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Celebrating Jennifer Silverthorne's 30 years with CU [1]



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After three decades of dedicated service to the University of Colorado, Jennifer Silverthorne will retire this winter, leaving behind a legacy of innovation, integrity and collaboration that will continue to shape the university's research enterprise for years to come.

Jennifer's journey with CU began as a professional research assistant in the Department of Psychiatry at CU Anschutz before working in the research administration offices at the Denver campus, then Anschutz Medical Campus. Her early work supporting grants and contracts sparked a lifelong passion for improving the systems that power academic research. That passion eventually led her to University Information Services (UIS), where she played a pivotal role in modernizing CU's central administration processes and leading the implementation of InfoEd — a foundational platform for the university's electronic research administration (eRA).

Under Jennifer's leadership as associate director of eRA Systems, the UIS eRA team guided the university through one of its most complex and transformative modernization efforts. What began as an underfunded and challenging project evolved, through Jennifer's persistence and steady hand, into a robust, collaborative service that now supports research administration across all CU campuses. Today, thanks to her work, eRA operates with greater automation, transparency, and trust than ever before.

"What a privilege it has been to work with Jennifer all of these years," said Jordan Wright, enterprise application development lead for eRA. "Through every up and down, she has provided a steady hand, guiding the team forward and leading us to where we are today. Jennifer is not only an exceptional leader, but also a wonderful friend — always willing to listen and offer support. She will be deeply missed."

Amy Gannon, associate vice chancellor of Financial Services at CU Anschutz, shared, "Jennifer has always been a person committed to the grants mission and seeking to collaborate, while striving to improve processes. She is a fierce advocate for the customer and research community. The campus and I will miss her personally: her perspective, customer focus, and wonderful personal approach. She's earned this next adventure, and we wish her the best!"

Colleagues describe Jennifer as both visionary and humble — a rare combination that has

defined her leadership.

“Jennifer Silverthorne has been synonymous with eRA at UIS for the past two decades,” said Jaya Vaidyanathan, UIS senior director of Research Grant Services & Customer Relationship Management. “Her mix of domain expertise, humility and resilience has built enduring relationships across campuses and created a high-functioning team that’s prepared for the future. Personally, she has been a trusted colleague and sounding board on many occasions. These are big shoes to fill.”

Reflecting on her career, Jennifer said that what she’s most proud of is the trust and collaboration her team has built with campus partners. “We’ve worked hard to make eRA something that campuses can rely on. Our upgrades used to be painful and risky, but now they’re almost routine — and that’s a testament to the team’s dedication and expertise.”

Jennifer’s guiding philosophy has always been rooted in service and ethical responsibility. With a background in public administration and psychology, she has long viewed her work in research administration as part of a broader mission: ensuring that research dollars are managed responsibly and for the greater good of the public.

As for what comes next, Jennifer is looking forward to time with her family — and a new chapter of creative exploration. She plans to spend more time with her daughters, building projects (including a chicken coop or two), and even launching a creative venture online. “It will be nice to be a beginner again,” she said with a smile.

Jennifer’s calm leadership, steadfast loyalty and quiet determination have left an enduring mark on UIS and the CU research community. Her colleagues will miss her deeply — but the systems and teams she helped build will continue to thrive as part of her remarkable legacy.



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