Collaboration a constant for state's premier research universities[1]
[2]

The competition between the University of Colorado and Colorado State University often generates the bigger headlines – like last Friday's Rocky Mountain Showdown between the Buffs and Rams.

Before and after the games, though, the state's two premier research universities go about the quieter work of elevating life in Colorado. Such enterprise often takes place in collaboration, such as cancer research at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora and CSU's Flint Animal Cancer Center in Fort Collins, or the CU Anschutz-based Colorado School of Public Health, powered by CU, CSU and the University of Northern Colorado.

The leaders of CU and CSU came together Aug. 30 to tout the value of such efforts and take stock of challenges facing the institutions. CU President Bruce Benson and CSU President Tony Frank appeared before an audience of 120 business and civic leaders, including CU Regent Glen Gallegos, at the Denver Post Education Forum, held at the newspaper's downtown Denver offices.

"Our two universities have great stories to tell," Frank said.

"Occasionally we disagree, and that'll be Friday night," Benson said with a smile. But the leaders emphasized areas of agreement, such as recognizing a need to stress the tremendous value that CU and CSU add to the state's economy, health and culture.

Benson noted the high level of satisfaction among CU alumni who took part in a survey last year. More than 95 percent reported they were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with their CU education. On average, more than two-thirds of those were in the "very satisfied" category.

"What we've got to get across to people is that we are still pretty much a bargain," Benson said. "Think about the cost of education compared to the cost of a car. A car depreciates while the value of education appreciates."

Benson and Frank acknowledged that state funding challenges have required universities to seek greater operating efficiencies and increase tuition. But they refuted the notion that student debt is debilitating to Colorado graduates.

Benson highlighted how student debt at CU and CSU are below the national average.

"That debt is not as onerous as a lot of people think. Default rates on loans are lower, too," Benson said. "The national average is around 10 percent, the state is around 10 or 11 percent, and we're around 3 percent. Why? Because (our graduates) get jobs."

Panel moderator Molly Hughes asked what sets apart research universities such as CU and CSU from primarily teaching universities and other colleges.

"At CU, we have undergraduate students controlling satellites, working in labs with researchers," Benson said. Industry and business "still need really high-quality employees. … People have to understand that's what we're supplying."

Said Frank, "At both our institutions, we create new knowledge, pass it on to the next generation, and apply it. They're more than just words. We don't believe those things are just simultaneous – we believe they're synergistic.

"As Bruce points out, when you can put students in a laboratory as undergraduates … you see some really powerful things happening. My guess is we're going to see that really accelerate for the next one or two decades."

By having two premier research universities within close geographic proximity, the region enjoys a "cluster of innovation," Frank said, much like Silicon Valley. He cited a Department of Commerce study that examined "innovation economics."

“The single biggest factor they found was the presence of two or more research universities within a certain physical proximity. Colorado has that,” said Frank, who noted the additional presence of the Colorado School of Mines, national laboratories and federal scientists. “These universities are a critical part of setting up Colorado to really compete in the knowledge economy in the 21st century. CU and CSU bring a lot to the table … In terms of the collaboration, I don’t think there’s a lot we can do that’s more important than create this economic ecosystem that will position Colorado so well as we go forward.”

At CU, Benson said he stresses collaboration within a single campus, between all four campuses and between CU and other institutions.

“We’re always looking for ways to help each other and collaborate,” Benson said.

Said Frank, “Across Colorado … you see universities that have really tried to knock down barriers and say, hey, if you can find a way to work with someone else and make progress, more power to you. Let us know how we can help. I think you see that reflected in both our administrations.”

Benson agreed.

“I think you see it all over the place. It’s critical that people operate like that,” Benson said. “It’s our business model. I’m a business guy. You have to work with other people and build trust with each other.”

Faculty Council debriefed on ‘challenging’ Tumpkin matter[3]

Faculty Council used much of its first meeting of the new academic year to review administration’s handling of the Joe Tumpkin matter, with many acknowledging the need for improved communication.

“The Tumpkin investigation was one of the harder things I’ve worked on during my 11 years here. It was challenging,” said Pat O’Rourke, vice president, University Counsel, during a report to the council at its Aug. 31 meeting at 1800 Grant St. President Bruce Benson also attended the meeting.

“We had a very complicated investigation essentially being managed at the Board of Regents level, which is extremely rare,” O’Rourke said.

Former assistant football coach Tumpkin, who left CU Boulder earlier this year, is being criminally prosecuted for charges of domestic violence. His former partner’s allegations came to light in December when she contacted Head Football Coach Mike MacIntyre, who subsequently informed Athletic Director Rick George. The AD then notified Chancellor Phil DiStefano.

CU administration took no further action at the time, and Tumpkin subsequently coached in Colorado’s Alamo Bowl appearance. O’Rourke told the council that the chancellor determined that reporting was not required because it fell outside of the university’s jurisdiction, but later acknowledged that he should have notified the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance so that it could assess jurisdictional issues.

In June, CU announced the results[4] of dual, independent investigations into the matter. DiStefano was suspended for 10 days without pay. George and MacIntyre agreed to each contribute $100,000 to entities addressing domestic violence. All three also received letters of reprimand and expectation.

Some members of the faculty raised concerns that the sanctions imposed were too lenient.

O’Rourke explained that President Benson and the Board of Regents tried to consider equivalent cases. For comparison, O’Rourke said, administration reviewed every case involving a failure to report at CU Boulder from 2007 to the present. In the majority of the cases, the appointing authority issued a letter of expectation. In the remaining

other failure to report cases where greater discipline was imposed, there was some other aggravating factor beyond failure to report.

Referring to the Tumpkin case, O'Rourke said, "The board and the president believed that (the failures to report in accordance with policy) were legitimate mistakes. They found no evidence to suggest this was being done for some sort of competitive reason in the athletics department."

As the two legal reports were completed, O'Rourke said, he should have had a conversation with Faculty Council to update it and discuss the administration's reasoning, but did not believe that "discipline of administrative employees is in the realm of shared governance." He also noted that CU ordinarily would treat a personnel matter as confidential, but made public the two independent reports after the investigation in an effort to promote transparency.

"(But) where we did fail, and I acknowledge this as something we need to do better, is recognizing that you are all members of the university community and you're communicating with your constituents," O'Rourke said. "We needed to better explain (these decisions) to you. ... I apologize that we didn't do it well enough to begin with."

Besides reporting to the council, O'Rourke also responded to questions from council members. President Benson then joined the meeting.

"I think we've handled it pretty well," Benson told the council. "It's important to fix those things as fast as you can," adding that he was frustrated by the lengthy investigation.

Council members asked O'Rourke and Benson about the moral and ethical obligations of university leadership, going beyond the university's laws and policies.

"I don't know how to answer that," Benson said. "People talk about having a template for how you handle these things. ... It's easy to say, 'Let's make them all simple,' but they're all different."

O'Rourke said that he and all members of the president's team are told that "the baseline expectation is, you do what's right."

Faculty Council expected to make statement on legal matter involving regent[5]

Regent John Carson, involved in a federal lawsuit alleging discrimination by the mortgage company for whom he provides legal counsel, provided a statement to Faculty Council in which he denies having expressed any personal or religious opinions in the matter. Carson also reaffirmed his support for nondiscrimination policies at CU, including those relevant to benefits.

Pat O'Rourke, vice president, University Counsel, provided the statement to the council during its Aug. 31 meeting at 1800 Grant St.

The council said it plans to make its own statement on the matter during Chair Ravinder Singh's report to the regents at today's board meeting[6] at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus.

Recent media reports detailed a lawsuit against Cherry Creek Mortgage and UnitedHealthcare, filed by a California-based employee who was told her same-sex spouse was not eligible for health benefits, based on company policy. Cherry Creek Mortgage has since revised its policy and its former board chair has stepped down.

Carson acknowledges having previously sent a letter to the employee informing her of the company's position, but denies having expressed any personal or religious opinion on same-sex marriage.

Some council members said they still have concerns about the matter, given the discrepancy between the regent's

statement and the claims made by the mortgage company employee. O'Rourke said the council is free to make a statement at the board meeting, and that individuals, as always, are free to make comments during the public comment portion of Board of Regents meetings.

In other business at the Faculty Council's Aug. 31 meeting:
In an update from Human Resources, the council was told that interest in the tuition waiver benefit has been very high, and credited the pilot program[7] that allows dependents of employees to benefit from discounts at any CU campus, not just the employee's home campus. About 1,200 applications have been received, up from the typical 1,000 at this time of year.

CU leaders urge action by Colorado lawmakers on DACA[8]

CU President Bruce Benson and the four campus chancellors have engaged Colorado's Congressional delegation to urge them to take action to allow DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students to continue to study and work beyond March at the University of Colorado and at universities around the country.

The leadership team on Saturday issued a communication reaffirming support for DACA students; see that message here.[9]

On Tuesday, CU leadership followed with this communication:

September 5, 2017

Dear University of Colorado Students, Faculty, and Staff:

In light of the announcement this morning by U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions to rescind the DACA program through a phased approach by March 2018, we have engaged Colorado's Congressional delegation to urge them to take action to allow DACA students to continue to study and work beyond March at the University of Colorado and at universities around the country. We have offered our assistance to Congress as they address the issue. As we articulated in our communication[9] on Saturday, DACA students are valued and important members of the CU community. They enrich our university, inspire us with their commitment to their education and to their futures, and enhance the diversity that makes CU strong. Ours is the only country many of them have ever known. We are committed to providing the resources necessary to support them. We will continue to stand with our students and work to ensure they can pursue the education that will benefit them and our country, and engage them in a process to allow them to remain here.ou.

Bruce Benson
President, University of Colorado

Philip DiStefano
Chancellor, University of Colorado Boulder

Don Elliman
Chancellor, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

Dorothy Horrell
Chancellor, University of Colorado Denver

Venkat Reddy
Chancellor, University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Nominations for Excellence in Leadership Award due Sept. 27[10]

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 2017 Excellence in Leadership Award. The deadline is Sept. 27.

ELP is a university-wide program 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
The award recipient and the nominator will be recognized at the Excellence in Leadership Luncheon and Lecture on Nov. 3 at the Brown Palace Hotel.

Who is eligible?

ELP graduates who are currently working at the University of Colorado. View the ELP Alumni list.[11]

Deadline– 5 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 27

How and where do I submit a nomination?

Complete the nomination form and email it Erin Russell at erin.russell@cu.edu[12].

Download the nomination form.[13]

Questions?

Contact erin.russell@cu.edu[12] or janet.lowe@cu.edu[14]

Newest Pac-12 ad 'The Moment Before' taps wide range of campus talent[15]

Chancellor, provost promote academic excellence in first town hall[16]

Back to class for former Denver Broncos star[17]

ECHO Colorado receives grant renewal[18]

James DeGregori goes ‘Over the Edge’ for Cancer League of Colorado[19]

Broussard to lead CU Boulder athletic fundraising efforts[20]

Krugman named interim dean of College of Nursing[21]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/collaboration-constant-state-s-premier-research-universities[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/dpost-edu-forum_feat.jpg[3] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-debriefed-challenging-tumpkin-matter[4] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-announce-conclusion-tumpkin-inquiry[5] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-expected-make-statement-legal-matter-involving-regent[6] http://www.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/Public[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/online-application-tuition-benefit-now-open[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-leaders-urge-action-colorado-lawmakers-daca[9] http://www.cu.edu/message-cu-leadership-regarding-daca-program[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/nominations-excellence-leadership-award-due-sept-27[11] https://www.cu.edu/docs/elp-alumni[12] mailto:erin.russell@cu.edu[13] https://www.cu.edu/docs/elp-award-nomination-form/[14] mailto:janet.lowe@cu.edu[15] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/newest-pac-12-ad-moment-taps-wide-range-campus-talent[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/chancellor-provost-promote-academic-excellence-first-town-hall[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/back-class-former-denver-broncos-star[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/echo-colorado-receives-grant-renewal[19] https://connections.cu.edu/people/james-degregori-goes-over-edge-cancer-league-colorado[20] https://connections.cu.edu/people/broussard-lead-cu-boulder-athletic-fundraising-efforts[21] https://connections.cu.edu/people/krugman-named-interim-dean-college-nursing