

# STATE

WINTER 2019

THE MAGAZINE OF THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

## BORDERLANDS

*History project explores complexity  
and community in southern Colorado*

FARM TO FOOD BANK

HIGH HOPES FOR AURORA

GROWING COLORADO  
STATE'S LAND-GRANT  
LEGACY



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## STATE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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ON THE COVER: José Ortega, an alumnus of  
Colorado State University-Pueblo and exhibit  
curator at El Pueblo History Museum, is shown  
with an image of Doña Bernarda Mejía Velasquez,  
a healer and well-known figure from Pueblo's past.  
Photo by Mary Neiberg

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[STATE WIDE]

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At the heart of our work is a profound mission: providing access to educational excellence and opportunities that arise from it.

Together, we make Colorado our home – and our state. ♦

The Milky Way is viewed from the Flat Tops Wilderness Area north of Glenwood Springs in western Colorado.





## COLORADO RISES

First return-on-investment report examines the value of higher education

Wondering if a college degree is really worth it?

Amid nationwide concerns over increasing tuition and student debt, the Colorado Department of Higher Education recently released an analysis answering that question with an unequivocal “yes.”

Yet, urgent challenges remain in holding down costs while expanding opportunities for students to earn degrees, the analysis finds.

The report, *Colorado Rises: Maximizing Value for Students and Our State*, reviews return on investment in public higher education in Colorado and evaluates how tuition price, debt, choice, and value affect a college student’s trajectory. It is the first in a series of annual reports produced by the Colorado Department of Higher Education to inform lawmakers, taxpayers, and students and their families about the value of public postsecondary education in the state.

*Colorado Rises* reveals that 75 percent of Colorado jobs, and 97 percent of the best jobs – with greatest opportunity for growth and pay – require training and education beyond high school.

Moreover, graduates of Colorado’s public colleges and universities realize higher wages that mount over time. For instance, the median wage for graduates with bachelor’s degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math, the category with highest earnings, is \$43,420 one year after graduation; that median income grows by 75 percent to \$76,054 a decade later.

“Earning a postsecondary credential can positively impact the lives of students and improve Colorado’s society broadly,” the report concludes. College graduates improve Colo-

rado’s labor market and contribute to competitiveness, while increased wages add significantly to the state tax base and economy.

Balancing wage data, the report summarizes student debt in Colorado. Of students who graduated in 2018 with bachelor’s degrees, 69 percent left college with debt averaging \$25,500. The study describes that debt load as generally manageable – comparable to an automobile loan.

This compares favorably to national data. Among students who borrow to attend public universities nationwide, the average debt at graduation is \$27,610, according to the Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities. Yet, compared to high school graduates, those with bachelor’s degrees realize average additional lifetime earnings of \$1 million, the APLU reports.

In Colorado, the majority of students attending public colleges and universities receive some form of financial aid, according to *Colorado Rises*. Nearly 90 percent of students at two-year colleges and 72 percent of students at four-year universities receive a mix of federal, state, and institutional aid that reduces overall cost of attendance. “Thanks to this support, students from low- and middle-income families often attend for very low cost or even tuition-free,” the report says.

It further stresses the critical need for expanded student access to higher education – achieved through financial aid and other means – and the importance of degree completion.

On these points, Colorado State University, flagship of the CSU System, has made notable gains. The university has increased financial aid for students by more than 80 percent in the last five years, and average student debt

at graduation is holding at about \$25,000, below state and national averages. CSU students also are graduating faster, thus limiting debt and entering the workforce quicker.

Meantime, the Board of Governors of the CSU System recently committed to a long-term investment of \$7.8 million in an array of CSU-Pueblo programs to support student success. CSU Global, the System’s third university, often measures program relevance based on employer satisfaction, because a majority of students are working full time while pursuing degrees. Employers have reported a 94 percent satisfaction rate with CSU Global alumni; a recent economic impact study further showed CSU Global graduates experience \$4 in higher earning potential for every \$1 they invest in education through the online university.

While analyzing the benefits of postsecondary education, *Colorado Rises* identifies a prime reason for rising tuition in the state and nation: declining state investment in public colleges and universities. In fact, Colorado ranks 47th in the nation based on state appropriations for postsecondary education, according to the report. That low investment, combined with impacts of the Great Recession, is a core reason for climbing tuition costs in the last decade, the report explains. Experts refer to this trend as the defunding of public higher education. In short, responsibility for the lion’s share of tuition costs has shifted over time from the state to students and their families.

*Colorado Rises* “underscores the importance of making higher education more affordable and innovative to contain costs,” the authors write. Find the full report at <https://col.st/yHp8d>. ♦

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE CUTLER





# FIRST LADY

On its 150th anniversary, CSU remembers an alumna who stands as an enduring symbol of educational access and inclusion

Libbie Coy was the oldest daughter of a Fort Collins pioneer family, a girl of the Great American Desert. Like many to follow, she saw opportunity in the promise of land-grant education after the State Agricultural College of Colorado was officially established in 1870.

When doors opened in 1879, Coy jumped to enroll at the school that would become Colorado State University. She took classes in the Main Building, a stately brick structure that rose above the bare ground like a sapling not fully rooted.

In 1884, Coy graduated along with Leonidas “Lon” Loomis, who became a prosperous farmer, and George H. Glover, who became a seminal figure in the college veterinary program. They formed the initial graduating class. Yet, Coy was notable beyond being one of the first to earn a Bachelor of Science at the college: She was the first woman to graduate from any institution of higher education in the state. Yes, the first woman to graduate from college in Colorado.

With that singular achievement, Coy stands as an enduring symbol of our land-grant university’s commitment to educational access and inclusion. And she illustrates another tenet of the land-grant mission – the idea that educating children of the working classes will invigorate entire communities with knowledge, creating ripple effects in innovation and well-being.

When she graduated, Coy became the de facto first lady of campus: She was hired as an instructor, was a co-founder of the college alumni association, married a fellow faculty member who served a stint as college president, launched college fundraising campaigns, and was a tireless volunteer in Fort Collins. She was a lifelong advocate of education.

Coy and her legacy are regaining attention as Colorado State celebrates its 150th anniversary this academic year. The university recently renamed a central campus thoroughfare as “Libbie Coy Way.” This Founders Day, on Feb. 11, 2020, the official 150th anniversary of CSU’s founding, Coy will posthumously receive the Founders Day Medal for embodying the institution’s values and its work in teaching, research, and service.

Like other land-grant universities nationwide, CSU was established after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act of 1862. The legislation granted public lands to each state; proceeds from the sale and long-term management of those lands helped fund public colleges and universities to educate the children of farmers and other working classes. It was a revolutionary concept that democratized higher education, previously the exclusive province of the wealthy, and transformed traditional university curricula with the specific aim of driving scientific discovery and quality of life. The Morrill Act describes land-grant colleges this way:

*... [T]he leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life. ...*

Coy spent her adult life proving the value of the education she gained at the State Agricultural College of Colorado. She rose as a pillar of the campus and community, active in countless philanthropic efforts to benefit the college and its students, local children, and fellow citizens. She died in Fort Collins in 1944, six decades after securing her place in the history of higher education in Colorado.

In prescient remarks at commencement in 1884, Coy had described college discoveries in constant interaction with the real world – an idea utterly bound to the land-grant ideal.

“May we remember that the ideal is not built in a day,” she said in her graduation speech, “but that it is the growth of time, constantly changing as new thoughts unfold, as the mind expands under contact with the real.” ♦



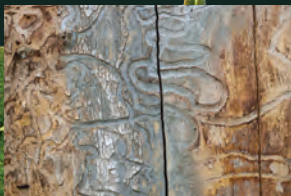
Opposite: Libbie Coy was the first female college graduate in Colorado, and she became a pillar of the Fort Collins campus and community. Above: Students and faculty gather outside the Main Building in 1886. Photography: Colorado State University Archives, Libraries & Special Collections



# GREEN MENACE

Watch out, Colorado.  
There's an insect coming for your ash trees.

The emerald ash borer – an invasive insect that has decimated tens of millions of ash trees in the United States and Canada – is making its way into urban landscapes in Metro Denver and Northern Colorado, potentially threatening an estimated 15 percent of shade trees planted statewide, the Colorado State Forest Service recently announced. In Metro Denver alone, an estimated 1.45 million ash trees are growing in parks and private landscapes, providing environmental benefits and boosting property values.



The emerald ash borer infests and kills all true native North American ash trees. The insect lays eggs on bark; larvae then tunnel in, leaving S-shaped galleries, ultimately weakening and killing trees.

The destructive bug, native to Asia, was accidentally introduced to North America in the 1990s and was detected in Boulder in 2013. That prompted a quarantine to stop transport of ash wood and products from Boulder County; the quarantine, combined with close monitoring, tree removal, insecticide treatment, and biological controls, was meant to halt or slow movement of the metallic green beetle.

But the emerald ash borer is an escape artist. Called the most destructive tree pest ever introduced in North America, the insect recently has been found in Broomfield, Westminster, and near Berthoud – a sign of growing threat to some of the most beautiful and popular shade trees in Colorado's urban and community forests.

The Colorado State Forest Service and CSU Extension are among the agencies helping to track and thwart the insect; both provide extensive online information and tips to help homeowners identify and control the pest. ♦





## CATALYST FOR CONSERVATION

Salazar Center leads research, policy, and practice

One of the state's most respected public servants, from one of its most deeply rooted agricultural families, has helped to establish a Colorado State University center to stimulate leading ideas in natural resources conservation across the continent.

- Ken Salazar – fifth-generation Coloradan, rancher, lawyer, policymaker, and pre-eminent mind in conservation – is a founder and namesake of CSU's Salazar Center for North American Conservation. He is best known for serving from 2009 to 2013 as secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the federal agency charged with conserving and managing the nation's natural resources, honoring its Native American heritage, and promoting energy security.

The Salazar Center for North American Conservation will extend that expertise to activate linkages and innovations in conservation research, policy, and practice. In particular, the center will promote a broad, systemic view of conservation that recognizes connections among environmental health, economic strength, and quality of life.

The center is part of CSU's School of Global Environmental Sustainability; in coming years, it will be based on the CSU Campus at the National Western Center.

"The center will serve as a clearinghouse of best ideas in conservation, and it will serve as a catalyst to action," Salazar said in September, as he opened the inaugural International Symposium on Conservation Impact, the center's first major event.

The symposium in Denver helped publicly launch the Salazar Center and attracted more than 200 elected officials and conservation experts to explore the issue of landscape and ecosystem connections across the continent.

It would be hard to match Salazar's credentials on conservation. Before heading the U.S. Department of the Interior, Salazar served as a U.S. senator from Colorado, as Colorado attorney general, and as executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. Complex conservation issues – crossing the realms of economy, environment, and society – threaded through those high-profile roles. He developed independent-minded ethics on conservation while growing up on a family ranch in Colorado's San Luis Valley. The new center is steeped in those values.

"Throughout his life and career, Ken Salazar has exemplified the spirit of service, reasoned leadership, and commitment to the public good that are at the heart of CSU's land-grant mission," Tony Frank, chancellor of the CSU System, said. "The Salazar Center sustains this great legacy by creating a space for innovation, forward-thinking, and collaboration on the most pressing conservation questions of our age."

The need to protect air, land, water, and wildlife is growing increasingly urgent in the face of climate change, species extinction, the disappearance of healthy connected ecosystems, and a rapidly growing global population, Beth Conover, recently appointed director of the Salazar Center, said. These changes are increasingly pressuring and fragmenting landscapes.

"The center looks to invest in cutting-edge ideas and world-class conservation leaders to pioneer projects that address these challenges," Conover said.

That work is already underway. During the center's first symposium, leaders announced the availability of a \$100,000 Conservation Impact Prize to be given annually, starting next year. Through the competitive grant program, funds will be awarded to proposals most likely to drive innovation in landscape connectivity, benefiting habitats and communities. Information at [connectivitychallenge.org](http://connectivitychallenge.org). ♦

Opposite: Ken Salazar, former secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, is a leading authority on natural resources conservation. He is a founder and namesake of the CSU Salazar Center for North American Conservation.



## FIRE STARTER

Meet the scientist central to the interstate chile debate

**Y**ou might think Mike Bartolo would have a quick answer to this burning question: Who grows better chile – New Mexico or Colorado? After all, Bartolo is the horticulturist who developed chile varieties especially for farmers in southeastern Colorado’s Arkansas Valley, where most of the state’s peppers are grown.

Those varieties, marketed as Pueblo chile, were hot news earlier this year. That’s when the governors of Colorado and New Mexico exchanged fiery rhetoric over the merits of green chile grown in their respective states, a debate chile aficionados and news media kindled throughout the harvest season. Stoking the flames, the Pueblo Chile Growers Association hosted tasting challenges, and the New Mexico Tourism Department roasted Colorado with a pricey ad campaign proclaiming New Mexico as “chile capital of the world.”

The tiff dates to 2015, when regional Whole Foods stores started selling Pueblo chile from Colorado instead of Hatch chile from New Mexico. (Of course, markets in New Mexico hold to their own.)

Sidestepping chatter about which state grows better chile, Bartolo recently noted that publicity is a boon for farmers in both states. “I look at it as a little bit amusing,” Bartolo said of the flareup. “It’s good-hearted and good-motivated and hopefully stimulates more consumption of chile overall – and more awareness of our connections to food and culture.”

Bartolo manages Colorado State University’s Arkansas Valley Research Center. For nearly 30 years, he has conducted research into irrigation efficiency, pest management, and soil health to identify sustainable cultivation practices that improve crop production in the region spanning the Arkansas River east of Pueblo. He and fellow scientists have tested these practices while growing crops important to the area – melons, onions, tomatoes, wheat, corn, and more.

But early in his scientific career, Bartolo inherited a bag of chile seed from his uncle, Harry Mosco, a first-generation Italian American and World War II veteran who

farmed near Pueblo. Bartolo, raised on a neighboring family farm, remembered his uncle as “a quiet gentleman who worked for years to scratch out a modest living.”

When Bartolo got the seed – found in a garage after his uncle’s death – he decided to plant some at the CSU research center, curious about the chile it would produce. Soon after, Bartolo spotted a plant with peppers that were a bit bigger, with thicker walls than the others. He saved the seeds and planted them the following year, again looking for superior traits, again saving seeds. His chile breeding became a passion project that stretched over three decades, apart from his core research.

From his uncle’s bag of seed, Bartolo has made some 400 selections and over the years has developed three distinct chile varieties now grown on nearly 1,000 acres planted in peppers in the Arkansas Valley. These strains, commercially marketed as Pueblo chile, have helped propel a surge in regional chile farming.

Tops among his varieties is the Mosco chile – named for Bartolo’s uncle – a hot, meaty pepper that has become the most widely grown cultivar in the region. Bartolo’s chile breeding also has produced the Giadone cultivar, a pungent pepper named for Pete Giadone, a well-known Pueblo grower and chile advocate; and the Pueblo Popper, a round novelty chile that works well for stuffed pepper recipes.

These and other varieties are the stars of the show during the annual Pueblo Chile & Frijoles Festival, which attracts as many as 150,000 people to Pueblo’s historic district each September. The festival, awarded as an outstanding community initiative during the 2019 Colorado Governor’s Tourism Conference, began after conversations between Bartolo and the president of the Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce.

As the region’s chile industry blossoms, Bartolo continues to pursue his longtime side project. “The Mosco chile is not a perfect chile. There are about 10 traits I would love to change,” he said. “I’m still hoping I’ll have a couple new varieties to release before I retire.” ♦

**Mike Bartolo** is senior scientist and Extension vegetable crops specialist at CSU’s research center in Rocky Ford. He developed the most popular pepper variety grown and marketed as Pueblo chile. But don’t ask him to pick between Pueblo and Hatch. “That’s comparing apples and oranges,” he says.

PHOTO BY DAVE NELIGH FOR COLORADO COUNTRY LIFE MAGAZINE



## WATER IN THE WEST

Second symposium identifies challenges and solutions

“Nothing is more fundamental to life than water. Not only is water a basic need, but adequate safe water underpins the nation’s health, economy, security, and ecology.”

- So begins *Confronting the Nation’s Water Problems*, a policy report issued by the National Research Council. The report calls for increased research and collaboration to solve water resource problems that are “significantly more numerous, complex, and larger in scope than those of the past,” especially in the face of a booming human population and climate change.

The Colorado State University System is taking up the charge, building on longstanding water expertise at CSU. Through research – and by sparking collaborative problem-solving – the System is on a quest to help ensure water quantity and quality for domestic, industrial, agricultural, recreational, and environmental needs.

That work took center stage in November, when the CSU System held its second Water in the West Symposium in Denver to identify challenges and solutions in the management of one of the world’s most precious and increasingly scarce resources. The symposium featured two dozen speakers and attracted a sold-out crowd of nearly 400 attendees representing diverse stakeholder groups.

“Colorado State University is in the perfect position to act as a convener on the issue of water,” said former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, a strategic adviser on food and water issues for the CSU System. “As we focus on solutions, we want everyone at the table to be part of this critical conversation.”

The annual Water in the West Symposium is an initial offering of the future CSU Campus at the National Western Center in north Denver. Groundbreaking for the CSU Campus is planned early next year, with opening expected in 2022. The CSU Campus at the National Western Center will conduct collaborative research and will offer public education tied to food, energy, water, health, and the environment. Information at [nwc.colostate.edu](http://nwc.colostate.edu) ♦

**The Gunnison River** flows west from Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park on Colorado’s Western Slope.



# BRIGHT MINDS

A new path to college for promising students who face obstacles

N dey Hydera is 17 years old and a first-year student at Colorado State University, yet she already has a life motto: Don't waste opportunities.

Hydera developed her mantra watching her mother, a single mom from Gambia who works as a certified nursing assistant and has raised two daughters in Denver. The concept took hold when Hydera was a junior in high school. Aspiring to a career in medicine, she completed an internship with the nursing staff at Children's Hospital Colorado. She observed premature babies and met gravely ill schoolchildren. Then, Hydera interacted with a 15-year-old patient, a boy her own age, who had suffered gunshot wounds and lost use of his legs.

"It was really sad and eye-opening," Hydera, a first-generation student majoring in biochemistry, recalled. "I had been really focused on little things – like, if I didn't do well on a test, I would be freaking out. It made me realize there are people in this world going through a lot.

"It motivated me," she continued. "I know I want to take advantage of all the opportunities that come to me because I know not everyone has those opportunities."

As she completed the hospital internship, Hydera pursued another opportunity: She joined Minds Matter Colorado.

The state chapter of a nationwide nonprofit, Minds Matter Colorado offers intensive mentoring for academically talented high schoolers from low-income families. It connects bright students with dedicated adult mentors and preparatory resources to attain college entrance and success. Programs are rigorous, immersive, and motivational, linking students to leadership and career experiences; helping them prep for college entrance exams; and conducting weekly sessions focused on college and scholarship applications.

With this readiness, Minds Matter students are invariably accepted to colleges and universities with scholarship support – often with multiple enrollment offers.

A new alliance between Minds Matter Colorado and the Colorado State University System provides students in the program with clear paths to attend CSU in Fort Collins, CSU Global, and CSU-Pueblo. The partnership, formalized earlier this year, reinforces a fundamental shared goal: providing access to higher education for all Colorado students with the talent and motivation to earn it. In finalizing the agreement, CSU System leaders noted that merit-based educational opportunities transform the lives of individual students and families, with critical benefits for communities, the workforce, and the economy.

"Talent is our next gold rush," Savinay Chandrasekhar, executive director of Minds Matter Colorado, said. "In the mid-1800s, people were smart enough to look under the ground to find gold and realize the riches there. Now, we'll be smart enough to look into the communities we haven't looked into and find that there are riches there, as well."

The partnership between Minds Matter Colorado and the CSU System grants conditional university enrollment to high school juniors in the readiness program. Students who want to attend a System school must then follow through to demonstrate academic achievement. The agreement also encourages regular interaction among Minds Matter students and CSU staff, so that students learn about degree offerings; are well-equipped to successfully apply for scholarships and financial aid; are ready to transition to university life; and are connected to academic support networks once enrolled.

While a number of students from the Minds Matter program have attended System schools before, the new partnership strengthens the connections and helped attract a new cohort of Minds Matter grads this academic year.

Hydera is among those students. She decided to enroll in Fort Collins after attending a

summer leadership program on campus before her senior year in high school. Called the Black Issues Forum, the weeklong offering attracts African American students from across the country and guides them in researching a range of cultural and socioeconomic issues relevant to people of color. The program struck a chord with Hydera, who was born in Seattle and spent much of her young childhood with extended family in Gambia, where she learned to speak Wolof, the language of her African relatives, and absorbed her family's culture.

At CSU, Hydera saw opportunity to study biochemistry – a mix of her favorite subjects – and to pursue her goal of attending medical school to become a physician. She graduated from high school with a 3.8 grade point average and 30 college credits, after taking advantage of concurrent enrollment through her Denver high school. Those and other achievements helped Hydera land a full-ride scholarship to attend Colorado State. Now completing her first semester, Hydera has a full load of science classes, has made new friends through the university's Black/African American Cultural Center, and finds academic support in a residential community for students with diverse backgrounds.

"It's been really great," she said. "My vision of my future is coming together." ♦

THE AGREEMENT ENCOURAGES  
REGULAR INTERACTION AMONG MINDS MATTER  
STUDENTS AND CSU STAFF,  
SO THAT STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT  
DEGREE OFFERINGS; ARE WELL-EQUIPPED  
TO SUCCESSFULLY APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS  
AND FINANCIAL AID; ARE READY  
TO TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY LIFE; AND  
ARE CONNECTED TO ACADEMIC SUPPORT  
NETWORKS ONCE ENROLLED.

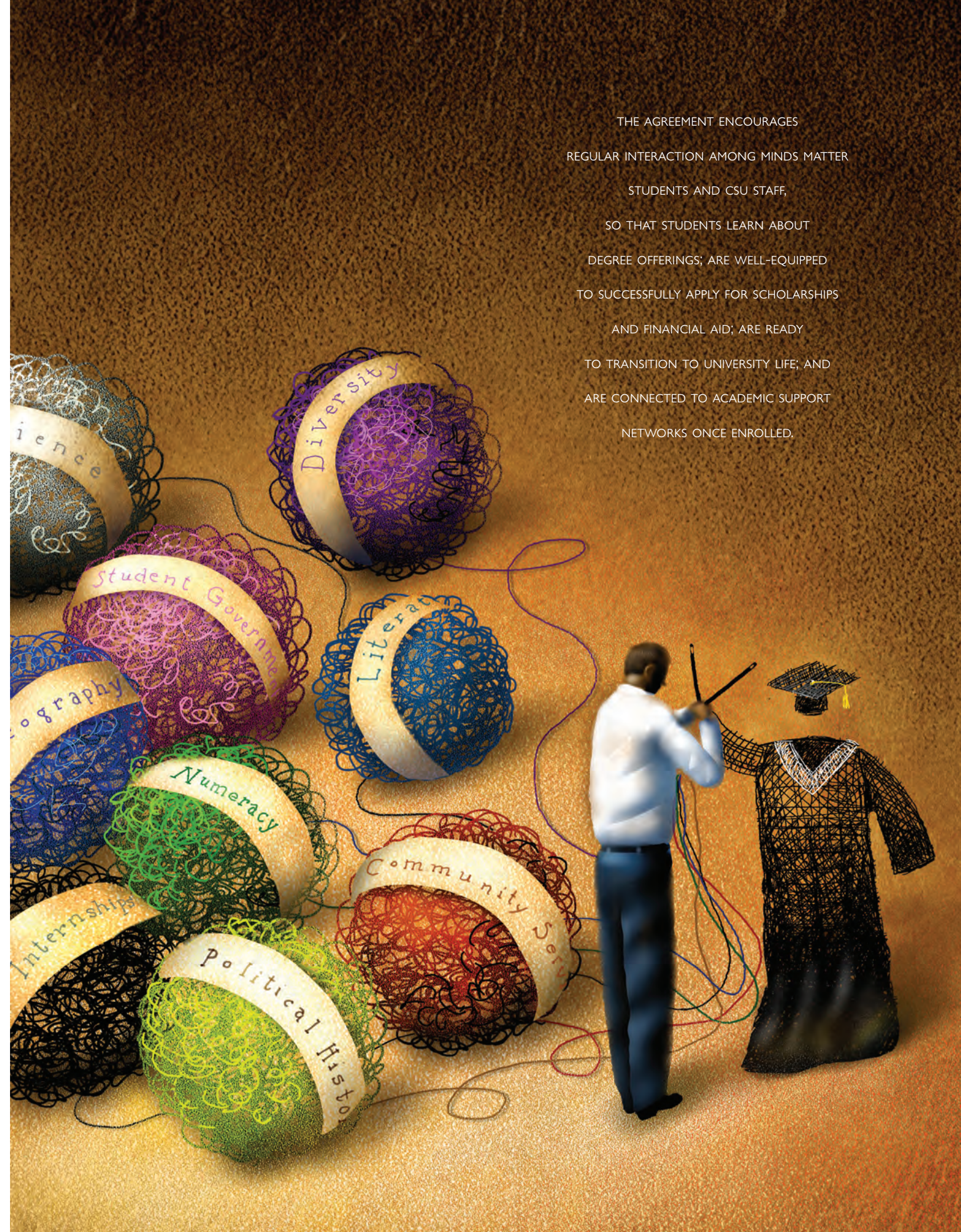


ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE CUTLER





## BORDERLANDS *of* SOUTHERN COLORADO

**T**he most prominent landmark near Pueblo, Colorado, the mountain that inspired the patriotic song “America the Beautiful,” is Pikes Peak. Rising to 14,115 feet, it is named for Zebulon Montgomery Pike, a U.S. Army explorer who traveled through the Southwest in 1806 and 1807 on a mission of geopolitical reconnaissance, soon adding to the young nation’s lust for westward expansion. His accounts were compiled and translated into three languages for readers abroad. “Pikes Peak or Bust!” was the motto for prospectors during the Colorado gold rush.

BY COLEMAN CORNELIUS

*The Arkansas River, with headwaters near Leadville, Colorado, flows east across the Plains to the Mississippi River. A section of river in what is now southeastern Colorado once formed the border between Mexico and the United States. Photo: Courtesy of History Colorado*





Given Pike's footprint in the region, it wouldn't be surprising to find a full museum exhibit about him in Pueblo, maybe an extension of the commemoration at Pike Plaza on the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk. But you won't find one at the History Colorado branch downtown. Pike has his panel, to be sure; his sword and scabbard are even displayed. Yet the new permanent exhibit at El Pueblo History Museum avoids elevating figures from early U.S. history who traversed the region, Pike and the frontiersman Kit Carson among them. Instead, it considers why they came – and the ripples that followed.

The exhibit is part of a History Colorado initiative called Borderlands of Southern Colorado. Through interconnected displays and lectures at its museums in Pueblo, Trinidad, and Fort Garland, History Colorado presents southern Colorado as a region whose inhabitants have been affected across generations by historically shifting political boundaries and related strife. Borderlands, the project shows, have long attracted agents of territorial expansion and nation-building, entrepreneurs and industrialists, and people seeking new opportunities and improved quality of life. Borderlands of Southern Colorado explores the human implications of mutable borders, where nations, cultures, economic interests, and identities by turns clash and commingle to give communities their unique and lasting texture.

Three Colorado State University alumni, including two gradu-

ates of CSU-Pueblo, lead the Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative as employees of History Colorado, an agency of the state Department of Higher Education that works closely with the CSU System. Above all, they hope to reflect the diversity of southern Colorado's residents, who often embody the blending of culture and identity found in borderlands and whose stories are rarely exalted in local museums.

"We're using borderlands as a lens to reveal the ways in which people from multiple places, perspectives, and traditions come together in these spaces. Sometimes they collide and sometimes they mix, but they always form new ways of being. We feel like that really represents southern Colorado," Dawn DiPrince, a CSU alumna and chief operating officer of History Colorado, said. "We think it's very important for people to see themselves at their community museum."

DiPrince, lead developer of the initiative, is a daughter of this borderland, the descendant of Italian immigrants who came to southern Colorado in the early 1900s to work in the coal and steel industry powered by the colossal Colorado Fuel & Iron Co. For years, CF&I owned the steel mill in Pueblo, driving expansion of Western railroads and industry. When DiPrince helped launch Borderlands of Southern Colorado with an academic conference in 2017, she wanted to illuminate the historical complexities of her own community.

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*Opposite: Pikes Peak is named for Zebulon Pike, who explored the region around Pueblo in 1806. It was earlier known as Sun Mountain in the language of native Mouache and Caputa Ute people. Above: Doña Bernarda Mejia Velasquez, a well-known healer, moved to Pueblo in 1912 after serving as a medical conscript for Pancho Villa's forces during the Mexican Revolution. Photography: Courtesy of History Colorado*





# EXPLANATION.

The lines marked thus ..... show the limits established by the Treaties made between the U. States & G. Britain in 1783 & 1842  
The line marked thus ..... the boundary line, settled by the Treaty of 1846 with Great Britain  
The lines marked thus ..... the Treaty of 1795 with Spain  
The lines marked thus ..... the Treaty of 1803 with France  
The lines marked thus ..... the Treaty of 1819 with Spain  
The lines marked thus ..... the Treaty of 1848 with Mexico.

## NEW U.S. TERRITORY

This map, held by the National Archives, was drafted after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed Feb. 2, 1848. It provides a sense of the vast territory ceded by Mexico to the United States, identified here as California, New Mexico, and Texas. The Arkansas River, which runs through Pueblo, Colorado, is shown on the northernmost edge of Texas. It had earlier carved the border between the United States and Mexico. The treaty moved the international boundary to the Rio Grande on the southern edge of Texas. President James K. Polk, a Southern Democrat, ordered the drafting of this map, and it represents his concept of how to divide newly acquired territory, a concept fiercely debated in Congress because of its implications for slavery and westward expansion, according to the National Archives. Like many maps of the time, this one is politically influenced and geographically problematic; however, it indicates the scope of new U.S. territory, the border's major shift from the Arkansas River to the Rio Grande, and the new wave of problems that followed.





*"We're using borderlands as a lens to reveal the ways in which people from multiple places, perspectives, and traditions come together in these spaces. Sometimes they collide and sometimes they mix, but they always form new ways of being. We feel like that really represents southern Colorado." —Dawn DiPrince*

"There's something really powerful about seeing yourself included in the collective narrative, and something equally destructive when you don't. When we're able to reclaim histories that have been erased, it strengthens communities," she said. "We believe in opening our arms very wide for an inclusive history."

Writings of the late Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa, who grew up on the Texas-Mexico border, helped inspire the History Colorado initiative. Among Anzaldúa's core concepts is the idea that borderlands, cut through by political boundaries, are geographic spaces where hybridity of all kinds emerges. The exhibit at El Pueblo History Museum includes the following excerpt from Anzaldúa's book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*: "A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition."

Southern Colorado entered its arc as a borderland centuries ago, when Native people with overlapping homelands were the area's first inhabitants. From the 1700s, the region was claimed in succession by Spain, France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and the United States. Those claims were often violently contested. The Arkansas River, running through the heart of Pueblo, was a key part of the international border dividing Mexico and the United States before the Mexican-American War. Territorial disputes involving Texas triggered the war in 1846.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in February 1848, ended the war with resounding effects: Mexico relinquished its claims to Texas and ceded more than half its territory to the United States. After gaining 525,000 square miles of new terrain, the United States extended west to the Pacific Ocean. The U.S.-Mexico border, earlier defined in part by the Arkansas River, moved to the Rio Grande along the southern edge of Texas. The region now known as southern Colorado, earlier squarely in Mexico, became part of the United States.

The Borderlands of Southern Colorado exhibit opened at El Pueblo History Museum last year with the rare display of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The National Archives loaned the document for just one month, requiring that it be sealed in a temperature-controlled glass case, with a guard posted nearby. Some museum visitors were overwhelmed with emotion while viewing the document that had dramatically impacted their families, José Ortega, exhibit curator, said. "The treaty had never been this close to the border it defined," he said.

By officially expanding the United States, the treaty fueled a new phase of the Indian Wars and provoked complex questions and pointed conflicts over property rights, financial holdings, and citizenship. Longtime regional residents with Spanish and Mexican ancestry – almost invariably on the losing end of those conflicts – distilled fundamental issues of citizenship and equality into a phrase repeated in heated debates even today: "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us."

The phrase resonates with many people whose forebears have

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*Opposite: George Bent and his wife, Magpie, a Southern Cheyenne woman, were children of the borderlands – culturally entwined and entangled in ferocious conflicts that ensued between Anglos and Native tribes after the region that is now southeastern Colorado became part of the United States in 1848, opening the gates to further westward expansion. Magpie was the daughter of a prominent chief, Black Kettle. Bent was born at Bent's Fort, on the Arkansas River east of Pueblo, to a Cheyenne mother, Owl Woman, and a well-known white tradesman father, William Bent. After fighting in the Civil War, the younger Bent unsuccessfully battled alongside and negotiated for the Cheyenne and Arapaho people. He was with Black Kettle in the peaceful Indian encampment that was decimated during the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864.*

*Above: Many families living in what is now southeastern Colorado had been citizens of Mexico before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo moved the U.S. border south, dramatically expanding U.S. territory. The change gave rise to a phrase that is well-known across the Southwest: "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us." Photography: Courtesy of History Colorado*



*Dianne Archuleta, an alumna of CSU-Pueblo, is an operations manager for History Colorado community museums. The Borderlands of Southern Colorado project includes a painful part of Archuleta's family history – one of her foremothers was an enslaved Navajo woman. She is pictured with exhibit photographs of two more women who reflected cultural complexities in a time and place of dramatic change: Josefa Jaramillo Carson, from an eminent family in Taos, New Mexico, was the third wife of frontiersman Kit Carson; Amache Ochinee Prowers, a Southern Cheyenne woman, settled in the 1860s with her husband, John Wesley Prowers, on the Plains east of Pueblo to run a cattle ranch and mercantile. Photo: Mary Neiberg*

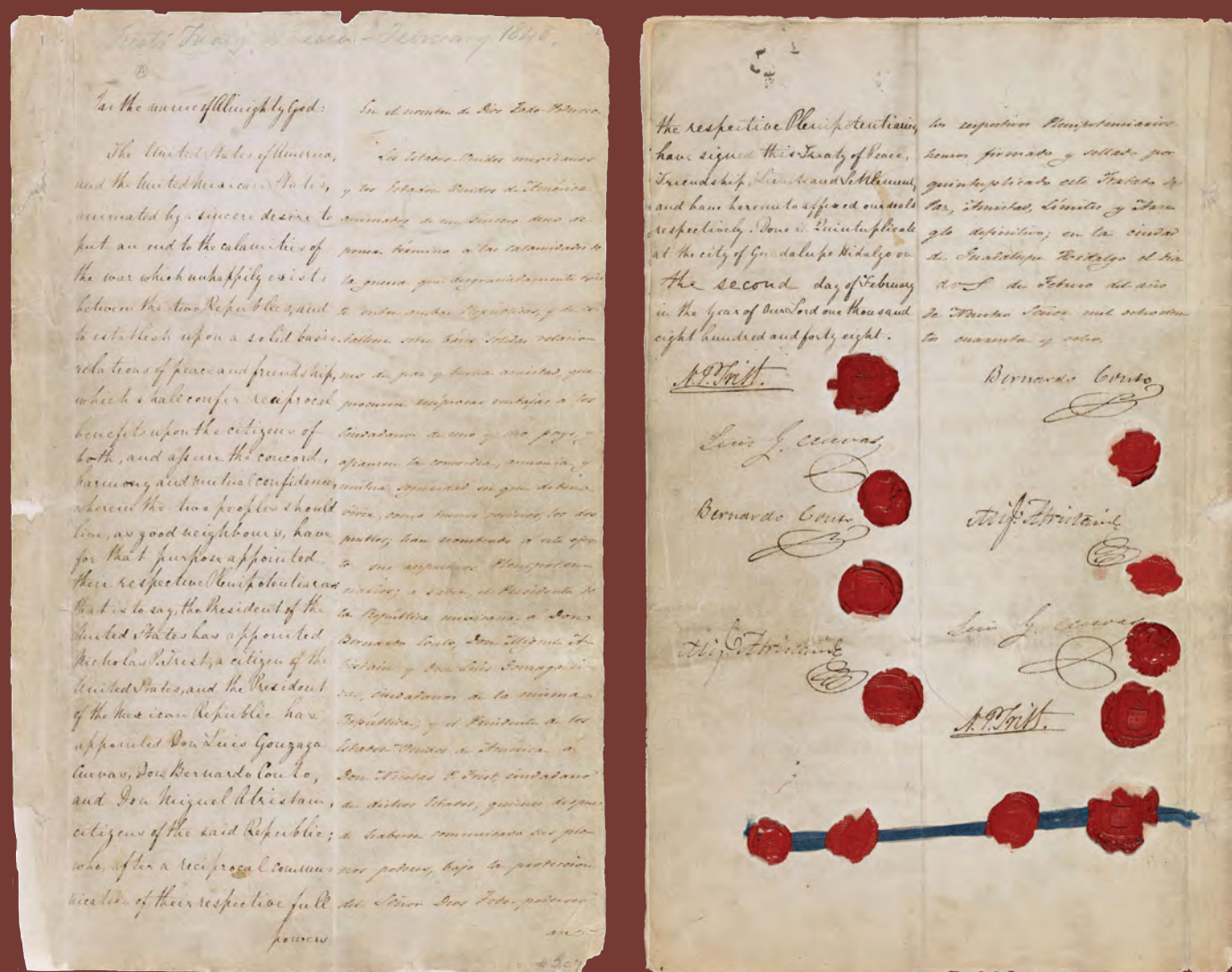






*Beginning in 1942, millions of Mexican farm workers, known as braceros, were transported to southern Colorado and elsewhere as part of agreements between the United States and Mexico. Together, these pacts were called the Bracero Program. The program filled agricultural labor shortages during World War II. It ran under different names until 1964, becoming the nation's largest guest worker program. Photo: Courtesy of History Colorado*





*"A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition." — Gloria Anzaldúa*

lived in the Southwest for generations, said Ortega, a lifelong Pueblo resident who grew up in a family of Chicano activists and, as a working adult, enrolled at CSU-Pueblo to pursue a degree in history and Chicano studies. Pueblo's population of about 112,000 people is 52 percent Hispanic or Latino, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Yet, as Ortega has learned through his scholarship and personal and professional experiences, many people of color feel marginalized in southern Colorado communities they and their ancestors helped establish.

The Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative is an important foray into truth-telling, Ortega said. "To represent ourselves is turning the tide, turning the narrative. We've had people come in and cry because it tells the story of themselves," he said, standing amid the interpretive panels, artifacts, and interactive media at El Pueblo History Museum. "There's no better way to tell the community story than to have the whole community in it."

Before graduating from CSU-Pueblo in 2016, Ortega helped establish a unique partnership between the university and the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, based in Washington, D.C. The partnership, made possible by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, allows CSU-Pueblo students juggling work and university studies to fulfill one-month internships at the institution's renowned museums, a notable opportunity for students whose personal and family responsibilities prevent them from completing standard Smithsonian internships, which span three months. Ortega was among the first five students to complete an internship, at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. The experience came shortly before the Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative began and influenced his work as an exhibit curator, Ortega said.

His colleague Dianne Archuleta, who likewise graduated from CSU-Pueblo with a degree in history and Chicano studies, joined Ortega in the first cohort of students with monthlong internships at the Smithsonian. She, too, decided to pursue a bachelor's degree after having children and establishing a professional career in her hometown of Pueblo. As she advanced in her studies, Archuleta began to see herself and her family in texts and lectures — as Hispanos with deep roots in southern Colorado whose stories stood in the shadows of history, largely unwritten, untold, even unknown.

She remembered hearing years earlier about her great-great-grandmother, a Navajo woman known as Rosario Romero. Archuleta hadn't thought much about her mestizo heritage, her mixed Mexican and Indigenous ancestry. Her family didn't really discuss it, and the topic wasn't part of her school lessons in Pueblo. Now, diving into history and Chicano studies at CSU-Pueblo, she sought more information and realized her family's past was quietly shared by many people in the Southwest: Her Navajo foremother had been enslaved.

As Archuleta learned, Rosario's given name in Diné, Ated-bah-Hozhoni, translated to Happy Girl. She, her father, hus-

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*Opposite: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in 1848, is a seminal document in the history of the American West, bringing new settlement, conflict, and cultural complexity to the region that includes southern Colorado. One of two duplicate originals was displayed at El Pueblo History Museum last year. Above: Vaqueros and immigrants introduced new traditions to southern Colorado's borderland, giving the region its unique texture. Photography: Courtesy of History Colorado*





# HOPE

Partnership yields college scholarships for  
Aurora students, alumni, and staff

BY MONTE WHALEY  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY NEIBERG

Rico Munn, superintendent of Aurora Public Schools, and Becky Takeda-Tinker, president and chief executive officer of CSU Global, struck an innovative real estate deal that swaps office space for scholarships to the online university.





Cory Henry, a graduate of Hinkley High School in Aurora, is among the first Golden Eagle Scholars to attend CSU Global with a full-ride scholarship made possible by the new partnership between Aurora Public Schools and the university.

LAST SPRING, CORY HENRY JOINED OTHER SENIORS FOR GRADUATION FROM HINKLEY HIGH SCHOOL IN AURORA, ON THE EASTERN EDGE OF DENVER. ABOUT 350 STUDENTS GATHERED IN THE AUXILIARY GYM AT AN EVENTS CENTER, WAITING FOR THE CEREMONY TO BEGIN. THEY RUSTLED IN BRIGHT BLUE CAPS AND GOWNS, ANTICIPATING THEIR RITE OF PASSAGE AND PATHS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL.

Henry hoped to study business and construction management in college, but those hopes were covered with question marks. He had applied for a few scholarships and thought his good grades and participation in sports and leadership programs would help him land financial support. Yet, he still wasn't sure where he would enroll or exactly how he'd pay for college.

Then, a school counselor took the gym microphone. Henry's future came to him in a surprise announcement moments before graduation: He was named a Golden Eagle Scholar – one of the first seven students to graduate from Aurora Public Schools with a four-year, full-ride scholarship to Colorado State University Global. The scholarships provide a leg up for motivated Aurora high school graduates who want the flexibility of online course work and who couldn't afford college without financial aid.

"Whoa! Are you serious?" Henry exclaimed as he heard the news. "That's crazy – thank you so much!"

Henry recalled the excitement as he finished his first three-credit college course, Introduction to Business, with an A in the grade log. Just as he had hoped, he is majoring in business and construction management through the nation's first fully online public university with accredited degree programs.

The CSU Global freshman aims to own and run a construction company, maybe branching into home sales. In addition to his studies, Henry is gaining on-the-job training, having worked for a Denver builder for three years and counting. His summertime construction work recently became a full-time job, so he's earning a solid income while completing online college course work at night and on the weekends.

"I'm super thankful I got the scholarship because, when I'm finished with college, I can focus on my career without worrying about paying off debt," he said.

The Golden Eagle Scholarship program is part of a new partnership between Aurora Public Schools and CSU Global. The affiliation boosts access to high-quality, career-focused college education and workforce development in Colorado. It revolves around a real-estate deal: an innovative space-for-scholarships swap that officials have called the first of its kind in the nation between a school district and a public university. The deal was authorized with legislation signed into law in Spring 2016; it was set in motion that fall, when Aurora voters approved a \$300 million bond issue to fulfill building and technology needs across the school district.

The district used \$8 million of the bond revenue to construct a

building for CSU Global administrative offices. The online university recently signed a 10-year lease and moved its headquarters from the Denver Tech Center to the Aurora Public Schools Community Campus near Buckley Air Force Base. But instead of

paying rent in cash, CSU Global is providing in-kind payments in the form of scholarships and substantially discounted university courses for the school district's recent graduates, older alumni, and employees. Even current Aurora high school students are eligible for tuition discounts if they are dually enrolled in CSU Global courses.

The district envisions the total value of these discounts – in tuition savings, expanded career opportunities, and increased long-term earnings – will exceed the \$6.3 million that CSU Global would pay in rent over the next 10 years, according to the terms of its lease. (The lease agreement also provides the options of cash payments or a combination of cash and in-kind payments, based on the school district's preference.)

For the Golden Eagle Scholars, the deal equates to at least \$7,500 per year for four years, amounting to free tuition for an online bachelor's degree. Other graduates from Aurora Public Schools, as well as district employees pursuing bachelor's degrees, are eligible for a 24 percent discount on CSU Global tuition. School employees who have bachelor's degrees and want to enroll in graduate courses get a bigger break: 33 percent off the standard tuition rate.

The district expects the space-for-scholarships swap to help fulfill its mission. "Our partnership with CSU Global expands our offerings, reduces barriers to higher education, and provides professional development opportunities to our staff and students," said Rico Munn, superintendent of Aurora Public Schools, who recently served on and chaired the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System. To put those benefits into perspective, nearly 2,000 students graduated from Aurora high schools last spring, and some 5,700 employees work for the district.

Reducing barriers is especially important for students who need financial aid and must navigate work, family, and other responsibilities to pursue college degrees, Munn noted. This describes many graduates. Aurora Public Schools is the fifth-largest district in Colorado, serving about 40,000 students in more than 60 schools. The district has a notably diverse population, with students from more than 130 countries who speak more than 160 languages; many are among the first in their families to pursue college.

Providing students with educational options and support is central to the district's ability to realize its strategic goals: that each student will have a plan for the future; that each will have skills to implement the plan; and that each will have credentials needed to open doors. "It's the district's vision that every student shape a successful future," Munn said.





That vision resonates with Becky Takeda-Tinker, president and chief executive officer of CSU Global. The online university launched in 2007 to provide flexible, affordable, high-caliber degree programs, tailored for working students who want to enter – or advance in – promising career fields. Takeda-Tinker often notes that the fully online model does not meet the needs of all college learners. Yet for an increasing number of modern learners, online education is a critical path to degrees that unlock career opportunities, simultaneously promoting workforce development and the economy.

Since CSU Global began, more than 18,000 students have completed certificates, bachelor's degrees, and master's degrees through the online university. Nearly 20,000 students are now enrolled in its 45 degree and certificate programs. About 40 percent of those students are in Colorado; others live across the nation and around the world. With its mission of providing career-relevant degree programs for nontraditional learners, CSU Global seeks innovations in the delivery of its courses and in the partnerships it forms to help fulfill student and workforce needs. The approach has resulted in its No. 8 national ranking among “Best Online Bachelor's Programs,” according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

An interest in innovation led to the new partnership with Aurora Public Schools. “This really continues our mission of providing access to higher education for students who choose not to pursue a traditional college education because of financial limitations, work demands, and personal responsibilities,” Takeda-Tinker said. “We believe our partnership will make it easier for students to pursue their goals and will help provide positive change for students and families in the community of Aurora.”

That big idea took on personal meaning when Takeda-Tinker met the first Golden Eagle Scholars and their parents and guardians at an orientation session last summer. “It was wonderful,” she said. “The parents and guardians were especially excited because they understand the enormity of having college in reach for their kids. It is an awesome feeling to help move those students forward and to help make college education a reality for them.”

Aliya Hayes, a graduate of Vista PEAK Preparatory, is another student in the first cohort of Golden Eagle Scholars. She hopes to provide vision care in the field of optometry, an interest inspired in part by her mom, who works as a medical imaging technician. “She always talks about all the interesting things she does and how she is really helping people,” Hayes said. “I want to do that – help people.”

Hayes has already taken sociology and literature classes through CSU Global and has managed her course work while increasing her hours at the sandwich shop where she works. With a full scholarship and her first college courses successfully completed, Hayes is feeling optimistic about her future. “I looked at the tuition at a lot of schools, and I thought, ‘Gosh, I’ll never be able to afford that,’” she said. “All of a sudden, I’m thinking, ‘I know what I am doing for the next four years.’ So far, it’s been great.”

For Ryan Baranovics, college seemed impossible before he graduated from Aurora Central High School last spring. Then, he learned he had been awarded a Golden Eagle Scholarship. “Going to college fulfills a dream I have always had,” Baranovics said. “I am excited and scared, but most of all, I am grateful.” ♦



Opposite: Aliya Hayes, in the first cohort of Golden Eagle Scholars, is using her full-ride scholarship to prepare for a career in the medical field of optometry. Above: President Becky Takeda-Tinker works in the new CSU Global office building on the Aurora Public Schools Community Campus.



A woman with short grey hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and jeans, is leaning over a black metal wagon filled with red and yellow apples. She is in an orchard with many apple trees in the background. The ground is covered with gravel.

*Amanda McQuade harvests apples in an orchard at CSU's Western Colorado Research Center near Grand Junction. She started a community program that uses fruits and vegetables grown at the center as the basis for public education about nutrition. The produce harvested goes to local hunger-relief programs to help people in need.*

## FARM TO FOOD BANK

*It takes an alliance to relieve hunger and educate a community*

THE SUN was starting to crank from bake to broil on a Sunday morning in August, as a gang of wagon-pulling volunteers headed into a vegetable plot at Colorado State University's Western Campus near Grand Junction.

Over the next two hours, these teachers, nurses, retirees, and students would rifle through vines searching out prime cucumbers and watermelons. They would cheerfully form bucket brigades to load the harvest onto trucks. Then, this fresh produce – along with more fruits and vegetables picked by other volunteer crews – would be delivered to local food banks, soup kitchens, and schools to help people struggling with poverty and hunger. Some of the produce would go by semi-trucks to Food Bank of the Rockies in Denver for distribution across 14 other counties.

During the course of the harvest season, from July to October, volunteers would spend 820 hours in university plots and orchards near the foot of Grand Mesa. They would harvest and deliver more than 97,000 pounds of fresh produce – apples, peaches, melons, peppers, squash, tomatoes, and more – to people in need on Colorado's Western Slope. At the same time, 800 local schoolchildren would visit the fields to learn about food and nutrition, often fixing meals in a CSU teaching kitchen with fruits and veggies they had picked. Paid college interns would meantime log nearly 1,600 hours of work-based learning about dietetics, food insecurity, and community engagement.

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BY NANCY LOFHOLM | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEC JACOBSON

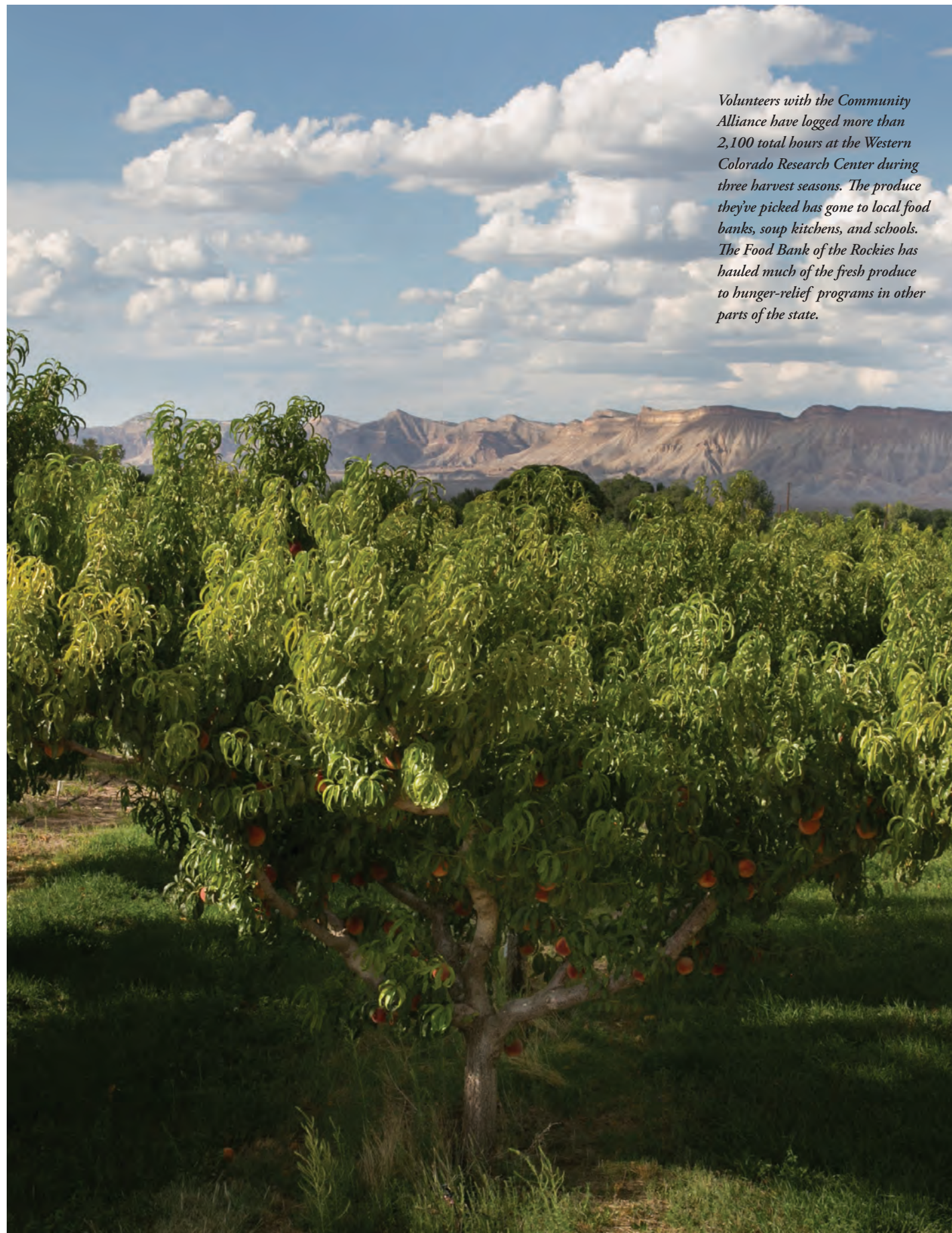




*The Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief started in 2017. In three growing seasons, volunteers have harvested nearly 271,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables from CSU orchards and garden plots. That's almost 136 tons of produce to help people coping with poverty and hunger.*







*Volunteers with the Community Alliance have logged more than 2,100 total hours at the Western Colorado Research Center during three harvest seasons. The produce they've picked has gone to local food banks, soup kitchens, and schools. The Food Bank of the Rockies has hauled much of the fresh produce to hunger-relief programs in other parts of the state.*

The buzzing activity was all part of the Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief, a program established two years ago on CSU's Western Campus. It has quickly gained notice as a model for connecting the university's agricultural resources to community education and problem-solving in the spheres of food, science, and hunger relief. Indeed, Colorado State recognized the alliance as its 2018-2019 best emerging program for community-engaged scholarship. The Colorado Department of Education recently commended the Community Alliance for exemplifying valuable partnerships with local schools.

This farm-to-food bank program – with its notable facets in education – is a significant first for the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station and its Western Colorado Research Center. The station, like those tied to land-grant universities nationwide, has been a core part of Colorado State University since the late 1800s. Its statewide research centers quite literally sow science: They raise crops and livestock using emerging knowledge and technologies, then offer test findings to benefit Colorado farmers and ranchers. The process helps yield economic success and environmental sustainability tailored to the state's agricultural industry and its soil, water, and climatic conditions.

Hunger relief represents a new chapter – linking production research to community education and acute food needs. The project is especially meaningful in its home base of Mesa County, where one in four families with young children lives in poverty, according to the 2017 American Community Survey.

The program began after an idea whirlwind in steel-toed work boots arrived on the Western Campus with a proposal. Amanda McQuade, with a Ph.D. in cellular and molecular biology, had been running a small food collection and distribution program from her home in Grand Junction. She saw the potential to do much more with the help of CSU's Western Colorado Research Center.

The research center – in a region well-known for peaches and wine grapes – began in 1922 to test tree fruit varieties and methods in water and orchard management; its faculty-led research later expanded to wine grapes. With limited manpower, getting the center's output to consumers was a secondary concern; efforts to harvest and deliver food had been spotty, costly, and often resulted in produce decomposing back into the soil in research fields.

McQuade had an idea: She considered all the fresh food and expertise at the university research center and imagined these resources as a catalyst for easing hunger and engaging with communities in new ways. She devised a wide-ranging plan that would tap volunteers and partners to get fresh produce from university fields and orchards to needy consumers, while also educating people – starting with schoolchildren – about nutrition and healthy eating. The program would relieve hunger and create a new appreciation for where food comes from.

Her plan would require lots of help. So McQuade enlisted dozens of volunteers and support from the Mesa County school district, regional philanthropic groups, such as the Western Colorado Community Foundation, and other individuals and agencies. She raised \$100,000 from donors to establish new vegetable plots alongside research orchards. With this network, McQuade formed the Community Alliance

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*Food pantries nationwide often urgently need high-quality, nutritious produce. The Community Food Bank of Grand Junction, shown here, is an important outlet for fruit and vegetables grown at CSU's Western Colorado Research Center at Orchard Mesa. The program "has transformed our clients' accessibility to fresh produce," the food bank's director said. One-third of the produce dispensed here goes to children.*





*Grand Valley Catholic Outreach is a key partner in the Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief. Here, volunteers use CSU produce to prepare nutritious midday meals for people in need.*



for Education and Hunger Relief. Since 2017, the alliance has been part of CSU's Western Colorado Research Center at Orchard Mesa, on the recently expanded Western Campus that includes newly added offices, classrooms, and a teaching kitchen.

"It was easy to give Amanda the go-ahead for this. Her plan had all the elements to be an effective way for CSU to get more involved with the community and to present agriculture in a positive way," said Greg Litus, manager of the research center, who hired McQuade to lead the alliance.

During the three growing seasons since it began, the farm-to-food bank program has harvested and donated nearly 271,000 pounds of fresh produce for people in need. That's nearly 136 tons of fruits and vegetables for hunger relief. The food goes to shopping bins at food banks, to salad bars at schools, and into cooking pots at centers that feed the hungry.

But that's not the program's only undertaking. The Community Al-

liance for Education and Hunger Relief has three layers, each with multiple programs and partnerships; all are rooted in university fields and orchards. The alliance works to feed community members facing food insecurity, those who might not know where their next meals are coming from and who often are unable to afford nutritious meals. It also provides public education about food, nutrition, and hunger. The alliance additionally provides college internships focused on agriculture, food insecurity, STEM education, and community-based nutrition.

McQuade and her collaborators have built these services bit by bit, involving multiple schools, health care professionals, employment services, churches, nutrition experts, social-service organizations, and even community corrections facilities. Hundreds of volunteers respond to her emails and Facebook posts seeking help with harvesting.

The effort to feed the needy is taking off in an area that can really use it. The Grand Valley is a dichotomy: It's a fertile place along the Colorado River, where so much food is grown; yet many people don't have access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The median household income in

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*More than 2,600 schoolkids have visited CSU's Western Campus during the past three growing seasons to learn about farming, food, and nutrition while picking produce in university gardens and orchards. Nearly half of all children in Mesa County schools qualify for free and reduced-cost lunches, a barometer of poverty and hunger in the community.*







*During field trips, youngsters often harvest fruits and vegetables then participate in taste tests and lessons about food and nutrition that dovetail with STEM curriculum at school.*

Mesa County is \$52,000, according to the 2017 American Community Survey. That compares to \$65,000 in Colorado as a whole, a 25 percent gap. Nearly half of all schoolchildren in Mesa County qualify for free and reduced-cost lunches. In one school, 92 percent of students qualify, a distressing barometer of local poverty and hunger.

The need was evident last summer at the Community Food Bank of Grand Junction, the seat of Mesa County. The food bank was a hive of activity on a weekday morning, as clients filled carts and donors dropped off loads of out-of-date food from grocery stores. The agency provides nearly 300,000 pounds of food annually – a third of it going to children.

“This has transformed our clients’ accessibility to fresh produce. We can offer them a shopping experience that mirrors what they might get at the grocery store,” said Marsha Kosteva, executive director of the food bank, after receiving a load of top-quality cucumbers, peppers, and tomatoes grown at the Western Colorado Research Center. In fact, food banks nationwide report that fresh produce is always in high demand but short supply.

Quality is a key part of McQuade’s vision. The Community Alliance does not donate throwaway produce. “I want the quality to reflect CSU, and I want to treat the recipients with dignity,” she explained. At another drop-off point, Grand Valley Catholic Outreach, workers waved a vegetable-laden pickup ahead of other vehicles dropping off items from gro-

cery stores and bakeries. “You’ve got the good stuff,” an excited outreach worker said, as he directed the CSU truck to the door.

Catholic Outreach coordinator Angela Walsh said her cooks look forward to weekly harvest-season deliveries from the CSU gardens and orchards. The outreach kitchen uses the donated fruits and vegetables to make midday meals for people in need. In late August, the kitchen received brightly colored watermelons and cucumbers, fresh-picked by volunteers with the Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief. “This is beautiful stuff,” Walsh said. “We are so used to getting stuff that’s compromised. It is really a treat to get something so fresh and delicious.”

Natalia Semeraro completed an internship at the CSU research center last summer, after earning a degree in nutrition science at the University of California at Berkeley. As part of her internship, she delivered fresh produce, a task she loved because it allowed her to see the excitement over food she helped grow and harvest – and she knew it would contribute to people’s health. “It’s a major privilege to be able to eat a balanced meal, and this helps. Fresh food is the most challenging thing for many people,” Semeraro said, as she pulled up to her next delivery at Child & Migrant Services in Palisade, east of Grand Junction. There, the kitchen staff smiled broadly as they welcomed a load of colorful peppers and watermelons, which would be used in meals for migrant workers and their families.

*Continued on Page 62*



*Kids often get to prepare produce they’ve picked in the teaching kitchen on CSU’s Western Campus, a hands-on approach that helps youngsters see how to put nutrition lessons into action in their own homes.*





CSU President Joyce McConnell started in July and leads a campus of nearly 35,000 students. As she was officially invested with her leadership role in November, she said, "Let's move forward, courageous in our actions, strategic in our thinking, and prepared to transform in order to meet the challenges of our rapidly changing world." Photo: John Eisele / Colorado State University

## GROWING A LAND-GRANT LEGACY

PRESIDENT JOYCE MCCONNELL SETS A COURSE FOR COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY IN ITS 150TH YEAR

In her first address to campus, President Joyce McConnell urged Colorado State University students, faculty, and staff to embrace "courageous strategic transformation" – to move well beyond the predictability of strategic planning and to instead commit to bold, high-impact action.

"It signals actual change," McConnell said of her concept, during the President's Fall Address to a crowd of hundreds on the historic campus Oval in September. "It speaks to the unexpected, to the extraordinary, even the impossible. That's what we're aiming for at CSU."

Her charge came shortly after McConnell stepped into the top leadership role at Colorado State, becoming the land-grant university's 15th president during its 150th anniversary year. She was officially invested with the role during an academic ceremony on Nov. 14, after being hired last spring by the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System. McConnell is the university's first female president. She succeeds Tony Frank, who now serves as full-time chancellor of the CSU System, which includes Colorado State in Fort Collins, CSU Global, and CSU-Pueblo.

McConnell's call for informed and nimble change encompassed all aspects of the System's flagship university: academic curriculum, research and scholarly activity, administrative processes, and the campus climate for people with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints. "Courageous strategic transformation means moving forward with our minds and our hearts wide open to new ideas, to new ways of doing what we need to do," she said. "It means including all who must be included and accounted for in our community and in our world."

In outlining her vision, McConnell echoed both the optimism and the urgency that have undergirded Colorado State University since its founding in February 1870. Funded in part with grants of public land, the university was established to ready students from working-class families for professional success and improved quality of life; their college educations, based on scientific and classical studies, prepared students to devise critically needed solutions in agriculture, engineering, and many other economically vital fields. Those tenets endure today, even as the university and the scope of its work have grown dramatically, the new president noted

in her first major campus address earlier this fall.

In her initial months, McConnell has often underscored the land-grant principle of providing talented students from all backgrounds with access to excellent education. The concept is central to a range of contemporary issues, from college affordability to campus incidents of racism and bias, which have erupted at Colorado State and other campuses across the state and nation. After two such incidents at the start of the fall semester, McConnell announced the launch of a CSU Race, Bias, and Equity Initiative aimed at prioritizing the safety and supporting the success of students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

"As a land-grant institution founded on the principle of access, we cannot turn our backs on any of our students," she said, while announcing the initiative during the President's Fall Address. "We owe it to all our students to create an environment in which they can flourish and succeed."

Here, too, McConnell urged a commitment to courageous strategic transformation as the basis of problem-solving: "We will set the standard across the nation and the world for what a great land-grant university looks like in the 21st century. Colorado State has a proud history of 150 years of work on behalf of the people of Colorado and of the world. Let's join to up our game!" she exhorted the crowd.

McConnell has honed her knowledge of the land-grant mission during a career in higher education. Trained as a lawyer, McConnell grew up near Washington, D.C., and worked for 23 years at West Virginia University. Like Colorado State, WVU is a land-grant school that has grown into a top-tier public research university. McConnell started there as a law professor, became a respected dean of the WVU law school, and then served as provost and vice president for academic affairs, the No. 2 campus leader.

At CSU, McConnell has a big task: The university is riding a wave of momentum, with remarkable gains in enrollment, graduation rates, research and scholarly activity, fundraising, and campus construction. It has a \$1.2 billion annual budget, student enrollment approaching 35,000, total faculty and staff of 7,600, a fundraising campaign that has surpassed \$1 billion, and statewide Extension offices serving every county in Colorado.

BY COLEMAN CORNELIUS



In the early weeks of her presidency, McConnell sat down with *State* magazine to discuss her new job.

**STATE:** We talked about some of the metrics that describe the scope of operations at Colorado State. What attracted you to the position of president here?

**McCONNELL:** Well, those data points are very similar to WVU. In my job as provost there, I was both internally and externally facing, and that gave me a lot of insight into the complexity of a university this size, what it means to be a state's land-grant, and all the responsibility that comes with it. There were also certain aspects of Colorado State that really spoke to me. It is a historic land-grant, and it is classified as a Carnegie Research 1 university, so it takes its research very seriously. And it is very authentic in its messaging about the importance of access and success for all students. CSU is also really future-focused in its work on sustainability. All of those factors are very important to me. Looking at it as a whole, it just seemed like the most perfect fit I could have imagined.

**STATE:** You are the first woman to become president at CSU. To put that in perspective, the American Council on Education reports that 30 percent of U.S. college presidents are women. What does it mean to you personally, and what do you think it means for students, university employees, alumni, donors, and other stakeholders?

**McCONNELL:** I don't think I initially understood the impact of being the first woman president at CSU. My focus was on being the best president I could be. Then I realized being the first woman has its own significance. Everyone around me was telling me, "This is amazing. There aren't that many women presidents of large universities." But the moment it really clicked for me is when my 33-year-old daughter called, and her friends were with her. She said, "My mom just became the president of Colorado State University," and I could hear these wonderful women just yelling and screaming and saying, "That's incredible!" That was the moment when I went, "Oh, this really has meaning." It's not just for me, not just for my family, but for women who are looking at, "What can I do in my life? What is possible?" This delivered a message that it is possible.

**STATE:** How do you think your role as CSU's first woman president relates to our land-grant mission in access to education?

**McCONNELL:** I believe the strength of pioneering women was really reflected in the fact that Colorado State, as a land-grant, was open to women from the very beginning. That speaks volumes about the independent spirit in Colorado. I think access is so important because if a student has what it takes to succeed at this university, they need to be here. They need to be here because this excellent education will not only transform their life, it will transform their family's lives for generations to come. President Lin-

coln signed the Morrill Act in 1862 and created land-grant universities so that higher education would be available to all people; it wouldn't be just wealthy people, who could afford private universities, and that remains a mission today. Think about the power of that. It's awe-inspiring.

**STATE:** What other aspects of our land-grant roots and mission remain especially important 150 years later?

**McCONNELL:** The language in the Morrill Act of 1862 refers to colleges established to teach agriculture, the mechanical arts, and other scientific and classical studies that help people develop practical solutions to problems. I think the greatest legacy for land-grants – 150 years later for Colorado State – is that same focus on, "How do we solve the world's problems?" We've seen an evolution in what it means to take education, research, and service to improve the lives of people who live in Colorado, the United States, and the world, yet that land-grant mission of local discovery with global impact is something that has really lasted, and we see it every day on campus.

The connection of CSU to the state of Colorado also remains very important. I truly believe the return on investment for state funds used in educating students returns over and over and over again, even with something as straightforward as expanded tax base from the higher earnings of college-educated students. Given Colorado's trend toward more high-tech industry – including high-tech needs in agriculture, for crop production, protein production, and animal care – we have a huge responsibility to Colorado and its economy to make sure we are meeting needs in research and workforce education.

**STATE:** You touched on investment in higher education, which raises the topic of tuition costs. This academic year, tuition remains unchanged for undergraduates who are Colorado residents. But over the past couple decades, CSU and other land-grant universities have faced decreasing funding from states. How do you communicate the problems to families faced with rising tuition, if not from year to year, then over time?

**McCONNELL:** I am grateful to the governor and state Legislature for support that allows us to hold tuition flat for resident undergraduates this year. When I've talked to alumni, they didn't always know tuition was inexpensive when they went to school because the majority of university funding came from the state, which kept tuition low. Over time, declining state support has shifted the tuition burden onto students and their families. For a Colorado resident graduating from CSU, the average debt is about \$25,000. What I share with parents is, that's the price of a car, and it's reasonable indebtedness for graduates just starting out. There are ways to go to college and for it to be affordable. In the end, studies show that every person who has an undergraduate degree as opposed to a high school degree is going to earn, on average, a million dollars more over a lifetime. That's a good investment. ♦



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BORDERLANDS *Continued from Page 35*

band, two sons, and daughter had been attacked in a raid, likely in 1861. The men and boys were murdered, and the Navajo woman and her daughter were abducted. They were sold to Padre Antonio José Martínez, a Spanish priest in Taos, and were renamed. The Navajo woman tried three times to escape enslavement, but each time was recaptured, Archuleta learned through spotty records and a narrative published by a descendant of the priest. When slavery was abolished in the United States, Martínez gained legal guardianship of the Navajo woman, extending her captivity; after the priest's death, she became a servant for his family and had children with a Mexican laborer for the household. Census records suggest Rosario was 100 years old when she died in 1930 in Ocate, New Mexico.

"When I came across this information, it really changed who I thought I was," said Archuleta, who soon discovered that Native American slavery was a widespread but little-known part of Southwestern history, adding painful nuance to Hispanic identity. "I really am mestiza – half conqueror and half conquered. It's been a really difficult thing to process."

After graduating from CSU-Pueblo, Archuleta became an operations manager for History Colorado community museums and felt compelled to share her great-great-grandmother's story as part of the Borderlands of Southern Colorado project. "It's a different type of slavery that isn't usually discussed in our nation's history," Archuleta explains in an exhibit video at El Pueblo History Museum. "These types of resilient ancestors braved these conditions in order for us to be where we are today."

Native enslavement is a critical missing piece of continental history, Andrés Reséndez writes in his book *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, a finalist for the 2016 National Book Award for Nonfiction. "If we were to add up all the Indian slaves taken in the New World from the time of Columbus to the end of the nineteenth century, the figure would run somewhere between 2.5 and 5 million slaves," Reséndez, a professor and historian at the University of California, Davis, writes. (He will be a featured lecturer at the History Colorado Center in Denver on Jan. 20.)

Other forms of survival and resilience are highlighted elsewhere in the exhibit at El Pueblo History Museum; for instance, in the story of Doña Bernarda Mejía Velasquez, who emigrated in 1912 from Mexico to Pueblo with her children and settled in the Mexican American enclave of Salt Creek. Doña Bernarda, depicted in a larger-than-life panel at the museum, was a renowned *curandera*, or healer; she delivered hundreds of babies and used traditional *remedios* to aid community members. To support her family, Doña Bernarda also was a baker and bootlegger. On the night before her death in 1971, she baked 17 apple pies, Vera Esquibel, her granddaughter, recalled.

"It makes me very proud to see her at the museum," Esquibel, who is 78 years old, said. "She was one tough cookie, my grandmother. She saved so many people. She's in heaven."

Another influential woman highlighted in the exhibit, María Teresita Sandoval, helped establish El Pueblo, the people's town, on the



*José Ortega is a lifelong resident of Pueblo who graduated from CSU-Pueblo with a degree in history and Chicano studies. He is an exhibit and collections coordinator at El Pueblo History Museum and a key contributor to the Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative. Photo: Mary Neiberg*

banks of the Arkansas River in 1842. El Pueblo began as a trading post and small settlement; it was abandoned several years later, after an attack by bands of Ute and Jicarilla Apache. Yet, reflecting the dynamics of a borderland, Pueblo rose again, reconfigured, in 1859.

These and other aspects of regional history will be the focus of two Borderlands of Southern Colorado workshops in the San Luis Valley next summer. The sessions are designed for K-12 educators who, in turn, might incorporate such cultural complexities into their class lessons.

Archuleta, who did not learn in school about the shocking issue of Native American slavery, and had little inkling of her connection to it, encouraged a new and broader view of regional history. "Being able to identify yourself and your story means knowing who you are," she said, contemplating the exhibit at El Pueblo History Museum. "It feels very rewarding to have a young person come in here and gain a sense of who they are and where they come from." ♦



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## FARM Continued from Page 55

Back at CSU's Western Campus, pre-schoolers lined up to wash their hands before trooping to the research center's five acres of apple trees. They swung plastic buckets, looking from apples to parents and teachers for guidance. "Is this a good one?" Stella Wilson asked. She studied a single hanging apple in a constellation of red fruit before deciding it could go into her bucket. "It makes a whole world of difference to see this start to finish. They love apples now," said Lyn Hazelhurst, who came with her grandchildren. She pointed to 4-year-old Carter Garcia, proudly lugging a bucket of apples. "He knows what harvest means now," Hazelhurst said.

*"If you pick it, you  
will want to eat it."*

— Anabel Yu, student

Joy Davis, a teacher at New Emerson School, a nearby magnet school focused on science, technology, engineering, and math, said the orchard field trip was just part of the learning experience for her elementary students. The previous week, they had learned about the history, parts, and nutritional benefits of apples. When they headed back to school from the orchard, the students would make applesauce and dry their apples. "It is just really neat for us to see all this come to fruition," Davis said.

On a harvest-season evening, another group of youngsters took to the vegetable plot and orchard to pick foods they would help prepare for a meal in the campus kitchen. Their pediatricians and other health care workers were with the kids as part of a healthy lifestyle program for youngsters who are overweight or have diabetes or prediabetes. The monthly dinner also served as a nutrition lesson — and it was a special occasion for the kids, who got to harvest their food before preparing it. "If you pick it, you



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## FARM

will want to eat it,” Anabel Yu observed, as she studied a bounty of hanging peaches.

Later, inside a kitchen permeated with the scent of fresh produce and ringing with the chatter of junior cooks, Katy Brown, a registered nurse with the pediatric program, directed teams as she explained simple salsa recipes made with watermelon, tomatoes, peaches, and peppers. These were new taste combinations for most of the kids. And their role chopping fruits and vegetables was a novel experience.

As the kids jostled for squash, bean, and eggplant tacos, Brown and Dr. Cassana Littler, a local pediatrician, were all smiles. “They get really excited to try new things because they planted and picked them,” Littler said of the youngsters in the kitchen. Some kids dug in and cleaned their plates; others were holdouts, skeptical of this new take on tacos. All went home toting bags and boxes of fresh fruits and veggies, along with printed recipes.

During a field trip the next day, Ann Duncan, a registered dietitian with CSU Extension, led local fourth-graders in tasting apples and tomatoes while discussing the importance of access to fresh fruits and veggies. “I help teach them to respect their food,” Duncan said. “A lot of them don’t have agricultural roots or much knowledge about where food comes from.” The kids took handpicked tomatoes back to school to share through the salad bar.

In the flurry of activities that keeps McQuade hustling, she has found time to spread her concept through presentations for other land-grant universities. “She is helping other stations with how to do this,” Litus said. “It will be interesting to see if this can grow nationally. Amanda is a real catalyst.” Leaders of the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station likewise are considering how the hunger-relief and education model developed on the Western Slope might be applied elsewhere in the state. They’re also looking for ways the program can be incorporated into CSU student and faculty research and scholarly projects.

Meantime, McQuade coordinates the alliance while also working at the ground level – often in the dirt with Mesa County schoolkids. She has an 11-year-old and 8-year-old twins of her own, and she knows that getting on a child’s level is important, especially when challenging them to eat something they’ve never tried.

“Have you ever tasted one of these?” she asked Landry Borgman, a fourth-grader who looked askance at cherry tomatoes collected in a vegetable plot.

Landry shook her head.

“Would you like to?” McQuade asked the girl.

Another shake.

“Do you want to try one together?” McQuade asked again. “If you don’t like it, you can spit it out. Let’s do it together. One, two, three!”

Then, Landry popped a sweet cherry tomato into her mouth and chewed thoughtfully. From that point on, she gobbled one little tomato for every few plopped into her bucket.

And the Community Alliance had another convert. ♦



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