CU earns high marks across the nation, region[1]

University of Colorado campuses and undergraduate programs historically earn high marks on U.S. News & World Report's annual Best Colleges lists, and the 2015 edition -- released Monday – again shows national and regional recognition of CU's sustained excellence.

The University of Colorado Boulder is No. 38 among top Public National Universities. CU-Boulder is 88th among all public, private and for-profit universities in the country. No other university in the state rates higher on the list than CU-Boulder.

The University of Colorado Denver is among the institutions included on the list of second-tier schools, those that immediately follow the list of Best National Universities.

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs is No. 13 on the list of Top Public Regional Universities of the West, and 51st overall among Regional Universities of the West.

Other Best Colleges highlights from U.S. News & World Report:
CU-Boulder's undergraduate engineering program comes in at 20th among public institutions whose highest degree is a doctorate, 36th overall. UCCS' undergraduate engineering program is sixth among public engineering schools whose highest degree is a bachelor's or master's, including military service academies. Among public, private and for-profit universities combined, the undergraduate engineering program ranks 14th. CU-Boulder's undergraduate business program at the Leeds School of Business lands at 22nd among public universities, 34th overall. CU Denver's undergraduate business program is 93rd overall among national universities. The undergraduate program in the UCCS College of Business is No. 113 overall among national universities. The list of Best Colleges for Veterans has UCCS at No. 17 among Regional Universities of the West. These are the top schools participating in federal initiatives helping veterans and active service members apply, pay for and complete their degrees. CU-Boulder is listed among A-Plus Schools for B Students, a guide to the highest quality institutions affording opportunity to B students.
The rankings released in advance by U.S. News & World Report are incomplete; more CU schools and programs were among the full lists released on Tuesday.

U.S. News & World Report rankings are based on its measures of academic peer assessment, graduation and retention rates, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources and alumni giving. "National Universities" are the 280 institutions – 173 public, 100 private and seven for-profit institutions – that offer a wide range of undergraduate majors as well as master's and doctoral degrees; some emphasize research.

The rankings are posted at http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges[2].

The 2015 edition Best Colleges book is available for purchase online[3].

U.S. News' annual rankings for graduate programs are issued in the spring.

Five questions for Christian Valtierra[4]

[5]

Christian Valtierra and his fiancée, Kerre Schmidt, who works at University of Colorado Hospital.

Introducing middle- and high-school students to the opportunities available in higher education is rewarding on many levels for Christian Valtierra, the assistant director for pipeline programming and university outreach in the Office of Inclusion and Outreach at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. The kids are eager and energetic and Valtierra feeds off

the energy. Sometimes, however, working with underserved populations and seeing the struggles they have can be difficult.

The pipeline programs and outreach initiatives are meant to help funnel individuals through the education tract leading to Anschutz, beginning as early as elementary school.

“We want to prepare the students and hopefully light the fire and provide assistance along the way. We continue to stay engaged throughout their educational paths so they can eventually meet their goals of becoming health-care providers,” said Valtierra. He often works with CU sister campuses, school districts, and outside entities to bring students to campus to introduce them to the college experience and show them the variety of careers available to them.

Valtierra said his route to CU was influenced by fate and his experience working with underserved populations. While studying at the University of Wyoming, he worked in admissions with Dominic Martinez, now the director of the Office of Inclusion and Outreach at CU. At UW, Valtierra had helped Martinez conduct programming that targeted minority and underserved populations. After graduate studies and work at the University of Nebraska, Valtierra took a position at Colorado State University. When a job opened up at CU nearly five years ago, Martinez reached out to him.

1. Did you know that you wanted to work in higher ed when you were in college or did it just happen?

[7]
I was steered this way. One of my uncles in California was a role model as a successful dentist. I gravitated to the success of that profession without really knowing much about it. When I entered college, I met with my advisers and they went through all the classes I had to take to be a dentist. There were a lot of science classes and I knew at that point it was not for me.

I looked around figuring out what I wanted to do and learned more about Dominic’s background. He graduated with a teaching degree with an emphasis in U.S. history and I observed first-hand how he integrated educational pedagogy with social justice issues for recruitment programming at UW. I thought it was neat, how he incorporated these areas and captured participant’s attention while promoting UW, so I gravitated toward education.

Part of my decision was focused on learning more about history, particularly the Civil Rights era. One of my favorite memories at UW was working on an education symposium that brought in Bobby Seale as a guest speaker. I had hopes of teaching, but I was working in admissions, and I saw my niche as fitting in more as someone working in higher ed who would work with underserved populations.

2. What are some of the programs at CU you’ve been involved with and how have they helped young students?

[8]
One is Health Professions Opportunity Day (hPod), which was started by Dominic and has been running for seven years. It was designed to target middle- and high-school students to expose them to health care fields but also to our amazing campus. Since I’ve been here, we’ve had a great partnership with the Center for Pre-Collegiate and Academic Outreach Programs and served anywhere from 200 to 300 students yearly from the metro area. We really show them the opportunities and possibilities available and let them know that if they put their minds to it and focus, and by relying on the support systems around them, they will be able to succeed. We’ve seen some of the students matriculate to the downtown campus and we have one young lady that went through hPod several years ago that is currently in medical school. It’s really gratifying to see them become part of the system and know that you had a role in at least planting a seed or continuing their interest in education.

The Undergraduate Pre-health Program, which we refer to as UPP, was started by Dominic and is beginning its ninth cohort. We’ve served a little more than 250 students in eight years. About 100 have been eligible to apply to professional and/or graduate programs and about 90 have matriculated through, mostly here at the Anschutz Medical Campus. Some of the early cohort students are completing medical school and entering residencies. Some have completed nursing programs that have been practicing and their communities for several years.

Even though we focus on the underserved and underrepresented, we work with all students – students who are dedicated and eager, and even some who need additional motivation. Having the opportunity to work with first generation, low-income and other underserved populations is the most exciting part of my job because I fit all of those categories. Working through the barriers these individuals come with, whether it's being the first in the family to graduate from high school and not having that education background in the home or coming from a lower socio-economic background, reminds me of where I came from and that can be difficult to deal with.

3. What were some of the barriers you faced and what kinds of programs were available to help you?

[9]
I came from a school that wasn't very high-achieving as far as scholastics was concerned, and I didn't have those individuals around that could motivate or provide good examples. My biggest advocate, even to this day, is my mom; she always preached education. But I didn't have examples at home because she only had an eighth-grade education. At high school, it was about doing the bare minimum, and I didn't have the skills to be successful. When I got to college, it hit me that I was unprepared to manage the expectations and responsibilities. The social part of college took me away from classroom. A lot of the problem was me not prioritizing properly and not seeking out resources that were there for me. Dominic played a vital role in helping me connect to the right people.

I was part of SSS – Student Success Services – which is part the TRiO programming umbrella, a federally funded program that was set up to target first generation, low-income students to assist them getting into and during college. I was part of the McNair scholars program, which is a Ph.D. preparation program that really helped me fine-tune skills I needed to be a successful student. I also was part of the Mortar Board honor society. I was very happy with the opportunity to be considered and being selected to such a prestigious academic honorary was a big accomplishment that was far from reality when looking back at where I started.

4. What occupies your time outside of work?

[10]
Growing up in Wyoming was a great experience. I was exposed to a lot of outdoor activities: hunting and camping. It was really different because most of my family lives in California, so when I talk with them about my experiences, they couldn't relate. I enjoyed being outside and as I grew up, I maintained that interest. Not so much hunting. We were taught that hunting was a way to put food on the table, not a sport. So now I'd rather see wildlife out there in the natural space. I have a Jeep with big tires and a lift kit and any chance I have, I like to go four-wheeling in remote Rocky Mountain areas.

5. You mentioned that you were faced with struggles growing up. Do you have a favorite good memory from that time?

[11]
I have a Jackie Robinson bobblehead that I got when I went to my first Dodgers game, shortly after migrating from Mexico to the Los Angeles area when I was 7. It's significant because I don't have a lot of fond memories early on because of the struggles and financial hardships we went through. In addition it was right before the Rodney King riots and we were living in the middle of noticeable tensions between groups across races and that was foreign to a new Mexican immigrant. One of my best memories from the time is going to the Dodger game and buying this bobblehead. I've been in the United States for 24 years, but at one point, I was undocumented, and that presented many barriers. That was one of the big pieces that we eventually overcame.

New Folsom Field seating closing in on finish line[12]

[13]
With the Colorado Buffaloes season debut at Folsom Field fast approaching, CU-Boulder Athletic Director Rick George

told a Board of Regents committee on Wednesday he is hopeful that new seating areas under construction will be finished in time for Saturday night's football game.

George's update on athletic facilities improvements at CU-Boulder was part of a meeting of the Intercollegiate Athletic Committee at the University Memorial Center on the CU-Boulder campus. The full board also met in executive session on Wednesday; most of the public portion of the meeting takes place today. (Check back at CU Connections later today and Friday for more meeting coverage.)

Construction on the new seating areas in the north end zone and northeast corner[14] began in May. George said one of the areas should be completed by late today, while the other will be "very close" to the Friday night deadline. The Buffs play Arizona State at 8 p.m. Saturday.

George said fundraising on the athletics facility upgrades[15] continues to go well. He said more than $50 million has been raised so far, representing roughly a third of the total construction cost. Improvements will continue over the next year, with a late fall 2015 completion date targeted for an indoor practice facility.

UCCS Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak and Steve Kirkham, intercollegiate athletics director, also spoke to the committee, providing updates on facilities progress. A new field atop a parking garage[16] provides space for club sports – and striking views of the Rockies. Groundbreaking on an expansion of the recreation center[17] took place earlier this month. At the Gallogly Events Center, basketball is expected to attract standing-room-only crowds this season, which has the campus considering future expansion plans.

Earlier in the meeting, George also listed for the committee the various ways the CU-Boulder athletic department honors and recognizes student athletes past and present, including several honorary dinners and celebrations of anniversaries of major championships. He said the department also likes having the flexibility to celebrate unconventional milestones, such as this year's 20th anniversary of "The Catch" during the Buffs game at Michigan.

"How we select our teams to honor, how often we do it, who's doing it – this is an area of our business that we're looking at," George said. "We're looking at it this fall and will report back (to the regents) early next year. I think it's an area of our business that we can do a lot better."

Regent James Geddes, who chaired the committee since its re-establishment in February 2011, gave a summary of its work during his tenure at the helm. Regent Glen Gallegos officially began his term as chair with Wednesday's meeting. Gallegos noted that the full board next June will consider whether to continue the committee. Geddes, who will leave the board after his term expires early next year, encouraged the board to continue the committee.

Gallegos asked for comments from the committee; Regents Steve Bosley and Irene Griego said they appreciate the work being done, but also want to gather feedback from administration on the usefulness of the committee.

CU-Boulder Phil DiStefano noted that an earlier version of the committee was discontinued more than a decade ago when it was decided that athletics issues should be heard and dealt with by the entire board. He pointed to a presentation on Title IX, scheduled for today's board meeting, as an example of an athletics-related issue that is being heard by the entire board rather than the committee alone.

Bosley said he hopes campus leaders will "be candid with us. Is this wasting your time? Is it beneficial? … Is this really a necessary step?"

Kirkham, noting the Division II status of UCCS athletics, said he appreciates the opportunity provided by the committee to keep board members apprised of activity in Colorado Springs.

Inclusive campuses the theme of 2014 Diversity Summit[18]

Registration is open for the CU system's 2014 Diversity Summit, which is set for Oct. 24.

The theme, "Developing Our Capacities as Inclusive Campuses," aligns with the university's commitment to diversity.All participants and presenters will be staff and faculty members of the CU community.

The event runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton Denver, 3203 Quebec St.

Online registration is open at http://fs25.formsite.com/OIOUCDenver/Diversity-Summit/index.html[19].

Registration is free, though seating is limited.

The goals of the summit are to increase attendees' knowledge about diversity topics and resources, and to enhance their communication skills. The summit is designed for staff and faculty in all roles.

The summit will include numerous cross-campus collaborations, including interactive displays and presentations on institutional research, library resources, Ombuds offices, international affairs and disability services.

Attendees may choose from a wide range of workshop topics, including cultural competence, online teaching and diversity, unconscious bias in hiring, LGBTQ safe zone training, medical professions and diversity, religion at work, health humanities, first generation students, and injustice in research.

Panel: Time is now for U.S. to lead in biomedical research[20]

Dan Theodorescu, M.D., Ph.D., director of the CU Cancer Center, addresses the panel at the 21st Century Cures Roundtable at National Jewish Health on Sept. 3.

The United States is in danger of losing its biomedical edge to countries that are aggressively funding research into personalized medicine.

That was a key message from the 21st Century Cures Roundtable at National Jewish Health on Wednesday. The discussion, hosted by U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Denver, featured a panel of experts from academia, government and industry. Among those representing the Anschutz Medical Campus was Dan Theodorescu, MD, PhD[22], director of the University of Colorado Cancer Center[23], the Rocky Mountain region's only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center.

DeGette said Congress is taking an overdue comprehensive look at what can be done to accelerate the pace of cures in the United States. She is working with colleagues to draft legislation that will address the biomedical process—from the basic-science discovery phase to streamlining drug and device development to delivering personalized, targeted treatments to patients.

All the panelists noted that biotechnology is at a crossroads in America—"We have all the technology in place .... this is going to be a game-changer," Theodorescu said—but funding levels for research have flattened in recent years as other countries roll out initiatives to take the science to the next level.

"If we lose leadership now, we're basically not going to catch up," Theodorescu said. "This is the moment. We invented most of the technology in this country, and we need to capitalize on it."

'Other countries investing'

Eric Green, M.D., Ph.D., director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, amplified Theodorescu's message, saying that the U.S. "developed the playbook" on biotechnology but is "letting other countries run with it." He noted that China currently has the largest capacity for genome sequencing, using U.S.-developed technologies, and England is launching "bigger and bolder" research efforts into personalized care.

"Other countries are investing upward," Green said. "We've been flat at best."

About a decade ago, the federal government doubled funding for National Institutes of Health research. Some 25 years ago, Congress teamed with the scientific community to launch the effort to sequence the human genome. Now, patients in the United States are benefiting from greater technology that comes at lower costs. A decade ago it cost $3 billion to sequence an individual human genome; today it costs just $1,000.

But such bold initiatives have languished in recent years.

"I hate to say it, but I think right now the U.S. biomedical research enterprise is on its heels," Green said. He said to DeGette: "When (Congress) doubled the NIH budget it was a feeling like we're going in the right direction, but I don't think there was quite the sense then of 'We know exactly what needs to be done.' The difference between now and then is truly the belief that we have this beautiful engine, just give us the fuel and we will make incredible discoveries and have clinical impact."

Translational apparatus needed

Theodorescu pointed out that biotechnology and biologic research also has the potential to create an economic engine for the country. He said personalized medicine, especially in regard to cancer, where patients tend to be overtreated, can actually reduce health care costs. "We would save costs if we could basically enroll them in clinical trials for therapies that potentially could really help them instead of treating them with things that are not."

The panelists said a robust health-records repository and clinical trials network need to be established where patient and study data is pooled and accessible to researchers. Speaking strongly in favor of such a registry was Frank Accurso[24], M.D., School of Medicine[25] professor of Pediatrics, Physiology and Biophysics and medical director of the Children's Hospital Colorado Clinical Translational Research Center.

Janet Woodcock, M.D., director of the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, said scientific discovery is not enough. She advocated for a strong "translational apparatus" that gets the research from the bench to the bedside. Lastly, she said, the scientific community needs to "take this to the community."

Judy Regensteiner, PhD[26], professor of medicine and director of the Center for Women's Health Research[27] at the Anschutz Medical Campus[28], echoed the need to get the public excited about biomedical research. Political will is necessary to improve NIH funding, she said, and it's the public who votes in members of Congress. "It's got to come through the political system, at least in part."

DeGette, who represents Colorado's First Congressional District, said she's noticed that people respond when she talks to them about 21st century cures. "It's like what everybody here (at the roundtable) is saying. They see the potential for their families and their friends, so I think there is a way to get people excited."

Raves for new Student Commons Building: 'Cool, modern, super-interactive'[29]

Hundreds of CU Denver students joined in the throng that simultaneously cut the ribbon on the new Student Commons Building on Sept. 9.

As they cut the ribbon that stretched 1,800 feet around this new campus jewel, University of Colorado Denver students

Mitchell Devito and Stephanie Adams extolled the amenities that they've already come to love in CU Denver[31]'s signature building.

"It's cool. It's very modern, and the classrooms are super-interactive," said Devito, a junior majoring in international relations. Adams, a senior studying public health, added, "There is a lot of comfortable hangout space for students throughout the building, and I like the big windows."

Several hundred students, faculty, staff and alumni gathered Tuesday morning to simultaneously cut the ribbon around CU Denver's new "front door"—christened by Chancellor Don Elliman the Student Commons Building[32]—and celebrate the first building completely devoted to CU Denver. A community reception, including building tours, was to be held later in the day.

A building designed for students

Check out Five Reasons You'll Love the new academic building[33].

CU Denver Chancellor Don Elliman prepares to cut the ribbon as Lubna Mazin, chair of events and planning for SGA, leads the countdown at the podium.

Scott Cao, president of the Student Government Association[35], kicked off the festive gathering by welcoming the throng to CU Denver's first "true home." "This building serves only CU Denver students' needs—it's a one-stop-shop for so many student services that were once scattered across the campus." Hoots and hollers erupted when Cao said, "I don't know about you all, but when I look at this brand-new building I just see CU Denver Lynx pride. It's something truly special and tangible that creates a sense of identity not only for students, but for faculty, staff and alumni. It will serve the future of CU Denver well."

The 146,000-square-foot, $60.5 million building opens just as CU Denver welcomes its largest-ever freshman class and sees its largest undergraduate enrollment, according to preliminary numbers. The building, financed entirely without student fees, addresses critical office and classroom needs and offers dynamic academic space to meet future needs.

"I want to re-emphasize a word that Scott used: This is our home," Elliman said. He noted that CU Denver has been on the Auraria Campus for 40 years but never had a building to call its own. "Every university, especially a growing one like ours, needs a place to call home, and this is it. I think it's one of the most exciting days in the history of CU Denver."

To applause from the audience, Elliman thanked John Lanning, Ph.D., chemistry professor emeritus, for chairing the building oversight committee as well as Anderson/Mason/Dale Architects for the design and Saunders Construction for the build. Months before the building was completed, the Student Commons Building was named Denver's best new building by Westword[36]. Elliman noted that "Student Commons" will serve as the building's name "until we find the name of a generous donor."

The location of the five-story Student Commons Building at the corner of Speer Boulevard and Larimer Street serves to better connect CU Denver's place in downtown Denver. "It's the front door to the whole Auraria neighborhood," the chancellor said. "We couldn't be happier with it."

Cao was joined at the podium by fellow student Lubna Mazin, SGA chair of events and planning. Both student leaders explained initiatives under way to further enhance CU Denver's growth and identity. Cao reminded students about a feasibility study being conducted on a new Wellness and Recreation Center[37]. He encouraged them to fill out surveys that will help "fuel the continued growth and excitement at this university."

Mazin, flanked at the podium by dignitaries and Milo the Lynx[38], said the senior class is raising donations for a senior gift that will stand in a prominent location. "It's to build a statue of our new school mascot (the Lynx) in front of our new building," she said. "What this statue will mean is this is our home, this is our territory."

And with that, Mazin asked attendees to encircle the new building with their scissors. She then led a countdown that launched the simultaneous, mass ribbon cutting and an exciting new era for CU Denver.

Boulder Campus Staff Council Spotlight: Vince Aquino[39]

Staff Council Spotlight is an initiative of the BCSC Awards and Staff Recognition Committee (BCSC/ASR). Contact Serena Leland, Boulder Campus Staff Council (BCSC) Representative, at serena.leland@colorado.edu[40] with comments or if you have a person you would like to recommend for the Spotlight series.

[41]

What is your official title at CU-Boulder? How long have you been here? What is the nature of your role?

I am the Lead Arborist for Facilities Operations for Facilities Management on Boulder's Main Campus. I started at CU in 1997 as a six-month temp, and then I extended, and then I was brought on full time. I think I'm going on my sixteenth year as a full time employee. I'm responsible for all of the trees in the General Fund areas on campus. By General Fund, I mean all the academic buildings and the common areas, a lot of the fields, the open areas on campus. I work with one other person directly, Joel Serafin. And we take on guys from the other crews.

We do care and maintenance, installations and removals for all the trees in those areas. We have about 4,000 trees. I'm from Chicago originally, and I came out here with my family in late grade school… my dad worked at CSU, he worked in biology as well, he worked in clinical pathology as a lab technician and that had a huge influence on my interest in biology and life science.

What kind of educational and professional background do you have? How does one end up being an arborist?

I'm probably not really the typical way. I don't have a degree. I studied some forestry and a lot of ecosystem biology. I was always very interested in that stuff, but never finished a degree. And I was working in trucking and warehousing and that type of work from my teens until my early thirties. And that's when I came on here and I just wanted to work outside so I got a job as a grounds keeper, and I always had a lot of interest in forestry and tree care. And I had a little bit of experience and background in it and as people saw that I had an aptitude for it and an interest in it, they encouraged it and I was able to get more training. I was able to pick up more skills, learn more techniques and go to conferences and workshops. And I was able to work with people from the outside, from the city and different people, and was able to learn quite a bit and I was eventually promoted into a Lead Arborist position here. I think I've worked hard to learn a lot of things and do a lot of things, but I kind of got lucky too, and I was in the right place at the right time.

What is your favorite kind of tree and why?

Oh boy. So, I guess, from a maintenance standpoint of trees that are around here, my favorite would be the Kentucky coffee tree. We have a handful of them on campus. They have really interesting bark texture and an unusual kind of serpentine, twisty canopy.

My two favorite ones are by the Engineering Center, on the northwest and southwest corner; there are really cool Kentucky coffee trees there. I like the Kentucky coffee tree a lot because it's so interesting in all seasons. I'm a wintertime person, I like the way things look in the winter. I like the bark texture, I like the silhouette of the canopy when it's out of leaf, plus it has a circular, serpentine, kind of swirling crown and canopy. It doesn't have the typical kind of scaffold branches; it's got these kinds of unusual twists and turns. I call it a haunted house kind of quality, trees that kind of look like a haunted house in the old monster movies. I like that a lot and I think it's an underutilized tree. And it's a great tree for Colorado. And it's a tree that people don't think of as a shade tree for their yard, but I think they should because it has a lot going for it. It's a good tree. It's hard to say which is my favorite tree on campus, but if you had to hold me to it, I'd say the Kentucky coffee tree.

My favorite trees altogether are the big guys on the west coast, like the giant Doug firs, the Port Orford cedars and the coastal redwoods. That stuff is pretty amazing. We actually planted a giant Sequoia on campus near Engineering. I'm hoping it will do pretty well, but we might not have the amount of water for it to get really big, but it's growing fast and establishing. There was a spot there, and it was protected and out of the wind, and it won't get vandalized there. Fingers crossed. It's been there four or five years and it's picking up steam.

What do you find inspiring or gratifying about your work at CU Boulder?

Well, I don't want to sound too sappy…

Was that pun intended?

Oh no, I didn't think of that! It was not intended. I don't want to sound too corny, how about that? I really enjoy working outside and working with my hands, and I am really grateful to have this job because to me, it's a great blend of intellectual and physical work. I get to work really hard, get dirty and tired, but I have to really think about what I'm doing. It's cerebral, it's artistic and it's very interesting.

I've been a biology nerd since I was a little boy. I guess I take satisfaction and I really enjoy the fact that in twenty and fifty, one hundred, and even two hundred years, there are going to be trees on this campus that I planted. Not just me, but my co-workers too, our group… trees that our crew planted. We're part of the heritage of the land and our work has a major impact on the landscape for decades, and maybe even centuries. If that doesn't inspire you, then I don't know what else would. Doing that is cool, and it's not just me, it's groups of us who do this. I'm part of this whole group that's making an impact on the aesthetics of campus for decades, and that's really inspiring.

If you had unlimited funds to do any kind of tree/arbor project on campus that you wanted, what would you do and why?

If we had the money and the land, and the labor resources, I would like us to have our own nursery or growing operation. We've gotten some really good products over the years, but it's tough to get exactly what you want the way you want it, the size and condition that you want it, and the time of year that you want it. I think it would be really interesting and really great if we grew our own stock, from either very small trees or even from seed in some cases, and cultivated and created our own stock of material for replacement. We could take our time and do it the right way and get the root material right. We could cultivate them the proper way and improve our success rate on stuff long term. We do pretty well, and we have a high rate of success on our plantings, but a great deal of the problems we have could be eliminated if we had our own nursery and we ran our own operation. We wouldn't just be at the mercy of whatever is out there, whatever came in that month or that year. We usually have a nice selection, but every once in a while there is something unusual that you would like. And so we could cultivate our own specimen trees and we could take scions off of our existing, historical trees that we want to preserve. We're going to try and do that anyway, but with a nursery, we could do a lot of that type of thing and have legacy trees. I think if I had a giant staff of people and a lot of money and some good land that would be kind of a dream thing to do.

Why is your/your team's work important and valuable for the campus?

We've seen studies that indicate that people decide if they're going to go to a university in the first twenty minutes that they're there. Students get out of the car and walk around and they've already decided, I'm not coming here or I love it. And what they see, the minute they get out the door, is our turf; the condition of our hardscapes; our shrubs and our trees; that the trash is picked up; the place is swept up; the mulch is where it's supposed to be; and all that. That might not register explicitly that this is what they're picking up on, but subconsciously they're seeing a place where it's obvious that people care. And of course, with the Flatirons background, that doesn't hurt either. I think our team is critical to getting people interested in coming here and staying here.

Obviously the academics are the principal motivation for considering CU in the first place, but once you've gotten off the plane, and you're walking around campus, you see our work. I'd like to think it has a big impact on people's decisions. I think they like it and they feel comfortable here, and they know it's maintained. Parents see it and they

know that someone here cares about the institution and the upkeep of the place, and that translates in other ways. It seems like a welcoming, reasonable place.

Also, for my work partner and me, public safety is a huge part of it. We have approximately 4,000 cultivated trees on campus that we care for. It's really difficult to keep track of the condition of all of those trees and to make sure that they're safe to be under. We have to visually inspect, or climb, or use the bucket truck to get into these trees and inspect them. We always keep an eye on them and assess them after storm events, wind events and different things like that. And we have to watch for disease and pest issues, to make sure the structural integrity of the trees is above the threshold for public safety. It's an enormous part of our work, and it's the thing that wakes me up in the middle of the night, like when the wind blows and I hear the wind howling, I'm thinking, "I hope this and that are ok." And to our credit, we take safety very seriously and we've spent a lot of years keeping everything as safe as we can and we work hard to do it. It's an important part of the job and it's a way that I feel that I have a direct impact on the safety and welfare of the public that uses our campus.

CU-Boulder has the new "Be Boulder." platform to highlight the positive impacts and achievements of the university, and is using "Be statements," like "Be Innovative" or "Be Driven." As the Lead Arborist on the CU-Boulder campus, what "Be statement" would you use?

I would say, "Be flexible." Every week and every day I have a work plan, but things rarely go as planned. Things change. We have a lot of construction and things that you don't hear about until the last minute, and different projects and different installations and things. And so we frequently have to be flexible-minded, be open-minded to just switching gears and changing the type of work we're doing pretty quickly. We also have to be flexible in that we have a lot of challenges for the types of trees we're maintaining and that people want to install and have on campus. We have to do some new and creative things to get those trees to live here, because they don't belong here. Also, a lot of people have really strong opinions about trees. People are emotional about trees, and they have strong feelings and strong ideas about what should and shouldn't happen to the trees on campus. I have to make decisions about what to do on campus - sometimes based on safety - and so I have to be flexible and open-minded and satisfy a lot of different people and many different push-and-pulls. So as an arborist, I would say, "Be flexible. Be open-minded. Be creative. Be experimental."

Ground broken for Recreation and Wellness Center[42]

[43]

Regent Kyle Hybl

University and campus leaders began a $16.3 million, 47,000-square-foot project to create the UCCS Recreation and Wellness Center on Sept. 5.

Led by Tamara Moore, executive director, Auxiliary Services, campus and CU leaders praised the expansion that will bring recreation, student health, counseling and nutrition counseling under one roof.

UCCS Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak called the project to bring together various student services visionary and inspirational.

CU Board of Regents Chair Kyle Hybl, reflecting on participating in his third expansion-related ceremony this semester, praised UCCS for having a "community and culture of doers" and said the campus is a place where "amazing things happen."

"Thank you for being both scrappy and relevant," Hybl said to about 60 faculty, staff and students at the ceremony.

[Samuels named Matrix Center director at UCCS][45]

Samuels

Dena Samuels, assistant professor of Women's and Ethnic Studies Program at UCCS, was recently named director of The Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity and Inclusion.

The Matrix Center examines the intersections of gender, race/ethnicity, and sexuality as they interact with each other and with other dimensions of privilege, oppression, and inequality. As director, Samuels will focus on programming, providing and coordinating workshops and trainings, expanding community outreach and fundraising.

Abby Ferber, professor in the Department of Sociology and Women's and Ethnic Studies Program, will serve as associate director. She will remain editor of the open-access, peer-reviewed journal, "Understanding and Dismantling Privilege," and direct the Matrix Center's graduate certificate program. Previously, Ferber served as director.

Moselle Bernal, project manager, Women's and Ethnic Studies Program, will assist Samuels and Ferber.

"My goal for the Matrix Center is to continue the great work that Abby (Ferber) has done to build this unique organization," Samuels said. "It has become a consistent entity that local, regional, and national communities can count on to provide intersectional social justice programming, workshops and resources in an effort to affect learning and change."

[Yeh receives Faculty Member of the Year honors][47]

[48]
Tom Yeh, assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science at CU-Boulder, has been chosen to receive the 2014 Student Affairs Faculty Member of the Year Award. The CU-Boulder Division of Student Affairs gives the award annually to faculty members who demonstrate outstanding engagement with students and who make substantial contributions to Student Affairs.

Yeh was nominated by students who lauded his "willingness to engage a diverse research group that connects students with others on campus and within the industry, use of a "'flipped classroom' approach where the learning occurs outside the classroom and 'where students can see themselves as co-creators of knowledge,'" and his efforts to develop student leadership by "deliberately creating and supporting opportunities for students to lead research groups and facilitate classroom discussions."

Yeh will be honored Sept. 19 at the Center for British and Irish Studies.

[Phiel publishes papers, receives honors][49]

[50]
Christopher J. Phiel, assistant professor in the CU Denver College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Department of

Integrative Biology, recently has had two papers accepted for publication.

The first paper is a multi-disciplinary effort by Phiel and Professional Research Assistant Colleen Bartman; student Jennifer Egelston; Raibatak Das; and Xiaojun Ren, chemistry.

“A Simple and Efficient Method for Transfecting Mouse Embryonic Stem Cells” was published in Experimental Cell Research and describes the development of a new protocol for introducing DNA into mouse embryonic stem cells, a widely used cell type in academic and industry laboratories.

Phiel explained that the researchers’ new method is comparable to existing methods, but is substantially cheaper -- for the same price of a commercially available reagent that can be used for 250 reactions, they can perform more than 82,000 reactions. He said they hope this new method will allow laboratories working with stem cells to stretch their research dollars.

The second paper is entitled “Gene Expression Profiling in Mouse Embryonic Stem Cells Reveals Gsk-3-Dependent Targets of PI3K and Wnt/?-Catenin Signaling Pathways." It was accepted for publication by “Frontiers in Endocrinology.”

The work provides detailed comparisons of the expression of all genes in different mouse embryonic stem cells in which Gsk-3 activity has been inhibited or genetically deleted. These results provide a broader perspective on how Gsk-3 activity affects gene expression.

Phiel also recently was recognized with a CLAS CRISP award and an ORDE Large Grant award. His research focuses on signal transduction and epigenetics in the context of neurological diseases.

CU collaboration included in new book[51]

CU colleagues recently coauthored a chapter titled “Patient and Family-Centered Care and the Interprofessional Team” in the book “Person and Family-Centered Care” by J. Barnsteiner, J Disch and M.K. Walton.

The chapter authors are College of Nursing’s **Gail Armstrong**, associate professor; **Amy Barton**, associate dean for Clinical and Community Affairs; **Wesley Nuffer**, assistant professor, assistant director of Experiential Programs, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences; and former CU School of Medicine colleague **Lynne Yancey**.

To illustrate the interprofessional team concept, the authors begin their chapter discussing a 70-year-old patient with multiple health conditions. Overall, the book examines the patient as a person first, and that the person is part of a family, however defined by the individual. The book offers a practical guide to help nurses and other clinicians engage individuals and their families as partners in the care process.

Huber returns from Fulbright sabbatical[52]

[53]
Martin E. Huber, professor of physics at CU Denver, has returned from his Fulbright-funded sabbatical in Israel. While there he worked with colleagues on superconducting quantum interference devices – or SQUIDs – to measure atomic-scale magnetic vortices.

Two papers on this work have been submitted to “Nano Letters” and “Nature Physics.”

Huber's collaboration with Professor Eli Zeldov of the Weizmann Institute of Science, developed over the past several years, beginning when they met at Stanford University during their last sabbaticals. Prior to this year, this work could only be performed in Israel.

At the end of this sabbatical, Huber and Zeldov's group devised a method to transport the delicate nanoSQUIDs to his Denver laboratory. This technique allows Huber's nanoSQUID research to advance in his own lab, and involving his own students, on a continuing basis.

In Huber's other research program, a collaborative work among over a dozen institutions in the search for dark matter, his National Science Foundation (NSF) proposal for continuing local work was selected from among a very competitive field of applicants.

The collaboration's proposal for a new experiment, SuperCDMS SNOLAB, also was approved by the NSF and U.S. Department of Energy for construction in the coming years. Huber will conduct work related to the development and construction of this experiment at CU Denver through additional, project-specific funding.

UCCS welcomes 10 new assistant professors[54]

More than 50 new faculty members joined UCCS for the fall semester including 10 assistant professors from the colleges of Business, Letters, Arts and Sciences, Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Education. They are:

[55]
Ann Amicucci, assistant professor, Department of English, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, previously was the assistant program coordinator for the Indiana University of Pennsylvania writing program and director of the writing center at Duquesne University.

[56]
Katie Anderson-Pence, assistant professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, previously held teaching and supervisory positions in the College of Education and Human Services at Utah State University and was an elementary school teacher in three Utah communities.

[57]
Jill Bradley-Geist, assistant professor, Department of Management, College of Business, previously was an assistant and associate professor at California State University, Fresno.

[58]
Jarred Bultema, assistant professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, previously was a graduate teaching assistant at Colorado State University and Calvin College in addition to working as a postdoctoral fellow at the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, and as a chemist in industry.

[59]
Grant Clayton, assistant professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, previously was an assessment and operations specialist in the UCCS College of Education as well as a graduate research assistant in the UCCS Center for STEM Education in addition to working in public schools in Texas and Colorado. He earned his Ph.D. from UCCS.

[60]
Elizabeth Daniels, assistant professor, Department of Psychology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, previously was an assistant professor at Oregon State University and also held teaching and research positions at the University

of California, Los Angeles, and University of California, Santa Cruz.

[61]
Somayeh Dodge, assistant professor , Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Dodge previously was a visiting assistant professor at UCCS and held teaching and research positions at The Ohio State University, the University of Zurich (Switzerland), Azad University (Iran) and Khaje Nasir Toosi University of Technology (Iran), and Technical University of Eindhoven (Netherlands).

[62]
Martin Key, assistant professor, Department of Marketing, College of Business, previously was an assistant professor at St. John Fisher College, a consultant and counselor for the Southern Illinois Small Business Development Center and the owner of a guitar sales and repair shop.

[63]
Scott Kupferman, assistant professor, Department of Special Education, College of Education, previously held teaching and research positions at Utah State University, California State University, Fresno, and worked with people with disabilities in schools and independent living settings.

[64]
Meghan C. Lybecker, assistant professor, Department of Biology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, previously held teaching and research positions at the University of Vienna, the University of Montana, and Eastern Oregon University. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Montana and a bachelor's degree from Eastern Oregon University.

Event offers tools, resources for international travel[65]

International Travel Tools and Resources, an event hosted by University Risk Management and the Office of International Education, is set for Sept. 24.

Come enjoy tea and coffee and learn from University Risk Management new important travel tools and resources available to all faculty and staff travelling on university business. Plus learn about campus resources for your travel, requirements for taking students abroad, and more.

The session runs from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Abrams Lounge in the Center For Community at CU-Boulder.

To RSVP, click here: International Travel Tools & Resources Info Session[66]

Questions: Carolyn Peet, 303-735-5900, or Carolyn.peet@cu.edu[67]

Call for proposals: Fall 2014 President's Fund for the Humanities grants[68]

The CU System Office of Academic Affairs is pleased to solicit proposals for the fall 2014 President's Fund for the Humanities (PFH) grants.

The PFH was established to preserve a balance in the university's programs of education and research by giving special attention to the humanities. Proposals might include: seminars in humanistic studies; public programs in the humanities; innovative teaching in the humanities; or requests for lectures or exhibits by visiting scholars. The fund might also support projects that involve interdisciplinary teaching, increase the visibility of the humanities, emphasize

humanistic values or address specific social problems in a humanistic context.

Projects selected for funding are restricted to a maximum PFH award of $3,000.

Proposals must be received by 5 p.m. Oct. 31.

An advisory board composed of faculty representatives from each campus will consider the proposals and make recommendations to President Benson for funding. For proposal requirements, guidelines and additional information, visit our website.[69]

Additional inquiries may be directed to Thomas Spahr, Academic Planning, Programs and Policy Analyst, at 303-860-5623 or Thomas.Spahr@cu.edu[70].

Faculty Council GLBTI symposium to consider health equity[71]

The University of Colorado Faculty Council GLBTI Committee is sponsoring its third annual symposium to provide a forum for faculty, staff and students at CU to exchange ideas and learn new strategies for inclusiveness throughout the university.

Theme of the event, set for 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 7 in the Trivisible Room, Research Center 2, at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, is Health Equity at CU. It's free and open to all students, faculty and staff.

Highlights:
Free Safe Zone Training for all interested faculty and staff from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., includes lunch. Keynote Speaker: Angela Sauaia, M.D., associate professor of Public Health, Medicine and Surgery, University of Colorado, and author of "The Quest for Health Equity." Other speakers include One Colorado and Dr. Brenda Allen, associate vice chancellor, diversity and inclusion.
Click here[72] to register.

Supplier Showcases conclude next week[73]

The Procurement Service Center (PSC) is hosting the ninth annual Supplier Showcases, your opportunity to discover potential new suppliers and connect personally with current suppliers. All CU faculty and staff are invited to attend this systemwide series, which began earlier this month in Boulder. The next event is today at UCCS.

First-time exhibitors include Instrument Rental & Calibration, Einstein Bros Catering, Halo Branded Solutions, Macherey-Nagel, Levy Restaurants, Midland Scientific, and Staybridge Suites Air Force Academy.

The showcases present a venue to see new technology and gather free samples of new products. PSC staff will be available to answer questions about fiscal procedures, travel rules, Marketplace and Concur. Stop in to visit with staff from the Controller's Offices, Policy and Efficiency, Internal Audit, Risk Management, Sustainability, FinPro Help Desk, and the PeopleSoft Upgrade Project.

Showcase sponsors Staples, Dell, the Parking Spot, and Xerox will be featured at each event. Representatives from Colorado Correctional Industries (CCI) and Christopherson Business Travel also will be in attendance.

The remaining schedule:

UCCS: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. today at University Center, Berger Hall

CU Denver l Anschutz Medical Campus: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Wednesday at Research Center 2, second floor Trivisible Room, CU Anschutz Medical Campus

Register now to join the more than 1,200 CU employees who are expected to participate. Registration details and a list of exhibitors is available here: https://www.cu.edu/psc/2014-psc-supplier-showcases[74]

Questions: Contact Penny Davis, penny.davis@cu.edu[75], 303-764-3445

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-earns-high-marks-across-nation-region[2] http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges[3] http://www.usnews.com/products/features/education-products-best-colleges-2014[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/five-questions-christian-valtierra[5] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_top[6] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_01[7] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_02[8] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_05[9] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_03[10] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_jeep[11] https://connections.cu.edu/news/five-questions-for-christian-valtierra/5q-valtierra_04[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-folsom-field-seating-closing-finish-line[13] https://connections.cu.edu/file/regfolsomfpng[14] http://www.cubuffs.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_LANG=C&DB_OEM_ID=600&ATCLID=209523690&SPID=255&SPSID=3843[15] https://connections.cu.edu/news/fundraising-for-new-athletics-facilities-celebrated-at-spring-football-game[16] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=15845[17] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=15940[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/inclusive-campuses-theme-2014-diversity-summit[19] http://fs25.formsite.com/OIOUCDenver/Diversity-Summit/index.html[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/panel-time-now-us-lead-biomedical-research[21] https://connections.cu.edu/file/anschutzpanel-biomed-respng[22] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/departments/Pathology/academicprograms/cancerbiology/Pages/theodorescu_canbio.aspx[23] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/centers/cancercenter/Pages/CancerCenter.aspx[24] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/departments/pediatrics/people/bios/Pages/accurso%2c%20frank.aspx[25] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/Pages/somWelcome.aspx[26] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/centers/WomensHealth/AboutUs/OurStaff/Pages/JudyRegensteiner.aspx[27] http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/centers/WomensHealth/Pages/WomensHealth.aspx[28] http://www.ucdenver.edu/anschutz/Pages/landing.aspx[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/raves-new-student-commons-building-%E2%80%98cool-modern-super-interactive%E2%80%99[30] https://connections.cu.edu/file/ucdstudent-commons01png[31] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/denver/Pages/DenverCampus.aspx[32] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/denver/Pages/Academic-Building-1.aspx[33] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/newsroom/spotlight/students/Pages/Top-five-reasons-you-will-love-CU-Denvers-new-building.aspx[34] https://connections.cu.edu/file/ucdstudent-commons02png[35] http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/studentlife/volunteerism/StudentGovernment/Pages/SGA.aspx[36] http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/newsroom/newsreleases/Pages/Westword-names-Academic-Building-Best-New-Denver-

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