

[University of Colorado system powers \\$11.6 billion in economic impact across state](#)<sup>[1]</sup>

**UPDATED NOV. 14, 2024**

**Note:** The story below, originally published Oct. 31, is based on preliminary data. New details and updated figures from the final report are available in [this story](#)<sup>[2]</sup> from the Nov. 14, 2024, issue of CU Connections.

The Board of Regents Finance Committee on Wednesday received some preliminary data on the CU system's economic impact: \$11.6 billion across the state last year, significant dividends of the four CU campuses delivering exceptional teaching, research, community engagement and health care.

As detailed during the committee's meeting held via webinar, the total economic impact grows to an even more impressive \$19.3 billion when also factoring in CU's two affiliate hospitals – UCHHealth University of Colorado Hospital and Children's Hospital Colorado – at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus.

The figures come from a new study of the 2023-24 fiscal year completed by the Business Research Division of CU Boulder's Leeds School of Business.

"I'm immensely proud of the incredible achievements happening across all four CU campuses. This economic impact report is a powerful testament to our collective efforts," said CU President Todd Saliman. "It's exciting to celebrate the vital role CU plays in driving Colorado's economy forward. From advancing research to enriching our communities, CU is dedicated to building a prosperous future for our state, and we're honored to be at the forefront of that mission."

This is the third consecutive year the Leeds study has reported a year-over-year increase in CU's economic impact. The base CU total of \$11.6 billion is up 7% over the previous year, while the \$19.3 billion that includes the hospitals is up 12%.

CU operated on \$7.1 billion in revenue and \$5.6 billion in operating expenditures in 2023-24. A significant portion was tied to sponsored programs and other restricted fund activity.

Economic impact figures include employee and student worker earnings, operating expenditures, construction, research, and spending by students and visitors. The study did not include the impact of alumni, retirees, technology transfer, and visits associated with football, conferences and concerts.

A Top 5 employer in Colorado, CU employed 57,161 faculty, staff and student workers at some point during the fiscal year; a snapshot during fall 2023 indicated total employment of more than 27,000 faculty and staff. Total salaries, wages and benefits of \$4.1 billion represented 72% of the university's total spending.

Besides employing thousands, CU helps drive Colorado's economy by buying from local vendors, attracting investment, educating the local workforce and delivering research discoveries.

A powerhouse for discovery, CU collaborates in a research triangle that includes universities, businesses and federal laboratories. CU's research expenditure activities alone represented \$3.6 billion of the total impact of \$11.6 billion.

CU's campus-by-campus economic impact is led by the CU Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora, with \$5.3 billion, followed by CU Boulder, \$4.6 billion; CU Denver, \$771 million; UCCS, \$690 million; and the Denver-based CU system administration, \$246 million.

At \$7.1 billion, CU's greatest economic impact regionally is on the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), consisting of the City and County of Denver, Arapahoe County, Jefferson County, Adams County, Douglas County, the City and County of Broomfield, Elbert County, Park County, Clear Creek County and Gilpin County. It's followed by the Boulder MSA, where CU's economic impact is \$3.5 billion; the Colorado Springs MSA, \$0.6 billion; and all other MSAs in Colorado, \$0.4 billion.

[Regents Governance Committee requests further clarity on possible changes to a current disability policy](#) [3]

The Board of Regents Governance Committee is considering how best to formalize CU's long-standing commitment to people with disabilities, one of the 16 classes protected from discrimination by regent law.

At the committee's [Oct. 24 meeting](#)[4], held at 1800 Grant St. and via webinar, regents chose not to act on a proposed rescission of Regent Policy 10M. The recommendation had been advanced following a nine-month review by a subcommittee and agreement from a larger systemwide accessibility committee. The effort had determined that the policy, first enacted in 1993, had grown redundant following past and recent actions taken to ensure compliance with 1990's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at the campus and system levels. Disability discrimination is also prohibited, consistent with the university's 15 other protected classes, pursuant to [Regent Law Article 8.A](#)[5] ("Nondiscrimination").

Among recent steps taken across the university to address the needs of people with disabilities are:

Last year's new Regent Policy 10A, "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion," which specifically added "accessibility" to the university's vision of diverse and inclusive working and learning environments

Two new administrative policy statements adopted earlier this year: [APS 5065](#)[6], Nondiscrimination Policy, which specifically added "failure to accommodate" on the basis of disability; and [APS 6011](#)[7], Digital Accessibility Policy

New employee training on digital accessibility

New systemwide procurement group focusing on prioritizing accommodation requests

New emphasis and communication of [university diversity reports](#)[8] (student data) and campus affirmative action plans (employee data, with goals) and DEI leads on campuses integrating disability identity and opportunities for participation

New emphasis on including metrics and goals in the next system strategic plan, along with underrepresented minorities and veterans per Affirmative Action plans

Campus and Workplace Culture Survey

Rather than advance the proposed rescission to the full Board of Regents for consideration, regent committee members called for more discussion and gathering of input from stakeholders. Administrators will assemble a working group and call for feedback from the campuses and governance groups. The resulting input will be shared with the committee at its next meeting, scheduled for Jan. 23, 2025.

In other business at last week's Governance Committee meeting, regents advanced proposed changes to some Regent Laws and Policies for consideration by the full board at its Nov. 7-8 meeting at UCCS.

Among the items discussed were Regent Policy 3.C and 3.D, which pertain to searches for administrators and guidelines for the appointment of chief officers of the university. Current Regent Policy 3.C addresses searches for Officers of the University, and Officers of the Administration. System administration proposed that the current policy be divided in two for better organization and readability:

Searches for Officers of the University and Chancellors (including the President, University Counsel and Secretary of the Board, Associate Vice President of Internal Audit, and Treasurer), Regent Policy 3.C Searches for Officers of the Administration (including those with the title of interim or acting vice president; associate vice president; vice chancellor; associate vice chancellor; associate counsel; and deans of the schools, colleges, and libraries), Regent Policy 3.D

Article 3.C.1(D) pertains to the temporary appointment of a president. No content changes were advised, but staff recommended it be moved and renumbered to Article 3.D.

Regent Policy 11.D had prohibited deferred compensation. Because the prohibition has become outdated, staff recommended it be rescinded.

Article 2.A.5 of Regent Law and Regent Policy 2.C.1 are changing to extend the terms of Board of Regents chair and vice chair, as well as committee appointments, from one year to two years. Regent Lesley Smith advocated for the change as a way of improving board governance and stability of university administration.

Regent Policy 2.J.1(C), which requires regents to “actively attend and participate in board and committee meetings, evaluate the materials presented, and ask questions necessary to inform the regent’s performance of official duties,” is adding the expectation that regents attend regular board meetings in person. The board chair, however, could allow remote participation under extenuating circumstances. Regent Frank McNulty advocated for the change.

The items are scheduled to be included on the consent agenda at next month’s full board meeting. Detailed materials linked to last week’s meeting agenda are [available here](#)[4].

Governance Committee members last week also discussed plans for post-election orientation for new members of the board and the full board’s winter retreat, scheduled for January.

[President Saliman hears highlights of CU Anschutz advances in research, inclusivity, community support](#)[9]  
[10]

During a recent visit to the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, CU President Todd Saliman engaged with students, faculty and campus leaders to discuss the groundbreaking medical and technological advancements shaping the campus's impact. The visit highlighted CU Anschutz’s dedication to research, inclusivity and community support.

In a meeting with shared governance groups, student senate leaders outlined key initiatives, including supporting students facing food insecurity through the campus food pantry, which has become an essential resource for some in the campus community. Saliman expressed his admiration for CU Anschutz’s efforts to address student needs and foster a supportive environment.

Deans and department leaders shared reports on progress and strategies for diversifying faculty to better represent Colorado’s demographics. Although each college is advancing at different rates, they all recognize the importance of having health care professionals who reflect the communities they serve. This commitment to inclusivity helps enhance patient trust and health outcomes, aligning with CU Anschutz’s broader goals.

Saliman also met with faculty and researchers leading innovative work in immunotherapy, a field in which CU Anschutz is making significant strides. The president learned about the pivotal role artificial intelligence plays in advancing health care on campus. Such innovations are expanding CU Anschutz’s research portfolio, boosting its reputation locally, nationally and globally.

Saliman noted how the campus’s dedication to bold thinking, disciplined science and inclusivity not only strengthens the university’s position as a leader in health care, but also reflects our commitment to improving lives in Colorado and beyond. Through transformative research and a compassionate approach to health care, CU Anschutz continues to make an invaluable impact.

[New portal tile gives instant view into weekly FAMLI benefits, supplemental leave](#) [11]

[Nominate an outstanding CU leader for the Excellence in Leadership Award by Nov. 22](#) [12]

[\\$1.25M awarded to University of Colorado innovators](#) [13]

[UCCS hosts Social Justice Summit](#) [14]

[CU Denver named top music business school by Billboard for fifth year in a row](#) [15]

[‘A place to dream’: CU Anschutz continues on its record-breaking course](#) [16]

[Wei is again named Colorado's state historian](#) [17]

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[It's hot pink and smells sweet. But the party drug tusi can prove deadly.](#) [20]

[Swamp-Dwelling Creature From Age of Dinosaurs Discovered in Colorado](#) [21]

[Colorado Springs students' project set to launch into space](#) [22]

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#### **Links**

[1] <https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/university-colorado-system-powers-116-billion-economic-impact-across-state>

[2] <https://connections.cu.edu/stories/final-report-cu-system-powers-194-billion-economic-impact-across-state> [3] <https://>

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[connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-governance-committee-requests-further-clarity-possible-changes-current-disability](https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-governance-committee-requests-further-clarity-possible-changes-current-disability)  
[4] <https://cu.diligent.community/document/14338/?lastModified=638653823713530000>[5]  
<https://www.cu.edu/regents/law/8>[6] <https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/5065>[7] <https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/6011>[8]  
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