Research funding for CU scientists reached $790 million last year[1]

Faculty researchers at University of Colorado campuses secured more than $790 million in sponsored research funding in fiscal year 2010-11 to advance scientific work in laboratories and in the field.

Preliminary numbers indicate the university's sponsored research funding for 2010-11 falls below the $884 million final tally in 2009-10. However, one-time federal stimulus dollars of an estimated $145 million allocated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) boosted the total received in the 2009-10 fiscal year.

Sponsored research funding is targeted for scientific projects, and universities cannot divert these dollars to fund non-research related expenses such as utilities, compensation, student financial aid and grounds maintenance. Besides funding specific projects, research dollars help pay for research-related capital improvements, scientific equipment, travel and salaries for research and support staff and student assistantships.

Research provides not only scientific gain, but economic gain. In fiscal year 2010, CU research led to the creation of 83 new businesses. Federal, state and local agencies provide these critically needed funds that support researchers and serve as a barometer of academic and research advancement.

Of the $790 million in sponsored research funding received in fiscal year 2010-2011, more than $542 million came from federal sources; more than $248 million from nonfederal sources.

Funding by campus:

- **University of Colorado Boulder,** nearly $359 million, including:

A National Science Foundation six-year, $5.9 million grant to continue intensive studies of long-term ecological changes in Colorado's high mountains, both natural and human-caused, throughout decades and centuries. A $28 million instrument developed to study changes in the sun's brightness and its impact on Earth's climate. It was one of two primary payloads on NASA's Glory mission launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California on Feb. 23.

- **University of Colorado Colorado Springs,** more than $12 million, including:

A $499,645 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to develop programs that protect students from victimization and build healthy relationships. A $750,000 Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education grant from the U.S. Department of Education to enable a group of southern Colorado colleges and universities to work cooperatively to increase the number of southern Colorado residents who attend college.

- **University of Colorado Denver and Anschutz Medical Campus**, more than $419 million, including:

A U.S. Department of Education grant for $398,834 for the first year of a three-year award, with the potential three-year award total of $1,198,674. The study will determine if differential outcomes for children with autism in the recently completed LEAP – USA efficacy trial continue to manifest themselves during a three-year follow-up period. A $2.77 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Health Care Research and Quality that will allow researchers, health policy experts and clinicians to understand the impact of health care interventions on health outcomes for minority, underserved and socioeconomically disadvantage populations by supporting observational comparative effectiveness research.

Other granting agencies included the U.S. Department of Commerce, Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Energy Department and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Logo earns design association recognition for CU-Boulder Creative Director[2]

[3]

The Office of University Communications on the Boulder Campus was recognized with an award of excellence by the University College Designers Association (UCDA) at its 2011 annual design competition.

Creative Director **Michael Campbell** won the award for a logo he created for the Red Lodge Clearinghouse, a center in the school of law. Out of 1,100 entries submitted nationwide, only 188 awards were given out.

This is the seventh UCDA award for Campbell, who has worked at CU-Boulder for 22 years.

[4]

President to make town hall appearances on campuses beginning this month[5]

University of Colorado President Bruce D. Benson will embark on a series of town hall meetings, speaking to members of all four campuses and system administration this fall.

The format will be similar to the town hall meetings that Benson led last spring, with audiences invited to ask questions.

The schedule:
University of Colorado Colorado Springs
10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 20, University Center, Room 302 **University of Colorado Denver**
3 p.m. Monday, Oct. 24, Lawrence Street Center, 1380 Lawrence St., Second Floor Terrace Room **University of Colorado Boulder**
10 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26, UMC Ballroom **Anschutz Medical Campus**
3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 1, location to be announced **System administration**
8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16, Sherman Street Event Center, East 18th Avenue and Sherman Street, Denver

Responsibilities change among members of UCCS Office of Human Resources[6]

Several changes of responsibilities are under way within the Office of Human Resources at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs. The changes, announced by Cindy Corwin, director, are:
Katie Simmons, compensation specialist, will review positions for exemption and conduct compensation analyses, assist in the hiring of exempt professional positions and meet with exempt professional search committees in addition to assisting in posting faculty vacancies on the JobsatCU website and overseeing required trainings completed by new and existing staff. She replaces Kim Hennessy, who recently accepted a position at Pikes Peak Community College.
Valerie Bivens-Young , general professional, and **Melissa Lucero**, administrative assistant, will be responsible for personnel actions regarding classified staff members until the vacant position is filled. **Susan Watson**, specialist, will review and provide guidance on faculty and exempt offer letters and approve appointments, support Academic Affairs in the RPT process, and supervise students working at the front desk in addition to other duties previously assigned to Bev Goodwin. Goodwin retired from UCCS but has rejoined the office in a temporary role while a search for a new staff member is under way.

CU to be key in selling state's business brand [7]

Ken Lund, director of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, speaks to CU leaders at the system administration offices on Wednesday. Photo by Cathy Beuten

The University of Colorado and other institutions of higher education will play a key role in selling the state of Colorado's brand to global business leaders, says the executive director of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade[9].

Ken Lund spoke Wednesday at the CU system administration offices in Denver, offering a brief summary of the new Colorado Blueprint[10], an economic development plan initiated by Gov. John Hickenlooper. Presented by the Office of Government Relations and the new CU Advocates program, which launches this month, the event was attended by dozens, including President Bruce D. Benson, CU's executive team and campus leaders.

"Part of what we're hoping to achieve is elevating institutions like this one to be part of the brand that sells this state," Lund said. "We're trying to weave together all the assets we have here, because it has got to be about more than just lifestyle."

Lund said Colorado's well-known natural beauty and outdoor recreation offerings obviously help with tourism and inspire people to move here. But more image-building must be done to tell the business world that the state is hospitable to boosting bottom lines.

The state's highly educated work force can be better leveraged in building a stronger, more robust economy, he said, as can the growth in research throughout the CU system.

"I look at what's going on at the Anschutz Medical Campus, and the question is, 'How do we leverage that even more?' Call me greedy."

Lund said there are no "magic bullets" for growing jobs in the state, but that growth is best achieved by focusing on the industries already engaged in business here.

While acknowledging that state funding for higher education is insufficient, Lund said he doesn't expect a tax measure would be passed by voters this year or next. "We need to re-establish the credibility of government," he said.

System Staff Council seeks nominations for employee of year[11]

[12]
Nominations are being sought for the fifth annual President's Employee of the Year Award, which will be presented to one system administration employee in recognition and appreciation of exceptional job performance. The $1,000 award will be presented Nov. 30 to the chosen employee at a recognition reception hosted by System Staff Council.

All system administration classified and professional exempt staff are eligible for the award with a few exceptions: Temporary employees, student workers, university officers, the human resources director and members of the recognition committee (Lori Krug, Tricia Strating and Tracy Miles) are ineligible. Fellow staff, faculty or students who have first-hand knowledge of the nominee's performance may nominate an individual; the nominee's supervisor must provide written approval of the nomination.

A nomination packet must include a letter of endorsement from the nominator as well as two or three other supporting

letters. The submission should not exceed six pages and should be sent electronically to Director of Human Resources Lisa Landis at lisa.landis@cu.edu[13]. Nominations will be accepted through 5 p.m. Sept. 30.

A nomination letter must include the following information:
Performance: Describe the traits that make the nominee personally and professionally successful. How does his/her performance serve as an example to others? How does s/he show accountability and pride in job duties/processes? What does s/he contribute to the daily operation of the unit? **Customer service:**How is the nominee responsive to and supportive of customers and colleagues? In what way does the nominee show respect for colleagues and customers, including those with different opinions, skills and objectives? **Teamwork:**In what way has the nominee acted to bring others together into a cohesive unit, or demonstrated a willingness to take action within a team framework? How is his/her willingness to share time, energy and knowledge for the benefit of the unit or customer demonstrated? **Leadership:** How has the nominee demonstrated leadership? **Excellence:**How is the nominee's willingness to go the extra mile demonstrated? How does s/he contribute to the greater CU community?
The director of human resources and the recognition committee will consider all nominations and make a determination based on the above criteria.

Online bachelor's degree completion now offered[14]

Students can finish University of Colorado Colorado Springs degrees in four high-demand fields by completing the final two years of coursework online beginning this fall.

Students can now complete degrees in business, criminal justice, nursing and allied health without traveling to campus, said Venkat Reddy, executive director of online program development. Throughout the spring and summer, UCCS faculty prepared junior and senior level courses for availability online. More than 300 students are expected to enroll for the fall 2011 semester.

"These courses, which were developed with the same standards for high quality as our on-campus offerings, will help improve access to UCCS," Reddy said. "I believe students from Colorado community colleges, those who are serving in the armed forces, or others who must stay closer to home, will benefit."

A limited number of spaces in nursing and criminal justice programs are available. For more information, visit www.uccs.edu/online[15].

For community college students, the addition of online junior and senior level online undergraduate courses will allow them to complete degrees while remaining in their home communities. For military personnel who began their education at UCCS or one of the state's community colleges, online courses enable them to continue their education even if deployed overseas or transferred to another duty station.

"Ideally, as we look in the future and more students will mix online, on-campus and CISCO-technology assisted courses," Reddy said. "It is important for students to understand that our online courses are developed specifically and with the highest possible standards. A degree that is completed online will have the same degree of rigor and of quality as one completed while attending classes in person."

The degrees are offered by three colleges: the College of Business, the School of Public Administration, and the Beth-El College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Each college is accredited by respective national and international accrediting agencies to ensure that standards for faculty and graduation criteria are upheld. These are the first online undergraduate degrees offered by UCCS. Since 1996, UCCS has offered an online master's degree in business administration with hundreds of graduates from around the globe as alumni. The Beth-El College of Nursing and Health

Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the School of Public Affairs also offer master's degree and graduate certificates online and the Division of Extended Studies offers online courses.

"We are starting with professional degrees that are in high demand," Provost Peg Bacon said. "We anticipate there will be more."

Dropping names … [16]

Romero

Andreanna Romero, executive assistant, University Advancement at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, moved to conference services consultant, University Auxiliaries, effective Aug. 1. … Rennie Harris Puremovement[18] – the hip-hop dance troupe of **Rennie Harris,** artist in residence at the CU-Boulder theater and dance department – will travel on a cultural tour to Egypt, Israel, Palestine and Jordan in spring 2012. DanceMotion USA is a cultural exchange program of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Urban Affairs.

Late professor emeritus to be remembered with plaque[19]

A campus plaque dedication for **Gerald L. Broce**, associate professor emeritus, Department of Anthropology at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, is scheduled for 3 p.m. Sept. 9 on the first floor of Centennial Hall.

Broce died March 15, 2011, at age 68. He was the founding faculty member of the Department of Anthropology at UCCS. He joined the university in 1974 after completing his Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of Colorado Boulder in 1973. He retired from the campus in 2006.

Members of the Broce family – including his wife, Jodie; daughter, Jenna; and son, Jed – will attend the dedication. Refreshments will be provided by the Office of the Chancellor and the Office of the Dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences.

Antisocial predators can wreak havoc on social networking sites[20]

[21]
With more than 750 million active users, Facebook offers plenty of opportunity for personal and professional interaction. But there are bound to be a few bad actors. CU's Office of Information Security offers these tips for avoiding scams that can take place on the social networking site.

Impersonation
Ever since that pesky wolf donned the sheep's clothing, none of us Facebook users can be safe. How are we ever certain that the friend request you got from your old high school sweetheart is really him or her? Facebook scammers rely on the tendency of users to accept requests without verifying who the person really is. There are a couple of reasons why we do this. First, we're lazy. It's a lot of work to follow up on that request – especially since the only way to really verify that request is through out-of-band communications. Second, we don't want to be rude. Just because I don't know exactly who you are doesn't mean I don't want to be your friend (see "social compliance" below). And third, we don't always understand the consequences of accepting fake friend requests – so what's the big deal?

Facebook scammers may have one or more of these possible motives for becoming your "friend." Maybe they are trying to gain your trust so they can send you a plea for money ("Please help! I'm backpacking in Europe and was mugged! Please send me $1,000 so I can get home!") Maybe they're stalking you – do you really want to share your "places" with people you don't really know? The most likely scenario is that they want to send you spam or get you to click on a link to a website that hosts malware. Having access to your friend list is also very enticing to a spammer. Maybe they are trying to steal your identity by getting you to fill out a form online with your personal information. Speaking of phishing…

Phishing
Identity theft equals money to these bad actors. According to Symantec's Global Internet Security Threat Report, the bad guys make up to $30 per credit card number, up to $850 per bank account username and password, and up to $20 per Social Security number (including name and birthdate). If a scammer can get a phishing message out to just 1 percent of Facebook users and if just 1 percent of them fall victim to the scam, that could potentially net him/her $1.5 million for credit card numbers. But how do they get us to give up that information? The scammer may have set up a rogue application or game that you have to pay for or give them access to your information to use.

Clickjacking (likejacking) and social compliance
There are some very convincing campaigns these days to get users to follow links, especially on Facebook . Scammers know how to use our morbid curiosities against us. The latest scam reported on the Sophos nakedsecurity social network blog is an "I lost all respect for Emma Watson when I seen this video! Outrageous!" scam. Posts like that are spreading through social networking sites with juicy enough titles that we just can't resist clicking on them. Besides, don't you really want to know why my good friend has lost all respect for this celeb? Scammers have found another weakness in our personalities – our need to fit in and be "in the know." Instead of watching an outrageous video, you download a virus and the scam is then posted on your wall for all your friends to click on, too. This method of propagation has taken on the term of "clickjacking" or "likejacking" in the IT security community.

Scare tactics
You may have noticed the common thread among these scams is trust. Scammers need your trust in order to get your information. A bad guy may get you to click on a link by impersonating someone you know or getting the trust of one of your friends who will pass the link on to you. Scare tactics are another way that scammers get you to trust them. If you got an email in your inbox that said, "I thought you should know that I saw a naked picture of you on Facebook – here's the link," you would probably be scared enough to clicking on the link.

So what do we do?
Reading this article is a good start. Understanding how scammers are trying to take advantage of you will help you recognize the scam so you can avoid it before it becomes a problem. Also, take care in the information you share and the people you trust when using social networking sites. Here are some "actionable" safety tips for securing your Facebook profile:
Adjust your privacy settings – Facebook provides extensive privacy settings so that you can granularly control the

information you share. Take advantage of the friends lists, too. Being able to group friends will help you separate your personal and work life. To find out more, check out the guide to privacy on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/privacy/explanation.php[22]**Set up secure browsing** – Make sure the eavesdroppers can't get your login information by turning on the "Browse Facebook on a secure connection (https) whenever possible." This setting is available by going to Account -> Account Settings -> Account Security and expanding the options by clicking the "change" link. **Set up login alerts** – Know when your account has been logged into from a computer you don't normally use. This setting is available by going to Account -> Account Settings -> Account Security and expanding the options by clicking the "change" link.

Within human cells, surprising discovery shines light on diseases[23]

A surprising new discovery by the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of California, Davis regarding the division of tiny "power plants" within cells known as mitochondria has implications for better understanding a wide variety of human diseases and conditions due to mitochondrial defects.

Led by CU-Boulder Assistant Professor Gia Voeltz and her team in collaboration with the UC-Davis team led by Professor Jodi Nunnari, the researchers analyzed factors that regulate the behavior of mitochondria, sausage-shaped organelles within cells that contain their own DNA and provide cells with the energy to move and divide. The dynamics of mitochondrion were intimately tied to another cell organelle known as the endoplasmic reticulum, which is a complex network of sacs and tubules that makes proteins and fats.

Voeltz and her colleagues showed that the division of the mitochondria within cells is tied to the point or points where they are physically touching the endoplasmic reticulum in both yeast and mammalian cells.

"This is the first time one cell organelle has been shown to shape another," said Voeltz, of CU's molecular, cellular and developmental biology department.

A paper on the study was published in the Sept. 2 issue of the journal Science. Co-authors on the study included CU-Boulder graduate student Jonathan Friedman, researcher Matthew West and senior Jared DiBenedetto and UC-Davis postdoctoral researcher Laura Lackner.

Enclosed by membranes, mitochondria vary vastly in numbers per individual cells depending on the organism and tissue type, according to the researchers. While some single-cell organisms contain only a single mitochondrion, a human liver cell can contain up to 2,000 mitochondria and take up nearly one-quarter of the cell space.

Because numerous human diseases are associated with mitochondrial dysfunction, it is important to understand how the division process is regulated, Voeltz said. Mitochondrial defects have been linked to a wide range of degenerative conditions and diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease and stroke. "Our studies suggest the possibility that human mitochondrial diseases could result from disruption or excessive contact between the endoplasmic reticulum and the mitochondria."

Previous work, including research in Nunnari's lab at UC-Davis, has shown that mitochondrial division is regulated by a protein known as "dynamine-related protein-1" that assembles into a noose-like ligature that tightens around individual mitochondrion, causing it to divide. The team found that several additional proteins linked to mitochondrial division also were found where the endoplasmic reticulum and mitochondria touched.

"The new function for the endoplasmic reticulum expands and transforms our view of cell organization," said Nunnari, a professor and chair of molecular cell biology at UC-Davis. "It's a paradigm shift in cell biology."

The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Searle Scholar Program and CU-Boulder. CU-Boulder's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program and Bioscience Undergraduate Research Skills and Training program funded the research by DiBenedetto.

Reception set for newcomers to UCCS[24]

Augspurger

Pike

Rogers

Snyder

A welcome reception for four leaders new to the University of Colorado Colorado Springs campus or in new positions is scheduled for 4 p.m. Sept. 21 in Dwire Hall 204, the Haehn Community Room.

Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak invited the campus community to a reception to welcome **Greg Augspurger**, director, Student Success Center; **Robb Pike**, vice president, CU Foundation; **Jevita Rogers**, director, Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment; and **Mary Snyder**, dean, College of Education.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served. To attend, please respond to exec1@uccs.edu[29] by Sept. 16.

Pike, Rogers and Snyder are new to UCCS; Augspurger previously was a member of the staff of the College of Business.

Mini Med School back in session[30]

Mini Med, a free course on science and medicine that began at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and has caught on in more than 100 cities, has returned.

The eight-week course, a community service offered by the University of Colorado School of Medicine, involves no tests, fees or credit hours. Those who attend regularly receive an unofficial “diploma.” Thousands of Coloradans have gone through the course.

Who attends Mini Med? Youngsters, grandparents, Aurora school kids, anyone with curiosity about the science that is the basis of modern medicine. It’s fascinating and sometimes practical. One woman learned the symptoms of a heart attack, then recognized them in a relative and likely saved his life.

Lectures offered by medical school faculty and other experts include anatomy and physiology, cell biology,

microbiology, immunology, pharmacology and cancer biology. Classes start at 7 p.m. with an hourlong lecture, followed by roughly a half-hour of questions and answers. Participants receive a book of lecture notes. Mini Med teachers make complex material understandable, but not “dumbed down.”

The originator of Mini Med, J. John Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., a CU medical school professor, recently received the 2010 Award for Public Understanding of Science and Technology, given by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS[31]).

Mini Med School began Wednesday and continues weekly through Oct. 26 (except Sept. 28) on the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora. It’s fed by satellite to the CU campuses in Boulder and Colorado Springs and other sites around the state. More information and registration information is available at http://medschool.ucdenver.edu/minimed/[32]

Panelists: Colorado will feel more pain from federal debt[33]

At the “First Friday” in this year’s Buechner Breakfast series, School of Public Affairs Dean Paul Teske moderated the Sept. 2 discussion, ""Federal Debt in the Future and Colorado’s Consequences.”

With United States unemployment at 9 percent and the presidential campaigns ramping up, Americans are getting “a lot of different messages on what’s happening,” said Andy Merritt, district director for U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman. He also pointed out, “Election years are a loss as it relates to policy.” Merritt added that he doesn’t expect to see any major policy-making until next year with possible acceleration around the end of this year.

Questioned by Teske about the potential impacts for Colorado, Merritt said, “Colorado has a lot of government-funded research and contracts. A lot of this defense funding could go away.”

Panelist Henry Dubroff, Denver Post opinion writer and entrepreneur, referenced Winston Churchill: “‘You can count on the Americans to do the right thing when they’ve exhausted all other alternatives,’” Dubroff said. “I think we’re out of alternatives.”

Dubroff also said the future of Medicaid is in serious jeopardy without some policy changes. “I do think we’re headed to entitlement reform.”

Lauren Larson, former chief of the treasury branch at the Office of Management and Budget and senior adviser at the IRS said, “We need to look at all of our programs side-by-side to determine the best actions.”

She pointed to the attention focused on President Obama’s planned announcement tonight, because “it sounds like he is coming up with a jobs plan to boost our confidence in the economy.”

“Ballot Issues and Education Fixes in Colorado” is the topic of the next Buechner Breakfast on Oct. 7. The series is named for John Buechner, School of Public Affairs faculty member who also has served as University of Colorado president and University of Colorado Denver chancellor.

Five questions for Kat Vlahos[34]

Vlahos

As a licensed, practicing architect, Kat Vlahos worked on both coasts for a number of years before she decided it was time to come home to her native Colorado. When she returned, she was taken aback by what she saw: an accelerated rate of building without a lot of good decision-making.

“I saw something precious to my heart – the landscape – disappearing, and that was the impetus for me. When I came to the university in 1995, it was because I thought I truly could make a difference,” she says.

Many of the new developments she saw were identical to those she’d seen in parts of the East Coast or even in California. They were missing a sense of place, a concept that always has played a crucial role in her thinking and her design process: understanding an area’s history, evolution, the topography, the climate and the people and how all the components come together. She had earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental design from the University of Colorado Boulder and a master’s in architecture from the University of Colorado Denver; upon her return, she taught a studio and eventually went through the tenure process. She’s now an associate professor at CU Denver in the College of Architecture and Planning and the director of the Center of Preservation Research.

Her research includes vernacular ranch architecture (those structures built without benefit of an architect) and cultural landscapes, which, she says, she finds beautiful and important.

“The everyday, ordinary places have the most to teach us,” she says. “They’re the places that a majority of the population lives in. There’s something pretty incredible about someone going out on the landscape and choosing their spot and building their little cabin. It took a lot of courage to attempt this type of settlement.”

One of her greatest pleasures is driving to rural landscapes, often accompanied by her 8-year-old twin boys, meeting people and watching her sons run and play in the environment she loves.

1. The center works to “preserve the past and examine the present to prepare for the future.” What are some examples of the work you’ve done?

[36]

The center has a wide range of faculty involved from several disciplines and colleges. They’re all involved in various aspects of preservation, from the micro level – someone who’s more interested in artifacts – to the larger culture landscapes and interactions between humans and the land. While we are heavily involved regionally, we have a national side and some of faculty work internationally as well.

We’ve come together to push the idea of documentation as something that can be used for informed decision-making, then we go into analysis, representing it, and using it as a tool toward conservation and preservation. We work with government agencies at the local, state and federal levels, and with local conservation groups.

For me, one of the best things we’ve done is work with actual ranching communities that want to sustain a way of life. I’m really proud of our work with Historic Routt County, a nonprofit organization in the Steamboat Springs region. They were a progressive group when we started working with them 10 years ago. We found a way to create a record through writing, drawing and photography so they could use it as a tool to pursue other preservation possibilities. More than 100 ranches have been surveyed and documented, and another community in the southeast part of the state is using the model.

We’ve also worked with the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management in the Four Corners area, scanning and documenting ancient Anasazi ruins. We used high-tech scanning to make a record of what exists there

because, at some point, the ruins will return to the Earth since there's no plan to stabilize them. We created records that can be used in the future for interpretive or research purposes.

I'm also proud of our work with a number of ranches around the state, including the Buffalo Peaks Ranch and the Hayden Ranch, both owned by the city of Aurora. These sites no longer are involved in traditional ranching and need to evolve into something new, so we worked closely with owners and potential inhabitants to help them discover that evolution. I think the best way to conserve or preserve a place is to continuously use it.

2. Your own research focuses on historic ranches. What motivated you to focus on this area and why is preservation important?

Kat Vlahos has led students on explorations across the state, including this family ranch on the eastern plains.

When I came back to Colorado, what I saw disappearing was the agricultural lands. I come from an agricultural background, and though I left it early in my life, it's a lifestyle my family has stayed connected to. My cousins continue to ranch; my father was a sheep man who always taught us that our health is directly connected to the health of the land.

I was also concerned by a loss of our heritage in this region. The development seemed insensitive to this region, and I thought a lot of these historic sites understood what needed to happen. I thought if I could analyze some of these old ranch sites, I might learn something about the efficiency and sustainability of materials, of the resources, of the space, even the simplest ideas such as the orientation toward the sun and the wind. These are the very basic concepts that are lost. I thought I could reveal some things about how we should design for this region.

On the most basic level, the American Farmland Trust has a great saying: no farms, no food. I think that a decade ago, a number of my students had never been on a rural site. I could take them to the most basic places, where everything was stripped away and they saw these multi-generational families working the site and really loving what they were doing. There's something incredible about exposing my students to these places. They learned a lot from talking to people who live close to the land, and also the whole notion of developing sustainable practices, which now, thank goodness, has come to the forefront of our awareness.

These people are stewards of the land. The buildings teach us basic ways about thinking about our built environment – the materials, the resources, the interaction of buildings and land, and the culture and traditions and values of the people. Preservation is important because all of these speak to what makes this American West an interesting place.

3. What would you consider one of the center's crowning achievements to date?

Through the support of our dean we were able to acquire some high-tech LIDAR laser scanners. One of the biggest challenges for me has been the scale of these landscapes. The high-tech equipment has put us on the cutting edge and given us another tool to be able to get out into the fields and create an incredibly accurate record of the place.

4. What kinds of criteria do you use to determine the projects the center will take on?

We are doing applied research, so you have to be careful when you're involved in the field that you don't become a tool for people to use. We are heavily connected to research and are committed to making better places by looking at information that can guide that process. Typically, communities or agencies will approach us and, as a group, we'll discuss if the project provides an educational component for our grad students and what it brings to faculty research. And we look at the benefits to the public and the university.

There's also a grassroots approach. Ranches happen to be my passion, so I'll push them as a project. Another faculty member is interested in Civilian Conservation Corps projects. The center tries to provide a supportive environment for faculty to explore their interests and educate students and to give something back to the community.

5. Are you still designing?

I design through my students now. The university system has a one-sixth rule that says faculty are required to restrict outside work and consulting to one-sixth of their time. But the work I do is very time- and energy-consuming, and having an outside practice would take away from that. I couldn't serve both well. I have found a way to practice with my students: All the projects we work on use real places and real people trying to resolve and solve real problems. You want to be able to integrate your life into the work you are doing. For me personally, the center and the college, and my ranches and my kids all have somehow become woven together. That works for me in a way that brings me a lot of joy.

Anthropology honors for CU-Boulder associate professor[38]

Michelle Sauther, an associate professor at CU-Boulder, and Frank Cuozzo of the University of North Dakota recently won the award for best poster presentation at the 15th International Symposium on Dental Morphology in Newcastle Upon Tyne, U.K.

This triennial conference, held since 1965, brought together anthropologists, paleontologists and other dental researchers from 17 countries.

Their poster, titled "Toothcomb function and use in wild ring-tailed lemurs: Implications for the evolution of the prosimian toothcomb," was based on their long-term research in Madagascar. It explored the impacts that wear and damage to this unique primate trait have on lemur health and biology. The award included a prize of 200 British Pounds.

Click here[39] for more on Sauther's research.

Links
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