Five Questions for Erin Hackel[1]
[2]

Erin Hackel's talent and love of vocal music landed her on stages singing opera and musical theater. She puts that experience to work as an associate professor at CU Denver's College of Arts and Media, in the Music and Entertainment Industry Studies Department, which she joined in 2003.

The Virginia native's expertise is in classical singing, having earned three classical vocal degrees, including a doctorate at CU Boulder. Yet at CU Denver, she plunged into a world where student demand necessitated understanding contemporary vocals.

"The difference between the two is a technical one," Hackel said. "It's a different way of producing the sound. It involves different usage of the vocal folds, the mechanism itself. That's one piece of it. Another piece is the physical height of the larynx: It tends to be quite low for classical singing; it creeps up for belters. They're two totally different ways of using the voice. To my mind, one is not any better than the other, they're just different."

The mother of two sons, she's also a voracious reader who loves to cook.

1. You work with student a cappella groups at CU Denver, including MIX, the Ninth Street Singers and currently Lark[3]. How do you go about forming and leading these groups?

I was asked many years ago if I would start a vocal ensemble. We have lots of different ensembles in our department – pop, rock, electro-acoustic, one that uses different kinds of mobile devices as instruments. I was asked to add a vocal ensemble to the roster. I really had an affinity for it and now we have a full-on a cappella program in our department, which is really great. There are beginning, intermediate and advanced ensembles.

I started entering my groups into different competitions. They did very badly at first! I learned a lot and now our all-female-identified group Lark has won a good number of awards, in competitions and for recordings. Last year we won a competition in Arkansas, and the prize was to travel to Asia to perform, which was a great experience for me and the students. Lark's first album, "Migration," was released in May. It's already up for six contemporary a cappella recording awards, which is fantastic. I'm really proud of them. The album is great and really shows who they are.

Lark performs a minimum of 10 to 15 times per semester – new student convocations, donor dinners, CU South Denver functions, or a hired gig in Denver. And of course competitions, so we're busy. I'm always with them when they travel. Most of the things we're doing are affiliated with a large festival: They'll get industry professionals to come in and judge; I tend to be asked to teach classes at the festivals.

We do everything as a group. From song selection to what they want to look like to movement to deciding what gigs we're going to do and not do. Everything comes organically from this group, the seven of them and me. I count myself as an equal spoke in their wheel. We filter everything through a brand. This group of young women has decided their brand doesn't have anything to do with sex or talking just to a man, right? So that filters out a lot of material for us to use. But in the end we come up with material that is important to them, with emotions they want to convey.

Right now, they all wear vintage dresses from the '50s, to comment on gender and misogyny. They pair it with combat boots – they're not going to wear heels – and the result is wonderful. It's wonderful to watch them.

2. How does the rise and continued popularity of TV singing competitions affect students deciding to pursue music education – or how you approach teaching?

I think certainly contemporary a cappella has become very popular because of shows like "Glee," "American Idol," "The Voice" and the "Pitch Perfect" movies, which are based on one of the United States competitions. Though "Pitch Perfect" is a very silly movie, there's a lot of truism and accuracy to a lot of it. I think that has definitely affected the field.

I only listen to NPR, so I'm not sure I'm particularly affected by the pop culture stuff, to be honest. My groups win a lot

of awards for innovation. From my own background in opera and musical theater, I tend to bring in elements that are very different from your traditional a cappella group. I'll bring storytelling, costuming – very theatrical elements. I've had a whole stage set made of PVC that had to be transported across the country. It tends to make an impact and the groups tend to get awarded for it.

3. You mentioned your background as a classical singer, yet you found yourself often training contemporary singers. How did you make that transition, and what are the challenges?

This is actually the core of one of my most popular classes I teach, which is how to sing in all styles. My DMA (doctor of musical arts) is in voice performance and pedagogy, and my master's is in opera. So all of my singing was classical singing. I still sing with the Central City Opera in their outreach ensemble. I left my doctorate very well-prepared to teach classical singers – then was offered a job teaching contemporary singers. Honestly, I was a little panicked at first. Because it's a very different way of singing.

Within the university setting, the way classical teachers have often reacted to pop or contemporary singing is … a little classist, right? "This is a lesser way of singing. Classical singing is the way to sing properly and healthily." Certainly, when I was looking around at how to do this, I did encounter a stigma against contemporary singing with some classical pedagogues. I think it's changing. Some classical programs are embracing what is a different cadre of students that can potentially come into their schools and learn in a slightly different genre and become singers.

It was about a 10-year journey for me to start researching how to teach contemporary singers. Frankly, there's not a lot out there. There's centuries of literature about how to teach classical singers. I had to cast my net very wide. To do scientific work, I ended up going to some places – one in California and an institute in Denmark – where they were teaching researched ways of singing contemporary styles of singing. I slowly started applying things to my students. Now I have a really clear and firm method, which is pretty tried and tested. I have a decade of healthy singers behind me, and they can all belt as high as they want – well, as high as I want them to!

4. You once said that, with your teaching, you strive to "demystify the voice." How do you go about that?

For me, taking voice lessons can often be a very mysterious thing. There are ways of teaching singers to sing that don't tell them exactly what to do. Or they go about it in a metaphorical way: "Sing as if chocolate is streaming from your cheekbones!" As a young student, you visualize, you try, then the instructor says, "That's perfect." And you think, what did I do?

The method I use is extremely straightforward. It's placed on a grid. I can tell a singer, do you want to sound like a soul singer? Great – look at the grid here, here and here. This is how we sound like a soul singer. They're very exact things they can do – like anchor the larynx – and that, to me, is demystifying the singing.

5. How did you come to focus on female composers and performers in your research and publications?

Roundabout, like anything else, right? It has come full circle. I'm fluent in Norwegian. My mom is from Norway. So a lot of my work during my doctorate was in Norwegian and there were a couple of composers and artists that I was very interested in and able to go to Oslo and research. They happened to be women. But looking back, I think I have always had an affinity for women's voices and messages, and how they've overcome adversity.

One of the first articles I wrote was about a Norwegian composer named Agathe Backer Grøndahl. She's just this wonderful composer. I came across a group photo of composers from the 19th century, and there she is, the lone woman, among this sea of Scandinavian men. It wasn't easy for her.

Now I have Lark as my advanced group and it gives me such joy to give these young women a platform for what they have to say. To help put them on stages so they can tell people who they are as artists and individuals, I feel so lucky and privileged. It makes me want to cry a little!

Colorado Law's Krakoff receives Chase Faculty Community Service Award[4]
[5]

A nationally recognized scholar in American Indian law and natural resources law, the University of Colorado's Sarah Krakoff, J.D., is the recipient of the 2017-18 Chase Faculty Community Service Award[6].

Krakoff is the Moses Lasky Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Research at the University of Colorado Law School, CU Boulder. Her work benefits the country's public lands and the underrepresented populations who rely on them. She applies interdisciplinary scholarship to her teaching in creative ways, providing CU law students with transformative experiences within – and beyond – the classroom.

The Chase Faculty Community Service Award is presented annually to a full-time CU faculty member who provides exceptional service to the community. An advisory council recommends an award-winner to CU President Bruce D. Benson, who bestows the honor, which includes a $10,000 grant sponsored by an endowment from JPMorgan Chase through the CU Foundation.

During her 22 years at Colorado Law, Krakoff has dedicated herself to indigenous communities and public lands. Along the way, she has developed programs that help low-income populations: The Acequia Project, which she leads, helps law students learn while providing free legal services to low-income farmers seeking to protect their water rights in Colorado's San Luis Valley.

"Professor Krakoff is preserving the past, improving the present and safeguarding the future for the acequia farmers of the San Luis Valley," wrote Colorado Law Dean S. James Anaya in the award nomination. "At the same time, she is creating a new generation of lawyers dedicated to helping humanity."

Krakoff's many published works include "American Indian Law: Cases and Commentary," co-authored with Bob Anderson and Bethany Berger; "Tribes, Land and Environment," co-edited with Ezra Rosser; and articles in the Stanford Law Review, California Law Review and other law journals. She regularly contributes to amicus briefs in American Indian law and public lands cases in federal courts across the country and serves on the board of trustees of the Grand Canyon Trust.

Before joining the Colorado Law tenure-track faculty in 1999, Krakoff directed the American Indian Law Clinic and secured permanent university funding to ensure the clinic's future. She began her legal career at DNA-Peoples Legal Services on the Navajo Nation, where she initiated its Youth Law Project with an Equal Justice Works fellowship. Krakoff earned a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a juris doctor from the University of California, Berkeley.

"I feel fortunate every single day to have a career that allows me to work with dedicated and passionate students on projects that might make some positive difference for low-income communities and the environment," Krakoff said. "To receive an award for helping to serve these communities is truly humbling. I am beyond grateful to my students and colleagues for nominating me for the Chase Award, and to CU for being supportive of my outreach throughout the years."

The Chase Faculty Community Service Award – established in 1991 with a $100,000 donation – is funded annually by an endowment from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation through the CU Foundation. The endowment provides an annual award of $10,000 to a full-time faculty member at the University of Colorado who has rendered exceptional service in his or her community.

Krakoff will be formally recognized for her Chase Award today at CU Boulder.

Chase is the U.S. consumer and commercial banking business of JPMorgan Chase & Co. (NYSE: JPM), a leading global financial services firm with assets of $2.6 trillion and operations worldwide. Chase serves nearly half of America's households with a broad range of financial services, including personal banking, credit cards, mortgages, auto financing, investment advice, small business loans and payment processing. Customers can choose how and where they want to bank: 5,100 branches, 16,000 ATMs, mobile, online and by phone. For more information, go to

Chase.com[7].

Regents set presidential search town halls[8]

The University of Colorado Board of Regents will hold a series of town hall meetings to gather insight and feedback from members of the university community and the public regarding the search for CU's next president.

Regents Heidi Ganahl and Irene Griego, search committee co-chairs, will host the meetings and gather input.

"It's important that we hear from the university's constituents as we start the process to select CU's next president," Ganahl and Griego said in a statement. "We want to know the qualities they would like to see in CU's next president and hear about the issues facing CU, our state and nation."

CU's next president will replace Bruce D. Benson, who has led the university since 2008 and has announced he will retire from the position in July. The board is soliciting nominations for the search committee and is in the process of hiring a search firm.

In addition to the in-person meetings, the Board of Regents invites electronic feedback on the search from constituents at https://www.cu.edu/presidential-search/forms/public-input[9]

The forums will be:

University of Colorado Colorado Springs
1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 11
University Center, Room 303

University of Colorado Boulder
1-2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 16
Old Main

University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
10:30 a.m.-noon Thursday, Oct. 18
Hensel-Phelps East Auditorium, Research 1 building, North

University of Colorado Denver
3:30-5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 18
Terrace Room, second floor, 1380 Lawrence St.

Faculty invited to contribute to new CU Connections commentaries[10]

The Faculty Council Communication Committee and CU Connections are teaming to launch a new forum for conversation across the four CU campuses: CU Faculty Voices.

For this new series of commentaries, CU faculty are invited to submit written pieces with a point of view. The goal is to foster conversation about topics and issues on the minds of faculty at the four campuses. We welcome article proposals that explore these topics through the authors' personal opinion, experience, or research.

Chosen pieces will be published on the CU Connections website and promoted in the CU Connections email newsletter, which is distributed to all CU faculty and staff across the system.'

Authors will receive an appreciation gift for their time, such as CU branded items, tickets for the University of Colorado A-line train, etc., as well as a letter of recognition for their service from the Faculty Council Communications Committee and the Vice President of Communication.

Content should be timely and relevant to the faculty and/or staff of the University of Colorado system. Subjects may be local (specific people and issues rooted at CU) or universal (pertaining to higher education in Colorado, the United States or the world).

Examples:
policy issues, from the campus level to the national level legislative issues (no overtly partisan, political or personal attacks) culture – campus or academic academic careers tenure and promotion professional challenges in research, publishing, teaching and service work balancing work, family, and health Online teaching and degrees Environmental sustainability of university campuses
Some guidelines:
Each article should be an original work, approximately 800-1,100 words in length, not previously submitted elsewhere for publication. Use clear, informal writing, free of jargon. Consider the style of newspaper opinion pieces and editorials, rather than essays for scholarly journals. When useful, include hyperlinks to relevant online material (facts and figures, news coverage, etc.).
Interested contributors should begin by submitting a brief pitch, including the topic and the writer's relevant expertise or experience. Click here to send a summary of your idea[11].

CU Connections reserves the right to exercise editorial oversight. Submissions will be edited for length, clarity and editorial style.

Questions? Contact the chair of the Communications Committee, Carrie Makarewicz[12], or the editor of CU Connections, Jay Dedrick[13].

Staff Council takes on slate of topics[14]

During their first meeting of the academic year, University of Colorado Staff Council members heard updates on a variety of issues, including the search for the university president, CU Denver campus goals and the formation of a new inclusivity committee for the CU Denver l Anschutz campuses.

The group met Sept. 20 on the CU Denver campus. Meeting highlights were:

CU Denver – Chancellor Dorothy Horrell told council members about happenings on campus, including the successful opening of the Lola & Rob Salazar Student Wellness Center. She also noted that, as part of a campus master plan, the university is working to develop a dedicated engineering building and a dining facility for first-year students.

Presidential search – The process to replace President Bruce D. Benson, who announced he would retire in July 2019, has begun. A search committee will be formed, and, according to university policy, the committee includes one staff member. Individual campus councils will reach out to staff members to find people who might be interested in serving on the presidential search committee. UCSC will collect the names of interested staff members and forward the names to the team heading the committee.

Staff members also may nominate themselves by filling out a form at https://www.cu.edu/presidential-search/forms/search-committee-nomination[15]

The composition of the committee is two regents, one dean, four faculty members (one from each campus), one student, one staff member, two alumni and four community members.

Staff Inclusive Excellence Committee (SIEC) -- Peter Crosier-Cajina and Karissa Stolen, co-chairs of the just-formed ad hoc committee of the Staff Council for the CU Denver l Anschutz campuses, detailed organizational plans[16] to help develop leaders who reflect the people they serve. About 40 people are participating in groundwork of setting goals.

Online training report – Staff Council member Annie Meltzer, a training coordinator with Employee Services, discussed a recently released annual report that details the number of people on each campus who use Skillsoft, an online learning system. Included in the online library are 111 customized courses for specific CU career advancement or training purposes. Some of the courses have been translated into several languages.

In fiscal year 2018, some 73,757 courses were completed, up from 63,784 in 2017.

Employee Services also is assessing the use of Lynda.com, another online space that houses thousands of video courses. The contract with the vendor runs through June 2019. Training and other courses were initially available only on the Boulder campus, but the benefit expanded in 2017 to all faculty and staff.

Changes to Regent Articles 1, 5, 7, 9 and related policies approved; obsolete discrimination policies eliminated [17]

Flu vaccine available in October on CU campuses[18]
[19]

The least wonderful time of year is here – flu season.

OK, OK, there's a lot to love about the fall and we all can delight in seeing the turning leaves. But to truly enjoy the view, you'll want to avoid the flu. Each year, between 5 percent and 20 percent of the U.S. population contracts the flu virus[20].

Give yourself a shot at good health this flu season by attending a flu shot clinic[21] on a University of Colorado campus in October.

Flu shots are free for CU Health Plan primary members and their spouses. Non-CU Health Plan members pay $26 dollars for a shot, and some insurances will be accepted (see the list of accepted insurance providers[22]). If you carry health insurance but it's not accepted at our clinics, you may be able receive a free shot at your doctor's office[23].

CU Colorado Spring campus will offer two special clinics in partnership with Kaiser Permanente, which is generously offering free shots to all Colorado Springs faculty, staff and spouses.

Here are the need-to-know details for this season's flu shot clinics[24]:
Bring your CU Health Plan member ID card Clinics are not open to students Other insurance providers may be accepted Vaccine Information Sheet[25]Clinic dates, times and locations[24]Registration instructions[24]

If you're a CU Health Plan member and you can't make it to one of the clinics, you're still eligible for a free shot through your primary care provider. Visit the CU Employee Services website to find a provider.[26]

MAVEN selfie marks four years in orbit at Mars[27]

Election-year reminder: There are do's and don'ts of campaign activity[28]

As the Nov. 6 Election Day approaches, the University of Colorado reminds employees of guidelines regarding political campaign-related activity and expression.

A variety of state and federal laws and regulations govern political expression and conduct in the university workplace. Application of the law depends on the particular facts of the situation, and legal counsel should be consulted when questions arise. However, the following guidelines may be used when trying to determine whether particular conduct is appropriate in the University setting.

General principles:
Employees have the right as private citizens to freedom of expression and participation in the political process When expressing their political views, university employees should endeavor to prevent the appearance of university partiality in political campaigns Private political activities must be conducted on personal time and without using university resources
Employees should refrain from the following activities while at work:
Sending emails from university-hosted email accounts in support of or in opposition to candidates or ballot initiatives Using university office supplies (including computers, copiers, and fax machines) to create campaign materials Making calls on university phones in support of or opposition to a political candidate or ballot initiatives Using university computers to make monetary contributions to political campaigns Placing campaign materials in locations not designated for general signage.
In general, employees may engage in the following activities while at work:
Discussing political issues and political campaigns with one another while on break Wearing buttons or clothing promoting a particular candidate or issue, provided that the employee does not regularly interact with the public as part of her job duties Placing a bumper sticker on a personal vehicle Participating in campaign-related activities on personal time
Because university email addresses are generally public and published on various websites, employees may receive electronic mail messages on their university-hosted email accounts from candidates and campaigns. Such emails are not illegal. The university cannot know or block every campaign- or candidate-related email account. Installing restrictive "spam" filters would have limited success with such messages, which originate from many different sources. It is important to remember, however, that the transmission of such emails to you does not constitute University of Colorado endorsement of any candidate or campaign. Employees should refrain from using university email accounts to forward candidate or campaign-related messages for the purpose of expressing opposition to or support for the relevant candidate or campaign issue.

University employees should always be aware that, as public employees, their activities may be subject to heightened scrutiny by the media and members of the public. Accordingly, they should take care to ensure that their private activities do not compromise their ability to carry out their official duties.

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Reddy: 'Great things are in store for this campus'[30]

Economics faculty edit prestigious Oxford Handbook[31]

Sen. Gardner helps Cohen Clinic celebrate milestone[32]

Celebration honors the Fitzsimons Building on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus[33]

Cree-Green receives prestigious research award[34]

Baefsky tapped to take arts and media innovation to new level[35]

Noel appointed state historian[36]

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