

# CU INDEPENDENT

## *magazine*

FALL 2020

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tattoo artists  
get creative  
Pac-12  
tournament  
canceled**

**A NEW NORMAL:**  
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Art by Mengchen Gong

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## FALL 2020

# Letter from the Editor: Despite challenges, the CU Independent lives to see another day

by Anna Haynes

To readers of the CU Independent,

A university as large as the University of Colorado Boulder without a student press is rare, but the campus has come dangerously close. We, the staff of the CU Independent, know that there has been uncertainty surrounding our future. I would like to update our readers and our community about our continuing efforts and provide reassurance that, despite this uncertainty, I am confident that we are here to stay.

My name is Anna Haynes and I will be assuming the position of the CUI's editor-in-chief for the 2020-2021 school year. Former editor-in-chief Robert Tann has held the position since last fall and has done an incredible job of keeping the CUI not only afloat, but also thriving during tough times.

I am taking on a unique task with my new role — the task of ensuring that the CU Independent doesn't vanish entirely. Until recently, the CU Independent has operated under CU Boulder's College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI). In December 2019, CMCI announced it would be ceasing our funding by May 2020 which includes the loss of our newsroom in Armory 206b and longtime faculty advisor Gil Asakawa, in favor of its own media venture. While our efforts to find sources of funding continue, we have yet to secure a long-term solution. COVID-19 has further complicated funding negotiations, as CU Boulder has experienced financial losses as a result of the pandemic.

We received an outpouring of support from journalists and readers alike in response to this news. For example, the Rocky Mountain Collegian, Colorado State University's student print publication, published its own letter from the editor in solidarity with the CUI. This support has reassured us that we are not alone in our fight to stay alive.

I am happy to confirm that CMCI has agreed to provide us with funding as well as newsroom and storage space-effective through mid-December of this year, for which we are incredibly grateful. As for the spring semester, we are continuing to have negotiations with potential funding sources, including the University of Colorado Student Government (CUSG).

The CUI's achievements cannot be overstated. Earlier this year, our staff won three Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Mark of Excellence awards with three finalists. The CUI has also provided extensive coverage in the face of COVID-19. I could not be more proud, and I hope that we will be able to continue to provide award-winning journalism to our community.

The first time I was harassed for my role as a student journalist, I was in shock. I had heard it before, but had never truly believed it until I experienced it myself—journalism, especially student journalism, is grossly undervalued. This only makes our efforts to keep afloat harder, but I am confident that with the help of those who continue to value journalism, we will continue to thrive.

We hope that we can continue to work with CMCI and CUSG to reach long-term solutions and ensure that CU Boulder's only independent student publication will not disappear. I am beyond honored that I have been given the torch as the new editor-in-chief, and I am excited to light the way for the CUI's next phase of life.

If you would like to donate to the CUI, you can find our official fund [here](#). From the bottom of my heart, thank you for all of your support.

Regards,

Anna Haynes, CU Independent Editor-in-Chief

**CU Independent Magazine** is produced by students for the CU and Boulder community. All of the content in this magazine was created in August 2020, after the University of Colorado Boulder's Spring 2020 semester. This masthead reflects the Fall 2020 positions of those involved with the creation of this publication.

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# ‘Everybody’s very uncertain’: Local businesses hope to survive as coronavirus brings Pearl Street to a halt

by Mairead Brogan

At 11 a.m. Tuesday morning, Boulder’s Pearl Street Mall was nearly deserted. White signs scattered across storefronts announced closings and reduced hours. The hustle and bustle of Boulder’s downtown was non-existent.

“Mornings are dead, afternoons are dead...

whole days are looking like slow nights,” said Noëlle Mrugalla, an employee at Trident Booksellers and Café.

As the deadly novel coronavirus, which causes the disease known as COVID-19, spreads across Colorado and forces the city and county of Boulder to take drastic measures, small business employees have been some of the people hit the hardest. On Monday, Colorado Gov. Jared Polis ordered statewide closures of seating inside all bars and restaurants until April 30, forcing businesses to move to delivery and takeout in order to survive.

“Hopefully, Trident will be able to stay alive because... rent is not cheap on Pearl. We don’t know what’s happening with that,” said Trident employee Crystal Garcia. “We’re not like a big business, there’s no fall-back.”

The governor’s decision comes as states across the country look to increase social distancing, with the Trump administration on Monday advising

people to limit gatherings to no more than 10 people in a bid to reduce the number of people coming in contact with the virus.

The virus’ effects have hit employees of the service industry especially hard— it’s cut their income severely.



A number of storefronts display signs explaining closure or takeout-only rules. Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (Mairead Brogan/CU Independent)

“I think it’s pretty scary ... we’re all low-income workers, like part-time for the most part,” said Mrugalla. “I might be filing for unemployment at 23.”

“Most of the staff here depend on tips but now they are going to depend on just hourly time,” said Diane Van Tiggelen of Boulder restaurant Salt.

Local businesses often represent pillars of the community, proving common spaces for the general public.

“One of the things I like about Trident... is it’s a sense of community for me, and I come here because I’ve gotten to know a lot of people, who’ve become very good friends, and I’m seeing fewer of them now as a result of the virus,” said Mike Badar, a frequent patron of the café.

While reduced hours and customers are hard for most businesses to weather, for some owners, the wellbeing of their employees comes first.

“The most important thing for me is the safety



Pearl Street’s Pizza Calore will be closing its doors and doing takeout only until further notice. Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (Mairead Brogan/CU Independent)

of my employees and my guests,” said Dan Shaffer, owner of Pizza Colóre, which has served homemade pizza on Pearl Street for over 20 years.

“Of course there’s the financial aspect of it where it’s gonna cost thousands to close the doors, but at the same time, is it still feasible to try and stay open and make it work for just a couple hundred dollars in possible sales?” Shaffer said. “There’s a certain tipping point where it costs more to be open, especially trying to keep staff employed, than it would be to just close the doors.”

Some local shops have already decided to shutter.

“We’re actually gearing up, we’re making all of our finalizations to close for at least the next two weeks or foreseeable future,” said Nathan Klein, owner of Smithklein gallery. He took over the business from his mother who opened the gallery over 30 years ago.

Other businesses are finding creative ways to reach their customers amid the pandemic.

“We want the community support still so we’re

doing the curbside pickup for puzzles especially right now because a bunch of people are in their homes,” said Art Source International Manager Katie Olsonwe’l. “(We might) eventually do custom framing... maybe by facetime, but we just need to kind of change the way we’re reaching people.”

PosterSource manager George Baillie is optimistic that despite the coronavirus’ spread, shoppers will return to the mall once the warmer weather returns.

“It’s tough to say right now, so far, like yesterday was busy, a lot of tourists out... today is slow, but it could be the weather,” Baillie said.

Still, some worry about what comes next. “Everybody’s very uncertain about the future... their financial stability and whether or not they could even work in service like immediately after,” said Mrugalla. “I think it’s gonna also push people who might be in the service industry to look towards different career paths.”



# As deadline approaches, students and faculty urge chancellor to allow Los Seis sculpture to remain

by Zack Cohen

After a month-long extension was granted for a recent memorial sculpture to remain on the University of Colorado Boulder campus, the installation's time may soon be up.

The 7-foot-tall art piece stands in memorium to six Chicano CU students and activists who were killed in car bombings in Boulder in the 1970s. The six have become known as Los Seis de Boulder. As the deadline approaches for the sculpture's removal, some students and faculty have said the cultural significance and awareness it has brought the community is too important for it not to become permanent.

"If it's removed ... I think it (loses) its charge and its relevance," said CU Boulder Master of Fine Arts student Jasmine Baetz, who spearheaded the sculpture's creation in 2019.

The sculpture stands outside Temporary Building No. 1, which was occupied in spring 1974 by Chicano students for 18 days as part of a protest against the university's budget cuts to their financial aid. Los Seis died during the same time as the protest. The sculpture along with a small mural tucked away at the base of stairwell 26 in Norlin Library serve as the only two reminders on campus of the victims' lives.

"If it's removed... I think it (loses) its charge and its relevance."

Jasmine Baetz, CU Boulder MFA student

The university's policy allows for temporary installations for up to 180 days according to CU Boulder spokesperson Deborah Mendez-Wilson. The sculpture's residency, which began in August of 2019, was set to expire on Feb. 8. But after calls to let the art piece remain, CU Boulder Chancellor Philip DiStefano granted a month-long extension until March 8.

A letter signed by 11 of CU Boulder's 12 college deans in support of the sculpture's permanence was sent to DiStefano in December 2019 and asked the chancellor to "send an important message to the Chicanx students on campus, along with other students of color at our university, that our university is working toward becoming a more welcoming environment."

Sharon Matusik, dean of the Leeds School of Business and the only one not to sign the letter, said in a statement to the CU Independent, "I appreciate the educational value of public art on college campuses, which is why I support the chancellor's decision to allow the Los Seis de Boulder artwork to remain in place for an additional month."

Other deans praised the chancellor's announcement that he would be forming a committee, known as the CU Boulder History Project, to evaluate the potential for student artwork to remain permanent on campus. But it is no guarantee that the Los Seis sculpture will remain in place and currently no committee members have been selected.

The chancellor's office is in the process of soliciting nominations, and the committee is expected to convene this spring to commence its work," Mendez-Wilson said.

A CU Boulder Today article published Thursday said further input on committee members will be sought during a panel at the upcoming spring

Diversity and Inclusion Summit on Feb. 25 in the University Memorial Center.

James White, dean of CU's College of Arts and Sciences, told the CUI he was "surprised to find out there was no mechanism" for evaluating whether an art piece should be permanent or not. He said he is supportive of DiStefano's initiatives.

White compared social conversation around the Los Seis sculpture to that of the UMC fountain renaming which honored a CU Boulder alum, Dalton Trumbo, who went on to become a filmmaker and free-speech activist.

"We are still talking about it," White said. "That's what art does, and that's what I would hope a piece like (the Los Seis sculpture) would do."

Lori Bergen, dean of CU's College of Media, Communication and Information, said in a statement that she is encouraged by the thoughtful dialogue the Los Seis sculpture has sparked when asked why she decided to sign the letter addressed to DiStefano.

The history of Chicano and Mexican-American activism on CU's campus stems back years before the deaths of Los Seis. Founded in 1968, United Mexican American Students (UMAS) quickly became an established student-activist collective on campus. The student group led coalitions to advocate for increased outreach and retainment of Mexican-American and Chicano students and eventually joined with Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlán to become UMAS y MEXA.

According to the group's co-chair, Mateo Vela, UMAS y MEXA has been in talks with CU Boulder Student Government to form a resolution that will encourage CU's administration to make the sculpture



The sculpture, seen here outside of Temporary Building No. 1, is dedicated to six Chicano CU Boulder students and activists who died in the '70s and is set to be moved on March 5. Currently, a committee is being formed to consider its permanence. Feb. 21, 2019. (Robert Tann/CU Independent)

permanent.

The CUI reached out to CUSG Executive and Student Body President Michael Martin for comment on the resolution but received no response. The CUI also reached out to CUSG's Diversity and Inclusion Department and received no response.

Apart from physical memorials, multiple community days organized throughout the past 50 years have taken place to remember Los Seis, with the most recent being in September following the sculpture's installation. Events are set to continue, with Baetz planning this spring to facilitate a second sculpture at 28th and Canyon to mark the second bombing site.

She's confident that the original sculpture will remain and only continue to cement Los Seis' legacy.

"Seeing this sculpture moved is not a possibility," she said.



# THROUGH THE LENS

SPRING 2020 IN PHOTOS



1. Boulder City Councilmember and keynote speaker Junie Joseph speaks on what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. means to her. **By Casey Paul**  
2. Shane Gatling and McKinley Wright IV record a clip for Buff Nation following the Buffs 71-65 victory over the Cal Bears at the CU Events Center. **By Nigel Amstock**  
3. Junior guard McKinley Wright IV flexes following a layup during the first half of play at the CU Events Center. **By Nigel Amstock**  
4. Sophomore forward Evan Battey elevates the ball towards the net during the second half of play at the Pac-12 Tournament. **By Casey Paul**  
5. Players walk off the court after a tough loss against Washington State, putting them out of the Pac-12 Tournament. **By Casey Paul**  
6. Sophomore forward Evan Battey celebrates a scored basket during the first half of play at the CU Events Center. **By Nigel Amstock**





7



8



9

7. Colorado and Stanford share a prayer circle following the horrific collision between Colorado forward Evan Battey and Stanford forward Oscar Da Silva at the CU Events Center. **By Casey Paul**



10



11



12



13

8. Tony Brown reaches to get more height during the vertical jump during the 2020 NFL Draft Pro Day. **By Kara Wagenknecht**  
9. The Buffs Going Bananas student club show their support during the game against the Washington State Cougars, which was also themed 'Buffs Going Bananas.' **By Casey Paul**  
10. Reading passionately from her book, Fajardo-Anstine channels past experiences and emotions to bring to her audience. **By Hunter Allen**  
11. Lil Wyte shows his smart, fast lyricism while opening at Three 6 Mafia's Denver show. **By Hunter Allen**  
12. Colorado's senior midfielder Anna Collawn runs around Oregon's junior attacker Lillian Stump during the first half at the Kittredge Field. **By Kara Wagenknecht**  
13. Colorado head coach Tad Boyle reacts to a turnover call against the Buffs at Pauley Pavilion. **By Nigel Amstock**



# COVID-19: a timeline

By CU Independent

**Dec. 31, 2019: a new virus**

China informs the World Health Organization (WHO) about patients in Wuhan developing a respiratory illness. Chinese officials identify the disease as a new type of coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, that causes the disease known as COVID-19.

**Jan. 30, 2020: A global emergency**

The same day the novel coronavirus is declared a global health emergency by WHO, the University of Colorado Boulder raises surveillance of the spreading disease and suspends Education Abroad-sponsored programs to China for the spring 2020 semester.

**March 4, 2020: Students abroad**

Nearly 200 university students are forced to return home after having their study abroad programs cut short. CU Boulder suspends all programs in China, South Korea and Italy.

**March 5, 2020: First cases in Colorado**

The same day the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment announces the state's first two COVID-19 cases, CU Boulder activates an emergency operations team to begin deep cleaning of campus facilities.

**March 9: Six CU affiliates tested**

The university tests six different people affiliated with the school for COVID-19. CU Vice President for Communication Ken McConnellogue says the university is "not near the point" of moving to online classes but leaves the door open to it being a possibility.

**March 10: State of emergency**

Gov. Jared Polis declares a state of emergency in Colorado. That same day, Colorado College becomes the first higher education institution in the state to move its classes online.

**March 11: CU Boulder classes move online**

The university announces all in-person classes will be canceled for the remainder of the spring semester and instead move online in a bid to slow the spread of COVID-19. All university-sponsored travel, both foreign and domestic, is temporarily suspended. The annual Conference on World Affairs, scheduled for early April, is canceled.

**March 12: A positive case**

A CU Boulder employee tests positive for COVID-19. The employee is believed to have worked in limited areas of the Center for Community (C4C) building on March 9 between the hours of 8 a.m. and noon but does not work in Housing and Dining Services and does not live in Boulder County.

**March 14: COVID-19 comes to Boulder County**

The county announces its first confirmed

COVID-19 case, a man in his 20s who travelled to Colorado from California where he attended an event where two other people tested positive.

**March 17: Commencement canceled**

CU Boulder cancels all spring commencement ceremonies, including its graduation event at Folsom Field in May. That same day, Boulder County limits public gatherings to just 10 people.

**March 19: IFC member tests positive**

The Interfraternity Council (IFC) on the Hil confirms one of its members tested positive for COVID-19. The fraternity member, also a CU Boulder student, attended at least one party during St. Patrick's Day weekend. The Boulder Police Department says it broke up multiple parties that weekend, most of which were around 100 people.

**March 23: Boulder orders stay at home order**

The City of Boulder follows Denver in ordering its residents to stay inside unless for essential business. Several activities and businesses are exempt from this order which, if violated, is punishable by up to 90-days in

jail and a \$100,000 fine.

**March 24: Most summer classes move online**

CU Boulder announces most of its summer classes will now be held online. This applies to Session A (June 1–July 2), C (June 1–July 24) and D (June 1–August 7). That same day, the university reports that 5,438 students, about 66% of all on-campus residents, have moved out of their residence halls.

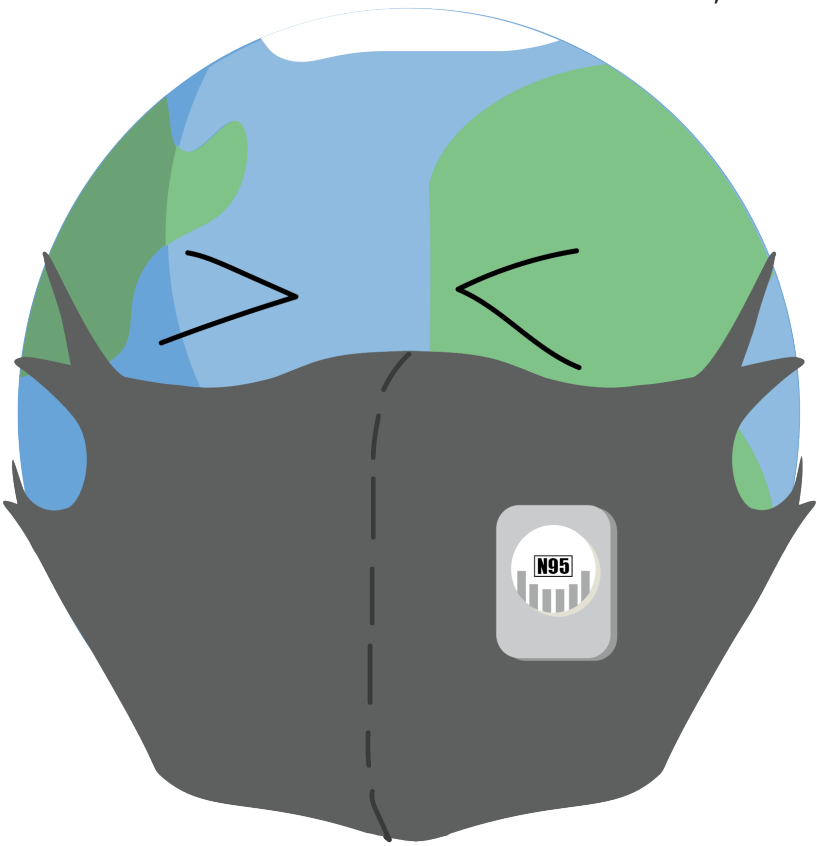
**March 25: State-wide stay at home**

Gov. Polis orders a state-wide stay at home order effective through, at least, April 17. The order supersedes any other from local city or county governments.

**April 28: Boulder requires face coverage in all essential businesses**

City Council issues an emergency order for all employees, vendors and customers entering businesses that host public accommodation, such as grocery stores, to cover their faces in order to halt the spread of COVID-19.

***See the full timeline, as well as COVID-19 coverage and data visualizations from the CU Independent, [here](#).***



Graphic by  
Mengchen Gong





Kelsey Rickert



Monica Huacuja Espinosa



Morgan Barnes

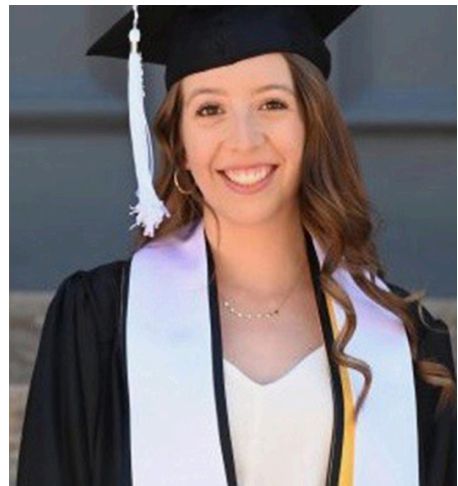


Katie Gach

# A NEW NORMAL

What COVID-19's impacts look like for CU Boulder students

By Robert Tann, Hannah Metzger, Anna Haynes and Casey Paul



Erinn Shea

A University of Colorado Boulder graduate student and teaching assistant has been caught in a balancing act of work after her 3-year-old daughter's daycare was forced to close down. One CU Boulder junior has found being cut-off from in-person interactions has taken a toll on her mental state. For a CU Boulder freshman, COVID-19 is the sickest she's ever been. She worries many aren't taking health precautions seriously enough to protect people like her immunocompromised family. In just a matter of weeks, the novel coronavirus pandemic has drastically reshaped life for college students. The CU Independent wanted to understand some of the many ways the highly contagious respiratory disease has created a new normal, so we set out to survey CU Boulder students between April 18 and May 7. Over those weeks, 110 students responded, with

five being interviewed. This is what they told us.

**Katie Gach, graduate student**

Fourth-year graduate student Katie Gach is trying to take it one day at a time. A teaching assistant in CU Boulder's ATLAS Institute, Gach has had plenty on her plate from grading her students' assignments to working on her own research. Now, she's at home with her 3-year-old daughter as well. "We had to figure out within a couple of days ... what is this going to look like with everybody home?" Gach said. Gach's daughter's daycare was one of several Boulder Valley schools that shut its doors on March 13 as the coronavirus pandemic threatened public safety.

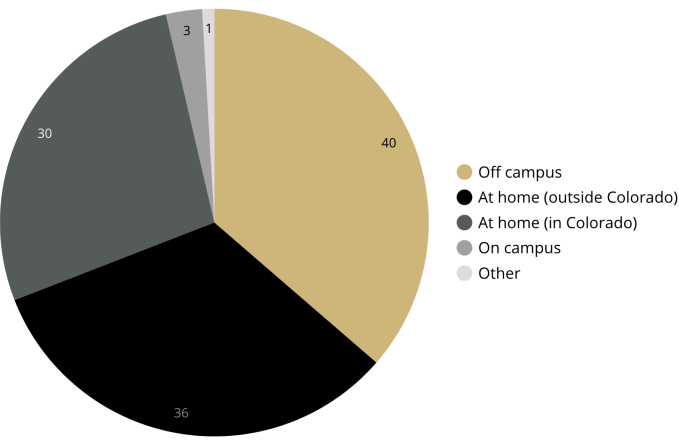
"She asks about her friends constantly," Gach said of her daughter. "Her whole world was just gone and she didn't understand why."

Now, she and her spouse have cut down on their day-time work hours to care for their young child, trading off on shifts in between meetings. "We've had to coordinate our schedules way more than usual," she said, adding that while she's enjoyed the extra time with her daughter, the new routine can be exhausting.

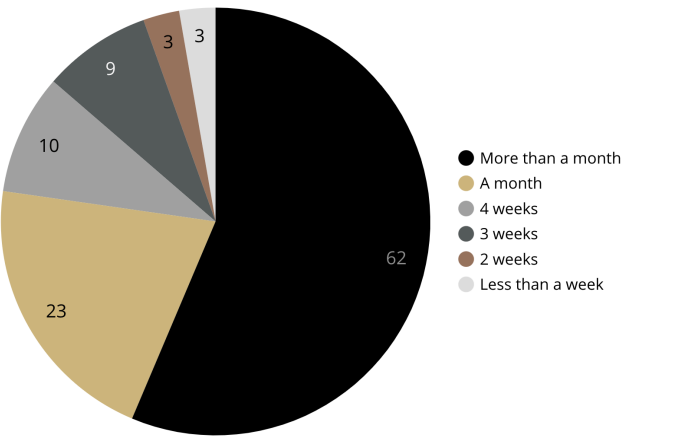
Gach has had to work longer nights to catch up on her doctoral research. While she would usually clock out for the night at around 10 p.m., Gach now finds herself staying up till 11 p.m. or midnight. This is because her stipend from CU is tied to her teaching, so she's pushed her research to the side during the day. And she doesn't even know yet just how the pandemic will affect her research, which she said is people-based and hinges on in-person interactions. "Cutting down workdays to about six hours each was pretty stressful," Gach said, adding that while she hasn't seen an effect on her income, she's chipped in to help other family members who have.

CU is already bracing for a bleak financial outlook. System President Mark Kennedy and other university leaders have taken a 10% pay cut through furloughs in an effort to mitigate future job losses, something Gach said she appreciates. But she also wants to see it continue in order to protect lower-income employees. A member of the newly formed system-wide CU union, Gach is supportive of the open letter the union released on its website on March 27 which lays out a list of actions for CU to take to protect various campus workers.

While she said she is lucky to have a joint-income with her spouse, there are many graduate students who would suffer if their pay and benefits from CU were cut. As she waits for more news from CU administrators, Gach is also keeping up with the updates from the daycare. Boulder Valley, like many other Colorado districts, is still uncertain about what fall will mean for its students, though scenarios released by the district last week include a possible blend of in-person and online learning. But Gach is confident she and her partner will figure it out. With so much to be anxious about, she wants other student parents to know to go easy on themselves. "Be very kind to yourself. Don't feel like you're failing your kid because you let them watch too much TV," she said.



Less than 3% of respondents were still living on campus. May 14, 2020 (Casey Paul/CU Independent)



Over 50% of respondents had been in quarantine for over a month. May 14, 2020 (Casey Paul/CU Independent)

**Kelsey Rickert, junior**

For some students, months of social isolation have taken a heavy toll on their mental health. Since moving back to her parents' home from Bear Creek in mid-March, CU Boulder junior Kelsey Rickert finds herself "in a void." She sleeps sometimes 10 to 12 hours a day and has struggled to keep up with her online classes. "I've found activities to stay busy but they, for the most part, have been very isolated activities without interaction," Rickert said. "I've been having a hard time staying connected to my friend group." Rickert said she's experienced a relapse in her



depression since being in quarantine and, while she’s tried to find outlets, it’s been hard to stay motivated.

“My friends and I started a mutual aid collective for CU students in the first couple of weeks following classes moving online. We had a couple of weeks there that we were going really strong and starting initiatives like a food drive. But, unfortunately ... I just couldn’t lead the meetings anymore. So it just kind of dropped off,” she said.

“There’s just been a lot of loss with my activism and my relationship with friends.”

Since the fall semester, Rickert has been on antidepressants and seeing a counselor in CU Boulder’s Counseling and Psychiatric Services. With the campuses soft closure, that too has been uprooted.

“That’s made relapses into depression worse,” Rickert said. “My CAPS therapist is not a licensed practitioner, so she can’t reach out over remote telehealth (services). I felt like she really understood me.”

That fall semester was the first time Rickert had been involved in therapy. While she’s considered exploring telehealth options, Rickert said seeing people in person is more important to her mental health than she had initially thought.

“Seeing people over Zoom now just doesn’t feel as impactful,” she said. “That was one of the first things I noticed, especially when I moved home.”

But some help has come. Rickert received about \$1,800 in reimbursement from Bear Creek and a \$1,200 stimulus check from the federal government.

“It definitely has helped. I was starting to run out of funds ... now I can put some money away in my savings account in case I can afford rent for an apartment or something like that.

Rickert said if prices drop she may consider renting an apartment in Boulder instead of returning to Bear Creek. That is if she decides to return to school at all.

“Classes were, unfortunately, maladapted to be online,” Rickert said. “I don’t know that I would enroll for fall if they’re all online.”

Though uncertainty has weighed on Rickert’s mind, she is optimistic for summer when she can take a break from classes and hopefully string together part-time jobs to keep busy.

Her advice to those facing challenges like hers

is to adapt in ways that make you happy. For her final assignment in one class, instead of writing an essay, Rickert chose to make a zine about the class’ topics.

“One thing that really helped me was incorporating a new interest in art into that project,” she said. “If you have to adapt your tasks or hobbies into new things to keep you interested ... then do it.”

Erinn Shea, graduated May 2020

Senior Erinn Shea said COVID-19 has affected nearly every aspect of her life. Shea, who is a 22-year-old sociology major, called the toll COVID-19 is taking on mental health “immeasurable.”

“My mental health as I have normally known it has been flipped upside down,” Shea said.

Following the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Shea moved from Boulder to Littleton to stay with her parents. In recent weeks, she has struggled with the impact of losing senior year traditions, working post-graduation and worrying about family members like her elderly grandparents and her father who works as an oncology nurse.

Even small pleasures like hugging her father when he gets home from work have been stripped away.

“It all feels very emotionally sterile,” Shea said. “Growing up, my dad coming home from work was always a big deal and so exciting to see him and give him a hug. It’s hard to see him as distant ... that he’s a concern coming home.”

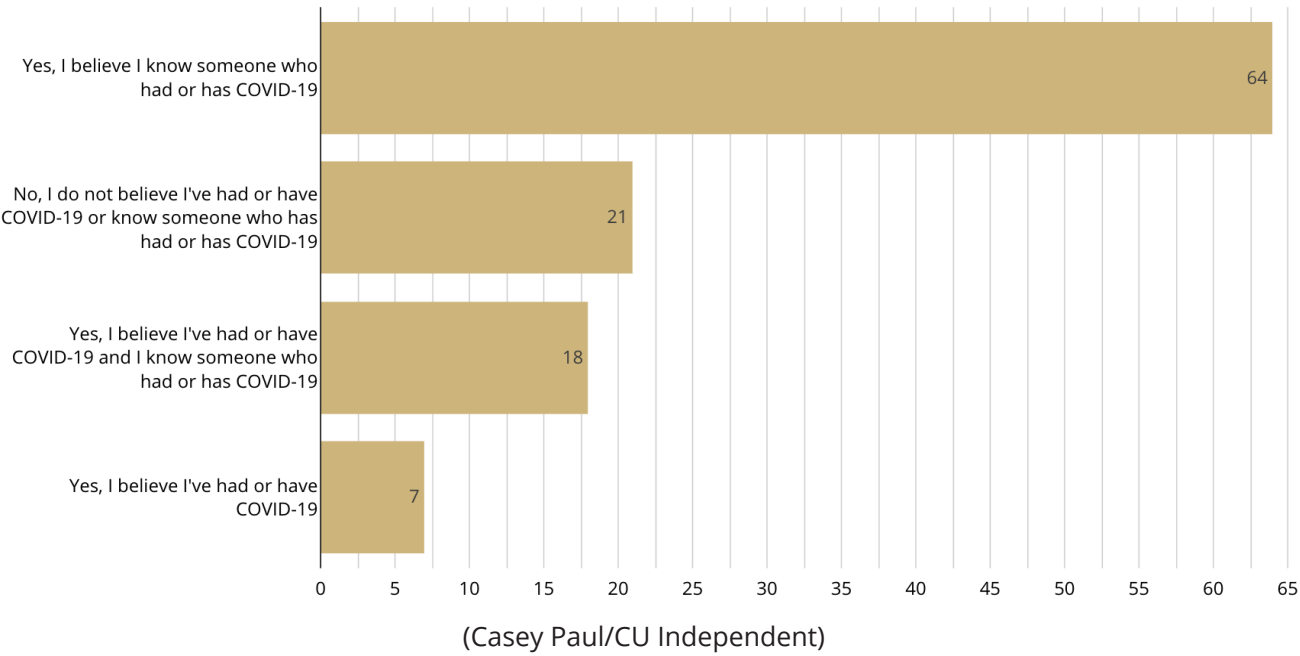
While coping with such emotional stresses, Shea has been trying to balance her well-being with her academic obligations.

As CU Boulder transitioned to online-only classes, Shea said the quality of her education has taken a hit. Losing the social and independent aspects of college, Shea said that even her most accommodating professors cannot make Zoom courses as effective as in-person learning.

“I want to be a teacher and school is so much more than academic curriculum,” Shea said. “A lot of it is having a safe space and creating relationships with professors and friends.”

Having earned her elementary education license, Shea is set to begin student teaching in the fall

Do you believe you had/have or know someone who had/has COVID-19?



before applying for her own classroom; however, she is unsure of what’s going to happen now. Shea fears if she’s forced to teach online, it will not give her the full experience of running a classroom.

In addition, Shea said that hiring freezes and the furloughing of recent graduates have made her future suddenly very unstable.

“Everyone’s stuck and it’s just the question of ‘what now?’” she said.

As Shea enters the future in a time of uncertainty, she is most concerned about how things will be after; what lasting mental health effects are going to come out of the pandemic.

Before COVID-19, Shea loved to frequent Broncos games with her father, but now she can’t imagine being able to put herself in such a crowded setting again.

To monitor her mental health during the pandemic, Shea has been using an app to track her emotions daily and provide meditations. However, she hopes the global trauma from COVID-19 will encourage society to put more support systems in place for people dealing with mental health issues.

“I know that my mental health journey in terms of COVID-19 is going to be a long one,” Shea said. “The one thing I could hope is that a greater understanding and compassion for mental health

would arise from this.”

Monica Huacuja Espinosa, junior

Monica Huacuja Espinosa is a junior majoring in ecology and evolutionary biology and pre-health. She is also a first generation college student, which has been an added stressor in dealing with repercussions of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

When cases of COVID-19 began being reported in Boulder, Huacuja Espinosa’s parents, who hail from Mexico, asked her to return to their home in Aurora.

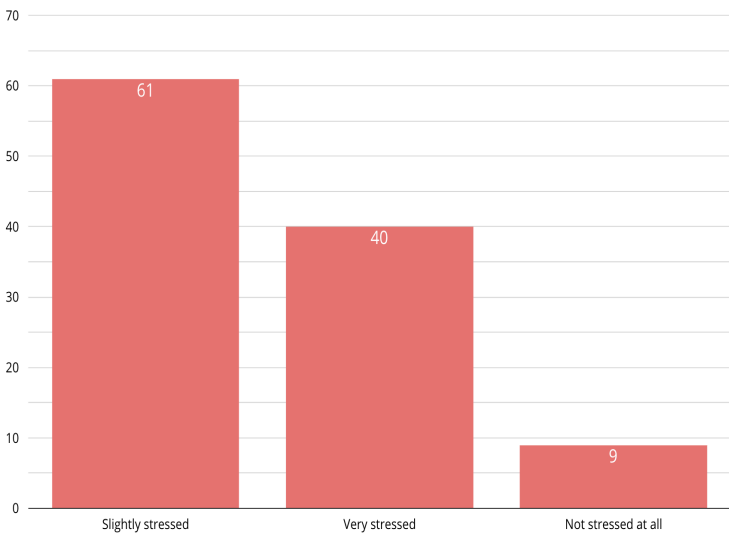
“I was happy to come home but didn’t realize all of the added stress this could lead to at the time,” Huacuja Espinosa said. In addition to studying for finals, Huacuja Espinosa took on the task of acting as a translator for her Spanish-speaking parents as they refinance their mortgage.

“Since everything (became) remote they needed help calling the company, as well as faxing documents and doing online signing,” Huacuja Espinosa said. Normally, she said, such documents could be delivered physically and an in-person translator would be available.

In addition to assisting her parents, Huacuja Espinosa was also tasked with helping her younger brother continue with middle school online, including using Google Classroom, Zoom and other virtual resources.

“These are tasks that I would not be worried about or be occupied with under normal circumstances,” she said. “The stress of school (and) family related stress on top of general stress everyone is facing amidst this pandemic was really overwhelming this semester and I could feel it taking a huge toll on my motivation for school.

How stressed are you currently?



(Casey Paul/CU Independent)

What is your greatest stressor currently?

| Stressors                     | Record Count ▾ |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Online class                  | 81             |
| My mental health              | 70             |
| The physical health of others | 59             |
| Employment                    | 53             |
| My own physical health        | 39             |
| Rent/bills/other payments     | 36             |
| Housing                       | 26             |
| Other                         | 14             |

(Casey Paul/CU Independent)

“I am the first person in my family to go to college and I am very proud of that,” Huacuja Espinosa said. “I always knew that it would be difficult at times not just because of

added family responsibilities, but also due to (my family's) lack of knowledge of the college experience and resources in general.”

She said despite the added responsibilities, she felt an obligation to help her parents who she said have “sacrificed a lot.”

Morgan Barnes, freshman

“It just started with a really bad headache, then the next day the sore throat came, and then the next day I was so sick I could barely move.”

Freshman Morgan Barnes began showing symptoms of COVID-19 on Wednesday, April 22. Doctors believed she likely had strep throat when her initial test that Friday came back negative.

“Monday rolls around and I still have a fever, my throat is still so swollen I can’t even swallow, and I was just a mess,” Barnes said. “Tuesday, I was so sick, I could barely stand up. I could barely open my eyes.” When she tested negative for strep throat and returned for a second COVID-19 test, blood results were positive.

Barnes has an autoimmune disorder, which places her at risk of severe illness more often than most.

“When flu season rolls around I get the flu. I’ve had whooping cough. I’ve had diseases that most people have never even heard of,” Barnes said. “But this is by far the sickest I’ve ever, ever, ever been.

“Up until (May 8), I was sleeping probably 18-20 hours a day, I wasn’t eating. I’ve lost 10 pounds in 10 days because I’ve just been so sick,” she said.

Not only does Barnes’ autoimmune disorder make her more vulnerable to illness, but her and her entire family have asthma, which only adds to the risk of contracting COVID-19, which “takes a toll on your lungs.” By the time Barnes began showing symptoms of COVID-19,

her and her family had already been self-isolating for over a month.

Barnes’ brother and her father have both since contracted COVID-19.

“My mom and my stepdad already worked from home previous to (COVID-19). We haven’t left the house, nobody’s come or gone in, we order in all of our groceries, so really the only way that we would have gotten it would have been through groceries where we missed wiping something down,” Barnes said.

She said after testing positive she was told the virus could spread through air ducts and said even the most extreme self-isolation would not have been enough to stop the spread in her home.

“I mean, even if I had been locked in the basement by myself for two weeks, (my family) still would have gotten it,” Barnes said.

While Barnes’ brother is asymptomatic, her father’s case may be more serious since doctors detected what she called the “COVID crackle” — a crackling sound that doctors hear in the lungs which indicates the development of pneumonia.

For Barnes, the lack of caution she sees in others is “just selfish.”

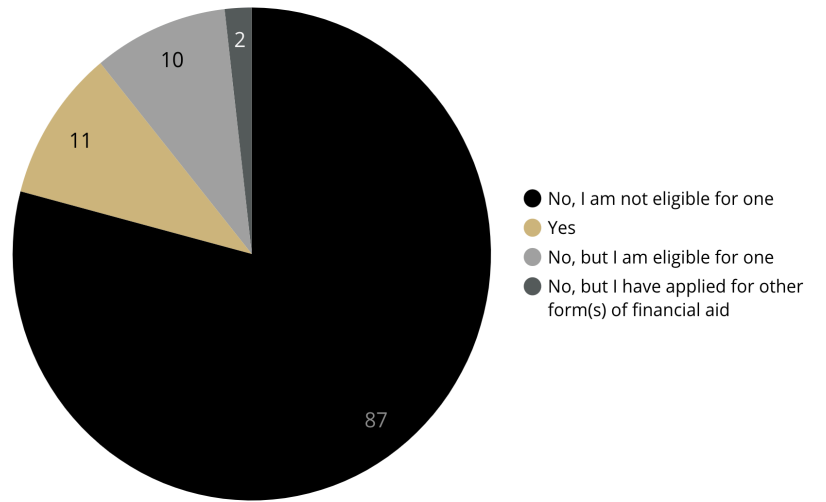
“It’s just heartbreaking to go on Snapchat and see that kids are still going to parties, kids are still with their friends, kids are still out drinking,” Barnes said. “I’d love to be doing all those things with my friends, but it’s honestly just like people are spitting in my face (and) saying, ‘we don’t care about your health.’

“Yeah, you’re young and healthy, you might be fine if you get it, but that’s not the case for a really great portion of the population,” she said. “Even though you are young and healthy, you might get pneumonia and be put on a ventilator. There’s no way of knowing. It’s different for every single person.”

She wants everyone to take it health precautions seriously regardless of age or health.

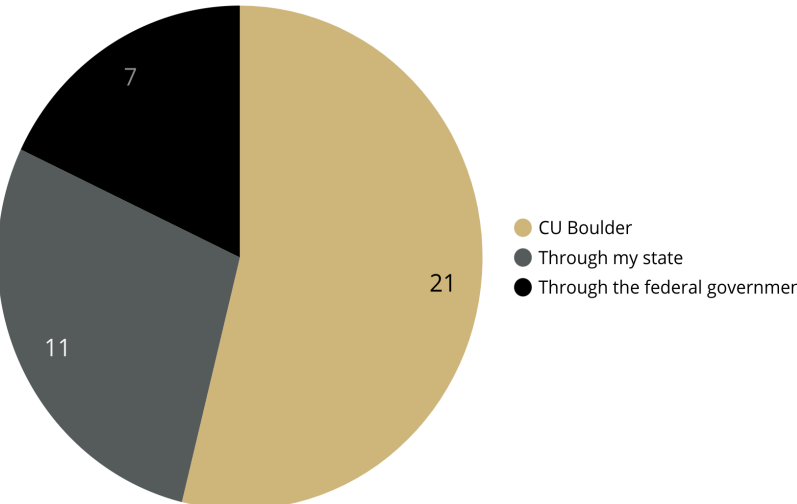
“Otherwise you will end up hospitalized or dead or killing someone else.”

Did you receive a stimulus check from the federal government?



(Casey Paul/CU Independent)

If you received financial aid, where did you receive it from?



(Casey Paul/CU Independent)

See all the data from the CU Independent’s survey by clicking [here](#) (best if viewed on desktop).



# CU student group The Brazen Project works to shed light on ‘fake’ pregnancy clinics

By Anna Haynes

On the fourth floor of the University Memorial Center (UMC) on the University of Colorado Boulder campus sits an office for a women’s medical clinic called Marisol Health, the only women’s medical clinic with offices on the CU Boulder campus. But according to members of The Brazen Project, a CU student group focused on reproductive rights, Marisol Health is a “fake clinic.”

The term “fake clinic” or “fake health center” has been used by pro-choice activists to refer to clinics that “intentionally mislead women about their reproductive health-care options to block them from accessing abortion care,” according to pro-choice organization NARAL Pro-Choice America. They are also commonly referred to as crisis pregnancy centers.

“The reason they’ve been referred to as fake clinics is because of the fact they present themselves as women’s health clinics but do not offer comprehensive reproductive health care options,” said Meiwen Liang, a CU senior majoring in anthropology who runs media and visibility for The Brazen Project. Marisol is not considered comprehensive by pro-choice activists, Liang said, because it doesn’t refer people to abortions as a pregnancy outcome option.

Anti-abortion counseling centers are harmful because it promotes the ideology that women do not (or) should not have full control of their bodies and further stigmatizes abortion,” Liang said. “Abortions are normal and people who decide to have one should be able to.”

Marisol Health is a women’s health clinic and

*Members of The Brazen Project work to counter misinformation from what they call “fake” pregnancy clinics. Their work begins in the heart of the CU campus.*

initiative of Catholic Charities Denver. It exists under the broader umbrella of Marisol Services, which also includes Marisol Homes and Marisol Human Services. Along with its outreach office in the UMC, Marisol Health has two locations in Denver and Lafayette. A fact sheet outlining Marisol’s services and medical staff can be found here.

Liang joined The Brazen Project out of her belief in the importance of social justice and activism for young people. She learned about crisis pregnancy centers after The Brazen Project showed a video by Vice entitled “The Fake Abortion Clinics of America.”

The group has been working to spread the word about Marisol and other crisis pregnancy centers by poster around campus and hosting training sessions.

## Claims based on ‘unproven research’

Crisis pregnancy centers often claim to have resources to reverse the effects of the abortion pill. A quick visit to Marisol Health’s website reveals a page titled “Abortion Pill Reversal,” which claims that Marisol offers services to reverse the effects of mifepristone (generically named Mifeprex and RU-486), a pill designed to terminate a pregnancy.

We know that an unplanned pregnancy can be scary and many women make decisions to abort their babies when they are terrified and stressed,” the webpage reads. It goes on to say that many women will, after some time, change their minds about having a “chemical abortion.

“You’ll find it on almost every crisis pregnancy center website,” said Lily Bisantz, a CU sophomore and event



Meiwen Liang, left, and Lily Bisantz, right, of The Brazen Project. Feb. 28, 2020. (Casey Paul/CU Independent)

coordinator and coalition builder for The Brazen Project.

Bisantz pointed to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which has warned that the efficacy of these claims is based on “unproven, unethical research.”

“CU students who may just be needing help or are curious ... need factual, unbiased information and Marisol Health is not giving (that) to them,” Bisantz said.

## Despite controversy, Marisol remains registered

Marisol Health obtained an office in the UMC by applying to become a Registered Student Organization (RSO). RSOs are overseen by the Center for Student Involvement (CSI), a department of the University of Colorado Student Government (CUSG).

According to the Student Organization Handbook,

benefits granted to RSOs includes the “ability to apply for office/locker space within the University Memorial Center through the space allocation process governed by the UMC and CSI Boards.”

There is currently no language in the Student Organization Handbook that prevents RSOs from spreading false or misleading medical information to students.

“We want them to be able to be here and do their thing but not harm students in the process,” Bisantz said. “As a registered student organization, we also don’t have a ton of power. We’re on the same ground as Marisol Health.”

## Education battles spread of misinformation

The Brazen Project works with a strong



emphasis on education, with the organization hosting review-a-thons at least twice a semester wherein members leave negative reviews on Marisol's website warning students about what they perceive as false medical claims.

"I think the education aspect is really important, especially since no one would go to these clinics if they actually knew what their intentions were," Liang said.



Meiwen Liang. Feb. 28, 2020. (Casey Paul/CU Independent)

CU graduate and former campus organizer for The Brazen Project Pablo de la Rosa said in a post on Marisol's Facebook page that the organization is "not a comprehensive health clinic" and criticized it for supporting the idea of abortion pill reversal and allegedly suggesting a causal relationship between hormonal birth control and breast cancer during on-campus meetings.

"It is unethical and dangerous for this organization to mislead the public with medical misinformation," de la Rosa wrote.

In response, Marisol defended its practices, writing that it is built "on the belief that women deserve respect and support to make important decisions about their sexual health or pregnancies" and stating it gives medically verified facts about procedures and birth control.

"Before Brazen, of course I cared about abortion

and abortion access, but it wasn't... very high on my priorities," de la Rosa said later in an interview with the CUI. "Maybe I felt that as someone without a uterus, it was an issue reserved for only middle-aged white women and that I had nothing to contribute to the (reproductive) rights movement."

What brought de la Rosa to the project was its focus on how abortion intersects with other systems of oppression such as race, class and immigration.

While The Brazen Project has largely focused its efforts on Marisol, another clinic alleged of spreading disinformation exists in Boulder called the Boulder Pregnancy Resource Center. Unlike Marsol, this clinic is more transparent in its anti-abortion stance, writing on its website, "We promote the principle that life begins at conception."



Lily Bisantz. Feb. 28, 2020. Casey Paul/CU Independent)

According to Bisantz, the Boulder Pregnancy Resource Center also appears to have adopted what NARAL Pro-Choice America calls a "co-location strategy" in which offices are placed near comprehensive health clinics or clinics that do provide abortion services.

"There's been so many stories where someone



CU students and members of The Brazen Project Lily Bisantz, left, and Meiwen Liang, right, talk with students in the University Memorial Center on Friday, Feb. 28 2020. (Casey Paul/CU Independent)

will have an appointment with an abortion clinic and then not know which one (they) should go to," Bisantz said. "It's not a coincidence that it's on the same block as the Boulder abortion clinic."

The Brazen Project will be holding another review-a-thon after spring break as well as an informational session on crisis pregnancy centers.

"These clinics use manipulative tactics to try to get someone out of having an abortion and spread false information," Liang said. "It's especially harmful when (people) are already in a vulnerable state seeking this service and have to go through this process in an environment that is not supportive."

Marisol has responded to The Brazen Project's claims in a statement to the CU Independent.

"Marisol Health believes it has one thing in common with the Brazen Project participants—we, too, are passionate about women's healthcare," Marisol said. "Marisol Health in fact is a network of licensed, comprehensive medical clinics for women, especially

serving those who are poor and in need."

"We give the best medical care with our three board-certified physicians, four nurse practitioners, a certified nurse midwife and case managers who are there to address all their needs," Marisol continued. "There is no confusion about what we offer. We are open and honest with our patients, giving them medically accurate information and care for all their needs. We are what authentic reproductive healthcare looks like."

"We encourage (The Brazen Project) to come to our campus resource center or Lafayette location and ask questions about women's healthcare. We invite an open discussion about this important topic—women's healthcare."

For Liang, it's important to let people know what Marisol and other clinics provide and to get people the resources that they need.

"And most importantly, abortion rights are human rights."



# Opinion: CU's plan to improve diversity is just an idea

by Vayle Lafehr

**Read the full version of this article on the CU Independent website [here](#).**

The University of Colorado Boulder's leaders cite 2015 as the first time it occurred to them to begin efforts toward improving campus diversity and inclusion. After a series of dialogues and workshops with students and faculty, authorship of a plan to move forward began three years later, in 2018. By October 2019, the official Inclusion, Diversity, and Excellence in Academics (IDEA) Plan was published.

The plan ruminates in its brainstorming phase, leading students and faculty to question whether that's where it will remain. Plagued by vague language and repeated delays, the IDEA plan is an ambiguous roadmap to achieving a more inclusive and equitable campus. While CU's intentions for improvement may be genuine, its execution leaves much to be desired.

The IDEA Plan constitutes the campus' only blueprint in history for better supporting minority students and faculty. After five years of working on this plan, there seems to be little return on the investment. It is now March 2020 and CU says the IDEA Plan is in the phase of "continue building partnerships for long-term, iterative growth according to the IDEA Plan's goals and recommendations."

CU Boulder Chancellor Philip DiStefano, in an article in CU Boulder Today introducing the IDEA plan, said it is the "product of extensive reflection, focused discussion and dedication to changing our culture at CU Boulder." When DiStefano says "reflection," his words are open to interpretation. Is he referring to students of color who have called for CU to provide a more comprehensive support system for minority students on campus? Is he referencing the most recent CU Undergraduate Student Climate Survey results, a survey that has not been administered since 2014 and which produced disappointing results when it came to minority students' feelings of belonging? By not

specifically identifying the reflection from which the IDEA plan is based on, it is hard to see where the plan is headed on a practical level.

Diving into the fifty-one-page IDEA Plan document, the university demonstrates support for increased financial support to underrepresented communities via scholarship programs and the re-evaluation of existing scholarship requirements to receive those.

Information about these financial support goals is dubious and non-committal. It is March 2020 and, since 2015, there haven't been any new scholarship programs specifically created for minorities.

When CU's Office of Diversity, Equity & Community Engagement (ODECE) was asked, "Which specific programs have been newly created to aid students from diverse backgrounds financially?" they replied, "To help provide initial guidance on IDEA Plan implementation, a transition working group"—which includes campus administrators, vice-chancellors and human resources officers—"has met with (Russell) Moore," the provost and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and a professor of integrative physiology.

This language is exceedingly vague: it doesn't reference any specific programs, specific dates for when we can expect substantive change or even implementation strategies that the "transition working team" plans to carry out.

The IDEA Plan document cites strategies that it will use to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty, some of which are expanding and supporting the existing STAR program: a special set of processes that aid academic departments in successfully recruiting those whose work and research will contribute to equal opportunity. Other strategies include supporting cluster-hire programs and promoting hiring practices for bettering diversity.

The university is sorely lacking in racial and ethnic diversity, however. In the 2015-2016 school year, 17% of faculty identified as racial or ethnic minorities. However, in the 2018-2019 school year, a little less than 16% of faculty identified as racial or ethnic minorities. These dwindling numbers are extremely concerning and lay the word "implementation" on shaky ground.

CU needs to address its poor diversity rates head-on. While it boasted one of its most diverse classes in fall 2019, the university still has a long way to go to be on par with its state-wide demographics.

According to CU's Common Data Set, 22% of the fall 2015 undergraduate class identified as racial or ethnic minorities. In fall 2017, 25% of the undergraduate class identified as racial or ethnic minorities and in fall 2018, 26% of the undergraduate class identified as racial or ethnic minorities. A 4% increase isn't much.

The IDEA Plan calls for more financial resources and programming for students and to increase financial resources and incentives for improving diversity. Though the IDEA Plan itself addresses the need to recruit from underrepresented communities and lays out a strong commitment to do so, strong commitments without action don't produce meaningful change. They haven't for the past five years. In addition, CU fails to include specifics; for example, which communities they plan to shift their recruitment focus to.

Diversifying CU's incoming pool of applicants is neglected when it comes to recruitment outside of Colorado. According to the New York Times, researchers found in 2017 that in CU's out-of-state visits, the university was "more likely to visit predominantly white public high schools over non-white schools with similar levels of academic achievement."

In 2017, it seemed CU strongly preferred the receipt from an out-of-state tuition bill to true racial and ethnic diversity. Objectives to increase financial support for underrepresented communities cannot be reached without major restructuring of recruitment methods and admittance. Unless CU Boulder commits itself to changing their current racial and ethnic composition on campus, neither diversity nor inclusion will exist.

Broad promises and transient objectives pervade this 51-page document. Section 3, page 36, advises, "While the IDEA Plan document serves the entire

campus, it does not serve as a specific roadmap for individual departments or units." Concrete, well-thought-out guidance for departments doesn't appear in the official IDEA Plan.

When pressed on the vagueness of their answers with, "What has been done since last year (Spring 2019) to improve diversity and inclusion at the administrative level?" they added, "Campus continues to implement efforts that promote diversity and inclusion at all levels." They attempted to bolster that statement with, "A transition team has been meeting to identify next steps in the process of implementing the IDEA Plan."

Why are the next steps still being identified and not taken?

In CU's defense, the CU System Faculty Council committee changed their name at the end of the 2018-19 academic year from the Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee (EMAC) to the Faculty Council Committee for Racial and Ethnic Equity (CREE). They defend this term by noting that they've included both "race" and "ethnicity" to be more inclusive. They also chose the term "equity" to emphasize their commitment to providing "access and opportunity" for students and faculty of color.

This name change wields no true instrumental value; it only embraces a more diplomatic definition of equality. While that intention is worthy, students and faculty aren't looking for nuances in an institutional label, they are looking for a diverse campus where everyone feels welcome, valued and supported.

According to the ODECE, "additional updates regarding the rollout of activities stemming from the IDEA Plan's recommendations will be announced in the coming weeks." This was reported on March 13th, 2020.

The "plan" closes out by stating: "The IDEA Plan concludes with galvanized optimism for our collective forward momentum." It is going to take a lot more than "galvanized optimism" to reify institutional change.

As it stands, the IDEA Plan is nothing more than an idea.



# Opinion: There might be a bright side to this pandemic

by Emily Ladd

**Read the full version of this article on the CU Independent website [here](#).**

After weeks of coronavirus spam in our inboxes, daily (if not hourly) updates on the mounting toll of infections and phone alerts warning us not to leave our homes, would it be crazy to think this pandemic isn't such a bad thing? It is forcing us to slow down, reconnect with ourselves and ask important questions about who we have become and who we want to be.

You might be wondering: How is that possible? We've been forced to a halt. God, Allah, the universe, science, the void of nothingness, whatever you may call it, has pushed a giant red STOP button in the sky and all the clattering commotion of mankind is screeching to a standstill. You just lost your job and you have to pay rent next week, you can't see your friends, all of your classes are on this glitchy, awkward digital platform and you have to live with the constant worry that your loved ones who fall into the at-risk population may contract COVID-19.

But for the first time in what feels like years—maybe your whole life—you have hours upon hours of uneaten time. You basically have a sprawling buffet of delicious time. What a strange thing. So, you think, does this mean I have to be alone and look at myself, like, really look at myself? Yeah, we all do. And maybe that's what we need.

We've become a society based on efficiency and speed. We are always on the go, constantly moving at a frantic pace. We hardly have time to drag our limp, exhausted bodies through the endless days bestowed upon us. Many of us simply go through the motions of living: We wake up as the sun rises, gulp down some coffee, rush off to work or school, try to focus our tired eyes on daily tasks, come home to heat up leftovers, then drown out the stress of the day in a few episodes of our current Netflix addiction. Is this really living?

The COVID-19 pandemic is triggering the start of a global recession and is causing stocks to plummet. Even though we are still in a shell-

shocked state, we are discovering benefits such as helping the environment. It turns out what is bad for the economy may be just the opposite for the Earth. As air travel is a leading contributor to climate change, a reduction in it is a breath of fresh air for the planet. In addition, due to quarantine restrictions, people are driving far less, eating out less, just doing less. When we are talking about the climate crisis, doing less is exactly what we need to be doing.

People may be becoming more altruistic. In countries around the world, people are stepping out onto their balconies to applaud health care workers as they get off their shifts. Communities are organizing to support their members through food drives, childcare, grocery drop-offs and restricted hours for the elderly. Italians are making music together from the safety of their socially-distanced balconies to raise spirits.

What it all comes down to is that this is a chance for us to look at ourselves and ask: What are we living for? We are being forced to see what and who is really important in our lives. It might be time to rethink our relationships. A lot of people in our social circles may fall out of our lives, but this is not a bad thing. The people who are reaching out to us now, and those we are reaching out to, are the ones that truly matter. If we don't like who we live with and where we live, we are being forced to reconsider those choices.

Maybe when this is over, we will change our lives. Maybe when this is over, we will stop spending time with people that do not feed us, stop spending energy on tasks that do not uplift us, stop acting in ways that hurt the planet or hurt the body that carries us. Instead, maybe we will start to breathe a little more, start to sleep a little better, start to love a little deeper, and start to slow our lives down. Maybe—just maybe—this crazy virus will be a grand wake-up call. When it is all said and done, we might come out on the other side as a better version of ourselves.

# Opinion: Boulder's sustainability efforts put other cities to shame

by Zoe Schact

**Read the full version of this article on the CU Independent website [here](#).**

The City of Boulder is considered one of the most sustainable cities in the U.S. The city's innovative efforts to protect the environment stress the sustainable potential that other cities do not yet possess.

Boulder's green initiatives such as its open space projects and annual Walk to Work Day have created an environmental community that stands out amongst others. The city is years ahead of most when it comes to environmental efforts.

Boulder was one of only 16 cities that helped its locals compost in 2016. Of those 16 cities, Boulder is the only small city listed. While curbside and industrial composting programs are on the rise in the U.S., an imported recycling ban from China could be detrimental to nationwide sustainability, as it has caused hundreds of cities to stop their recycling programs.

Recycling is expensive and time-consuming. As it becomes more popular, recycling becomes more difficult to do. The University of Georgia estimates that the ban will leave 111 million metric tons of trash with nowhere to go by 2030. The ban impacts most of the nation, but Boulder property owners are required to provide recycling and composting for its tenants, once again placing the town on a sustainable pedestal.

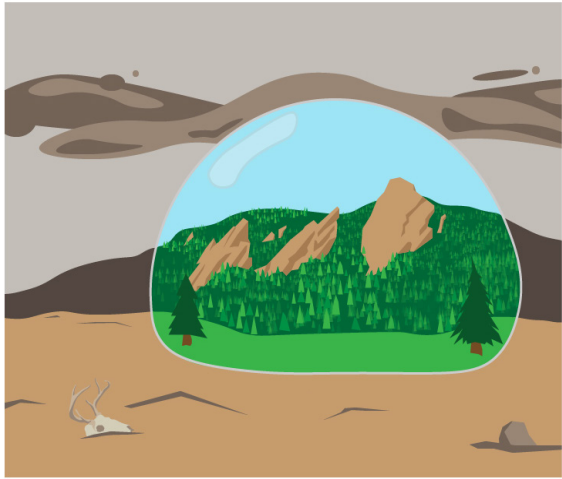
Chris McCaffrey, a second-year environmental studies student at CU, believes that Boulder is ahead of the curve with sustainability because of its inhabitants. Boulder was ranked the most affluent medium-sized city in 2014 according to the Denver Business Journal. Because of the city's higher median income, residents can afford sustainable products

such as electric cars, energy-conserving home installations and local produce. McCaffrey highlighted that most people in Boulder are active and part of the outdoor community, giving locals an incentive to protect the land they use and love.

A healthy integration of environmental protection and urban settings can be seen at the Boulder Creek Path, according to McCaffrey, who believes that other cities should integrate nature into urban settings in a similar way. When cities remove creeks, they are likely to have an increase in floods.

"It's maintaining a healthy ecosystem with a creek that's coexisting with people all the time. Everyone has the chance to get out and feel connected to nature for a bit," McCaffrey said.

After spending time living in Argentina, McCaffrey trusts that its locals have the right perspective about the environment.



Graphic courtesy of Owen Hartmann

"The land is such an integral part of their daily life," he said. "I would love to see nature as a more integral part of daily life in America."

Climate change becomes more important each year, as national leaders around the globe have begun to prepare for action. UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa describes climate change as the main struggle of the present generation and a struggle that affects all future generations. As Boulder remains progressive, there is hope that other places will take action as well.



# A look back: Top 5 CU football games of the decade

by Chad Peterson

With COVID-19 upending the sports world and canceling future events, the CU Independent decided to look back on some of the Buffs’ most memorable games of the decade. Of course, this list is subjective and you may not see your favorite game on here, but all of the matchups mentioned deserve a spot on this countdown.

**5. 38-24 win vs. No. 22 Washington State — Nov. 19, 2016**  
**CU: 8-2, (6-1), Washington State: 8-2, (7-0)**

Colorado’s run game proved vital in their late-season match up with No. 22 Washington State on this brisk Saturday afternoon in Boulder. CU ran for 258 yards on 59 carries to put themselves in poll position to win the Pac-12 South the following week versus Utah.

After going into the half down 17-14, the Buffs defense was able to limit the Cougars offense to seven points in the third and zero in the fourth while the Buffs offense was able to put up 24 points in a resilient second half. Junior tailback Philip Lindsay carried the ball 31 times for 144 yards and two touchdowns including the day’s opening score. Quarterback Sefo Liufau threw for 345 yards and carried the ball 23 times for three touchdowns in a signature performance from the Buffs senior QB. It was the second time a CU quarterback has thrown for 300 yards and rushed for 100, the other being Steven Montez at Oregon earlier in 2016.

CU was able to outgain Washington State’s offense 603 yards to 462 and went 13 for 21 on third-down conversions. The Cougars went 4 of 15 on third down.

**4. 10-5 win at Stanford — Oct. 22, 2016**  
**CU: 5-2, (3-1), Stanford: 4-2, (2-2)**

For the first time in a decade, the Buffs

became bowl eligible with their defeat of the Stanford Cardinal in Palo Alto. Colorado forced four turnovers including two Tedric Thompson interceptions and held Stanford star running back Christian McCaffrey to 92 yards on 21 carries on their way to the victory.

The game was sloppy throughout and neither team eclipsed 200 yards passing, but CU rushed for 224 on 49 carries. It was Stanford’s first game since its 2015 opener at Northwestern that they failed to score a touchdown. It was McCaffrey’s third game in a row that he failed to reach 100 yards rushing, the longest such streak of his career. Stanford lost three games in 2016, all when McCaffrey did not reach the 100-yard mark. Stanford only had 263 total yards.

Stanford went on to go 6-0 including a bowl victory after the loss to CU finishing the season 10-3 and No. 12 in the AP poll. 2016 was the only season this decade the Buffs finished with more than 6 wins and bowl eligibility.

**3. 34-31 win in overtime vs Nebraska — Sept. 7, 2019**  
**CU: 2-0 (0-0), Nebraska: 1-1 (0-0)**

In a stunner, CU defeated Nebraska 34-31 getting two wins in as many years against the Buff’s classic rivals. Steven Montez threw for 375 yards and two scores while KD Nixon had 6 receptions for 148 yards and a touchdown.

Nebraska took an early lead in the game and by the half were up 17-0, limiting the Buffs offense to 74 total first-half yards. CU punted six times and threw an interception on the first seven drives. The Buffs offense got started with an 8 play 64-yard touchdown drive and went on to score a touchdown on three consecutive drives. KD Nixon caught a 96-yard touchdown from Steven Montez and Jared Mangham had two running touchdowns on those three drives.

The two teams continued to trade off scores and with 3:33 left in the fourth, the score was 31-24 Cornhuskers. CU got the ball back and went on a 10 play 70-yard drive to tie the game capped off by a 26-yard touchdown pass to Tony Brown in the corner of the endzone.

The game went to overtime and the Buffs got the ball first, unable to score a touchdown, kicker James Stefanou converted a 34-yard field goal. Nebraska had a chance to win the game with a touchdown but lost four yards overall on their first three plays and were forced to attempt a 48-yard field goal to force another overtime. The field goal went way right and the win went to CU, making it two years in a row beating their rivals.

**2. 33-28 win at Nebraska — Sept. 8, 2018**  
**CU: 2-0 (0-0), Nebraska: 0-1 (0-0)**

CU was able to emerge from a sea of red with a victory in their first meeting with former Big-12 rival Nebraska since 2010. Steven Montez threw for 351 yards and three touchdowns and Laviska Shenault Jr. was able to build on his incredible start to the 2018 season with a pair of touchdowns and 177 yards receiving.

The game got off to a fast start with a touchdown pass to Jay MacIntyre, a touchdown run from Laviska Shenault Jr., and all of a sudden, CU found themselves up two touchdowns within 10 minutes of the first quarter. Nebraska responded with three unanswered touchdowns and a James Stefanou field goal made the score 21-17 at the half.

Stefanou was once again able to cut down the Nebraska lead to one by converting a 35-yard field goal on the Buffs opening drive of the second half. Nebraska responded and extended their lead to eight with a 57-yard touchdown to Adrian Martinez. Jay MacIntyre collected his second touchdown pass of the day to make the score 28-27 Nebraska with 1:24 left in the third.

The fourth quarter had three missed field goals, two by Nebraska and one by CU, and the score stayed at 28-27. CU got the ball back with 2:15 and marched down 77 yards in 1:17. Steven Montez dropped back from the Nebraska 40 and dropped a dime to Laviska Shenault Jr. to take a five-point lead with one-minute remaining.

Nebraska had a chance to win the game moving the ball down to the CU 21-yard line with 0:23 left in

the fourth quarter but were unable to convert a touchdown. It was CU’s first win at Nebraska in their last four tries. The past 12 games between the two teams have seen a 6-6 split in wins. This was CU’s only away win of the season.

**1. 27-22 win vs Utah — Nov. 26, 2016**  
**CU: 10-2 Utah: 8-4**

2016 saw the Buff’s most successful season of the decade. A ten-win season commonly known as “the rise” amongst seniors saw its fruition in the Buffs 27-22 win over Utah in the final game of the season that saw the Buffs clinch the Pac-12 South for the first time since joining the conference in 2011. Coming into the season the Buffs had gone a dismal 5-40 in the Pac-12 in their prior five seasons. The win saw CU make their first conference title game since 2005 in a seven-win season under Gary Barnett.

Coming into the game the Buffs controlled their own destiny, a win and they would go on to the Pac-12 title against Washington. A loss would mean USC would take the spot representing the South division of the conference.

The Buffs defense was stellar in the win, taking the ball away from Utah four times and sacking Utah three times. Utah quarterback Troy Williams had an abysmal evening passing the ball going 13-40 for 160 yards, a touchdown and two interceptions. Chidobe Awuzie terrorized Utah all night with 8 tackles, a fumble recovery, a sack and a pass defended.

Devin Ross and Shay Fields combined for 16 receptions and 172 yards. Fields also had a touchdown.

The win came in front of Folsom Field’s first football sellout since 2008.

***Read the full version of this article with honorable mentions on the CU Independent website [here](#).***



# Spread of COVID-19 forces cancellation of Pac-12 tournament, March Madness

by Adam Bender



A basketball sits on the court at the CU Events Center. March 18, 2015  
(Gray Bender/CU Independent File)

The spread of COVID-19, more commonly known as coronavirus, has forced the Pac-12 to cancel the remainder of the 2020 Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament in Las Vegas, Nevada. During the first-round matchup between Colorado and Washington State on Wednesday, the Pac-12 announced that no fans will be allowed in the arena for the remainder of the tournament. The next day, a statement from the conference's vice president Andrew Walker canceled the rest of the tournament.

"The Pac-12 Conference has made the decision to cancel the remainder of the Pac-12 Men's Basketball Tournament and all Pac-12 sport competitions and Pac-12 Championship events, effective immediately, until further notice," Walker said. "This decision has been made in consultation with our member universities in an effort to limit the spread of the virus and in the interest of the health and safety of our student-athletes, campus personnel, working and event personnel, and all those who attend Pac-12 events."

In addition to the cancellation of the conference tournaments across the nation, the NCAA also announced the cancellation of the men's and women's postseason basketball tournaments Thursday morning. With this decision, the NCAA is putting the health and wellness of student-athletes, staff and fans at the forefront.

Colorado Athletic Director Rick George released a statement on Thursday morning in light of the recent decisions made by the Pac-12 Conference and NCAA. The NCAA canceled all remaining winter and spring championships effective immediately and the Pac-12 announced the cancelation of all spring sports competition until further notice.

"The CU athletic department is committed to the health and safety of our student-athletes, staff and fans as it relates to COVID-19," George said. "As the situation is developing rapidly, we continue to collaborate with leaders from campus, the Pac-12 and NCAA as we make decisions that are in the best interest of our student-athletes and staff."

# CU Bluffs: CU basketball knocks off Duke to win National Championship (in a perfect world)

by Jack Carlough

This past month has been tough for all of us. No matter your profession or what your life revolves around, it has been a struggle. For college basketball fans, last week would have been the National Championship game. In a perfect world, this game would have occurred. But the world is not as such. In a perfect, absolutely flawless, heaven-like world, the Colorado Buffaloes win this game. We've all had plenty of time to daydream recently, so let's entertain this hypothetical game a bit further.

They did it. The University of Colorado Buffaloes men's basketball team has won a National Championship. It took a miracle, but they did it. In the waning seconds of overtime, sophomore forward Evan Battey drained a half-court buzzer-beater to knock off the Duke Blue Devils, 73-72.

"It was absolutely unreal," Battey said after the game. "I can't believe what just happened. I'm so happy for Buff nation and for our team that has worked so hard to get here."

In front of 70,234 fans at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in Atlanta, Georgia, the Buffs did the impossible. Head coach Tad Boyle couldn't contain his excitement postgame.

"The fact of the matter is this victory was nice, but this after-party is going to be even better," Boyle shouted while being mobbed by fans at half-court. "I was pretty confident that we would win and took the liberty of scouting out all the best clubs in Atlanta. All of Buff nation is invited and we're going to enjoy this one for a while."

Junior guard McKinley Wright IV led the charge for the Buffaloes with 34 points and 13 assists. The Minnesota native orchestrated an offensive attack that put up 40 points in the first half. Colorado led by three after 20 minutes.

Complimenting Wright was junior guard/forward Tyler Bey with 17 points and 10 rebounds. Boyle believed his talented one-two punch gave the Blue Devils fits in a variety of ways.

"They (Wright and Bey) were just about unstoppable tonight," Boyle said. "Whether it was

rebounding, finding the open man or coming up big in a clutch spot, we knew we could count on them to get the job done."

The game remained tightly contested in the second half. Duke and CU traded blows with six lead changes. With just over a minute left in regulation, sophomore guard/forward D'Shawn Schwartz found an open lane to tie the game at 67. Defense from both teams hunkered down in the final minute to push the game into overtime.

For the second year in a row and ninth time overall, it would take another five minutes to crown a champion. Duke applied the pressure early in the period with a 3-pointer, followed by a dunk on their next possession to give the Blue Devils all the momentum.

A pair of free throws from Wright shrunk the deficit to three and Colorado's defense would keep the Blue Devils scoreless for the rest of overtime. With two minutes remaining, Bey was fouled and made one of two free throws.

Then the magic happened. Following a controversial Duke turnover that needed a review to determine possession, Colorado would get the ball back with two seconds remaining.

"All the pressure was on at the point," Boyle said. "We drew up a play and crossed our fingers that it would work and sure enough, it did."

Not many people would consider Battey a long-range threat and that's exactly why Boyle's play worked. Schwartz inbounded the ball for the final play and he found a streaking Battey on the opposite sideline. Battey caught the chest-high pass and threw up a prayer that was answered.

The Buffs were national champions, in a perfect world.

**CU Bluffs is CU Independent's satire section. Read more CU Bluffs [here](#).**



# Amidst a pandemic and without in-person clients, Colorado's tattoo artists are getting creative

by Altug Karakurt

Tattoo artists haven't held a needle in their hands since the closure of nonessential businesses on Mar. 18. But being unable to tattoo hasn't stopped them from creating art.

Tattoo artists have started to put their skills into creating custom artwork for their customers in a search for outlets that will support them during the coronavirus pandemic. While government relief may be slow, these outlets have become the livelihood for the modern tattoo artist.

Artists have turned to commissioned artwork and are selling drawings and prints, as well as discounted gift certificates toward future tattoos.

"I wouldn't call it ... enough to support living in Colorado or anything like that, but it's a good supplement to be able to pay for groceries and bills," said Boulder tattoo artist Frank Simanton.

"People aren't working right now and are trying to figure out how they're gonna pay rent and stuff. So we're all kind of in the same boat right now," said Sam Perry of Denver's Copperhead Tattoo Parlor.

In a more organized attempt, All Sacred Tattoo Studio in Wheat Ridge, Colorado has printed merchandise with designs by their artists and are splitting the fundraised amount equally. Studio artist Forrest Henderson sold out of his custom face masks and even included a chance to win a free future tattoo.

Nate Stephens of Marion Street Tattoo in Denver is selling t-shirts that partially benefit healthcare workers. Inspired by the historic tattoo design "The Rose of No Man's Land," Stephens focused on the healthcare professionals in his design. By April 16, he had raised \$2,196 to be donated to Denver Health Foundation's COVID-19 Urgent Relief Fund.

According to Stephens, the support for his project has also extended beyond the tattoo community.

"Most of the people have no interest in tattoos whatsoever, but they have some kind of connection to somebody working on the front lines," Stephens said. "They're buying them as gifts as well. I'm finding out a lot of people are buying shirts to give to people that are on the front lines."

Encouragingly, Stephens is not the only one stepping up to support essential workers. Joining a global movement of large-scale

endeavors, the Colorado tattoo scene has been working hard to give back to the community. Led by Black Sage Studio, four tattoo shops have joined forces in donating personal protective equipment like medical grade gloves and masks to medical professionals and senior citizens.

"Any sort of threatening moments in history, not just in the tattoo industry, I think all artists kind of band together and start trying to make some sort

of positive social change," said All Sacred artist Landon Morgan.

The pandemic also poses an ethical dilemma.

People are still reaching out to tattoo artists over social media to get tattoos at home, despite Colorado's stay-at-home order, and some artists are apparently answering the call.

"Those people are going to end up being kind of blacklisted in the tattoo community after this is over," Simanton said. "Some of them even posted on Instagram and Facebook, like they are being some kind of rebels. You're not being a bad ass by going into work and spreading the disease."

Still, many are abiding by government and health officials' guidelines and said they look forward to the day they can safely return to work. Many clients have reached out to ask for future appointments, which will lead to a backlog and a busy schedule.

"Luckily most of my clientele base, they're either still getting paid for their time off, or they're working from home," Simanton said. "This is true especially for clients that I'm doing sleeves and back pieces and large projects on."

But others are worried about the long-term financial impact on their client base, even once the lockdown is lifted.

"Most of my clients are more industry workers, people who wait tables, who bartend and do industry type work," Perry, the Copperhead Tattoo Parlor artist, said. "Those are definitely in the businesses that are being affected the most during all this."

A common sentiment from artists was gratitude towards their clients and the community. In unprecedented circumstances, they are thankful for the understanding of their clients in rescheduling and providing flexibility, as well as their financial support. Despite their own struggles, Denver and Boulder's tattoo artists are still giving back, showing a strong sense of community and solidarity.

The work of the contributing artists can be found at the following links: [Ryan Willard](#), [Sam Perry](#), [Landon Morgan](#), [Frank Simanton](#), [Nate Stephens](#), [Forrest Henderson](#).



Pet portraits are a popular choice in commissioned artwork. (Courtesy of Ryan Willard)



Nate Stephens's t-shirt design honors healthcare workers battling the spread of the coronavirus. (Courtesy of Nate Stephens)



# Rep. Eric Swalwell discusses impeachment, corruption and democracy in new book “Endgame”

by Ben Berman

Our elected officials create the laws citizens are expected to follow, but what happens when they break those laws themselves? Our system, carefully crafted to prevent tyranny, offers a powerful solution: impeachment.

Only three presidents of the United States have ever faced this lofty accusation, including the current incumbent, President Donald Trump. Despite overwhelming evidence in favor of his crimes of foreign interference, he continues to stay in the Oval Office thanks to the blind loyalty of his party, in what’s likely the most politically divided era in recent memory.

“Endgame: Inside the Impeachment of Donald J. Trump” is the work of Rep. Eric Swalwell, a Democrat who represents California’s 14th District in Congress and played a role in last year’s impeachment of the president. He’s been serving in the House of Representatives since 2013, and his latest novel is the product of his firm stance against the current administration. He recently spoke with the CUI to discuss his approach of writing “Endgame,” alongside his mixed feelings on the American impeachment process.

The book’s recounting of the impeachment process comes from a unique vantage point, as Swalwell was one of only two people in Congress who served on both the Judiciary and the Intelligence committees, giving him a first-hand look into what he described as “a pattern of corruption” from the Republican Party — a major subject of “Endgame.”

Swalwell provides first hand accounts from both major parties in Washington, many of whom testified against President Trump as he was charged with abuse of power for his solicitation of foreign interference, before eventually being acquitted of all charges. In “Endgame,” Swalwell seeks to present a dual narrative. He praises the “heroes” who came forward with evidence early

on in the process, while firmly condemning the “cowardice of people who didn’t do the right thing.”

Swalwell recounts the time that a Republican colleague reportedly said, “(Trump) will have my head lopped off if I go against him.”

“They were putting their careers ahead of doing the right thing,” he said, disappointed by the blatant lack of objectivity from his peers, “so instead, they were willing to allow the wrong outcome to occur, or allow corruption to persist, because they didn’t have the temerity to do the right thing.”

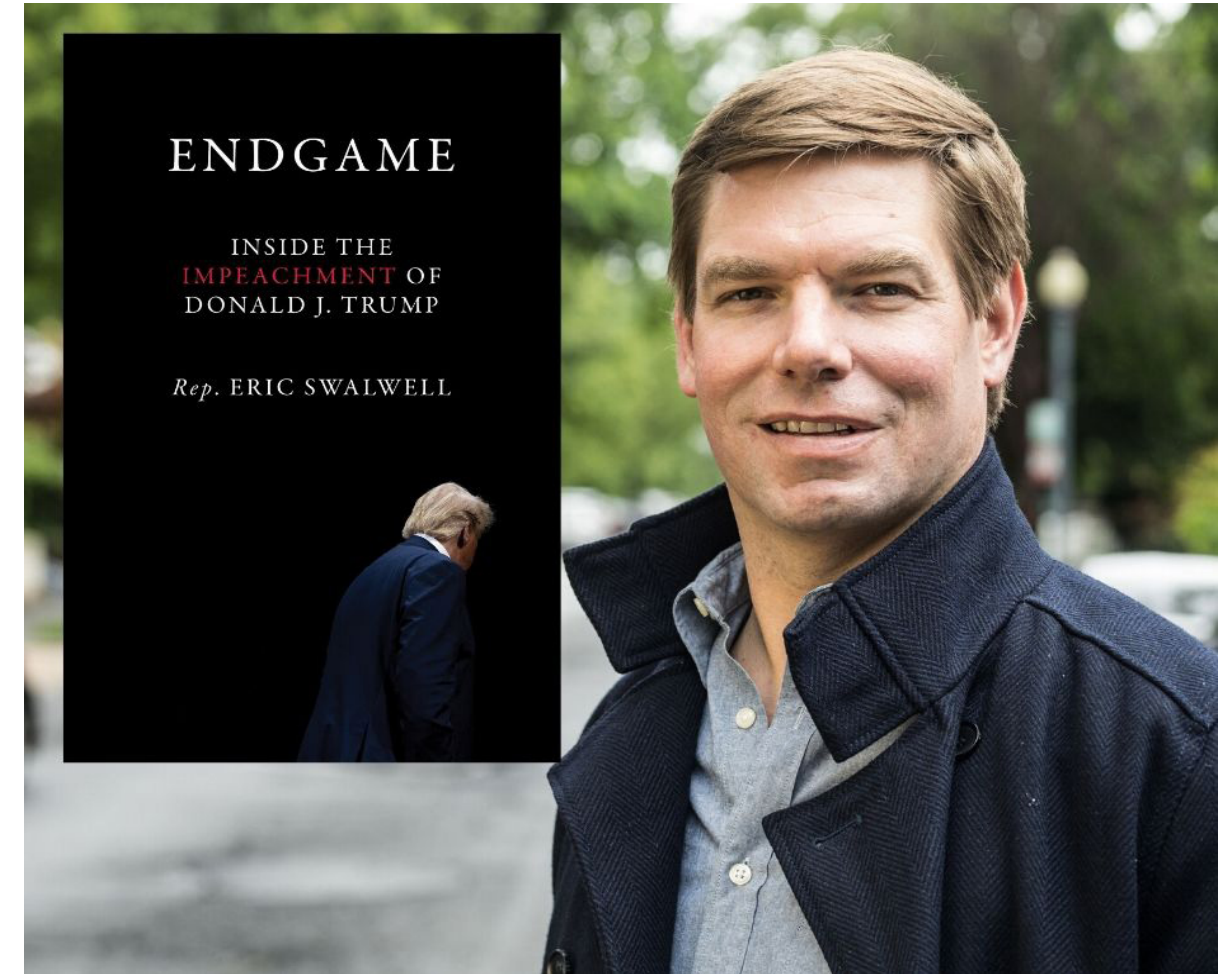
Due to the loyalty-based, partisan nature of American politics, and the fact that the Senate is currently controlled by Trump’s party, Swalwell found frustration in the outcome of the impeachment, because “with so much evidence in front of them, they chose to double down and defend the president.”

“We had Republicans who wouldn’t even vote to call witnesses in the Senate. It was truly see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil,” he told the CUI.

Despite the outcome of the impeachment, where a Republican-majority Senate acquitted Trump of charges and allowed him to continue his term, Swalwell saw virtue and purpose in the process for different reasons entirely.

“We wanted the public to understand what was at stake. And we wanted the future to see that there was a standard of conduct that was expected of presidents,” he explained, “We were mindful that our words would be interpreted by future members of Congress, and we wanted to make sure they understood why we did what we did in case they ever had to hold another corrupt president accountable.”

Alongside thoughts on the now-concluded proceedings, Swalwell urges voters to liken Trump’s behavior during the impeachment to his administration’s ongoing handling of the COVID-19



Rep. Eric Swalwell (CA-12) and his new book, “Endgame: Inside the Impeachment of Donald J. Trump” (Courtesy of the National Press Club).

pandemic.

“The same pattern of corruption that he engaged with in the Ukraine investigation is what he is doing with the Pentagon. He’s telling his staff that governors can only receive ventilators or personal protective equipment if they praise him. So, again, it’s someone who puts his personal and political interests above the country. And that’s what’s been so frustrating with this presidency.”

While removal from office is no longer an option, Swalwell now has sights, and hope, set on Nov. 3, where Democrat Joe Biden will likely be Trump’s opponent.

“I do believe that the effort to try and cheat the election has been undermined. So, certainly I think he’s inoculated the electorate against that type of misinformation.”

Swalwell believes that the American public

will not only recognize, but reject Trump’s corruption, even when presented with the choice of voting for him once again.

“There could be two endgames,” he said, alluding to the decisive move of a chess match. “One endgame could be the demolition of Trump-ism into full out autocracy in our country where the rule of law does not matter anymore. Or, it could be redemption and rebuilding of democracy. And I’m inspired to believe that the latter is what’s going to happen.”



## “A change is gonna come”: CU black musicians for social change

by Isabella Fincher

“A change is gonna come.” Sam Cooke sang those words in 1964. Now, 56 years later, maybe a change will really come.

In the past two weeks since George Floyd’s murder, America has exploded in outrage with massive protests, demanding an end to police brutality and systemic racial inequality.

“This is unprecedented, and that’s incredibly significant,” Asha Romeo, a University of Colorado Boulder junior and black musician, said. “Something must come out of this. Murders like this have been happening forever, but protests and unity have not happened like this before.”

Originally from Ethiopia, Romeo was adopted by white parents and grew up in Boulder. Being black in a predominantly white community was “hard and confusing” for her growing up.

“Not being able to see enough people that represented my identity, I accidentally molded myself to the people I saw and criticized myself for not looking like anybody else,” Romeo said. “I never experienced blatant racism, but I would get a lot of strange, back-handed or out-of-line comments.”

In college, Romeo turned to music as a form of activism, to give voice to her experiences and celebrate black music. She believes music is a “universal language” that can spread messages of equality and hope, in the fight against racial injustice.

In 2019 for “Persevering Legacy,” a CU concert featuring only female composers, she performed a song by Margaret Bonds, a renowned black composer and collaborator of the poet Langston Hughes. More recently, Romeo sang Cooke’s “A Change is Gonna Come” at CU’s Diversity and Inclusion Summit.

Now, at the Black Lives Matter protests, Romeo has been singing and using her voice to demand change. Once again she sang Cooke’s “A Change is Gonna Come” at “Boulder in Solidarity,” a Boulder

protest on May 30, later posting a video on her Facebook profile.

Romeo is not the only one demanding change through music at CU. Eli Harvey, a CU sophomore and queer black musician, sees music can be a potent form of activism in the Black Lives Matter movement. Growing up in a Catholic church with a black congregation in Aurora, Harvey’s “musical background” began in gospel singing.

“Music is a core part of who I am and my identity,” Harvey said. “Music has always been framed as a part of culture and has always been important in my family. My mom sings. My dad sings. My cousins all sing. One of my aunts is a professional singer.”

For Harvey, moving from “informal gospel singing” to studying musical theater in college was challenging, both culturally and musically. They described their freshman year as “a bit of a learning curve” because they “never had voice lessons before.” In addition, Harvey felt isolated from their fellow CU music students, who were predominantly white, and saw issues of cultural appropriation versus appreciation in classes.

“My first semester at CU, I was really lonely,” Harvey said. “I didn’t have any black or brown friends who understood what it meant to be a black queer person.”

So, Harvey turned to music to express their feelings and address issues of black representation.

“Art, activism and politics go hand in hand almost every time,” Harvey said. “That’s the biggest reason why people make art. It allows you to have a voice and to control what is being said. That’s a very beautiful thing.”

**Read the full version of this article and watch Romeo’s Facebook video on the CU Independent website [here](#).**

## Women’s History Month: The CUI’s favorite albums by women artists

by CU Independent

**To celebrate the start of “Women’s History Month,” CU Independent editors and writers share their favorite albums by women musicians.**

### “Sharon Isbin & Friends: Guitar Passions” (2011) – Sharon Isbin



(Guitar Passions/Sony Classical 2011)

Classical guitarist Sharon Isbin plays with impeccable clarity and a mellifluous tone. Hailed as “the Monet of the classical guitar” and “classical guitar’s reigning diva,” Isbin has dominated the classical guitar world for decades and has won three Grammy awards. In her 2011 collaboration album “Guitar Passions,” the grand dame of the guitar juxtaposes classical guitar’s greatest hits with playful cross-genre works. Isbin has always been a musical pioneer, from debuting Tan Dun’s “Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra” in 1996 to collaborating with Joan Baez in 2007. On this album, Isbin continues to transcend the stereotypes of classical music, refracting timeless classical and pop staples through her musical

vision. In canonical works, such as “Asturias” and “Adagio” to “Concierto de Aranjuez” and “La Catedral,” Isbin demonstrates her flawless technique and control, animating popular works. Then in a cover of Heart’s “Dreamboat Annie,” sung by Nancy Wilson, she blends easily into metallic acoustic guitar arpeggios, waxing nonchalant, yet never compromising her silky tone. In “Chovendo na Roseira” and “Sonidos de aquel dia,” Isbin once again lets loose, jamming with jazz guitarists. That is the genius of Isbin, her profound vision of the classical guitar as a dynamic entity; she continues to reimagine the guitar’s place in music today, never ceasing to dream of its future.

Isabella Fincher – Arts Editor

### “Lush” (2018) – Snail Mail



(Lush/Matador Records 2018)



Snail Mail's "Lush" is the album that set precedent for a new era of lo-fi indie. For a debut album to take a group of 18-year-olds on a world tour is pretty incredible. "Lush" is lead singer and guitarist Lindsey Jordan's take on a lo-fi indie monologue. Each track is blanketed with subtle teenage angst and gentle, confessional uncertainty. The album becomes a masterful composition that takes listeners on a time trip back to age 18, when sweaty summer afternoons bled into the thick humidity of evening afterglow loneliness. Jordan's lyrics reflect teenage simplicity, as she repeats ideas of feeling low and on the backburner. The album recreates a time period before boredom becomes a novelty; each song is innocent and naive. Sonically, "Lush" excels at not falling into repetitive song structures that fade into the next. On top of every track is an overarching heavily reverberated guitar creating multidimensionality. Every guitar lead is different but still cohesively flows together. "Lush" creates a new dynamic for indie-rock to venture into, a much-needed perspective on an over-saturated genre.

Zack Cohen – Arts Editor

**"Telefone" (2016) – Noname**



Telefone/Self-released 2016)

Noname is more of a poet than a rapper. While her most recent album, "Room 25," racked up a spot in the top 10 of Metacritic's "Highest Scoring Albums of the 2010s," her project titled "Telefone" is a

personal favorite of mine. The Chicago native delves her own pain surrounding life-altering phone conversations. Her distinctive lullaby rap flow is elevated by her soulful songs, filled with sounds of childlike innocence and gospel undertones. Noname's lyrical precision along with her seasoned Ghetto Sage trio, Smino and Saba, on the track "Shadow Man," is a surefire success. "Diddy Bop" unveils a flashback to Noname's childhood struggles and mistakes, letting loose with famed rapper and persona P. Diddy's dance move. The project as a whole is playful yet thoughtful, experimental and cohesive. Noname defies the genre of rap. More than a poet, "Telefone" proves she is a creator.

Benny Titelbaum – Staff Writer

**"Joanne" (2016) – Lady Gaga**



(Joanne/Interscope 2016)

"Joanne" brought Lady Gaga far away from her typical dance music into a new, earthy realm focused on sisterhood and womanhood. "Joanne" received three Grammy nominations and won Best Pop Solo Performance for "Joanne (Where Do You Think You're Goin')." Song after song on "Joanne" empowers women to support one another. In the process, it literally passes the Bechdel test in the track "Hey Girl," featuring Florence Welch. Welch and Gaga sing to each other "Hey girl, hey girl/ If you lose your way/ Just

know that I got you." Unlike her past albums, Gaga channels a country twang in "Joanne." Especially in "John Wayne" which begins with Gaga saying, "It's like, I just love a cowboy you know." But the most different and beautiful track is the title track. "Joanne" is a story of a young woman taken from life too young, inspired by Gaga's own aunt Joanne, who died at the age of 19. Gaga's vulnerability makes the track resonate with listeners, serving as a memorial for the artist and aunt she never met. Lady Gaga took the pain of loss that shaped her family and created art resulting in a beautiful, raw testament to the power of sisterhood.

Kaylyn Buehler – Staff Writer

**"Ctrl" (2017) – SZA**



(Ctrl/RCA 2017)

Filled with silky vocals and soft electronic production, Solána Rowe's first full-length project feels like a therapeutic experience. It seems as if the 26-year-old took a deep breath in, and the exhale was a 14-track examination of modern relationships and her budding self-worth as a young person. Though the project is intimate, it never comes off as a single-note. "Ctrl" is a celebration of the full spectrum of emotions. SZA seamlessly weaves between joyfulness, depression, hurt, confidence and jealousy. On tracks such as "Love Galore," she proclaims her own worth as a

woman, singing "Why you bother me when you know you don't want me? / Why you hit me when you know you know better?" On "Supermodel," she fearlessly admits "I been secretly banging your homeboy / Why you in Vegas all up on Valentine's Day? / Why am I so easy to forget like that?" At times introspective, at times exuberant, SZA embraces the melancholic sonic template established by modern R&B purveyor Frank Ocean, while also bringing a sense of exhilarating freedom and self-love. Ctrl takes a snapshot at a precise moment in the singer-songwriter's life, where she gains not only awareness of the instability of love but the worth of fighting for it. In doing so, the wrenching honesty of "Ctrl" stands atop the decade's R&B catalog.

Ben Berman – Staff Writer

**"Let England Shake" (2011) – PJ Harvey**



(Let England Shake/Island 2011)

Singer-songwriter PJ Harvey has been one of the most influential artists in the genre since the early '90s. Harvey stands out among her peers with the evolution of her sound and vision between each record. She is at her best in "Let England Shake," which combines ideas from prior releases to form an ambitious conceptual project. Throughout the aptly named album, Harvey doesn't hold back with her criticism of not only English but also American



politics. In “Glorious Land,” she compares the two countries and delivers bold lines like, “What is the glorious fruit of our land? / Its fruit is deformed children.” She shares similar anti-war messages on tracks like “Word that Maketh Murder” and “On Battleship Hill.” Her love-hate relationship is on full display in the complementary title track and “England.” Sonically the spotlight seamlessly transitions between the melody-driven instrumentation and Harvey’s vocals. The simple, yet textured instrumentation reveals new details with every listen and adds impressive replay value to the record. Although this record deals with a diverse set of topics, the core anti-war sentiment and its consistent sound ties everything together and turns this collage of social commentary into a cohesive conceptual album.

Altug Karakurt – Staff Writer

“Lover” (2019) – Taylor Swift



(Lover/Republic 2019)

“Lover” unlocked something in Taylor Swift that the world had never seen from her before. The album is whimsical and fun, yet oddly political, especially for Swift. I’ve been a fan of her since the days of “Our Song,” but there’s something about “Lover” that makes it really special. The album came out at the same time as her pivotal, raw documentary “Miss Americana,” where Swift openly talks about her

rollercoaster of a career and her process in assembling “Lover.” For the first time, Swift personally owns this album, and somehow she’s more emotionally vulnerable here than in any of her previous records. All in one album, she has a feminist anthem, a song defending LGBTQ rights and a tune that talks about her mom’s battle with cancer. This record celebrates love in all capacities, giving its listeners inspiration and encouragement. It seems as though Swift finally felt free to speak her mind without anything holding her back.

Kathryn Bistodeau – Staff Writer

“LONER” (2018) – Caroline Rose



(LONER/New West Records 2018)

On her second album “LONER,” independent singer-songwriter Caroline Rose combines catchy pop-rock with self-aware, sarcastic lyrics to great effect. Rose is able to make the listener laugh with lines about party-goers all having “alternative haircuts,” then tell a touching story of a single mom and the anxiety associated with the passage of time. A multi-instrumentalist, Rose wrote and performed almost all of the sounds on the album, allowing her to have full artistic freedom in creating a singular work. Rose finds a perfect balance between sarcasm and sincerity, being open and honest but never taking herself too seriously. The real joy of this album, however, is its endlessly listenable quality. Perhaps, it’s something about Rose’s voice, or maybe it’s the straightforward songwriting. Nonetheless, every song on “Loner” begs to be replayed over and over again.

Cameron Markuson – Staff Writer

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