Election preview: Regent candidates tell why they want to serve[1]

Colorado voters on Nov. 5 will determine the winners of three races for the Board of Regents, the governance group overseeing the University of Colorado system.

Regents are elected to six-year terms, which are staggered. Eight of the nine seats are assigned to Colorado's congressional districts; one at-large seat is elected by voters statewide.

Regent Lesley Smith, D-Boulder, the incumbent regent at large, chose not to run for reelection.

Representing the 3rd Congressional District, Regent Glen Gallegos, R-Grand Junction, is finishing his second term and is term-limited.

The lone incumbent in this year's contest, Regent Ken Montera, R-Colorado Springs, is again running in the 5th Congressional District.

CU Connections invited the major-party candidates on the ballot to respond to this request:

Please tell the faculty and staff of the University of Colorado system why you wish to serve (or continue serving) on the Board of Regents.

We asked candidates to limit their comments to roughly 250 words.

Here are the responses we received:

AT LARGE

Elliott Hood
D-Boulder
www.hoodforcolorado.com[2]

Attending CU was one of the best decisions I ever made. I got a great education and met many lifelong friends, including my amazing wife, Caroline. I cannot think of a better way to serve than to help lead the university that has given me so much.

But this isn't just about service. It's about advancing the cause of public education more broadly. I have dedicated my life to education: first as a teacher, then as an education nonprofit director, and now as an education attorney advocating for schools and educators across Colorado.

The best thing we can do as a community is to provide great public schools for everyone. Research universities like CU have the added importance of serving as incubators of innovative ideas that make our communities more resilient, more informed and more connected.

But attending college has become less reachable for many. It is several times more expensive to attend CU than it was when I graduated 20 years ago. No one should have to mortgage their future to get a college degree. My candidacy for regent is focused on ensuring excellence in everything we do – from teaching to research to athletics – but also ensuring that every qualified scholar across Colorado, regardless of background, can attend and graduate from CU without being burdened with debt. We also need to become a more sustainable university and take bigger steps to protect our environment and combat climate change.

I look forward to serving this university as regent at large.

Eric Rinard
R-Fort Lupton

www.rinardforregent.com[3]

My love of learning did not end with my graduation from the CU College of Engineering nearly 40 years ago. I have learned much since then and am still learning today. I wish to share my decades of experience, both practical and intellectual, and help guide CU toward a future of continued innovation, growing human prosperity for Colorado and beyond. I have reached the stage in life where I am compelled to serve my community and help others succeed.

As my wife and I counsel our four children on their journey through high school and beyond, I see how differently each of them chooses their path. We are also excited about their many options for transitioning to self-reliance, and this inspires me to seek an active oversight role in what I consider their best option – pursuit of a degree from my alma mater. An option that also serves 60,000 students like mine, who are on their own individual journeys.

As a parent of college-age children, I am sensitive to the social and emotional needs of young adults striking out on their own for the first time. I hope to inspire new initiatives to reduce living costs and improve mental health and positive outlooks, particularly for incoming freshmen. In the words of my favorite American philosopher, George Santayana, “Knowledge of what’s possible is the beginning of happiness.”

DISTRICT 3

Robert Logan
D-Durango
www.loganforcu.com[4]

After 27 years as a social studies teacher in a public school, I wanted to use my work experience and business degree to continue to serve the communities of rural Colorado. As a sixth-generation Coloradan, my devotion to the state is strong and my desire to see families have as many academic opportunities as possible motivated me to look into the regent position.

My short-term goals are to understand what the faculty, staff and students desire for the university. As a regent, I believe listening is the first step to understanding where the institution has been and where it is headed. I am sure a few long-term goals will arise from those interactions. That being said, I have three stated goals as part of my campaign:
First, make CU more accessible to all students in Congressional District 3 Second, expand partnerships, collaborations and opportunities with other state schools and rural communities Third, support collective bargaining for all CU employees
As the flagship research school in Colorado, CU has a unique opportunity to set the expectations and opportunities for all Coloradans who are seeking academic excellence. To be an elite university demands focus, shared responsibility, and a mission worthy of the effort. I believe CU has that desire and that I can contribute my knowledge, skills and experience to help build a better university and therefore state.

Ray Scott
R-Grand Junction
rayscott.co[5]

With 12 years of experience in the Colorado legislature and extensive involvement in managing substantial state budgets, I am well-equipped to approach spending from various angles. In addition to my legislative background, I have also amassed several years of entrepreneurial experience, having established multiple businesses. Currently, I serve as the president of the Industrial Property Owners Consortium located in Adams County, where I oversee all operations.

It is important for faculty and staff to understand that my approach to problem-solving is rooted in a business perspective and prioritizes cost and revenue analysis. When it comes to CU, any decision made must ultimately benefit

the students in the long run. The construction budget that I have been informed about aligns with my expertise as a former contractor. I am confident that my perspective will contribute valuable depth and experience, particularly in situations that require a fresh outlook.

DISTRICT 5

Ken Montera
R-Colorado Springs
www.monteraforregent.com[6]

It's hard to believe that I have had the privilege to serve the University of Colorado as regent for almost three years! I was appointed by Gov. Polis to fill a vacancy in 2021 and then elected in 2022 in Congressional District 5. Since beginning my time on the board, I have been elected vice chair of our board unanimously three times. I also serve as chair of the Investment Advisory Committee and vice chair of our Finance and University Affairs committees.

When I think about what I'm most proud of over the past three years, it is the collaborative and effective way that our board focuses on the needs of our students, faculty and staff, and making CU the best it can be. We are keeping the collective good of our university at the forefront of our decision-making process.

Some examples of this include the board's unanimous selection of President Saliman, co-chairing the search committee for our system treasurer, and being an integral part in the selection of two chancellors.

Academically, we added a bachelor's in aerospace engineering degree at UCCS two years ago, and recently added a master's in aerospace engineering.

We recently cut the ribbon on the Anschutz Engineering Center at UCCS and have supported integral projects at our other three campuses.

Graduation and retention rates are improving at all four campuses and student-athlete GPAs are at an all-time high. I was proud to welcome Coach Prime to our family and look forward to his program's success.

Because of our phenomenal faculty, we broke an all-time high in research dollars in the last year at over $1.7 billion – $910 million at CU Anschutz alone!

The future is extremely bright at the University of Colorado. I am humbled to be a part of its leadership, and I hope to be part of its future.

Axel Brown
D-Colorado Springs
axel4cu.org[7]

I'm running for CU regent because I want to be more than just a photo op at campus sporting events and donor galas. I want to be someone who truly represents the voices of staff and faculty and is present on campus whenever they need, not just when it looks good. I want to fight for their needs while bridging the relational gap between faculty, staff and administration that has existed for a long time on campuses across the United States of America.

Staff and faculty are the first and forever lasting impressions of our campuses and I'm running for regent because I believe they deserve someone who truly values their input and the work that they do every single day.

CUriosity: Why does playing in the dirt feel so good? [8]

Photos: Hispanic Heritage Month at CU Denver [9]

Photo Feature: 28th Annual UCCS Economic Forum[10]

As Colorado's high ozone and air pollution days climb, so do health dangers[11]

Sparn retires after 46 years of service to LASP [12]

Arquilla leading major new NASA grant [13]

Jones to be inducted into Texas Literary Hall of Fame [14]

We went to a startup symposium at the University of Colorado. We saw these nine cool startups. We said "wow" a lot. [15]

Vacuum Pumps, Robots, and a Real-Life Time Machine: Welcome to the Outside Gear Lab at CU Denver[16]

The Wealthy Are Paying Big Money to Pump Oxygen Into Their Mountain Homes[17]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/election-preview-regent-candidates-tell-why-they-want-serve[2] http://www.hoodforcolorado.com[3] http://www.rinardforregent.com/[4] http://www.loganforcu.com[5]

https://rayscott.co/[6] http://www.monteraforregent.com/[7] https://axel4cu.org/[8]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/curiosity-why-does-playing-dirt-feel-so-good[9]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/photos-hispanic-heritage-month-cu-denver[10]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/photo-feature-28th-annual-uccs-economic-forum[11]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/colorado-s-high-ozone-and-air-pollution-days-climb-so-do-health-dangers[12]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/sparn-retires-after-46-years-service-lasp[13]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/arquilla-leading-major-new-nasa-grant[14] https://connections.cu.edu/people/jones-be-inducted-texas-literary-hall-fame[15] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/we-went-startup-symposium-university-colorado-we-saw-these-nine-cool-startups-we-said-wow-lot[16] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/vacuum-pumps-robots-and-real-life-time-machine-welcome-outside-gear-lab-cu-denver[17] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/wealthy-are-paying-big-money-pump-oxygen-their-mountain-homes