

Guest Commentary

CU visiting Fort Morgan on Tuesday

Representatives of the University of Colorado will visit Fort Morgan on Tuesday to welcome areas students who will study at one of our four campuses in the fall. I am pleased to be able to join the group as my first official outreach activity since becoming CU's new president on July 1.

Meeting the needs of the state is a critical part of what we do at CU. The most obvious area where that manifests itself is educating students and preparing them to be productive members of society and the workforce. The CU Celebration on Tuesday allows us to shine a spotlight on area students who will study at CU.

Some of them have participated in a program we extended to Morgan County a couple of years ago, CU's Pre-Collegiate program. It engages students as early as middle school, but particularly in high school, to show them what's possible in higher education and to help them get there and succeed. It provides insight into college applications, readi-



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ness and success. We're happy if they attend a CU campus, but we're just as happy if they make their way to any college or university.

Over the past couple of summers, more than 60 students from area high schools successfully completed a residential pre-collegiate program on CU's Boulder campus and we are looking to grow the program.

As Colorado's leading public research university, we also have a strong focus on meeting the needs of communities large and small, and in extending CU's expertise to every corner of Colorado. The CU for Colorado website details nearly 300 community outreach programs that are addressing those imperatives. The programs address issues that matter to people in eastern Colorado and beyond in areas ranging from health care to energy, from

water quality to K-12 education.

Every community has needs related to health care. Physicians from the CU School of Medicine and other health care workers from the CU Anschutz Medical Campus are active in community hospitals and health care clinics. There are more than 500 clinical sites around Colorado, including several in the Fort Morgan area, where doctors and health-care workers provide much-needed services.

The Area Health Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) is a statewide network (including a site in Greeley), that partners with CU's schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy, as well as the Physical Therapy and Physician Assistant programs, to address health care and health workforce needs. They provide services and education programs in partnership with CU and other agencies and organizations.

CU has a strong focus on serving K-12 schools, whether through resources available to

teachers or programs that visit schools to address particular topics. CU received funding from the Colorado Legislature two years ago to help foster "grow your own" programs for teachers in rural schools. We also provide direct support through a variety of programs. For instance, students and faculty from the CU Law School have a program that teaches about the Constitution. The Colorado Shakespeare Festival in the Schools troupe at CU Boulder performs at schools across Colorado throughout the school year, using Shakespeare as a tool for understanding issues such as bullying.

I'm excited to welcome students from the Fort Morgan area to CU. And I'm also looking forward to listening to people in your community to learn about your needs, as well as what you think about how we're doing and how we can do better.

Mark Kennedy is president of the University of Colorado.