

[Nominations for Excellence in Leadership Award: Deadline extended to Sept. 30](#)^[1]

Do you know a leader who has participated in the Excellence in Leadership Program?

The Excellence in Leadership Program (ELP) is now accepting nominations for the 2015 Excellence in Leadership Award. The deadline recently was extended to Sept. 30.

ELP is a universitywide professional development experience that provides opportunities for faculty and staff to become more effective leaders who can successfully address the key challenges of a dynamic university.

The Excellence in Leadership Award recognizes an ELP alumnus who has shown exemplary leadership at the university in one or more areas:

Leadership of organizations, departments or teams
Leadership of projects, programs and/or research
Fiscal management and/or fundraising
Student instruction

Who is eligible?

ELP graduates who are currently working at the University of Colorado.

[View the ELP Alumni list](#)^[2]

Deadline – 5 p.m. Sept. 30

How and where do I submit a nomination?

Complete the nomination form and submit to Beth Otis at: beth.otis@ucdenver.edu^[3].

[2015 Excellence in Leadership Award Nomination Form](#)^[4]

The recipient of the award and the nominator will be recognized at the Excellence in Leadership Luncheon and Lecture on Nov. 13 at the Brown Palace Hotel.

Questions?

Contact beth.otis@ucdenver.edu^[3] or janet.lowe@cu.edu^[5]

[Kassoy aims to connect retired faculty to CU](#)^[6]

^[7]

David Kassoy keeps busy. For starters, the Boulder resident runs a small research business, writes for journals, gives oral presentations at technical meetings, counsels potential retirees about their future options and cycles on the roads around Boulder several times a week.

He also has a list of initiatives he'd like to take on at the University of Colorado.

Given that activity level, it's easy to overlook the fact that Kassoy – who signs his email “Academic Fossil” – retired as a professor of mechanical engineering at CU-Boulder back in 2008.

“Retirement is an interesting period in one's life,” he says, “because you can do what you want to do, when you want to do it.”

As the academic year gets underway, Kassoy is hoping he'll reach many more like-minded retired faculty across CU.

He took on the role of president of the CU Retired Faculty Association, or CURFA, in January 2015. Of the 800-plus retired faculty members from across the system, 350 are dues-paying members of CURFA. Membership is \$20 annually after a free first year. He'd like the enrollment to grow.

"One of the goals of CURFA is to encourage people to continue their research careers, if at all possible," he says. "You also can volunteer – I never knew of a department chair who would turn down volunteers."

"The goal is keeping people connected. The university underutilizes its retirees, in my view."

With funding from the Office of the President and the Office of Academic Affairs, CURFA works to engage retired faculty across the system; UCCS and CU Anschutz also have campus-based associations of retired faculty. Retired faculty at CU Denver are considering forming their own campus group, Kassoy says, while CU-Boulder, ironically, has no campus-centric group. "Most of our activity is in Boulder, though," he says.

One example of that activity is set for next week, when CURFA sponsors a Tea Time at the Academy on Sept. 9. It's an afternoon of vocal music from opera and Broadway; among the performers is pianist Robert Spillman, a professor emeritus. Other events include a monthly series of lifelong learning seminars, now facilitated by Uriel Nauenberg (Physics, retired), who is serving as vice president of CURFA. The fall and winter slate includes talks on timely science and history topics and a presentation by David Skaggs on the TABOR amendment.

The list of group benefits also includes a member directory published annually; a newsletter published twice a year; regular business meetings, also twice a year, which include spouses; "field trips" to explore CU entities such as LASP and the MAVEN project; and the opportunity to apply for annual \$1,000 research grants, offered to five retired faculty members per year.

Kassoy is looking to broaden the value provided to members and expanding the outreach provided by retired faculty. The goals include:

An oral history of CU, compiled via interviews with retiring faculty
Encouraging participation by spouses of deceased retired faculty
Mentorship of first-generation and/or international students
Identifying volunteerism opportunities at CU-Boulder
Online availability of the member directory and CURFA newsletters for all CU retirees
Associate membership in CURFA for interested community members

The CURFA group also now has an activist Executive Committee, interested in addressing the retired faculty community interests in the months ahead.

For details on how to join CURFA, [click here](#)[8].

[Faculty Council discusses big picture with Regent Griego](#)[9]

Board of Regents Vice Chair Irene Griego was a guest at the Faculty Council's first meeting of the academic year, taking questions from council members and discussing big-picture issues affecting the University of Colorado and higher education institutions everywhere.

Griego, a Lakewood Democrat representing the 7th Congressional District, emphasized that she and the board value input from Faculty Council and faculty members across the system.

"We need to hear your voice so we can plan effectively for issues that come up that are important to you," she said during the Aug. 27 meeting at 1800 Grant St. "We really need that information."

Griego said she feels it's important for regents to be able to represent faculty when making decisions.

"Anytime you have issues or concerns, please let me know," she said. ""It does give me better insight into what goes on.

"The other thing I want to get your input on is the future of the university. Things are really changing in our world rapidly, and I'd like to know what all of you think is the role of the university?"

Gloria Main said society wants and needs good citizens. “We have a moral obligation, and our students must understand that they have an obligation, to the broader community – to the world. They must use their costly education not only to line their own pockets, but to contribute to the world. That is part of our mission.”

Others said it’s important for the university to support “career literacy” for undergraduates without chasing trends in the current job market. Michael Lightner, interim vice president for Academic Affairs, pointed to a statistic indicating that 80 percent of current graduates will eventually be in jobs that don’t currently exist. “So there’s a real challenge in looking at a strong core, an onramp (to employment).”

Tamara Terzian said members of the university community serve a mission not just of educating students, but to educate the broader community about the research undertaken across the university. Griego said she agrees completely.

“I never chose to be a public official, but I ended up being one,” said Griego, who first was appointed to the board by Gov. John Hickenlooper in 2011. Her professional background is in K-12 education. “I was always in a community of educators. Now that I’m a regent, I’m getting more of the political world, and I’m amazed – and sometimes appalled – at how much some people don’t know about our university. When I speak to (external) groups ... all they’re interested in is our football team. They don’t even know about the contributions CU is making to the state and the nation. Not just (economic impact), but contributions in research that impacts our lives.

“I agree that our community needs to learn more about what we do, and I know (CU communicators) are working on that.”

In other business at last week’s meeting:

Kathleen Bollard attended her last faculty council meeting before departing as vice president of Academic Affairs to return to her role on the CU Denver faculty. She thanked the council for its support over the years; Chair John McDowell said Bollard’s work has been appreciated by the council, which gave her a standing ovation. “I know that your taking on all of this service is a huge amount of work on your part. It really is appreciated by all the people who work with you on shared governance,” she said. The university’s parental leave policy will be a focus of the coming year, said Kathy Nesbitt, vice president of employee and information services, during her report to the council. “I know there’s interest in that leave being paid. I don’t know if we’ll get there; some campuses pay and others do not. My goal over the next year is to have a conversation about that. I need time because this is a very delicate issue – it’s sensitive to all of you, and there are financial implications.” Committee reports noted the dates of two systemwide symposiums presented by Faculty Council: The GLBTI symposium is set for Nov. 13; the CU Women Succeeding symposium will be Feb. 25-26. Both will be at UCCS. McDowell said he has begun work on facilitating a potential change to the Privilege and Tenure Committee, whose mission is to provide faculty members a hearing for grievances involving perceived violations of rights or privileges. The council has set a goal of allowing non-tenure track faculty to be part of the committee, which isn’t allowed under current bylaws.

[CU-Boulder expands Center for Western Civilization to include the Visiting Scholar in Conservative Thought and Policy](#) [10]

[CU-Boulder Department of Athletics explores creation of Sports Governance Center](#) [11]

[Mountain Lion Volleyball signs eighth-grader in special ceremony](#) [12]

[Clinical trial drug transforms life of cancer patient](#)[13]

[CU Health Plan doctors honored](#)[14]

[Save the dates for the 2015 Distinguished Research Lectures](#)[15]

[Starting fresh: Tech changes will streamline user experience](#)[16]

[Instructor earns Exercise is Medicine Award](#)[17]

Jess Kirby, instructor, Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences, was recently recognized by Exercise is Medicine with a gold award.

At the group's May 29 Exercise is Medicine World Congress, held in conjunction with the American College of Sports Medicine's annual meeting, Kirby and representatives from 23 other campuses were recognized for promoting physical activity on their home campus.

Kirby helped launch the first annual Trek the Trail 5K and also partnered with the Student Health Center and Campus Recreation Center to provide exercise referrals and recreation coupon cards to students who are not regularly physically active. She thanked Vicki Schober, physician and medical director, Student Health Center, for her assistance with the project.

The awards were given in three categories, gold, silver and bronze. Other universities earning gold awards in addition to UCCS were Auburn University, California State University Long Beach, Michigan State University, Slippery Rock University and Western Kentucky University.

[President's Scholars Honored at School of Medicine Reception](#)[18]
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Top leaders from the University of Colorado and the School of Medicine gathered on the Anschutz Medical Campus Wednesday evening to recognize medical students who have been awarded President's Scholarships.

"We're thrilled you're here," said Don Elliman, chancellor of the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. "We're delighted that we could have the program that you are all benefitting from, which is directly resulting from the commitment of the president of the University."

President's Scholarships were created six years ago to aid students of diverse backgrounds who would not be able to afford medical school without financial assistance. The scholarship is a four-year award, ranging from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per student per year. There are 12 students in the School of Medicine's Class of 2019. Since the inception of the program, scholarships have been awarded to more than 80 students.

Dozens of students, faculty and University leaders met at a reception in the Fulginiti Pavilion for Bioethics and Humanities.

University of Colorado President Bruce Benson's office provided the original investment in the program – \$10 million over five years to support scholarships to recruit students from diverse backgrounds.

Benson lauded others who have contributed with scholarships for the same purpose.

"What I think is equally important is what everybody else has done," Benson said. "We've got over 75 faculty and staff who have stepped up and said we're putting money in this program too."

The scholarships have been a key initiative that has improved the diversity in the School of Medicine. Six years ago, about 10 percent of the students in the incoming class were from backgrounds underrepresented in medicine.

Now, more than 30 percent of the class comes from such backgrounds. In the Class of 2019, more than half come from diverse backgrounds when including a broader definition that includes rural backgrounds, first-in-their-family to attend college, and socio-economic status.

"These scholarships really helped us move the needle in a positive way in recruiting a medical school class that is consistent with the goals of our organization, which is to be leaders in research and to be leaders in medical care," said John J. Reilly, Jr., MD, dean of the School of Medicine and the University's vice chancellor for health affairs.

"I think the data are pretty clear," Reilly said, "that both our clinical care and our research enterprise benefit from a diverse student body and a diverse faculty."

Students at the event said they would have been unable to afford the School of Medicine without the scholarships.

Judas Kelley, a first-year medical student from Lakewood, was an emergency medical technician in Denver. He had received an undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado Denver in 2010 and went back to school to get the education he needed to be ready for medical school.

With a wife and a one-year-old child, he said the scholarship "makes a huge difference, especially with the financial obligations I'll have at the end."

Laurel Dang, a second-year medical student who graduated from University of California, Irvine, said the scholarship was "one of the reasons I came here."

As a first-generation student whose parents are immigrants from Vietnam, she said the cost of medical school would have been out of reach without the aid.

Lorena Rincon-Cruz, a first-year student who graduated from Stanford University, said she's wanted to be a physician since she was 10 years old, but medical school seemed like an expensive dream.

"This gives me an opportunity to go to a school that I would not be able to go to without the help," she said.

[Griffith named interim ombuds office director following Gomez retirement](#)[20]

Kathy Griffith, project manager, Office of the Chancellor, will serve as interim director, Ombuds Office, effective Sept. 1.

Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak announced Griffith's appointment following the retirement of Nina Gomez. Gomez served as director since 2008 after retiring as an associate professor in the Department of Communication.

"I am deeply appreciative of Nina and her willingness to apply communication theory and personal skills to helping faculty, staff and students resolve differences," Shockley-Zalabak. "She brought a steady hand and a practical approach to problem resolution."

Gomez said: "I am bidding adieu to UCCS as I resign from my position as director of the Ombuds Office. I have found all these years to be enlightening as I have learned more than I have taught. My thanks to all with whom I have interacted and I wish much success to all. I feel as if I'm leaving my extended family whom I will miss."

The Ombuds Office provides students, staff, administrators, professional staff and faculty with voluntary, informal, neutral, confidential, third-party assistance in resolving university issues, concerns or conflicts. Griffith will serve as interim director. Chancellor Shockley-Zalabak will confer with governance groups before any additional action.

Griffith retired from UCCS in 2008 after 36 years in the chancellor's office where she served as chief of staff and also served as the university's sexual harassment officer. Since 2008, she has worked part-time as a project manager.

Griffith can be reached at 255-3119 or 255-3304 or by email, Kathy.griffith@uccs.edu[21]. The Ombuds Office is in Cragmor Hall 003. For more information, visit <http://www.uccs.edu/~ombuds/>[22]

[Heller Center selects new faculty director: Cunningham retires](#)[23]

Minette Church, associate professor, Department of Anthropology, is the new faculty director of the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities.

Church replaces Suzanne MacAulay, professor and chair, Department of Visual and Performing Arts, as faculty director. MacAulay served as the first faculty director for the Heller Center, a position designed to rotate among Heller Center departments every three years. The faculty director is responsible for managing the artist/scholar-in-residence program, reviewing and approving the guest house applications, answering classroom-related questions about the Heller Center and working closely with UCCS staff involved in the Heller Center's operation.

Mary Coussons-Read, executive vice chancellor, Academic Affairs, announced Church's appointment as well as the retirement of Perrin Cunningham, curator, Heller Center for Arts & Humanities. Cunningham was associated with the Heller Center since 2002 and previously served as its director. She secured state grants to support the Heller Center, was involved in fundraising and helped oversee the Heller restoration project. The Heller Center won Historic Civil Restoration Awards in 2010 and 2011, and American Association of Museums grants in 2013 and 2014.

"I am very proud of the work I've been able to do at the Heller Center," Cunningham said. "This seems to be a good time to step into the background. I have great confidence in Professor Church and know that she will continue the legacy of the Hellers."

Cunningham will continue to teach humanities courses at UCCS in addition to working on writing and film projects.

[New faculty join for fall semester](#)[24]

More than 30 new faculty members joined UCCS for the fall semester. Over the next few weeks, those who hold instructor, assistant professor or associate professor positions will be introduced to the campus. Today's installment includes 13 assistant and associate professors from the College of Business, College of Education, College of Engineering and Applied Science, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and School of Public Affairs.

Oksana Bihun, assistant professor, Department of Mathematics, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Bihun previously was an assistant professor at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, and held teaching and research assistant positions at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and National University of Lviv, Ukraine. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri, Columbia, and a specialist in applied mathematics degree from Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine.

Andrea Bingham, assistant professor, Department of Leadership, Research and Foundations, College of Education. Bingham previously held a graduate assistant positions at the University of Southern California, was a secondary English professional learning community facilitator for Teach for America and a secondary teacher support provider for Loyola Marymount University. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California and a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University.

Tara Cepon-Robins, assistant professor, Department of Anthropology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Cepon-Robins previously was a student and researcher at the University of Oregon, Eugene. She earned a Ph.D. and master's degree from the University of Oregon, Eugene, and a bachelor's degree from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Kaitlyn DeGhetto, assistant professor, College of Business. DeGhetto previously was a student and researcher at Florida State University, Tallahassee. She earned a Ph.D. from Florida State University, Tallahassee, and bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Helen Graham, assistant professor, Nursing Department, Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Graham previously was the cardiac rehabilitation and pulmonary rehabilitation program manager for Penrose St. Francis Health Care Services, Colorado Springs, and held other professional nursing positions. She earned Ph.D. and master's degrees from the University of Colorado, Denver, and a bachelor's degree from Arizona State University School of Nursing, Tempe.

Andrew Lac, assistant professor, Department of Psychology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Lac previously was a research assistant professor at Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, as a statistical consultant at various universities and as a visiting assistant professor at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. He earned a Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate University, master's degrees from California State University, Los Angeles and California State University Dominguez Hills, and a bachelor's degree from the University of California Los Angeles.

Michael Landon-Murray, assistant professor, School of Public Affairs. Landon-Murray previously was a visiting assistant professor at the University of Texas at El Paso and an adjunct instructor at the University at Albany, State University of New York. He earned a Ph.D. from University at Albany, a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh, and bachelor's degree from University at Buffalo, State University of New York.

Emily Mooney, assistant professor, Department of Biology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Mooney previously was an associate professor of biology for Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and coordinator of undergraduate research for the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, Crested Butte. She earned a Ph.D. from West Virginia University and a bachelor's degree from State University of New York.

Deborah Pollard, associate professor, Nursing Department, Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Pollard previously held various positions including interim director at the University of North Carolina Wilmington School of Nursing and was an associate professor at Wheeling Jesuit University, Wheeling, West Virginia. She also worked as a nurse in hospitals. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, a master's degree from West Virginia University and a bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College, West Liberty, West

Virginia.

Brandon Runnels, assistant professor, Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Runnels previously held teaching and research positions with the California Institute of Technology, Los Alamos National Laboratory, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and Southern Rockies Consulting. He earned master's and Ph.D. degrees from the California Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology.

Kristin Samuelson, assistant professor, Department of Psychology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Samuelson previously held faculty positions at California School of Professional Psychology, San Francisco. She earned Ph.D. and master's degrees from the University of Virginia and a bachelor's degree from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Colin D. Wren, assistant professor, Department of Anthropology, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. Wren previously was a postdoctoral research associate at Arizona State University and a research associate at Université de Montréal. He earned a Ph.D. from McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, master's degree from University College London, and bachelor's degree from McGill University.

[Study co-authored by CU-Boulder sociologist finds connection between genes, educational attainment](#) [25]

A first-of-its-kind, nationally representative [study](#)[26] of siblings supports previously published research on unrelated individuals that links specific genotypes to educational attainment among adults in their mid-20s to early 30s.

The research, published Aug. 20 in AERA Open, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Educational Research Association, found that, within families, an adolescent with a higher "polygenic score"—which summarizes previously identified genome-wide associations for educational attainment—than her or his sibling tended to go on to complete more years of schooling.

The authors of the study used genome-wide data from 1,594 siblings in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, also known as Add Health.

While the predicted difference in actual educational attainment between siblings was small—roughly one-third of a year of schooling—the study provides new evidence that recently discovered genetic factors actually do cause differences in educational outcomes, according to lead author Benjamin Domingue, of Stanford University.

"By examining siblings, this study was able to control for external social aspects, such as schools, neighborhoods and level of parental education, to hone in specifically on the role of genes in this complex process," said Domingue. "The study provides strong evidence that genotype can predict educational attainment within families."

The researchers were careful to note that they have not discovered "the gene for education" or that these findings somehow imply that a person's educational attainment is determined at birth.

"It still only explains a very small and trivial amount of the variation, 2 to 4 percent, which means that 97 percent of the reason why individuals do well in school has nothing to do with these genes," said CU-Boulder Institute of Behavioral Science researcher and Department of Sociology Professor Jason Boardman.

Furthermore, the authors found that the association between genetic predisposition and actual educational attainment was of comparable strength within and between families, indicating that family environments may be magnifying a modest genetic difference between siblings. For example, siblings may seek to differentiate themselves from one another, causing them to form identities that drive them toward more or less academic-related activities. The study found no relationship between a sibling's birth order and his or her polygenic score.

When looking at only African Americans, the genetic effect was found to be smaller but still statistically significant.

"The social environment appears to be more important for educational outcomes for African Americans," Boardman said. "This is a classic example of an unfair system. Even though someone has pro-education alleles, they don't manifest an educational benefit by race."

Boardman also pointed out the results are highly correlated to a point in time. For instance, in the mid-1960s, researchers found no genetic link to smoking because everyone was doing it. Today, smoking is correlated to a certain genotype.

"What manifested as a genetic resource for education for the 1940s might be completely different than what we're showing now," Boardman noted.

In another key finding, the study documented that polygenic scores across a broad population sample, going beyond siblings, are associated with social environmental differences.

European Americans with higher polygenic scores tended to live in more socially advantaged neighborhoods and had mothers with higher levels of educational attainment. While African Americans' polygenic scores were not related to the social circumstances of their neighborhoods, they were associated with maternal level of education.

"We show, for the first time, clear evidence for socio-geographic patterning of polygenic scores in the contemporary United States," said Domingue. "Neighborhoods can be important facilitators of, or impediments to, children's social attainments."

The authors emphasize that while there is a causal relationship between polygenic educational scores and educational attainment, among the general population, social factors still play a more important role in shaping outcomes. For instance, having a mother who graduated from college was associated with an additional 1.7 years of schooling.

The authors also warn that the predictive power of the polygenic educational score is too weak to be used for individual clinical interventions.

"Eventually, this type of research will help us better understand, across broad groups, the complex relationship between genetics, environments, and traits and behaviors, as well as help us better understand why school or government policies may or may not be generating desired objectives," Domingue said.

Other study authors are Daniel Belsky, of Duke University; Dalton Conley, of New York University; and Kathleen Mullan Harris, of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

[OPINION: Giving College Administrators a Business Education](#)[27]

[UCCS students see pros and cons to CU Boulder's switch to mobile safety app](#)[28]

[CU aims to be leader in research of sports issues](#)[29]

[Before implosion, doctors and nurses remember old campus](#)[30]

Links

[1] <https://connections.cu.edu/stories/nominations-excellence-leadership-award-deadline-extended-sept-30>[2]
http://www.cu.edu/sites/default/files/ELP_alumni_web.pdf[3] <mailto:beth.otis@ucdenver.edu>[4]
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<https://connections.cu.edu/itn/implosion-doctors-and-nurses-remember-old-campus>