

CU research: life changing and record setting

We announced earlier today that CU faculty researchers across our four campuses secured a record \$1.2 billion in research funding for 2018-19, surpassing the previous record of \$1.053 billion. The success is due to the high quality of CU's faculty, the staff who support them and the students who work with them.

It's also indicative of the value of a research university. We address some of society's most pressing problems, ranging from health care to climate change to cybersecurity, and thousands of issues in between. We advance knowledge along a continuum that began centuries before us and will continue for centuries. And we give our undergraduate and graduate students opportunities to learn that only come through hands-on research.

Combined, the research output of our four campuses places CU among the top 10 public research universities in the country.

The \$1 billion-plus also has ripples throughout Colorado's economy in terms of jobs, materials, buildings and ancillary businesses. More than three-quarters of the research funding comes from federal agencies such as NASA, the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, so our researchers are attracting money to Colorado.

While research funding covers a portion of faculty salaries and the labs they use, there is one notable thing it doesn't do – it doesn't allow us to shift funding to other areas of need such as tuition or operations (except within the narrow confines of the research project). Much like donors who designate their contributions for a specific scholarship, building or project, research funding agencies earmark money for specific projects.

Still, research has a profound impact on our university, state and world. There are thousands of research projects across CU, but I want to pluck out one example that illustrates the kind of work we do. At our most recent Board of Regents meeting on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, we were provided a tour of the CellSight Ocular Stem Cell and Regeneration program in the Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Eye Center.

Physicians and researchers from the School of Medicine's Department of Ophthalmology, led by Dr. Valeria Canto-Soler (the Doni Solich Family Chair), are developing novel stem cell-based therapeutics to save or restore sight in patients suffering from blinding diseases such as macular degeneration. We saw how they used a person's stem cells to generate human retinal cells in a petri dish.

Their work is remarkable and inspiring. With the goal of restoring sight or saving sight, it has the potential to impact millions. It also illustrates another hallmark of CU researchers – collaboration. The CellSight program brings together cross-disciplinary teams, each with a particular area of expertise, to work together to take the innovative treatments from the research lab to a patient's bedside.

It's awe-inspiring to learn about some of the great research work across CU. It ranges from the far reaches of space to remote wind-swept glaciers, from renewable energy to planning better communities across Colorado.

I'm proud of the work of everybody involved in our research enterprise. They are changing the world, one project at a time.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Kennedy President

For feedback, contact officeofthepresident@cu.edu