Rico Munn will lead state's Department of Higher Education[1]

Photo is courtesy of the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies

Rico Munn, executive director of the state's Department of Regulatory Agencies since 2007, is Gov. Bill Ritter's choice to be the new executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education[3].

Munn, who in his most recent role managed the business side of Colorado's government and ensured consumer protection, will assume his new duties Nov. 2.

"Rico has done an outstanding job leading and improving the Department of Regulatory Agencies," Ritter said. "He also has a passion for education and the strong management skills necessary to help us build the best higher-education system in the country."

From 2002 to 2007, Munn represented Colorado's First Congressional District on the State Board of Education, which provides oversight for Colorado's K-12 public schools. He also served as an adjunct professor of law at the University of Denver's Sturm College of Law. Munn earned his law degree from DU in 1996 as a Chancellor's Scholar; he earned a bachelor's degree from Midland Lutheran College.

"The Governor is committed to ensuring the long-term success and stability of our system of higher education. I share that commitment," Munn said. "I'm honored that he has asked me to lead the department forward as we create a system of higher education that expands opportunities for Coloradans in every corner of the state."

CU President Bruce Benson said he has had initial discussions with Munn, and looks forward to working with him further.

"He has the skills and experience to be an effective leader who will work with all of Colorado higher education to ensure that it meets the needs of our state and its citizens," Benson said.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education is home to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education; it oversees 27 public institutions of higher learning, where 220,000 students are enrolled. The department also oversees several student loan programs.

Greg Ferland, currently deputy director at the Department of Regulatory Agencies, will serve as DORA's interim director.

Five Questions for Alan Cass[4]

[5]
Alan Cass' roots run deep at the University of Colorado at Boulder: Both his parents worked for the university, where he began his own career in 1959. The longtime PA announcer for Buffs football and basketball games officially retired in 1998 as director of the Coors Events/Conference Center and assistant athletic director.

His family tree also happens to intertwine with that of a CU legend: Glenn Miller, the big band icon who attended the university before conquering the pop music world during the 1930s and '40s. The connections inspired Cass to establish the Glenn Miller Archive, for which he continues to serve as curator. Cass gives a free multimedia presentation on Miller's life at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 24, in Eaton Humanities, room 150. A reception follows the event, presented by Friends of the CU Libraries. For details, call Linda Harkness at 303-492-7511 or go to the University Libraries Web site[6].

How did you become curator of the Glenn Miller Archive?

I'm distantly related to Glenn Miller's wife's side of the family. Her family and my family were all pioneers in Boulder County. So there was always this mystique that we were related, even though it was only through marriage.

Naturally, when I was growing up in the 1950s, the big bands were still around. I listened to the music and danced to it at the Trocadero Ballroom in Denver. In 1969, while I was working at the University Memorial Center, I suggested we set up a small display case dedicated to him in the Glenn Miller Ballroom. We got the word out that we were collecting items, and the story got picked up by a wire service and ran around the world. Suddenly, things just started showing up in the mail. Over the years, it grew into a major collection.

How large is the collection?

We have an archive room on campus where it occupies a considerable amount of space. We have every recording he ever produced in a studio, as well as many private recordings — air checks of radio shows that he would use to critique the band. We have 2,000 photographs of him, from his infancy on up until his death in 1944. We've started digitizing the photos and music, which is on 78s, LPs and cassettes.

We have some nice display space in the Heritage Center in Old Main, where we've dedicated a room to him. We're really not a museum — we're an archive. Our main goal is preservation. But we are looking forward to having more of these things on display in the next year or two, hopefully in a building that's part of the library system. We want the material to be more accessible to fans, students and faculty, so they can get an idea of who this guy was.

Which items do you find the most noteworthy?

Three come to mind. We have his first trombone as a young musician. We have his college trombone, as well, which he used while attending CU in 1922 and 1923. We also have the first gold record ever presented in the recording industry, dated Feb. 12, 1942, for sales of more than 1 million copies of "Chattanooga Choo Choo."

That first trombone — we loaned it to the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles in January. It will soon come back after being there a year. We've loaned things over the years to the museum in Fort Morgan, where Glenn Miller grew up. He was born in Clarinda, Iowa, where they're opening the Glenn Miller Birthplace Museum next year, and we'll loan items to them, too. We're more than happy to share.

How did his CU experience influence his career and his life?

Part of why he was so successful was that he was a smart businessman, and he learned a lot of that at CU. This is where he met his wife, too. He really loved Boulder and the university. He would frequently dedicate tunes to the university and the folks back home. The world premiere of his movie "Sun Valley Serenade" was in Boulder in 1941.

It's interesting — he got a failing grade in harmony class at the School of Music. He could have given up, but he continued, and look what he achieved. Harmony was a hallmark of his achievements.

He always professed that he would come back to CU and maybe finish his studies. He said he would love to teach. He never got that opportunity.

What's the most misunderstood aspect of Glenn Miller's legacy?

Some have said he wasn't the greatest trombone player, and he would be the first to admit that. But he was one of the top players, and the No. 1 or No. 2 arranger of big band music. He really had his finger on the pulse of what America wanted in music. I point to the record: In 1940, he had 45 tunes in the top-seller charts. Nobody before or since has equaled that mark.

He was enamored of classical composers. He was a genius, had a very analytical mind, and was a terrific

businessman. He was unique in that he could do so many things. Still, I think he would be quite humbled there's been so much attention given to him.

Accessing Higher Ground conference set for Nov. 10-14[7]

The 12th annual Accessing Higher Ground conference, to run Nov. 10-14 at the Westin Hotel in Westminster, promises more than 50 sessions.

Presented by Disability Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder[8], the event's hands-on labs and lectures will address the availability and benefits of accessible media and assistive technology for sensory, physical and learning disabilities in the university and business setting.

Keynote speaker will be T.V. Raman, research scientist for Google Inc.

Other topics on the agenda include legal and policy issues, such as ADA and 508 compliance, and making campus media and information resources — including Web pages and library resources — accessible.

The conference is aimed at those who must design or provide accessible Web, media, information resources and technology in the academic environment. Past audiences have included Web designers, assistive technologists, people with disabilities, disability specialists, faculty, media specialists and programmers interested in accessibility.

CU faculty and staff may receive a $30 discount on registration by registering as an ATHEN (Access Technology Higher Education Network) member at the event Web site[9], where conference registration and general information is posted.

News briefs[10]

Oct. 30 is deadline for CARTSS research funding applications

CARTSS — the Center to Advance Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences — is accepting proposals for fall 2009 funding through Oct. 30.

CARTSS supports social science research and teaching initiatives on the University of Colorado at Boulder campus, and has funded research in nearly every social science department. Of particular interest to the center is seeking innovative ways to integrate faculty research with undergraduate and graduate teaching.

Available grants range from $500 to $4,000. Submission requirements and contact details are here[11].

College of Nursing earns maximum duration of program accreditation

The University of Colorado Denver College of Nursing recently received the maximum number of years of re-accreditation possible from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), an arm of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, for the college's degree programs: bachelor of science in nursing, master of science in nursing, and doctor of nursing practice.

The nursing accrediting body awarded 10 years of re-accreditation for the college's bachelor's and master's degree programs, the maximum number of years CCNE awards for continuing accreditation. The organization awarded five years of initial accreditation to the college's new doctoral program, which is the maximum number of years awarded for new degree programs.

"The College of Nursing is pleased to have received the maximum number of years of accreditation from CCNE, a recognition of the excellence of our programs and faculty," said Dean Patricia Moritz, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N. "We would like to thank the entire nursing community, including all of our hospital and public health care agency colleagues, for their participation in the several daylong site visits by CCNE last spring, which were part of the accreditation process. We were highly successful in our accreditation efforts because of the collaboration with and support of our clinical nursing partners."

CU Opera takes on 'La Traviata'

Verdi's "La Traviata" will be fully staged by CU Opera this weekend at Macky Auditorium on the University of Colorado at Boulder campus.

Showtimes for the production, directed by Leigh Holman, are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets start at $12. For tickets and more information, click here[12], or call 303-492-8008.

Colorado firm aims to commercialize CU breakthroughs in pain management[13]

The CU Technology Transfer Office recently executed an option agreement with Colorado-based Xalud Therapeutics Inc., giving Xalud the right to commercialize a novel approach for treating neuropathic pain and other diseases of the central nervous system.

The company's lead product candidate, invented by Dr. Linda Watkins[14] of CU-Boulder, is a proprietary, non-narcotic-based therapy that eliminates neuropathic pain in highly predictive, gold-standard rodent models. Xalud also believes its treatment approach might be effective against diseases of the central nervous system.

Neuropathic pain is a chronic, debilitating condition affecting millions of people in the U.S., and is expected to grow into an $8.5 billion market by 2018.

Study: Tanning associated with moles in very light-skinned children[15]

[16]
A new study led by researchers at the Colorado School of Public Health[17]at the University of Colorado Denver shows that very light-skinned children who tan appear to develop more moles on the skin than children who don't tan. The presence of these moles is the strongest risk factor for melanoma development.

Cutaneous melanoma ranks sixth in incidence of all cancers among men and women in the U.S. The authors cite studies that found much of the preventable risk for melanoma is established in childhood, and developing habits around sun exposure and protection is particularly important early in life.

In Colorado, high elevation combined with more than 300 days of sunshine a year means residents have increased exposure to UV rays, resulting in a melanoma incidence rate approximately 30 percent higher than the national average.

"The number and size of nevi, also known as moles, are often used for determining the risk of developing melanoma," said Lori Crane, Ph.D., chair of the department of community and behavioral health at the Colorado School of Public Health and principal investigator on the study. "The risk factors for melanoma development and higher nevus counts include lighter hair color, eye color and skin color, greater UV exposure, higher frequency and severity of sunburns, and freckling."

The study is published in the September issue of Archives of Dermatology[18], one of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)/Archives journals, and was supported in part by a grant from the National Cancer Institute.

Forum to provide 2010 southern Colorado economic outlook[19]

The Southern Colorado Economic Forum, set for Friday, Oct. 30, brings together experts from the private, public and academic sectors to offer an annual snapshot of local economic activity and forecasts to help businesses plan for the coming year. The forum is made possible by a cooperative effort between the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, the College of Business and the forum's business sponsors.

Tom Zwirlein, business professor and director of the forum, and Fred Crowley, the forum's senior economist, will provide their views at the 13th annual event. Registration begins at 7 a.m. in the Heritage Ballroom at the Antlers Hilton Hotel, 4 South Cascade, Colorado Springs.
Eugenio AlemÃ¡n, senior economist from Wells Fargo Bank, will provide a national and international economic outlook in his keynote address. The forum lineup also features panelists from the aerospace industry and the governor's renewable energy office. A town hall meeting at 10 a.m. enables audience participation, with local government and business leaders on hand to discuss issues facing the community.

For more information on the agenda and registration, go to the Southern Colorado Economic Forum Web site[20].

STEMapalooza connects kids to science, technology, engineering, math[21]

Nearly 7,500 people attended the first day of STEMapalooza. (Photo by Glenn Asakawa/University of Colorado)

Thousands attended last weekend's University of Colorado Denver STEMapalooza[23], a two-day event aimed at exciting Colorado kids about careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Students, their parents and teachers enjoyed hands-on, "minds-on" activities such as fast-track racing, robotics, gaming, film production, staging and rocketry. Friday attendance, more than 7,000, exceeded last year's two-day tally.

Sharon Unkart, managing director of CASMIC (The Center for Applied Science and Mathematics for Innovations and Competitiveness) at UC Denver, and manager of STEMapalooza, called the event "an incredible opportunity for engagement between the community and the university for an exchange of educational ideas and networking. Given the increased interest in just a year, I see participation rapidly growing on both the attendee and exhibitor levels."

The Friday-Saturday event at the Colorado Convention Center featured more than 100 exhibitors from higher education, K-12, education organizations, work force development, economic development, large and small business and industry.

Students learn about the aerodynamics of paper airplanes at a UC Denver booth during STEMapalooza at the Colorado Convention Center on Friday, Oct. 16. (Photo by Glenn Asakawa/University of Colorado)

Popular displays included one sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey, in which students could drag a rock with a pulley to create small "earthquakes" and track their vibrations on a computer screen. A hands-on "rocketwerks" booth sponsored by the Denver Museum of Nature and Science encouraged young scientists to build paper rockets and launch them to test their designs. At a traveling planetarium, dozens of students lined up with their parents to learn about astronomy. Many participants at the expo wore cardboard Genghis Khan hats provided by the museum to promote its latest exhibit about the Mongolian emperor.

STEMapalooza was sponsored by the Colorado Convention Center, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, the Colorado Workforce Development Council, Lockheed Martin, the Center for Applied Science and Mathematics for Innovation and Competitiveness (CASMIC), and Girls Exploring Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (GESTEM).

UC Denver is part of the Colorado STEM Network, the statewide coalition of businesses, government, education and community groups that was launched by Gov. Bill Ritter in June. The state's focus on STEM education is seen as a way of developing future business leaders, scientists, researchers and educators.

Online tool localizes climate change for Coloradans[25]

Hear the term "climate change," and it's understandable if your mind flashes images of the polar ice cap — quite a distance from the Centennial State. A new vehicle for visual storytelling from CU-Boulder faculty paints a local picture of the phenomenon.

The Learn More About Climate site[26] teams leading climate scientists, many from CU-Boulder, with Colorado storytellers to explain how climate change affects the state — and what some people are doing about it. The site features five videos and offers resources for students, teachers, community leaders and policymakers.

The initiative is coordinated by the office for university outreach in the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies.

"It is an excellent public education tool that presents the facts in an accessible, localized manner," said Anne Heinz, dean of Continuing Education and Professional Studies.

"CU-Boulder is a global leader in energy and climate change research and environmental stewardship," said CU-Boulder Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano. "This initiative puts the research and expertise from our laboratories into the hands of citizens, enabling them to participate in public policy discussions at the local, state and federal levels."

Colorado Sen. Mark Udall commended the university for the effort to localize and promote better understanding of climate change in Colorado.

"I would encourage all Westerners to take action to address this critical issue by using this new tool to discover ways to conserve our region's valuable and limited resources," Udall said. "I hope this Web site will open many minds — not only to the enormous challenge climate change poses for our communities — but also to the opportunities we can pursue to strengthen our economy and promote a more sustainable energy future."

Videos at the site lead viewers through the science of climate change, exploring how it is affecting the state's water supply and ecosystems, and how individuals and organizations are addressing these challenges. Stories from the

Denver Zoo to the eastern plains and the mountain forests illustrate how the issue affects the state.

CU-Boulder contributors to the project include the Institute for Arctic and Alpine Research (INSTAAR), National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), department of geography, department of ecology and evolutionary biology and the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies.

Leeds School of Business names interim dean[27]

[28]
The University of Colorado at Boulder's Leeds School of Business named Manuel Laguna interim dean, effective Nov. 1.

Laguna, with master's and doctoral degrees in operations research and industrial engineering, joined the faculty in 1991. He is a professor of operations management and previously served as senior associate dean in the Leeds School of Business.

Laguna follows Dennis Ahlburg, who accepted the presidency of Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas.

Department of Neurology names new chair[29]

[30]
Ken Tyler, M.D., was named chair of the department of neurology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

A professor of neurology, medicine, microbiology and immunology, Tyler accepted the position that Don Gilden, M.D., held for the past 23 years.

Tyler earned his undergraduate degree at Harvard University, where he graduated magna cum laude, and his doctorate from The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Director of student information system replacement project earns kudos[31]

Kari Branjord, executive director of the University of Colorado's MetamorphoSIS[32] project, was named Applications Implementer of the Year by Oracle Magazine. The bimonthly publication of leading business software company Oracle is distributed to more than 550,000 top IT managers, database administrators and developers.

With MetamorphoSIS, Branjord is leading the replacement of the university's outdated student information system with a new $50 million system that uses several Oracle products.

Oracle Magazine presents annual Editors' Choice Awards to people who exemplify leadership, vision and dedication in working with and managing Oracle technology.

In a profile[33] in the November/December issue, Branjord said implementing better technology is about improving the lives of the 80,000 students, faculty and staff throughout the university's campuses.

"From the beginning of the project, we've been focused on creating and implementing a new footprint for higher education information technology," Branjord told the magazine. "With this footprint in place, we can use our internal resources to better meet the needs of students, administration, staff and faculty in ways that are both innovative and efficient."

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/rico-munn-will-lead-states-department-higher-education[2] https://connections.cu.edu/file/munnjpg[3] http://highered.colorado.gov/dhedefault.html[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-questions-alan-cass[5] https://connections.cu.edu/file/glennmilleralancassjpg[6] http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/friends/activities.htm[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/accessing-higher-ground-conference-set-nov-10-14[8] http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/[9] http://www.colorado.edu/ATconference/[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/news-briefs-7[11] http://cartss.colorado.edu/scholarseedfunds.html[12] http://cupresents.org/default/index.cfm?action=Details&eventID=12[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/colorado-firm-aims-commercialize-cu-breakthroughs-pain-management[14] http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?et=1102767734994&s=5892&e=0019Ex8FY_RXY9OXE4xySWDU9gPj5LjqGr4eCfOaXncbXS6BFOT3xRAFohGB9EtLpkBXi8H8l3yhjxbK60uiC-8cPzS-TgmNxRSTOkecX6q-LPNdmev7RDzocPIBA4a0DH5_g9ROxv0Z8hKrs-leFcfM1MznEdLtTZmHWIqKpsTnWiff2TvMWLDZhW0-DrYabo2[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/study-tanning-associated-moles-very-light-skinned-children[16] https://connections.cu.edu/file/amcjpg-0[17] http://www.cudenver.edu/Academics/Colleges/PublicHealth/Pages/welcome.aspx[18] http://archderm.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/145/9/989[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/forum-provide-2010-southern-colorado-economic-outlook[20] http://www.southerncoloradoeconomicforum.com/[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/stemapalooza-connects-kids-science-technology-engineering-math[22] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/stemapalooza-connects-kids-to-science-technology-engineering-math/stempapalooza17ga[23] http://thunder1.cudenver.edu/casmic/stemapalooza/[24] https://connections.cu.edu/across-cu/stemapalooza-connects-kids-to-science-technology-engineering-math/stempapalooza10ga[25] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/online-tool-localizes-climate-change-coloradans[26] http://learnmoreaboutclimate.colorado.edu/[27] https://connections.cu.edu/people/leeds-school-business-names-interim-dean[28] https://connections.cu.edu/file/peoplelagunajpg[29] https://connections.cu.edu/people/department-neurology-names-new-chair[30] https://connections.cu.edu/file/tylerkenneth1jpg[31] https://connections.cu.edu/people/director-student-information-system-replacement-project-earns-kudos[32] https://metamorphosis.cu.edu/default.aspx[33] http://www.oracle.com/technology/oramag/oracle/09-nov/o69awards.html#branjord