Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

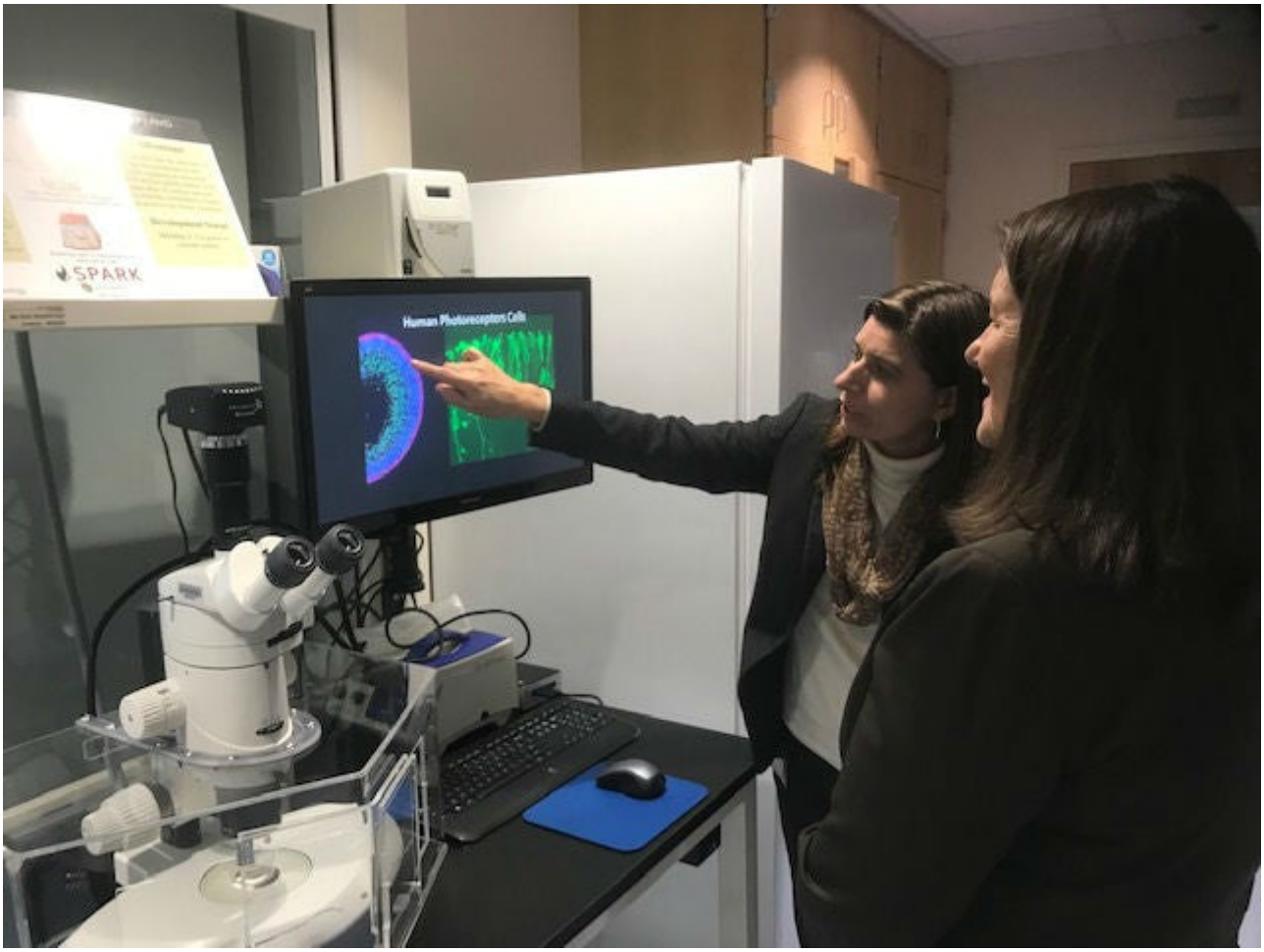
Congresswoman DeGette Tours Labs at CU Anschutz Medical Campus [1]

February 6, 2020 by Natalie Barry [2]

Last October, Congresswoman Diana DeGette visited the CU Anschutz Medical Campus to speak to young scientists about the impact they can have on public policy at the first CU Anschutz Science Policy Summit [3]. The summit was attended by postdocs and graduates from research institutions across Colorado and was organized by Project Bridge [4]. The Congresswoman gave examples from her own congressional career of how she worked with scientists to inform better public policy, such as her successful advocacy to overturn a ban on the use of some stem cell lines in research, her passage of the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255 [5]), and her current work investigating the health hazards of vaping.

The Congresswoman returned to campus in November to meet with faculty members and see some of the cutting edge research taking place in their labs. DeGette was welcomed to campus by Vice Chancellor for the Office of Health Affairs and Dean of the School of Medicine, John J. Reilly, Jr., MD.

The tour began at the Gates Biomanufacturing Facility [6], where DeGette heard about exciting progress in developing new cell and gene therapies at CU Anschutz, including CAR-T immunotherapy treatments and work by Gates Center for Regenerative Medicine [7] Director Dennis Roop, PhD., on developing a treatment for the deadly skin disease, Epidermolysis Bullosa. The group was joined by Diane Gates Wallach, Co-chair of the Gates Center Advisory Board. The tour continued at CellSight [8], an ocular stem cell and regeneration research program housed in the Department of Ophthalmology at the School of Medicine [9]. DeGette was given an overview of the program's efforts to develop innovative stem cell-based technologies to both prevent and cure age-related macular degeneration (AMD) by the program's director, Val Canto-Soler, PhD. The tour ended at the Bates Laboratory [10], where the Congresswoman learned about how Emily Bates, PhD., uses genetics to determine the molecular mechanisms of pediatric disorders. Dr. Bates and her team also discussed their research on the health impacts of vaping and discussed some of the barriers to more research on this important issue.



Congresswoman Diana DeGette speaks with Valeria Canto-Soler, PhD at CellSight

Office of Government Relations



Congresswoman Diana DeGette with Emily Bates, PhD, Assistant Professor and Yunus Ozekin, PhD Graduate Student

Emily Bates Laboratory



Congresswoman Diana DeGette (center) stands with Project Bridge founder Erin Golden (left) and president Lisbet Finseth.

Jessica Ponder

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