

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF AURORA

# FORWARD TOGETHER



Ushering in  
*Our Next Era*  
of Service







COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE  
of AURORA

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**Blair Lee**  
Executive Director of Strategic  
Communications & Alumni Engagement



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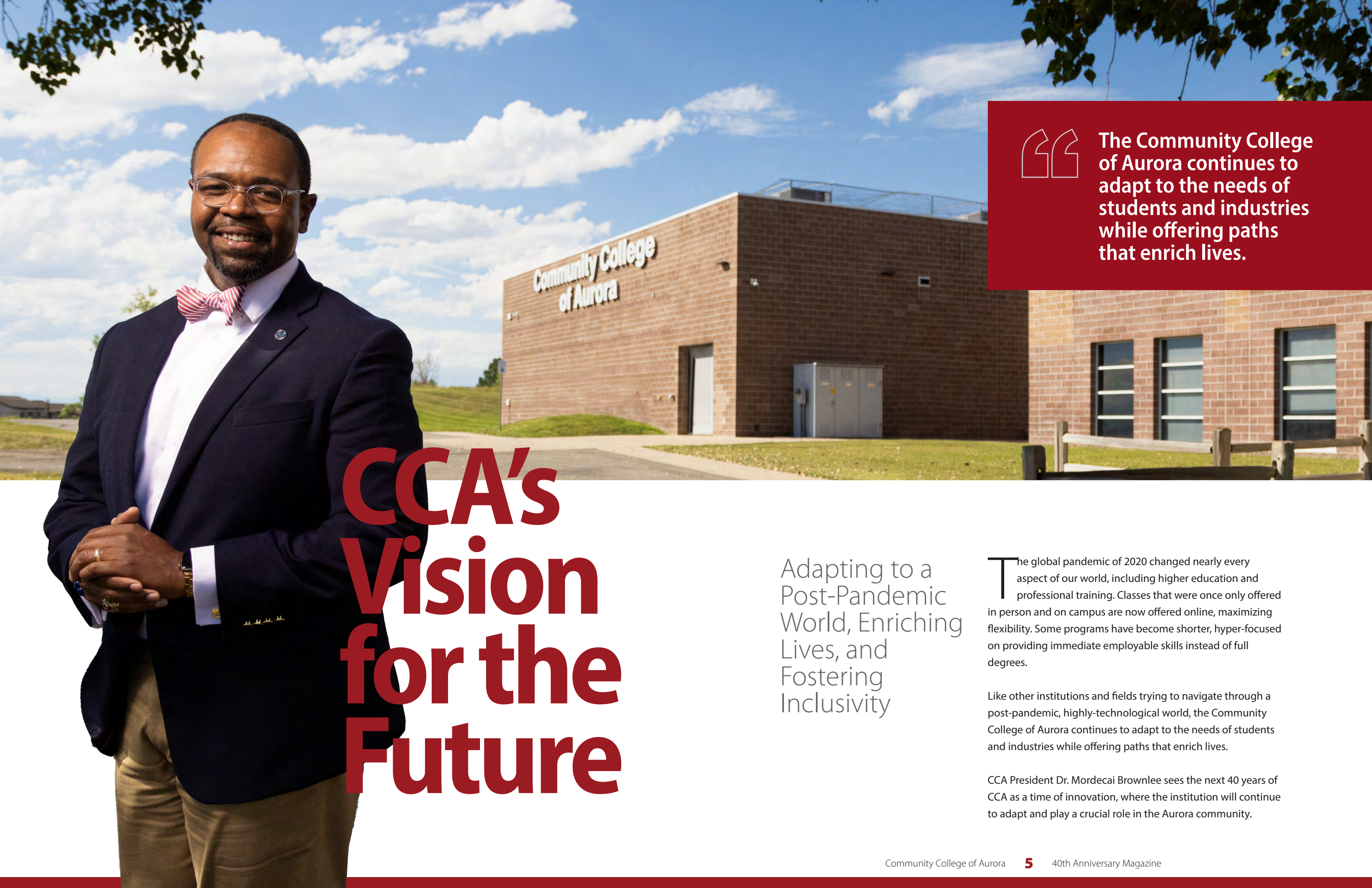
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**Credits:**  
Design: Abby Luna  
Photography: Ivan Diaz and CCA Dept. of Strategic  
Communications  
Editor: William Axford





The Community College of Aurora continues to adapt to the needs of students and industries while offering paths that enrich lives.

# CCA's Vision for the Future

Adapting to a Post-Pandemic World, Enriching Lives, and Fostering Inclusivity

The global pandemic of 2020 changed nearly every aspect of our world, including higher education and professional training. Classes that were once only offered in person and on campus are now offered online, maximizing flexibility. Some programs have become shorter, hyper-focused on providing immediate employable skills instead of full degrees.

Like other institutions and fields trying to navigate through a post-pandemic, highly-technological world, the Community College of Aurora continues to adapt to the needs of students and industries while offering paths that enrich lives.

CCA President Dr. Mordecai Brownlee sees the next 40 years of CCA as a time of innovation, where the institution will continue to adapt and play a crucial role in the Aurora community.



**67%**  
of CCA students  
are people of color

**50%**  
of CCA  
attendees are  
first-generation  
college students

**80**  
countries  
represented  
at CCA



"I would say that prior to the pandemic, we were not known for online education," Dr. Brownlee said. "We created a whole new division dedicated just to online and blended learning. We're leaning forward into what's called 'open-educational resources.'"

Open-educational resources is an approach to education where students have access to books, research resources, and more material. Dr. Brownlee believes that embracing technology and taking a more open approach to education will help students of all backgrounds to succeed, whether they're fresh out of high school or an adult with children to raise.

This approach to a more technology-friendly education will also make higher education more accessible to a wide-range of people. Aurora is the most diverse community in Colorado. Students of color make up 67% of Community CCA's student population. More than 50% of CCA attendees are first-generation college students and nearly 80 countries are represented at the college.

Dr. Brownlee said part of his responsibility as the sixth president of CCA is to create a space where everyone feels welcomed.

"Students, faculty, and visitors are going to be honored in their identity, of who they are, and how they see the world," Dr. Brownlee said. "We're making sure these respective individuals we have the privilege to serve can realize their dreams."

The changes at CCA go beyond virtual classrooms. A 59,000 square-foot STEM focused-building is expected to have its first phase of its opening in 2024 and second opening phase in 2025. Here, students will be able to earn degrees and certificates that focus on engineering, construction, and similar math and science focused careers.

Dr. Brownlee sees the new classes and building as a necessary evolution at CCA. New additions in the works at CCA includes micro-credentials will enable students to gain employable skills as quickly as one semester. He said based on data and submitted responses, some students are more interested in becoming employed instead of earning a full degree or certificate.



**Students, faculty, and visitors are going to be honored in their identity, of who they are, and how they see the world," Dr. Brownlee said. "We're making sure these respective individuals we have the privilege to serve can realize their dreams."**

"These changes come down to data-driven decisions and understanding the demographics of who we serve," Dr. Brownlee said. "It is my hope that our new academic program developments, new renovations and capital advancements, and new systems and infrastructure will ensure the first-generation and immigrant families we serve will be thriving in 40 years because of the education and

experience CCA provided them."

Dr. Brownlee credits the work of previous CCA presidents like Betsy Oudenhoven for pushing the school forward as a place of economic mobility for the Aurora community.

"Under her tenure, the land and buildings at Center Tech were paid for. The science building is going to create some very historic partnerships, not only for the college but for the city of Aurora."



# Paving the Way to Diverse and In-Demand Careers

Innovative Programs, Entrepreneurship, and a Commitment to Diversity Shape CCA's Educational Vision

Community College of Aurora is brimming with new programs that will provide students with pathways into in-demand engineering, health sciences and emerging arts jobs, in addition to preparing them for a four-year program.

Programs centering on mechanical engineering, civil engineering, nursing, behavioral health, and the innovative arts are unrolling at CCA now and in the next few years. At the same time, CCA is reinvesting resources from programs and classes that had low enrollment and completion rates, allowing us to invest funds into programs that will enrich the lives of CCA students.

"Over the past two years, we spent a lot of time focusing in depth on how we can diversify our offerings by leveraging noncredit options," said Dr. Bobby Pace, CCA's Vice President of Academic Success.

Pace points to what he calls CCA's approach to the employable arts as a different approach in higher education, where students can learn the podcasting process, strategies to monetize Youtube, and other skills needed to succeed in the most modern and in-demand jobs.

"We have an entrepreneurship mindset, but that's not something that has translated into the traditional degrees and certificates that we offer," Pace said. "We're helping our students understand how they can better market themselves so that they don't have just a degree, but they understand the subsequent skills and competencies that come out of that degree to better position themselves in the workforce."

As an instructor who came up through the ranks at CCA, Dr. Pace has the perfect background for creating change at the college that brings students the most value for their time and tuition.

Starting as an adjunct political science instructor in 2008, Dr. Pace was elevated to a full-time faculty member and then the Chair of CCA's Social Sciences Department. He served as the college's first Dean of Concurrent Enrollment before becoming the Vice President of Academic Success.

Even after working his way up into an executive administrative role at CCA, Dr. Pace continues to teach

courses in both political science and geography. He believes teaching while working in a leadership role at CCA keeps him connected with students' experiences.

"I learn so much about what students are going through, what they're thinking about, and what their mindset is," Dr. Pace said. "They help me to grow and continue to advance intellectually."

In addition to diversifying CCA's offerings, Dr. Pace said it's important that the college also has a diverse and empowered faculty.

"We've been expanding our faculty ranks and seeking folks who believe in DEI as a framework and believe in the mission of CCA," Dr. Pace said. "We're also ensuring our growing diverse faculty have the pedagogical training to be successful with our students."

Online classes, service-oriented courses, and continued integration into the Aurora community is leading CCA's mission for its next 40 years. Dr. Pace highlights CCA's police cadet program and partnership with the Aurora Police Department as an example of what the institution aims to accomplish with the community.

"We have a responsibility to take our learners and elevate them up, and let them serve and live and thrive in their own community," Dr. Pace said. "That's at the heart of what we're trying to do."

**We have a responsibility to take our diverse learners and elevate them up, and let them serve and live and thrive in their own community.**







## CCA Uses \$1.1M in Federal Relief Funds to Pay Off Tuition Debt for Hundreds of Students

The Community College of Aurora has used \$1.11 million in federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) money, made available through the CARES Act, to eliminate tuition debt for hundreds of its students. The debt-clearing initiative aims to remove barriers to college attainment and has erased tuition balances for 378 students who were enrolled in fall 2020 classes at CCA, allowing them to continue their education despite pandemic-related disruptions. An additional \$442,200 in tuition debt will be written off for 374 students who took spring 2021 and/or summer 2021 classes at CCA. The program supports the upward mobility of CCA's students, many of whom experienced increased food and housing insecurity during the pandemic, with a significant portion of the college's student body belonging to minority populations.



## Boettcher Foundation Awards the Community College of Aurora Grant for \$70K

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) and the Boettcher Foundation have publicly announced a partnership, with the foundation pledging \$70,000 to CCA's Capital Campaign for the new Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies. CCA's President, Dr. Mordecai Ian Brownlee, emphasized that it will address the evolving needs of various sectors in Colorado and the City of Aurora. The Boettcher Foundation has a long history of investing in Colorado businesses and higher education institutions, and their contribution is expected to have a significant impact on students and the state as a whole. The new building, set to span 55,000 square feet on CCA's CentreTech campus, will provide training in construction, clean energy, power mechanics, applied engineering, and STEM fields, making it one of CCA's most transformative projects.

## Arapahoe County Commissioners and Three Community Partners Provide Initial \$5.5M Gift for New Historic Building

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) is set to break ground on its first new building in over two decades, the Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies, with significant support from Arapahoe County Commissioners' \$3.5 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) contribution, along with an additional \$2 million commitment from a tri-chair team. This center, scheduled for completion in summer 2024, will include areas for Diesel Power Mechanic training and STEM courses. Dr. Mordecai Ian Brownlee, CCA's President, emphasized the significance of this initiative for meeting workforce needs and providing student opportunities, with the aim of aligning with CCA's mission of preparing students for transfer and employment opportunities.



## CCA Breaks Ground on New Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) in Aurora, Colorado, marked the groundbreaking for its new Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies, the institution's first new building in nearly two decades. The facility aims to prepare students for direct workforce entry or transfer to four-year institutions by offering programs in construction, diesel power mechanics, engineering, cyber security, renewable energy, and various STEM fields. Notable speakers included Colorado Community College System Chancellor Joe Garcia, local senators, officials, and generous contributors. The facility's academic offerings aim to meet the growing demand for STEM jobs, with completion expected in Fall 2024. A partnership with Aurora Public Schools is also in the works to increase high school students' access to CCA's campus.





# Embracing Language and Culture in Aurora

## Empowering Immigrant Communities and Overcoming Language Barriers at CCA

Before she met her husband and moved to Aurora, Svetlana Ehrhart worked on 12-day cruises out of St. Petersburg, Russia. Moving from a city of 5 million people to the nature-oriented lifestyle of Colorado was a culture shock that Ehrhart welcomed.

But Ehrhart faced challenges that nearly every person faces when they immigrate to a new country — language barriers and cultural differences. Thanks to her experience as a tour guide, Ehrhart said she was able to more-easily learn English at the Aurora Language Center. The experience gave her language skills and knowledge to become an adviser at Community College of Aurora for other immigrant students.

"It was difficult to learn English but I was in a better position than probably most of the people who immigrate from different countries," Ehrhart said, citing her experience as a tour guide in St. Petersburg, Russia. "I knew English before coming here. But I wanted to improve it, and I'm still doing that."

Ehrhart said she met her husband while working as a tour guide in Russia. Her husband was from Colorado, leading her to immigrate from St. Petersburg to Aurora.

Ehrhart started working at Community College of Aurora in 2003 starting at the Aurora Language Center, becoming a part-time adviser. Ehrhart eventually joined the CenterTech team as a full-time adviser.

"I really enjoyed it because I like helping people fulfill their dreams," Ehrhart said.

Ehrhart's established life in Colorado made it easier for her mother, Yelena Triodina, to follow her daughter from Russia to America. Although her mother could speak Russian and German, Ehrhart said she found English difficult to master.

"It was very frustrating for her to learn English," Ehrhart said. "She was about 65 when she went to the Language Center. The memory is not as good as the memory of the young people."



**Erhart faced challenges that nearly every person faces when they immigrate to a new country -- language barriers and cultural differences.**



Through hard work and perseverance, Ehrhart’s mother was able to build conversational English skills at CCA’s Language Center to eventually pass the U.S. citizenship test.

The Language Center has six levels and can help people who have no knowledge of speaking English. As a community that speaks more than 60 languages, Ehrhart said the Language Center has been a great resource for people like her and her mom. In addition to learning a new language, many people use the Language Center as a place to learn about American culture and life in Aurora.

“Students at the Language Center always ask things like the best ways for them to be more involved in their community, where certain churches of faith were at, and got to know more about different cultural living,” Ehrhart said.

CCA also offers numerous English as a Second Language courses, along with translation and interpretation degrees.

For more information, visit [ccaaurora.edu](http://ccaaurora.edu) or call (303)360-4700.



**Students at the Language Center always ask things like the best ways for them to be more involved in their community, where certain churches of faith were at, and got to know more about different cultural living, Erhart said.**





# The Cultural Center: A Place of Belonging

Embracing  
Diversity and  
Fostering Inclusion

The CCA Cultural Center is now open! On Monday, October 16th, members of the Community College of Aurora (CCA) and community partners gathered to take in a blessing from Grupo Tlaloc Danza Azteca, witness a ribbon cutting, and enjoy a reception of cultural foods with performances from Mariachi Internacional Denver and Mudra Dance Studio.

As both a Hispanic Serving Institution and Minority Serving Institution, cultural identities and exposure to diversity is key for students and CCA employees. This Fall 2023, students who

identify as Hispanic or Latinx make up 37.9% of CCA's student body. Overall, 69% of CCA students identify as Students of Color.

To Dr. Angela Marquez, CCA's Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief of Staff, Dr. Susan Hua, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Marco Vasquez, Assistant Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the college's Cultural Center is a community space for students to connect through shared identities, while engaging with and learning from others who have different identities through trainings and programming. Initiatives from the Cultural Center seek to celebrate heritage and culture while deepening understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

"The Cultural Center is huge for us," Dr. Marquez said, "It's important for students to belong, as belonging has a direct impact on persistence and completion. This space was created to provide an environment where people can bring their own perceptions, life experiences, and their cultures. It's a space where people can be their authentic selves."

As important as it is for students and employees to see themselves in their institution, CCA's Cultural Center is also an opportunity for students to learn about customs and cultures they may not have been exposed to. Heritage Month celebrations like Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and similar events will be featured at the Cultural Center. Vasquez said there are also plans to work with Aurora businesses, like restaurants, to help broaden cultural knowledge, awareness, and representation.

Although cultural centers are not typical for community colleges, the creation of a Cultural Center at CCA is a vital aspect of supporting students intentionally. CCA's student population reflects the City of Aurora, which is home to a diverse group of ethnicities, cultures, communities, and families.

"It's important for all of us to learn how to work with, live with, and understand individuals who are different from you," Dr. Marquez said. "Students must have the ability to navigate cultural differences and understand others. This is important for their own growth and development, as they prepare to live and work in an increasingly diverse world."

Dr. Marquez credits CCA's President Dr. Mordecai Brownlee for providing the resources that led to the opening of the Cultural Center, including allocating funding and ensuring that personnel were hired to oversee the space.

Dr. Hua notes that the Cultural Center features training and programs for members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, individuals who identify as undocumented or DACAmented, and individuals who identify as Veterans or have military-dependent status. Programs are in place to help students and employees learn about allyship, supporting students, and referring to resources as well.

As CCA celebrates 40 years and we look to the next four decades, Dr. Marquez, Dr. Hua, and Vasquez see the Cultural Center as an instrumental infrastructure of the institution and the community.

"I think the Cultural Center will continue to be a space for students to come together, feel included, and to be valued for their cultures and their identities," Dr. Marquez said of CCA's next 40 years, "CCA is a community college and we really do live up to the community part. We're making sure that we're serving the community that we're in. It's important for us to value the whole person; our students are coming to us with a wealth of life experiences that are valuable and important."

Students, employees, and community members can visit the Cultural Center on the CentreTech campus, in the Student Center, Suite S205. Anyone wishing to support the efforts of the Cultural Center can make a donation by visiting this page: <https://fundraise.givesmart.com/e/aUAgUw?vid=11nhb4>



“It’s important for students to belong, as belonging has a direct impact on persistence and completion.”





# The CCA Foundation: Empowering Student Success Through Scholarships

## Unleashing Generosity and Creating Opportunities for CCA Students

**J**ohn Wolfkill, Executive Director of the CCA Foundation, a nonprofit entity of the college that “supports CCA’s priorities and provides life-changing opportunities for students by developing philanthropic resources, community connections, and industry partnerships.”

“The Foundation unleashes generosity in the community to increase the economic mobility of our students,” Wolfkill said. “We’re an organization whose primary mission is to create meaning in the lives of people.”

The CCA Foundation usually invests around \$6000,000 annually in scholarships and student support services. This past year, the Foundation awarded more than \$788,000 to 418 students.

Wolfkill says the CCA Foundation likes to support scholarship recipients throughout their entire time at CCA. If you receive scholarships in your first semester, there’s a good chance you’ll be awarded scholarships every semester until your final one at CCA.

“We know that 40% more students will complete their degree when they receive those multiple semesters of scholarships, compared to when they only receive one scholarship,” Wolfkill said.

Wolfkill said 73% of scholarship students are first generation and students of color. Looking at data starting in 2016 to present day, Wolfkill said 85% of scholarship recipients, within two years of receiving their first scholarship, complete credential, transfer to another institution to complete a bachelor’s degree and beyond, or are still enrolled at CCA.

To receive scholarships at CCA, the CCA Foundation simply asks students to tell their stories.

“It’s one application in the fall and one application for the spring semester,” Wolfkill said. “We don’t require all those extra steps like letters of recommendation. What we really want to hear is our students’ stories so they have one application for all of our 60 or so scholarships that we offer throughout the year.”

While some students may not believe they are eligible for a scholarship, Wolfkill encourages everyone who studies at CCA to inquire about scholarships. There are scholarships for students who qualify and don’t qualify for financial aid; students who were born in America or abroad; and students who just graduated high school or have been working for many years and are coming back to CCA to prepare for a new career.

Some available scholarships at CCA center around STEM, construction management, health sciences, or diesel power mechanics. Other scholarships exist for first generation students, graduates of Aurora high schools, and some for student parents.

One of CCA Foundation’s premiere scholarship programs is Aurora Gives. Aurora Gives partners with fourteen area non-profit and educational partners to provide a pathway to a debt-free associates degree. Aurora Gives covers 100% of the tuition, fees, and book expenses for scholarship recipients after financial aid or any other scholarships the student receives. Additionally, recognizing that

unexpected hardships can cause students to stop-out of college, the Foundation provides about \$16,000 to the college for student emergency assistance.

For students who may benefit from emergency assistance, Wolfkill encourages them to contact the student advocacy team at CCA. Wolfkill said the emergency assistance helps students who may be \$200 to \$500 short on food, childcare, or transportation costs. The fund helps students overcome barriers that may otherwise prevent them from completing classes.

Wolfkill encourages others to get involved, saying, “There are several ways to get engaged with CCA and the CCA Foundation. Consider how you can give some of your time, your expertise, or your resources to help the next generation of CCA students.” To learn about how you can get engaged, call or email John Wolfkill at (303)360-4833 or [John.Wolfkill@CCAurora.edu](mailto:John.Wolfkill@CCAurora.edu).



**We’re an  
organization  
whose primary  
mission is to  
create meaning  
in the lives of  
people.”**



# CCA Student Artwork



**Name of Student:**  
Jenna Durbin (Drawing One)  
**Degree/Certification:**  
Associate of Arts



**Name of Student:**  
Lizette Aguirre  
(Drawing 1)



**Name of Student:**  
Sophie Edelblute (Drawing One)  
**Degree/Certification:** Associate of Arts

**Name of Student:**  
Aisha Jama (Drawing 2)  
**Degree/Certification:**  
Associate of Arts  
**Expected Graduation Date:** Spring 2024  
**Name of Artwork:**  
The Encounter



**Submission Title:** Magazine Front Cover  
**Name of Alumni:** Vivian Luu  
**Degree/Certification Earned at CCA:** Graphic and Web Design  
**Expected Graduation Date or Graduation Month/Year:** Graduated May 2020





# Crafting Cinematic Dreams into Entrepreneurial Success

## A Remarkable Journey through Cinematic Arts, Line Producing, and Business Ownership

Community College of Aurora Cinematic Arts program graduate Aleah Fisher realized she was living her dream while she was working on the set of *Power*, a show produced by 50 Cent/Curtis Jackson.

"I was kind of like, 'Oh my God, am I really in New York?'" Fisher said. "It just felt surreal. It was a very proud moment for me because I was the youngest intern to ever start at Starz, and I was the only intern to become a line producer."

After obtaining her cinematic arts degree from CCA, Fisher continued to work at different shows for Starz, a premium channel that produces high-quality shows. The role allowed her to travel globally. But after working for two years as a line producer, the production company Lions Gate bought out Starz, who laid out Fisher.

Fisher stayed in cinema but took on different roles when she started working at the company she would eventually come to own, Crude Connection. Fisher describes the company as matchmakers or a brokerage company, lining up video production crews with clients around the world.

"Our clients range from restaurant owners all the way up to these huge corporate conglomerates," Fisher said. Her company Crude Connection coordinates the type of video shoot customers want, site locations, and connects with the best local video crew in the area. "We're video production matchmakers."

The opportunity for Fisher to become a business owner came about six years ago, when the previous owner of Crude Connection wanted to retire. While Fisher loves what she does and owning her own business, the chance to take over Crude Connections couldn't have come at a more difficult time.

A few years after taking over the business, the Covid-19 pandemic hit, slowing down virtually every business in the world. Navigating through the pandemic was difficult but Fisher felt she

had the skills to make it through, thanks to some business and project management courses at CCA. She also said she kept in touch with many of her film professors, who helped guide her through difficult times.

For current and future CCA students, Fisher recommends taking some business and economic classes, no matter your career goals.

"No matter what industry you're in, you have to know what you're talking about," Fisher said.

Coming out of the pandemic, Fisher said she's blown away by the innovation continuing to unfold in her industry. Smartphones are replacing expensive cameras for some shoots. Drones and robots are used to get unique angles. Even artificial intelligence is changing the film industry.

Regardless of technological advances, Fisher firmly believes people will always be essential to her job.

"Robots and iPhones are awesome, AI is great," Fisher said. "But there is nothing truly better than a professional who has their own creative spin, their own talent."

**Navigating through the pandemic was difficult, but Fisher felt she had the skills to make it through, thanks to some business and project management courses at CCA.**



# Leadership for the Future

Breaking Barriers &  
Empowering Women  
Leaders at CCA



**One of the most powerful things I've appreciated in my tenure as a CCA leader is beginning to see those barriers broken down and being able to incorporate all of myself into my leadership identity...and to have it validated and modeled by our own male president.**

It takes a great deal of coordination, passion, and teamwork to ensure the Community College of Aurora continues to move forward.

As a leader who believes that diversity is a strength, CCA President Dr. Mordecai Brownlee has five women in executive roles to bring the best services possible to Aurora and the surrounding community. In a space that is predominately occupied by white males, these women are expanding the executive spaces in higher education.

Three of the five leaders include Dra. Reyna M. Anaya, Dean of Student Success and Senior Student Affairs Officer; Lynne Winchell, Vice President of Administrative Services and Chief Financial Officer, and Cindy Hesse, Vice President of Human Resources and Personnel Success. CCA is not only leading the way by diversifying their executive team with qualified women leaders, but also by enabling these women to forge their own leadership styles.

"I had the privilege of serving at another institution where there was a woman president," Dra. Anaya said. "That individual's leadership was influenced by

generational expectations where showing emotion and incorporating family into the workplace was not perceived as "good" leadership. One of the most powerful things I've appreciated in my tenure as a CCA leader is beginning to see those barriers broken down and being able to incorporate all of myself into my leadership identity...and to have it validated and modeled by our own male president."

"I agree, I like the empowerment we've been given," said Winchell. "It's a turning point and especially in my field, which is male dominated. I'm overseeing facilities and grounds and many controllers in private and public sectors are male. To be a leader in this capacity is very beneficial. It's also inspiring that I have the opportunity to mentor others to help them learn more about my role, or to fill my position."

Each of the executives have left a lasting impact on CCA even before they were selected for their current roles.

Since 2018, Dr. Anaya has supported CCA students in areas of experiential learning, advocacy services, scholarship coaching, career readiness, disability services, parenting student services, military services, and more. Winchell manages the financial and budgetary aspects of the college. In addition, she oversees facilities, security & emergency management, procurement & contracts, and information technology. Hesse has been involved in the hiring of vice presidents, deans, and numerous faculty. She's also been involved in nearly every HR task including employee retention, training, payroll support, policy, and compliance.

When it comes to forming leadership styles, the women said Dr. Brownlee embraces their accumulated skills and knowledge.

"To come to a place of work and know that you have the freedom to move in a given direction or autonomy to make a decision, and to know that the person that's backing you knows that you have the credentials and the expertise to make a sound decision... that's what makes us a great team," said Hesse. "It's really important that you're able to have that trust with each other at the executive leadership level and to have a President who empowers their team members."



# Finding His Voice and Advocating for Others



## A Journey from Medical Challenges to Student Leadership at CCA

Peter Park had to delay his educational journey after complications from a surgery left him unable to speak. But despite being unable to speak, Park advocated for himself and was able to find his voice.

“The whole journey took about five years, and part of it was learning how to advocate for myself and make sure I wasn’t just another figure, another number, and another patient, but rather someone with needs, and that I could voice those needs,” Park said.

Park’s passion through his medical journey to rediscover his voice carries over at Community College of Aurora, where he joined ASJ and found his passion for helping other students to be heard. Being involved in on-campus organization and student life has led to more opportunities for Park, including a senator position with Student

Government Association. One of his first actions as senator was connecting students with the bookstore scholarship, helping them cover the costs for books and school supplies.

“I love reaching out to students and telling them about everything that’s happening on campus because a lot of people aren’t aware of how many resources and cultural events happen at CCA,” Park said. “I was blown away when I heard this was the most diverse college in Colorado. It totally makes sense with the genuineness of all the people that I’m seeing.”

One of his most memorable experiences with SGA was visiting the Colorado capitol and sitting in on a session for affordable housing.

“That blew me away, I didn’t fully grasp what was going on in state politics,” Park said. “I’m aspiring to go to law school one day. That visit really changed my entire world. I was inspired by these professionals after having the opportunity to talk to them. There was something about that affordable housing meeting that made me realize we’re all in this together, and I want to be a part of it.”

No matter what Park decides to do with his future, he’s already accomplished a lot to be proud of. Being a part of SGA has connected Park with other student leaders he’s met on retreats and events. Growing up, Park said his family rarely took trips, so he learned a lot from taking trips with SGA.

Park is also a Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI) recipient, a founder of the Community Service Club, founder of the Asian American Pacific Islander Club and a first-generation college student. Park, whose parents are from South Korea, did not have much guidance or mentoring when it came to transitioning to college. He initially did not realize there were scholarships and grants available to him.

“It’s been quite a journey as a first-generation student. I don’t really have the means of understanding where I should be or the next step in my academic journey but I’m figuring it out as I go.”

Despite figuring out his next steps as he goes along, Park said he’s looking forward to whatever the future has in store for him.

“I want to remind people that you have to be optimistic about the future and that there’s always a brighter future you should strive for. At the end of the day, we’re all students. To be part of this institution, to have this opportunity, I’m really grateful.”



**I want to remind people that you have to be optimistic about the future, and that there’s always a better future you should strive for. To be part of this institution, to have this opportunity, I’m really grateful.**



# Honoring the Legacy of CCA Alumni

Celebrating Success,  
Building Connections,  
and Giving Back

All students who have ever taken a single class at the Community College of Aurora are considered alumni, whether they graduate with a two-year degree and completed their bachelor's degree at another institution, or only attend for a handful of semesters.

No matter what paths students choose after CCA, the school wants to make sure it remembers its alumni and celebrates their success.

"Something we're doing is being very strategic on how we tell the stories of our alumni," said Blair Lee, Executive Director of Strategic Communication and Alumni Engagement for Community College of Aurora, who oversees all of the college's marketing, public relations, and community affairs.

Lee himself has experienced the life-changing effects that alumni can have for students while they're completing their studies. While completing his education at the University of Baltimore, Lee experienced financial difficulties with past due balances. An anonymous donor not only paid Lee's balance but also paid for him to complete his masters degree.

"I think about that in my current role," Lee said. "My life is completely different because I was able

to finish grad school. So I'm always asking, 'How can we get our alumni to unleash that kind of generosity here in Aurora?'"

Prior to coming to CCA, Lee and his family lived in Houston, Texas, where he worked as the Director of Communications for Texas Southern University. Some 15 months before, Blair had never been to Colorado until his interview for his current position with CCA. It didn't take long for Blair and his wife to see the appeal of Aurora.

"It's the mountains that gets everyone," Blair said, noting the natural beauty all around Colorado. "It's been great living in Aurora because it's afforded my family some pretty great opportunities."

One of Lee's favorite aspects of working at CCA is seeing his team's projects and decisions have a direct impact. Working with a more intimate institution allows Lee more freedom with

marketing and alumni relations than he would have at bigger institutions.

Part of Lee's new initiatives in promoting CCA is rolling out a brand new website for the college. The interface is more user-friendly and the number of pages on the site have been significantly reduced, enabling students, alumni, faculty, and employees to easily stay up-to-date with CCA.

**No matter what paths students choose after CCA, the school wants to make sure it remembers its alumni and celebrates their success.**



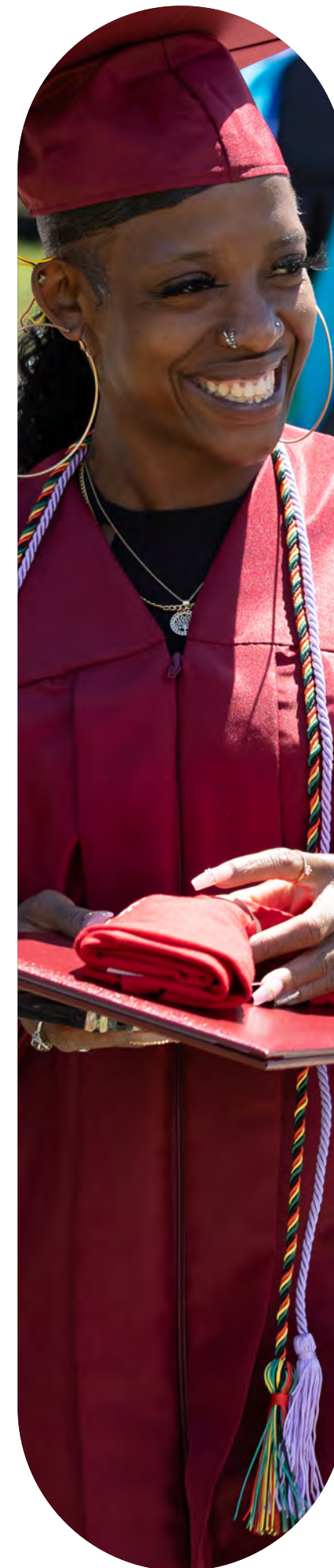
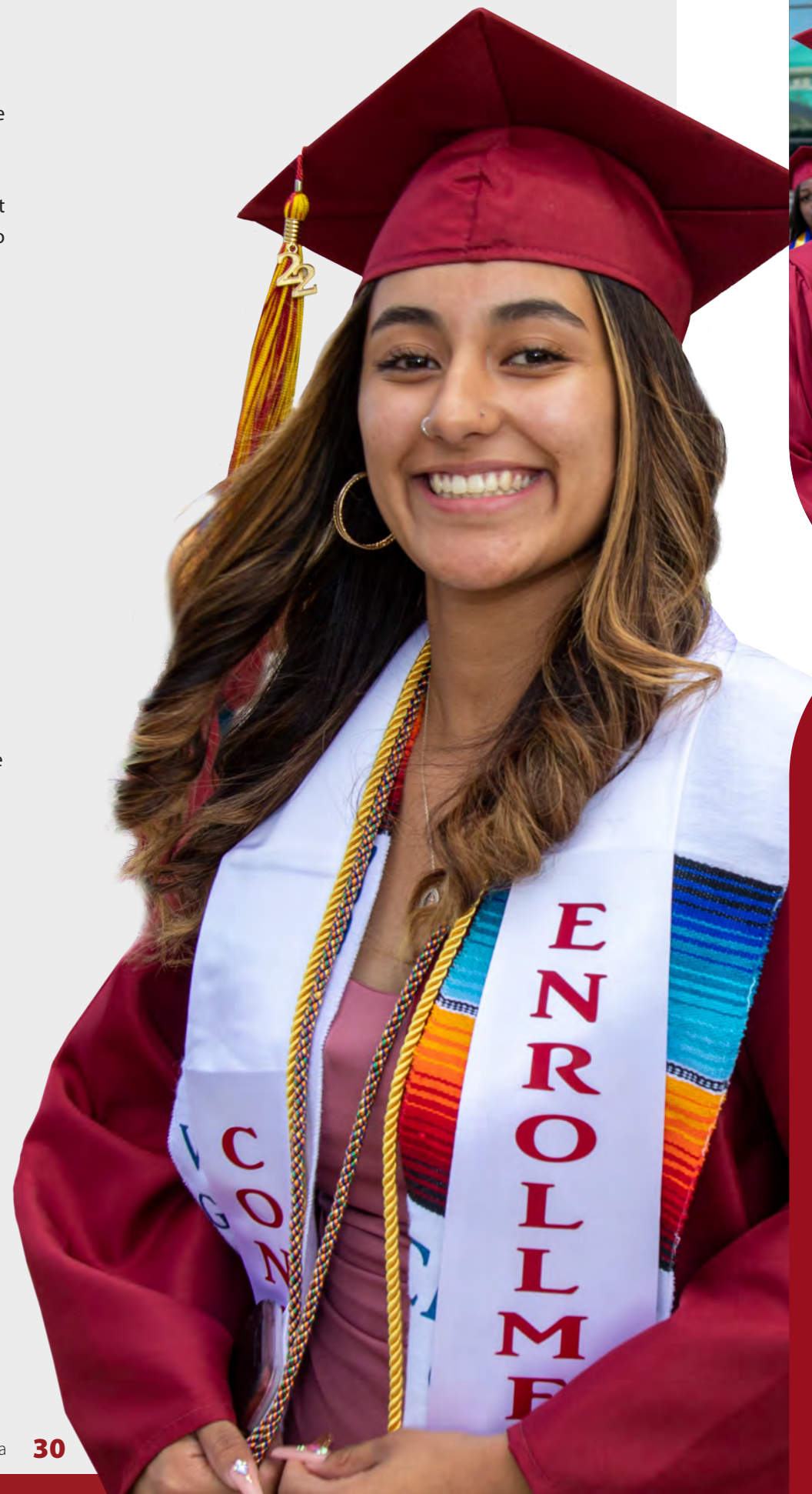
"The first thing people are going to do is Google your institution," Lee said on the importance of CCA's online presence. "If someone can buy something from Amazon in two clicks, why can't they enroll in classes or apply to college in a two clicks?"

In addition to staying engaged with CCA's alumni, Blair and his team highlight the strengths of the college for current and future students. Revitalization projects like the restructuring of the college's President's Conference Room to honor CCA's first president Dr. Nai-Kwang Chang. In September, CCA broke ground for its new Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies building. The new building will house the programs for diesel power mechanics, engineering, cyber security, and other STEM careers pathways in math and science.

"We're being super strategic on making sure the programming we offer will lead students from the classroom to the workplace," Lee said.

No matter how successful CCA's marketing is, no message is as powerful as hearing and interacting directly with alumni. In October, CCA is inviting alumni to speak on campus and share their experiences since completing their education at CCA.

For alumni looking to get involved and give back to the school, Lee said it doesn't have to be monetary. Alumni can volunteer their time through events on campus and mentor CCA students. For alumni who are interested in getting involved, [ccaaurora.edu/alumni](http://ccaaurora.edu/alumni).



**We're being super strategic on making sure the programming we offer will lead students from the classroom to the workplace.**





# Making an Impact Through IT

## From Nicaragua to Mexico, How One Man's Passion for Technology Transformed CCA's Learning Environment

A native of Nicaragua and a former resident of Mexico, Peralta was already immersed in the Information Technology sector prior to moving to the United States. When the opportunity arose to advance his educational studies, Peralta chose Aurora, Colorado as his new home. Peralta has always had a passion for learning newer technologies, especially those that involve Enterprise Systems, and that's what ultimately fueled and ignited his interest for moving abroad.

Eduardo first came in contact with the Community College of Aurora in 1998, where he enrolled as a full-time student and was introduced to the work-study program. He immediately applied and requested to be placed in the Information Technology department and that's where his professional journey began.

"I started as a work-study at CCA and eventually became a regular tech when a position opened up," Peralta said. "I've been at CCA since '98. I was a technician first then I became a telecom administrator then I helped on the server side. I always liked networking and I was fortunate that I could apply classroom theory while on the job."

Peralta not only worked tech jobs for CCA, but he has also taught computer courses in the Computer Information Systems (CIS) department, all while working full-time at the Community College. It was a unique position Peralta said because I enjoyed passing my knowledge on to others and helping them along the way.

"A lot of people I run into in the field tell me that it helped them a lot," Peralta said. "They say they understand my approach and that I was an inspiration to them as well." After nearly eight years of working in CCA's IT field, the position for IT director became available. Peralta took a chance and applied for the position himself. "I said why not me?"

In a little over a year during his time, as CCA's IT director, Peralta has taken leadership and management courses. His major goals include being an effective leader and updating CCA with the most effective technology that enhances learning environments.

"I've been fixing classroom and conference room technology software to improve the workflow. We used to use five different apps for various things in a classroom. I started finding ways where we could start streamlining services."

Staying at the top end of technology and education trends is not an easy feat. For Peralta, it's taken years of studying trends, learning about the latest equipment, and partnering with other organizations to see how they handle their IT operations.

Hearing about declining IT help calls and praise for simplifying technology while streamlining services is one of the many things that keeps Peralta motivated.





**You don't always get the opportunity to work under great leaders, but when you do, it ignites your spirit and helps fuel your vision for success.**

"It's rewarding when I'm in the hallways and people say 'Thank you for taking care of that right away,' Peralta said.

In the 23 or so years Peralta has called Aurora home, he said he notices the community continues to become more diverse. For him, that has led to a rich diversity of food, reminding of other places he's lived, like Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and more.

"When you go there, you want to eat pretty much all the food," Peralta said of a specific El Salvador restaurant. "Make sure you have more than an hour for lunch because you're gonna get good food."

What became a simple notion of seeking new opportunities abroad, or what some of us would call a leap of faith, became a life-changing experience for Eduardo Peralta. Eduardo remains humble in his role and attributes many of his accomplishments to his former mentors (Former CCA President, Dr. Linda Bowman and Dr. Betsy Oudenhoven) and existing mentors (Lynne Winchell Vice President of Administrative Services and CCA's President of the Community College of Aurora, Dr. Mordecai Brownlee).

"You don't always get the opportunity to work under great leaders, but when you do, it ignites your spirit and helps fuel your vision for success."



# The Path to College Success

How Concurrent Enrollment Paved the Way for a Bright Future



**A**s a participant in the Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT) program, Jada Gray was able to complete her first year of college for free. The 2020 [What high school did she graduate from?] graduate didn't even have to leave school to complete her Community College of Aurora classes.

"I had college professors in my school, so I took classes like calculus in algebra," Gray said. "I realized that the kids taking the college courses were a lot more driven and that's what I really appreciated about taking them. The people were motivated, they knew they were here for a reason, and they wanted to learn more."

**I realized that the kids taking the college courses were a lot more driven and that's what I really appreciated about taking them.**

Students in concurrent enrollment also allows them to take classes at CCA's campus. The ASCENT program is a fifth-year high school program that allows students to continue concurrent enrollment after 12th grade, enroll in postsecondary courses, and earn college credit at no cost to them or their families.

Another advantage to the ASCENT program is that the transition from high school coursework to college was natural and nice. Concurrent enrollment allowed Gray to ease into difficult college classes. She said the smaller classes allowed her more time with instructors and the resources she needed to succeed.

Another crucial factor in Gray's CCA success was getting involved in student life. She joined student government and the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

"I would be a lot more lost and wouldn't have had as much motivation because I wouldn't have had so many people lifting me up," Gray said. "I want to be a role model to my friends and my little sister, who's eight. I tell new students to go to student life, they'll give you all the resources you need to get involved."

After taking advanced math and science courses at CCA, Gray said she's going to study engineering and environmentalism at Colorado School of Mines. She also has plans to become an architectural engineer, which will involve further education.

"I would love to help design buildings. I would love to make the world more sustainable," Gray said.







# Nurturing Curiosity in Science

Inspiring CCA Students Through Astronomy and Advocating for Inclusivity

Nearly all scientists dream of making a breakthrough discovery in their field. For Community College of Aurora astronomy professor and science faculty member David Atlee, the price that comes with becoming a full-time research scientist was too high.

"I get to talk to my astronomy classes about a broad variety of topics, which are really fun," Atlee said. "I always love Black Hole Day. It's my favorite day of the semester. My favorite part of teaching, absolutely, is getting students who get excited and ask questions and want to dig deeper into particular topics."

After growing up near Philadelphia, Atlee attended Penn State for his undergraduate degree and Ohio State for his PhD in astronomy. He at one point considered pursuing a tenure track for a research position at an institution.

While completing a post doctorate, Atlee found some aspects of a research career to be tedious and a constant battle to secure grant funding. Though he loved problem solving and working with other researchers, Atlee found that the acceptance rate for grant funding for his field of study is astronomically low.

"You've got to write 20 grant proposals to get one to succeed," Atlee said, "And that's just soul crushing."

Transitioning out of a research role, Atlee began teaching astronomy courses at City University of New York and at LaGuardia Community College. After a few years, Atlee started looking for teaching positions in Ohio. It was during this job search that he discovered an opening for a teaching position at Community College of Aurora. In his time teaching in Colorado, Atlee is confident he made the right career choice.

In addition to fueling interests in the cosmos, Atlee says studying astronomy helps students read and interpret data, how to write in a technical scientific context, and how to understand uncertainty.

In addition to piquing the interests of students' wonder in the universe, Atlee serves on the Hispanic-Serving Institution Task Force. He sees the position as a fantastic opportunity to make science more accessible for a diverse student body.

"We're making sure that we're meeting our students where they are, that we're bringing their perspectives into the classroom," Atlee said.



**We're making sure that we're meeting our students where they are, that we're bringing their perspectives into the classroom.**





**The thing I'm really excited about is creating advancement opportunities and serving the students.**

"We're showing students things they've learned at home and in their communities, and integrating these things into their science classes."

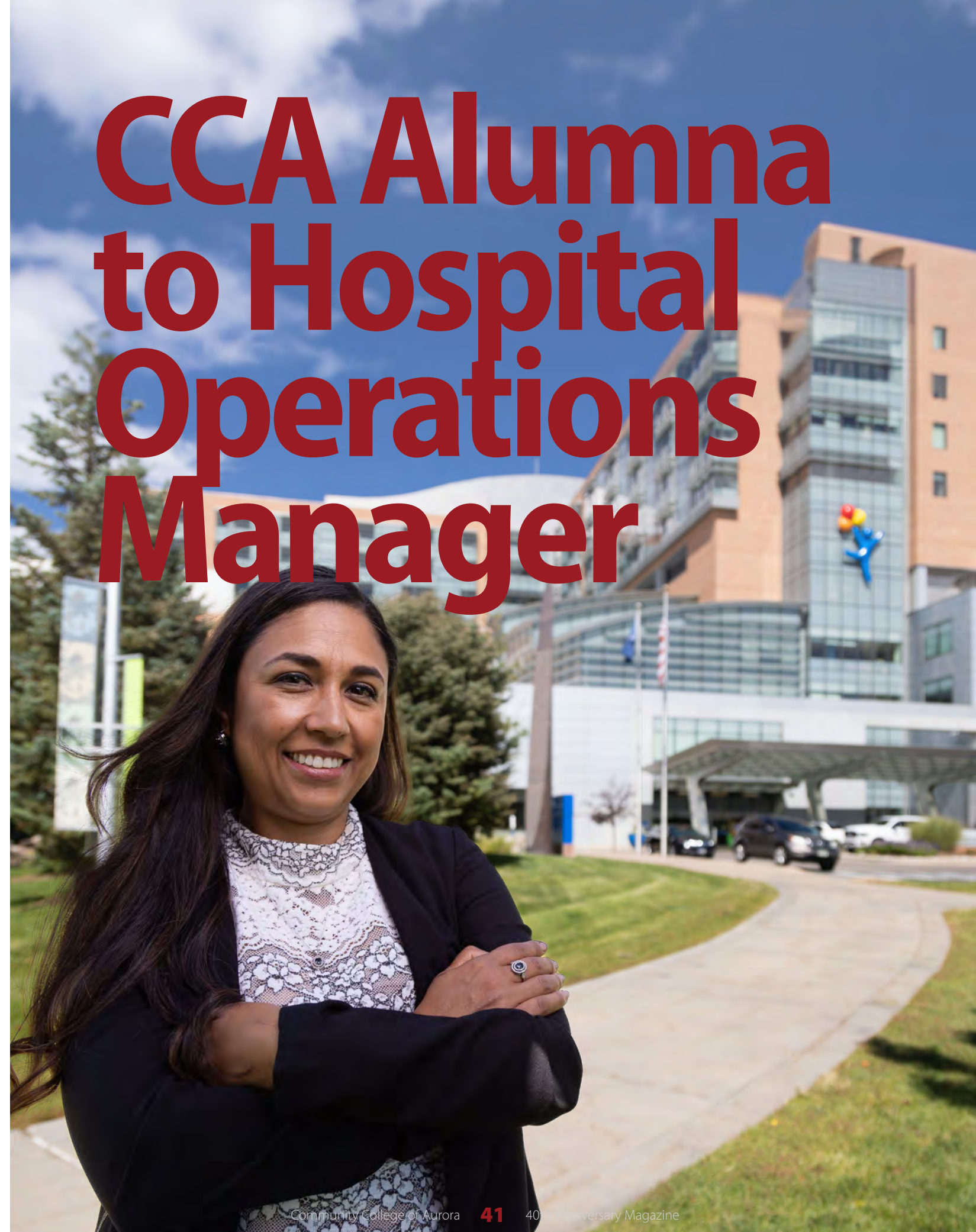
Coming from less diverse areas of Ohio, and then teaching in Brooklyn and Queens where students speak multiple languages, Atlee understands the importance for diversity, inclusion, and equity. Add the new engineering degrees and the upcoming building for the Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies, and Atlee sees science as a viable and successful career path for CCA students.

"We're really excited about the opportunities that we're able to provide having dedicated engineering degrees and especially with our articulation agreements with a number of our local four year colleges and universities. We have a number of students who are really excited to take our two-year engineering AES degrees and then transfer to great schools like Colorado School of Mines.

"The thing I'm really excited about is creating advancement opportunities and serving the students."



# CCA Alumna to Hospital Operations Manager





## Caroline Ruiz's Inspiring Journey of Professional Growth and Compassionate Healthcare



The path to becoming an integral part of the Children's Hospital Colorado took years and wasn't always so straightforward for Community College of Aurora alumnae Caroline Ruiz. As her life changed, so did her professional goals. Ruiz credits CCA for giving her the platform to grow and achieve.

"CCA helped me figure out what career path I was truly passionate about," Ruiz said, who oversees clinical operations for the Centers for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Children's Hospital Colorado.

Ruiz said she attended classes at Community College of Aurora because it afforded her the flexibility she needed as a full-time employee, and later a wife and mother. In the 2000s, Ruiz said she was trying to get into nursing school while working as a medical assistant. Her interests shifted to the administrative operations of health care, moving her aspirations in a different direction.

"Although I thought nursing was the path that I would follow, I quickly realized that was not the case" Ruiz said. "CCA allowed me the time and opportunity to figure out the career path I was most passionate about. Once I decided to move forward with a career in healthcare administration and transfer to a 4-year institution, I was able to transfer all of my credits toward my bachelors degree."

After graduating from CCA with her associates degree, she continued to work as a medical assistant at the Children's Hospital Colorado. Seeing opportunities open up, Ruiz made the transition to an administrative role, now known as administrative service coordinator.

In the 16 years Ruiz has worked at Children's Hospital Colorado, she worked her way up from medical assistant to staff assistant, then program assistant, operations coordinator, operations supervisor, and is currently the operations manager. During the pandemic, Ruiz said she was able to excel every year in a new position.

"I partner with many leaders across Children's Hospital Colorado to make sure our clinic is operating effectively and efficiently," Ruiz said. She is responsible for managing daily operations which includes oversight of staffing, access, quality assurance, process improvements, financials, and policies"

Ruiz has always found working in the medical field to be rewarding. Her conviction for compassionate and effective medical services grew after working through the pandemic.

"At the beginning, with all of the uncertainty, it was just amazing to see how many of our healthcare workers showed up every day not knowing what to expect," Ruiz said,

For students who have taken some time away from school and are unsure if they can finish their degree, or those who think they can't change careers, Ruiz said CCA is a great option for achieving their goals.



**CCA allowed me the time and opportunity to figure out the career path I was most passionate about.**

"CCA offers flexibility to meet your needs which was important to me. As a full-time employee wife and mother I needed a flexible schedule. It was also important to surround myself with people who had a growth mindset. You are the average of the five people you surround yourself with so choose them wisely."



Opinion Piece:

# Looking Ahead



**By Clair E. Collins, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Pathway Success**

In today's competitive educational landscape, staying stagnant is not an option. The first principle of enrollment management is recognizing that continuous progress is essential. It's not just about taking steps forward; it's about ensuring that every move is a strategic, well-calculated one, driven by data, and geared toward the critical tasks of student recruitment and retention.

At CCA, we are committed to bringing this approach to the forefront as we look ahead to the next 40 years. Students today are more discerning than ever when it comes to the value they receive from a college education. Therefore, we are dedicated to not only explaining this return on investment but also making education as affordable as possible. This includes finding ways to subsidize the cost of attendance while also maintaining high educational standards.

Additionally, we are embracing cutting-edge technologies to connect with students in innovative ways. By leveraging everyday tech tools, we aim to build closer relationships with our students and offer them personalized support services. Our data has consistently shown that no two student journeys are the same, which drives us to adapt our processes. We are committed to providing flexibility and implementing best practices that guide students toward their unique personal and academic goals.

CCA's approach to enrollment management focuses on strategic progress, financial accessibility, technological innovation, and personalization. We believe that by constantly evolving and tailoring our methods to meet the diverse needs of our students, we can truly provide them with the best possible educational experience.



**By Kathryn Skulley, Dean of Assessment, Strategy, and Performance Excellence**

As educators, we are committed to helping students receive a quality educational experience. A quality educational experience means carrying out checks on programs, processes, and services. Accreditation is one-way institutions carry out quality checks.

Colleges must be accredited by a "nationally recognized" accrediting agency to be eligible for federal student aid from the U.S. Department of Education (DoE). Accrediting agencies, according to the DoE, are private education associations. Accrediting agencies establish criteria for institutions to achieve acceptable levels of academic quality. Accreditors evaluate an institution based on the aforementioned criteria through a comprehensive evaluation that includes self-reflection and a focused visit.

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has independently accredited the Community College of Aurora (CCA) as an entire institution. HLC, which was established in 1895, is one of seven regionally accrediting organizations in the United States. HLC examines the institution to determine how its programs, processes, and services advance the college's mission. Since 1988, CCA has been accredited by HLC. HLC receives annual updates from the College. Twice every ten years, CCA submits comprehensive evaluations for continued reflection, which was last conducted in 2016 at the College's mid-cycle evaluation. In accordance with HLC accreditation renewal procedures, CCA will submit its comprehensive evaluation and participate in a focused visit during the 2024 Spring Semester.

Specific academic programs are also accredited or approved, known as specialized program accreditation or specialized program approval. Professional preparation programs are the focus of specialized accreditation or approval. Paralegal, Emergency Medical Services, and Basic Law Enforcement Training Academy receive specialized accreditation or approval.

For CCA, accreditation is not just a periodic quality check. Accreditation is an ongoing process. CCA's relationship with its accreditor is a partnership used for quality check and for improvement and evolution forward.



# The Power of Mentorship

## From CCA Graduate to Future Social Worker, A Journey Fueled by Compassion and Education

One Community College of Aurora alum is guiding Colorado's youth through his passion of mentorship. A spring 2022 graduate, De'Quan Enzor said CCA is an important step toward achieving his goals of working with at-risk youth.

"I knew exactly what I wanted to do and CCA accepted me and gave me the opportunity to start the fulfillment of my dreams."

Growing up, Enzor said a teacher named Ms. Smith at his middle school was one of his first mentors. As a teacher who was always welcoming students to her class and checked up on Enzor during his birthday and holidays, he valued her time. To this day, Enzor stays in contact with his middle school mentor.

Enzor's road to becoming a mentor started before he came to greater Denver and made an impact on the youth.

"I found myself in a position where I started volunteering at this organization, and it was the first time in my life where I became a mentor to young people," Enzor said. "I really cherished those opportunities that I had as a mentor to them."

Enzor came to Aurora in 2020, seeking a change of life from the one he had in Tallahassee, Florida. His passion for mentorship followed him, leading him to become a coach counselor for Rite of Passage, an all boys facility in Morrison that helps middle school and high school age youth.

"They experienced a lot of trauma and they needed individuals in their lives they could trust," Enzor said. His mentorship experience to the Boys and Girls Club where he worked as a club director at Crawford Elementary for two years. There he worked with kids who were in fifth grade and younger. Between the two organizations, Enzor mentored youth of all ages.

Aurora's diversity of immigrants and refugees exposed Enzor to a multitude of cultures and situations.

"It's been very rewarding," Enzor said. "I know that I don't want to do anything outside of working with the youth, whether that's from a counseling perspective or mentorship in general."

To move forward in his career, Enzor signed up for classes at Community College of Aurora in

2020. Since it was during the pandemic, a lot of Enzor's classes were online. Despite the non-traditional approach to college, Enzor said he met more mentors and connected with classmates.

"I want to do therapy for children and families, and I have to have an education for that," Enzor said. "I always knew education was important and that it's something I want to look back on my life and say, 'I'm glad that I actually went to school.'"

De'Quan Enzor graduated with an Associate of Arts from the Community College of Aurora in the Spring of 2022. Enzor is now finishing his degree at Metropolitan State University, where he is studying social work.

**I knew exactly what I wanted to do and CCA accepted me and gave me the opportunity to start the fulfillment of my dreams."**





## Community College of Aurora and Aurora Police Department Announce Historic Partnership

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) and the Aurora Police Department (APD) have formed a groundbreaking alliance with the introduction of the Cadet Pilot Program this fall, providing young residents of Aurora an opportunity to learn and serve in their community. CCA has phased out its Basic Law Enforcement Training Academy Certificate due to declining enrollment, partly due to limited job prospects for graduates. This new program, set to enroll its first cohort of 20 students in spring 2024, aims to propel students into high-demand public safety careers while strengthening the relationship between the police force and Aurora's diverse community. Graduates will earn an Associate Degree and complete a two-year apprenticeship with the APD, ensuring viable employment and preparing a diverse group of future law enforcement professionals.



## Mexican Consulate, CCA Partner for \$9,000 Grant to Help Mexican National Students Attend College

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) and the CCA Foundation, in partnership with the Consulate General of Mexico in Denver, are supporting Mexican nationals and students of Mexican descent pursuing higher education in the U.S. The consulate has granted CCA \$9,000 for the sixth consecutive year to boost the DREAM Scholarship program through the Mexican government's IME-Becas initiative, providing 12 CCA students with \$750 fall scholarships, matched by the CCA Foundation in the spring. The additional \$9,000 in scholarships for students of Mexican descent through the Aurora Gives scholarship aims to assist those without access to federal financial aid, promoting academic and economic stability. CCA, designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), demonstrates a commitment to narrowing the educational attainment gap between Hispanic and white students.

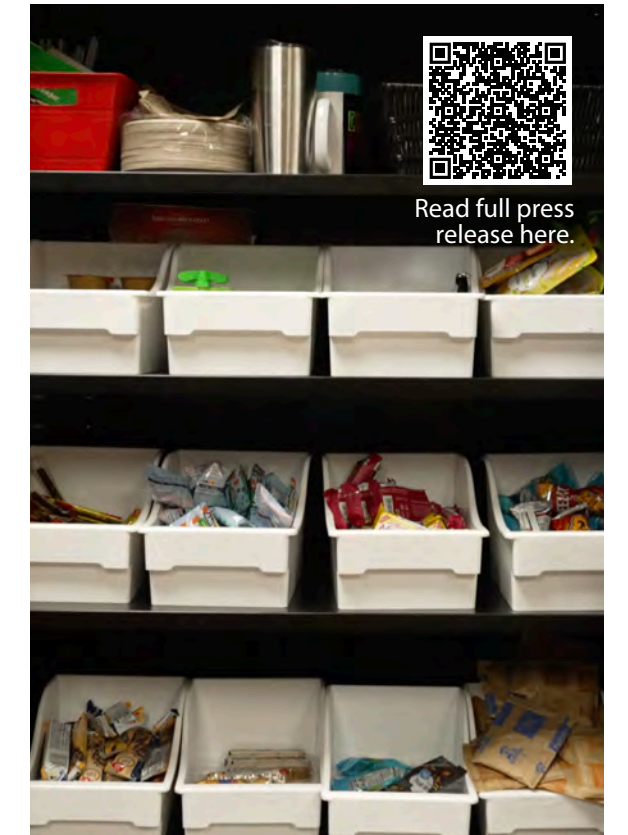
## CCA Earns "Hunger Free and Healthy Minds" Designation from CDHE

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) has received two designations from the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) in recognition of its commitment to prioritizing student well-being beyond academics. CCA's "Hunger Free and Healthy Minds" campus designation underscores its dedication to enhancing student success by addressing food insecurity and mental health access. The CDHE's Social Determinants of Student Success initiative aligns with CCA's commitment to inclusive learning and student success. To combat food insecurity, CCA has implemented measures like free snack stations, a mobile snack unit, Foxy's Mobile Market, and a Farmers Market event. Additionally, CCA supports students' mental health through awareness, prevention, and access to services, including free short-term counseling and referrals to community partners. These designations reflect CCA's commitment to ensuring every student can succeed by addressing their basic needs.



## CCA Receives \$20,000 Food Pantry Assistance Grant to Combat Food Insecurity

The Community College of Aurora (CCA) has been awarded a \$20,000 Food Pantry Assistance Grant (FPAG) to address food insecurity among its students and staff. Administered through the Trailhead Institute and Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger, the grant reinforces CCA's commitment to student success and well-being. CCA aims to enhance on-campus food security initiatives by sourcing nutritious local produce and products. This grant is particularly significant as a recent survey revealed that 64.1% of CCA students face food insecurity, which hampers their educational progress. The grant aligns with CCA's values of equity and opportunity, ensuring that students have access to essential resources. The Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger is dedicated to eradicating hunger in the state over a five-year period. The FPAG positively impacts the campus community, offering fresh food to students and supporting local farmers, thus addressing a crucial need for student success.







# Transforming English Classrooms

Fostering Critical Thinking, Advocacy, and Personal Growth in Freshman English

The English team has spent the past few years in self-study, taking personal journeys to reflect upon who we are as teachers. We've researched the purpose of English classes, working to align with the value of our humanistic discipline in ways that are authentic to and empowering for our students. We want our students to learn skills to be successful in future classes, careers, and life in ways that cultivate and sustain who they truly are. Our goals are to open space in our classrooms for students to deepen humanity and compassion for themselves and others. This work has sometimes been hard, but our goal is to improve student experiences and outcomes, and that makes it totally worth it.

What we learned is that the real value in being in an English classroom community is in connecting with cultures and perspectives outside of our own small bubbles of experience and in being able to discover what we have to say - what is truly important to us - and learning how to effectively engage our voices to say those things. Thinking critically about our world, discovering our voices, becoming more empathetic, gaining confidence in self-empowerment, and developing advocacy muscles for the things we believe in become the real goals of a freshman English class. As students leave our classrooms, we want them to be ready to advocate for themselves and for the

ideas and ideals most important to them, both in their future classes and in their lives outside of school.

I say "we" in this reflection because, while I'm mostly talking about how we teachers hope to impact student experiences, we've found that being part of these classroom communities always shapes and changes us as teachers, too. Our students, through their wealths of knowledge, vulnerability,

and fearlessness, constantly push us to understand differently, engage more creatively, and love more fully. So much of who I am comes from the impacts my students have had on me. That's part of the beauty of a college English class. We can take a journey of growth, understanding, compassion, and creation together.



**Our students, through their wealths of knowledge, vulnerability, and fearlessness, constantly push us to understand differently, engage more creatively, and love more fully.**







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# GET INVOLVED WITH THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Explore alumni opportunities with upcoming events, volunteering or supporting the college where you got your start.

Connect With Our Community!  
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