

Dear Alumni and Friends,

I have long believed that life is a game of addition, not subtraction. And when that addition involves interacting with or surrounding yourself with people with different views, different backgrounds, different experiences, all the better.

Diversity is often viewed narrowly through a lens of race and ethnicity. While those are part of it, they are by no means all of it. Diversity to me is the sum of a variety of things – a person’s demographic characteristics, life and work experiences, viewpoints and interactions, among others. And what I have seen over and over – in my own upbringing, my educational experiences and my careers in business, government and academia – is that it is not only imperative to respect the dignity of each individual, but to recognize that diversity is a powerful asset, both personally and professionally.

The Wall Street Journal, in its article [“The business case for more diversity,”](#) noted that a diverse and inclusive culture in business provides a competitive edge. It leads to better products, more innovation, fresh ideas and a stronger bottom line.

My own experiences echo that. Homogeneous groups tend toward homogeneous ideas and strategies. Diverse groups challenge, question and view problems from different angles. They arrive at better outcomes.

Embracing diversity is the right thing. It's an important aspect of everything we do at the University of Colorado. We strive to foster a learning, living and work environment that mirrors the society we serve and makes all feel safe and included. We also know that infusing diversity throughout our activities enriches the learning experience and makes our graduates better prepared to succeed in life.

That's one of the reasons we recently elevated our strategic plan's diversity working group to be the plan's fourth pillar. Our original thinking was that diversity must be part and parcel of each of the areas we identified as focuses of planning. It needs to be. But after broad input from the university community, we agreed that it also is appropriately recognized as a pillar.

Anything judged important should be measured. Our diversity engagement survey in the field now with students, faculty and staff across our four campuses will guide our action. It will give us insight into the climate and culture on our campuses, and identify areas where we can improve.

Incidents, such as the recent racist incident on our Boulder campus, remind us that there is always work to be done in this area, and that diversity must be a constant focus. It is important for all of us to build on the work of generations before us to embrace diversity and to achieve a more inclusive environment.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Mark Kennedy President

For feedback, contact officeofthepresident@cu.edu



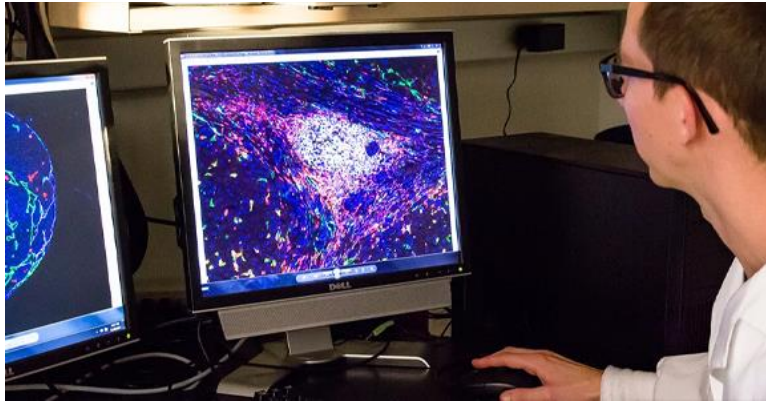
Share



Tweet

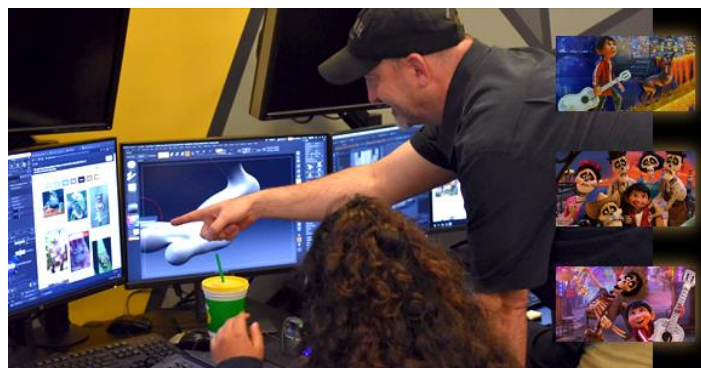


Forward



University of Colorado Anschutz, Boulder campuses to expand research collaboration

The University of Colorado Boulder and the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus are moving forward on a bold plan to enhance research collaborations, with the aim of generating knowledge that improves human health and spurs innovation and economic development.



3D Graphics and Animation program builds industry leaders

Two years ago, Paul Conner took a group of his 3D Graphics and Animation students to see *Coco*, Pixar Animation Studio's award-winning fantasy film. At the end of the movie his eyes

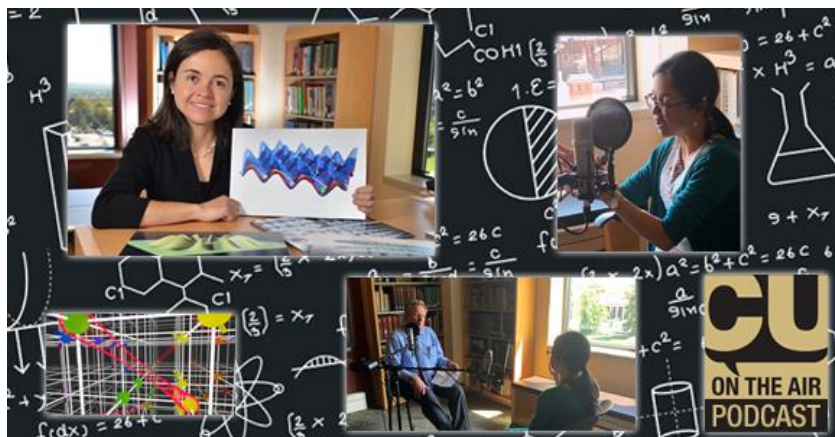
welled with tears. “Four of my students were in the credits,” said Conner, an instructor of visual arts in CU Denver’s College of Arts & Media.



Strategic Planning Update

We are making great progress on our systemwide strategic plan, *Leaning Into the Future*. We have selected working groups from across CU’s four campuses to address nine strategic areas of focus (ranging from graduation rates to deferred maintenance and sustainability). The areas of focus are under the four pillars of the plan: access, affordability and student success; discovery and impact; fiscal strength; and diversity, inclusion, equity and access. The latter, as noted in the introductory message above, was elevated after discussions with university stakeholders.

You can follow the plan’s progress and contact working groups on our [website](#). Working groups will continue their efforts through the end of the semester and into spring semester. You can see a timeline on the website as well. We expect the work on the plan will continue through the end of the semester as working groups develop outcome goals, metrics and action steps. We intend to present the finished plan to the Board of Regents at its 2020 summer retreat in July.



Atomic research opens doors to quantum systems and new realities

CU Boulder Professor Ana Maria Rey, a theoretical physicist and fellow at JILA, discusses new techniques for controlling quantum systems, and using them in applications ranging from quantum simulations/information to time and frequency standards. Rey's team explores how that research creates a better understanding of science . . . and reality.

CU BOULDER

CU Boulder research to focus on often-overlooked rural America

Goal is to develop understanding of characteristics and patterns of change in small rural places.

CU COLORADO SPRINGS

School of Public Affairs students win big at first American Criminal Justice Association competition

Students in the extracurricular organization netted seven awards at their first regional competition.

CU DENVER

From success to significance

In her final State of the Campus Address, Chancellor Dorothy Horrell outlined why CU Denver is poised to move from success to significance.

CU ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Cancer warrior pens devotional to grit, hope and cutting-edge care

Author Bonnie Doran's treatment at the CU Cancer Center comes at the 'right place, right time.'