CU President Bruce D. Benson announces retirement[1]

Editor's note: A version of this story first appeared on CU Connections July 18 as Breaking News.
[2]

University of Colorado President Bruce D. Benson last week announced his retirement, effective July 2019.

Benson, who earned a geology degree from CU in 1964, has been president since March 2008. He is the longest-serving CU president in 65 years.

"It has been my honor and privilege to serve as president of my alma mater for the past decade-plus," Benson said on July 18. "CU is among the top universities in the world and has a bright future. The university advances the economy, health and culture of our state every day, and I'm proud of the work we've done to ensure it is one of Colorado's most important public assets."

Click here[3] for President Benson's full statement.

"Bruce Benson has been one of the most effective presidents in the university's storied history and the mark he leaves on CU and our state will endure for some time," said Sue Sharkey, chair of the CU Board of Regents. "His passion for education, commitment to diversity of all kinds, business acumen and outstanding leadership have CU well-positioned for a bright future. Bruce is a true friend and mentor in the art of leadership, not only to me, but also to many who have known him."

During the 10-plus years of Benson's tenure, CU has seen considerable success in annual measures.
Some 135,000 students have earned degrees from CU's four campuses (Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, the Anschutz Medical Campus). Enrollment increased from 54,174 to 65,375 (with an additional 7,000 taking courses for credit); Internally generated financial aid increased from $88 million to $184 million; Research funding increased from $660 million to $1.03 billion; Fundraising increased from $135 million to more than $400 million; CU's endowment increased from $721 million to $1.3 billion; The overall budget increased from $2.2 billion to $4.5 billion; CU's economic impact increased from $5.3 billion in 2012 to $8.3 billion ($12.3 billion when affiliate hospitals are included).
"CU's success has been a team effort and I have been fortunate to work with some great people, from faculty and staff to campus chancellors and my executive team," Benson said. "Together, we've improved the culture, enhanced collaboration and increased diversity in all its forms. CU has programs and people in every corner of Colorado and we're proud of what we do every day to improve the state that was founded the same year as the university."

Click here[4] for CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano's statement on President Benson's announcement.

Click here[5] for UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy's statement on President Benson's announcement.

Regents hear from consultants in lead-up to presidential search[6]

In what turned out to be a timely discussion at its retreat July 11-13 in Tabernash, the University of Colorado Board of Regents heard from a panel of presidential search consultants about the national marketplace for university leaders and insight into search processes.

At the time of the discussion, CU President Bruce Benson had not announced his retirement, which he did July 18.

The three search consultants talked about candidate types, timelines, search committees and the national landscape for presidential searches.

The panelists – Shelly Weiss Storbeck of Storbeck/Pimental & Associates, Jennifer Biehn of Odgers-Berntdson and Michael Mitchel of Korn Ferry – all have conducted searches for presidents and chancellors, including within CU. Kathy

Nesbitt, vice president for employee and information services, facilitated the conversation.

The regents have spent more than a year refining the presidential job description and qualities they would like to see in CU's next leader. The groundwork will prove beneficial after Benson's announcement last week.

"As an institution, CU is a community leader," Biehn said. "When you get a profile of what you're looking for, that person is out there."

Storbeck said the Board of Regents has a key role beyond selecting the next president.

"The board needs strong representation on the committee," she said. "The committee has to sell, and they have to sell CU."

She added that non-traditional presidents, non-academics such as Benson and Hank Brown before him, account for 18 percent of presidents at public and private institutions. She added that 30 percent of presidents and chancellors are women and 17 percent are people of color.

Nesbitt said CU's structure – a system with four campuses – also will play a role in the kind of leader it attracts.

Mitchel said the board needs to gaze into the future when considering candidates.

"You have to ask, ''Where do you want the university to be three, five, 10 years from now? What's the culture you want?'"

The panelists agreed that it is imperative that the board have a sound idea of what they want the candidate to achieve and how that person can fulfill the university's vision.

With Benson's announcement last week, the process will take on a heightened significance. The regents are expected to meet in the coming weeks to start the process, although a meeting date has not been set. Benson indicated he intends to retire in July 2019.

Regents eye metrics to measure system, campus successes[7]

The University of Colorado Board of Regents agreed on a set of metrics that will give tangible evidence of the university's progress, as well as a clear picture of areas where it must improve.

In Tabernash at its annual summer retreat July 11-13, the board heard from Vice President for Finance and CFO Todd Saliman, who spearheaded the project.

"This is a tool for you to judge the progress and the performance of the president, chancellors, campuses and all of us," Saliman said.

He worked with campus chancellors and their teams over several months to home in on the key measures of the university's success under the broad headings of affordability and access, student success, fiscal sustainability, and reputation and impact.

The process was guided by the regents' Strategic Vision[8] framework. The resulting metrics [9]outline is a living document the regents and administration agreed will provide a solid overview of CU's key imperatives.

"It's like our guide to where we're going," said Regent Irene Griego.

Many of the metrics have specific numeric goals, such as four- and six-year graduation rates, degrees awarded,

enrollment, gift revenue and economic impact. Each has a 2017 baseline number and a five-year goal projected to 2023.

Saliman said a particular metric will be addressed in depth at each upcoming board meeting.

“We want to have an ongoing conversation and an in-depth conversation on particular metrics,” he said.

CU Denver Chancellor Dorothy Horrell said the approach will let campuses dive deeper into each metric.

“It will allow us to spend time with regents talking about how we manifest each issue, and examining the underlying factors,” she said. “It keeps us moving in the direction we’ve already started. Aligning all that and leveraging that is certainly an opportunity.”

The wide-ranging metrics effort will also explore factors such as alumni satisfaction ratings, patents awarded, online enrollment, student debt and the ratio of institutional aid vs. tuition.

“We don’t want to just look at them as check marks, we want to look at the broader implications – things like retention rates, internships, how we’re engaged in the community,” said UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy.

Some of the regents suggested things that were missing or needed more prominence, intellectual diversity chief among them.

“Diversity of thought needs to be much more prominent,” said Regent John Carson. “This is the very heart of what the American university is all about. We have got to present our students with a full range of thought.”

Regent Heidi Ganahl echoed Carson’s point.

“Many of us on the conservative side feel under-addressed in higher education. We want to measure this somehow and we want to move the needle. We’re here to represent our constituencies and our communities,” she said.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Lightner said the university should focus on its areas of greatest need.

“We hire based on expertise, we don’t hire based on political affiliation,” he said.

Yet he also said there is no place for any kind of discrimination on campuses, including political thought.

Saliman said his group will refine the metrics to reflect the regent discussion and would continue the conversation at each upcoming board meeting.

CU Boulder earth, atmospheric sciences No. 1 overall in 2018 global university rankings [10]

Seventh season of Mini Law School addresses hot topics[11]

Chronicle names UCCS a 2018 ‘Great College to Work For’ [12]

Exploring and learning from coexistence in medieval Spain[13]

Top 5 ice cream shops close to campus[14]

High altitude does not seem to cause higher suicide rates[15]

College of Nursing practice tapped for governor initiative [16]

Frank, Kuhn, Lyons, Tamburini named Outstanding Early Career Scholars [17]

Wienholtz joins regional board of NASPA [18]

Chen talks immigration[19]

In memoriam: Ron Gallegos[20]
[21]

Ronald I. Gallegos, a member of the CU Boulder community for 33 years, died July 4, 2018. He was 70.

In the ’80s, Gallegos established CU’s Pre-Collegiate Development Program, which provides college preparatory opportunities to low-income and first-generation students from Colorado.

“Ron was proud to work at the University of Colorado and, despite the fact that he was not an alum, he bled black and gold,” said Chris Pacheco, executive director of the Office of Pre-College Outreach and Engagement, in a eulogy. “He knew that the university was the perfect place to do the work he felt he was called to do and the university supported his work in every way they could.”

Click here[22] for an obituary.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/cu-president-bruce-d-benson-announces-retirement[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/benson_02.jpg[3] https://www.cu.edu/article/bruce-d-benson-statement[4] https://www.colorado.edu/today/2018/07/18/statement-chancellor-distefano-president-bensons-announcement-future-retirement[5] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=33461[6] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-hear-consultants-lead-presidential-search[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-eye-metrics-measure-system-campus-successes[8] https://www.cu.edu/strategicvision/strategic-framework[9] https://www.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/B2LUBN5EE1AB/$file/BOR_Metrics2018_AllFour_v201807.pdf[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-boulder-earth-atmospheric-sciences-no-1-overall-2018-global-university-rankings[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/seventh-season-mini-law-school-addresses-hot-topics[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/chronicle-names-uccs-2018-great-college-work[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/exploring-and-learning-coexistence-medieval-spain[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/top-5-ice-cream-shops-close-campus[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/high-altitude-does-not-seem-cause-higher-suicide-rates[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/college-nursing-practice-tapped-governor-initiative[17] https://connections.cu.edu/people/frank-kuhn-lyons-tamburini-named-outstanding-early-career-scholars[18] https://connections.cu.edu/people/wienholtz-joins-regional-board-naspa[19] https://connections.cu.edu/people/chen-talks-immigration[20] https://connections.cu.edu/people/memoriam-ron-gallegos[21] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/p_ron-gallegos.jpg[22] https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/wheat-ridge-co/ronald-gallegos--7906425