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CU Federal Relations Update - 5.15.24 [1]

May 15, 2024 by Riley Black [2]

As part of the relaunched federal update, we wanted to provide some updates about recent visits to CU campuses from federal officials and from CU leadership, faculty, and students to our nation's capital.

Last month, we welcomed Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO) to events on our campuses. On April 8, CU Denver's School of Public Affairs (SPA) hosted [3] Rep. Crow, where he participated in a fireside chat with Dean Paul Teske and spoke about the state of democracy and his time in Congress. On April 24, Rep. DeGette toured [4] the Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research and learned about campus efforts to advance women's health.



Lab manager Rebecca Baldermann, Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO), Professor Kerrie Moreau and Ludeman Center Director Judy Regensteiner tour the Core Lab of the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CCTSI)

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We welcomed several heads of research to DC this year. During the week of March 4th, Massimo Ruzzene, Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation at CU Boulder, met with Colorado congressional staff as well as staff from the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the National Science Foundation. Ruzzene highlighted CU's participation in the NSF-funded CO-Wyoming Climate Resilience Engine [5], expressed support for reauthorizing the National Quantum Initiative [6], and urged robust funding for research agencies, including NSF and NASA, while on Capitol Hill. Ruzzene was joined by RIO Workforce Innovation Director Chris Gustavson to discuss innovative campus workforce development initiatives. Read more about the visit at the CU Boulder Research and Innovation Office's newsroom [7].



CU Boulder Vice Chancellor for Research Massimo Ruzzene and Workforce Innovation Director Chris Gustavson at the U.S. Capitol

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During the week of April 22, Phillip DeLeon, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research at CU Denver, along with Martin Dunn, Dean of the College or Engineering, Design and Computing, and Laura Argys, Associate Dean for Research and Creative Activities, traveled to DC and met with staff at the Department of Transportation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

CU's medical community was also well-represented in DC, with visitors including Jenn Leiferman, PhD, Director of the Rocky Mountain Prevention Center at the Colorado School of Public Health; Representatives from the Center for Health, Work, and Environment at the Colorado School of Public; Vik Bebarta, MD, Director of the Center for COMBAT Research at CU Anschutz; Casey Green, PhD, Chair of the Bioinformatics Department at CU Anschutz; and Cathy Bradley, PhD, Dean of the Colorado School of Public Health. CU School of Medicine faculty members Dara Aisner, MD, and Paul Christine, MD, PhD delivered congressional testimonies as well.

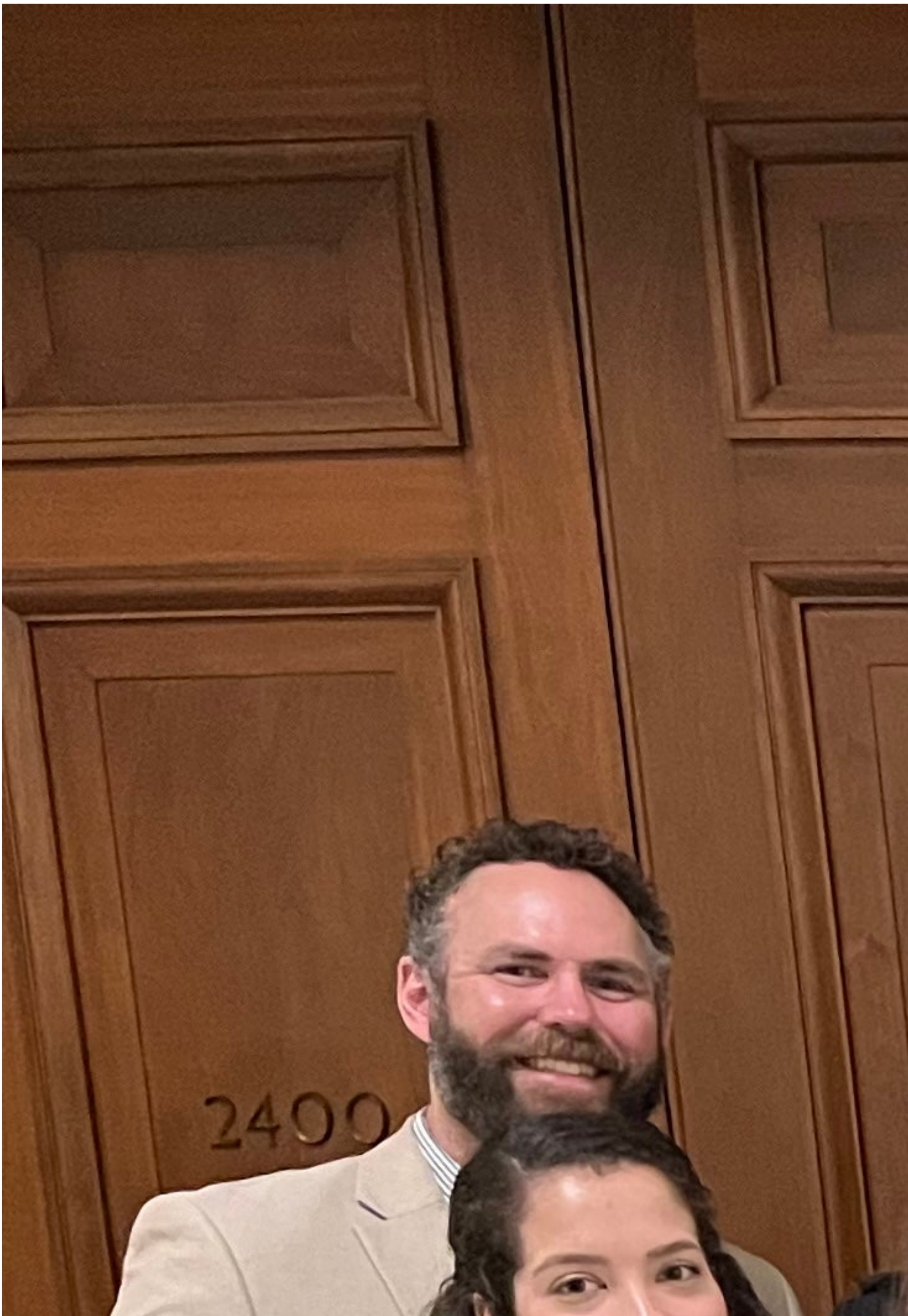
CU Boulder had a strong presence in DC this spring with a series of visits from campus leaders including Keith Molenaar, Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Science; Scott Adler, Dean of the Graduate School; Waleed Abdalati, Director of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences; Dan Baker, Director of the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics; Shelley Knuth, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Computing; Scott Sternberg, Director of the CUbit Quantum Initiative; Mike Gooseff, Associate Dean for Research in the College of Engineering and Applied Science; and Barbra Sobhani, Director of the Colorado Space Grant Consortium. Other CU Boulder scientists and educators representing the campus in DC this spring include Nancy Stevens and Samantha Eads, CU Museum of Natural History; Kate Tallman, University Libraries; James Rattling Leaf, Sr., North Central Climate Adaptation Science Center; Pam Buckley, Institute of Behavioral Science; Alexandra Arlotta, Office of Financial Aid; and Stacey Forsyth, CU Science Discovery. In addition, Heather Lewandowski and PhD student Qizhong Liang represented CU Boulder and JILA, the university's joint research institute with NIST, at an NSF Quantum Showcase on Capitol Hill headlined by the NSF director. Read more about that visit at the JILA newsroom [8].

The federal relations team also supported CU Boulder student engagement in our nation's capital, including the first-ever Smead Scholars "fly-in" and PhD student Georgia Butcher's participation in American Association for the Advancement of Science's Catalyzing Advocacy in Science and Engineering [9] workshop, which culminates in a day of congressional meetings. Thanks to the incredible leaders, scientists, educators, and students who took part in these visits and educated policymakers about CU Boulder initiatives and priorities.



CU Boulder PhD Student Georgia Butcher at the U.S. Capitol

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CU Boulder Smead Engineering Scholars at the office of Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO)

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NIH Increasing NRSA Pay Levels for Pre- and Postdoctoral Scholars
The National Institute of Health is increasing the pay level for pre- and postdoctoral scholars who are recipients of the Dr. Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards [10] (NRSA). Predoctoral scholars will receive an approximate 4% increase- equaling $28,224 yearly, and postdoctoral scholars will receive an approximate 8% increase- equaling $61,008 starting pay annually. More information on the NRSA increase can be found on the NIH website [11].

Department of Education Releases Letter Reminding Schools of Title VI Obligations
On May 7, the Department of Education released a “Dear Colleague” letter reminding schools of their legal obligation to address discrimination based on shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The letter contains information about the analyses that the Department uses to determine whether discrimination exists and examples of conduct that raises concerns under Title VI. More information on the letter can be found at this Department of Education press release [12].

House Passes Bill Expanding Definition of Antisemitism Under Anti-Discrimination Laws
On May 1, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill by a vote of 320-91 that broadened the Department of Education’s definition of antisemitism when enforcing anti-discrimination laws. Seventy Democrats and 21 Republicans voted against the bill, including Colorado Reps. DeGette and Boebert. The bill requires the Department to consider the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism when investigating discrimination under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. More about the bill can be read in *AP News* [13].

CU Center for COMBAT Research and U.S. Air Force Academy Form Educational Partnership
CU Anschutz’s Center for COMBAT Research and the U.S. Air Force Academy signed an educational partnership agreement on April 23 to facilitate academic collaboration and the creation of joint training programs and seminars. More information on the partnership can be found in the CU Anschutz newsroom [14].

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[4] https://x.com/RepDianaDeGette/status/1783270296163676423 [5] https://www.co-wyengine.org/
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[8] https://jila.colorado.edu/news-events/news/jila-participates-inaugural-nsf-quantum-showcase-capitol-hill
[9] https://www.aaas.org/programs/catalyzing-advocacy-in-science-and-engineering
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