

WHEN TEACHERS LOVE TO TEACH, STUDENTS LOVE TO LEARN

Colorado Community College System

"A teacher affects our world for eternity; one can never tell
where their influence stops." – Henry Adams



Portfolio of Faculty Excellence



COLORADO COMMUNITY
COLLEGE SYSTEM

ARAPAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COLORADO NORTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF AURORA

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER

FRONT RANGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LAMAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MORGAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NORTHEASTERN JUNIOR COLLEGE

OTERO JUNIOR COLLEGE

PIKES PEAK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PUEBLO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TRINIDAD STATE JUNIOR COLLEGE

We are so proud of the high quality of faculty at our colleges! Our faculty members influence the success of our students each and every day and make a real difference. This publication, "When Teachers Love to Teach, Students Love to Learn," highlights 26 Colorado Community College faculty members who exemplify the spirit and quality of Colorado Community College faculty around the state. These outstanding educators have chosen to empower those who turn to us, the state's largest higher education provider with more than 151,000 students, to enrich their lives.

In this booklet you will discover the many reasons our well-qualified faculty value teaching at our institutions, primarily because we provide individually-focused learning experiences for our students. The faculty members profiled in "When Teachers Love to Teach, Students Love to Learn," represent how well educated and experienced our faculty members are in their profession and/or discipline. Many have Ph.D.'s and several have a lifetime of experience as successful practitioners of what they teach.

For purposes of brevity I will not tell you about all 26 profiles in this booklet but here is a sampling:

- You will read about an award-winning filmmaker/faculty member who created an internship program that allows his students to work on projects with some of Hollywood's biggest names in directing. This faculty member directs a film school that is so good, it was recently ranked one of the top seven in the nation to watch.
- You will learn that Jaguar has judged one of our automotive technology faculty members to be among the best in the world.
- You will get to know our Fulbright scholar who has authored a widely distributed book on international relations.
- You will find that one of our colleges has a faculty member who worked to develop the cochlear implant and artificial heart.
- One of our faculty members is a Harvard-educated, internationally-known psychologist who descended from English-illiterate Polish immigrants.
- We will introduce you to our calculus-loving, math professor who excels at preparing students for the Colorado School of Mines.
- Finally, we will highlight an emergency medical faculty member who still spends his weekends rescuing car accident victims.

We believe that our faculty makes a difference and we thank them for their tireless dedication to helping our students succeed.

In closing, I leave you with a quote that we believe accurately depicts the impact our faculty are making on Colorado and beyond, "A teacher affects our world for eternity; one can never tell where their influence stops." – Henry Adams

Sincerely,



Nancy J. McCallin, Ph.D.

President

Colorado Community College System

Our Vision

Colorado community colleges are unsurpassed at providing quality educational opportunities for all who aspire to enrich their lives.

Our Mission

To provide an accessible, responsive learning environment that facilitates the achievement of educational, professional and personal goals by our students and other members of our communities in an atmosphere that embraces academic excellence, diversity and innovation.

Our Goals

Student Access

- All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs.

Student Success

- The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a highly skilled workforce.
- Colorado students shall have seamless opportunities to transition from high school into college and from two-year institutions into four-year institutions.
- Colorado students shall have the opportunity to succeed through high quality, cutting-edge instruction and educational services.

Operational Excellence

- The financial stability of the system's institutions and the physical safety of its students shall be ensured.

Kathryn Winograd

Ph.D., University of Denver • Master of Fine Arts, University of Iowa Writers' Workshop

Arapahoe Community College

English Faculty Member

Distinguished Faculty Award for 2007

Statewide Teaching with Technology Faculty of the Year 2009



"I feel that I have a better sense of my students than faculty at schools who rely on Teaching Assistants. I'm in the trenches where I can give them direct feedback and help struggling students face to face."

Dr. Kathryn Winograd teaches literature, composition, research writing and creative writing.

"There is nothing more gratifying and exciting than watching a group of people come together as learners, peers, and mentors and hearing that buzz of excitement, of real engagement when the class is working just right."

When Dr. Winograd's students come to class, face-to-face or online, they encounter a supportive teacher who has: served on the faculty of prestigious graduate schools; had four teacher resource books published by McGraw Hill and Scholastic; and whose works have been celebrated via regional awards and included in national magazines.

She has also cultivated a community of student and non-student writing aficionados for the college known as "The Writer's Studio" and produces many special events, including a local literary festival.

Carl Bergemann Master of Science in Marketing Economics, Colorado State University

Arapahoe Community College
Marketing and Business Faculty Member

For almost a decade, Carl Bergemann has been introducing students to Marketing, Advertising, e-Commerce, Communications/Report Writing and Statistics.

“After heading Nevada State marketing operations for First Interstate Bank and then running my own marketing research consulting firm for a couple of decades, I have found teaching to be the ultimate experience and a capstone activity to my extensive career.

I really care about my students and the integrity of what I do. This is why I focus all my effort on teaching and improving the learning experience. I do this by being enthusiastic about what I teach and creating a dynamic and ‘real world-oriented’ collaborative learning environment that sustains the attention span of my students.”

After streamlining the statistics curriculum he was teaching to allow extra time to master the essential competencies, Bergemann has increased the success rate for students taking that course over others who have taught it, drastically. “I make statistics relevant for my students by posing real world problems to them like... ‘How many ER bays will a new hospital need to satisfy 90% of the demand at any given time?’”

Besides, having a faculty member whose expertise has been highlighted in *Advertising Age*, the *American Marketing Association Journal* and *Quirks Marketing Research Review*, Bergemann’s students also get to learn from the Fortune 500 market research experiences he gained from having a client base that included Proctor and Gamble, General Electric and Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.

Additionally, as a faculty member he has led his students to apply their newly acquired marketing skills to benefit charities such as the Ronald McDonald House.

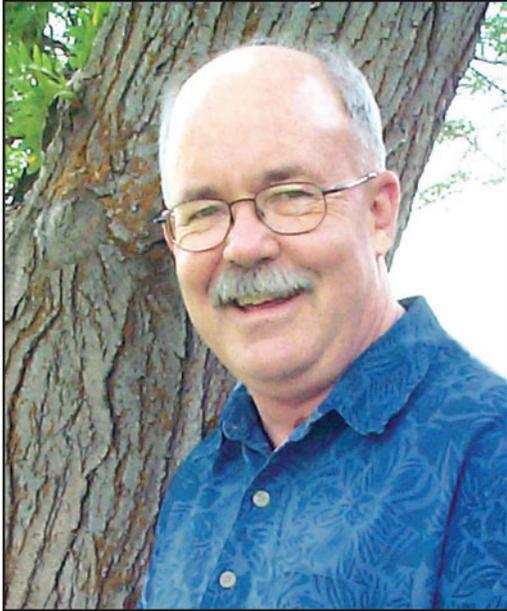


“I worked six years at a university where the staff was more interested in research and getting published than students. They had me teaching 100 students per class. Here it is capped at 25 and I actually get to know my students. Interestingly, I have found the type of student we frequently get to be more innovative and creative than the typical university student because they have had to become independent at a much earlier age.”

Mark Patterson

Associate of Applied Science, Dental Hygiene, Amarillo College
Bachelor of Science, Allied Health Education, Southwest Texas State University

Colorado Northwestern Community College
Dental Hygiene Faculty Member and Program Director
Participant and facilitator of student efforts to provide desperately needed dental care to the indigent



"I am inspired by the fact that each student who completes this community college program goes home to their community and impacts the lives of their neighbors in a positive way by treating and preventing disease, educating parents and children, and influencing health care policy."

Mark Patterson has educated future dental hygienists for 30 years. Currently he teaches Ethics, Community Dental Health and Pre-clinical and Clinical lab courses.

"Making a complex and complicated movement with a sharp instrument in a small space without doing damage to live tissue is a difficult thing to master. Teaching a student to replicate this is even more difficult. I love the look on a student's face when, after months of practice, they can demonstrate they have the ability to make these movements with clinical precision.

I also love watching them grow as professionals and when they contact me two or three years after graduation thanking me for teaching them what they needed to know to be competent and successful." Many after just five years in the field make around \$75K.

In fact, Patterson's students get to study with an educator who was appointed by the Governor to serve on a task force identifying barriers to Coloradans accessing the health care they need (e.g., those who live in rural counties). He has also served as president of the Colorado Dental Hygienist Association and was instrumental in getting legislation passed that enables hygienists for the first time to: inform their patients of problems they uncover (e.g., cavities); administer anesthesia; and, take plaster impressions for the purpose of treatment plans thus improving access to dental health care all across Colorado.

Remarkably, when the American Dental Association reviewed his program's self study and conducted a site visit in 2008, not only did the program impress, they could not find any aspects of it warranting any recommendations or suggestions.

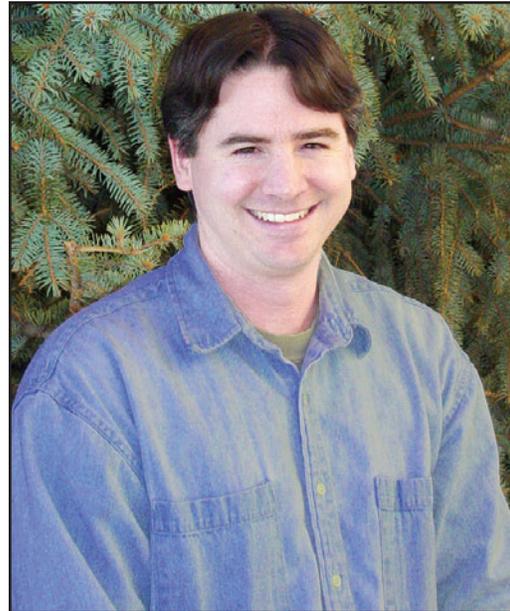
Todd Ward

Ph.D., Microbiology, Colorado State University

Colorado Northwestern Community College
Biology Faculty Member
Arts and Sciences Chair

“My university mentor was a great teacher but has to spend 90% of his time chasing grants. I get the opportunity to get to know my students and incorporate a personal touch into my teaching.

I pull out all the stops to help my students succeed and many do so despite their struggles because they have a good heart. I love my job and the small town I’m in – and I know how lucky I am to be able to say that.”



For nearly a decade, Dr. Todd Ward has been teaching Microbiology, Human Gross Anatomy and General Biology I and II to future nurses, dental hygienists and other health providers.

“I love sharing knowledge with my students, watching those ‘light bulbs’ go off in their heads and witnessing their personal growth and progress.”

Dr. Ward’s biology students get hands-on experience identifying micro-organisms via expeditions to regional cave systems. Some of these adventures involve crawling in the dirt through tight passages and rappelling 75 feet down into a cave. In the rare instance the identification of a particular cave bacterium eludes Dr. Ward and his students, he’ll send it away for a detailed DNA analysis. Interestingly, his dissertation involved genetically engineering a virus to eradicate disease-bearing mosquitoes.

Not only do other faculty members rely on Dr. Ward’s “Microbiology: Laboratory Techniques and Bacterial Identification” manual, Dr. Ward persuaded the Colorado State Anatomical Board to designate the college as the only cadaver-dissection lab on the Western Slope. This distinction is so unique that other colleges send their students to Dr. Ward’s lab so they can gain one-of-a-kind experiences working with cadavers.

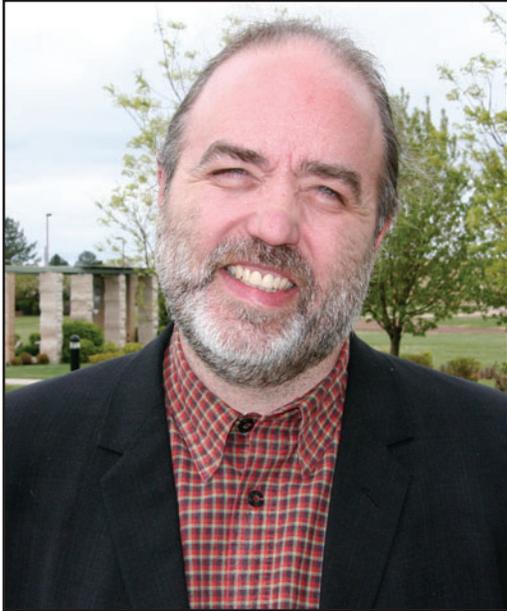
Todd Bergren

Ph.D., Bio-engineering, University of Colorado at Boulder

Community College of Aurora

Lead Faculty of Community College of Aurora's Biotechnology Program

Associate Chair of Science



"In this economic situation, I love being part of the solution to people's problems.

Community college students inspire me. I can't believe what obstacles they overcome so they can come and work extremely hard in my classes.

I feel that because of our small class sizes and emphasis on teaching, we don't teach science as well as a university, we teach it much better!"

For 16 years, Dr. Bergren has taught every biology/biotechnology class offered at CCA including DNA techniques and specialized classes where students can study genetics, molecular biology and the cell and evolution at CCA to earn a four-year Metropolitan State College of Denver degree.

"I love to teach because it allows me to continue learning about and discussing the most interesting thing in the world to me... Science. It is also wonderful to see students gain some of my enthusiasm for the topic and become comfortable working in a professional biology research lab." Dr. Bergren's lab features state-of-the-art equipment found in only a handful of locations across Colorado.

Dr. Bergren's students benefit from him being the principal investigator on two federal grants which have brought nearly a million dollars to CCA. Using some of this funding, he recently taught 120 high school teachers how to bring molecular biology labs into their classrooms. He has also involved his students in research for the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health and they are currently searching for solutions to keep hotel wastewater from disrupting the ecosystem around Cancun.

Dr. Bergren has also designed and built an experimental directed polymerization apparatus that flew on the space shuttle to contribute knowledge towards making artificial skin stronger. Last year, his students worked with NASA to send bacteria to the edge of space to see how its DNA would mutate. He says, "My goal is to get my students to think critically like a scientist." Dr. Bergren's reputation has led to him sitting on the biosafety committees of National Jewish Health and CU's Anschutz Medical Campus.

Frederic Lahey

Master of Fine Arts, Columbia University School of the Arts

Community College of Aurora
Director, Colorado Film School

Besides serving as founding director of the internationally sought-after Colorado Film School since 1992, Frederic Lahey teaches their Film/Video Production III and Directing Workshop.

“I love the excitement of students as they gain a new understanding of an idea or grasp the power of a technique. I love taking something as mysterious as filmmaking and showing them the simple steps of the craft. . . empowering them as storytellers.” Lahey’s students benefit from his experience as an award-winning writer, director, producer and cinematographer whose works have appeared on most national networks, major international cable, movie theaters and have been selected for inclusion in major film festivals.

The film school Lahey directs is so good, it was named one of the top seven to watch. It recently beat out Yale University when it was awarded an exclusive internship program with one of the largest film/tv talent agencies in the world. This partnership is enabling his students to work on projects with some of Hollywood’s biggest names in directing. He was also appointed to the Governor’s Advisory Board for the Creative Economy and champions the Colorado film industry at the state legislature and via the state economic development director’s media leaders forum.



“I love that we operate as an open admission institution because I believe in democratic access to the means of expression. For too long, filmmaking and media messaging had been relegated to a select few.

With us, the tools and techniques are available to everyone. However, our rigorous program shakes out those who are not serious artist-storytellers.”

Ashley Weycer

Dual Master of Science, Nursing-Midwifery and
Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nursing, Yale University

Community College of Denver
Assistant Professor of Nursing



“Teaching at a community college is rewarding because we get to help students transform their lives. Many begin our program thinking of nursing as their only chance ‘out’ of their situation. However, many times, this very situation makes academic success difficult. So many of our students master incredible amounts of academic and psychomotor material as they go through the program while wrestling with economic and psychosocial challenges that many people could never imagine. Watching these students accomplish this feat every day has been one of the most inspiring experiences of my life.”

Ashley Weycer prepares future nurses to administer care to maternal, newborn, pediatric and psychiatric patients.

“I find the act of teaching to be exciting, energizing, creative and fulfilling. Being able to take complex material, distill it into comprehensible parts and then place that information back into the ‘bigger picture’ is something that has always come naturally to me. It is incredibly rewarding to watch students ‘get it.’ Even more exciting is to watch my students morph into confident individuals as they begin to master the program content.

Biologically speaking, women’s bodies are designed to be pregnant. Everything a woman must endure in pregnancy has a purpose. I love cultivating insight about these processes in the nurses I prepare.”

Not only do Weycer’s students get to benefit from her education from the Yale School of Nursing, they also get to learn from her experiences as a labor and delivery nurse at two hospitals and as a practicing midwife. When it comes to psychiatric nursing, she is able to share her experiences working at an adolescent outpatient clinic and a correctional facility. Finally, she brings one-of-a-kind experience from serving on Yale-New Haven Hospital’s Bioethics Committee.

Weycer’s students also get to learn from an educator who has repeatedly lectured at Yale, presented at gatherings such as the International Society of Psychiatric Nursing Annual Conference and has been published in the Journal of Nursing Education and the Barnard-Columbia Women’s Handbook.

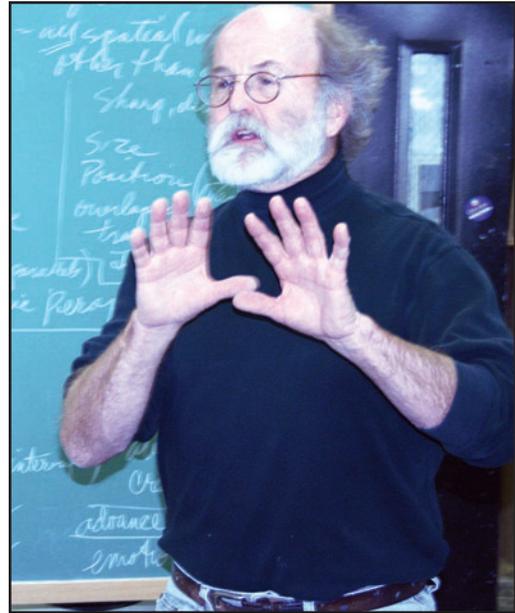
Charles Parson

Master of Fine Arts, Cranbrook Academy of Art

Community College of Denver
Senior Chair of the Arts Department
Nationally Celebrated Sculptor and Muralist

"Because community colleges are exceedingly cost effective, they don't become a financial burden around their students necks for 30 years – which for an emerging artist can be deadening.

Additionally, our faculty are practicing professionals - hailing from highly reputable schools. I expect them to bring this perspective to their students and encourage this level of real-world engagement by regularly asking them 'What are you doing in your artwork?'. "



For 40 years, a tireless Charles Parson has undertaken dual full-time endeavors: teaching and practicing art. He's done this while like many of his students, raising a family. He currently teaches two- and three-dimensional design, figure-studies and all levels of painting and drawing.

"I am a missionary for the arts. I help 18, 45 and 70 year olds discover who they are through the weaving of life into the realm of art.

So many people just see art in its final form. I enjoy enthralling my students as I demystify the process and show them that it's not magical – it's just hard work. After I share my lifetime of real world experiences with them, I enjoy seeing the epiphanies of sudden understanding that they experience regarding the creative world."

Not only did Parson create the sculpture department at another college, he's exhibited an astounding 55 one-person shows across the U.S. His sculptures, which have risen to three-stories tall and weigh up to 5,000 pounds, have graced Chicago, the Universities of Purdue and Wyoming, the Brooklyn Bridge's Hudson Park and other national sites. His murals help enhance the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Plus, he has had himself or his works featured or reviewed in several arts publications and major market newspapers including: *Sculptural Pursuit*, *Artspace*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Orlando Sun* and *The Miami Herald* while racking up numerous Best-of-Westword awards.

In the past three decades, besides authoring books about how everyday life has inspired his abstract art, Parson has served as a museum and theater consultant and board member. Additionally, he has lectured extensively across the U.S. as an arts advocate, been sought out as a jurist and actively participated in the Colorado Art Education Association.

Gregg Musser

World Class Veteran Automotive Technician

Front Range Community College

Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certified Automotive Technology Faculty Member



“Community colleges are the perfect setting for Career and Technical Education. I have always learned best from a ‘hands on’ approach, so teaching here is the perfect position for me.

I get students who may not have been big fans of math – not realizing that they’re doing geometry when I’ve got them aligning a car. We get them working with compound angles, conceptual physics, and changes in states and matter. In sum, they learn that an automobile is a ‘rolling physics project.’”

Gregg Musser teaches students the technical skills to test, diagnose and repair the complex mechanical, chemical and electronic/computer-based equipment found in today’s automobiles.

“I enjoy sharing my lifetime of real-world experience with my students. It makes me happy when, after starting at the very beginning of this field, they begin to develop the skills I’ve taught them. It is also great seeing them become better problem-solvers and then advance themselves.”

Musser’s students get to learn from a professional whom Jaguar judged to be one of the best technicians in the world. Musser was one of 12 technicians from across the globe invited to the Jaguar factory in England to be trained as an international expert on the car make. He also brings 28 years experience as a Jaguar technician - 18 years with Stevinson Automotive.

NASCAR respects Musser so much, they have had him serve the past 10 years on their Technical Advisory Council.

Musser is an innovative faculty member. For example, he will have one group of students engineer an automotive problem and then have another work to diagnose and solve it. “Figuring out how to create problems is a great way to learn what causes them.”

Andrew J. DeRoche
Ph.D., History of Foreign Relations, University of Colorado

Front Range Community College
History Faculty Member

Dr. Andrew DeRoche teaches courses covering Ethnic Studies and the history of the United States, Colorado and U.S. Foreign Relations.

"I work hard to make my classes enjoyable, interesting and fun for my students. Many have struggled in their lives so I try to make them comfortable. We use a lot of music, documentary clips and primary documents, such as a soldier's diary, to make history come alive!"

Dr. DeRoche's students get to study with an educator who was selected in 2005 for an esteemed Fulbright Scholar award to teach and research at the University of Zambia. Dr. DeRoche not only teaches international relations, he also lives them. He met his Zambian wife, a journalist, while in that country to interview its former president.

He is also an active historian who regularly publishes articles, has presented in London, Holland and Zambia, and is author of two widely distributed books: *Andrew Young: Civil Rights Ambassador* and *Black, White, and Chrome: The United States and Zimbabwe, 1953 to 1998*.



"I teach at community colleges because they are a place where one can really make a difference and engage students who will benefit appreciably from the education as they work to change their lives."

Christine O'Toole

M.S., Physical Therapy, University of Colorado

Lamar Community College

Pre-medical Faculty Member

Founder of LCC's Sports and Fitness Four-year Degree Pathway



"I love how teaching at a community college gives me a chance to help people who are overcoming significant obstacles turn their lives around through hard work and determination and earn a piece of the American Dream. It is really satisfying to have students come back each semester to tell me that the strong basis I gave them helped them not only realize their medical-career goals but changed their lives for the better."

Christine O'Toole teaches pre-medical classes such as Anatomy and Physiology, and Pathophysiology.

She has a gift for taking complex concepts and making them understandable to just about any student. "I love discovering how to open each student's mind to the excitement of learning and growing."

O'Toole's students not only get to learn from someone who has ten years experience teaching rigorous college courses, she also brings experience working as a physical therapist in hospitals, nursing homes and private practice – helping people recover from the ravages of strokes and cancer. "We're just beginning to unravel the mysteries of the brain and its interrelation to the rest of the body," says O'Toole, "and this has a lot of important ramifications for those suffering from traumatic brain injury."

Each year, only one graduate student in the entire nation pursuing a master's in Physical Therapy is selected for the prestigious Mary McMillan Scholarship. This scholarship recognizes outstanding scholastic achievement, character and promise of future professional contributions. In 1995, O'Toole was selected for this honor and 15 years later we're pleased to report that she's lived up to this predicted excellence.

J.J. Rydberg
B.A., Physical Education, Adams State College

Lamar Community College
Horse Training and Management Faculty Member

"We strive to get our students to a level where they can go out with a professional horse trainer, be successful and continue on acquiring a lifetime of hands-on learning.

We open doors for them by permitting them to meet trainers from across the U.S. that they would otherwise never get to meet. They then get to pick one of these trainers to intern with for 15 weeks.

There is a big need out there and upon working side by side with a top trainer, a job offer is usually forthcoming."



For 10 years, students from all over the country have been coming to Lamar Community College so J.J. Rydberg can teach them how to be successful in the equine industry.

His current class consists of students who have travelled to Lamar from 17 different states to participate in his program because it is the only one of its kind.

Remarkably, Rydberg's students have to tend to their studies, e.g., care for their animals, seven days a week plus on holidays.

"I enjoy getting students to understand how a horse thinks and operates. They need to learn to anticipate any mistakes the horse might make because once a horse does something improperly – the wrong way becomes his way of doing it... I have never quit learning better ways for training horses and I have found horses teach me new things every day."

Because Rydberg's father was a horse trainer, he grew up in the equine business. After earning his baccalaureate degree from Adams State College, Rydberg began a road that would eventually earn him a national reputation for his ability to teach people to teach horses.

Along the way, Rydberg served on the Board of Directors for the Colorado State High School Rodeo Association and the Western States Cutting Horse Association. He also won two world championships for showing from the American Quarter Horse Association and he was featured in *Western Horseman* magazine.

Bob Huber

Master's in Marketing Education, Colorado State University

Morgan Community College

25-year Business Faculty Member

Founder of MCC's Real Estate Program



"I enjoy teaching at a community college because we teach usable and marketable skills not just abstract hypothetical theory. The economics of success is all about alternatives and that's what we do for people – we empower them by using practical education to expand their alternatives with ones that are better than what they've been experiencing.

As a teacher, I'm always challenging myself to be a little better at what I do. After 25 years, I'm just starting to get good!"

Bob Huber teaches Economics, Business Law, Business English and Morgan Community College's Real Estate Licensing Classes.

"I love to teach because I love to learn. Every time I teach a class I learn something new and my enthusiasm for this carries over to my students. I enjoy the moment when after conveying a concept that a student realizes that the information will help them make a living."

Ten years ago, Huber, as the successful owner of Huber Realty, created MCC's Real Estate Program. Today, he still practices real estate and there is not a real estate office you can go into in Ft. Morgan that doesn't have one of his students. In fact, Huber has trained hundreds, more than programs from colleges twice MCC's size.

"I have lived the world of real estate and I speak to my students from years of experience. Knowing about the little nuances and potential pitfalls of transactions that I can share with them can make all the difference when they're trying to close a deal. Many times I have been across the table from my former students on real estate transactions. Watching them walk away from the closing with their check in hand is gratifying because they are making a living using information and skills I have shared with them."

Huber continually challenges himself to be more effective at delivering his classroom material and prepares relentlessly for his classes, constantly verifying that he is teaching the most current knowledge. With a continual fear that he not come across as boring, Huber enthusiastically, and sometimes humorously, teaches by providing his students with meaningful, relevant and intriguing examples of business concepts which could very easily otherwise seem dry and uninteresting.

Luke Smith

B.S., Electrical Engineering/Pre-Med Option, University of Colorado
Master of Science, Physiology and Biophysics, Colorado State University

Morgan Community College
Biology Faculty Member

After spending 25 years researching and developing amazing human aids such as the cochlear implant, Luke Smith was ready to establish a solid Microbiology program at MCC.

In addition to this subject, he also teaches Pathophysiology, Anatomy and Physiology, and intro-Biology courses to future nurses and health care workers.

"I love teaching because I love the subject matter that I teach and I'm just wired that way. I like to see knowledge grow and develop. I recognize that significant research comes from knowing and applying.

I seek to inspire my students to apply their knowledge towards ends that benefit us all. The science of living systems is the study of the miraculous. I have fun teaching but I am very sincere about the value of the future medical professionals I prepare understanding the various functions of living systems."

Smith understands the physiology of learning down to the process of "the dendrites of one's brain growing spines and the synapses creating 'learning' circuits." He likes to amaze his students by helping them understand the interrelatedness of all the tissues in our bodies and how they talk to each other and manifest problems when in disrepair.

Smith has published 40 journal articles relating to his research with physicians from all over the globe as he worked to develop the cochlear implant and artificial heart/ventricular-assist-devices.



"Over 30 years ago, I discovered I loved teaching but got recruited to work on research and development grants. I've been there and done that!"

"Today, working at a community college, I actually get to teach and I love it. I cannot relate when I hear four-year profs complaining about their teaching duties."

Connie Humphreys

Master's in Humanities, Wright State University

Ph.D., Education and Human Resource Studies, Colorado State University

Northeastern Junior College

Philosophy Faculty Member



"I started at a two-year college and that's where I met some of my best teachers.

At the university level they are mostly interested in research. Community colleges are where intense teaching really happens. Our faculty members care about their students and they teach with 'soft eyes'."

Dr. Connie Humphreys teaches Philosophy courses such as Ethics and Comparative Religion.

"I love teaching because it is so much fun to watch my students grow and transform in just two short years. Teaching is also important to me because I subscribe to Plato's allegory of the cave that calls upon those who have become educated to pay it forward."

Dr. Humphreys' ethics students learn how to problem solve dilemmas they will encounter throughout their lives and become reflective about the impact of their choices. They enjoy the dialogue she facilitates about rights, justice and equality. The practice they get analyzing tough decisions under her tutelage prepares them to apply ethics in future situations when they won't have much time to think.

In fact, the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* respects her teaching methods so much that they will publish a dissertation follow-up she recently authored entitled, "Developing Student Character: Community College Professors Who Share Power." This piece discusses how students become optimally engaged by collaborating in the selection of classroom rules, evaluations and teaching method and the emerging concept of 'learner-centered teaching.'

Larry Pollart

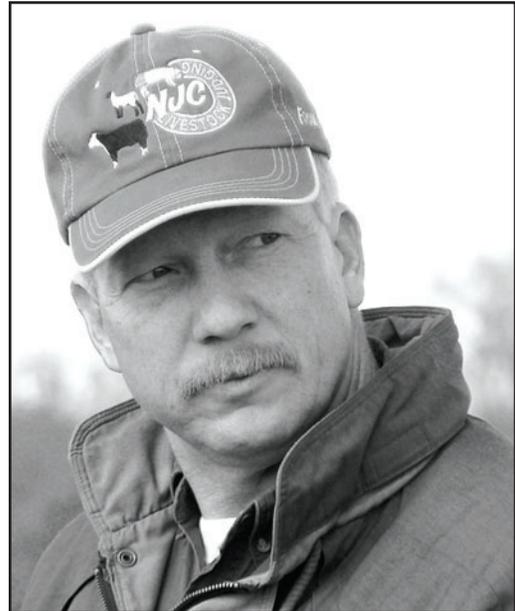
Master's in Agricultural Education, Colorado State University

Northeastern Junior College
Animal Science Faculty Member

"I tell my students that the best part of a two-year college is that we will get to know you. I also tell them that the 'worst' part is that 'we will get to know you'.

I don't mind when kids complain a little bit because then I know I'm stretching them.

I received a text from a former student who now is at a university who told me the best part of her college education was here because we actually cared about her."



Larry Pollart teaches those on the front lines of agribusiness. Students turn to Pollart to learn about livestock feeds, livestock judging, agricultural carpentry/welding, animal health and beef cattle production. "With feeds, they need to know how each individual species differs," he explains.

"Having a kid who has struggled come up to you and tell you, 'I get it now and I understand why to do this' is a feeling one never gets over... if I taught them and then they come back and tell me they coached their 4H Team to win the national championship... that is awesome for me."

Pollart grew up on a Colorado ranch which produced crops, cattle, hogs and horses. Upon earning degrees in Vocational Agriculture Education from NJC and CSU, he began coaching livestock judging teams and continues to do so today. Prior to coming to NJC, he taught high school ag classes for a decade. During that time the National Vocational Ag Teachers Association honored him as an outstanding member and he received an honorary state FFA degree.

He has since spent the past decade sharing his teaching excellence and "mildly entertaining humor" with NJC. A few years ago he was selected president of the National Junior College Livestock Coaching Association. Today, fairs and stock shows from all over the country, including Denver's National Western, turn to Pollart to judge their events.

Remarkably, Pollart has received NJC's Joel E. Mack faculty member of the year award on two separate occasions. This means more to him than any other award because it is one in which the student body selects the winner.

Diane McElroy

Master of Science – Nursing, University of Phoenix

Otero Junior College
Nursing Faculty Member



“My family owns a small business in La Junta and this is where we intend to stay. Having Otero Junior College in our community has not only brought economic opportunity to my students, it has enabled me to pursue a career I love.”

In the late 90s, Diane McElroy wanted to teach nursing so badly that for 18 months, she put 350 miles on her odometer every week, commuting to a master’s program in Denver. Since that time, she has taught many of Colorado’s nurses how to facilitate the miracle of birth and the care of mom and newborn. In addition to maternal child nursing, she also teaches general nursing classes and a component of medical surgical nursing.

“Nursing is an art that is dear to my heart. It gives me great pride to see ‘the light bulb come on’ for students as they put all the pieces together concerning complex medical processes. I want each of my students to become a caring nurse and it’s amazing to watch the transformation they make in this program. For me, it’s also very inspiring to have them come back and tell you that you have made a difference in their life.”

McElroy has honed her teaching craft so well that the Southern Colorado Clinical Scholar Coalition has designated her their expert-presenter on “Teaching and Learning Styles.” Her instructional style reflects a deep caring for every one of her students and she makes herself available to help each one-to-one.

She is also an active member of the Colorado Organization for Associate Degree Nursing which works to ensure that the need of our state’s rural communities to grow their own two-year-trained registered nurses will continue to be satisfied.

Lisa Gallegos
Master's in Education, Lesley College

Otero Junior College
Biology Faculty Member

Lisa Gallegos brings 16 years of experience as an educator to teaching Anatomy and Physiology and Biology courses.

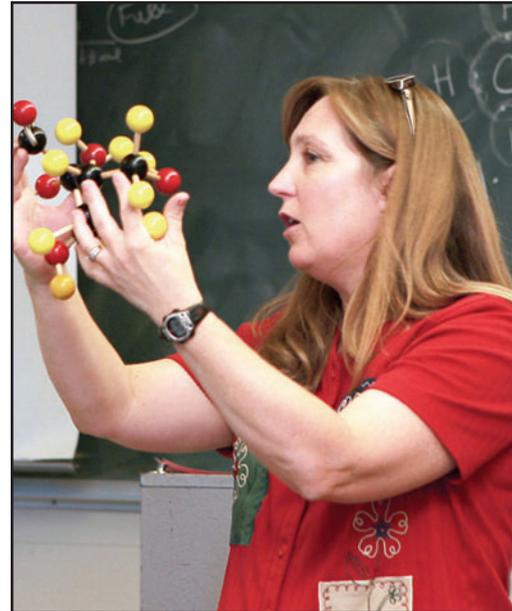
"I love teaching because it is emotionally and academically stimulating to see students believe in their accomplishments and succeed in their goals. It is these learning relationships that are built on a passion for knowledge that give me a way of changing our world one person at a time.

I especially enjoy seeing the accomplishments of my former non-traditional students who had decided to return to school 10 to 20 years after high school. They are full of aspiration when beginning the education they'll need to transition to a new career, however, they usually lack the self esteem and study habits required to retain the immense amount of information presented to them.

I find it very rewarding to encourage them on their pathway toward graduating to new roles as nurses, dental hygienists and other medical related professions which will mean they are finally living their dream.

I love dealing with the interrelationship of muscles to bones. More importantly, I am inspired by life itself; it is quite tranquil to realize that we start off as two small cells, divide into a small ball of cells that interacts and responds to the developmental process only to create a human that is capable of breathing, growing, learning, manipulating and responding.

It is my hope that some of my students will one day discover new cures or create new materials that can reshape or create a better world."



"Community colleges provide a great education locally in a small setting that helps students thrive. We empower students with tools to create a better environment for themselves and their families.

I have found that my students become transformed and motivated in the exciting yet demanding classroom I try to create for them."

Deborah Licht

Ph.D., Psychology (Experimental Psychopathology), Harvard University

Pikes Peak Community College

Full-time Faculty, Department of Psychology



"I am inspired by the first-generation college students who turn to community colleges to pursue their education. I come from a family of such people, i.e., people dedicated to learning. My father's parents came from Poland, not knowing English. And although my grandmother was illiterate, she tried throughout her long life to learn to read and write. I'm also inspired by the non-traditional students who turn to us for a college education despite having numerous hurdles, such as poverty, academic delays and childcare concerns. One might have classified me as an 'academic snob' before I came here, but now I truly appreciate what a great service we are providing the citizens of Colorado."

Dr. Deborah Licht brings 20 years of teaching experience to courses such as Introductory Psychology, Psychology of Workplace Relationships, Child Development, and Elementary Statistics.

"I love teaching for many reasons. For instance, I enjoy seeing students' eyes light up when they understand a difficult concept. I also enjoy helping students think more critically about the world around them. It thrills me when my students come to class and report that their experiences outside of class are different because of what they learned in class.

Effective teaching has many things in common with acting. I think if I hadn't become a teacher I would have ended up waiting tables in New York with all the other unemployed actors."

Not only do Dr. Licht's students get to learn from a Harvard-educated faculty member, her research has also been published in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*. Also, a national publisher has her co-authoring an Introductory Psychology textbook for community college students. On top of all that, she brings the unique experience of having taught in Denmark and guest-lectured at the University of Copenhagen.

While in Denmark she worked with an international research group of theologians, psychiatrists and philosophers studying consciousness, schizophrenia, language and thought.

"My students are often amazed by how the human brain works with its complicated networks of neurons. They also enjoy learning to assess the validity of so-called psychological research that is promulgated in the media. They get to where they can determine if what they are reading is wrong, overstated or misinterpreted. For them this is quite an 'ah ha' experience."

Michelle Bender

B.S., Extended Elementary Education, University of Wisconsin

Pikes Peak Community College

Early Childhood Education Faculty Member with 25 years Experience

Fellow candidate, University of Denver's Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program

Michelle Bender teaches those who mold the minds of the youngest of children.

"Teaching adults how to teach the young children who will become our future doctors, lawyers, neuroscientists, etc. is my life's passion and gives me purpose. Because 90% of the brain is wired by age 3, I teach intentionality. Everything these future educators do must be purposeful. When working with children, if my students do something wonderful, they need to know why it was wonderful."

Bender's students get to tap her vast experience in Early Childhood Education. Her first teaching practicum was in 1985 and she's been honing her craft of teaching others the science of cultivating young children's brains ever since.

Notably, she was appointed to the Lieutenant Governor's P-3 Professional Development Planning Task force and serves on the El Paso County's Early Childhood Council, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Child Development Group, and advises local school districts and is testing online modules for the University of North Carolina FPG Child Development Institute.



"I like the intimate nature of community colleges because you get to see that you're making a difference."

"I get to know my students very well. I see them in: advising; their work environment; and, in practicum. I get to help them identify their goals and then individualize their career path, providing direct feedback as they progress."

Mary Kubeck

B.A., Forensics, Indiana University

M.Ed, Curriculum and Instruction, University of Colorado

Chair, Pueblo Community College Law Enforcement Academy

Member, Southeastern Colorado Regional Law Enforcement Association

Past Member, Colorado State Peace Officers and Training Standards Board



"We're special at our community college because we ask students to 'dream big' and then help them develop a life plan, an education plan and a career plan – we then show them how to align and coordinate each for personal success and happiness.

We change lives here and give people who thought they had no way out of their situation an opportunity to strut their stuff."

Mary Kubeck has prepared those who protect and serve at Pueblo Community College's Law Enforcement Academy since 1996. Prior to that she honed her ability to teach these professionals with the Colorado State Patrol and Lakewood Police Department.

"My students go through an intensive academic program that requires personal standards beyond most other college programs.

Initially, my students are unsure and although they are 'college ready' our academy takes them beyond that and they grow into professionals fit for public service. It is such an honor to watch them develop the soft skills necessary for police service. They become confident, smart, exceptional people that exude confidence. Their professional standards, from grooming to their values and ethics, grow to such great heights that I become proud of the men and women they become.

I am humbled to share in a small part of the lives of so many men and women who have dedicated themselves to public service. I not only watch them grow while attending PCC but I also get to follow their careers in the newspapers."

From the age of three, Kubeck's mother, a dance instructor, cultivated Kubeck into being her 12 year-old assistant. Her mom taught her how to break down a "combination," step by step, in order to teach a more complicated routine more simply. Kubeck says she continues to use this teaching approach very successfully to help future law enforcement personnel grasp complicated concepts.

When Kubeck's students graduate from the academy they often thank her for making them see that they could achieve far beyond what they had initially thought. As one of the founders of PCC's "College Learning Council," Kubeck is not only committed to "excellence in teaching and learning" for her program (e.g., she designs pre-recorded District-Attorney-reviewed simulations which test her students' assessment of when a law has been violated) but for her entire institution.

Nicholas Alfonso

M.S., Applied Natural Science, CSU-Pueblo • Pursuing Ph.D.

Pueblo Community College, 2009 Faculty Member of the Year
Science Department Chair and Faculty Member of Biology, Human Health and Disease, Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology, Conceptual Physics and future elementary school science teachers

"I am inspired by all who enter my classroom! I find inspiration in the single mothers who work full-time and still manage to juggle family and school, the grandmother who never thought she would have the opportunity to venture into college, the individual who has been in the workforce for many years and due to personal, professional and perhaps economic change has found themselves, once again pursuing another degree or certificate."



"Teaching is such a wonderfully enriching and rewarding experience. To me it's not my job, it's my passion. I love the educational rapport that is built between professor and students and the rich inquisitive and intuitive conversations that blossom in the presence of education."

Alfonso's students may not know it, but he sits on the state faculty curriculum committee that determines the contact hours, objectives and learning outcomes for all disciplines to which colleges across Colorado must adhere.

Alfonso regularly has students who come back to express how he helped mold their path to success. "When they come back and say 'you inspired me to a higher degree' or 'med school'... that means the world to me."

Steven Brown

Certified Paramedic, St. Anthony's Paramedic Academy
A.A.S., Paramedicine, Red Rocks Community College

Red Rocks Community College
Emergency Medical Technician Faculty Member



"My students inspire me because they are really nice people who are taking on a big challenge. They go out into the streets to care for the sick, elderly and injured from the most impoverished to wealthy walks of life.

We make sure our students are so competent and compassionate that if it were my family I'd be comfortable with them handling their care.

We do a lot of hands-on realistic simulations toward this end."

For 13 years Steven Brown has been teaching the people who rescue you in a medical emergency.

"Teaching allows me to influence the attitudes of the emergency medical providers of the future. That's why I especially like to teach our EMT-Basic class. The students are still malleable at this point and for those of us who want to change this profession for the better, this is where it starts.

Sometimes the outcome for our patients is bad. However, I teach my students that as long as they go into a call ready to do the job physically, emotionally and they have checked their equipment and have stayed abreast of this ever-changing field – then the impact of these adverse occurrences on them will not be nearly as bad as if they had not been fully prepared."

Steven Brown has been responsible for building Red Rocks Community College's revered EMS program. Brown summons experiences from his extensive 28-year career as a paramedic to give his students authentic insight into what the career they are training for is actually like.

In fact, Brown still volunteers his weekends working for the North Fork Fire Department and spent most of the Saturday night before interviewing for this piece taking care of the victims of an auto accident near Deckers.

Finally, Brown's students get to learn from a faculty member who sits on the educational sub-committee of the State of Colorado's Emergency Medical Service and Trauma Advisory Committee and a committee that advises the Governor.

Terry Reeves

M.S., Applied Mathematics, University of Colorado

Red Rocks Community College
Mathematics Faculty Member

Terry Reeves teaches an assortment of math courses but her favorite course to teach is Calculus II.

"I love Calculus II because it's the culmination of all previous knowledge... trigonometry, college algebra, etc. To me it's like sudoku or a crossword... it's a series of mini-puzzles for me to solve.

I try to make math more human for my students. We talk about its rich history, gain insight on the mathematicians behind it (e.g., Newton was a crazy man) and study how the theorems evolved. When my students succeed and find enjoyment in math... my heart sings!"

Reeves gets to know her students well and refers them to internship opportunities she learns about. She referred one top student to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and they found he was so well prepared they hired him on permanently. Another is working on his second Ph.D. in math and credits Reeves with being his mentor.

Reeves also chairs the statewide math faculty group. In this capacity, she helps shape the future of mathematics instruction across Colorado.



"My students inspire me with how they balance, work, family and school. My best students would rival the best at a four-year college. Thirty of 34 of my calculus students are transferring to the Colorado School of Mines. The community college is a potent mechanism to make people's lives better regardless of their age. In this atmosphere, I believe, working alongside my colleagues, that we can truly change a person's life."

Bob Philbin

Master's in Plasma Physics, Princeton University

Trinidad State Junior College

Physics, Astronomy, Calculus/Mathematics and Computer Science Faculty Member



"I really like the cultural diversity of community colleges. I think Ivy League educated faculty choose to teach at these institutions because we get to give students at this level opportunities they would not otherwise get. Also, our capacity to be available to our students is unparalleled."

Bob Philbin has been helping community college students grasp rigorous science and math content for two decades.

"I love physics and math and watching students 'get it,' especially when they see connections to their daily life."

As author of the nationally distributed *Doing Science: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Philbin has also studied at Princeton with the greatest minds in plasma physics (e.g., recreating the conditions at the center of the sun on earth). Philbin aims to cultivate the critical thinking and curiosity of his students by helping them make a connection between theory and practice via actual experiments. "It's easy to get lost in the math," he says, "but I love their excitement when they see how it all connects to practical real life stuff."

As participants in Colorado's NASA Space Grant project, Philbin and his students recently worked with a top expert from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as they launched a balloon to the edge of space to study how gas in a tube changes 18 miles above the Earth.

These small-town students, many who had never been on an airplane before, then flew to Pasadena to present at the Jet Propulsion Lab.

Deb Haverfield

M.A., Education, Adams State College • Nationally registered in Paramedicine

Trinidad State Junior College Valley Campus (Alamosa)
Emergency Medical Services Faculty Member

Deb Haverfield is in her third decade of teaching. She has been preparing students to be EMS first responders since 1994.

“I love the challenge of teaching new concepts to students and I get a tremendous level of satisfaction from seeing their progress as they learn. The classes in our EMS Program give students a unique kind of confidence as they acquire the skills to save someone’s life. Knowing these skills changes people.”

Haverfield’s students get to learn from a first responder who has served on an ambulance service for 19 years, including a tour as its director. They also get to learn from an educator who 9 years ago was so committed to her field that she completed a rigorous Paramedic program while teaching full-time. Today she sits on the Monte Vista Community Ambulance Board and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s Regional EMS Trauma and Advisory Council.

“The goal I have for my students is to get them to the point where if after graduation I find out that we’re going to work an ambulance call together – I will turn and say ‘oh good’ and not ‘uh oh!’ When they walk out of here I want them to be prepared to rescue my neighbor or family member. They need to be able to apply their learning and not just recall things from memorization – because every call is different.”

To help get her students to this point, Haverfield drills them with a variety of different simulations and scenarios.



“I appreciate how to be employed as a career and technical educator at a community college, one usually has had to work in a particular field before they teach it.”

“My students inspire me to give them everything I can to help them reach their goals. It means a lot to me that one day many of my students will save a life... and I will have had a little part of that!”

