Regents approve 3 percent salary increases for faculty, exempt professionals[1]

[2]

The University of Colorado Board of Regents on Friday approved a 3 percent merit salary increase pool for faculty and exempt professionals, as well as a state-mandated salary pool increase of 3.5 percent for classified staff (2.5 percent cost of living; 1 percent merit raises).

The action, which will apply to the 2014-15 budget year, was part of a special meeting of the board at system administration offices in Denver.

The approved salary increases are .1 percent less than last year's salary pools, which were 3.1 percent for faculty and staff and 3.6 percent state-mandated increases for classified staff.

The state budget proposed by Gov. John Hickenlooper had included a 4.5 percent total salary increase for state employees, but in the long bill that's expected to be introduced at the Capitol on Monday, lawmakers reduced the amount to 3.5 percent. The 1 percent difference will enable lower rates of tuition increases at the campuses (see more information on the tuition vote here[3]).

The salary increase was approved 8-1, with Regent James Geddes, R-Sedalia, voting no. Geddes presented an alternate tuition and salary plan to the board; the proposal called for no tuition increases for resident students, and would have instead enacted higher tuition for out-of-state and international students, and reduced faculty and staff compensation increases to 2.5 percent.

While discussing the salary increases, regents stressed the importance of retaining hard-working faculty and staff. Regent Glen Gallegos, R-Grand Junction, called raises for the employees "critical." Regent Joe Neguse, D-Broomfield, said it is imperative to "support the people at the university who work hard day-in and day-out."

President Bruce D. Benson also encouraged approval of the salary pool as recommended by administrators.

"I'm proud of the people at the university because they've really bucked up," said Benson, noting several faculty and staff have taken on additional duties for little or no more compensation. "We're in a market where we have to survive. We have to work to keep our good people; we've got people being recruited out of here."

In other action at Friday's meeting:
The board voted on three separate motions concerning the election of the chair and vice chair. The proposed revisions to the selection process were the result of a deadlock in June of last year in which regents failed to elect a chair for the upcoming year, casting 14 rounds of ballots over 90 minutes. The motions needed a two-thirds majority to pass: The board voted 5-4 in favor of the first motion, which would have dictated that any vote to elect the chair and vice chair be held by secret ballot if there is more than one nominee for each position. Voting no were Regents Steve Bosley, R-Longmont; Kyle Hybl, R-Colorado Springs; Gallegos and Geddes. It failed because a two-thirds majority was not reached. The board approved 6-3 the second motion, which provides that the chair and vice chair be from different political parties unless seven or more regents are members of the same political party. Voting against the measure were Regents Bosley, Gallegos and Hybl. The board unanimously approved the third motion that states, among other things, that unless otherwise limited by regent provisions, any regent is eligible to be elected to the chair or vice chair irrespective of that regent's party affiliation; and in the event the board is unable to elect a new chair and vice chair, the current chair and vice chair continue in their respective offices until the next scheduled or special meeting. The next regular or special meeting will be considered a new election. The board voted unanimously in favor of alerting finalists for presidential and chancellor positions before publicly announcing their names, as required under the state's Open Meetings Law. This would allow finalists to determine whether they want to proceed, without fear of reprisal from their current position. The board voted 8-0 in favor of re-addressing policy to allow for representation by university governance groups for all vice president search processes. The board's Laws and Policies Committee had been considering a change that would have required only that the governance groups be represented in searches for the vice president of academic affairs. (Regent Stephen Ludwig, D-Denver, did not vote as he was not yet present at the meeting.)

Tuition rates for 2014-15 set by Board of Regents[4]

[2]
The University of Colorado Board of Regents on Friday approved tuition rates throughout the system for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

In most cases, the increases affecting resident undergraduate tuition are about 3.4 percent, well below the 6 percent expected to be allowed this year by state lawmakers, as well as below last year's rates of increase across the CU system, which ranged from 6 percent to 8.7 percent.

The board voted 7-2 in favor of the slate of rates recommended by university administration, which presented information to the board during its meeting at system administration offices in Denver. Regents James Geddes, R-Sedalia, and Joe Neguse, D-Broomfield, voted against the proposed tuition rates.

"Thanks to a rare increase in state funding, this year's increase is among the lowest in the past 10 years," Chair Michael Carrigan, D-Denver, wrote in a letter sent this week to CU governance group leaders. "The Board of Regents is grateful for the bipartisan support for increased higher education funding from the governor and General Assembly."

Senate Bill 1, now in process at the Capitol, would deliver $100 million in increased funding for higher education, a boost first proposed by Gov. John Hickenlooper.

Approved tuition rates vary by program. Unless otherwise noted, rates of increase listed here – from the resolution voted on by the board – pertain to resident undergraduate base tuition:

University of Colorado Colorado Springs: up to 3.4 percent, or up to $254 for an academic year (30 student credit hours). Read more on the UCCS details here.[5]

University of Colorado Denver: up to 3.5 percent, or up to $296 for an academic year (30 student credit hours, arts and sciences)

University of Colorado Boulder: likely3.3 percent; up to 3.4 percent, or up to $298 for an academic year (30 student credit hours, arts and sciences)

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus: up to 6 percent, or up to $21.50 per credit hour (undergraduate nursing students)

The tuition rates are qualified as "up to" because administrators will be working on budget proposals in the coming weeks, and will keep the increases as low as possible – and no higher than the ceiling figures listed.

Before the vote, Geddes presented his Plan X for tuition, which would have entailed striking out tuition increases for resident undergraduates, he said. He criticized the administration and Board of Regents for "not insisting our expenditures come under better control." As examples, he pointed to academic program redundancies among campuses – three business schools, for example – and construction of new buildings such as the one planned for CU-Boulder's Euclid Autopark[6].

Regent Steve Bosley, R-Longmont, said what the campuses proposed were "realistic, modest increases."

Said Regent Sue Sharkey, R-Castle Rock, "Tuition increases must be justified, and I think they have been justified. … The campuses clearly identified the needs that additional tuition revenue would serve."

President Bruce Benson said he likes to remind people that "we are a market economy in higher education," and noted that average faculty salaries at CU-Boulder are below the averages of some peer institutions. "It's important to remember this is a market and we have to continue to drive forward."

“I hate (tuition increases) as much as anyone in this room,” Benson said. “But we’re holding it down to as low as 3 percent. … I think the staff has done a heck of a lot of work to come up with these proposals, and I’m certainly in favor of them.”

Five questions for Marty Otañez[7]

Otañez with a farmer in Argentina.

A demonstration in Malawi.

It was April of 2000, and Marty Otañez was in Malawi in southeast Africa at a demonstration against the World Bank and other international financial institutions.

Otañez earned a master’s degree at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria in 1992 and another master’s in labor and employment in the Netherlands before he journeyed to Malawi for the first time in 1995. The country was in the process of democratic change, driven primarily by trade union activities, and Otañez became interested in the role of unions in democratization and social justice.

Five years after first visiting Malawi, Otañez was at the demonstration, filming the event as part of his field work. He had spent time with organizers in the union of tobacco farm workers as he tried to understand some of the obstacles they faced. He was hoping to determine how he could use ethnography and anthropology “to make visible the bad practices of United States tobacco companies that profit from unpaid child labor, bonded labor, and environmental problems such as deforestation and pesticide poisoning.” For no reason, police shot tear gas canisters and tracer bullets into the peaceful crowd of about 60 demonstrators. He began to run for his safety, but at the same time, he kept filming (you can watch the video ‘Thangata’: www.sidewalkradio.net/?p=23[10]).

He wanted to capture knowledge and data to adequately represent what happened on the ground, but he also wanted to show solidarity with the country’s workers and labor leaders.

Otañez has used that experience to encourage students and individuals around the world “to engage on levels that can undermine structures that are responsible for a lot of the problems we address as professors.”

“I engaged in something called militant ethnography, using anthropological resources to push the discipline to more fully meet the mission of the university, which is to contribute to the health and wellness of communities where we work. And it definitely woke me up to the problems people face in developing countries.”

He began to look at anthropology as a tool to work for social justice and the moment also launched his career in video anthropology.

In 2008, he joined the University of Colorado Denver, where he is an assistant professor in anthropology, with specialties that include cultural, visual, policy, and medical anthropology as well as political ecology.

Article continues below video

1. Who or what influenced you most while you were in Malawi?

I have been able to visit the country more than a dozen times since 1995 and have probably spent more than 26

months there, doing research projects and working with different groups. One individual who has influenced me a great deal is one of the trade union organizers there, Rafael Sandramu. We would travel as many as 175 kilometers a day on his motorcycle to farms and he would introduce me to some of the men, women and children who grow tobacco. I was drawn to his style of being with the people, not necessarily drilling them for information, but to be present with individuals, and learn from them. Over time, that creates some momentum so that people can have the skills to stand up for what they believe in: fair tobacco leaf prices, fair earnings and a reduction in poverty.

I continue to work with him today and just saw him in January. We have a couple of projects we're trying to move forward. My time with him encouraged me to think of my position as one of power and influence and definitely a position of organizing, which is how I see myself in the university, in my service, my teaching and in my research projects.

2. You initiated Fair Trade Tobacco in the summer of 2011. What is Fair Trade Tobacco and what has it accomplished?

Otañez documenting farm work in Argentina.

Fair Trade Tobacco is a repository of information and resources for individuals around the world who are interested in making visible the exploitative practices of tobacco companies, cigarette manufacturers and leaf buyers. The specific purpose of the website (fairtradetobacco.org[12]) and the group is primarily to draw attention to some of these problems at the farm level, but also to put pressure on the World Health Organization (WHO) to use May 31, "World No Tobacco Day," to address something more than demand and consumption issues. For the past 21 years, the theme has never focused on tobacco agriculture. Through the website, we've created momentum for WHO to designate May 31, 2015, as World No Tobacco Day with themes that focus on tobacco industry exploitation in agriculture as well as alternative livelihoods for tobacco farmers and farm workers. The designation means that donor funds become available, and it draws attention to the idea that tobacco is not just a health issue, but also involves human rights, fair earnings, food sovereignty and corporate accountability issues.

3. What are the impediments to improving the conditions in tobacco-growing countries and what's being done to make changes?

The main impediment to any kind of positive changes in the livelihoods of tobacco farmers, farm workers, and public health policies is the tobacco industry, especially Philip Morris, Japan Tobacco, British American Tobacco and U.S. leaf buyers, including Universal Corporation and Alliance One International, that purchase about 90 percent of tobacco in Malawi, as well as the majority of leaf in tobacco-growing, developing countries.

At the local level, we want to provide tobacco farmers and farm workers in Malawi and elsewhere with information and resources so they can advocate for themselves and receive decent earnings, and for those who wish to exit tobacco farming, grow a mix of food and cash crops instead of tobacco. We want to demonstrate to the world the ways that tobacco companies suppress and collude over leaf prices to pass costs on to farmers and farm workers. It's also important to provide the farmers with accurate and up-to-date information about leaf prices offered by buyers and the different grades and qualities of leaves.

On a national level, it's about bringing people together to talk about alternatives to growing tobacco and how the tobacco industry through contract and labor arrangements keeps people hooked on tobacco growing. Because Malawi and other countries like it have been growing tobacco for so many years, the crop is an important part of the economy. In reality, tobacco families who cultivate leaf do not benefit in any meaningful way. The discussions about alternatives are about reducing the number of plants produced each year and increasing the mix of crops grown. These crops would be healthy ones that are less toxic than tobacco and do not require a lot of chemicals – crops that people can eat.

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control treaty is the first international health treaty, and its focus is on tobacco. I'm working with different global advocates and policy leaders to develop provisions that look at alternate livelihoods for farmers and farmworkers and initiatives that hold companies responsible for labor abuses and ecological

destructive practices. We want to educate people about the fact that tobacco control is about health as well as economic and environmental issues.

By this time next year, we hope to have a sophisticated program in five or six tobacco-growing developing countries that would, through text messaging, create a repository of information where farmers and farm workers would share information about leaf prices to improve their earnings. Data will be used in corporate accountability and worker rights initiatives in the world tobacco growing sector.

4. You've also done some advocacy work for immigrants in the Rocky Mountain region in Colorado. What did that entail?

From 2010 to 2012, I worked in partnership with labor organizers with the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC) – a group of 55 nongovernmental organizations in the state – through a visual anthropology project that was primarily used to document some of the lives of individuals involved in different jobs that support the ski industry. In 2009 and 2010, this population of undocumented and other immigrants was neglected – a function of geography and lack of resources. We focused on populations in Carbondale and Silverthorne, for example, and documented through video some stories and experiences that these people experienced, including being picked up by ICE (U.S. Immigration and Custom's Enforcement). We use video as an advocacy tool, but it also is a historical tool and people can use it to remember the struggles and victories immigrants face (https://vimeo.com/album/1684239[13]).

Historically, we as anthropologists go and tell other people's stories. I gravitated toward a model of digital storytelling to allow myself as a professor and a professional filmmaker to provide others with the skills to share their stories. It's a technique and strategy to provide individuals from the community with the structure and co-facilitators, as well as the equipment, to make stories on the issues that they believe are important to their own community.

Through research projects, I've investigated tobacco, cancer, and hepatitis, and now I'm working on sexual and reproductive health access and justice (http://tinyurl.com/mjma6e7[14]). Individuals share their stories on the videos, which are accompanied by companion policy briefs or viewing guides. The videos are used to get the issues onto the landscape where decisions are made about people's lives.

5. Tell me about a favorite item that you own.

One of the things I have is a fake shrunken head that a former undergraduate student of mine from Ecuador brought to me. I like it because it is prominently displayed next to my computer monitor and it gets so many reactions: everyone notices it because it is so odd -- the hair, the thread through the lips, the leather-looking skin. In our society, many individuals find it disturbing that cultures would shrink heads. In reality, from my knowledge of Ecuador, individuals never actually shrunk heads. It was a tourist thing that was devised to generate material things to sell. It reinforces an awareness about culture, and on a different level, it is a symbol of who I am. I'm half Eucadorian. I sometimes joke that I have Incan blood that drives me in my scholar activism. My Ecuadorian heritage is something I'm continuously learning about. It's something I'm proud of and wear on my sleeve even though it gets crowded out by my white-looking skin.

[15]

Higher ed funding bill being revised after concerns expressed[16]

[17]

A proposed change to how state funding is distributed among higher education institutions is being modified partly in response to concerns expressed by leaders at the University of Colorado.

House Bill 1319, introduced earlier this month by House Speaker Mark Ferrandino, direct more funding into the College Opportunity Fund (COF), which follows resident students to the state institution of their choice, and allocation to colleges and universities would be based partly on factors such as student retention and graduation rates.

CU's Government Relations team has expressed serious concerns about the bill's impact and unintended consequences. Based on initial figures, some colleges and universities would benefit from such changes; others, including CU, would stand to lose funding.

On Friday, Ferrandino met with several higher education presidents, chief financial officers and lobbyists. Among the 30 in attendance were Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia and Richard Kaufman, chair of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). All governing board representatives expressed some concerns, including those whose institutions would benefit from the current version of the bill.

Concerns ranged from the bill's introduction late in the legislative session – Ferrandino is in his last year at the Legislature and said he is eager to get the bill passed before he leaves – to suggestions that the bill's measurements be based on outcomes rather than inputs. Some governing boards wanted to weight Pell-eligible students and enrollment growth higher; some governing boards wanted to rate completion and graduation rates higher.

All governing boards asked questions about some of the numbers attached to the different policy goals in the bill and several governing boards asked about tuition and how that would be factored into the bill. Garcia and Kaufman expressed their concerns that the process needed to be more collaborative and that the CCHE should play a key role as it has in the past — convening the governing boards to work out many complex and challenging details, as well as examining the role and mission of the different institutions.

Ferrandino said he intended to significantly change the proposed bill, stating that he would not include the funding formula's specifics in the bill, leaving them to be worked out in the future. No action would be taken until after the House had heard the long bill, the state's budget bill, which is in process this week. He also talked about having some of the issues in the bill phased over time, rather than all being implemented in 2015-16.

Tanya Kelly-Bowry, vice president of Government Relations, said the bill now is moving in a much better direction than the original version, but CU remains cautious until the next draft is available for review, likely by early next week.

CU also is working to rescue funding for a proposed renovation of the Ketchum Arts and Sciences Building at CU-Boulder.

The $13.4 million project will replace aging infrastructure within the building to include the HVAC, plumbing, electrical systems, a fire alarm system upgrade, as well as asbestos abatement. It also includes the addition of new air conditioning, building insulation, and window replacement for energy conservation.

The state's Capital Development Committee had recommended the project be funded, but the Joint Budget Committee did not fully fund the list of projects as recommended. Renovation of the Auraria Library (originally $26.8 million) and new construction of the Visual and Performing Arts Building at UCCS ($13.3 million) remained on the list of funded projects, though Auraria was reduced by $5 million.

CU now is working with other institutions whose projects also weren't funded in an effort to secure at least partial funding from lawmakers for Ketchum and other excluded projects.

New solar-powered tables offer sustainable convenience[18]

Two students examine the new table on the Upper Plaza.

Three new solar power picnic tables will offer faculty, staff and students the chance to charge electronic devices while enjoying Colorado Springs' 300 days of sunshine.

Each table is made of recycled materials and is equipped with four standard AC power outlets and two USB ports, all powered by solar panels on the table's umbrella. A number of LED lights located under the umbrella will light the tables at night.

Because the tables run solely on solar energy, they are off the university's grid and require no outside energy source. A meter displays how much electricity is being generated and consumed.

The tables are located on the Upper Plaza, El Pomar Plaza and outside the south entrance to the University Center near MOSAIC and the Copy Center.

According to Matthew Driftmier, secretary of sustainability, Student Government Association, the tables provide students with a hands-on opportunity to learn more about the university's sustainability efforts.

"A lot of what the different sustainable groups on campus do is often done behind the scenes," Driftmier said. "(We) wanted these tables to be a physical, tangible product of UCCS' sustainable practices that students get to interact with and use."

The project was unanimously passed by the Green Action Fund which uses a $5-per-semester student Solar Fee to fund sustainability-related projects on the campus.

For more information about the Green Action Fund, please visit www.uccs.edu/gaf[20].

With help of device developed at CU, new glaucoma procedure could offer patients non-drug, non-surgical option[21]

Renderings of CU's DWT device, courtesy of OcuTherix.

OcuTherix, Inc.[23] and the University of Colorado (CU) have completed an exclusive license that will allow the company to continue developing a new non-invasive procedure for the treatment of glaucoma that uses patent-pending technology developed at CU.

Glaucoma is a leading cause of worldwide blindness, and is treated by lowering the fluid pressure inside the eye (intraocular pressure). Topical eye-drop medications are often used to lower eye pressure, but because these medications can cause discomfort, patients often fail to take them correctly and consistently. Laser and surgical procedures are also used to reduce eye pressure; however, these techniques are fraught with complications and do not consistently reduce eye pressure in the long term.

A research team led by Malik Kahook, MD[24], Slater Family Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology at the CU School of Medicine, has developed a compact, non-invasive device that uses carefully calibrated external sonic oscillation to stimulate drainage of the eye's fluid, reducing eye pressure. This innovative procedure, called Deep Wave Trabeculoplasty (DWT), is intended to be an efficient, safe and effective in-office treatment. Studies have shown that DWT does not cause tissue damage and lowers eye pressure consistently. An ongoing clinical study is intended to demonstrate that DWT has long-lasting benefits and can be repeated when needed. "The initial DWT study in humans revealed consistent eye pressure lowering without adverse events," said Kahook. "Our team believes that DWT will play a significant role in the treatment of glaucoma in the United States and across the globe."

"Gradual vision loss is devastating, and I am proud to be working with outstanding partners to develop DWT as we strive to save vision in people with glaucoma," added OcuTherix CEO Robert Atkinson. "I strongly believe that DWT

represents a new age in glaucoma treatment."

"We believe this device represents a completely novel approach to the treatment of glaucoma, and the University is excited to work with a company that will help Dr. Kahook develop such a pioneering technique," said David Poticha of CU's Technology Transfer Office.

OcuTherix, a spin-out company of medical device incubator Prospex Medical, Inc., is dedicated to medical device innovation to save vision in people with glaucoma. CAUTION: Deep Wave Trabeculoplasty (DWT) is an investigational device and is not approved for sale. www.ocutherix.com[23]

Basketball pool picks not going so great? Here is why, says CU-Boulder math professor[25]

[26]

It took 48 games for the first and second rounds of the 64-team NCAA men's basketball tournament to be decided, and millions of fans are deliriously awaiting the Sweet 16 to commence today.

But is there anyone left among the tournament pickers still in the hunt for Warren Buffet's $1 billion offer for filling out a perfect bracket? Dream on. According to University of Colorado Boulder Professor Mark Ablowitz, chair of the Department of Applied Mathematics, the odds of picking all 48 games correctly for the Sweet 16 from the original 64 teams by selecting randomly, like a coin flip, is approximately 1 in 280 trillion, or 1 in 280,000,000,000,000.

Sound tough? Really, really, really tough, says Ablowitz. But the odds of picking the ultimate winner from the full 63 games of the NCAA basketball tournament randomly are breathtaking: about 1 in 9.2 quintillion, or 1 in 9,223,000,000,000,000,000.

"These aren't just numbers," he said. "The real essence here is the issue of the behavior of large numbers. When numbers get exponentially larger and larger, things get out of hand very, very quickly," said Ablowitz, who specializes in nonlinear optics, water waves and applications of complex analysis.

According to journalist Eddie Pells of The Associated Press (who no doubt had some help from a math expert), if every possible combination of NCAA tournament winners and losers in the field of 64 was filled out on its own sheet of paper, it would weigh about 184 trillion tons -- more than 500 million times as much as the Empire State Building.

Others have calculated that picking all 63 NCAA tournament games correctly would be about the same odds as shooting four hole-in-ones in a single round of golf, or winning three consecutive Powerball lotteries.

"I'm not a basketball maven," Ablowitz said. "But if I had wanted to improve my personal odds, I would have looked at 10 high-profile sports websites that gave the odds for each game, then averaged those. Using 10 sources rather than one source smooths the numbers out a little, so you wouldn't be putting all of your money in one basket."

Ablowitz said sporting events are notoriously hard to predict, citing the 2014 Super Bowl, in which the Denver Broncos -- favored by 2.5 points over the Seattle Seahawks by Las Vegas oddsmakers -- were annihilated 43-8. And player injuries and illnesses can play a large role in athletic events, he said.

As far as the prediction skills of successful statisticians go, Ablowitz pointed to Nate Silver of FiveThirtyEight.com, a polling aggregation website, who correctly forecast the winner of the 2012 presidential race between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as 31 of 33 U.S. Senate races, in The New York Times. "But sports can be far more complex than presidential elections," Ablowitz said.

The envelopes, please: Smiles unsealed at Match Day 2014[27]

[28]

The annual Match Day festivities for CU School of Medicine students launched with hugs, laughter and lots of photo-taking, filling the 90 minutes between check-in at the Grand Hyatt ballroom in downtown Denver and the envelope-opening that unveiled for each fourth-year medical student where they would go next.

The students, accompanied by family and friends, filled the gold-and-black-themed ballroom with a buzz of excitement as they waited to open the 148 envelopes that would reveal their future.

Each year in mid-March, graduating medical school across the country find out simultaneously where they will perform their residencies, which can last between three and 10 years. The students have visited residency programs and ranked the places where they hope to get training. Those places have ranked the students they want for their programs. When all that ranking is done, the National Residency Matching Program puts it all together to determine the match for more than 16,000 graduating seniors from across the United States.

At 9:45 a.m., CU students were instructed to find the envelope with their name on it from a table near the dais, pick it up and then return to the tables where they were seated with friends and family. But no peeking. They were not allowed to open the envelopes until the magic hour – 10 a.m. – and not a moment sooner.

Dean Richard Krugman, M.D., speaking at his 24th CU Match Day, advised graduates to embrace their match.

“This envelope marks the beginning of the most intense learning year of your career since your first year of preschool,” he said, predicting that their learning curve will be “spectacular.”

“Some of you will be excited, some will be happy and some will be less thrilled than other people,” he said. “But nothing in medicine is forever. Even this.”

He handed the microphone to Associate Dean for Student Life Maureen Garrity, Ph.D., who offered a brief toast and, more important, permission to open the envelopes.

The reaction came in waves, as students opened their envelopes. Some groups erupted with screams and shouts instantly. Students at other tables hesitated before learning their destination. Within 20 seconds the room was in uproar.

[29]

Within moments, class co-president Carmen Sepulveda was reciting her classmates’ destinations to other students.

Sepulveda is going to Swedish Medical Center in Denver to specialize in family medicine, but she seemed almost as excited about her classmates’ destinations, which is maybe not so surprising for a student who said she “made it a point to learn the name of every one of my classmates in the first week of medical school.”

Sepulveda chose Swedish because she is impressed with the program, which she says uses the Patient Centered Medical Home model.

“It has a really good atmosphere. All the residents work together. Between Second Look (Day) and dinners with residents, I pretty much met all the residents at one time or another.”

She'll also stay in Denver where her family and her in-laws live. But for those moving out of Colorado, Krugman reminded graduates, "You've got a career that is portable. It can take you anywhere."

AppIt Ventures CEO credits Business School experience for guiding firm to success[30]

The AppIt Ventures team at a Denver outing. From left, CEO and CU Denver student Rob Carpenter, Brandon Brisbon, Stuart Parker, Lawrence Battey, Brandy Anderson and Raelina Krikston.

AppIt Ventures[32], a software startup that got rolling after winning the 2012 Bard Center for Entrepreneurship Business Plan competition[33] at the CU Denver Business School[34], is going strong and just reached another milestone.

Still at the helm of AppIt is company founder Rob Carpenter, who recently represented CU Denver[35] in another prestigious competition—the University Startup Challenge at the University of Denver. Five student-owned companies were finalists in the first-ever competition, which included top-rated businesses launched by students representing the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University and DU.

AppIt Ventures posts strong growth

Carpenter, who co-founded AppIt Ventures in late 2011 with fellow CU Denver student Jeff Macco, is about a third of the way through the Business School's MBA program[36]. He'd be farther by now, but business is so brisk that he's had little time for studies.

"We're up to six full-time employees and we're doing really good revenue numbers," Carpenter said. "We're on track to double or triple last year's numbers."

AppIt Ventures specializes in developing mobile custom applications that generate brand engagement, drive productivity and increase revenues. The company got its start with consumer-oriented apps for clients on a variety of topics, such as guitar playing and writing a business plan. By early 2012, it was already profitable and on its way to developing 25 apps.

But Carpenter and Macco, who has since left the company, discovered that the well for consumer-space apps ran only so deep. "Conventional wisdom says 60 percent of apps are not financially successful and 80 percent do not generate enough revenue to start a company," Carpenter said. "We found that 95 percent of consumer apps don't generate enough money to sustain a company."

Changing focus to custom-enterprise clients

[37]

So, after some growing pains in early 2013, which saw the amicable-terms departure of Macco and the need to shrink the company to two full-timers, AppIt Ventures made a strategic pivot: The company began developing apps for custom-enterprise clients. This opened the market to any company looking for a software app that could streamline an operation and create efficiencies. "At the end of the day, an app is a small-niche software product that does something for a company—it creates some kind of efficiency," Carpenter said.

For example, AppIt is developing an app for the nation's largest cattle-auction company. The firm had previously relied on a print catalogue to show all the cattle that were up for auction. "They wanted a digital catalog that they could update on the fly and would include a full database of auction items," Carpenter said. The app created by AppIt Ventures will end up saving the company "a lot of money."

With success comes notice. Sarah Engel, program manager of the Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship[38], saw AppIt's steady rise and told Carpenter about the University Startup Challenge. Carpenter is looking to build out his firm's network of investors, and the five student startups will be among two dozen companies making pitches to raise capital at the 7th Annual Angel Capital Summit.

'Competitions got us rolling'

Carpenter recalls that after winning the Bard Center for Entrepreneurship competition (now the Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship Business Plan Competition[39]) AppIt was featured in numerous media reports, which helped generate more clients. Also in 2012, AppIt Ventures won the Colorado Office of Economic Development business plan competition. "Those (competitions) really got us rolling and on a fast track for growth."

Many exciting chapters are yet to be written in the company's story. Given his tenacity, Carpenter will surely one day have three letters—MBA—after his name.

The CU Denver Business School, the Jake Jabs Center for Entrepreneurship, and the Rutt Bridges VC Fund[40], all provided the education and motivation that still plays a significant role in his life.

"Now that everything is structured (at AppIt) and I can delegate a tremendous amount of work, it gives me a tiny bit more flexibility in my schedule to get back to school and get that degree finished," he said.

Matias receives national award for education research[41]
[42]

Cheryl Matias, an assistant professor in the School of Education and Human Development at CU Denver, has been selected as the 2014 recipient of the American Educational Research Association Division K Innovations in Research on Diversity in Teacher Education Award.

The award recognizes research that demonstrates innovation in addressing issues of diversity in teaching and/or teacher education. The award honors work that explores and/or demonstrates powerful new ways to think about diversity in teaching and teacher education, giving direction to educators and to policy makers; offers an expanded vision of a theoretical framework, research methodologies, or practices regarding diversity in teaching and teacher education; or provides new models of research that give direction to the field concerning diversity in teaching and teacher education.

The selection committee cited Matias's steadfast focus on deconstructing whiteness so that the teachers she prepares will be able to engage constructively with students of color. One of her nomination letters pointed out: "Traditional approaches in diversity in teacher education research often focus on how to understand the cultures and languages of students of color (mostly urban), or how to learn best teaching practices that better facilitate the learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students, as in culturally responsive pedagogy. . . The focus of Cheryl's work is on how teachers, a majority who are white females, sustain projects of racial justice inside the classroom by understanding the emotional and affective dimensions of teaching and learning that are needed to invest in long-term, socially just teaching."

Matias will receive the award during the organization's Division K Business Meeting on April 4 in Philadelphia.

Additionally, Matias and her twins recently were invited by Michelle Obama to a private screening of "The Muppets: Most Wanted" and to tour the White House.

Montoya receives Fulbright Specialist grant for work in Colombia[43]

[44]
Lupita Montoya, assistant professor in the Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering Department and affiliated faculty in the Mortenson Center in Engineering for Developing Communities at CU-Boulder, has been awarded a Fulbright Specialist grant for spring 2014 at La Salle University in Bogota, Colombia.

Through the grant, Montoya will consult with faculty about air quality challenges in Colombia and provide lectures on air quality and public health. She will conduct needs assessments with schools and government institutions about how to address local problems regarding air quality and public health.

Air pollution is currently a main environmental concern in Colombia, after natural disasters and water sanitation. The World Bank has estimated that costs of urban air pollution for Colombia are 1.1% of GDP.

Montoya received a similar grant in 2012 to visit the Pontifical Catholic University in Chile, which led to research collaboration funded by the Chilean government to study indoor air quality and health in Santiago, Chile.

Pielke to contribute to new website[45]

[46]
Roger Pielke Jr., a professor of environmental studies at the University of Colorado Boulder who also directs CU's Center for Science, Technology, Policy and Research, will be a contributing writer for FiveThirtyEight, a data journalism website that launched earlier this month.

The editor-in-chief of FiveThirtyEight, an ESPN blog, is Nate Silver, a statistician and writer who is best known predicting the 2008 presidential election. Silver also is a special correspondent for ABC News. The site will include coverage of politics, economics, science, life and sports.

Pielke, who writes about the same topics on his own blog, will write a feature every other week.

Sloan joins UCCS Radio as staff adviser[47]

Ben Sloan in the UCCS Radio studio

Ben Sloan, media specialist, Information Technology Media Services recently was named the staff adviser for UCCS Radio.

With six years' experience as a radio DJ prior to joining UCCS, Sloan's excited to be behind the microphone again. "I started off in radio working behind the scenes on the technical side," Sloan said. "Once I got my own show and found my radio persona, I fell in love with it."

Sloan previously worked with UCCS Radio as a volunteer. Following the September 2013 death of Margaret "Marge" Mistry, he took over as the fulltime adviser. According to Sloan, Mistry's work set UCCS Radio up to move forward.

"Marge was everything to us," Sloan said. "She set up a lot of great partnerships across campus and really gave us a lot of momentum."

Sloan hopes to keep the momentum alive with a number of projects designed to increase the program's visibility, including installing radio boxes around campus that are capable of streaming UCCS Radio's online format, adding more faculty and staff programs, acting as DJ for more events, and potentially broadcasting over the air.

Sloan can be heard on UCCS Radio during "Office Hours With Ben" on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

UCCS Radio started in 2003 as a project undertaken by the UCCS Chapter of the ACM, the Computer Science Professional Association. The establishment of the radio station was made possible by a grant by the UCCS Technology Fee Committee. In 2005, the UCCS Internet Radio Station became an official organization within the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. The Internet Radio Station has an associated Student Club that performs many of the activities needed for day-to-day running. The club receives support from the College of Business, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, College of Education, School of Public Affairs, Beth-El College of Nursing & Health Sciences, and Ent Federal Credit Union.

For more information or to listen, please visit radio.uccs.edu.

Bowman-led group receives patent[49]

[50]
A research group led by **Christopher Bowman** of the CU-Boulder Chemical and Biological Engineering Department, recently received a patent for an improved method of detecting molecular recognition events, for use in diagnostic and environmental sensing applications. This patent is part of a portfolio of intellectual property generated by this group covering technology that uses polymeric materials (rather than conventional enzymatic amplification) to generate an amplified response to molecular recognition events in order to permit detection of low levels of biological molecules.

This IP portfolio has been developed by CU startup InDevR, Inc. as part of its ampliPHOX Colorimetric Microarray Detection system. In addition to Bowman, the other CU inventors on this patent were John Birks (Fellow Emeritus, CIRES); Kathy Rowlen (formerly CU-Boulder Chemistry and Biochemistry, now CEO of InDevR); and Hadley Sikes (formerly of CU-Boulder Chemical and Biological Engineering, MIT).

Fernald's work featured in journal cover story[51]

The work of **Doug Fernald**, a senior instructor, BIGHORN Director, and CaReNet Assistant Director at the School of Medicine, is featured in the cover story of AHRQ's Research Activities. Fernald's research includes health assessments and practice transformation. He developed "Health Assessments in Primary Care: A How-To Guide for Clinicians and Staff" to help medical professionals effectively implement procedures to assess, monitor and support their patients. Through assessment, for instance, "clinicians and patients can better evaluate and prioritize behaviors that can be changed, such as diet and exercise for patients with a sedentary lifestyle," according to the article. To read the article, visit http://www.ahrq.gov/news/newsletters/research-activities/14mar/index.html[52].

Diversity summit postponed[53]

The CU systemwide diversity summit has been postponed.

The event had been slated for April 17.

The new date is October 24. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Doubletree by Hilton Denver.

Check CU Connections for more details in the coming weeks.

A healthier you in 15 minutes[54]

[55]

A personalized plan to better health is just one click away.

The SUCCEED Health Assessment (HA) provides a tailored approach to better health by offering solutions for lifestyle improvements. In just 15 minutes, participants can obtain the information needed for a healthier future.

Employees who are the primary member of a CU Health Plan can complete the SUCCEED Health Assessment online. [55]

Prizes for the week of March 24: Complete the HA this week for the chance to walk away with **one of two $100 Massage Envy gift cards, a tablet, everyone's favorite music device or one of six Fitbits.**

Take the HA for one entry into the weekly prize drawings. Like Be Colorado on Facebook[56] for an additional entry! Employees who have already liked Be Colorado on Facebook will automatically be entered for a second entry once they have completed the HA. Participant must complete the HA for both entries to be considered. Ten winners will be drawn and notified every Monday during the campaign; participants may only win once. Entries will carry over each week until the campaign ends on April 11.

Earn $25 a month: The HA is an annual requirement of the Move. program. **Participantsmust retake the HA by June 30, 2014, to continue to be eligible for the Move. incentive through the end of this year**. Those who have already completed the HA in 2014 do not have to retake it at this time and will automatically be entered into the prize drawing.

Click here[57] to learn more about Move.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-approve-3-percent-salary-increases-faculty-exempt-professionals[2] https://connections.cu.edu/news/mission-statement-discussion-runs-into-numbers-trouble/regentsseal-2[3] https://connections.cu.edu/news/university-of-colorado-board-of-regents-sets-2014-15-tuition-rates[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/tuition-rates-2014-15-set-board-regents[5] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=14533[6] https://connections.cu.edu/news/regents-considering-rates-of-salary-increases-tuition-changes[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-questions-marty-ota%C3%B1ez[8] https://connections.cu.edu/file/5q-martytoppng[9] https://connections.cu.edu/file/5q-marty01png[10] http://www.sidewalkradio.net/?p=23[11] https://connections.cu.edu/file/5q-marty02png[12] http://www.fairtradetobacco.org/[13] https://vimeo.com/album/1684239[14] http://tinyurl.com/mjma6e7[15] https://connections.cu.edu/file/5q-martybottompng[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/higher-ed-funding-bill-being-revised-after-concerns-expressed[17] https://connections.cu.edu/news/higher-ed-funding-bill-being-revised-after-concerns-expressed/leg_top[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-solar-powered-tables-offer-sustainable-convenience[19]

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