Budget news: Déjà vu all over again[1]

(Casey A. Cass/University of Colorado)

Higher education's portion of the latest round of cuts to the state budget has yet to be determined, but CU budget officials say the university will once again be a target for reductions. Gov. Bill Ritter's office announced Monday that the state faces an additional $240 million revenue shortfall in the current fiscal year.

"This adds to the challenges we already face in balancing this fiscal year's budget, but it also presents ongoing difficulties for next fiscal year and beyond," said Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Kelly Fox.

Legislative Council, a nonpartisan group that provides budget analysis to the Colorado Legislature, told the Joint Budget Committee on Monday that Colorado faces a $430 million revenue shortfall over this fiscal year and next. The shortfall is in addition to the cuts the governor announced in August (CU's portion to date is $81 million).

Higher education's share of the new round of cuts is expected to be announced in the coming weeks. The governor will submit a draft of his fiscal year 2010-11 revised budget Nov. 2.

Fox said CU will continue to work to balance its budget through a combination of revenue enhancements, efficiencies and strategic cuts. The university's legislative agenda will reflect that approach, Fox said.

"We intend to work with the Legislature in the upcoming session to see if the state will give us some freedom that will allow us to operate more efficiently," she said.

Benson thanks CU employees while warning of further tough times[3]

CU President Bruce D. Benson
(Glenn J. Asakawa/University of Colorado)
CU President Bruce D. Benson(Glenn J. Asakawa/University of Colorado)

University of Colorado President Bruce D. Benson today lauded employees for "pulling together as a team" in the face of budget challenges, but warned of more difficult times ahead.

Benson spoke to system administration employees in Boulder this morning at the Grusin Music Hall for the president's annual convocation address. He will speak to system employees in Denver at 7:30 a.m. Friday at 1770 Sherman St.

"It's a team effort across the campuses and with central administration, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate what you do," Benson said. "I know how hard people are working. We have all made a major commitment to our students and the state.

"We've been around for 133 years, and our job is to sustain and enhance this great university."

He cited several examples of faculty and staff pulling together, including the phased implementation of the Integrated Student Information System project by staff in University Information Systems, Employee Learning and Development's creation of specialized online training courses and the electronic imaging project in Payroll and Benefits Services that is converting 1.7 million pages to electronic files.

Benson said teamwork is particularly important in light of news this week that the state budget continues to head south. Gov. Bill Ritter on Monday announced that recent revenue estimates show the state is short an additional $240 million

in the current fiscal year. Higher education's portion of the shortfall has yet to be determined.
"The state is pretty broke and it's only going to get worse," Benson said. "These are really troubling numbers."

In response, the president said CU would take a three-pronged approach to balancing its budget: improve revenues, enhance efficiencies and make strategic cuts. A key facet of the first two strategies will be to work with the governor and legislature in the upcoming session of the Colorado General Assembly on legislation that will free CU and other higher education institutions from onerous regulation in areas such as purchasing, financial aid and tuition setting.

Benson said the university has "done a really good job operating with the small amount of funding the state gives us." Yet he also said the university cannot continue on its current path, where some 40 percent of state funding has been cut over the past two budget years.

New master's program at Anschutz first of its kind in region[5]

Nairn

A new degree program at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus will address the shortage of workers trained in epidemiology, a core public health discipline that's in demand more than ever.

The master of science in epidemiology will be offered at the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH), a collaborative project of the University of Colorado Denver, Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado. Epidemiology studies the cause, spread and control of threats to public health.

"It will be the only degree of its kind in the Rocky Mountain region," said UC Denver Provost Roderick Nairn. "With such concerns as H1N1 and bioterrorism, there's been a lot more interest in public health, and our public health workers are depleted. We need more people, and they need advanced degrees."

Nairn presented the recommendation for the research-focused degree program to the Board of Regents at the Oct. 16 meeting. After receiving board approval, the request now goes to the Colorado Department of Higher Education for consideration. The program would begin in the fall of 2010, a required deadline for the CSPH to remain on track for accreditation next year by the Council on Education in Public Health. Student applications for the first semester are due in February.

"The purpose of this degree program is to give students a foundation in the science and methods of research in epidemiology so we can move knowledge in the field forward, rather than just relying on existing paradigms," said John Hokanson, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of the Department of Epidemiology at CSPH.
Hokanson said he expects the program to attract students interested in careers in population-based research at universities or in industry, such as biotech or pharmaceutical companies. "This would be an ideal degree," he said.
In a statement provided to the regents, UC Denver Chancellor M. Roy Wilson said plans for the new degree program make smart use of existing resources, with no need for new course development. The three to five new students expected to enroll per year in the degree program's first five years will take existing classes.

"We've targeted a relatively low number of students so that we don't get caught short," Hokanson said. "We certainly could handle more, probably double that number, if there's interest. Probably the biggest resource demand will be for faculty. The master's requirement is either a thesis or published paper, and those require a fair amount of faculty time to guide a student."

Hokanson said high demand might mean some students who apply for the program are turned away to start.

"I would hate to do that, but I don't want to overload the resources in our department," he said. "I certainly expect the program to grow, and my hope is that it grows in a continuous, limited way rather than a precipitous way."

Mission statement discussion runs into numbers trouble[7]

[8]
Discussion about the Board of Regents draft mission statement focused on the issue of whether it should refer to three institutions or four in the University of Colorado system, or not list a number at all.

The board drafted the statement at its retreat in the summer with the help of chancellors and senior staff. It is intended to be a general guidepost for the university. The draft and its attendant guiding principles will return to the board for a vote in November.

Earlier in the summer, the board had adopted a resolution stating that for branding and marketing purposes, CU would comprise four campuses: Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus. For purposes such as accreditation and federal grant submission, UC Denver would remain a consolidated institution under its current single name.

The current draft states, "The University of Colorado is a multi-institution public research university serving Colorado, the nation, and the world through leadership in high-quality education and professional training, public service, advancing research and knowledge, and state-of-the-art health care. Each of its institutions is established in the Colorado Constitution and has a distinct role and mission articulated in state statutes."

Previous drafts noted "Each of its three campuses ..."

UCCS Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak said specifying the number of campuses is not as important as reflecting the university's fundamental focus and noting that CU is a multicampus institution.

"We really need to think about what a mission statement is," she said. "It must reflect the core mission of what you're about and I think it does that no matter if it has the number or not."

Still, the board had extensive discussion about whether the number of campuses should be in the statement and, if so, what that number should be.

"There appears to be a lot of confusion here," said Regent Michael Carrigan (D-Denver). "We need to have more discussion."

The board agreed to forward the draft document to system governance groups. "We certainly want to give them the opportunity to give us feedback," said Regent Tom Lucero (R-Loveland), chair of the board's Laws and Policies Committee, which will make recommendations on language before bringing the mission statement back to the full board.

The regents discussed how the university and its campuses are referred to in the Colorado Constitution and state statutes. University Counsel Dan Wilkerson told the board the constitution and statutes are inconsistent in references to CU. The constitution refers to three campuses in Boulder, Colorado Springs and Denver, and gives the regents authority to operate "all or any part of the schools of medicine, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy â€¦ at Denver. The constitution also provides that, with prior approval of the legislature, the board has the discretion to establish and maintain "medical center, or branches of such institutions in any part of the state."

In statute, there are role and mission statements for four campuses. Throughout the constitution and statutes, CU is

referred to in various ways: campuses, institutions or universities.

Regent Joe Neguse (D-Boulder) said the statement should be as direct as possible. "I don't think ambiguity is a good thing in our governing documents," Neguse said. "I think it lends itself to confusion and I think we can clear up that confusion."

But Wilkerson said tracking the constitution and statues for consistency's sake would be difficult.

"We're working in a legal framework that doesn't lend the clarity that Regent Neguse wants," Wilkerson said.

News briefs[9]

CU System Staff Council recruiting team for Race for the Cure

The University of Colorado System Staff Council is recruiting participants for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, set for Oct. 4 at Denver's Pepsi Center.

The day features a 5K run or walk, both co-ed, and a 1-mile family fun walk. A Sleep In for the Cure option is available for those who can't attend but wish to contribute to the cause.

Cost is $35 for adults, $25 for kids under 12 and adults over 65. Register online at www.komendenver.org[10]. After clicking on "Register," follow the "Join an Existing Team" link and search for "University of Colorado System."

Team members will contact registrants with information on a meeting place for race day.

President seeking applicants for humanities grants

Proposals for the fall 2009 President's Fund for the Humanities grants must be received by 5 p.m. Oct. 30.

The awards of up to $3,000 go toward preserving balance in the university's programs of education and research by giving special attention to the humanities. An advisory board comprising faculty representatives from each campus will consider proposals and make recommendations to President Bruce D. Benson for funding.

Details are on the president's Web site[11]. For more information, contact Linda Starkey, special assistant to the associate vice president for academic affairs, at 303-860-5623 or Linda.Starkey@cu.edu[12].

Conference considers how to join theory with practice

"Making It Real" is the theme of the second annual University of Colorado Conference on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, hosted by the Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement[13] (IECE) at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

The daylong event, set for Oct. 30 at the University Memorial Center, seeks to offer a space for exploration of critical topics and issues, and to promote discussion that improves the practice of service-learning and civic engagement. Peter Simons, director of the institute, says discussion will address how to put theories into practice.

The schedule features presentations and networking sessions on constructing courses, syllabi and assignments; forming community partnerships; and conceptualizing experiential and civic education. The afternoon will include a workshop on funding resources and application forms and deadlines from sponsoring organizations. The conference is part of the IECE's Education and Training Program, which seeks to provide faculty with the knowledge, understanding

and tools to integrate the scholarship of engagement into academic courses

The attendance fee is $15. For more details, see the agenda and registration form[14] or contact Peter Simons at peter.simons@colorado.edu[15].

Board of Regents looks to honor those who excel

The Board of Regents invites nominations for 2010 honorary degrees, university medals and distinguished service awards.

An honorary degree (doctor of humane letters or doctor of science) is the university's highest award, recognizing outstanding achievement in intellectual contributions, university service and/or public service. Medals recognize people whose achievements and contributions are particularly associated with the university, while distinguished service awards honor those whose achievements are especially associated with the state and/or nation.

The nomination deadline is Nov. 15. For details or to download nomination forms, go to www.cu.edu/regents/Awards [16]. To request hard copies of forms to be mailed, contact the Board of Regents' office at 303-860-5667.

Best, brightest professors sought for Distinguished title

President Bruce D. Benson requests nominations for the 2009 Distinguished Professors, a title awarded to recognize the outstanding contributions of CU faculty members to their academic disciplines.

For a description of the nomination process, please see the administrative policy statement[17].

Nominations should be made through the department chair, and must be approved by the dean and provost. Campuses set deadlines for faculty dossiers, which are due to the president's office in July. Winners are announced in late fall.

NEA grant to bolster new plays, conference from Shakespeare Fest

An ambitious theater project being led by the Colorado Shakespeare Festival (CSF) and a Massachusetts troupe has obtained a $15,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The funding will fuel the creation of new plays and a conference planned for the University of Colorado at Boulder next year.

The CSF and Shakespeare & Company of Lenox, Mass., plan to co-commission and co-produce a cycle of plays dedicated to the American experience. This initial grant will provide funding for commissions to published playwrights Constance Congdon and J.T. Rogers; it also will fund a conference of 40 historians, playwrights and other scholars and theater professionals who will gather at CU-Boulder next April. The festival is working with CU's Center of the American West and the Conference on World Affairs to organize and host this event.

Philip C. Sneed and Tina Packer, producing artistic directors for CSF and Shakespeare & Company, respectively, conceived of this project in 2006. The cycle of plays will focus on what it means to be American and will feature the large casts typically employed by Shakespeare festivals.

As part of the plan, another conference will invite American playwrights, theaters, historians and scholars to gather and discuss the important components of the American history play cycle, and more playwrights will be commissioned. Finished scripts of the commissioned plays will be made available to other Shakespeare festivals, major theater companies, schools and universities. The project is expected to span at least a decade.

Walking is good for you — unless ...[18]

[19]
Pedestrians face a much greater risk of being killed in accidents than motorists — nine times as likely per kilometer traveled — according to a new study by University of Colorado Denver researchers.

Children, older adults, Hispanics and African Americans also are disproportionately affected by pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions. UC Denver researchers asked two main questions about pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions in Denver:
What patterns do pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions follow? What is the relationship between pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions and environmental characteristics by census tract?
A combination of physical characteristics and social conditions can increase the risk of pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions in an area, according to the study by Anne K. Sebert Kuhlmann, Ph.D., UC Denver health and behavioral sciences program; John Brett, Ph.D., associate professor of anthropology; Deborah Thomas, associate professor of geography; and Stephan R. Sain, Department of Mathematics.

"Public health is increasingly learning how the built environment impacts healthy behaviors," said Sebert Kuhlmann. "As more people begin to walk instead of drive there may be increased risk of accidents involving pedestrians and automobiles. In this study, we used publicly available data from local and state agencies to develop measures on how social and environmental factors affect pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions."

Results showed that most pedestrian-motor vehicle collisions take place downtown, in LoDo and in nearby neighborhoods bordering major arterial streets.

The American Journal of Public Health published the study[20] in its September 2009 issue. Researchers said they hope the report will lead Denver and other cities to pursue policies enhancing pedestrian safety and public health programs aimed at decreasing injuries from pedestrian-auto collisions.

Grant money aimed at boosting future teachers in southern Colorado[21]

Crawford

DePry

Weathers

Newly awarded research grants totaling more than $500,000 will give three faculty and staff members of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs College of Education the potential to boost recruitment and strengthen training of K-12 teachers in southern Colorado.

Lindy Crawford, associate dean of the College of Education, will be principal investigator on a $72,600 grant from Teach Colorado, a Department of Higher Education program. In partnership with the Colorado School of Mines and the Troops to Teachers[25] program, the grant will be used to recruit 10 recent college graduates and five current undergraduate students with math and science backgrounds to pursue careers in secondary education and special education teacher preparation.

Randall DePry, associate professor and chair of the Department of Special Education, will be principal investigator on a

$240,607 grant from the No Child Left Behind Act[26] to assist military personnel currently working as para-professional educators to become licensed math, science or special education teachers. The program is in partnership with the Mountain West Troops to Teachers office on the UCCS campus.

John Weathers, assistant professor, will be principal investigator on a $216,680 federal grant from the No Child Left Behind Act to enhance the formative assessment capacity of 84 math and science teachers in Pueblo School District 60. He will work in cooperation with faculty from the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Northern Colorado, and Princeton, N.J.-based Educational Testing Service researchers.

LaVonne Neal, dean of the College of Education, lauded the successful efforts of faculty and staff in preparing winning proposals to the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

"The total of these grants is approximately 50 percent of the state funding dispersed by the Colorado Department of Higher Education for teacher preparation," Neal said. "This demonstrates the high-quality of the UCCS faculty and staff."

Education, support on agenda for Colorado Cancer Day[27]

Educational sessions for health professionals and for families dealing with cancer will mark Saturday's third annual Colorado Cancer Day, presented by the University of Colorado Denver, University of Colorado Cancer Center and University of Colorado Hospital.

The continuing education program for medical professionals offers the latest information on cancer detection, treatment and surveillance. Faculty from the center and UC Denver will present the full-day seminar, which offers Continuing Medical Education credit; registration fees vary.

Saturday's half-day program for cancer patients, survivors and their supporters promises the public access to experts who will provide information and answer questions at sessions divided by type of cancer: breast, colorectal, lung and prostate. The event is free and includes a complimentary lunch.

Both programs are at Education 2 North on the Anschutz Medical Campus. For more information or to register, go to http://www.uccc.info/for-healthcare-professional/cancer-center/cme/ccd/index.aspx[28].

Report: University community making strides in Title IX efforts[29]

Hogshead-Makar (Photo courtesy of Florida Coastal School of Law)

Findings from the first year of a five-year review of the University of Colorado at Boulder's efforts to curb sexual assault and harassment throughout the campus indicate vigilance and progress.

Chancellor Phil DiStefano presented a summary of Title IX adviser Nancy Hogshead-Makar's report[31]at the Sept. 16 meeting of the CU Board of Regents.

"This is extremely positive for the campus," DiStefano said. "The findings show that we compare favorably to other campuses across the country."

The report calls CU's responses to sexual assault and harassment incidents "appropriate and consistent." As an example, it notes the quick response of university leaders to a series of off-campus assaults earlier this year, reminding the community of safety precautions and resources and reaching out to parents of students.

"These responses demonstrate that CU appreciates the significance of sexual assault upon a community," the report states, "and that it is not limiting its responses to sexual assaults occurring on the campus or between CU students."

The report notes the important role of the SASH (Sexual Assault Sexual Harassment) Task Force in prevention, but suggests that its membership needs greater involvement by faculty.
"SASH members have considerable expertise and produce good educational materials, but need to have a faculty presence to assist in the integration of those materials throughout the institution, including the curriculum," the report says. "Chancellor DiStefano is receptive to exploring opportunities to increase faculty involvement."

The university established the independent adviser position as part of the settlement in a Title IX lawsuit. Title IX, enacted in 1972, aims to eliminate discrimination in education programs, particularly athletics, based on gender.

"It's important that the university community know of our progress in this area," said Regent Michael Carrigan.

Hogshead-Makar, a tenured professor at Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville, Fla., is considered one of the country's top experts in Title IX.

"I am continually struck by the degree of investment people had in a positive outcome for students and for the community as a whole," Hogshead-Makar writes in the report. "I look forward to continuing this dialogue with CU."

Office reports best year for invention disclosures[32]

Allen

Despite the national economic downturn and diminishing licensing revenue, the University of Colorado Technology Transfer Office expanded the university's tech portfolio in fiscal year 2008-09, Associate Vice President David N. Allen told the CU Board of Regents last week.

"The recession has had a dampening effect on us," Allen said during the regents' Sept. 16 meeting in Boulder.

Even so, fiscal year 2008-09 proved to be the TTO[34]'s best yet for new invention disclosures, especially in the field of renewable energy, Allen said.

Allen[35] told the regents that CU is one of the top U.S. universities when it comes to startup companies. Over the past five years, technology based on CU research has led to the creation of 51 companies. Of those, 44 are operational, and 42 have operations in Colorado, he said.

Bioscience-related inventions continue to dominate the university's tech portfolio. TTO reports that three drugs based on CU research have been approved by the Federal Drug Administration to treat rheumatoid arthritis, macular degeneration and adult shingles. Also, 21 drugs remain in clinical trials and more than 100 therapeutic, diagnostic and medical device technologies are in the preclinical development pipeline.

Allen said CU's patent portfolio continues to grow. He said the TTO experienced a slight budget contraction for new patent filings, but the loss is more than offset by strong patent reimbursements from licenses. Because of exclusive options and licenses, and the creation of companies, "our performance in these areas places CU TTO at a nationally

prominent level," Allen said in his annual report. He said the TTO also has built productive relationships via partnerships with Colorado-based incubators, business advisers, investors and entrepreneurs.

On the downside, the TTO has reported anticipated revenue decline over the past two years based on the expiration of a key patent estate. The predicted revenue decline was amplified by the national economic recession.

"As the recession continued, licensee product sales slowed, licensee development programs were curtailed, and financing ground to a near standstill," he said.

Allen said the TTO's 2008-09 revenue of $4.4 million was the lowest level in several years; the office drew down $916,000 from a treasury loan to offset the drop. The office does not expect its annual licensing revenue to cover its operating expenses for the next two to three years, and plans to draw from the remainder of the treasury loan and its long-term investment account.

Despite the hardships, Allen said TTO's internal and external customers and stakeholders could expect "a continued high level of service."

Astronaut joins CU-Boulder faculty[36]

Voss (Photo courtesy of NASA)

Former astronaut and University of Colorado at Boulder alumnus **Jim Voss** has joined the campus's aerospace engineering sciences department. Voss holds a master's degree in aerospace engineering from CU-Boulder as well as an honorary doctorate from the university. Voss, who holds the Roubos Endowed Chair in Engineering, also will serve as an ambassador for the college and campus.

Voss, hired as a full-time scholar in residence, is one of three astronauts affiliated as faculty at CU-Boulder.Â He joins former astronaut Joe Tanner in the aerospace engineering sciences department; NASA's John Grunsfeld has a future appointment as adjoint professor in the astrophysical and planetary sciences department.

Voss said his assignment includes teaching classes and mentoring graduate student projects in the area of human space flight and helping to develop the department's graduate program in bioastronautics, along with Tanner, associate professor David Klaus and research professor Louis Stodieck. Voss will develop and teach an undergraduate course, "Introduction to Human Space Flight," which will be open to engineers and nonengineers.

During his NASA career, Voss spent 202 days in space, participating in five spaceflights and four spacewalks. A U. S. Army flight test engineer, he retired a colonel in 2003. He also served as a professor and associate dean of engineering at Auburn University.

Postdoctoral fellow awarded AAAS fellowship[38]

McCoy

University of Colorado School of Medicine postdoctoral fellow **Erica McCoy** received a 2009-10 fellowship in science and technology policy from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). McCoy will work with the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service as an energy, environment, agriculture and natural resources fellow. Before her appointment, McCoy was a postdoctoral fellow in obstetrics and gynecology in the School of Medicine.

The yearlong fellowship, funded by science societies and government agencies, teaches fellows about science policy while they lend their expertise to the government. This year's class of fellows is the largest in the program's 36-year history, with nearly 200 scientists participating.

System administration appoints IT security principal[40]

Lard

Keith Lard was named IT security principal for University of Colorado system administration. His duties will include developing, implementing, managing and maintaining a comprehensive information security program for system administration. Lard will also serve as an internal information security consultant to the university and will work with campus IT security personnel and Bill Walker, chief information security officer, to implement and maintain the program.

Based at UIS in Boulder, Lard also will be the main point of contact for system employees with security-related questions or concerns. A CU alumnus, Lard has worked at UIS for two years and has a decade of experience in the IT security industry.

CU Denver names director of student life[42]

Khushnur Dadabohy, Ph.D., was appointed director of student life at the University of Colorado Denver. She will oversee daily functions of the office of student life at the Auraria Campus, including student activities, events, clubs and Student Government Association leadership. Other responsibilities include providing office leadership for student engagement in activities such as Welcome Week, convocation and the Women's Leadership Conference.

Postdoctoral contributions celebrated nationwide this week[43]

Erin Giles is searching for metabolic links between obesity and cancer. Jason Duex is trying to determine how to inhibit a tumor-forming protein in cancers. Kimberly Cox-York is striving to advance the world's understanding of the role estrogen plays in heart disease.

All three are University of Colorado Denver lab researchers, and are among the estimated 800 postdoctoral fellows on CU's campuses.

On Thursday, Sept. 24, their advisers and other supporters will celebrate their contributions on the first National Postdoc Appreciation Day, sponsored by the National Postdoctoral Association[44]. CU is one of 60 academic institutions in 27 states and Canada that will mark the occasion, expected to be an annual event.

"The purpose is to celebrate the significant contributions that postdoctoral scholars make to the U.S. scientific enterprise and, at the same time, to increase awareness of these contributions," said Valerie Saltou, a coordinator in the UC Denver postdoctoral office.

Saltou said postdoctoral scholars come to CU armed with advanced degrees, and receive training under senior scientists with the goal of becoming independent researchers prepared to run their own labs. Others aim to become bioscience entrepreneurs. As postdoctoral fellows, they provide invaluable training to undergraduate and graduate students, and critical feedback to their advisers.

"Beyond performing much of the day-to-day oversight and labor for experiments, fellows provide critical scientific debate and discussion that makes the overall pursuit of knowledge not only more rigorous, but also more interesting," said Paul MacLean, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the School of Medicine's Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism. "Fellows are much more likely than graduate students or technicians to challenge their mentors' dogma, to pursue alternative explanations, and to spend extra time and effort finding or acquiring data to support their own arguments."

MacLean said postdoctoral researchers are "inherently involved in adjusting the direction and focus of their mentor's lab, while creating a niche for their independent pursuits. This type of intellectual interaction is a fundamental part of their progression towards independence, but its value to their mentor's research program is greatly underappreciated."

John H. Freed, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, held two postdoctoral positions when he was younger, and is credited with lobbying for greater visibility and prestige for UC Denver postdoctoral researchers.

"Far too often, postdocs have been relegated to the role of unsung heroes at universities," said Freed, who has mentored several fellows. "Postdocs are a critical component for the overall research productivity of the university. National Postdoc Appreciation Day gives us all a chance to tell postdocs how much we appreciate their hard work and contributions."

Canadian reaches Colorado heights with metabolic research

Giles atop Colorado's Mount Bierstadt during a climbing expedition.

As a doctoral student, **Erin Giles**became intrigued with the biology of breast cancer. Why did it often spread to bone? To get to the bottom of her question, she immersed herself in molecular biology. Along the way, she realized she wanted to pursue a more whole-body approach in her research.

Building on her undergraduate studies in biomedical science at the University of Guelph, Giles earned a doctorate in medical science from McMaster University (both in Ontario, Canada). When it came time to choose where she'd conduct postdoctoral research, she was impressed with studies being conducted at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

Paul MacLean[46], Ph.D., an assistant professor in the school's Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism and Giles' mentor and adviser, told her his research team collaborated with the university's nationally regarded Center for Human Nutrition[47], and that his lab was in the midst of developing a rat model of obesity and postmenopausal breast cancer.

"It seemed like a perfect fit," said Giles, a native of Dorchester, Ontario, Canada. "I would have the opportunity to learn how to conduct metabolic studies, and I would be bringing with me some expertise in breast cancer biology that would be an asset in Paul's group."

As she looks toward her future, Giles feels confident her experience will help not only her career, but other people as well.

"I'm hoping the studies I'm currently conducting will increase our understanding of the link between obesity and cancer, and that the knowledge from my work can be used to improve patient care in the future," she said.

From Wisconsin to Colorado: Postdoctoral researcher seeks clues to solve riddle

Duex

Jason Duex likes solving riddles. Right now, he is trying to unravel the mystery behind the letters EGFR. Sure, he knows what the letters stand for — epidermal growth factor receptor — but what he really wants to know is how to inhibit the tumor-forming protein in many types of cancers.

To do that, the Sun Prairie, Wis., native is conducting research in the lab of Alexander Sorkin[49], Ph.D., an associate professor of pharmacology at the School of Medicine.

Duex (pronounced "do") earned a bachelor's degree in biology at the University of Wisconsin and a doctorate in biochemistry at the University of Iowa. Counted among the ranks of postdoctoral researchers at CU, he believes such work is the driving force behind research at any major university.

"Postdocs generally bring more experience and innovative thinking than students and technicians, while at the same time having fewer university commitments than faculty," he said. "This leads to more research publications, which ultimately helps faculty and the university secure more funding. This is not to detract from what students accomplish. If it weren't for students, there wouldn't be any postdocs."

While faculty and students appreciate postdoctoral fellows for their research and classroom experience, many university administrators don't know what to make of them, Duex said.

But, Duex said, "Like students, postdocs are also future ambassadors for the university," especially as they advance in their careers and share stories about their postdoctoral research experience at CU. Eventually, Duex would like to become a tenured faculty researcher.

Before then, however, he will continue to try and solve the riddle behind the letters EGFR.

Colorado native gets to heart of matter with estrogen research

Cox-York

Kimberly Cox-York spends a lot of time contemplating where fat is stored in the human body.

The Cripple Creek native is not an athletic trainer or a diet guru. She's trying to determine how estrogen regulates fat and stores it in hips, thighs and the midsection. It's all part of her efforts to advance our understanding of the role the hormone plays in women's risk of developing heart disease.

Cox-York is conducting postdoctoral research alongside her adviser Rachael E. Van Pelt, Ph.D., in the Investigations in Metabolism, Aging, Gender and Exercise (IMAGE) group in the School of Medicine's Division of Geriatrics[51].

Before coming to the University of Colorado Denver, Cox-York earned a bachelor's degree in biology at Fort Lewis College, a master's degree in nutrition at the University of Hawaii and a doctorate in nutrition at Colorado State University.

Historically, she said, postdoctoral scholars have been viewed as "cheap labor — highly skilled, but often not given much creative license." That attitude appears to be changing.

"There is more emphasis on training the fellow in developing well-thought-out research plans, grant and manuscript

writing, and managing a research lab or project," she said. "Postdoctoral researchers are a critical link in the research chain. They are not only a major driver in conducting the research itself, but they bring unique experiences and skills that advance the objectives of established research labs."

Once her tenure at UC Denver ends, Cox-York's goal is to become an independent, translational researcher in cardiovascular disease and adipocyte (fat cell) biology.

"The supportive environment of the IMAGE group[52] allows me to hone technical skills, as well as develop the experimental design and writing techniques that are so critical for success in research," Cox-York said.

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/budget-news-d%C3%A9j%C3%A0-vu-all-over-again[2] https://connections.cu.edu/news/budget-news-deja-vu-all-over-again/capitol-cass-3[3] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/benson-thanks-cu-employees-while-warning-further-tough-times[4] https://connections.cu.edu/file/bruce1jpg[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-masters-program-anschutz-first-its-kind-region[6] https://connections.cu.edu/file/nairn011jpg[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/mission-statement-discussion-runs-numbers-trouble[8] https://connections.cu.edu/file/regentsseal1jpg[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/news-briefs-4[10] http://www.komendenver.org/[11] https://www.cu.edu/pfh[12] mailto:Linda.Starkey@cu.edu[13] http://www.colorado.edu/iece/[14] http://www.colorado.edu/iece/Making_It_Real_Conference_Registration_Fillable_PDF_Final_1.pdf[15] mailto:peter.simons@colorado.edu[16] https://www.cusys.edu/regents/Awards/index.html[17] https://www.cusys.edu/policies/policies/A_Distinguished-Professors.html[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/walking-good-you-%E2%80%94-unless[19] https://connections.cu.edu/file/ucdsign1jpg[20] http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/99/9/1632[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/grant-money-aimed-boosting-future-teachers-southern-colorado[22] https://connections.cu.edu/file/lindy-crawford-small2jpg[23] https://connections.cu.edu/file/depryr2jpg[24] https://connections.cu.edu/file/weathersjohnweb1jpg[25] http://www.mwttt.com/Default.aspx?tabid=3631[26] http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml[27] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/education-support-agenda-colorado-cancer-day[28] http://www.uccc.info/for-healthcare-professional/cancer-center/cme/ccd/index.aspx[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/report-university-community-making-strides-title-ix-efforts[30] https://connections.cu.edu/file/hogshead-makar1jpg[31] http://www.colorado.edu/news/downloads/TitleIXReport.pdf[32] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/office-reports-best-year-invention-disclosures[33] https://connections.cu.edu/file/dallen2jpg[34] https://www.cusys.edu/techtransfer/[35] https://www.cu.edu/techtransfer/contact/bios/dallen.html[36] https://connections.cu.edu/people/astronaut-joins-cu-boulder-faculty[37] https://connections.cu.edu/file/peoplevoss1jpg[38] https://connections.cu.edu/people/postdoctoral-fellow-awarded-aaas-fellowship[39] https://connections.cu.edu/file/peoplemccoy1jpg[40] https://connections.cu.edu/people/system-administration-appoints-it-security-principal[41] https://connections.cu.edu/file/peoplelard1jpg[42] https://connections.cu.edu/people/cu-denver-names-director-student-life[43] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/postdoctoral-contributions-celebrated-nationwide-week[44] http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/[45] https://connections.cu.edu/did-you-know/postdoctoral-contributions-celebrated-nationwide-this-week/dyk_giles-2[46] http://www.uchsc.edu/nutrition/MacLean/macleanbio.htm[47] http://www.uchsc.edu/nutrition/Administration/admin.htm[48] https://connections.cu.edu/did-you-know/postdoctoral-contributions-celebrated-nationwide-this-week/dyk_duex-2[49] http://pharmacology.ucdenver.edu/faculty/sorkin/sub_sorkin/index.htm[50] https://connections.cu.edu/did-you-know/postdoctoral-contributions-celebrated-nationwide-this-week/dyk_cox-york[51] http://www.uchsc.edu/coa/[52] http://www.uchsc.edu/image/