Staff and Contact Information for Government Relations [1]

Todd Saliman, Senior Vice President for Strategy, Government Relations and Chief Financial Officer

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Senior Vice President for Strategy, Government Relations and Chief Financial Officer
todd.saliman@cu.edu [2]

Todd Saliman, senior vice president for strategy, government relations and chief financial officer, has 30 years of experience working on public policy in Colorado. He served in the Cabinet for two governors and is a former member of the Colorado General Assembly. Before joining CU, he worked with a private government affairs company in Colorado. He has more than 10 years of experience advocating on behalf of CU with Colorado higher education and policy leaders.

Prior to being named senior vice president, Saliman served as CU’s vice president for budget and finance and chief financial officer, where he led the budget team through many state fiscal challenges. As senior vice president, he continues with his CFO duties and now helps guide CU system strategic initiatives and oversees CU’s state and federal governmental affairs operations.

From 2007–10, Saliman was a member of Gov. Bill Ritter’s Cabinet and senior staff team. He was director of the Governor’s Office of State Planning and Budgeting. As director, he led the direction of the state’s budget, legislative and strategic initiatives. He also developed the governor’s budget request – submitted annually to the Colorado legislature – and developed and implemented plans to keep the budget balanced throughout the fiscal year. His office also prepared quarterly economic forecasts for the state. He guided the state budget during the great recession.

When Governor Hickenlooper was elected, Saliman continued on as a Senior Advisor during the Governor’s first legislative session to provide guidance and support on state budget and policy issues.

From 2003-06, Saliman owned and operated his own lobbying firm, Todd Saliman and Associates, which represented some of the most prominent organizations and governmental entities in Colorado, including the University of Colorado.

Todd served eight years in the Colorado legislature (1995–2002), four of which were spent serving on the Joint Budget Committee. He also served on the Appropriation, Finance and Local Government committees. Saliman was also appointed to various special committees that focused on specific issues.

Saliman is a native of Colorado and attended the University of Colorado Boulder. He
graduated cum laude with a degree in political science. He and his wife Michelle have two children, Max and Mira.

**Denver Office**

1800 Grant Street  
Suite 800  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone: 303-246-7040

**Washington, DC Office**

1779 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Suite 610  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: 202-518-8702  
Fax: 202-518-8705

**FEDERAL RELATIONS TEAM**

**Natalie Barry, Assistant Director of Federal Relations**

**Contact:**

Phone: 303-495-9624  
Natalie.Barry@cu.edu [3]

**Bio:**

Natalie Barry is the Assistant Director of Federal Relations. She has been with the University of Colorado since 2011, and supports a broad range of administrative, research, writing, and analytical duties that are designed to support CU’s federal relations efforts. She prepares and sends out the Government Relations department newsletter. She also works closely with each congressional office to schedule Hill visits and assists with constituent requests regarding issues on campus. Natalie helps plan and coordinate federal events on CU campuses. Additionally, she makes travel arrangements, drafts correspondence, and prepares department expense system reports.

Natalie received a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She and her husband Tyler enjoy living in Colorado and traveling as much as possible.

**Heather Bené, Associate Vice President of Research and Federal Relations**

**Contact:**
Heather Bené is the Associate Vice President of Research and Federal Relations for the University of Colorado and represents CU in Washington, DC. Bené has worked in government relations for public research universities for nearly 15 years, including over six years at CU. Bené represents the university with federal officials, national organizations and government entities on funding and policy issues related to higher education and scientific research. Her policy portfolio encompasses budget and appropriations; immigration; higher education; tax; and research policy including for the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Standards and Technology, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Departments of Energy and Defense.

Bené has served in numerous national leadership roles, including most notably as President of The Science Coalition, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of more than 50 of the nation's leading research universities, including CU Boulder, which is dedicated to sustaining federal investment in fundamental scientific research. Bené has served on the leadership boards for the Association of American Universities' (AAU) Council on Federal Relations and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities' (APLU) Council on Governmental Affairs. She chaired AAU's Immigration Task Force from 2016-17, a particularly complex period in immigration policy impacting universities, and as the association's energy policy lead in 2020. She is the 2020 recipient of AAU's "Ripple Effect" Impact Award, which recognizes her public service and mentorship contributions both within AAU and across the higher education community.

Previously, Bené worked in the Government Relations Office at her alma mater Oregon State University on state and federal policy and advocacy. Bené managed legislative affairs for Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the organization with oversight for Oregon's higher education and student aid systems, in 2014. She also served on the presidential and vice presidential advance teams for the Obama Administration. Bené has a master of public policy degree from OSU. Her graduate thesis analyzed university student voting behavior over six election cycles. She also has bachelor of arts degrees from OSU in English and political science.

Kathleen Drew, Federal Relations Associate

Contact:
Phone: 202-642-0954
Kathleen.Drew@cu.edu

Bio:
Kathleen Drew serves as Federal Relations Associate for the University of Colorado System’s Office of Government Relations, representing CU in Washington, DC. Kathleen has worked in both higher education and electoral politics, having worked as an intern in the Office of Economic Development and Community Engagement at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and as both intern and staff for numerous campaigns, including
races for the House of Representatives, Senate, Michigan House of Representatives, and Governor of Michigan Gretchen Whitmer. During her tenure at APLU, Kathleen maintained a policy portfolio including workforce development, science and technology, and higher education. As a campaign staffer, Kathleen worked on campaign communications, fundraising, and policy, with specific focuses on higher education, climate change, and health care. Kathleen is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a Bachelor's in political science and communications.

Kent Springfield, Associate Vice President for Federal Policy

Contact:
Phone: 202-341-1714
Kent.Springfield@cu.edu

Bio:
Kent is the University of Colorado’s lead on all federal issues for the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, CU Medicine, UCHealth and the Fitzsimons Innovation Community. He focuses on issues relating to biomedical and health research, healthcare delivery, healthcare workforce development, intellectual property, student financial aid, immigration and tax. Kent is a member of the American Association of Medical College’s (AAMC) Government Relations Representatives Steering Committee. He is also active in the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities’ (APLU) Council on Government Relations, the American Hospital Association’s (AHA) Government Relations Officer’s Network, and the American Association of Cancer Institutes (AACI). Prior to joining the University of Colorado, he spent five years as the Director of Government Relations for the George Washington University, and worked at trade publications covering Capitol Hill, including Congressional Quarterly. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Communications and MBA from GW.

Jack Waldorf, Associate Vice President of Federal Relations and Outreach

Contact:
Phone: 720-387-6587
Jack.Waldorf@cu.edu

Bio:
Jack Waldorf serves as Associate Vice President of Federal Relations and Outreach for the University of Colorado System’s Office of Government Relations. Based in Denver, Jack is responsible for federal activities impacting the University of Colorado System, and its campuses. This includes representing the university on issues related to federal higher education and research policy and serving as a direct contact between the university and federal officials, including Colorado’s congressional delegation. Prior to joining CU in early 2013, Jack worked in both the United States House of Representatives in Colorado and the United States Senate in Washington, D.C. serving as a policy advisor for a number of issues, including education, health care, and transportation, and has a deep understanding of public policy and the federal legislative process. Jack is a graduate of CU Boulder with a Bachelor’s in Political Science and History, and earned his Master’s Degree in Public Administration at
CU Denver. Jack and his wife live in Erie, Colorado with their two sons and black lab.

STATE RELATIONS TEAM

Allison Kohn, Director of State Relations

Contact:

Phone: 720-450-0739
Allison.Kohn@cu.edu

Bio:

Allison Kohn is the Director of State Relations and Policy Analysis. She is responsible for analyzing and tracking legislation during the state session, as well as preparing fact sheets for use with legislators. She also organizes state legislator tours and events and works with state legislative offices on constituent issues. Additionally, she helps prepare correspondence and updates to the university community on legislation. She assists the lobby team with coverage of committee hearings and stakeholder meetings. Allison previously worked as the State Scheduler in the Denver office for U.S. Senator Cory Gardner. She has a Master’s in Public Policy from the University of Denver. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from the University of Kansas.

Angela Rennick, Assistant Director of State Relations

Contact:

Phone: 303-246-7040
Angela.Rennick@cu.edu

Bio:

Angela Rennick is the Assistant Director of State Relations. She supports a broad range of administrative duties that are designed to support CU’s state relations efforts. She also assists with the state legislative session by drafting and updating legislator biographies, running reports on legislation being tracked, filing lobby reports, assisting with research requests and coverage of committee hearings. She helps coordinate CU System leadership outreach events across Colorado. Angela has a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from Colorado State University and a Master in Public Administration from the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs.

Heather Retzko, Associate Vice President of State Relations

Contact:
Bio:

Heather Retzko is the Associate Vice President of State Relations. She serves all four institutions in the CU system by lobbying many pieces of legislation affecting CU. She also takes special interest in CU's issues related to Title IX, research, academic programs and administration. Heather worked in the office as a student assistant for three years. She also served as Executive Assistant to our state and federal lobbyists, and Special Assistant to the Executive Director and Policy Analyst of State Relations. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Colorado at Boulder and a Master in Public Administration from the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs. In FY 2012, Heather was a fellow in the CU Emerging Leaders Program.

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Links
[2] mailto:todd.saliman@cu.edu
[3] mailto:Natalie.Barry@cu.edu
[4] mailto:Heather.Bene@cu.edu
[5] mailto:Kathleen.Drew@cu.edu
[6] mailto:Kent.Springfield@cu.edu
[7] mailto:Jack.Waldorf@cu.edu
[8] mailto:Allison.Kohn@cu.edu
[9] mailto:Angela.Rennick@cu.edu
[10] mailto:Heather.Retzko@cu.edu