceptualized and how the approaches used in injury prevention exemplify classic approaches in public health," she said. Drawn to topics and issues out of the mainstream, Runyan found that the field of injury prevention provided her with the opportunity to develop an agenda and push it forward.

When she came to CU from the University of North Carolina in 2011, she began to find people working in or interested in injury prevention and helped bring them together. "One of the things I've been trying hard to do is help people connect with each other so that we can build a network of people with the idea that the whole is greater than sum of parts." Part of her job, she said, is being a matchmaker and putting together people with people and people with ideas.

"We have the capacity at this institution to provide major leadership throughout our region as well as nationally if we can get over the hump with respect to funding, and get a set of cohesive programs launched. We have the capacity to move the needle if we can marshal the necessary resources."

1. You said that approaches used in injury prevention exemplify classic approaches in public health. What do you mean by that and why hasn't injury prevention received more attention until recently?

The field of public health had a tradition of focusing on the context in which health problems occur. Current trends have focused on individuals and what people can do to make themselves healthier. While there are important things that people need to do to stay healthy, there's a tendency to basically place blame on people for their illnesses, when in fact, a classic public heath approach would say that the environment has a lot to do not only directly with health, but also with what people are able to do to affect their own health.

For example, it's not just about whether people exercise enough, but whether they have safe places where they can exercise. It's not just about whether people wear seat belts when driving, but also about making sure that cars and roads are safe so that not all of the safety burden is placed on individuals.

My master's program in public health was focused on thinking in those broader terms and understanding the health and safety of the environment. My research is mostly based on finding solutions at the environmental and policy level – thinking of public health as a process of social and system change.

There are several reasons why injury prevention has historically received less attention. One is that we have had a linguistic problem of referring to injuries as “accidents,” which conveys a sense that things just happen. In fact, the word “accident” has been banned from some professional journals. I start teaching about injury by saying that if students have that perspective – that they assume it’s fate or chance – then they might as well forget about taking the class. Public health is all about making change.

Another issue is that injuries are a hugely broad set of problems, and while there are many similarities across different types, it is often easier to assume that fixing the problem is someone else’s responsibility – another agency or organization -- for example. Traffic safety, for instance, is a problem of the transportation department, or worker safety is a labor problem, and that way no one has to own the entire set of problems.

I keep trying to figure out why this isn’t true for cancer. There are lots of different types of cancers and different approaches, but somehow they are more unified. We have to figure out how to do that with injury prevention.

Because it has been so fragmented and not part of the public health domain until recently, injury prevention wasn’t addressed broadly by federal agencies until the 1980s. There is no National Institutes of Health agency dedicated to the problem, partly because injury doesn’t fit so neatly in the medical model. It wasn’t until 1985 that funding was appropriated by Congress to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to start an injury program. Even so, the field is very poorly funded, receiving only a fraction of the money that goes to other health problems – completely out of proportion to the magnitude of the problem.

2004-10 US Age-adjusted Death Rates per 100,000 Population (click image for a larger version)

The CDC funds 10 research centers, but not a single one is west of Iowa, and statistics show that the highest injury fatality rates are in the West and South. (See graphic at right.)

Over the years, injury has become increasingly recognized as a legitimate part of public health, but it is still a long way from being seen as the important issue that it is. We need to design environments and products to assure safety and not rely on individuals to always know and do the safe thing. For example, we can teach parents and babysitters to test bath water to make sure a baby isn’t scalded, but wouldn’t it be better to make sure the water coming out of the tap doesn’t go above 120 degrees? We can do that by setting the temperature on water heaters at a safe level at the factory so that people don’t have to actively change anything unless they want to increase the temperature. For many safety matters, we shouldn’t have to rely on individual behavior, because humans make mistakes. Instead we should engineer the product to avoid human error as much as possible to allow the environment to be safe.

The same goes for guns. We’ve had the technology for close to 100 years to make guns so that a child can’t fire a handgun, so when a 3-year-old picks up a parent’s gun, they can’t shoot themselves or their little brother. But, we have failed to implement the technology – and, as a result, preventable deaths keep occurring.

2. Is there a subset of research that intrigues you most?

I’ve studied adolescent workers for about 15 to 20 years. It’s an area where there is needless injury and we need to figure out how to make work environments safer. I am currently designing new research to learn more about how employers approach training and supervision of young workers and where the gaps are in safety practices and adherence to labor laws.

Since coming to Colorado, I’ve been focusing some work on suicide prevention because it is such a huge problem here. We have one of the highest suicide rates in the country, and we need to solve it.

One example is our work on suicide prevention that is focused on using health care providers to counsel families to lock up medications and temporarily remove firearms from the home when someone is in crisis. We are completing a

small project at Children's Hospital Colorado that showed that both clinicians and parents of suicidal youth were very receptive to delivering and receiving these messages. We are now starting a regional study to see how other hospitals approach this issue.

We don't know why Colorado has such a high suicide rate. But one of the factors is access to mental health and reducing the stigma related to mental health care. If you are in a crisis, you can't wait for six months to receive services.

There also is a large proportion of suicides that occur with firearms. Colorado, like other states in the West, has a high ownership of firearms. National studies have shown that states with high gun ownership have higher suicide rates.

Another source of suicide in our state is prescription drug overdoses. With adolescents, it is sometimes hard to tell if it was a suicide or an unintentional poisoning with a prescription drug. It's an issue nationally, as well, because prescription drug fatalities have surpassed motor vehicle deaths as a cause of death – a fact that is shocking to most people who have no idea how dangerous prescribed drugs can be.

3. How has your research/work influenced change?

I am proud of my work in a number of areas where I have gotten things started --- with others following up with the finishing touches. For example, I led development of a trial emergency department surveillance data system in North Carolina in the late 1980s. Though our system was never fully implemented, it laid the groundwork for development of national standards, and a very robust system was developed about a decade later by some colleagues. I did a major study on residential fires in the 1980s as well, leading to changes in North Carolina state policy to require smoke alarms in all residential properties. And, I have done research for a number of years on the experiences of young workers (under age 18), trying to bring to light the hazards they are exposed to and how they often are a forgotten part of the workforce. More recently, I tackled the question of whether colleges performing criminal background checks before admitting undergraduates could predict who will be engaged in misconduct on campus as a way of addressing campus violence (it doesn't predict).

Some of my most gratifying work has been training others – both graduate students and practicing professionals in the principles of public health and injury control and watching them use that information to advance the field.

4. You founded PIPER when you came to CU. What is the mission of the program and what, specifically, are some accomplishments of the program?

Our mission is "To drive evidence-based practice through discovery, translation and workforce development." As part of building the program, I was able to recruit staff and faculty to work with me to create a strong presence for injury prevention on this campus. I was fortunate to hire four very talented individuals and to engage with other scholars already on the campus. As I often say when I meet new people, 'You may not know it yet, but you really are interested in injury prevention.' It usually gets a laugh and some attention. Once people find out what injury prevention is all about, they often are more interested than they thought they were.

When people stop to think about it, they can usually think of a number of friends and family who have experienced serious or fatal injury. In fact, I ask students to draw their family tree and mark all their relatives who have experienced an injury resulting in death or medical care. Rarely is there someone who does not have at least a few family members to tell about. In my own family, for example, my grandmother died of burn injuries while several ancestors were murdered during the Holocaust, and several others (including me) have experienced less serious injuries -- resulting in sprains and fractures.

We have accomplished a lot in the three years we have been operating as a program. This includes nurturing relationships among interested individuals on campus who are gaining from working together and exchanging ideas as well as seeking and receiving funding for new projects. Our team is working on topics that range from falls in older adults to motor vehicle safety to sports injury to gang violence to dating violence to suicide to prescription drug abuse to poisoning by marijuana to occupational injury. We are engaging students in this work and connecting with lots of state and local agencies to help them achieve goals in injury prevention – and are learning a lot from their work.

5. You have had a distinguished career. What have been some of the highlights? What about the lowlights?

Highlights have been working with so many bright and eager students who bring both energy and ideas to the task of finding problems and solving them. Also, I have been very committed to bridging the research and practice worlds and to integrating my training in health behavior, policy and epidemiology. Sometimes that means that I am not as expert in anything as I might like, but I can do a bit more boundary spanning as a result.

The lowlights have centered on the fact that injury is still not recognized as a problem in a manner commensurate with its magnitude as a health issue, and the fact that funding is so meager. This is a perpetual problem and, as a result, it can be hard to recruit new talent and to stay positive. I think one of the challenges is convincing younger scholars that all of public health is about social change and that the process takes a long time. We need to take a long-term view and not just carve things up into tiny pieces because it is fundable.

I am unabashedly an idealist and have to remind myself sometimes to not get discouraged by the pace at which change happens. But I also try hard to encourage others to be more idealistic and to have high aspirations and push for more rapid pace of change.

Regents sworn in at CU Denver[2]

Regents John Carson, Irene Griego and Linda Shoemaker at CU Denver on Wednesday night. (Photo: Casey Cass/University of Colorado)

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday officially welcomed two new members and one returning member as the three recently elected representatives took their oaths of office during a ceremony at CU Denver's Student Commons Building.

Nancy Rice, chief justice of the Colorado Supreme Court, administered the oaths of office for John Carson, Irene Griego and Linda Shoemaker, each of whom won their elections in November. Their six-year terms on the nine-member board have begun.

Regent John Carson -- with his wife, Eileen -- is sworn in by Chief Justice Nancy Rice. (Photo: Casey Cass/University of Colorado)

John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, represents the 6th Congressional District. He is an attorney in corporate practice in Greenwood Village. A CU alumnus, he earned bachelor's and law degrees at the University of Colorado Boulder and a tax law degree from Georgetown. In 1983, he received CU's Thomas Jefferson Award for leadership. He also has served on the CU Law Alumni Board. Carson was president of the Douglas County Board of Education from 2009 to 2013, and served on the board beginning with his election in 2005. He also served in the Marines and has extensive experience working on Washington's Capitol Hill.

Regent Irene Griego is joined by her husband, Al, while being sworn in by Chief Justice Nancy Rice. (Photo: Casey Cass/University of Colorado)

Irene Griego, D-Lakewood, represents the 7th Congressional District. She has 40 years of experience in education, from pre-K to university level, as a teacher, principal, administrator and university instructor. She earned her bachelor's degree at CU-Boulder and doctorate at CU Denver, with a master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado in between. She is the recipient of numerous school and community awards. She joined the Board of Regents in December 2011 after being appointed by Gov. John Hickenlooper to a seat formerly held by Regent

Monisha Merchant. Griego first won election in 2012, and currently serves as the board's vice chair.

Regent Linda Shoemaker shares a laugh with her husband, Steve, and Chief Justice Nancy Rice. (Photo: Casey Cass/University of Colorado)

Linda Shoemaker, D-Boulder, represents the 2nd Congressional District. She is a former journalist and attorney who has devoted the past 20 years to advancing quality public education in Colorado. A CU-Boulder alumna, she was elected and served as president of the Boulder Valley School District Board of Education, was founding board chair of the Bell Policy Center, and currently serves as president of the Brett Family Foundation, which she co-founded in 2000 with her husband, Steve Brett. Across the CU system, she has served and supported the Journalism Program Advisory Board, the CU Foundation Board of Trustees and the CU Advocates program.

The regents being sworn in were surrounded by family and friends, and joined by leaders from across the university, including President Bruce Benson, CU Denver Chancellor Jerry Wartgow, CU Anschutz Medical Campus Chancellor Don Elliman, sitting regents Steve Bosley, Michael Carrigan, Kyle Hybl and Sue Sharkey, and outgoing regent Joe Neguse.

Quotables:

"Some things in life have such an impact, you never can shake them. The University of Colorado had that impact on me," Carson said. "I believe education is the key to the American Dream."

"Being the first to graduate from college in my family was quite important. ... I see the values my parents have given me as gifts. ... All people have rights, and all people should have the opportunity to graduate from this great university," Griego said.

"This is a dream come true for me. ... We have huge challenges. We've got to figure out how to remain a world-class public research university which is not supported by the state (in funding). ... We can show the country that it can be done," Shoemaker said.

The board and its newest members won't wait long to get to work: The regents' mid-winter retreat begins this morning at President Bruce Benson's ranch in Silverthorne. The agenda for the meeting, which is scheduled to run through noon Friday, is posted here[7].

John J. Reilly Jr. named dean of CU School of Medicine[8]

John J. Reilly Jr., M.D., has been named the next dean of the University of Colorado School of Medicine and the university's vice chancellor for health affairs, effective April 1, 2015.

Reilly is currently the Jack D. Myers Professor and Chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. He joined Pitt in 2008 after more than two decades with Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

He is a prolific researcher who has authored or co-authored more than 100 peer-reviewed research reports and co-authored chapters in two of the most well-known textbooks of internal medicine. His areas of interest include the genetic and environmental factors associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and the role of alveolar macrophage enzymes in emphysema, COPD and lung cancer.

Reilly was selected after a nationwide search of highly qualified applicants and the announcement of his appointment

comes one year after Richard D. Krugman, M.D., announced his plan to step down as dean of the University of Colorado School of Medicine when his successor was hired. Krugman became acting dean in 1990 and was appointed dean in 1992. He is the longest-serving medical school dean in the United States.

“We are extremely pleased to hire a talented academic leader of Dr. Reilly’s caliber,” said Donald Elliman Jr., chancellor of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. “He brings strong leadership and the ability to work constructively with others across disciplines, departments and backgrounds.”

Elliman also thanked Krugman for his distinguished career as leader of the CU School of Medicine. During Krugman’s tenure as dean, more than 4,000 physicians, physician assistants, physical therapists and medical scientists earned degrees from the school.

“We are grateful for Dr. Krugman’s commitment to creating an environment that nurtured and launched the careers of thousands of medical professionals,” Elliman said. “Colorado, our country and the world are a better place because of his careful stewardship.”

Reilly – who will hold the Richard D. Krugman, M.D., School of Medicine Dean’s Endowed Chair – graduated from Harvard Medical School after earning an undergraduate degree in chemistry from Dartmouth College. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and later completed a fellowship there in pulmonary and critical care medicine.

Reilly is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and by that Board’s Pulmonary Subspecialty Board. He also holds a Board Certificate of Competence in Critical Care, is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, and is a past chair of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Clinical Trials Study Section.

Results of retirement vendor study expected this month[9]

University of Colorado Staff Council members received a variety of updates during their final meeting of 2014, conducted via video conference on Dec. 18.

E. Jill Pollock, who turned over the role of vice president for employee and information services to Kathy Nesbitt beginning this month[10], told council that CU President Bruce D. Benson this month will announce the results of the examination of retirement vendor options for university employees. A university task force studied and ranked the top vendors, then sent a recommendation to Benson. Pollock said the group set out to pare down the options – some 800 choices – to a number that will eliminate overlapping products and ensure employees receive optimal rates of return on their investments, ease of access, excellent customer service, and low fees.

In addition, Pollock said the University of Colorado Health and Welfare Trust is working to reduce prescription drug charges for employees enrolled in the health plans through the university, and also is working with committees and other groups to find a way to add benefits related to gender reassignment. Because there currently are no Colorado doctors who perform the necessary surgeries, the university is hoping to team up with an insurance vendor to find providers in other states – most likely California – who are able to provide the necessary health care.

Pollock said the Office of Policy and Efficiency (OPE) is reviewing a comprehensive sexual misconduct and harassment policy for the university that is scheduled for final approval in July. The draft of APS 5014 - Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures is available for review at http://www.cu.edu/ope/efficiency-and-effectiveness/presidents-task-force-efficiency/aps-5014-sexual-harassment-policy[11]

In other matters:
Council members discussed ongoing concerns about university staff members being discouraged by supervisors or others from participating in campus governance bodies. Nancy Sicalides-Tucker said that Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff Leonard Dinegar recently sent out a memo to campus chancellors that reiterated the importance of

employee participation in governance boards. System employees who work at university campuses rather than the system office have reported they have been unable to participate in campus activities, and some were told the reason was because of budgetary issues. In some cases, these employees were unaware of activities because their email addresses are not included in campus-wide distribution lists. Council members said budgets were not a problem and that any system-employee exclusions were misunderstandings. Council members agreed to ensure that system employees are added to event notice lists and allowed to participate in campus events. The Colorado Springs campus staff councils continue to consider a proposal to merge, a move that would help unify the campus and eliminate duplicate efforts by the governance groups. The proposal would allow separate subcommittees to speak to pay and benefits issues for staff and exempt employees. At CU Denver, the staff council and EPA Council voted 10-2 to merge and the group is revising its bylaws. Faculty Council continues to examine tuition benefits, which are different at each campus. One consideration for parity is to allow employees a certain dollar amount to use toward tuition, instead of giving employees a certain number of credit hours. UCCS is concerned that such a policy would not be a “one-for-one trade” and unfairly impact the campus budget since costs at Boulder, for instance, are higher than tuition costs at Colorado Springs. It is likely that more employees from UCCS would take classes in Denver or Boulder than the other way around.

Legislative session brings new opportunities, challenges for CU[12]

The 70th Colorado General Assembly convened on Wednesday, the launch of a 120-day session that will see a new group of lawmakers consider budget requests and changes to laws that directly affect the University of Colorado and higher education across the state.

In the November election, Republicans regained a majority in the Senate, now holding a one-seat advantage over Democrats, 18-17. Though Democrats also lost seats in the House, they maintain a majority over Republicans, 34-31.

CU’s Government Relations team will be working with the CU Budget team on several key priorities, including garnering support for the budget request of Gov. John Hickenlooper, a Democrat; his plan, announced in November [13], holds some good news for CU and higher education:
A 10 percent operating increase for higher education totaling $60.6 million; An additional $15 million to help offset the impact of implementation of HB 1319 (for a total operating increase of $75.6 million); $30 million for the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Fund, a fund created last year. Institutions must apply to access funds, which are awarded based on the quality of the proposals submitted by institutions. Continuation construction costs for the Jennie Smoly Caruthers Biotechnology Building in Boulder ($20.2 million) and the Visual and Performing Arts building in Colorado Springs ($9.6 million).
The Colorado Commission on Higher Education’s capital priority list also includes three other CU projects that will need additional funding in order to progress: a classroom renovation at CU Denver North ($50.6 million in additional funding needed); a CU Denver Interdisciplinary Building and Data Center ($140.3 million) and a CU-Boulder Aerospace and Engineering Science Building ($196.6 million).

CU will support the governor's request for Level 1 (critical) controlled maintenance needs, as well.

Federal lawmakers also returned to Washington earlier this week. CU’s government relations team will be working at the national level as well, where appropriations for the 2016 budget year hold ramifications for CU. Research efforts and financial aid funding depend on federal investment; the next fiscal year also will see the return of sequestration, which tightened budgets for many researchers across the system two years ago.

Other issues expected to draw attention nationally: reauthorization of the Higher Education Act; the Campus Safety and Accountability Act; reform of tax, patent and immigration laws; the America COMPETES Act; and potential legislation related to college athletics.

At the state Capitol, CU is expected to work with lawmakers on several potential bills to be introduced by CU. Key areas of focus will be workforce needs, STEM education and university infrastructure.

Follow coverage of CU-related activity during the legislative session in the coming weeks in CU Connections.

CU doctor details steps to successful weight loss[14]

[15]
Resolve to make those weight loss resolutions stick this year with help from Holly Wyatt, M.D., and the secrets she and her staff have discovered at the University of Colorado Anschutz Health and Wellness Center[16]. Wyatt is the center's associate director and co-author of "State of Slim," which shows dieters how they can create their own state of slim no matter where they live.

Wyatt[17] has learned that mindset in weight loss can be just as impactful and life-changing as diet and exercise and teaches that concept in her transformational weight loss programs. Her newest program is Extreme Weight Loss: Destination Boot Camp[18]. Boot camps in October were a sell-out and sessions in 2015 will be held March 22-28, June 14-20, and July 26-Aug. 1.

For long-term weight loss success, Wyatt encourages dieters to identify their personal "why" for losing weight, focus on positive aspects of weight loss, create a supportive environment and develop new habits to make healthy decisions. And, what better time to make the commitment and use her tips than in the new year?
Find your "real" why: Dig deep, identify your why and write it down. Recognizing your strong internal motivation will help you stick with new healthy behaviors for more than a few weeks. **Be honest: Are you really ready to make a change?:** how high a priority is your resolution? If it's not an eight or higher on a scale of 10, you're not likely to stick with the necessary behavioral changes for long-term success. **Out with the old, in with the new:** New friends, new places, new routines and new behaviors all help with weight loss transformation success. Surrounding yourself with like-minded people will make it easier. **Road map to success:** You know what your New Year's resolution is; now you have to map out the transformational journey. Exactly what will you do to lose those 15 pounds or train for a 5K? Achievement is in the details. **Go public and get vulnerable:** It's scary, but put yourself out there. Tell lots of people about your resolution. Good old-fashioned peer pressure makes you accountable. It's harder to cheat when everyone's checking up on you. **Nobody's perfect:** No weight loss transformation journey is perfect. Life gets in the way. Have a plan to navigate the bumps in the road and stay focused despite the slip-ups. The body achieves what the mind believes. **Don't hold back:** Make the decision to achieve your resolution and jump in with both feet. Making a halfhearted commitment won't cut it. Know your why, your what and your how, then go for it 100 percent. **Score a quick win:** Nothing makes you more determined or gives you more confidence than quick success. Take your big goal and break it into bite-size, achievable chunks and feel your willpower skyrocket. **Create an autopilot and cruise to success:** Resolutions get harder to keep after four to six weeks when the excitement wears off. Having a default autopilot plan in place makes it easy and boosts willpower.

Architecture students design homes for disabled and service animals[19]

[20]
University of Colorado Denver architecture students are learning to design homes with disabled veterans and their service dogs in mind. Students in the Master of Architecture[21] program in the College of Architecture and Planning spent the fall semester designing innovative, energy efficient residences to accommodate disabled veterans and their service dogs working collaboratively on daily tasks.

Students in the course were tasked with designing homes with features that allow a person with a disability to easily move throughout the house. Students also aimed to provide a space that was accessible and comfortable for a service dog to work.

To identify the design elements important to an injured veteran and service dog, the class enlisted the help of local

nonprofit Freedom Service Dogs (FSD) on the project. FSD provides specially trained service dogs to people with mobility challenges. The students worked closely with an FSD client – an injured veteran, his service dog, and the dog trainer to determine the home design elements that will be most beneficial to their unique situation.

"I created this course based on my belief that architecture should better accommodate those with limited mobility and range of motion so that quality of life is improved and simple daily tasks aren't exhausting and challenging," said Professor Julee Herdt[22]. "Design should also include the service dog's needs from the beginning. These dogs are family members with important roles to fulfill."

CU Denver Architecture students teamed up with engineering students to incorporate practical and efficient energy features. A few student design features include:
Kitchen drawings from a "dog's eye view" to better understand how a service dog can easily assist a vet working at a countertop from a wheelchair. A lamp designed and built from salvage that a dog can turn on or off with their paw. An enclosed "solar courtyard" for vets needing daylight as part of their healing. The sun's heat collected in the courtyard is used to heat the home. A home with windows easily opened from a wheelchair, plus features to accommodate a vet dealing with decreasing mobility.
Herdt says, "The students have designed beautiful, functional homes by removing physical barriers and obstructions so spaciousness, sunlight, and freedom of movement are gained."

At the end of the course, one student project will be selected by a panel of professional judges. Moving forward, the student with the winning design will go on to seek funding and support to build a "Freedom Service Home" for a disabled vet-in-need and their dog.

Colorado business confidence remains positive, stable for first quarter of 2015, says CU-Boulder index[23]

The confidence of Colorado business leaders has increased slightly going into 2015, according to the Leeds Business Confidence Index (LBCI) released Monday by the University of Colorado Boulder's Leeds School of Business. The index also is more stable than ever in its 11-year history.

"We've gone seven quarters with very low volatility quarter to quarter after having very high volatility quarter to quarter for the previous run of the entire survey," said economist Richard Wobbekind, executive director of the Leeds School's Business Research Division[24], which conducts the LBCI. "When business people are assessing the environment they're seeing it as really stable right now."

The first quarter LBCI for 2015 posted a reading of 60.8, up from 59.5 last quarter.

Expectations measured positive -- at 50 or higher -- for all of the metrics within the index, which include the national economy, state economy, industry sales, industry profits, capital expenditures and hiring plans. The favorable standings represent 13 consecutive quarters of positive expectations, according to the LBCI.

Underscoring stability, the standard deviation of the LBCI -- or variation from the average reading -- has been a mere 0.7 over the past seven quarters compared to 7.9 each quarter before that in the report's history.

Overall, optimism in the state economy is the highest metric in the index for the first quarter of 2015 at 66.2, up from 63.9 last quarter. Optimism in the national economy gained the biggest boost; it's at 60, up from 56.4 last quarter. And hiring, though still solidly positive, is the least bullish component of the index at 58.2, up from 57.9 last quarter.

Metrics on capital expenditures notched positive at 59.4 for the first quarter of 2015, up from 57.8 last quarter.

Profits expectations are at 59 heading into the new year, up from 58.8, and sales fell a fraction of a point to 61.8, down from 62.1.

Colorado's unemployment rate fell to 4.1 percent in November 2014 and employment in Colorado has registered 49 months of year-over-year growth.

Employment growth is fragmented around the state. The top three areas that showed growth are the Greeley (+4 percent), Denver-Aurora-Broomfield (+2.7 percent) and Boulder (+2.3 percent) Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). The Greeley MSA is 14.7 percent above prerecession employment levels.

Employment growth also was recorded in the Fort Collins-Loveland (+2 percent) and Pueblo (+1.3 percent) MSAs. The Colorado Springs MSA was flat and employment fell in the Grand Junction MSA by 1 percent.

The Colorado Springs and Grand Junction MSAs are the only two areas that have not regained prerecession employment levels in Colorado.

Statewide, the biggest employment gains in November compared with the same month in 2013 were in the mining and logging, construction, and leisure and hospitality sectors.

For more information about the Leeds School's Business Research Division and the first quarter report visit http://leeds.colorado.edu/brd[25].

Let's Knock Out Cancer gala to feature Colorado hitmakers the Fray[26]

[27]

Let's Knock Out Cancer – a gala presented by the University of Colorado Hospital Foundation to benefit the hospital and the CU Cancer Center – is set for Jan. 24 at the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center.

The Fray will headline the event's entertainment with what's billed as an intimate concert. The national hitmakers first came together in Colorado; singer-songwriter Isaac Slade studied the music industry while attending CU Denver.

9News anchor Corey Rose will emcee.

The black-tie event begins at 6 p.m. with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by dinner, program and concert at 7:15 p.m. The hotel is at 650 15th St., Denver.

All proceeds from the gala will go to UCH and the CU Cancer Center.

Tables for 10 and individual tickets are available. Click here to register[28] or contact Megan Terry at 720-848-7126 with questions.

Basketball teams to challenge Western State in Downtown Classic[29]

[30]
The UCCS basketball teams will return to the historic Colorado Springs City Auditorium for the Third Annual Downtown Classic on Friday.

Both UCCS men's and women's basketball teams will face Western State Colorado University in a Rocky Mountain

Athletic Conference doubleheader.

The women's game will begin at 5:30 p.m. with the men's game to follow at 7:30 p.m. Advance tickets are available at http://www.UCCSTickets.com[30]. Game day sales will begin at 4:30 p.m. at the auditorium.

The UCCS men's team is ranked No. 3 in the latest NABC Division II National Poll and is 13-0 for the first time in program history. The Mountain Lions are in the top 10 of NCAA statistics in scoring, field goals made, free throws made and steals. The UCCS women's team is 11-2 and is second in the RMAC standings with a 6-1 record. The Mountain Lions have the recent national player of the week in Abby Kirchoff, who broke the UCCS single-game scoring record last month.

The Mountain Lion games will continue an ongoing partnership between UCCS and the City Auditorium that started two years ago. UCCS used a temporary setup for the Inaugural Downtown Classic in 2013, and then put in a new floor with basketball lines, purchased new scoreboards and a new hoop system for last year's game that brought the facility up to NCAA and National Federal of State High School Associations standards.

The city of Colorado Springs made improvements to the curbing on the north and east sides of the facility in 2013 and resurfaced the west access corridor in 2014. The city is in the early stages of bringing the restroom area to code and accepted design proposals for the project this fall.

The Colorado Springs City Auditorium opened in 1922 after a general election vote in 1921 approved a $390,000 bond measure. The Strategic Plan for the Revitalization of the City Auditorium has identified the most needed upgrades to the facility to enhance the future use of the building and establish it as a viable public events venue in downtown Colorado Springs.

Marks elected to Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank board[31]

[32]
Lilly Marks, vice president for health affairs and executive vice chancellor of the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, recently was elected to a three-year term as a board member for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, representing the public.

Marks had been a member of the Denver Branch Board of Directors since 2013.

The appointment, announced Dec. 27 by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, became effective Jan. 1.

Members of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's head office board of directors represent the 10th Federal Reserve District: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Wyoming, northern New Mexico and western Missouri.

The Kansas City board consists of three directors who are bankers elected by commercial banks that are members of the Federal Reserve System, three who represent the public and are elected by member banks, and three who represent the public and are appointed by the Federal Reserve Board of Governors in Washington.

Directors meet monthly to confer on economic and banking developments and to advise the Bank on its operations and policies. The directors also are responsible for establishing the Bank's discount rate, subject to review and determination by the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

Barsugli receives funding for wildlife, climate studies[33]

Joseph Barsugli, research scientist at the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) at CU-Boulder, is one of several researchers who recently was awarded funding by the U.S. Department of the Interior's North Central Climate Science Center in Fort Collins. Barsugli and others will share $400,000 in funding for new wildlife and climate studies.

His project, titled "Evaporation, Drought, and the Water Cycle Across Timescales," will continue through 2017 and looks at evaporation, drought and the water cycle in the northern Rocky Mountains and Northern Great Plains.

According to the Interior's website, the project "identifies and addresses climate science challenges that are important for ecologists and land managers in the North Central region. Drought is a dominant driver of ecological, economic, and social stress in the region, and is expected to be a major mode in which the impacts of climate change will be manifested in the region. The specific goal of this project is to improve the understanding of drought, and in particular to improve the climatic data (temperature, soil moisture, and other aspects of the water balance) that is being used to make projections of future ecological conditions in the regions. We will work to translate this scientific knowledge and data so that it is useful for land managers through the development of future drought scenarios that are supported by the quantitative data and tailored to the needs of the different landscapes within our region."

Matthews, Neu, Cook publish findings on insomnia in children and cancer[34]

College of Nursing colleagues **Ellyn Matthews**, **Madalynn Neu** and **Paul Cook**, have published research findings on sleep among children with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) and their mothers.

"Sleep in Mother and Child Dyads During Treatment for Pediatric Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia" was published this fall in the journal Oncology Nursing Forum. The authors note that ALL is the form of cancer diagnosed among one-third of all the cases of cancer in children between birth and age 14. While survival rates are good for these patients, symptoms such as disrupted sleep and fatigue can cause stress for the child as well as for the family or caregivers.

To better understand these cases, the researchers asked study participants to complete questionnaires and sleep diaries to evaluate the amount and quality of their sleep time. In addition, mothers and children wore a wrist actiwatch, an accelerometer that detects motion and sleep/rest and wake periods. Mothers with children who have ALL reported greater insomnia compared to controls, and the sleeplessness was associated with anxiety, depressive symptoms, and stress. Maternal groups did not differ on diary and actigraph measured sleep outcomes, yet both groups experienced sleep fragmentation. Children with ALL took longer to fall asleep and had worse sleep habits and patterns.

For the researchers, the results indicate an important role for oncology nurses who may be in situations where they can spot sleep-related problems in both children with ALL and their mothers. These nurses could offer recommendations or referral assistance to better manage sleep disruptions.

Obituary: Gary Stern[35]

CU Denver colleagues are remembering Emeritus Psychology Professor **Gary Stern**, who died Dec. 31, 2014, at his home in Littleton. He was 75.

Stern joined CU in 1969 when the Denver location as an extension division. He was an early advocate for CU Denver attaining status as a campus in the CU system, and he was among the first professors to he hired after the Psychology Department was established.

Psychology Department Chair Peter Kaplan said, “Gary served on our faculty with distinction for nearly 40 years, including as department chair. He founded and led the Social Psychophysiology Lab, and was widely known as an outstanding teacher and mentor. He was a very bright guy – witty and engaging -- and students really loved him.”

Stern was honored with the CU Denver College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ Excellence in Teaching Award in 1987.

On a personal note, Kaplan said, “Gary hailed from the Bronx, New York — as a fellow Bronxite, I would often reminisce with him about the ‘good old days’ on Gun Hill Road. He will be missed. “

Stern is survived by his sons Nicholas and Michael Stern.

At his request, no service will be held. Those wishing to remember Stern may send a donation to CCFA: Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation; National Processing Center; Attn: Honor & Memorial Gifts; P.O. Box 1245; Albert Lea, MN 56007-9976 http://online.ccfa.org/site/PageNavigator/Honor_Memorials[36].”

In memoriam[37]

Names of current and former University of Colorado faculty and staff who have died in recent weeks. List compiled by Employee Services.

CU-Boulder
Ronald D. Engler, 87, classified staff retiree. Nov. 19, 2014. **Magdalene J. Romano,** 96,classified staff retiree. Dec. 12, 2014.
UCCS
Robert S. Dotson, 36, classified staff. Dec. 8, 2014.
CU Denver
Phyllis W. Schultz, 89, faculty retiree. Dec. 3, 2014.
CU Anschutz Medical Campus
Marion P. Downs, 100, faculty retiree. Nov. 13, 2014.

Staff Council seeks nominations for Service Excellence Awards[38]

Nominations for the annual Service Excellence Awards – which honor classified and university staff employees who have provided outstanding and sustained volunteer service to their campus, community and the university – are being accepted by the University of Colorado Staff Council.

Deadline for nominations is Jan. 30.

The Service Excellence Award is presented to a qualified individual from each campus and system administration and includes a $1,000 cash prize. Awards will be presented April 3 during the All Staff Council Conference.

Nomination packets must include:

- A nomination form, completed and signed by the nominator, describing the nominee’s service;

• A statement or letter that summarizes the nominee's volunteer or service contributions to the University of Colorado, their home campus and their community/civic/professional organizations, and that explains why this individual deserves the Service Excellence Award.

• A copy of the employee's current position description or a paragraph describing the nominee's current job duties and responsibilities.

Award honorees will be chosen by Staff Council members. For more information on award criteria and the nomination process, visit the UCSC Service Excellence Award web page[39].

Deadline extended for Gee Award nominations[40]

The Women's Committee of the Faculty Council requests nominations for the 2014 Elizabeth D. Gee Memorial Lectureship Award, which carries a $1,000 prize. The recipient presents his/her scholarly work during the Gee Memorial Award Lecture at the annual CU Women Succeeding Professional Development Symposium on Feb. 27.

The nomination deadline has been extended to Jan. 31.

The award recognizes and honors an outstanding faculty member of the University of Colorado for efforts to advance women in academia, interdisciplinary scholarly contributions and distinguished teaching. Instituted in 1992, the award is named for Elizabeth Gee, a faculty member in the CU Anschutz Medical Campus School of Nursing and the late wife of former CU President Gordon Gee.

The Gee Award is the only award in the CU system that specifically recognizes outstanding work on women's issues and a concerted effort to advance women in the academy.

Eligibility: Any full-time faculty member from any of the CU campuses may be nominated.

Criteria: The criteria for selecting recipients of the award are as follows:
Record of advancing women in the academic community (please note that nominee should show evidence of advancing women beyond his/her own department); Significant and original scholarship and/or creative work; Record of research, teaching, and/or service that pushes the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge and makes connection between disciplines; Distinguished record in teaching excellence.
Nomination: To nominate a candidate, please submit the following:
a nomination statement in letter form (please individually address each of the four criteria listed above in the letter); a two- to three-page abbreviated current curriculum vitae of the nominee; a one- to two-page personal statement from the nominee (please individually address each of the four criteria listed above in the statement); and Letters of support from the University community and the extended academic community. One letter from a student or advisee is optional. Nomination packets should not exceed 20 pages. Only complete nomination packets sent in by the due date will be reviewed.

Please submit the **nominating packet as a single PDF file** to isabella.muturisauve@cu.edu[41] by 5 p.m. Jan. 31.

If you have any questions about the nomination process, please contact Melinda Piket-May at Melinda.Piket-May@cu.edu[42]. Preference will be given to nominees who have been with the University of Colorado at least five years.

Visit http://www.cu.edu/faculty-council/awards/elizabeth-d-gee-memorial-lectureship-award[43] for a complete list of previous award winners.

Sutherland seminars focus on bipolar disorders[44]

The next Sutherland Seminar Series of weekly sessions on topics related to bipolar disorders will begin Jan. 26 at CU-Boulder, running 6-7:30 p.m., and will continue each Monday through March 16.

The series is primarily designed for adults with a bipolar disorder and their family and friends, but is open to anyone in the community who wants to better understand the disorder and how to manage it.

Each session stands alone, so people may attend only one session or all eight. No commitment or pre-registration is required.

Most seminars are in Room E214, Muenzinger Psychology Building.

A $10 per person donation is appreciated, but no fee is required.

Click here[45] for more details and the full schedule of topics.

Funding for the Sutherland Center at CU is provided through an annual grant from the Sutherland Foundation, through in-kind contributions from the University of Colorado, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, and from generous grants from the University of Colorado's Outreach Committee. This partnership sustains the Center's work.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/five-questions-carol-runyan[2] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-sworn-cu-denver[3] https://connections.cu.edu/file/reg-swearing-intoppng[4] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/reg-swearing-in_carson.png[5] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/reg-swearing-in_griego.png[6] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/reg-swearing-in_shoemaker.png[7] http://www.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9RSQ8X7AA1FD[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/john-j-reilly-jr-named-dean-cu-school-medicine[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/results-retirement-vendor-study-expected-month[10] https://connections.cu.edu/news/dpas-nesbitt-named-vp-of-employee-and-information-services[11] http://www.cu.edu/ope/efficiency-and-effectiveness/presidents-task-force-efficiency/aps-5014-sexual-harassment-policy[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/legislative-session-brings-new-opportunities-challenges-cu[13] https://connections.cu.edu/news/governors-proposed-budget-includes-good-news-for-higher-education[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-doctor-details-steps-successful-weight-loss[15] https://connections.cu.edu/news/cu-doctor-details-steps-to-successful-weight-loss/weight-loss-2[16] http://anschutzwellness.com/Home[17] http://anschutzwellness.com/about-us/team[18] http://www.anschutzwellness.com/extreme-weight-loss-destination-boot-camp-form[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/architecture-students-design-homes-disabled-and-service-animals[20] https://connections.cu.edu/file/ucdsvs-animalspng[21] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/ArchitecturePlanning/Academics/DegreePrograms/MArch/Pages/MArch.aspx[22] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/ArchitecturePlanning/facultystaff/directories/Pages/Individual%20Pages_Architecture/Herdt_Julee.aspx[23] https://connections.c

u.edu/stories/colorado-business-confidence-remains-positive-stable-first-quarter-2015-says-cu-boulder[24] http://leeds.colorado.edu/brd#overview[25] http://leeds.colorado.edu/brd[26] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/let%E2%80%99s-knock-out-cancer-gala-feature-colorado-hitmakers-fray[27] http://knockoutcancergala.org[28] http://uch.thankyou4caring.org/knock-out-registration-page[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/basketball-teams-challenge-western-state-downtown-classic[30] http://www.uccstickets.com/[31] https://connections.cu.edu/people/marks-elected-kansas-city-federal-reserve-bank-board[32] https://connections.cu.edu/file/pmarkspng-0[33] https://connections.cu.edu/people/barsugli-receives-funding-wildlife-climate-studies[34] https://connections.cu.edu/people/matthews-neu-cook-publish-findings-insomnia-children-and-cancer[35] https://connections.cu.edu/people/obituary-gary-stern[36] http://online.ccfa.org/site/PageNavigator/Honor_Memorials[37] https://connections.cu.edu/people/memoriam-24[38] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/staff-council-seeks-nominations-service-excellence-awards-0[39] http://www.alumniconnections.com/links/link.cgi?l=6204097&h=10015230&e=UCO-20141218102358[40] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/deadline-extended-gee-award-nominations[41] mailto:isabella.muturisauve@cu.edu[42] mailto:Melinda.Piket-May@cu.edu[43] http://www.cu.edu/faculty-council/awards/elizabeth-d-gee-memorial-lectureship-award[44] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/sutherland-seminars-focus-bipolar-disorders-1[45] http://rdsfoundation.org/the-rds-center-at-cu/seminar-series/