

CU INDEPENDENT

magazine

FALL 2019

WHAT DOES
TRUMP'S
EXECUTIVE
ORDER
MEAN
FOR FREE
SPEECH
AT CU?

INSIDE:

WILL VILL GRAD RATES
REGENTS ON MARK KENNEDY
Q&A: RICK GEORGE
CWA JAZZ CONCERT

Illustration by Shiyue Zhang



cmci

COLLEGE OF MEDIA
COMMUNICATION
AND INFORMATION

Undergraduate degrees in six specialties:

Communication • Critical Media Practices
Information Science • Journalism
Media Studies • Strategic Communication

colorado.edu/cmci



Think. Innovate. Create.



University of Colorado **Boulder**



@cubouldercmci

INSIDE...

2 NEWS:

REMEMBERING BOULDER FIGURES

4 *WILL VILL GRADUATION RATES*

6 *CLIMATE CHANGE STRIKE*

8 *MARK KENNEDY*

13 VISUALS: SPRING SEMESTER IN PHOTOS

14 FREE SPEECH AT CU

20 OPINION:

FRATERNITY DRUGGINGS

STUDENT JOURNALISM

25 SPORTS:

RICK GEORGE

28 ARTS:

CWA JAZZ CONCERT

CU Independent magazine is produced by students, for the CU and Boulder community. All of the content in this semi-annual newsmagazine was created between January and May 2019, during the University of Colorado Boulder's Spring 2019 semester, and updated for timeliness. This Masthead reflects the Fall 2019 positions of those involved with the creation of this publication.

Contributors, in last name alphabetical order:

Nigel Amstock (Outreach Supervisor), Amanda Boyer (Staff Writer), Bri Barnum (Outgoing Copy Editor), Devan Daley (Copy Editor), Isabella Fincher (Assistant Arts Editor), Jake Havoc (Comic Artist), Anna Haynes (Senior News Editor), Carina Julig (Outgoing Managing Editor), Fiona Matson (Outgoing Multimedia Editor), Hannah Metzger (Managing Editor), Ryan Northrop (Photographer), Casey Paul (Assistant Photo Editor), Angela Smith (Photographer), Robert Tann (Editor-in-Chief), Shiyue Zhang (Illustrator, Cover Artist)

For comments, corrections, questions, and article submissions, email tips@cuindependent. The CU Independent reserves the right to moderate any and all submitted content and responses.

“Inclusipedia” brings underrepresented people of Boulder to light

By Isabella Fincher,
assistant arts editor

Wikipedia, one of the world’s most visited websites, had helped shape historical narratives online. However, the site has gained controversy for its lack of diversity when it comes to its editors. Only 17% of Wikipedia’s profiles are for women. Sites like Wikiproject Women in Red are trying to change “one article at a time” by increasing the amount of content about women.

At the Museum of Boulder, three women are tackling this racial and gender bias head-on through their project “Inclusipedia.” Inclusipedia recognizes influential Boulder County women and African Americans through Wikipedia profiles.

“I love learning about new women and people of color that I hadn’t heard of before,” said museum intern Liliana Rae Elliot. “I think it has brought awareness of women’s and people of color’s historical impact upon the Boulder community.”

In April 2018, Elliott, a University of Colorado Boulder student majoring in history, co-founded Inclusipedia alongside Megan Moriarty, the museum’s director of community engagement, and Kassondra Cloos, a freelance writer and activist.

“I started Inclusipedia because I was

discouraged by the lack of information about prominent Boulder women,” Moriarty said.

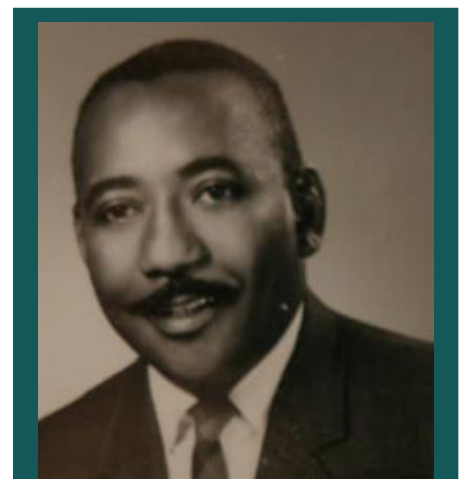
Five articles have been published under the Inclusipedia project, with 21 more in the works. Two published

articles are for historical figures: Mary Rippon, the first female professor at CU, who started teaching in 1878, and Lucile Buchanan, the first African American woman to graduate from CU, graduating in 1918. CU media professor Polly McLean has published a biography of Buchanan, following 10 years of exhuming the CU alum’s history.

Two other articles are for more recent Boulder figures: Clela Rorex and Penfield Tate II. Clela Rorex was the first person to issue a same-sex marriage license in the U.S. in 1975. After retiring in 2011, she continues to be an LGBTQ ally. Penfield Tate II was a local African American politician, who was the first and only African American mayor of



Lucile B. Buchanan, the first black woman to graduate from CU Boulder. Photo courtesy of CU Boulder.



Penfield Tate II, the first and only African American mayor of Boulder. Photo courtesy of CU Boulder.



Clela Rorex, the first person to issue a same-sex marriage license in the U.S. Photo courtesy of Carnegie Branch Library Collection.



Mary Rippon, the first female professor at CU. Photo courtesy of CU Boulder.

Boulder. His son, Penfield Tate III, was the vice chairman of the Colorado Democratic Party in the 1990s, as well as a member of the Colorado Senate and two-time candidate for mayor of Denver, running in both 2003 and 2019.

Elliott said creating Wikipedia profiles for women and people of color can be difficult because they are underrepresented in academia and in the media. According to Wikipedia's notability requirements, an individual must be referenced by published secondary sources. Original research, such as a university thesis and primary sources from the time period, is not sufficient.

"The most challenging part of the work is finding enough detailed secondary sources to prove to Wikipedia that the person is worthy," Elliott said. "Wikipedia's rules are often quite tough, and it can be hard to prove the worthiness of women and people of color because often there are few things published about them."

To involve the Boulder community in Inlusipedia, Moriarty and Elliott have also

organized several community edit-a-thons, including one at CU's College of Music on March 9.

During these edit-a-thons, attendees learn how to edit existing profiles and create new ones. A new user-friendly update means editors do not need to know coding to contribute to Wikipedia, so less technical knowledge is needed to get involved.

"I love the outreach component of the project, where we teach others about the inequality on Wikipedia and provide them with a platform of how to work to solve this issue," Elliott said.

Moriarty said that while the impact of the project may be small for now, she hopes the project will increase awareness and empower people to take action.

"I hope folks realize how limited our current historical narratives are right now because they are so focused on the accomplishments of white men," Moriarty said. "I hope they learn that they can make a huge difference and even change that narrative by diversifying the content on Wikipedia."

Students living in Will Vill have lower retention and graduation rates

By Carina Julig,
former managing editor

Students who spend their freshman year in Williams Village residence halls are more likely to leave school without completing a degree than students who live on the main campus, according to data from the University of Colorado.

The university's Office of Data Analytics (ODA) keeps a record of graduation rates broken down by residence hall. The data shows that students who live in dorms on CU's main campus during their freshman year have consistently higher retention and graduation rates than those who live in Williams Village.

Williams Village, colloquially referred to as Will Vill, is an extension of CU Boulder located several blocks from the main campus. It is used mostly to house freshman students and currently consists of five residence halls. Along with residence halls, Williams Village also has a post office and a recreation center, and the Buff Bus provides transportation to the main campus. A new \$48.9 million dining hall, the Village Center, opened in Williams Village in the spring of 2017.

According to the ODA, students who lived in Williams Village their freshman year are less likely to have graduated by the

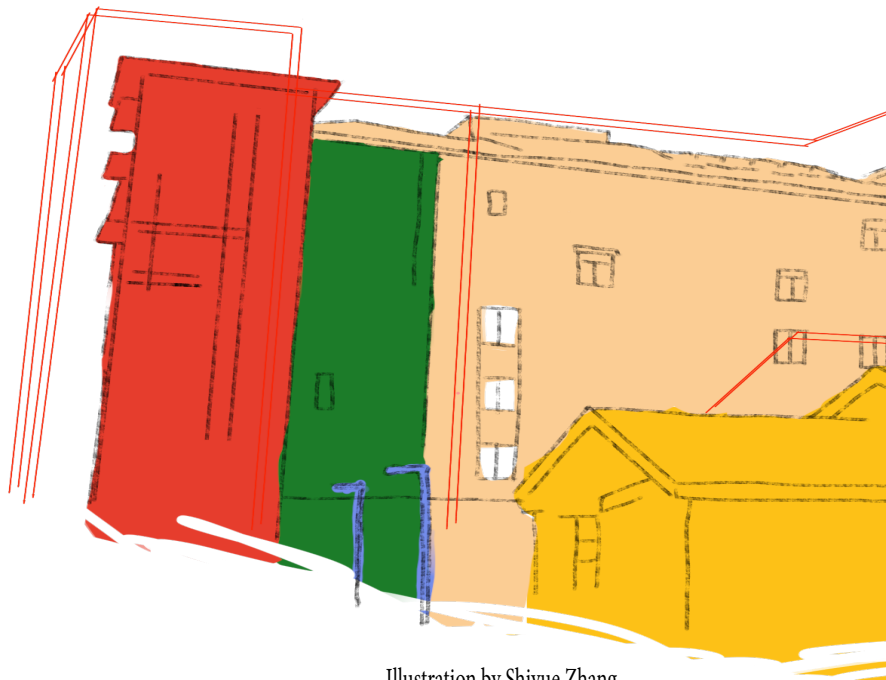


Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

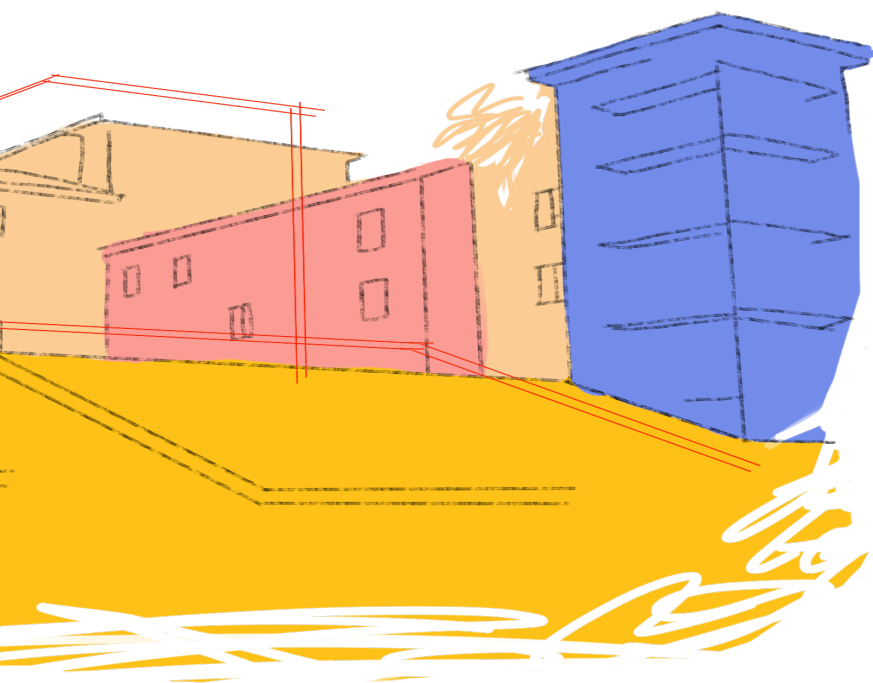
summer of their fourth year than students who lived on the main campus by several percentage points. An analysis for the last five years that data is available for, 2010-2014, shows a consistently lower graduation rate for Williams Village students.

Deborah Mendez-Wilson, a spokesperson for the university, said that CU is aware of the disparity for Williams Village students and is working to mitigate it.

Freshman housing has the greatest impact on second-year retention rates (freshman to sophomore year). Second-year retention has steadily increased for students in Williams Village, but still lags behind those on main campus.

Mendez-Wilson noted that since 2014, Will Vill's second-year retention rate has increased from 81% to 86%, while the rate for main campus increased only two points (86% to 88%). She said that this is a "significant improvement" that will lead to subsequent retention rate increases.

Rates are lower across the board for students of color, who consistently have lower graduation rates than their white counterparts. An Ethnic Living Learning Community residence hall program was created to help give students of color a sense of community on campus,



but despite receiving overwhelmingly positive reports from participants, it was discontinued in the fall of 2017.

“We know we have work ahead of us when it comes to serving the needs of all students, including students of color,” Mendez-Wilson said in a statement.

Regarding the factors that could be driving the residence hall gap, Mendez-Wilson said that “in the past, some students and families have told us that Williams Village is farther away from main campus than they expected, and some students later reported dissatisfaction with their room placement.”

Williams Village is generally home to freshmen who registered for student housing later in the spring or summer before their freshmen year because housing on the main campus fills up first. It’s possible that students who sign up later are also students who are more likely to drop out for a variety of factors (unsure they are ready for college, unsure they want to attend CU, having financial difficulties, etc.). However, there is no data identifying any specific factors.

Mendez-Wilson said that their 2017 and 2018 year-end surveys had reported higher student satisfaction with Williams Village. She suggested that this could be because

of increased services, such as the Village Center, new study and socialization spaces and the health center.

The university is currently building a new residence hall in Williams Village, Williams Village East, that will open in fall 2019. It will architecturally match Williams Village North and will house over 700 students.

“The university is investing more in the Williams Village community to meet students’ needs,” Mendez-Wilson said.

She said that the administration is developing student programs to help build community, including handing out refreshments at the Buff Bus stop, hosting open mics and implementing messaging campaigns on the dorm bulletin boards.

Hall directors in Williams Village organize a range of programs for students. Since implementing these programs, some students have reported looking forward to leaving main campus at the end of the school day, Mendez-Wilson said.

The university is also looking into providing more transportation options from Williams Village, including bikes and rideshare services.

CU is currently conducting a housing master plan assessment that will outline future housing needs and support services. The assessment will run through summer 2019 and will be used to develop the next campus master plan, which is due in 2021.

Williams Village will play a key part in the university’s housing plans as the number of incoming students continues to rise. The number of incoming freshmen has increased year after year; in 2018 CU welcomed its largest-ever freshman class of 6,701. Since main campus is fully developed, Williams Village is the most promising place for the university to build more housing.

Climate Reality Project co-chair is a climate change superhero

By Anna Haynes,
senior news editor

Hundreds of CU students joined in the global fight for climate action this past spring, marching through downtown Boulder with signs that read “I care about my future, why don’t you?” and “Green 4 all.” CU’s Climate Reality Project, a club dedicated to achieving environmental policy reform on the CU Boulder campus through activism, spearheaded the event.

During the march, CU sophomore and Climate Reality Project co-chair Mike Jacobs realized his childhood dream of becoming a climate action superhero, speaking to hundreds about a “choking” planet and “boiling” seas.

“We still have a chance,” Jacobs said. “Sure, our chances are slim. Sure, we’re in for one of the most enduring fights in human history. The way I see it, the harder the challenge, the greater the goal. We have the power.”

The group started with the help of Administrative and Political Liaison Emilie Craig, who insisted on having Jacobs on board after taking Introduction to Environmental Studies with him.

“I knew I couldn’t do it alone,” Craig said. “I knew I needed all the help I could get, and I needed (Jacobs) to help me because (he) really inspired me to change my own personal lifestyle.”

Jacobs, who had been working with the

local Boulder chapter of Earth Guardians, was eager to take on the Climate Reality Project and take “a more collegiate approach to the problem.”

Jacobs said that comic books inspired him as a child to dedicate himself to advocating for others.

“I’ve always looked up to superheroes as idols,” Jacobs said. “There’s nothing more powerful than helping another person.”

During the Youth Climate Strike on March 15, members of both the Climate Reality Project and Earth Guardians pushed CU to pledge to transition to 100% renewable electricity by the year 2030, “to ensure that we youth will have a stable and healthy future and economy.”

“CU Boulder has not yet committed, but CSU has committed to 100% renewable (energy) by 2030, the entire University of California system has committed to carbon neutrality by 2025, and CU is in the capital of renewable energies here in Boulder,” Craig said. “We should be at the forefront of the renewables movement.”

The strike was attended by several politicians and CU administrators, including U.S. Rep. Joe Neguse (D), an early backer of the Green New Deal.

Before the strike, Jacobs saw politicians as “esoteric” and “the gods of society.” Getting them to listen to him felt like an impossible task. Jacobs wants those who feel discouraged from getting involved in activism, however, to stop underestimating their power.

“They came and they listened to me,” Jacobs said. “The more that we as activists start making our voice be heard, the more they listen.”

Another goal of the Climate Reality Project, Jacobs said, is to encourage young people to lobby.

“These are our legislators,” Jacobs said. “They serve us. You can go into their office and lobby for whatever you want. Probably these legislators have never seen a college student come in. I’m sure there have been a couple in history, but nothing compared to the amount of retired people or the amount of oil and gas lobbyists.”

According to Jacobs, young people should become involved in the climate change fight because “it’s not our next generation, it’s us.”

Craig agrees that youth activism is essential to the

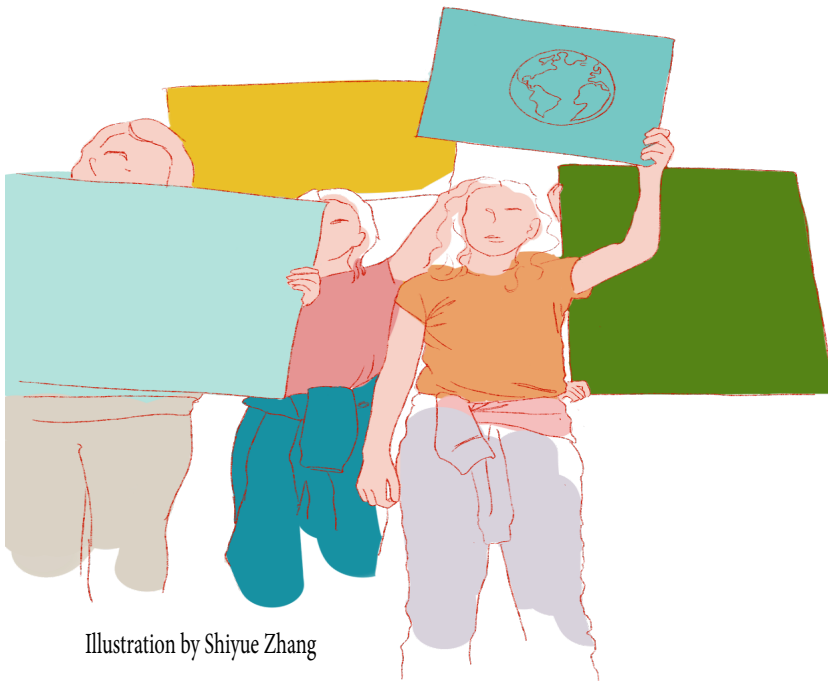


Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

climate fight.

"We are the future, you know?" Craig said. "We have an unbelievable amount of power and voice in this democracy. We're so lucky to have a democracy, but youth are not going to be heard unless they speak out."

Jacobs had postponed his college career to advocate for climate change policy, but is now working towards his degree in order to have a stronger voice in the climate change fight.

"Balance is always a challenge but [Jacobs'] integration is admirable," Max Boykoff, associate professor and director of the Center for Science and Technology Policy said. Jacobs took Introduction to Environmental Studies with Boykoff.

"From the beginning [of the class], he showed purpose and determination to learn as much as he could and to immediately apply it to real-world challenges," Boykoff said. "He seems to be moving purposefully in the world and that is something to value."

While moving with purpose, Jacobs still sees a need for urgency.

"Time is running out," Jacobs said. "Climate change is upon us, and I just feel like the sooner I get that degree,

the sooner ... I have way more authority in this world."

Jacobs has been involved in activism throughout his life, including refugee relief and immigrant rights. When he began learning about climate change, however, he never looked back.

"I quickly realized that this is the single most important fight in human history right now," Jacobs said. "I obviously can't be out there fighting every single fight for every single person; for every refugee, for every immigrant, for every asylum seeker ... However, if I can avert climate change, that would help everyone."

Jacobs' urgency to fight isn't going unnoticed — to Craig, Jacob represents "the heart and soul of youth climate activism."

"He is fighting for the greater good of all, and uses his voice to do so at every given opportunity," Craig said.

Jacobs' work inspires even those outside of the environmental activism world.

"(Jacobs) is extremely dedicated to his environmental activism," said Matt Dulberg, film studies major at CU and close friend of Jacobs.

Dulberg is in the process of filming a documentary about Jacobs, whom he describes as selfless, motivated and outgoing. The film, Dulberg said, is prompted by Jacobs' engaging story of how he got to where he is today.

"[Jacobs] chooses not to accept the destruction of our planet, and he knows that he has the power to stop it," Dulberg said.

While "power" here may not refer to flying or superhuman strength, it is enough for Jacobs.

"It basically lets me live my hero complex," Jacobs said. "I just want to save the world."

Regents reflect on divisive vote to appoint Mark Kennedy as CU president

By Carina Julig,
former managing editor
&
Robert Tann,
editor-in-chief

The University of Colorado's Board of Regents find themselves in a fractured state after a vote along party lines to confirm Mark Kennedy as the next CU president. All five Republican regents voted for Kennedy, while their four Democratic colleagues voted against him. Kennedy, whose Republican voting record while in Congress has been heavily criticized by university students and faculty, assumed office on July 1.

Following the vote, regents grappled with a decision that exacerbated the group's partisan divide, though some deny the influence of politics when it comes to decision making.

"I wasn't looking for a Democrat or a Republican or an Independent," said Regent John Carson (R) on the presidential search process. "I was looking for someone who could lead the university effectively."

Carson said that Kennedy struck him as a "strategic thinker" and believes that regents and the university need a "clear, strategic vision" for initiatives such as fundraising, research and overall academic excellence. While chancellors of the university's campuses have had strategic plans before, one has yet to be enacted by the system president. He added that he still feels "great" about his decision to confirm Kennedy.

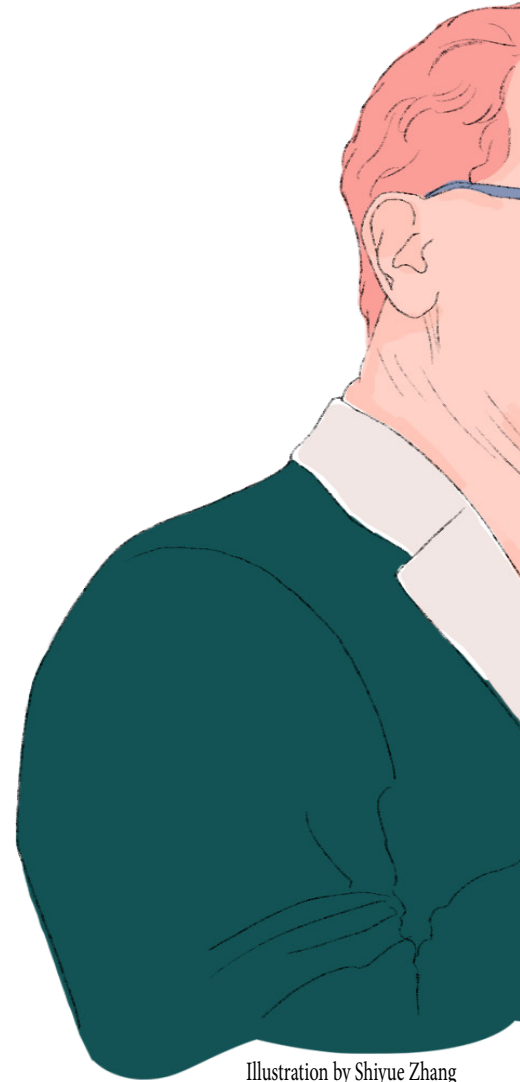


Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

"I supported him all along," Carson said, adding that he believes Kennedy brings a mix of "business," "political" and "academic" experience.

But it is Kennedy's experience that caused public outcry from many across the various CU campuses when he was announced as the sole finalist for the position. In the eyes of some students, being a sole finalist meant that Kennedy's presidency was already a "done deal."

"The fact that there is only one candidate takes away any illusion that the students have a say in who leads our university," said CU junior Lucy Horne.

Kennedy faced heavy criticism over votes he made during his time in the House of Representatives from 2001-2007, where he represented two districts from Minnesota. Kennedy backed and co-sponsored several anti-LGBTQ+ bills aimed at restricting marriage equality for same-sex couples. He also fell under scrutiny for his anti-abortion views and his lack of support for minority aid programs and stem cell



research.

"Essentially, his record leaves me with little reason to believe that he'll actually have students best interests at heart, especially LGBTQ+ students' and students of color," said CU sophomore Ryan Brady.

CU faculty members also expressed concern over Kennedy's views.

"It's really disappointing that they couldn't find a person who wasn't involved in Republican politics to take the position," said CU instructor Steven Frost. "I wish they had somebody who was actually more interested in higher education than political agendas."

Frost, who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community, also felt "uneasy" over Kennedy's votes to define marriage as between a man and a woman and his pro-life stance.

Regent Carson said he was "fine" with the opposition that Kennedy faced but believes it is time to "move forward" and ensure that Kennedy is supported in his role. He assured that being a regent is not a

"partisan position."

"We're all adults here," Carson said. "We know when to set politics aside."

Regents are elected by party to represent each of Colorado's seven congressional districts, with two others elected to represent the state at large. Their political affiliation is included in their title on their main website.

Regent Heidi Ganahl (R) said she is "excited" to work with Kennedy and is pleased with the search process. She assured that the search committee was not partisan, as evidenced by the unanimous 9-0 regent vote to name Kennedy as the finalist.

Ganahl, like Carson, appreciates that citizens are able to have a voice through regents' political elections.

"I believe the board has to come together for the best interests of the university and the state," Ganahl said.

When asked about her thoughts on politics in higher education, Ganahl said it is "part of society today" and that "politics is everywhere."

A partisan board

However, Regent Irene Griego (D), who has been on the board since 2011, felt differently than her Republican colleagues. She said the "reality" is that the board is political.

"Unfortunately, it becomes very partisan," Griego said.

She said that board "votes responsibly" most of the time, but when it comes to a 5-4 vote it is "very obvious" that the decision becomes a political one.

"I personally do not think that we should be making decisions on education and what's best for our students in the state of Colorado based on anyone's politics," Griego said. "I think politics should be left at the door and should not be entering into our decision process. But unfortunately, that does not always happen."

She understands that many states do

not elect their regents by party, and sees partisanship as a drawback for CU's board. Griego also worries that people can use their status as regent as a "platform" for their political ambitions.

When asked about her decision to vote against Kennedy's confirmation, Griego said she felt that the board needed to "pause and reevaluate" their decision to put forward a sole finalist for president. Hearing from students and faculty, she knew about the various concerns around Kennedy. When she heard that some community members felt that Kennedy's presidency was a "done deal" even before the final vote, Griego's perspective on the process changed. Knowing this, Griego said she could not vote for Kennedy.

Ultimately she was "disappointed" that more time was not taken to consider the issues that many shared with her and the rest of the board. Still, she knows it is "important to move on" but hopes that student voices "don't stop."

"It's important for regents to hear those voices," Griego said.

Voices came in the form of protests in the lead up to Kennedy's confirmation.

On April 15, days before Kennedy began his tour of all four CU campuses, over 100 students gathered on Norlin Quadrangle on the Boulder campus to denounce Kennedy.

"His voting record on pretty much everything I represent is abysmal," said graduate student Natalie Sharp, who identifies as a queer woman of color. Sharp held a sign saying "at least CU students know how to Google."

Kennedy wrote an open letter to the university prior to his confirmation in which he stated that his views on same-sex marriage had "evolved" since his time in Congress. However, some students remained skeptical of his claim.

"As a member of the LGBT community, I am tired of people who have contributed to rampant homophobia in politics simply saying they have 'evolved,'" said CU student Victoria Acuña, addressing the protestors.

Student skepticism

Amidst concerns from students and faculty, Regent at Large Lesley Smith (D) assured that students will not feel any "drastic" change in the short term.

"We still will have the great faculty we have," Smith said. "We're all very cognizant of the fact that we have a shared governance model. We made that clear with Mark and I feel like he believes that also. He can't be top-down in his decisions. It's got to be shared with faculty and administrators."

Still, Smith believes that uniting the board is going to be "quite challenging."

"I really do hope we can look more broadly at CU and not focus on a particular agenda," Smith said.

Smith still stands by her vote against Kennedy's

confirmation and said that after reviewing survey data and speaking with colleagues about their concerns over Kennedy, she could not vote for him.

Still, Smith is prepared to work with the new president for the betterment of the entire university community. She hopes that political strife is over and that should it arise, Kennedy will need to "take off his partisan hat."

But not all students feel a sense of unity.

Third-year law student Dana Steiner hopes that regents will be able to mend their political differences but said that the entire process is a "very big reflection of what happens when you allow your board of regents to be elected."

"[The regents] turned an apolitical position into a political fight that gained national news attention," Steiner said.

A bloated salary

Mark Kennedy will receive an annual base salary of \$650,000, an 81% increase over his predecessor Bruce Benson. After his first year, that salary will increase to 850,000.

Kennedy's contract, set for three years, states that the salary is "necessary for retaining Kennedy in light of prevailing market conditions and competitive

"It's important for the regents to hear those voices."



Students on Norlin Quad protesting Mark Kennedy. Photo by Robert Tann

employment practices in other states.”

Kennedy will also be eligible to receive up to \$200,000 in incentives per year based on achieving specific performance objectives such as “outreach efforts” to visit at least four communities outside of Boulder, Denver and Colorado Springs. He may also receive bonuses for initiating a strategic planning process in collaboration with campus leaders and for a campaign to support diversity and inclusion at the university. Overall the value of his contract will exceed \$1,000,000.

All the regents except Linda Shoemaker (D) voted in favor of the contract.

“It seems to me like the \$200,000 in bonuses is structured so that there’s really very little requirement on him and any requirements will be decided by the Republican regents,” Shoemaker said.

In a statement to the CUI, CU Boulder’s Committee on Rights and Compensation wrote “CU is taking nearly 10% of our paychecks in student fees while offering Kennedy a quarter million dollars in bonuses for doing the bare elements of his job is simply astounding ... To us, this disparity reflects an administration whose priorities are not the students and employees who keep CU running.”

Kennedy’s bonuses also include:

- A one-time \$80,000 payment for Kennedy’s moving and transportation expenses.
- \$15,000 per year for an automobile allowance.
- A suite at Folsom Field for home football games and four season tickets to home men’s and women’s basketball games.
- The sponsorship fee for one social or country club in Boulder or Denver.
- Reimbursement for “reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of his duties.”
- Retirement benefit programs, with the university providing a maximum contribution of 10% of Kennedy’s base salary.



THROUGH THE LENS

1: Sophomore guard Tyler Bey prepares to dunk the ball during the first half of play at the CU Events Center. **By Nigel Amstock**

2. Freshman guard Emma Clarke swerves around her opponent, the UW Huskies, and goes for the basket. **By Casey Paul**

3. Anderson .Paak steps off the drums and comes in front of the curtain. **By Ryan Northrop**

4. Christo Bowman gets down low during the Boulder show of the Away We Go Tour. **By Angela Smith**

5. A protestor holding a #MeToo sign at the Womxns March in Denver. **By Robert Tann**

6. A Denver PrideFest attendee covered in rainbow paint. **By Anna Haynes**

7. A Mile High Festival attendee with her Bull Terrier. **By Anna Haynes**

8. Freshman Evan Battey shows his love for his mom after the game. **By Casey Paul**



FREE SPEECH, HATE SPEECH AND AN EXECUTIVE ORDER: PERSPECTIVES AT CU

After President Trump took executive action to protect campus free speech, the CU community reflects on what the First Amendment means to them.

**BY ROBERT TANN
& ANNA HAYNES**

Colin Kielty opened his door on the morning of August 12, 2017, to see trucks bearing neo-nazi decals parked in front of his house. Young white men in polo shirts and khaki shorts sat in open-bed pickup trucks, waving Confederate flags as neighbors shouted at them to leave. The second day of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA was about to begin.

The day progressed into violence. Kielty saw people with shields engage with others, tear gas thrown in different directions, medics responding to people who were hurt. Then he was threatened with a taser.

Stunned, Kielty saw a neo-nazi poised with the weapon eventually leave with other alt-right protestors. Yet after his experience, Kielty still feels that he was lucky. He is white. He is male. He

couldn't imagine what other minority groups in the area must have been feeling that day.

The Unite the Right rally, more commonly known as the Charlottesville riots, is a controversial landmark in the conversation of free speech in the United States, particularly as it relates to college campuses.

On March 21, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to "protect free speech" across all public universities in America. As it stands now, the order will direct 12 grant-making agencies to work with the Office of Management and Budget in an attempt to ensure that universities are complying with federal law.

Public universities like the University of Colorado Boulder are required to meet federal guidelines in



order to receive federal funding. However, many students and instructors at CU feel that free speech is a right that is already soundly supported, both in productive and damaging ways.

After the Charlottesville riots, Kielty finished graduate school at the University of Virginia and now teaches at CU as a visiting scholar. Kielty's class, "Free Speech and Dangerous Ideas," explores the philosophical foundations of free speech and how it operates today. To Kielty, free speech on campus is "pretty free."

"It's almost impossible to imagine any student leaving CU Boulder and going to a workplace where they have the same kinds of freedom to speak that they do here," Kielty said. "Freedom of speech (at CU) is not only robustly protected but robustly

encouraged in a way that is actually hard to find in other kinds of communities."

A unanimous vote by CU's Board of Regents in 2018 updated the university's free speech policies to fall in line with Senate Bill 62, which ensures that free speech can occur in public spaces on campuses while prohibiting universities like CU from confining expression to just "free speech zones."

But Kielty said that hate speech is also protected on campuses like CU.

CU's current policies state that while the university understands hate speech as "hurtful and offensive speech targeted against certain groups and individuals," it is still protected under university policy. The university does state that it will make efforts to "promote a culture of respect and civility."

However, CU has repeatedly hosted controversial and provocative speakers such as Milo Yiannopoulos, Ann Coulter and Candace Owens. For Kielty, bringing these types of speakers is a “bad idea.”

“A commitment to free speech does not commit you to thinking that it is a good idea to bring controversial speakers on to campus,” Kielty said.

When asked about Trump’s executive order, Kielty said it is difficult to know what its exact ramifications will be for universities.

“I do not by any means want to suggest that to use something in a political way is to use it inappropriately,” Kielty said. “However, I do think it is important to register the distinction between engaging in a philosophical discussion about something and to try to use a concept to pursue particular political ends. I would assume that is what is being done in this instance.”

‘It means everything’

The president’s decision has left conservative groups on campus eager to see what the order may hold for free speech.

“Without free speech, you couldn’t have the majority of things you see on campus today,” said Barret Barker, co-president of CU’s Turning Point USA (TPUSA) chapter. “I hold it higher than a lot of other things. To me it means everything.”

Barker has been with the conservative campus group since 2016 and hopes that the organization can provide a side that “a lot of people don’t get on campus.”

It’s a side that has been represented by conservative firebrands like Milo Yiannopoulos and Ann Coulter, whose CU visits have triggered protests from students. But Barker insists that speakers are not necessarily endorsed by the group. Rather, TPUSA wants to bring speakers who are “interesting to hear” even if some may consider their words hate speech.



Barret Barker; illustration by Shiyue Zhang

“Hate speech still falls under free speech,” Barker said. “We’ve had speakers come and people say, ‘this is hate speech.’ Well, it’s still free speech.”

This is not to say that TPUSA does not want disagreement — Barker “strongly encourages people to have opposing views” as a way for everyone to understand both sides.

“I think that (free speech) should be given the right to everybody on both sides,” Barker said.

Barker said he enjoys attending events that he may not necessarily believe in but finds important to spark “intellectual thinking.” Recalling Milo Yiannopoulos’ 2017 campus visit, which drew over 200 protestors, Barker said he was pleased to see such a large turnout for both attendees and protestors. In a lot of ways, Yiannopoulos’ talk was a chance for TPUSA to “get its name out” to the CU campus.

Protestors and Yiannopoulos supporters stood in the cold winter air on the night of January 25, 2017. Due to security concerns from previous talks, Yiannopoulos was hosted with a full force of police officers equipped with pepper spray and batons. Supporters of the provocateur held signs which read “feminism is cancer” — a popular phrase of Yiannopoulos — and “CNN lies” as protestors chanted “fuck these Nazis.”

“I’d say it was definitely a good event,” Barker said. “We’ve had a lot of good reaction, a lot of bad ones. The negative sides have always been having protestors out there, but that goes with free speech as well and they have the right to do that.”

The night was a testament to CU’s open policy towards free speech, and Barker said on behalf of himself and TPUSA, the university has been



Protestors ruffle with police at Milo Yiannopoulos’ speaking event on campus.

incredibly supportive. The proposed Trump executive order will bring little change to CU's policies, believes Barker, who said CU is exceptional in its free speech tolerance.

"Personally I believe the content of (the executive order) is a good thing," Barker said.

Still, Barker leans against the use of an executive order to enforce such a policy and said he would prefer to see it be handled in the legislative branch.

"It should not be a one-sided issue," Barker said.

"I think this is a non-partisan issue that both sides should be supporting."

However, even TPUSA has faced the brunt of the problems that arise with free speech. Recently, TPUSA Communications Director Candace Owens made several comments regarding Adolf Hitler and nationalism.

"Whenever we say nationalism, the first thing people think about, at least in America, is Hitler," Owens said. "He was a national socialist. If Hitler just wanted to make Germany great and have things run well, OK, fine."

Following this, TPUSA's

CU chapter released a statement on Twitter which read "we do not believe Candace Owens to be the most effective representation for Turning Point USA, as Communications Director or otherwise."

Barker said he would not comment further on TPUSA's statement, yet it has led some students to question the limits of hate which free speech has allowed.

'Normalized hate'

As Ann Coulter addressed hundreds of students and community members during a TPUSA sponsored event on March 21, 2018, then-sophomore and former president of the Black Student Alliance, Gwendalynn Roebke, spoke to a huddled crowd

inside Old Main.

Roebke, along with Women's Resource Center (WRC) and the Gender and Sexuality Center, brought students together as part of a counter event to Coulter's talk, which to Roebke was not free speech but "hate speech." Roebke

recalls the armed guards with snipers laying on the roof of the UMC, an "image of violence."

For Roebke, events like the alternative to Coulter's talk intended to give a safe space away from the aggression and violence of the ensuing protest. Coulter's talk and those who defended it as free speech only "normalized hate," said Roebke.

Speakers like Coulter, said Roebke, believe that certain people "don't deserve to exist."

"Or if they do deserve to exist, it's to exist under others by virtue of your skin color or sexual orientation," Roebke said. "And that's not productive."

"Sensationalists" is the word Roebke uses to describe such speakers, who only say rhetoric that leads people to get hurt. Roebke believes CU's decision to host speakers like Coulter and Yiannopoulos is a "tremendous waste of time and money" for people who are trying to "erase" marginalized groups of people through rhetoric.

"It's protecting white heteronormativity," Roebke said. "What they are advocating for is the forceful removal of people, is the forceful silencing of people, is borderline eugenics talk."

Free speech has always protected the privileged in society, said Roebke. So when they heard about Trump's executive order, they were "not surprised" — it is a move that Roebke sees as benefiting racists.

Growing up in Colorado Springs, Roebke said they are no stranger to racial slurs or



Gwendalynn Roebke; illustration by Shiyue Zhang



Photo by Jackson Barnett, edit by Fiona Matson.

microaggressions.

"I was treated like I was a mistake by other people," Roebke said.

"Whenever black and brown people use free speech and speak out against oppression, then they're perceived as violently bad."

Roebke asks the question: "If free speech really applies to everyone, why is it wrong for people to be very actively black?"

But Roebke does not believe regulating free speech will solve these issues either. Roebke instead prefers their racism "out in the open."

"We always were racist," Roebke said. "And so it's the look of racism and all (Trump) is doing right now is making the look come back. But now because of this order that is wrapped up in free speech, not 'hate speech,' it's easier for (racists) and it looks better."

Briannah Hill, former president of CU's Queer Trans People of Color, shared similar sentiments to Roebke's view on the one-sided nature of free speech.

"It uses privilege to stay alive and we all need to reevaluate how we think about 'free speech vs. hate speech' because we all have privilege in one way or another and might have acted on hate speech," Hill said.

CU enables speakers to make marginalized groups feel even more oppressed according to Hill, who believes the university should reevaluate its policies.

"I do not believe that hate speech should be protected, but if we're looking at it truthfully, it has been protected since 'AmeriKKKa' has been established for a certain dominant group in power," Hill said.

'We have to be careful'

Across campus on the night of Coulter's speech, Heraa Hashmi walked into the large



Heraa Hashmi; illustration by Shiyue Zhang

lecture hall of Chem 140 as students and community members stared and whispered. Hashmi wears a hijab and knew that it made some attendees uncomfortable.

Hundreds were packed into the large room, eagerly awaiting a talk by conservative commentator Ann Coulter, who was sponsored to come to campus by TPUSA.

Hashmi, a senior at CU and former president of the campus' Muslim Student Association, took her seat in the crowd and listened as Coulter railed against immigrants and liberals. At one point, Coulter urged the U.S. to bring in immigrants who were "better looking." Within 30 minutes of the talk, she stood with several other students and marched out as part of a silent protest.

"(Coulter) was exercising her right," Hashmi said in regards to Coulter's speech. "But at the same time, the same right that allows her to say the things that she wants to say is the same right that allows me to push back against that and say 'I don't think that's acceptable.'"

As she and other students left the room, attendees booed and chanted "USA," something Hashmi found interesting.

"That comes out of the assumption that I'm not American, and I am an American citizen," Hashmi said. "It's a very weird position to be put in."

Hashmi describes free speech as the "crux of our nation." It's an ideology that grants equal access and opportunity. But for Hashmi, what being an American means for her is having free speech "to the extent that it doesn't infringe upon others."

Years ago, in a history class, Hashmi was told by a classmate that "not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims." The student asked

Students walk out of Ann Coulter's talk on campus.



Hashmi why Islam had never “condoned terrorism.” Following that exchange, Hashmi created a 712-page document listing times and locations for when and where Muslims condemned acts of violence.

Coulter herself has been criticized for her comments on Islam, as Andrew Goldstein, treasurer of CU’s Gay-Straight Alliance, stated. Goldstein cited Coulter’s comments on a “genocide against Muslims” from a 2017 post in which Coulter lays out three policies for preventing “terrorism in the West,” one of which being to “drop a nuke on some majority-Muslim city involved in terrorism.”

Photo by Bri Barnum,
edit by Fiona Matson.



“I don’t think that it’s appropriate for (CU) to be inviting people who say that, because it’s suggesting that they don’t care about Muslim students and staff and faculty,” Goldstein said. “It’s not just a difference of opinion calling for people to be killed.”

For Hashmi, Trump’s executive order will only continue to enable such speech.

“We really have to be careful and evaluate (Trump’s executive order),” Hashmi said. “When you

bring someone to this university, in a way you are telling the students ‘this is someone whose opinions have validity.’ And to be quite frank, from what I know about Ann Coulter, some of her comments are not worthy of any attention.”

‘Out of CU’s control’

Free speech can make it hard for schools like CU to draw the line.

“Everyone’s entitled to their own opinion,” said Joey Wong, a fifth-year student and member of CU’s Midwestern Asian American Student Union (MAASU) chapter.

Wong understands the issues of free speech but

believes CU has their hands tied when it comes to preventing forms of hate speech.

“I think it is kind of out of CU’s control to screen or sort through the speech,” Wong said. “Because if they had to screen or sort, then it wouldn’t be free speech.”

Still, Wong feels that CU needs to do more to facilitate a productive environment for free speech. For him, the constant cycle of divisive speakers yields little benefit to students, specifically in terms of diversity and inclusion.

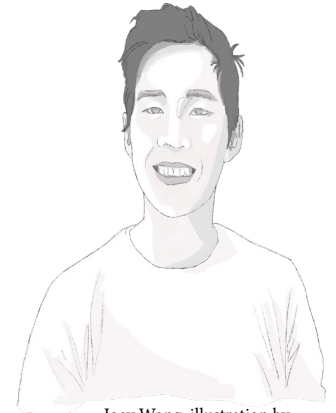
“We try to support (MAASU) to be a part of these protests, to really drive them to think ‘hey, we’re part of this Boulder community,’” Wong said. “And if something doesn’t really align with your values, you should seek out this alliance that has the same things as you.”

While not an active protestor himself, Wong said that if anything, protests can help students who may feel sidelined become more integrated within the university community. Wong refers to it as a type of networking.

“This is something we want to promote students to do,” Wong said. “Just so they can know more about where other people are coming from, how they’re approaching problems and how do we ultimately solve it together.”

In the face of Trump’s executive order, Wong thinks the decision will bring more conscious awareness to how CU “shows that they have free speech.”

“There’d be potential tensions between not only just racial issues but gender issues, sexual issues, social issues, to have the courage to speak up after this,” Wong said. “If (CU) doesn’t deal with (the executive order) well, then these problems and animosity will keep rising to the surface.”



Joey Wong; illustration by
Shiyue Zhang

Opinion: End of fraternity drugging investigation sets a dangerous precedent

By Hannah Metzger,
managing editor

It was a month into Mable Sanders' freshman year at the University of Colorado Boulder when she went to her first frat party. Her friends had been partying at fraternities for weeks but Sanders declined the frequent invitations. "I was always too scared to go out because of the things I heard happened at frat parties," she said. However, on Sept. 27, 2017, after watching her friends leave and return countless times without incident, she decided to tag along. Sanders and her roommate arrived at the party armed with a group of girlfriends who were already tipsy off of Burnett's. Sanders and her roommate took one swig from a wine bag held up by an enthusiastic fraternity member chanting, "slap the bag!" The girls then retreated to the dance floor. Happily swaying along to the blaring music, Sanders felt silly for waiting so long to come to a frat party.

It was nearly an hour later when she realized she had been drugged.

Incidents like Sanders' are all too common. Fraternities have been proven to foster environments of sexual violence leading to increased rates of sexual assault and druggings and Boulder is no exception.

As Sanders and her roommate both began

to stumble through the party, losing control of their bodies, their girlfriends physically dragged them out of the frat house and back to their dorm. There, the two spent the remainder of the night throwing up.

"At the party, everyone was super friendly and the guys carrying the wine bags weren't forceful or aggressive," Sanders said. "I felt deceived by this fraternity and shocked by my own naiveté."

While Sanders escaped the situation relatively unharmed, not all have left so easily.

According to Teresa Wroe, director of Education and Prevention and deputy Title IX Coordinator at CU, druggings have become "somewhat typical" occurrences.

"We have issues pop up every fall semester where people are concerned that they were drugged," Wroe said.

Last year, four fraternities — including the fraternity that hosted the party where Sanders was drugged — were accused of drugging six female CU students at parties hosted on Oct. 17, 2018.

The investigation for this alleged mass-drugging took a disappointing turn as it was revealed on Feb. 1, 2019, that the blood samples from the victims had been mishandled and are not viable for drug identification.

Director of the CU Office of Victim Assistance Jessica Ladd-Webert said that even when evidence is not lost, drugging investigations often lead to nothing.

"The biggest concern and challenge with these cases is proving (them)," Ladd-Webert said.

Though there have been very few studies on the frequency of druggings, one 2016 study of three colleges found that about one in 13 college students reported being drugged before. A different study found that 62% of women who had been drugged

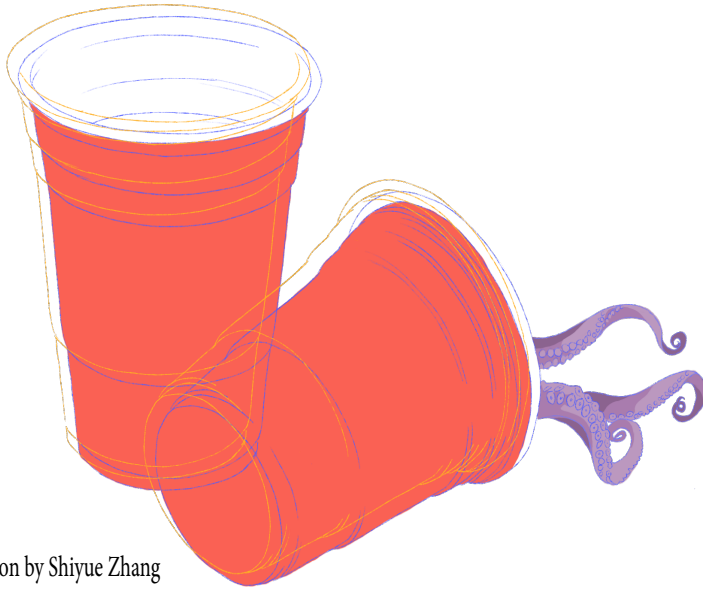


Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

did not report to the police and 65% of those women were “not confident” that their assailant would be held responsible by the law.

This kind of inaction in Boulder has created an atmosphere for fraternities that allows them to endanger female students without consequence.

Fraternity members are found to be three times more likely than nonmembers to commit sexual assault and rape. Studies have also shown that fraternity members are more likely to hold rape-supportive beliefs and sexually aggressive attitudes towards women. In addition, fraternity members are also more likely to use alcohol, coercion and threats to obtain sex.

The inconclusive ending of the drugging investigation sets a dangerous precedent for the future. Despite the numerous women who came forward, no one was held responsible, there were no real punishments and there is nothing deterring the perpetrators from doing this again.

Boulder has created an environment in which victims have no reason to seek help when they have been violated. This is evident in the fact that only

8% of sexual assaults at CU Boulder are reported, compared to the national average of 23%. Victims of druggings like Sanders’s often believe that coming forward is useless.

“I felt that reporting would be a waste of time,” Sanders said. “I knew that this kind of thing happened all the time and I know they would somehow find a loophole to avoid trouble.”

While the perpetrators of druggings and sexual violence are taught that their actions are without consequence, the university prefers to focus on preventative measures for the victims rather than discouraging aggressors.

“Bystander intervention is something I think we want to continue education on,” Ladd-Webert said. “So, increasing our friends’ noticing skills. Maybe a friend seeing another friend considering putting something in someone’s drink. How do they intervene?”

While encouraging safe habits for friends and victims can be helpful, the threat of sexual violence is never going to decrease if CU puts all of its effort toward teaching people how not to get assaulted, rather than deterring the assaulters themselves. Regardless of how many effective bystander slideshows the university sends, failing to punish abusers and allowing men to fester in these problematic environments encourages sexual violence.

The lack of ramifications in the mass-drugging of female students has taught all aggressors on this campus that they are able to get away with anything. The precedent that has been set by this case puts all CU students in danger, reinforcing the problematic atmosphere fraternities have created.

Opinion: Support for journalism starts with student news

By Robert Tann,
editor-in-chief

The climate of journalism is in a crucial state. With a president determined to warp public opinion on all reporting that doesn't agree with him, shrinking newsrooms and increasingly fewer available resources, it's time for the public to decide if it wants to support a free press or live in darkness.

Never has this decision been more urgent than now, and it starts at the earliest of stages in the smallest of newsrooms. Now is the time for universities and their representatives to take action and support student journalists.

When I first read the Rocky Mountain Collegian's tweet, I felt a lump in my throat. The tweet explained that the majority of copies of the outlet's printed April 9 edition had been stolen from the distribution racks and recycled or ripped apart. Colorado State University claims the theft, which resulted in over 1,000 copies being stolen, was in response to the paper's cover story. The cover story detailed allegations of misreported campaign finances by Associated Students of Colorado State University presidential candidate Ben Amundson and vice presidential candidate Alexandra Farias.

You may read this and say, "so it's just about a student government election, what's the big deal?" The big deal is the obvious obstruction of information presented by a free press.

As then Collegian Editor-in-Chief Haley Candelario said in a Denver Post article, "(The Collegian is) not this big, bad newspaper trying to corrupt the minds of student voters. We're just saying students deserve to know information about their representatives. We've done everything we can to give it fair, balanced, accurate coverage."

No comment has been issued by CSU in regards to the incident, and for Candelario, the hypocrisy of CSU's student government's claims of transparency is "frustrating."

Access to information is a right. It enables us to engage in our civic duty. It is the cornerstone of democracy. It is what holds the powerful accountable, whether it be a student government official or the president of the United States.

We see many different ways that information is being obstructed in our country. Donald Trump has manipulated the narrative of "fake news" and used it in an attempt to delegitimize negative coverage of him and his administration. He has barred journalists from White House briefings and called them "stupid," "rude" and "terrible" — and let's not forget when he mocked a disabled reporter. For Trump, it isn't news, it's "lies" and his rhetoric is causing his supporters to choose ignorance over truth.

This is no different than what has occurred on the CSU campus.

It's time to call out such blatant attempts to obstruct the right to information. It starts with schools like CSU and showing support for student papers like the Collegian. If universities are truly meant to

facilitate and foster the passions of today's youth, departments should stand wholeheartedly by the hard-working students who juggle classes, homework and other college struggles as they dedicate themselves to informing the student body and community at large.

I do not see this.

Last year, various student newspapers across the country took part in the #SaveStudentNewsrooms movement, catalyzed by Melissa Gomez, the

then editor-in-chief of the Independent Alligator at the University of Florida. Gomez took action after reading a Twitter thread from Southern Methodist alumna Jessica Huseman, who wrote that SMU's paper, the Daily Campus, was shutting down

"This is a travesty — especially because (SMU) has no commitment at all to transparency and freedom of student voices," Huseman tweeted.

Soon after, the Alligator saw budget cuts and ended up dropping their print publication due to a lack of resources and support. But the paper's editors were not silent, and we should not be either.

Students journalists took to the site Save Student Newsrooms to tell people why student journalism matters.

"I would have never entertained the idea of a career in journalism without the ability to try it out myself in a low-stakes, low-risk environment," wrote Ben

Conarck, a then-editor for the Vermont Cynic.

"I learned more at The Red & Black than I did at any of the internships I had while attending the University of Georgia," stated a former reporter for the Red & Black.

And as my own personal attest, I can say that joining the CU Independent has taught me more, given me more and allowed me more than I could have hoped for when it comes to journalism. I have truly discovered my passion through the CUI and for that I will always be grateful.

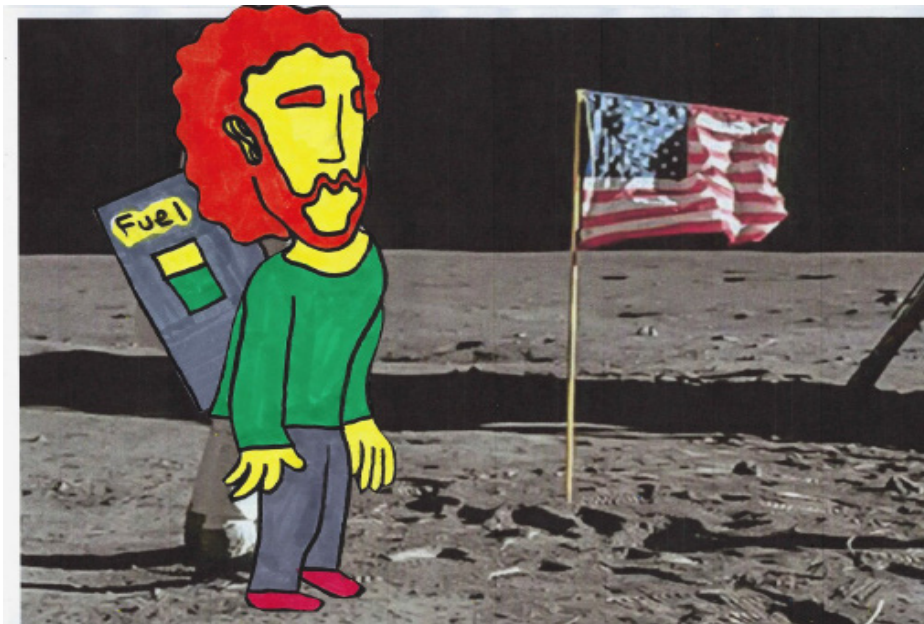
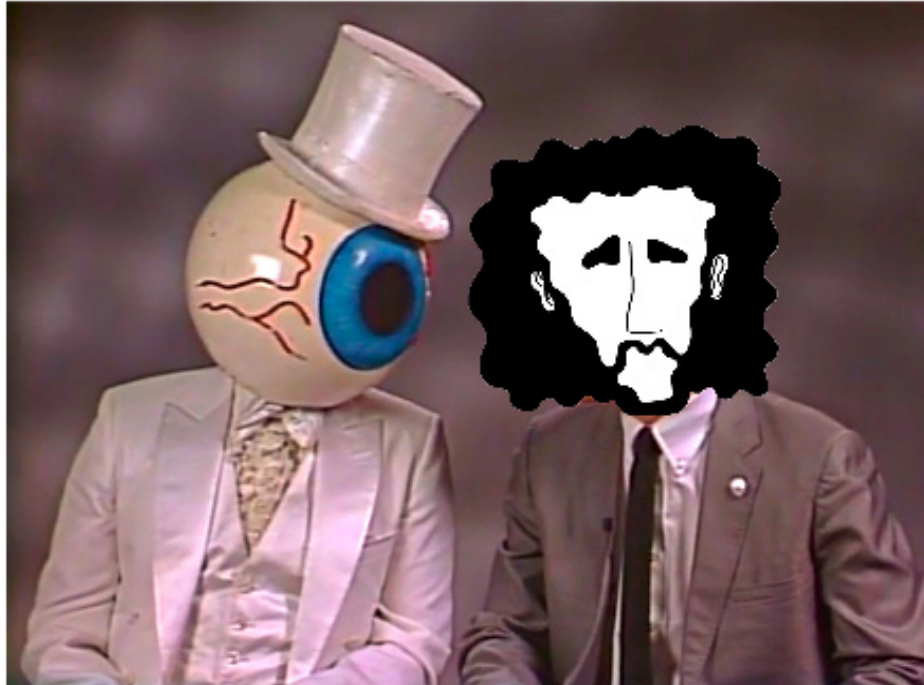
Now, our country faces a great challenge. Do we stand by as hedge funds suffocate local newsrooms like the Denver Post? Do we let our president demonize and incite violence against reporters? And do we say nothing when a student body has its information stolen from them?

It's time to step up and support an industry that makes us truly free. But how can we address the problems on a national level when incidents like the paper theft of the Collegian occur? It's on the universities to support their student newsrooms, and then maybe, just maybe, we can end this dangerous spiral.

"It's time to step up and support an industry that makes us truly free."

Comic: Jake Havoc

“Jake Havoc” is a comic series created by Jacob Newman. The strip pays homage to various American cultural landmarks and serves as a commentary on the sometimes strange nature of our daily lives.



Q&A: RICK GEORGE, CU ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

By Amanda Boyer,
staff writer

During his six years in charge of university athletics at CU Boulder, Rick George has helped the department in many ways, including hiring coaches and staff members, spearheading a multi-million dollar athletic complex expansion, and strategic planning and fundraising to help the Buffaloes brand become what it is today.

George welcomed the CU Independent into his grand office space for a one-on-one sit-down interview, where we discussed his role as the athletic director, his accomplishments and the future of the athletic programs.

CU Independent: What brought you to CU?

Rick George: I had worked at CU when we won a national championship in 1990. I was a football recruiting coordinator, and my youngest daughter was born here, so when we were given the opportunity to come back we said ‘yes.’ We have a passion for CU and Boulder and it just made sense.

CUI: What are your goals for this upcoming year regarding athletics?

RG: You know, I think for us we want to continue to raise the bar on our performance and what we’re doing in the classroom. We’ve had nine and hopefully 10 consecutive years of a 2.9 (grade point average) for athletes, and those are the bars we want to grow and raise. From an athletic standpoint, I’d like to win another championship. I think we have the right people to do this and new leadership. I have high expectations and we want to continue to provide more resources for our athletes in the areas of mental health, strength and nutrition and career development. These are important for the structure for our athletes.

CUI: What drew you to hiring first-year football Head Coach Mel Tucker?

RG: He fit all of the things I thought we needed in a coach. As I look back on our success when we won the national championship, I felt we needed a coach who could bring discipline and accountability, and he’s had great success in his career. I interviewed him three days before the SEC Championship, and I wanted somebody that had the background of success, that played the game, could bring discipline, accountability and toughness, and he checked all the boxes.

CUI: Having worked in the Big 10, Big Eight and Southeastern conferences, what makes the Pac-12 Conference stand out?

RG: For us, it really fits who we are for Colorado. There’s nine research institutions like ours in the conference, so having that collaboration from a university perspective is important. We have 30,000 living alumni on the west coast and being able to bring our programs to our alumni has allowed us to have record fundraising efforts. It’s been a real positive to us.

CUI: You were awarded twice by CU’s student athlete advisory committee as its choice staff member of the year, due to attendance at most home athletic events, regular meetings with team captains of all programs to interact with them and receive feedback as well as willingness to meet with any student athlete. How do you think being so hands on and building personal relationships with our student athletes has benefitted the department and the teams?

RG: Look, I think all of that speaks to the culture that we’re trying to create. I think in any department or organization or team the culture has to be such that people can thrive in it. My support means that I care. I think it’s important everyone in our department understands that I do care about what we’re doing and I think that creates a culture that’s inclusive that everybody can feel a part of. I hate to use the term “family oriented” but I think it’s like that in a lot of ways because we support each other — for example, “Buffs supporting Buffs” — and I think those things are important to building the right cultures. The time commitment that student athletes put in is significant and being around people that have the same thing brings a strong culture.

Once more under new leadership, Steven Montez prepares for final season

By Scott MacDonald,
former assistant sports editor

Three quarterbacks coaches in three years. That's the reality facing redshirt senior quarterback Steven Montez, who enters his fifth and final year of eligibility at the University of Colorado Boulder while studying under his third quarterbacks coach in as many seasons.

The 6-foot-5-inch gunslinger has gotten used to change. After all, the game of football is fickle, and an athlete's ability to adapt isn't merely encouraged — it's a requirement. As part of being the team's starter, it is Montez's job to be a leader; embrace the change and guide the rest of the team through the overwhelming waters of changing tides.

With the firing of former Head Coach Mike MacIntyre back in November, most of his staff, save three, were also relieved from their contractual obligations. Among those who were let go was quarterbacks coach Kurt Roper, who also served as the program's interim head coach during the final game of the 2018 season. The release of Roper was probably the most consequential for Montez, who often raved about "Rope" and how he was wholly influential in his development.

When I asked the Buffaloes' senior passer about the changing of the guard from Roper to current hire Jay Johnson at the last spring practice before break, Montez briefly

interjected at my first mention of Roper.

"Huge fan," he said, before allowing me to continue my question.

"Coach Johnson is a really smart coach, a very bright-minded, offensive-minded guy," Montez said. "He's incredibly sharp at every meeting. He's just a great guy as well, just like Coach Rope. I love them both, I think they're great coaches and I think (Johnson) is going to get us on the right path."

Johnson not only has to right the ship as the team's offensive coordinator, but he also has to guide the Buffs' quarterbacks quest through a brand new offense. Johnson, too, made mention of the influence Roper had on his new quarterback.

"I think part of it is at least developing that relationship," Johnson said. "I know Coach Roper is a great guy, an exceptional coach. I'm just trying to hopefully build on what he's already established, and so if we can build that camaraderie, that relationship, I think it goes a long way."

After the extreme changing of the guard that happened at the tail-end of the 2018 season, Montez played one last game under then-interim Head Coach Roper. For Montez, he wasn't sure if it'd be his last game at CU — though it did turn out to be Roper's finale. The senior spent winter break and the start of the spring semester grappling with the decision to stay with the program or declare for the NFL draft.

He decided to stay.

"I just talked to my family to see what was best, seeing what they thought was best, seeing what I thought was best," Montez said. "Looking back on it, staying here was the best decision I've made ever since I made the decision to come here. Those are probably the two best decisions I've made. I'm very excited about this upcoming season and I'm very glad that I stayed."

In their early talks, Johnson made certain not to put ideas in Montez's head about staying or going — he

wanted it to be Montez's decision — but made sure to lay down some of the pros and cons for the impending fifth-year quarterback.

"I don't know if I had any input on swaying his decision, but I just know we talked and were very transparent about what we're trying to do and how maybe that could be beneficial for him and those types of things," Johnson said. "Ultimately, it was his decision."

It's a decision that Montez calls his best yet. Now, whether that translates to success this season remains to be seen, and first-year success under a whole new coaching staff and playbook can be tough. But so far, it's been smooth.

"Obviously when you have transition, there's change, but I think he's dealt with the change pretty good," Johnson said. "That's always the hard part. A lot of times in football we do a lot of similar things but it's just different languages. I think he's starting to grasp some of that and starting to visualize and see things a little bit better. He's making some good strides."

That is the point of spring ball, after all. It's an added slate of practices months before the actual season starts. It's especially important when there's an entirely new offense to learn. Every day of studying it, practicing it and perfecting it, is of the utmost importance.

According to Montez, this iteration of offense is unlike anything he's seen under his last three coaches.

"I think this offense — the one that we're learning now — is more different than anything we've done in the past," Montez said. "But the transition from (former quarterbacks coach Brian Lindgren) to Roper was more of a smoother transition because of the offense — it changed a little bit but it didn't really change very much."

Lucky for Montez, he has Johnson on his side.

"Coach Johnson is really getting us through this process really smoothly and helping us learn a lot,"

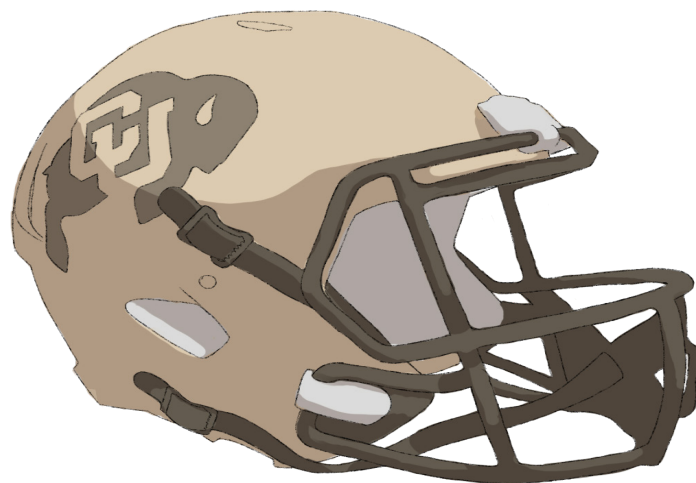


Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

Montez said. "We're picking up the playbook really quickly."

That's an encouraging sign, especially given the fact that there's still plenty of time to perfect the new playbook. It's also a testament to Johnson himself. It's perhaps one of the reasons head coach Mel Tucker made Johnson one of his first hires when accepting the position at Colorado.

"Coach Johnson, he's a pro," Tucker said. "He's been there, done that. He's called a lot of games. He knows how to develop quarterbacks, his attention to detail is off the charts, he's extremely organized and he gets it."

As for what Tucker's seen from his new coach/quarterback dynamic: So far, so good.

"They work very well together ... the players, they feel that," Tucker said. "They feed off of him. They know he's an expert at what he does and that gives them a chance to be great. They've been working very well together so far."

“Into the Woods” production enchants CU with modern twist

By Isabella Fincher,
assistant arts editor

The Tony Award-winning musical production “Into the Woods” came to life at the University of Colorado Boulder’s University Theater this past February, with a cast that presented a creative and contemporary interpretation of the classic Broadway hit. The stage was awash with a wonderfully elaborate set and extravagant costumes.

A mashup of different fairy tales, “Into the Woods” includes characters from “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Cinderella,” “Jack and the Beanstalk” and “Rapunzel,” as well as two original characters — the Baker and his wife. Many of the disturbing, dark moments from the original Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault stories are incorporated into the script, often diverging from the happily-ever-after Disney fairy tales.

These disparate characters are plunged into one world together, haphazardly trying to pursue their own familiar fairy tales at the same time. The Baker and his wife’s quest to break a family curse and have a child, however, tie the storytelling together.

An intricate set consisting of multi-level platforms spread across the stage and extended towards the ceiling. The set was held together by brown wooden beams while branch-like ladders connected the different levels. Leafy vines snaked around the entire stage, creating a true feeling of being in the woods.

The costume design was synthesized from several

eras, with Cinderella’s sisters in bouncy hoop skirts with bows while Little Red Riding Hood in the second act wore a red leather jacket with combat boots. Using modern costumes allowed for a diverse interpretation of the character of Riding Hood, played by K. Woodzick.

“I ... use my own short hair as a faux-hawk in the second act, which [allowed] the role of Little Red to look visually queer. I’ve not seen another interpretation of Red that is this overtly queer, and I love it,” Woodzick said.

The actors worked to find a balance between fantasy and reality in their portrayals. Even though fairy tale characters are not real, the audience saw aspects of themselves reflected through them.

“Although this show is the ultimate fairy tale mashup, it holds so much truth [about] real life,” said cast member Asha Romeo, who played the

Witch during a Saturday performance.

“I really tried to make the Witch come off as a misunderstood person, who had been hurt in the past and was simply coping by being mean [and] cruel,” Romeo said.

Brendan Lynch, who portrayed the role of the Baker, did not believe the Witch was simply an evil villain.

“I want the audience to walk away understanding there is no true villain ... every action you take has consequences on both yourself and the people around

you,” Lynch said.

Lynch’s made-for-the-stage wife, Rita DiSibio, built upon this take.

“Although many of us make mistakes and follow the wrong paths while pursuing our own happiness, sometimes these mistakes lead us to discover exactly which path we are meant to be on,” DiSibio said.

Despite the tragedies and struggles the fairy tale characters encounter in the woods, their experiences leave them with a profound understanding of themselves and what is truly important to them.

As DiSibio said, “Sometimes the only way out of the woods is through the woods.”



Illustration by Shiyue Zhang

Outstanding musicianship showcased in eclectic CWA jazz concert

By Devan Daley,
copy editor

Spring semester's Conference on World Affairs brought together eight highly-skilled jazz artists for a performance in Macky Auditorium.

The concert drew a predominantly older crowd, with a small number of college-aged individuals scattered throughout the audience. With the cool weather outside, ski jackets were shed to reveal suits and dresses, providing an air of sophistication which was similarly reflected in the venue itself. In spite of the snowy conditions, the auditorium was filled nearly to capacity and was abuzz with excited chatter and eagerness to see this year's performance.

Following in the tradition of previous CWA jazz performances, the selected musicians represented a combination of global and local talents. The group was led by Associate Professor Brad Goode, who doubled as a rumpeter. Another CU faculty member, Brazil native Bijoux Barbosa, played both stand-up and electric bass.

The visiting musicians included two-time Grammy award winner Ernie Watts on saxophone; Howard Levy, founding member of Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, on piano and harmonica; Thom Rotella on guitar; Rony Barrak, Lebanese percussionist renowned for his talent on the darbouka or "goblet drum" on percussion; and the highly-energetic Adam Nussbaum on drums. French singer and winner of the 2012 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Competition, Cyrille Aimée, provided vocals on a select number of tracks later in the evening.

The setlist was highly diverse, incorporating jazz, blues and globally-inspired sounds within an atmosphere of improvisation. Most performers

presented their own compositions. The opening number instantly revealed the performers' talent and the ease with which they played together. Solos were traded between the saxophone, trumpet, guitar and piano in a conversation between instruments. The smoothness of the horns was perfectly backed by the bass and percussion, including the unique rain-like sound of the darbouka.

The audience fixated on the stage with rapt attention. They mostly appeared stoic, only a small portion tapping their feet or gently bobbing their heads. While not apparent in the audience's body language, appreciation for the music was openly conveyed through applause. They cheered enthusiastically at the end of individual solos and at the end of the song itself.

The set continued with "Sure Would Baby," a blues track composed by Nussbaum in honor of his wife. One of Levy's compositions followed, a sultry and vibrant number inspired by the music of Brazil. Next came a highlight of the evening with Ernie Watts' composition "Freaky Flyers," which he introduced as an attempt to tap into the "primal energy of music." The song was a shock to the system, which felt highly frantic and playful at once.

It was plain to see that the musicians were impressed with one another's abilities, as many sported huge grins throughout the performance. The audience was similarly impressed, with many members turning to their neighbors to express their amazement once the song ended. Rotella's "Oddball" followed, and Levy presented another one of his compositions, "The Two Eddies." Aimée then joined the rest of the musicians on stage.

Aimée's first performance of the night was a cover of the jazz standard "Night and Day," which showcased her uniquely sweet, girlish voice and impressive talent for scat singing. The other musicians cleared the stage for the fan-favorite of the evening, Aimée's "Down." She performed it with only her voice and a loop machine, which she affectionately dubbed "Rupert the Looper." Aimée looped and overlaid her live vocal tracks to create a full sound with a strong beat, multi-layered harmonies and catchy lyrics about her move to New Orleans. The innovative performance was met with thunderous applause and cheers from the audience.

JOIN THE TEAM!

Want to be a part of CU Boulder's award-winning news site?
We are always looking for new writers,
photographers, graphic artists
and web designers.

Think you might be interested?
Email your resume to
tips@cuindependent.com!

