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Briefs [1]

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Lt. Governor Diane Primavera Meets with CU Students and Campus Experts

Lt. Governor Diane Primavera met with students and campus experts across the CU System in the fall. As part of her virtual healthcare listening tour in September, Lt. Governor Primavera met with members from the Center for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention [3] for a presentation and discussion around behavioral health. The Lt. Governor also met with members from CU Denver student government and student leaders from other higher education institutions in Colorado. This discussion focused on mental health issues for students, and other topics affecting higher education.

In October, Lt. Governor Primavera virtually met with the UCCS College of Engineering and Applied Science (EAS [4]). CU President Todd Saliman and UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy joined EAS Dean Don Rabern and aerospace industry partners as they discussed how UCCS works in collaboration with the aerospace industry to meet workforce needs by partnering on research, student project teams, internships, jobs, and employer-student engagement. These collaborations increase the skills of students and create graduates with real-world experience for highly technical jobs in aerospace.

Industry representatives from Kratos, Lockheed Martin, MITRE Corporation and Northrop Grumman participated in the conversation which also focused on university to industry partnerships, government partnerships, infrastructure and new degree and capability growth at UCCS.

CU Hosts Colorado Congressional Delegation and Staff for Campus Visits

CU Federal Relations arranged several educational tours for D.C.-based congressional staff including the following:

- Staff from Sen. John Hickenlooper's office met with leadership from the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement [5] , Colorado Area Health Education Center (COAHEC [6]), and Extension for Community Health Outcomes (ECHO [7]) in July at the CU Anschutz Medical campus.
- Staff from Rep. Joe Neguse's office met with researchers from JILA [8] and the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research (INSTAAR [9]) at CU Boulder during the August recess.
- Staff from Rep. Jason Crow's office met with researchers from the Bates Laboratory [10] and Center for Advancing Professional Excellence [11] at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus during the August recess.
- Staff from Rep. Ken Buck's office attended a Rural Health Roundtable at the CU Anschutz Medical Campus and toured the Cooperative Institute in Environmental Sciences (CIRES [12]) at CU Boulder. They also met with leadership from the Center for National Security Initiatives

[13], Colorado Space Grant Consortium [14], and the Mortenson Center on Global Engineering [15] at CU Boulder during the August recess.
- In November, science staffers from the offices of Sens. Michael Bennet and Hickenlooper, and Reps. Neguse and Ed Perlmutter toured the Smead Department of Aerospace Engineering Sciences [16] and the laboratories dedicated to all aspects of aerospace.

State Legislators attend Buffalo Belles Luncheon

Senators Kevin Priola (R-Adams) and Barbara Kirkmeyer (R-Brighton), and Representatives Judy Amabile (D-Boulder) and Kyle Mullica (D-Northglenn) were recognized at the November 3rd Buffalo Belles Luncheon at CU Boulder.



Representative Kyle Mullica, Representative Judy Amabile, CU Men's Basketball Coach Tad Boyle, CU's Jerry Johnson, Senator Barbara Kirkmeyer, Senator Kevin Priola, CU's Heather Retzko

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CU Boulder CIRES Director Joins Senators Bennet and Romney for Rafting Trip

Cooperative Institute in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) Director Waleed Abdalati joined Sens. Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Mitt Romney (R-UT) for a rafting trip of the Colorado River, during which the group discussed efforts to improve climate resiliency in the Rocky Mountain region and across the U.S. The group was joined by environmentalists, ranchers, business leaders, policy experts, and a Tribal chairman from across Colorado and Utah to convene a

discussion on how best to move forward in the threat of water shortages in the West and in the face of the growing effects of climate change. During the September 18 discussion, Dr. Abdalati provided insight into what scientists already know about the changing Western climate and forecasted what is to come, including increased heat indexes as well as increased rates of drought and wildfires. More about the meeting can be read here [17].

American Heart Association's STEM Goes Red Event at CU Boulder

High school students from the Northgleen area attended the American Heart Association's STEM Goes Red [18] local event hosted by CU Boulder on September 24. The day was dedicated to encouraging students to pursue careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields, particularly female and BIPOC students. Dr. Angie Paccione, Director of the Colorado Department for Higher Education, was the emcee and moderator for the event. Students heard from women in STEM fields across various career pathways, such as engineering and healthcare. Regent Leslie Smith participated on a panel about STEM careers to discuss her professional background.

The keynote speaker for the event was *TIME*'s 2020 Kid of the Year [19], Gitanjali Rao, from Lonetree, Colorado. Regent Ilana Spiegel introduced Rao before her keynote speech.



Regent Ilana Spiegel and Regent Lesley Smith at the STEM Goes Red Event at CU Boulder

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Dr. Angie Paccione and Regent Lesley Smith pose with attendees at the STEM Goes Red Event at CU Boulder

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Dr. Angie Paccione and TIME 2020 Kid of the Year, Gitanjali Rao at the STEM Goes Red Event at CU Boulder

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CU Anschutz Medical Campus Submits Comments on Cures 2.0 Bill

CU Anschutz Medical Campus submitted comments to the offices of Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Fred Upton (R-MI) on the discussion draft for the Cures 2.0 bill [20] released in November 2021, which builds on the 21st Century Cures Act [21]. In the July 16 comments [22], CU expressed gratitude that the *RISE Act of 2021* (H.R. 869 [23]) is included in the bill, provided certain funding proposals so that the budget for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) would not be tied to the general National Institutes of Health budget, and emphasized the importance of Messenger RNA (mRNA) as a viable treatment method for numerous prevalent diseases in the U.S., including cancer and heart disease. The comments also encouraged supporting tools that will allow artificial intelligence and machine learning to revolutionize clinical research using real-world data, such as the National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C [24]), the largest clinical data repository in the U.S. which was created during the COVID-19 pandemic, when NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) collaborated with more than 90 health systems across the country to collect standardized electronic health record (EHR) data in a single, secure, HIPAA-

compliant database.

CU Urges Congress to Support Research in Reconciliation Negotiations

CU President Todd Saliman, CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano, CU Anschutz Medical Campus Chancellor Don Elliman, CU Denver Chancellor Michelle Marks, and UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy signed a letter [25] on August 4 urging members of the Colorado congressional delegation to support the inclusion of research infrastructure and other key priorities in the latest budget reconciliation bill. Federal support for research infrastructure, originally included in the bipartisan Senate infrastructure package, was eliminated after concerns from some Senate Republicans about the cost and size of the package, leaving the latest budget reconciliation bill as the primary vehicle through which Congress can deliver investments in research and research facilities. The letter also called for members to double the Pell Grant maximum award to $13,000, invest in research and scientific infrastructure programs to support laboratories and other scientific facilities, and invest in upgrades and updates to higher education facilities.

CU Signs Amicus Brief in Support of OPT Program

The Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration and NAFSA: Association of International Educators filed an amicus brief in support of Optional Practical Training (OPT) program in the case *Washington Alliance of Technology Workers v. Department Of Homeland Security et al*. CU joined more than 150 higher education institutions in signing the amicus brief [26] on June 21, 2021.

OPT is a program that allows undergraduate and graduate students with F-1 immigration status, who have completed or are pursuing their education, to work in the U.S. for one year while on a student visa to complement their education. The case, which is ongoing before the D.C. Court of Appeals, centers on the legality of the OPT and STEM OPT programs, with the plaintiffs seeking to end the programs. The higher education community, however, maintains the great importance of the OPT and STEM OPT programs both in providing international students with supplemental training and experiential learning and in recruiting international student talent at U.S. colleges and universities. More about the case and the amicus brief can be read here [27].

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