

University of Colorado Boulder
**STUDENT AFFAIRS PLANNING,
ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS**

THE
CHARGE

FALL 2022

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WELCOME TO THE CHARGE

COLLABORATION. CONNECTION. COMMITMENT.

This edition of The Charge shares insights, achievements and more in the Division of Student Affairs during the 2021-2022 academic year. After a tough year of learning and working through a pandemic, many Student Affairs departments were able to apply lessons learned during times of continuous change. Despite ongoing challenges, Student Affairs staff made immense efforts to provide positive student experiences and support this past year—no matter the circumstance.

The Charge features stories that share how Student Affairs adapted to the needs of our students and aligned efforts with campus-wide priorities. This ranges from belonging and engagement initiatives to a return to in-person operations. As a data-informed organization, it is important for us to understand our students' needs in order to equitably support them. These stories help connect the work of Student Affairs with the entire CU Boulder community, sharing our commitment to holistic student development.



ADVANCING THE DINING EXPERIENCE AT CU BOULDER

At the University of Colorado Boulder, when meeting student needs and innovation converge, the result is an exceptional dining facility! The Libby Dining Center, which had been closed since 2015, has been renovated and reopened as a full-service grab-and-go option called Libby on the Run. This option provides a variety of made-to-order, ready-made and hot food options for breakfast and lunch that are completely free from peanuts, tree nuts, gluten and wheat. The foundation of the Libby dining experience is allowing students and guests the freedom to

select from a variety of options that are free from three of the major allergens and gluten. There are more than 20 options per day and more than five hot items during each service. The menu includes unique salad combinations, alternative milks and a frozen yogurt machine that runs daily. Specific menu items include options such as the spinach/mushroom strata, alternative flour pancakes and spicy BBQ tempeh.

In the spring 2021 End of First Year survey, nearly two-thirds of students (n=1,364) agreed that overall their

dining experiences were positive (combined somewhat agree/agree/strongly agree ratings). When the need arose for an additional dining hall, Campus Dining Services created a space that stands out as providing an exceptional experience for students that is free from three of the major allergens as well as gluten. At CU Boulder, all campus dining centers have a variety of options that are listed on the Nutrislice app and the 'Dietitian's Meal of the Day' ensures students can learn how to create a balanced meal. Libby on the Run provides an

opportunity for students with specific dietary needs to have their needs met and is committed to being completely free of tree nuts, peanuts, gluten and wheat. This is valuable as the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention have reported a 50 percent increase in food allergy prevalence among children when comparing 1999 and 2011 (foodallergy.org/resources/facts-and-statistics). Additionally, although a severe or fatal reaction can happen at any age, teenagers and young adults with food allergies are at the highest risk of fatal food-induced anaphylaxis, according to the Food Allergy Research and Education organization (foodallergy.org). The Campus Dining Services dietitian, Lisa Whalen, RDN, noted that she saw a need for a dining facility that was free of some of the most common food allergies such as peanuts, tree nuts, wheat and gluten. The new Libby on the Run dining facility provides students with Celiac disease and gluten sensitivity a centralized location to find gluten-free options that are not available at other dining facilities on campus. Researchers estimate that one in 133 Americans has Celiac disease and six percent of Americans have a non-Celiac gluten sensitivity. They also suggest that Celiac disease can lead to several other disorders and the only existing treatment is a 100 percent gluten-free diet (beyondceliac.org/celiac-disease/facts-and-figures/). The seriousness of these allergens was on the mind of the creators of the new dining space. From procurement and purchasing to the final recipe preparation, the Libby dining space does not allow any tree nuts, peanuts or wheat into the facility. Additionally, the recipes were written

and reviewed with a critical lens to ensure safety.

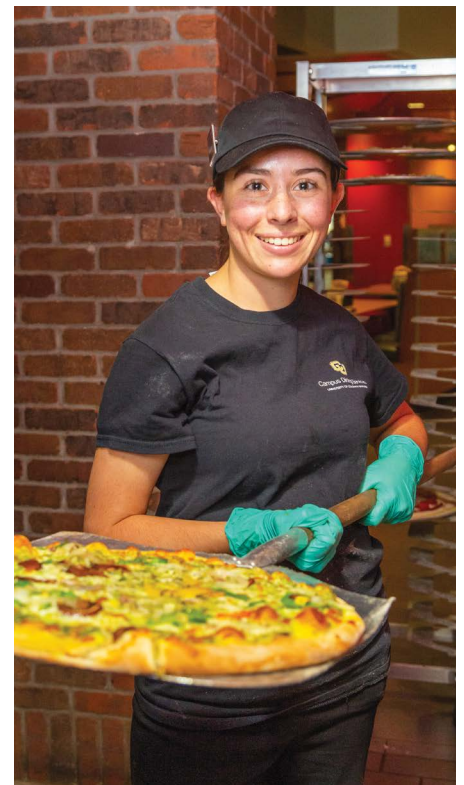
Libby follows Campus Dining Services' focus on fresh produce, made-to-order options and scratch cooking techniques in a convenient space. Opening this academic year, the dining hall is already serving more than 600 students daily. This dining space also has practical implications for the students at CU Boulder. When it is lunch time at CU Boulder, Buffs are often known to start gathering at the main campus dining facility in the Center for Community. This dining hall was originally designed to serve 5,000 meals per day but routinely exceeded that capacity serving 7,500 meals per day. The result was often a busy lunch hour and long lines. To alleviate the pressure, the Libby on the Run dining center is a thoughtful option for those Buffs who need something fast and offers a way to ease the demand on other spaces.

The sustainable features of the dining hall cannot be overlooked. A few minor equipment adjustments allowed for an entirely new menu to be developed by the associate director for residential dining and culinary operations. In the future, the Libby dining center will also have a mindful café and programming space. The café will be designed to create a peaceful and beautiful space where students and staff can unplug and focus on mindfulness while enjoying healthy, nutritious cuisine.

At CU Boulder we are committed to shaping tomorrow's leaders, positively impacting humanity and being the top university for innovation. The Libby on

the Run dining center is one example of how we have operationalized these imperatives by ensuring we are leading, innovating and impacting our students and the campus community. This dining experience is an excellent opportunity for CU Boulder students and the community.

Learn more about Campus Dining Services: colorado.edu/living/dining





THE FUTURE OF STUDENT SUCCESS: UNDERSTANDING AND ARTICULATING SKILLS

DEMAND & NEED FOR SKILLS

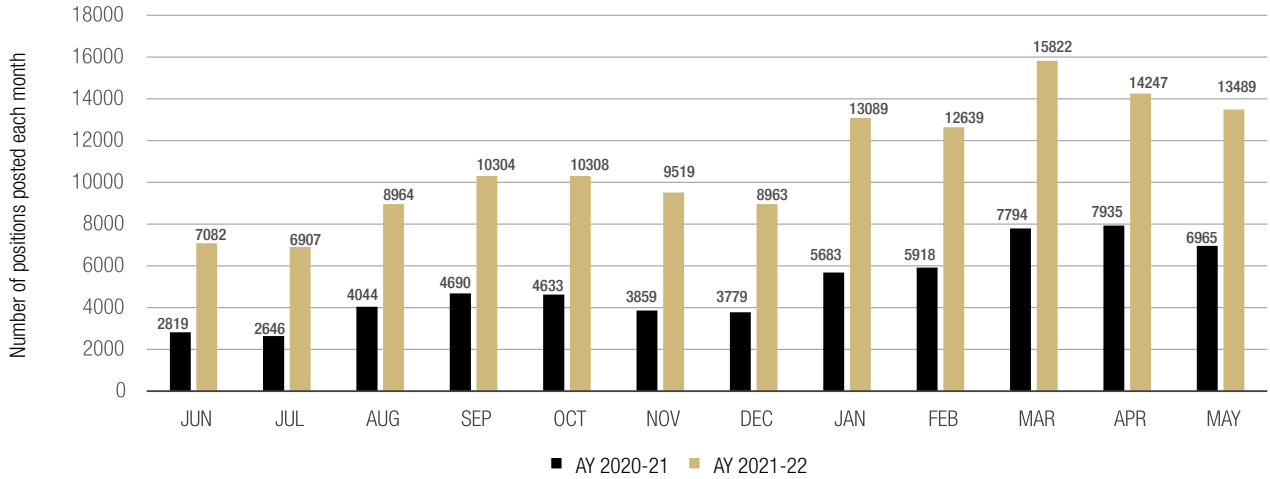
A national trend in university career services is the increased importance of workplace skills, including adaptability, problem solving and communication. Students need to be intentional about building foundational workplace skills, also referred to

as soft skills, character traits or interpersonal qualities, to help them find a meaningful job upon graduation.

The state of Colorado has identified “skill development” as a key initiative. In June 2021, lawmakers approved and the governor signed HB21-1330 into law, which prompted the creation of the Student Success and Workforce Revitalization Task Force.

Senator Jeff Bridges was quoted as saying: “Most folks pursue higher education to get the training they need to succeed in the workforce, but right now there’s too often a disconnect between what our schools teach and what our employers need. These suggestions will close that gap, increasing the return on investment in higher education for our students

FIGURE 1: Number of Approved Jobs and Internships posted to Handshake
JUNE 2020 - MAY 2022



in higher education for our students and expanding Colorado’s qualified workforce for our businesses.”

In a recent report by the Colorado Workforce Development Council, Colorado Talent Pipeline 2021, state leaders identified that “[t]he future of work is now as we are working to build our economy back stronger than it was before. Rebuilding includes equity, reskilling and upskilling, investment in programs with promising results and career-connected learning to continue to foster a Colorado for All” (p. 6). Key recommendations from the report are to prioritize the incorporation of a transferable skills-training curriculum into academic institutions at the secondary and postsecondary level to increase the market value of degrees and credentials.

With the current conversation turning to career outcomes for students, higher education can proudly show a long history of imparting habits of mind that are critical for long-

term career success. CU Boulder Career Services, operating as the bridge between industry and higher education, recognizes an additional call for concrete and well-matched competencies from companies eager to hire early career employees in their efforts to replenish workforces ravaged by “The Great Reshuffle.”

A variety of employers are hiring CU Boulder students for jobs and internships on Handshake, the campus job and internship board. There was an increase in active job and internship postings every month in 2021 and early 2022 as compared to the same months in the previous year. Between Jan. and May 2022, there was an average of 13,857 active job and internship postings as compared to between Jan. and May 2021 with an average of 6,859 job and internship postings.

The challenge for students applying for work is that they need to clearly signal their fit to employers and can do so by identifying and clearly

communicating the skills they bring with them to the workplace. An example of this challenge was indicated through a focus group conducted in spring 2022 with a sample of 13 undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences. During the focus group, students were asked to describe the skills they think they will need in their future career. Fewer than half of participants articulated the need to demonstrate conceptual knowledge from their coursework (e.g. math, science, data analysis, programming languages) and a few students noted basic professional skills (e.g. communication, data entry, email communication, teamwork, leadership). Students reported developing these “skills” solely through their coursework or online certifications. Several students reported feeling confused or unsure about the skills they will need because they believe employers are vague in position descriptions.



HOW CAREER SERVICES IS RESPONDING

Informed by the research and future workplace forecasts, Career Services has developed a new program, Skills for Success. Career Services has launched this program so that all CU Boulder students can experience career success. In developing this program, we dug into the research and best practices. We relied heavily on research by professional associations focusing on early career hiring identifying what employers are looking for as well as longitudinal research giving us insight into what students have expected from their college degrees for over five decades.

Skills for Success has also been developed in consultation with key academic partners. The program includes a transferable-skills curriculum, customizable workshops and a tailor-made resource library focused on identifying and communicating workplace skills. We also invested in key software platforms

to assist in the skill-building process.

The Skills for Success program guides students through a process of five important elements of building marketable skill sets for their future job search, all with a focus on minimizing anxiety and gaining a sense of agency in their career.

- 1 | Learning which skills are of particular interest to employers
- 2 | Inventorying their current skill set
- 3 | Identifying skills gaps when considering career goals
- 4 | Finding opportunities to build additional skills
- 5 | Honing the ability to showcase their skills to employers in the job search process

During the 2021-22 academic year, Career Services piloted Skills for Success through seven workshops to 40 attendees and conducted eight additional presentations in academic courses, extracurricular programs and

student employment training with a total of 61 attendees. Students shared the following direct feedback through a post-workshop survey:

Would you recommend this workshop to others?

- *“Yes, it helped me identify what skills actually are and how I can better articulate them.”*
- *“I would. It’s a way to help relieve stress of finding marketable skills in yourself.”*
- *“Yes, because it makes the prospect of job searching and pursuing a career less overwhelming and less of a solo endeavor.”*

What did you find most helpful?

- *“We all have important and useful skills, but we usually don’t recognize them.”*
- *“Talking about skills made me recognize what I can offer to an employer.”*



To leverage labor market data in understanding what skills employers are seeking in applicants, Career Services has partnered with Lightcast, a major labor market analytics firm. Using Lightcast software, Career Services offers students skills reports identifying top skills sought by employers for their chosen occupations along with other key metrics, like top employers, relevant industries and average salary ranges. These reports can be requested online and aid in students' understanding of how their current skill sets align with those sought for the jobs they are targeting. Starting in fall 2021, students and alumni could request a skills report from Lightcast. There was an increase in requested reports in the spring 2022 (n=76) semester compared

to fall 2021 (n=38).

In addition to students requesting reports, Career Services staff use these reports to enhance the information they share with students and campus partners. The reports are used to inform campus partners on top skills required and top employers hiring for specific majors. Career Services staff can use the information to explore the relationships between salary and trending skills; identify which jobs are trending and in-demand; and finally, confirm the necessary and distinguishing skills for various occupations. This information is presented to students and faculty during requested workshops and also during a bi-weekly, customized workshop series on industry trends for Arts & Sciences

and College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI).

FUTURE PLANS

Career Services will continue to offer programming open to all students in the form of interactive group workshops focused on the importance of building skills while in college, the many opportunities available for building skills and learning to effectively articulate skills to potential employers. We also offer individual advising appointments where students can get tailored support on assessing their skills and creating a concrete plan to build skills while at CU Boulder. For students who prefer a DIY approach, they can download a



Skills for Success guide to navigate the skill-building process on their own and request tailored skills reports for specific jobs and industries for which they are interested. Career Services will continue to conduct pre- and post-assessments to measure student learning and confidence.

New for the 2022-23 academic year, Career Services will partner with programs in Student Affairs and academic departments to customize and introduce the Skills for Success program tailored to specific student populations and majors. Currently, New Student & Family Programs is introducing all new students to the foundational skills through their online orientation program. In the fall, Career Services will provide skills-based professional development workshops to all students living in the residence halls and members of campus-affiliated sororities and fraternities. Additional departments that are considering including the Skills for Success program include the Graduate School and Pre-Health advising. Also in the fall, Career Services will launch an updated Canvas course that includes a Skills for Success module, which will be available to any interested academic departments to incorporate into academic courses. Additional academic partnerships include the University Exploration and Advising Center and the leadership minor.

Career Services will continue to collaborate with Riipen — an experiential learning platform and marketplace — to provide short-term interdisciplinary, team-based projects.

These projects allow students to hone the competencies they find they need to strengthen through the skills gap analysis portion of Skills for Success in real workplace-based projects. While Riipen projects are traditionally unpaid, Career Services partnered with the Boulder County Chamber of Commerce and Front Range Community College to receive a \$250,000 grant that will provide stipends to first-generation students who complete Riipen projects in the coming years. This grant opens access to students who may otherwise be unable to take advantage of unpaid opportunities. Early results from the program indicate students find the opportunity useful in gaining foundational skills. Of the 19 students who participated, 13 of them self-reported that they developed skills in marketing, lead generation, leadership, presentations, communications, research, time management and project management. Specifically, a student provided direct feedback: “I feel like I understand market research and customer segmentation much more than I used to as well as developing presentational skills.”

Because the Skills for Success program foundation has been developed and built over the last two years and with the state-wide support for skills development, Career Services is well-positioned to support students to understand and articulate their foundational skills so they can successfully launch into their future.

Learn more about Career Services: colorado.edu/career



REESTABLISHING IN-PERSON EVENTS AND THE CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) serves as an engaging service department within CU Boulder's Division of Student Affairs, funded by the CU Student Government activity fee. In its variety of roles, CSI cultivates community-building on campus through intentional programs and events, leadership development opportunities, cultural programming, student employment and supporting student organization operations.

Outside of supporting student organizations and programming boards like the Cultural Events Board, Distinguished Speakers Board and

Program Council, CSI prioritizes hosting programs and events that connect CU students to one another and the greater campus community. After a prolonged time of uncertainty, CSI made shifts to welcome back students to a more "normal" campus for the first time in two years. CSI recognized that students would be looking forward to the opportunity to attend events, particularly for those who may have missed out on milestones like high school graduation and their first year of college due to COVID-19. The year started off with a variety of event-based restrictions that made outdoor events more

compelling to students. Once event restrictions were relaxed, CSI was able to host more than 40 events during the spring semester. This led CSI to be able to better investigate the impact and reach of its events in a year where many students were excited to further explore and engage with campus.

The annual Be Involved Fair, hosted in collaboration with the Volunteer Resource Center, served as a kickoff to student events during the beginning of the academic year in August. The fair was the first event for student organizations to gather in-person to

recruit new members since January 2020 and was the first large-scale event for students in 18 months. As a signature event within Fall Welcome, the Be Involved Fair was evaluated through the annual Fall Welcome survey, an instrument used to understand the perceptions and experiences of incoming first-year and transfer students during Fall Welcome. The event had a satisfaction rate of 82.9 percent, the highest of any non-athletics Fall Welcome event. Additionally, 28 percent of students participating in the survey identified the fair as the most valuable event they attended as part of Fall Welcome. Qualitative feedback from the assessment highlighted the outcomes of the event and the specific impact it had this year, with one student stating the fair was “very informative and nice to be around other students – there were many resources and ways to connect with the school.”

Moving into the spring semester, CSI was able to return to hosting a regular slate of weekly and monthly events. These events were planned largely with the intent of creating a welcoming environment, allowing students to meet peers with common interests, and building connections between students and the larger campus community. The events included I Love Mondays, DIY Nights, Guided Paint Classes, Buffalo Nites and events hosted by the Dennis Small Cultural Center. Over 50 percent of more than 1,300 attendees at more than 30 spring semester events identified having met at least one new person from having attended the event. Additionally, over 60 percent of students at the spring semester events agreed that the events allowed them to feel a

sense of community and connection with the larger CU Boulder community.

An important element of reviewing events hosted throughout the semester is determining which students are choosing to attend CSI events and evaluating where gaps may be in reaching students, as well as considering logistics like type of events and location. CSI analyzed demographic data of 1,300 unique event attendees during the spring semester. Event attendees were generally representative of campus-wide demographics. By college/school, 53 percent were from Arts & Sciences, 21 percent from Engineering & Applied Science, 7 percent from Business and 5 percent from College of Media, Communication and Information (CMCI). Across classes in school, 22 percent of event attendees were first-year students, 25 percent sophomores, 18 percent juniors, 22 percent seniors and 11 percent at the graduate level.

Event location is an area of feedback CSI often considers as part of future

planning, taking into account the high number of students who live off campus and the wide geographic variance of residence halls. 60 percent of spring event attendees lived off campus. Of the 40 percent of attendees who lived on campus, 41 percent lived in central campus halls, 40 percent lived in Williams Village halls and apartments and 19 percent lived in Kittredge area halls.

When evaluating the data and overall impact of events hosted by CSI, it is important to focus on how events and other activities can positively impact the student experience through allowing students to connect with peers, as well as feel connections to the larger campus community. In the Fall 2020 Follow Up New Student Survey, 44 percent of first-year students identified “making new friends” as a “major non-academic obstacle to success at CU.” Similarly, in the 2020-21 Second Year Survey, 35 percent of second-year students identified “making new friends” as a “major non-academic obstacle





to success at CU.” The findings around both meeting new people and feeling connected to the larger campus community from CSI’s spring programs emphasize the importance of hosting these types of events to enhance the experience of CU students. These regularly occurring weekly and monthly events provide opportunities for students to build community and connect with peers who share mutual interests in a fun, safe environment.

The demographic data associated with the attendees at spring events also provides opportunities for programmatic growth and additional assessment. While Arts & Sciences and Engineering students were well-represented, other colleges/schools, including Leeds Business

and CMCI, can become areas to seek out increased collaboration, marketing and partnership. Additionally, student populations, like transfer students and graduate students, present an additional area of intentional growth and outreach. Finally, a demographic analysis of attendee race and ethnicity indicates slightly higher engagement than the general campus population among two historically marginalized groups, Hispanic/Latino (15 percent vs. 12.6 percent) and AAPI (15 percent vs. 9.7 percent). The Fall 2021 Campus Culture Survey findings indicate students of color reported an overall lower sense of belonging and community at CU Boulder than their white peers. With the spring 2022 event data and in a larger university context, it is important for CSI to continue to

provide programming and connection opportunities for students from all historically marginalized identities.

The success of both large and small student events hosted by CSI across the 2021-22 academic year shows promise in students’ interest in connecting with peers and building community, particularly in response to the extremely limited opportunities for in-person connection of the last 18 months due to COVID-19. This year’s events set a strong foundation for CSI to continue building campus community and utilizing data to track outcomes. Keep up with all of CSI’s events for students at colorado.edu/involvement/csi-events.

Learn more about the Center for Student Involvement: colorado.edu/involvement



INCLUDING INCLUSION IN COLLEGIATE CONFERENCING

It is finally happening: a full summer conference season after a two-year pandemic sabbatical. CU Conference Services (CUCS) is projected to welcome roughly 133 programs, 12,700 daytime attendees and 8,200 overnight attendees in-person during the 2022 summer, a roughly 27 percent growth in numbers over the summer of 2019. The campus is going to be busy!

A NEW WAY TO RUN THE BUSINESS

The pandemic certainly impacted CUCS's ability to plan and host in-person events, but we found ways to advance and innovate our operation. This time last year, we were excited

about the growth in our virtual and hybrid event services. A change of pace also allowed us to really examine our priorities: how CUCS shows up for its staff, Student Affairs and the university as a whole and even the broader field of collegiate conferencing. One of our biggest takeaways is that we have the opportunity to be doing more to further inclusive excellence into every area of our business.

While CUCS has not historically collected formal feedback around diversity, equity and inclusion, we have received a variety of anecdotal evidence that suggests it is critical to guests' overall satisfaction while on campus. Every summer, we receive a variety of accommodation requests regarding gender inclusive facilities, assistive

technology devices and ADA accessible spaces. There are, however, inclusion efforts that are not as common that should become part of our standard operating procedures, like buffet lines at functional heights for wheelchair users at both catered and dining center lines, policies that allow for adult caregivers to stay in a building with their neurodivergent charges attending a youth program and a mechanism for participants to report unwelcoming and harmful behavior.

We have had real concerns shared with our staff that we hope to address, like how a gender-split program impacts a non-binary individual's perception of inclusivity on campus, or how seating availability affects how valued a wheelchair user feels on campus. The

concerns reach beyond campus into the community, for example a restaurant manager that racially profiles a guest of color and the impact that has on the sense of safety while attending a conference in Boulder. If our student staff feels that tolerating rude guests is a direct violation of social justice, what does that say about our overall commitment to balancing inclusion with customer service?

INCLUSION IN CUCS AND COLLEGIATE CONFERCING

Collegiate conferencing is an interesting and sometimes challenging juxtaposition of running a revenue-focused business within the parameters and expectations of higher education and student affairs. Aspects of our work are certainly informed by student support and development; however, other parts really function in a vastly different way programmatically. How, then, do we combine both priorities and balance our personal and campus commitments to inclusion with providing customer focused service?

One of our first initiatives as a team was establishing a baseline of where our team might need growth in diversity, equity and inclusion work. To do this, our team completed the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and debriefed our cultural competency as individuals and as a team. Like many who complete the IDI, our perceptions of our cultural competency were higher than our indexed competency. We used that initial training as a springboard for

monthly “lunch and learn” sessions about diversity, equity and inclusion topics. Local and national events often shaped our discussions: the murder of George Floyd and subsequent protesting, legislation regarding transgender rights, and conditions of Mexican border detention centers. For every topic we covered, we found 10 more that deserve attention.

Learning and development is a valuable part of diversity, equity and inclusion work but we recognized the need for action too. For a small team, Conference Services has a robust implementation of committees to turn ideas into deliverables. These include the Sustainability Work Group and the Student Development Work Group, among others. In fall 2021, we decided it was time to create a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group (DEIWG) to make inclusion part of our office culture. With conference attendees from more than 20 countries, guests ranging in age from six to 96, a student staff of nearly 100 in the summer, all with diverse personalities, interests and abilities, our goal is to ensure all stakeholders feel not only welcome but celebrated during their time at the University of Colorado Boulder.

So far, the DEIWG has worked on the following:

- **Inclusive Housing:** We met with University Housing to discuss options available to students during the academic year, with a focus on how we can support similar requests within the parameters of a conference program. Some of the key takeaways were around how to

provide gender-inclusive housing options, ADA accessible spaces, religious accommodations and the process and protocol for service and emotional support animals and services that can be provided when additional accommodations are needed.

- **Inclusive Job Postings:** We updated the language in our student job postings to be more inclusive. We removed a requirement for a driver’s license that might limit international student applicants or students who cannot drive for ADA reasons. We removed all gendered language in the job descriptions and requirements. We added an inclusion statement to match the university’s professional staff postings. While our overall applicant numbers have not changed, we have seen noticeable growth in international student employees (who currently account for roughly 50 percent of our student staff team).
- **Inclusive Training:** We started including DEI training in every professional and student staff member’s onboarding plan. We added a discussion item to our weekly staff meeting agenda to promote both on- and off-campus training opportunities such as Safe Zone, UnDocuAlly and the Diversity and Inclusion Summit. We have implemented group training to discuss how to address non-inclusive behaviors from conference guests in a customer-oriented way.

While we are excited by the progress we

have made, there are additional goals we want to address. These include

- Creating an inclusive meeting checklist. This list will be a tool to help our clients think through whether or not their event plans are inclusive to everyone, including making all event spaces ADA accessible, making buffet lines accessible to individuals using wheelchairs, ensuring that conference brochures use inclusive language, requiring all presenters to use microphones, including closed captioning on all virtual and hybrid components, having an anti-bullying policy and allowing options to include pronouns on name tags.
- Adding language to our Inclusive Safety, Security and Sustainability (SSS) meeting about our commitment that guests are not only physically safe on our campus but also emotionally and psychologically safe. Our SSS presentation is given in-person to all youth programs and as a handout to all adult programs and we want to ensure that all guests feel welcomed here.
- Inclusive Marketing: All of Conference Services publications and our website include language about our commitment to sustainability. We want to incorporate language about our commitment to diversity and inclusion and what guests can expect from their experience with us.
- Inclusive Contracts: We want to go through our next round of contracts with a critical eye to ensure that it

is inclusive to all who might read it, articulate when and why we ask about gender, make sure our language is not ageist or ableist and is accessible to readers who do not work in the legal field.

PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT MOVING FORWARD

We know what we want to work on and the next step is to gain insight into whether our efforts are making a difference in how our guests and students view inclusion at the University of Colorado and in Conference Services. We have historically implemented four surveys:

- Student Staff Feedback: Historically, questions were asked at an end-of-the-semester evaluation meeting asking student staff to reflect on their experience working on the team, their development opportunities and the support they received from the professional staff. This year, the feedback will be collected more frequently and will include options for completing anonymous surveys and/or in-person interviews to support students who want to withhold their identity during the feedback process.
- Client Feedback: The questions are sent to the event planning and contracting contacts for each summer or conference program and focus on their planning experience with their conference coordinator.

- Guest Feedback: This survey is sent to overnight adult participants and focuses on the services and amenities they used during their stay including lodging, dining, catering, meeting space, etc.
- Internship Lodging Feedback: This survey is sent to long-term lodgers through the internship lodging program (ILP). The questions focus on the services and amenities they used during their stay such as lodging, internet connectivity, transportation, etc.

This year, we will be implementing two additional surveys: an online survey for virtual program attendees and an online survey for clients that use CUCS spaces (such as the Village Center and Kittredge Multi-purpose Rooms) for meetings and events.

As we implement surveys for summer 2022, participants in all surveys will receive new questions regarding their perceptions on how welcoming and inclusive their experience was at the University of Colorado Boulder and working with Conference Services.

So far, we have a lot of plans but not a lot of data due to a lack of events in the past two years. We hope that with a record number of guests attending conferences this summer, we will get a record number of survey responses. We look forward to receiving feedback as we send out surveys this coming summer, and know that even if we meet our satisfaction goals on a welcoming and inclusive experience, we will still be able to find ways to improve.

Learn more about Conference Services: colorado.edu/conferenceservices



RESPONDING TO THE MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT OF COVID-19

It is no secret that a mental health pandemic/crisis has been left in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic. While anecdotally, those on the front lines of college mental health have sensed the impact, recent data confirm this both nationally as well as locally.

WHAT IS CAPS SEEING?

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) at CU Boulder uses a variety of tools to assess and measure mental health concerns and

symptoms for students presenting to services. These assessments not only allow CAPS providers to identify individually what is going on with the students seeking support, they also allow CAPS to be able to track mental health needs and trends and develop programming and resources to best support and meet those needs.

CAPS at CU Boulder is part of the Practice-Research-Network known as the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH). CCMH collects data from close to 700 participating universities through assessment tools that are routinely administered

to students present for counseling services at college counseling centers around the country. Being a part of CCMH allows CAPS to utilize the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS) instruments as a tool to assess psychological symptoms and distress on eight different subscales (depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety, academic distress, eating concerns, family distress, frustration/anger and substance use). With each of these scales the higher score indicates higher concerns in these areas. All students seeking

services at CAPS are administered the CCAPS62 at their initial screening and then a modified version (CCAPS 34) at subsequent individual appointments; this allows CAPS to track changes in both the individual and the collective responses over time in treatment.

While there has been a steady increase in many of these scores over the past five years, overall nationally, students reported a significant increase in social anxiety, academic distress, eating concerns and family distress from fall 2019 to fall 2021. These scores are also consistent with scores from CAPS in these areas. Each subscale ranges from 0-4, where 0 is the lowest level of distress/concern and 4 is the highest possible level of distress/concern. Figures 1 through 3 represent the average of all scores collected for each of these subscales.

Additionally, students may be given other mental health assessments in CAPS or Medical Services at various times of seeking care. The PHQ9 (Patient Health Questionnaire) and The GAD7 (Generalized Anxiety Disorder assessment) are two of the tools used

for students seeking psychiatric care at CAPS. These assessments evaluate depression and anxiety symptoms as well as substance abuse concerns. Similarly to trends seen in the CCAPS, overall scores on moderate to severe anxiety and depression symptoms have seen a significant increase since fall of 2019.

Students seeking care in Medical Services are also assessed for mental health concerns. These assessments look at anxiety, depression and substance use through tools called the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ), Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) and a substance use assessment tool called the CAGE-AID. The Behavioral Health team (our CAPS team of mental health providers embedded in Medical Services) has seen both an overall rise in the depression and anxiety assessment scores as well as an increase in students scoring positive on these assessments (indicating an increase in depression and anxiety symptoms). All students seeking care in Medical Services are given these assessments at their very first visit to medical services and then every 90 days.

FIGURE 1: SOCIAL ANXIETY

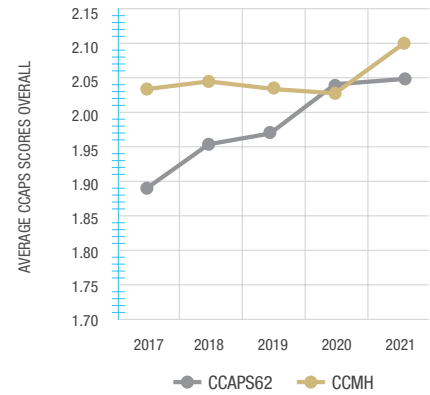


FIGURE 2: EATING CONCERNS

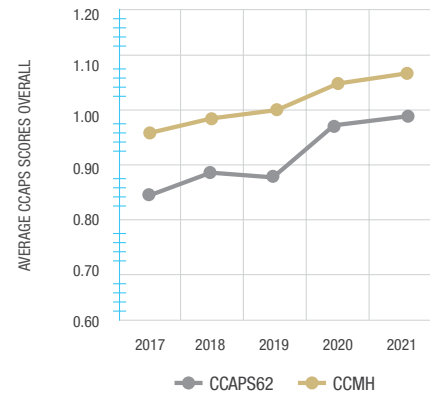


FIGURE 3: ACADEMIC DISTRESS

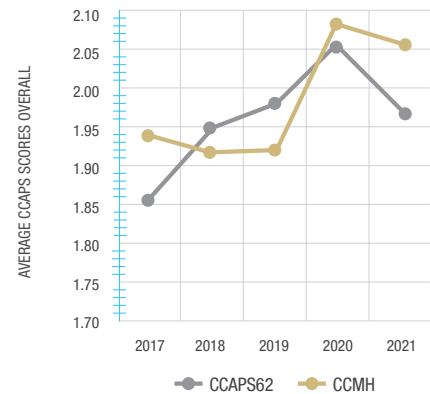


FIGURE 4: PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

PHQ9 Change in Percentages / Depression symptoms

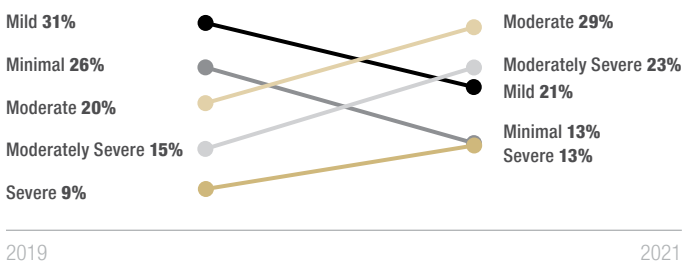


FIGURE 5: GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER ASSESSMENT

GAD7 Change in Percentages / Anxiety symptoms

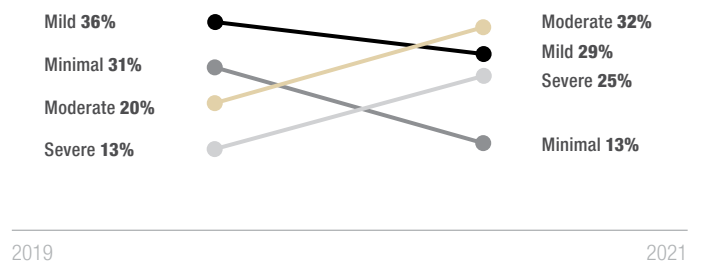
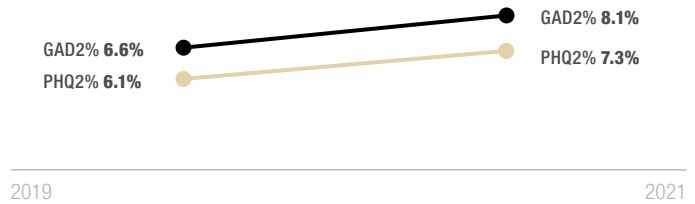


FIGURE 6: INCREASE AVERAGE GAD AND PHQ SCORES FROM 2019 TO 2021:

	2019	2021
GAD	0.97	1.12
PHQ	0.57	0.67

FIGURE 7: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCREENING SCORES
% of Students that scored positive / Fall semesters



There was an increase in the percentage of students meeting the cutoffs for the Behavioral Health screens (scores >4 on GAD suggests anxiety and >3 on PHQ suggests depression) from 2019 to 2021.

WHAT IS CAPS DOING?

With anxiety and distress being the top issues identified by our students, CAPS offers services to address this in a number of ways with a number of venues. The variety of services is designed to meet the different needs of students, to increase accessibility and to try to meet students where they are at. While CAPS does offer individual therapy and psychiatry services to address many of these issues, to continue to increase access, to provide services to as many students as possible, and to continue to reduce barriers to treatment, CAPS also is continuing to create and revise additional services.

Groups and Workshops

CAPS has always had a very robust group program, running upwards of 15 groups per semester. CAPS groups are broken into process groups (general

and topic specific) and skills-based groups. For many of our students, group therapy can be the most effective form of treatment. While groups offer support and reduce the sense of isolation with one's issues while providing an opportunity for students with shared identities to come together to relate and offer care and support, the function and role of group therapy goes much deeper. Groups can act like a microcosm for someone's outside world. Challenges, dynamics and struggles that individuals feel in their everyday lives, tend to surface in a group therapy setting. This can allow the group to become a safe place for the individual to identify these challenges, receive feedback and support and practice or try on new ways of being with others and interpreting events. The experiential nature of group therapy allows it to be such a helpful and effective form of therapy.

Early on in the pandemic, in response to hearing from our students that the isolation and social distancing was having a negative effect, we quickly realized that our group therapy had to return as soon as possible to help reduce the profound loneliness

and isolation that our students were reporting. Knowing and believing in the power of groups, our providers navigated through the awkwardness of Zoom, the challenges of technology snafus and were able to re-create the group experience over telehealth, averaging over 4000 group visits per year.

Groups offered at CAPS this past year include:

Process Group

- Students of Color
- Women of Color
- Creating Safety: Moving Past Trauma
- Transgender and Gender Creative
- International Students Group
- General Undergrad (coed and gender-identified specific)
- General Grad (coed and gender-identified specific)

Skills-based Group

- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

CAPS workshops are great resources to teach students and support them in developing concrete coping skills, strategies and a greater understanding

of anxiety, distress tolerance, mindfulness, emotion regulation, healthy living, communication and emotional flexibility. Students leave workshops with simple everyday tools that are accessible and effective. Additionally, workshops are available to our students who are residing out of state. In our Workshop Satisfaction survey, over 96 percent of respondents indicated that they either somewhat or strongly agree with the question: "I will be able to use the information I learned to improve my mental health or circumstance."

CAPS ON THE ROAD

While many students do find their way either virtually or in-person to the CAPS office in C4C, we recognize that many students are not coming to us. There may be cultural barriers, concerns about the stigma of mental health, lack of awareness that what



they are experiencing may be mental health related or uncertainty/fear about talking to a therapist. To try to reduce these barriers and to better meet students more where they are, CAPS offers many programs and services in various places on campus.

Behavioral Health Team

Recognizing and supporting the important connection between physical and mental health, CAPS has a full team of mental health providers embedded in medical services at Wardenburg Health Center. Students visiting Medical Services are given behavioral health assessments prior to appointments. These assessments are mentioned in the data above. This team provides support, outreach and interventions to students who score positive on these assessments or present to the medical clinic with mental health concerns. This is a great way to provide mental health support to students who may be unaware that their symptoms are related to mental health or may be more comfortable initially sharing this information in a medical setting instead of a counseling center. During the 2021-22 academic year, the behavioral health team connected with more than 3500 student visits in medical services due to mental health related concerns.

Embedded Team

CAPS also has a team of embedded clinicians working with the Office of Victim Assistance and Health Promotion. These clinicians are full-time embedded in a variety of schools throughout the university, offering all of CAPS services specifically to the individuals in these schools, and working with faculty and staff in these schools consulting and presenting on mental health issues/concerns. Many of these clinicians have physical office space located in the specific school, allowing for easier access for students and another way we are meeting students where they are.

FIGURE 8: SOCIAL ANXIETY

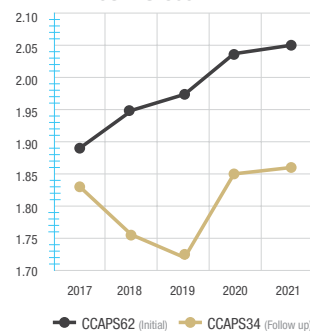


FIGURE 9: ACADEMIC DISTRESS

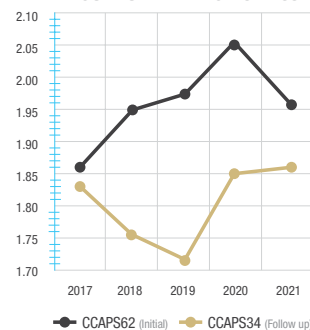


FIGURE 10: EATING CONCERNS

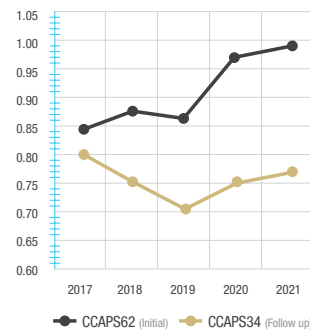


FIGURE 11: DEPRESSION

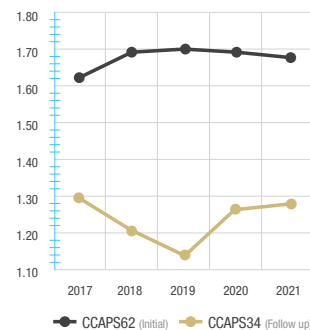
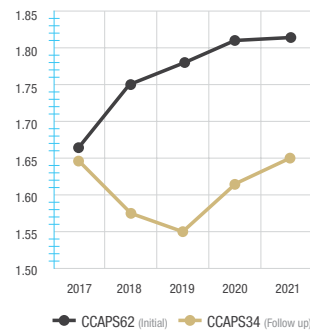


FIGURE 12: GENERALIZED ANXIETY



Let's Talk

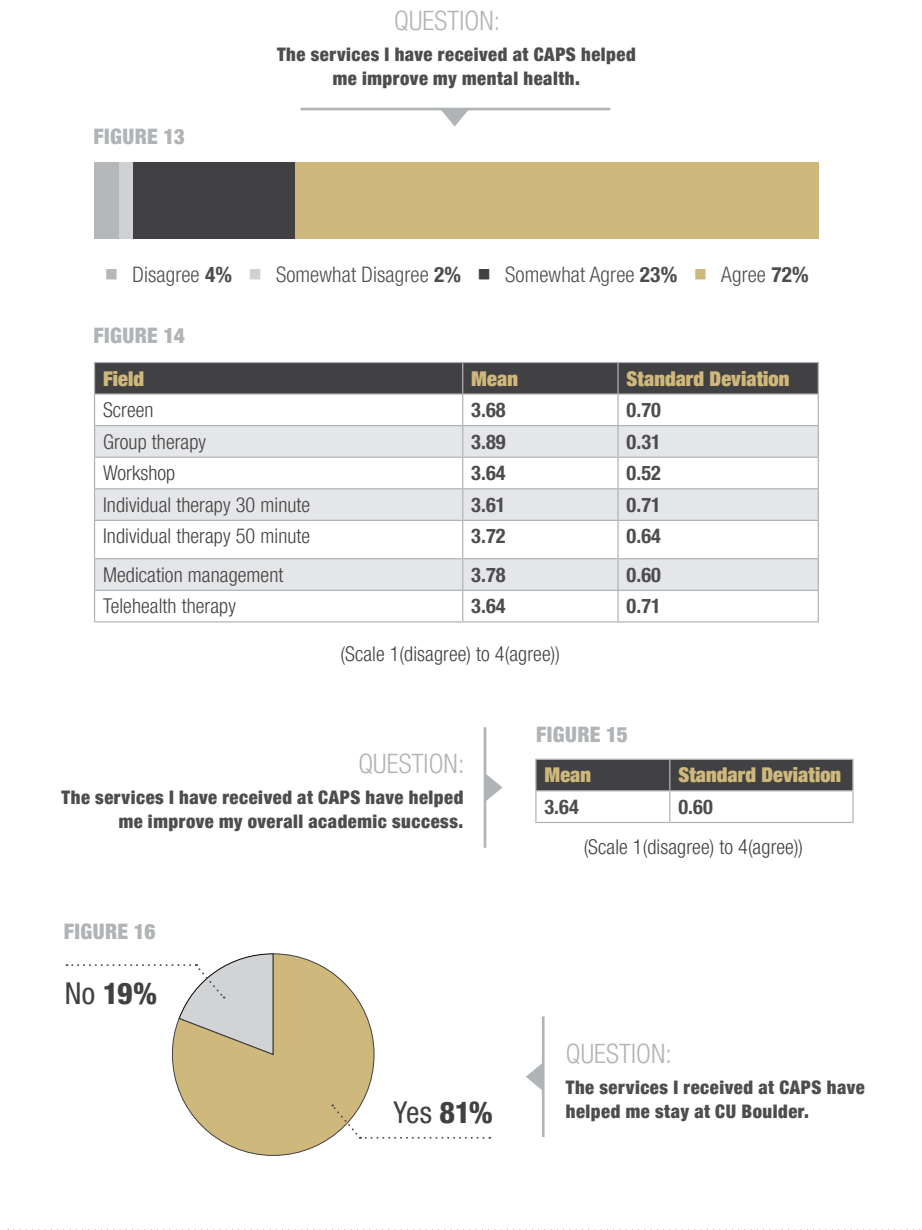
When a brief consultation with a therapist to get quick tips, resources or tools is needed, students can virtually or physically hop into a Let's Talk session. These sessions are a consultation and not therapy, therefore, students do not need to complete paperwork, or schedule an appointment. On a first-come, first-served basis, students can "try on" speaking with a therapist, get some quick advice about a friend, or some quick tips to manage a stressful roommate situation. Let's Talk services are also available to our out-of-state students as it is not considered therapy and licensing laws do not apply.

HOW IS CAPS DOING

Students completing the CCAPS62 at their initial visit at CAPS are also presented with the CCAPS34 every 30 days when they are being seen for individual therapy. Below is the average difference in the scores for the initial assessment (CCAPS62) and the follow ups visits (CCAPS34). This data is also consistent with the national data indicating that students seeking services do report a significant reduction in symptoms. As the data demonstrates, students have shown a significant reduction in their scores on each of these scales, indicating a reduction in symptoms and distress in these areas.

Patient Satisfaction Survey Results

All students being seen in CAPS are sent a patient satisfaction survey after their first visit and then every three months following any service at CAPS. The following is data collected from the survey for the academic year of 2021-22:



Overall, results from the patient satisfaction survey indicate that the majority of students completing the survey have felt relief from their mental health concerns and impacts due to services they have received at CAPS.

CAPS Moving Forward

There is no question that a mental health pandemic has followed the COVID-19 pandemic and college students are not immune. College counseling centers across the country have seen both an increase in students

seeking care as well as an increase in acuity of mental health issues in the students being seen and as a result have needed to continue to explore ways to expand and revise services to meet this ever changing demand. Moving forward, CAPS will be exploring ways to increase services to under-resourced communities, and reduce barriers and increase access to care for students seeking mental health support.

Learn more about Counseling and Psychiatric Services: colorado.edu/resources/counseling-psychiatric-services-caps



ADAPTING TO THE RAPID DEMAND FOR SERVICES

Disability Services (DS) was at a crossroads at the end of fall 2021 due to a significant increase in student utilization of its services. It became clear that Disability Services needed to find new and innovative ways to meet the rising number of students in need of accommodations and to ensure those accommodations could be provided in a timely and effective manner.

Disability Services began tracking new applications for accommodations in fall 2020, and saw a 51 percent increase in the number of new applications received in fall 2021 (n=1,028). At the time, each student who submitted an application for accommodations was required to schedule an hour-long access meeting to review their requests,

discuss the process and address any additional questions or concerns they may have. In step with the increase of applications, the Disability Services office experienced a 62 percent increase in completed access meetings from fall 2020 to fall 2021. As a result of this jump in applications and access meetings, DS began to see access meetings booking up to six weeks in advance, a wait time not before seen during the fall semester. In addition to access meetings for new students to DS, current students were facing the same long wait times to meet with their access coordinator and address any new accommodation requests, which rose by 52 percent from the previous fall 2020 semester. Some factors that

explain this steep rise include the transition of housing accommodations from University Housing to Disability Services, students who delayed enrollment due to the pandemic, more campus awareness about the services available by DS, and a 70 percent rise in students submitting requests due to temporary medical conditions during the fall semester. In summary, the volume and pace of work being completed by the Disability Services office this past fall was not sustainable.

To address the problem, Disability Services implemented a number of departmental changes by focusing on staff schedules to identify ways in which working hours could be made more efficient and effective. DS also

considered student accessibility needs, accommodations requested and the administrative time required to implement those accommodations to inform this decision making.

IMPROVED SERVICE FOR STUDENTS REGISTERED WITH DISABILITY SERVICES

Current students who had already registered with Disability Services and were familiar with the process requested 52 percent more additional accommodations in fall 2021 than fall 2020. However, requesting new accommodations does not necessarily require an hour long meeting with an access coordinator, and in some instances, doesn't require a meeting at all depending on the type of request and information already available. As such, Disability Services provided clear instructions for current students on how they could request new accommodations online, and created virtual office hours twice per week for them to drop into with any questions or concerns they had regarding accommodations. These office hours reduced wait times for full-length, one-hour appointments to a week or less.

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF TEMPORARY MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Disability Services provides support to students with temporary medical conditions (TMC), which may not meet

the level of a disability as defined by disability law, yet still have a significant impact on their ability to access and participate in courses. Examples of temporary medical conditions may include a broken arm or leg, surgeries and prolonged acute illness lasting more than two weeks. TMCs are often unexpected and sudden, requiring a student to quickly adjust to their condition if they do not want to fall too far behind and still have an opportunity to be successful in their coursework. To ensure these students could be seen in a timely manner, DS identified primary access coordinators addressing students with TMCs and reduced meeting times from one hour to 30 minutes.

Disability Services also examined the types of accommodations requested by students. This included the level of impact each accommodation had on the student's ability to effectively access a course and the impact on the Disability Services office to review the request, make a determination and assist with implementation. There are inherent differences in accommodations and the level of impact, yet the process for addressing the accommodations was the same. To address the problem of wait times for students, Disability Services identified testing and note-taking assistant accommodations that were most frequently requested and approved without much further documentation or follow-up meetings, and then identified the accommodations with a much higher level of impact and support required. This information helped DS create a new accommodation review process for the different levels of impact and support. In some cases, DS

found that some applications could be processed without a need for an access meeting, which freed up additional availability for the cases that required more dialogue between the student and DS. In short, this approach provided new students a faster determination of their accommodation requests.

As result of the changes described above, Disability Services saw a significant reduction in wait times for access meetings at the start of the spring 2022 semester which never exceeded more than one week. While wait times tend to be shorter in the spring, they have historically reached 2-3 week wait times; and the number of applications for accommodations received during the spring semester increased by 26 percent from 2021 to 2022. Current students could access standing office hours with their assigned access coordinator, or find availability within a week to schedule an appointment if needed. Students with temporary medical conditions (up 21 percent from previous academic year) were able to receive DS support within a day or two to help get their courses back on track and set up for success to the extent possible. DS staff had the time on their calendar to more effectively complete the work of reviewing an increasing number of requests for accommodations and to more effectively support their caseloads despite a 47 percent increase in applications and a 52 percent increase in additional accommodation requests from current students from 2021 to 2022.

Learn more about Disability Services: colorado.edu/disabilityservices



IDEAS TO ACTION: INCENTIVIZING CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION

Engaging students in problem solving and public speaking is a crucial part of preparing the next generation of leaders who will help tackle the climate crisis. At CU Boulder, the Environmental Center offers a number of programs that cultivate students' leadership in sustainability and climate justice. In its third year, the President's Sustainable Solutions Challenge (PSSC)

is a pitch competition where students develop and present their ideas for sustainable innovations and solutions that address environmental quality, natural resource use, social justice and economic longevity for the CU Boulder campus. In a follow-up process, all proposals are also considered for actual implementation on campus. Collectively, the student ideas inspire change and

create innovative solutions for the campus.

The Sustainable Solutions Challenge is now a system-wide program which receives sponsorship from the CU President's Office in part due to a bipartisan proposal brought forth by a team of CU Regents to the President's Office. This competition showcases sustainability innovation from all four

CU campuses and finally took place at all four campuses in 2022 after disruptions from COVID-19. CU Boulder was able to hold the competition for the past three years despite the pandemic challenges. In the spring of 2020, we quickly adjusted to a remote format for the competition. In 2021, we continued remotely and the Environmental Center sponsored the prize money to keep the program going until we could reconvene with the other campuses and secure funding from the president's office for 2022.

The competition fosters the students' abilities to develop proposals with meaningful impact. Over three years, the PSSC has fielded 18 wide-ranging proposals from 46 students. Students who participate in the PSSC have the opportunity to participate in workshops to hone their ideas, meet with campus subject matter experts and identify best practices and challenges for the campus. In March, a month prior to the April proposal deadline, we host the ideation and pitch development workshop. This workshop was not highly attended in 2021 when it was held in a remote format and it was difficult to get students engaged in problem solving for campus when they were detached from campus due to the pandemic. The in-person workshop of 2022 saw a great turnout with more than 50 participants. Interested participants came to understand the proposal components, refine their concepts, connect with other students and learn more about campus sustainability topics of relevance and additional resources.

To participate in the pitch competition, students submit a proposal summary

with a pitch deck. Five proposals are invited to give 10 minute presentations at pitch night before a panel of judges. A panel of judges rate the pitch proposals based on feasibility, impact and innovation and winning proposals are awarded cash prizes. In 2022, 13 undergraduate students comprised the five competing teams. The five judges were Prof. Phaedra Pezzullo, CU Regent Lesley Smith, Jasmin Barco and students Anila Narayana and Bullos White. The 2022 proposals included a variety of topics and interests including

- Piezoelectric Tiles: A Pathway to Sustainable Energy presented by Ann Giang and Joseph Marrujo (First place, \$1500)
- Recycle Like a Buff presented by Kate Huun, Tasha Smith, Kat Avedovech, Karlie Conzachi, Kayla Vasarhelyi, Bryce Poirot, Lauren Mullen (Second place, \$500)
- Hempcrete: Sustainable

Development Within CU Boulder presented by Henrique Sannibale (Audience choice, \$500)

- Iīā: A Personal Carbon Calculator presented by Ishan Gohil, Anuradha Prakash and Niki Kosuri
- The Future of Campus: Combining Sustainable Transportation and Biodiversity presented by Helen Flock

In 2020, the top proposal was developed by Travis Torline ('21), Nick Provost ('21) and Nina Hooper ('22). The team presented an idea for implementing green roofs across campus. They demonstrated how green roofs, outfitted with low-growing, native Colorado plant species, would reduce heating and cooling costs for campus buildings, resulting in a lower carbon footprint. While the environmental benefits were clear, the team chose to place a stronger emphasis on the social aspects of their proposal. Green roofs provide additional



spaces for people to congregate with one another and interact with nature. The Green Roofs team provides a great example for how sustainability is important for all disciplines. While Travis was an economics major, Nina and Nick both studied electrical engineering.

Caroline Wiygul, the lead student organizer for both the 2021 and 2022 competitions, shared, “As a student organizer, I’ve seen that the competition gives students a venue to expand on their most ambitious or dearly-held ideas for our campus. I think that having these proposals appreciated and taken seriously motivates participants to continue working on them and pursuing aspirational visions for climate action.”

CU Environmental Center Assistant Director Jasmin Barco served as one of the five judges for the PSSC. She reflected, “The President’s Sustainable Solutions Challenge is a great opportunity for students to bring forth their creative climate solutions and visions for a more sustainable campus. It’s a great opportunity for professional development.”

With so many great ideas, the competition is the beginning of the path for the student’s proposal to move from concept into reality. While the cash prize is appealing, students want to see change happen. After the competition, the Environmental Center undertakes a process for each of the submitted proposals to be reviewed by relevant campus stakeholders for proof of concept. Currently one proposal has been fully funded and implemented. Five proposals are under active consideration for implementation.

For CU Boulder, the development of the President’s Challenge was a synergistic opportunity to increase student engagement in the Sustainable CU grants program. By having the pitch competition generate ideas for campus projects, we have established a new system for recruiting proposals for the long-standing Sustainable CU Fund. In 2005, students designated student fees to implement on-campus sustainability projects that reduce the university’s impact on climate and the environment. The fees allocated for these efforts make up the Sustainable CU Fund, which can be used for projects involving renewable energy, energy efficiency, recycling and waste reduction and other innovative sustainability solutions. The student leaders of the CUSG Environmental Board, which administers the Sustainable CU Fund, established criteria to prioritize projects created and led by students. Finding student-initiated projects that are fundable, feasible and have support from campus partners has been challenging. If stakeholders advance a project for funding, the CUSG Environmental Board will prioritize the student fee funding for the PSSC projects and the students can actually see their concepts come to fruition. The Sustainable CU fund can now tap into this well of student-initiated potential projects coming from the PSSC to add to the 120 funded projects of the past 17 years.

CU Regent Lesley Smith was one of the original champions of starting the PSSC program. She has served as a judge in 2020 and 2022 and shared, “The students are passionate, poised and show creativity in their ideas, which

have ranged from reducing food waste and water usage to living roofs. I can’t wait to see living roofs sprouting up across campus! I also learned a lot, like the concept of biophilic design. I hope students will apply for the grants offered by the EC to have their ideas come to fruition.”

The climate crisis is one of humanity’s biggest challenges. As such, CU Chancellor Phil DiStefano’s Campus Call to Climate Action is a key focus. The Environmental Center’s role in engaging more students in innovative solutions and applied learning is critical to rise to the challenge. Programs like the President’s Challenge and Sustainable CU directly harness student creativity and catalyze projects that make a lasting impact. For 2023, we are excited to expand participation in the Challenge with additional ideation workshops geared to students’ coursework. We aim to encourage project-based learning and support students and faculty to use the campus as a living and learning lab for climate action and sustainability.

Learn more about the Environmental Center: colorado.edu/ecenter

“

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”

BELONGING WITHIN THE NATIONAL PAN-HELLENIC COUNCIL



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In the 2021-22 academic year, 3,513 undergraduate students at the University of Colorado Boulder chose to participate in a university-recognized fraternity or sorority. Having been apart for two years due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, our students yearn for a place they can surround themselves with a supportive community, which is needed now more than ever. The fraternal experience can provide that supportive environment and a place where students can create unforgettable experiences. Our fraternities and sororities offer students a sense of belonging by providing a

connection to the campus community. This is especially pertinent for the Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) students enrolled at CU Boulder.

When initially established, fraternities and sororities catered to cisgender, straight, white males. As BIPOC students gained access to higher education, they were often faced with racist campus cultures and environments, making it difficult to find a sense of belonging within the institution. Research by Hernandez and Lopez (2004-2005) shows how vital it is for “students to have a sense of belonging and feel appreciated. If students feel ignored and unaccepted

by other students, faculty or staff, they will feel marginalized and much less likely to persist in college” (p.44). BIPOC students understood this and decided to do something about it.

In 1906, at Cornell University, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. was founded as the first historically Black fraternity in the country. Then, the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) was established in 1930. NPHC is composed of nine historically Black fraternities and sororities founded between 1906 and 1963 at historically Black colleges and universities. NPHC fraternities and sororities later expanded, offering opportunities for Black students to



join the organizations at all types of institutions, including predominately white institutions. At CU Boulder, all nine historically Black fraternities and sororities have been a part of our campus at one point in time.

NPHC once existed at CU Boulder because Black students needed a space where they felt they belonged. Unfortunately, due to challenges created by campus culture and the environment that these Black student-serving organizations faced, many of the NPHC fraternities and sororities became inactive. We understand that the fraternity and sorority experience is a vital part of our students' time on campus. This is why the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL) has made it a priority to continue its support of NPHC fraternities and sororities and create a sustainable plan to permanently re-establish the NPHC at CU Boulder.

OUR ROLE

In 2020, CU Boulder established FSL as a stand-alone department. The office has three full-time, passionate professional staff members dedicated to the undergraduate fraternal experience. FSL uniquely serves a vital role at the institution and within the Division of Student Affairs to uplift and empower BIPOC students by providing opportunities for them to be involved in historically Black and culturally-based fraternities and sororities. Bringing NPHC fraternities and sororities to CU Boulder will allow more students to find their community and create a stronger sense of belonging on campus.

While there are some unique challenges, we anticipate NPHC's return will be a success due to ongoing work with our students, campus partners, NPHC graduate chapters and

community members.

This year, four of the nine NPHC fraternities and sororities have been granted provisional status at CU Boulder through FSL:

- Alpha Iota Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
- Chi Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
- Omicron Zeta Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
- Zeta Pi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Provisional status allows these organizations to actively recruit CU Boulder students and gives them access to campus facilities and resources. The presence of these four NPHC fraternities and sororities can directly impact the 2.6 percent of students identifying as Black or African American and the overall 26.3 percent of students identifying as BIPOC at CU Boulder. FSL is working to establish provisional status with the remaining five NPHC organizations.

In April 2022, we welcomed five NPHC fraternities and sororities in our first NPHC Meet and Greet event. Students had the opportunity to connect with these organizations, learn more about them and explore how to join their fraternity or sorority. A total of 30 Black and Brown students were in attendance. We hope to expand our outreach and create more opportunities for our BIPOC students to join these NPHC fraternities and sororities. One BIPOC graduate student who attended the event shared how he appreciated finding out that this event was taking place. While he was

an undergraduate student, he tried organizing something similar to our NPHC Meet and Greet but was not successful. When he saw this event was taking place, he knew he needed to attend because he still had an interest. Although he was a graduate student and moving to another state at the end of the semester, he wanted to establish contact with one of the NPHC fraternities in attendance to learn how to join after he moves.

NPHC offers students a sense of belonging through their undergraduate career and into their graduate and professional journey. So far, two NPHC fraternities and sororities with provisional status have welcomed a total of three BIPOC CU Boulder students into their organizations. While three may seem like a low number, it is a good start for historically Black Greek-lettered organizations, especially at a predominantly white institution. With further efforts to bring NPHC back to campus, we hope to grow that number.

HOW WE KNOW IT MATTERS

Based on the 2021 Campus Culture Survey results, students participating in a fraternity or sorority generally report a higher sense of belonging than those who are not in Greek life.

- 91 percent of Black or African American student survey participants who are current members in a fraternity or sorority either agree or strongly agree that they made friends at CU Boulder

compared to 66 percent who are not members and have no plans to join.

- 91 percent of Black or African American student participants who are current members in a fraternity or sorority either agree or strongly agree they have a sense of community at CU Boulder compared to 35 percent who are not members and have no plans to join.

The Campus Culture Survey findings demonstrate that fraternities and sororities create more space for our Black students to experience belonging and find a campus connection. The NPHC website states that historically Black fraternities and sororities must continue on college campuses because “racial isolation on predominantly white campuses and social barriers of class on all campuses create a need for African Americans to align themselves with other individuals sharing common goals and ideals.” This is why FSL will continue our efforts to permanently re-establish and support the NPHC at CU Boulder.

We have entered a new generation of students and we have seen an increase in BIPOC students in higher education. We must do our part to ensure that the fraternity and sorority community reflects the student body. Approximately six percent of the current fraternity and sorority community at CU Boulder are BIPOC students. However, as of fall 2021, 26.3 percent of the student population identified as BIPOC (excluding those who identify as white or international or

are unknown). FSL is working to create a fraternity and sorority community where that 26.3 percent and the growing number of future BIPOC students enrolling feel represented and have a stronger sense of belonging and community at CU Boulder.

Learn more about Fraternity and Sorority Life: colorado.edu/greeks



NATIONAL PAN-HELLENIC COUNCIL (NPHC)

NPHC consists of nine historically Black fraternities and sororities:

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. | Est. 1906 at Cornell University

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. | Est. 1908 at Howard University

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. | Est. 1911 at Indiana University Bloomington

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. | Est. 1911 at Howard University

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. | Est. 1913 at Howard University

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. | Est. 1914 at Howard University

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. | Est. 1920 at Howard University

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. | Est. 1922 at Butler University

Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. | Est. 1963 at Morgan State University



QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENTS OF CU BOULDER HOUSING FACILITIES

The mission of the Housing and Facilities Services (HFS) department is to provide clean, safe, secure, well-maintained and environmentally supportive facilities. Reynolds (2007) studied how the quality and attractiveness of the built residential environment plays an important role in the recruitment and retention of students. Campus facilities planning around new construction and repair/replacement of existing assets and infrastructure should be an important part of the university's strategic planning

and mission (Reynolds, 2007). To create the best possible learning and living environment, the HFS department's quality team developed a standardized data analysis technique called Asset Performance Index (API) and Facility Performance Index (FPI) to evaluate buildings and everything therein.

Creating a standardized scoring method is essential because the HFS portfolio includes buildings constructed between 1934 and 2019 with vastly different

building standards. Also, the scope of work HFS performs ranges from the simple changing of a light bulb to more complicated issues that require hiring contractors to repair compromised building foundations or performing full-building renovations. With a uniform scoring method across all buildings and assets, the HFS department can make data-informed decisions about prioritizing resources, informing project planning and reducing unplanned asset failures and subsequent corrective actions.

The process of scoring a building begins with assembling a team that includes HFS engineering, managers, quality and building subject matter experts (technicians). The team conducts an asset inventory based on Uniformat II. Uniformat II is an American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) industry standard which provides a framework to classify all assets methodically within and around a building. The team reviews building assets by reviewing engineering drawings and performing physical on-site walks of each building. Assets include everything within and surrounding a building such as lighting fixtures, HVAC equipment, heating generation, toilets, walls, carpet, landscaping etc. Next, the team meets to assign risk, priority and performance scores on a 10-point scale to each asset and adds notes as necessary. A low score reflects an asset is not as important and/or in good working condition. A higher score indicates the asset is very important or it is in poor working condition or has failed. Notes are

added as necessary per asset. Inputs to the scoring session come from the experience of subject matter experts, previous project information and data from TMA, HFS's maintenance management software. Data scraped from work orders includes types of failures, time to complete, inspection notes and labor and parts costs for the repair and/or replacement of the asset.

The priority score reflects the scope and necessity of the asset. Scope refers to how many residents within the building or complex the asset affects. Necessity is defined as the element being required versus expected or convenient. A broken fire alarm panel, for example, affects all residents within a building and a functional panel is required per building codes. This item would receive a priority score of 10. However, one broken door buzzer would only affect a couple of residents within an entire apartment complex and is a convenience, not required, and would therefore score a one.

The risk score accounts for the time to repair or replace the asset along with considerations for cost, safety of residents or staff, the environment and reputation of the institution. Replacing a light bulb would be quick and have minimal impact on residents so it would receive a risk score of one. However, if the foundation of a building is found to be considerably unstable, it would receive a risk score of 10 as it could require a costly, multi-year project to fix.

Lastly, the performance score is based upon the current condition and functionality of the asset with attention to the suitability of the asset for the

intended purpose. An asset like a newly installed water heater would score one for performance because it is less than a year old and under warranty. However, a 10 score indicates that the asset has completely failed its intended purpose or has been decommissioned, like an electric exhaust fan that has a broken motor and is unable to move any air.

After all assets have been reviewed, the risk, priority and performance scores are combined to give an overall API. Assets scoring greater than or equal to six are flagged. The team develops a plan to address and prioritize any flagged items or notates why a specific flagged item will not be addressed. API scores of all assets for a building are then averaged to calculate the final FPI. This data informs the maintenance team on preventive maintenance or replacement strategies for each asset. HFS also uses these scores as inputs for the project team to plan large summer projects that will be performed by contractors.

Each summer HFS takes a handful of buildings offline to perform larger maintenance projects. These buildings are completely vacant and not available for conference guests. The planning for summer projects starts a year in advance to understand the scope of needed repairs and upgrades and begin requesting quotes from contractors. Instead of just using anecdotal evidence of what people think the building needs, the API program allows us to take a data-based approach to prioritize the most critical or under-performing aspects of a building.

One building that HFS scored in spring

2022 underwent several improvement projects during summer 2022. The building's final FPI score was 4.8 (out of 10, where a higher score indicates worse performance). HFS flagged 21 out of 151 total assets (14 percent). Ten of the flagged items are being explicitly addressed during the project. Some of the project work for these included replacing bathroom flooring (API 9.2), fixing gutter downspouts (API 7.1), replacing exit signs/lights (API 6.9) and fixing roof tiles (API 6.1). After the summer project, the HFS API/FPI team will re-score the flagged assets that were repaired or modified and calculate a new FPI. Taking the before/after FPI percentage change is one method to quantitatively measure the success and cost effectiveness of the summer project, ensuring we are focusing on repairing or improving the right things.

During spring 2022 HFS scored 10 out of 44 total buildings within our portfolio (23 percent). Those buildings had FPI scores ranging from 4.8 to 5.1. While completing this round of scoring, we have been refining and standardizing the process for the API/FPI program. While each housing facility is unique, defining performance standards per asset allows us to more readily compare different facilities. These scores will be updated on a regular schedule, as well as after any major projects are completed. Evaluating scores before and after a major project will help us benchmark how well we are meeting our goals of giving residents a quality and attractive environment in which to live and study.



PROMOTING STUDENT SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

While creating a culture of wellness in a community as large and diverse as CU Boulder is no small feat, Health Promotion has made it their mission to accomplish this pivotal goal. The department's work is encapsulated by the theoretical framework of the Eight Dimensions of Wellness, which connect the most crucial aspects of behavioral and physical health to establish a meaningful representation of overall wellness in an individual. The dimensions include social, emotional, physical, intellectual, financial, occupational, spiritual and environmental wellness. This model, developed by the Substance

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), guides the development of educational and social experiences for students that create purposeful, positive changes in their overall wellness. Using this framework, Health Promotion programming strives to increase the quality of life among students and contribute to their success at CU and beyond. For each of the many programs that make up Health Promotion, one or more of the eight dimensions form a supporting pillar that guides the content and learning outcomes delivered to students.

- The Collegiate Recovery Community provides connection and/or housing for students, faculty and staff in recovery or seeking recovery from a wide range of behaviors.
- Peer Wellness Coaching allows students to work directly with their peers to achieve success in areas like physical and emotional well-being, goal setting, stress reduction and time management.
- The Weekly Outreach Programming that Health Promotion sponsors includes weekday activities engaging

students on topics such as mindfulness, emotional wellness, physical health and stress management techniques.

- The Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) program is an established substance use prevention program that offers resources from prevention strategies to referral to treatment opportunities.

These programs, and others that this article will explore more deeply, have been paramount to the wellbeing of students over the past year. Health Promotion has had more than 18,000 student contacts and more than 1,000 faculty/staff contacts during the 2021-22 academic year in outreach activities, tabling events, trainings, community events and classes.

When CU Boulder students participated in the National College Health Assessment in spring 2021 (n=953), survey results revealed that they struggled most with stress, anxiety, depression and sleep.

It is widely known that these types of mental health concerns have been exacerbated by the pandemic and increasingly affect students' lives. The ways in which they live, learn and socialize have all changed dramatically. More than half of student respondents reported that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased their level of stress.

As the data demonstrated the negative impact of the pandemic on these aspects of wellness, Health Promotion tailored programming to meet the

specific needs of CU students. This article will explore Health Promotion's efforts to enhance three specific Dimensions of Wellness for students (social, emotional and physical) through the work of the Contact Tracing and Case Investigation Team, the Buffs Discuss Program and Mental Health First Aid Training.

with keeping students safe and healthy while living in residence halls, going to class, visiting the gym and eating in shared spaces. Throughout the 2021-22 academic year, the Public Health Office worked with campus and community partners to review scientific updates and policy needs for COVID-19, including updated isolation guidance, updated vaccine requirements and a masking requirement exemption protocol. Staff reviewed 122 masking requirement exemption requests for spaces and events across the year, distributed at-home antigen test kits and hand sanitizer, conducted

CONTACT TRACING AND CASE INVESTIGATION TEAM

As we've navigated life alongside COVID-19, the campus was tasked

FIGURE 1: Proportion of students who have experienced mental health concerns in the past 12 months NCHA, Spring 2021

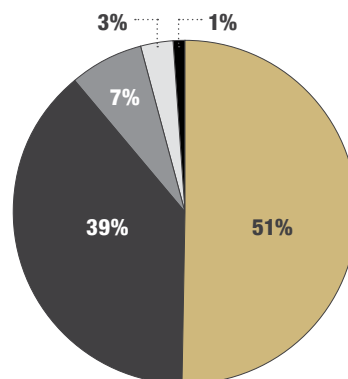
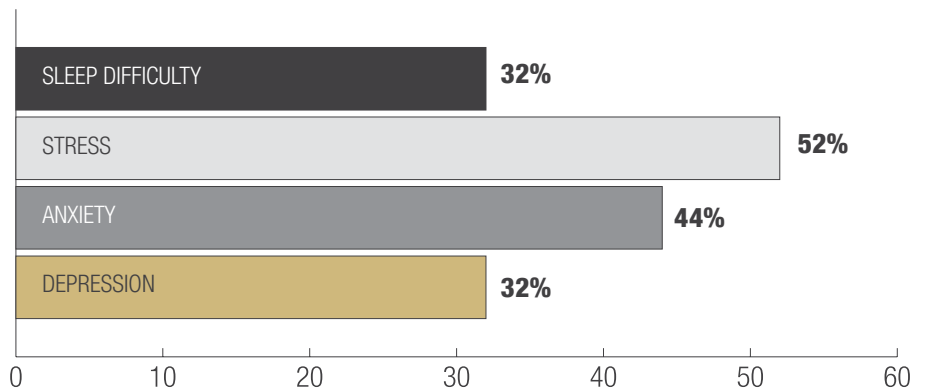


FIGURE 2: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your overall level of stress

- Significantly increased my level of stress
- Somewhat increased my level of stress
- No change in my level of stress
- Somewhat decreased my level of stress
- Significantly decreased my level of stress

case investigations, responded to community concerns and rapidly adopted shifting guidance to assure that protocols were evidence-based, kept campus workplaces safe and were in alignment with local and state requirements. The case investigation and contact tracing team, made up of four professional staff and four student employees, contacted students, staff, faculty and campus affiliates who had tested positive for COVID-19 to discuss their experience, support their recovery, assuage fears and prevent spread in our community through isolation guidance and contact tracing and notification. Case investigators referred individuals to healthcare providers, discussed access to food and housing while in isolation, gave guidance on return to work, supported individuals needing additional help with classes or when traveling and followed up on testing concerns.

During fall 2021, the team attempted to contact 865 Boulder County residents who had tested positive for COVID-19, and completed 80 percent of these investigations. Case investigators also conducted 45 campus assessments with individuals residing outside of Boulder County to assure that they were receiving

support and to assess any COVID-19 impacts for campus and contact notification needs. Winter break and the beginning of spring 2022 were both significantly impacted by the Omicron variant surge. The spring 2022 resulted in more than 1,400 cases and campus assessments through May 7. In partnership with campus and community partners, we have been successful in keeping campus a safe place to live, work and learn.

While COVID-19 has been the primary focus of the new Public Health Office, staff also worked to explore and educate our community about different facets of illness prevention and public health as a field. In April, staff partnered with Public Health Certificate faculty, the Health Professions Residential Academic Program (RAP), students from the Public Health Hub organization, Boulder County AIDS Project and others to host eight Public Health Week events, serving 216 students. These events included exploring what public health is, connecting with public health professionals, Narcan administration training, HIV testing, bone marrow donor registration and a succulent social that explored the

social determinants of health. Staff will continue to learn more about campus needs and how to match the interest in public health with opportunities for education and career development.

BUFFS DISCUSS PROGRAM

Bufs Discuss is another integral program to support students' wellbeing. Student facilitators are trained to engage with students in short conversations about substance use and associated behaviors. These conversations use existing validated surveys (i.e. Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT); Alcohol Use Disorder Screening Test (AUDIT); and Cannabis Use Disorder Identification Test (CUDIT)) along with motivational interviewing to encourage students to reflect on their relationship with substances. Bufs Discuss facilitators talk to their peers about experiences with substances, feelings surrounding their experiences and goals for the future. Students reflect on the prompts and explore how these factors shape their relationship with and access to substances. The

FIGURE 3: ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-22 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Data

	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
CASES	35	85	129	120	228	268	633	161	59	112	237
CAMPUS ASSESSMENTS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	27	18	81	14	10	12	18
CONTACTS	6	52	92	54	49	26	12	3	16	4	16

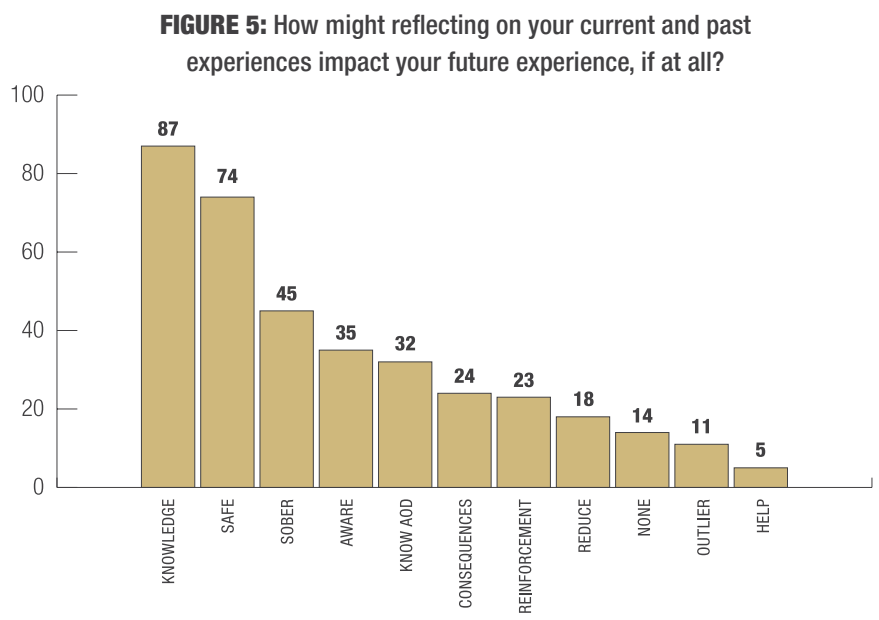
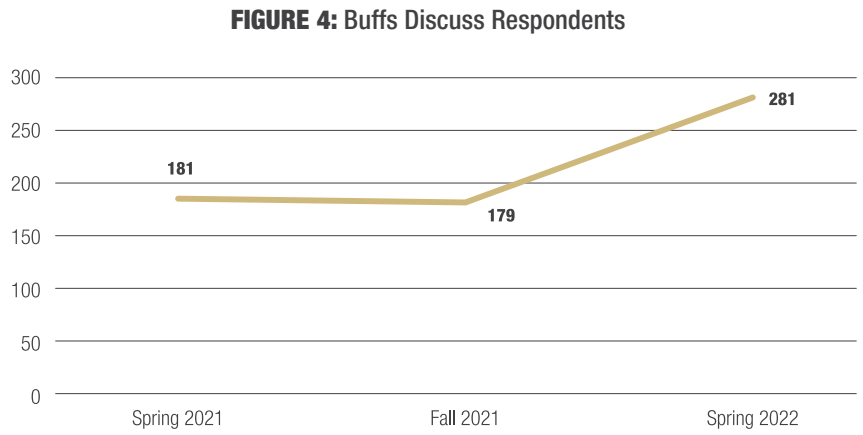
deidentified data is collected from survey respondents to inform substance use programming.

The 2021-22 academic year brought Buffs Discuss facilitators back in-person after being virtual for spring 2021.

After brief intervention, student participants have reported that reflecting on their past and current substance use experiences impacted their future experiences with substances. This question had 232 student respondents with 94 percent expressing anticipated impacts. The qualitative data is coded using an existing codebook. Most frequently, students reported this experience improved their general knowledge about substances, leading them to feel more informed about their substance use decisions. Additionally, students reported this experience would help them to be more safe by using harm reduction strategies (e.g. be with someone they trust, pace themselves, set limits, etc.). This is also the first time in recent semesters that students reported intentionally choosing to be sober as a top category, emphasizing students' desire to explore or continue a more substance-free lifestyle.

In a follow-up survey, 82 percent (n=181) of respondents reported that there were benefits in talking to others about their experiences with substances. Emma Schick, a Buffs Discuss facilitator explains:

“There have been definite ‘lightbulb’ moments when we talk with other students [about] rituals, what serves them and what they don’t want to experience related to their use. They feel newly empowered to control the



outcome and to shape their experience. They gain a sense of agency.”

Utilizing peers to engage students in conversations about substance use is a valuable tool. The facilitators are able to connect students to resources such as the Collegiate Recovery Community, Health Promotion’s Exploring Substance Use Workshop and Health Promotion’s Nicotine Cessation Coaching program, among others.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

As a way to further leverage evidence-based programming to support mental health, Health Promotion offers Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training courses on a regular basis for CU students, staff and faculty. This course is skills-based and teaches participants about various mental health and substance use disorders, as well as how to respond

to an individual experiencing distress. Participants learn to assess the risk of suicide or harm, listen non-judgementally, give reassurance and information, encourage appropriate professional help and encourage self-help or other support strategies.

Ten training courses were offered in the 2021-22 academic year, drawing 105 attendees. Participants are given assessments to measure their skills, opinions, and knowledge throughout the course. After completion of the February 2022

course, 100 percent of the survey respondents (n=3) reported that they were very likely to have a supportive conversation with an adult experiencing signs and/or symptom(s) of a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis. The same respondents also affirmed that they are very likely to use the action plan taught in the course to connect an adult experiencing signs and/or symptom(s) of a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis to appropriate resources.

One participant reported that the most helpful part of the course was

“Addressing suicide. This is a very difficult subject that most people shy away from and it feels empowering to learn how to talk about it.”

Data from the February 2022 course also demonstrate the skills and knowledge gained from the training through a survey question assessing knowledge on a specific topic before MHFA and after MHFA. Three attendees participated in the assessment.

The benefits of this training are extensive. Not only does it afford faculty and staff the opportunity to learn to support those in crisis, but it also enables students to support their peers in the same way. This type of peer support works to reduce the feelings of isolation associated with a crisis and create trust based on the shared experiences of a peer. The entire community benefits from a more well-educated, confident and diverse mental health and substance use support system. In the March 2022 attendee survey, nine participants were asked how confident they are in dealing with recognizing and assisting someone in crisis as a result of the MHFA training. They indicated that they overwhelmingly agreed that the training inspired more confidence in these situations. Training topics such as “Recognize the signs that someone may be dealing with a mental health problem, substance use challenge or crisis,” “Ask a person whether they’re considering killing themselves,” and “Reach out to someone who may be dealing with a mental health problem, substance use challenge or crisis” were

FIGURE 6: Describe the purpose of Adult MHFA and role of the First Aider

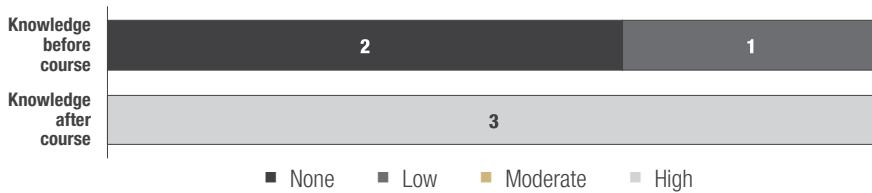


FIGURE 7: Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health or substance use challenges that may impact adults

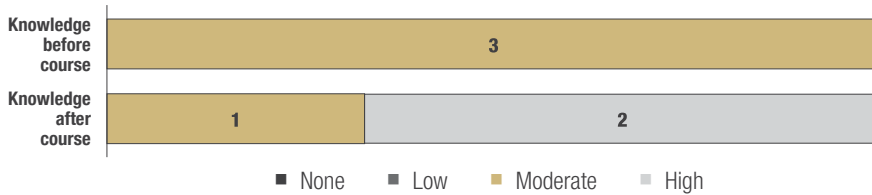


FIGURE 8: Explain ways in which a First Aider may cope with feelings of discomfort in providing MHFA

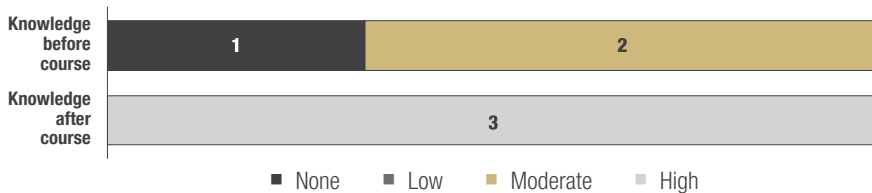
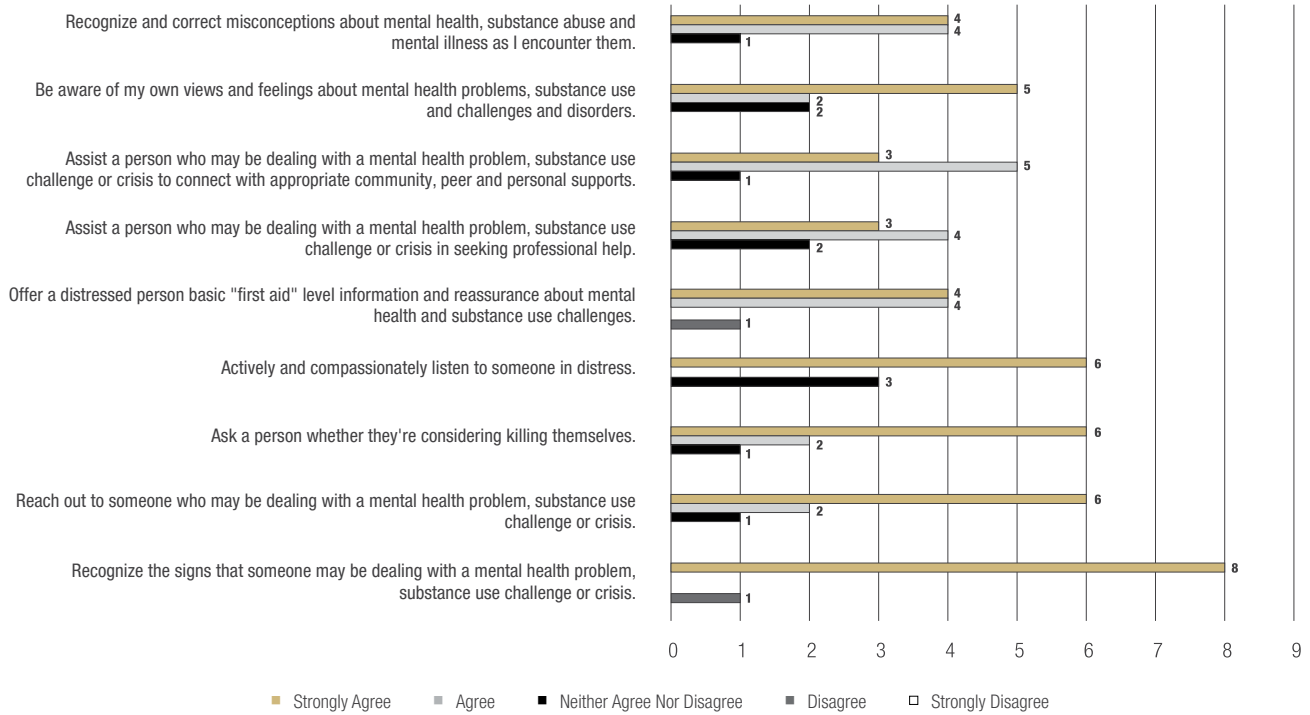


FIGURE 9: As a result of MHFA Training, I feel more confident I can...



the areas that respondents built the most confidence in. These skills are invaluable in the creation of a campus community that is focused on student wellbeing.

The various Health Promotion programs, outreach events and educational opportunities have made a notable impact on the wellbeing of our campus community over the past year. These offerings have shaped public health policies to keep our campus physically well, connected students with their peers to reflect on social wellness related to their substance use and trained campus community members to be a force for wellness. Campus-wide wellness is a goal that transcends any one department's individual abilities. Together with partners across the campus, Health Promotion will continue to adapt to the needs of students to create innovative ways to support their health and well-being at CU and beyond.

Learn more about Health Promotion: colorado.edu/health/promotion



TRANSFER SUCCESS AND TRANSITION



As restrictions have gradually been lifted and much of campus operation has returned to business as usual, New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) experienced growth in the number of new programs available to students as well as student participation on campus during the last year. One of the most notable changes in our programming came as a result of a new position within our office. Under the direction of Nash Albrecht, the NSFP transfer program coordinator, the cross-campus cohesion in transfer programming and support at the university has increased far beyond prior efforts.

The hiring of a transfer program coordinator came with the hope that they would connect disparate transfer initiatives across campus and provide

direction for the various ad-hoc programs that previously existed. Nash has worked diligently this year to make these hopes a reality. Over the course of the academic year, Nash has spearheaded collaboration across campus to provide 49 transfer programs to 1,181 participants. During National Transfer Student Week (Oct. 18-22, 2021), 16 events were hosted and 219 students attended, not only providing space for community-building and celebration of transfer student success, but also taking the time to understand attendees' top concerns as transfer students. Twenty-one percent of transfer students surveyed at the event reported community was an area of concern during their transition to the university. Seventeen percent cited communication as being a concern; 16

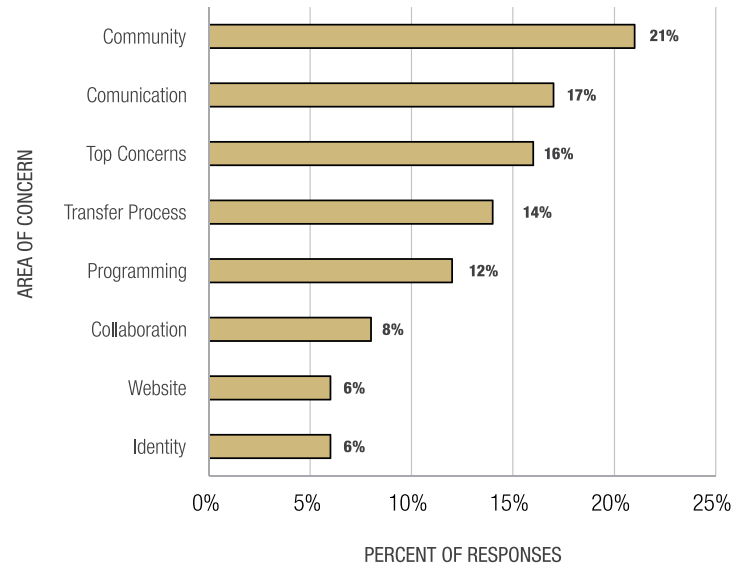
percent reported that their top concerns were housing, finances and credit evaluation; 14 percent reported the transfer process to the university was of concern; and 12 percent reported concerns with programming.

In addition to this feedback, a focus group was conducted to beta test the new website with eight first-year transfer students living in Bear Creek. An additional listening session was conducted with two first-year transfer students to learn more about the transfer student experience and ensure the new website met students' needs. Results from these conversations revealed that few transfer students knew of the old website, but once introduced to the new one, felt it would be a valuable resource in the

transfer student admission process. One participant commented, “I want all departments to know about this website!” Other participants commented on how helpful the new website would have been during their application and transfer process, and recommended highlighting the website in more marketing emails sent to incoming transfer students.

The data collected at National Transfer Student Week along with the listening session provide context for the transfer student experience and have helped shape continued programming. Current plans for the future include the addition of a Transfer Living Learning Community in Bear Creek in order to address the top concerns expressed by current students and create a space for transfer student housing, community and programming.

FIGURE 1: Transfer student experience areas of concern



NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOURNEY LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Under direction from Program Coordinator Abbey Strusz and with collaboration from the entire team, New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) launched the inaugural run of an eight-week, one-credit leadership course for journey leaders (JLs)—student leaders who engage incoming students in the campus community during Fall Welcome—in spring 2022 in order to offer more substance for their resume and add more tangible leadership development to their educational

experience. This project has been in development for more than two years, requiring cultivation of relationships with key partners in the School of Education at CU Boulder as well as development of outcomes, course texts and week-by-week curriculum.

In 2020, NSFP hired a summer intern through the Association for Orientation, Transition and Retention (NODA), who worked closely with Abbey to create an eight-week curriculum derived

from the book "Emotionally Intelligent Leadership" (Shankman et al., 2015) (Shankman, M. L., Allen, S. J., Haber-Curran, P., & Komives, S. R. (2015). *Emotionally intelligent leadership: A guide for students*. Jossey-Bass.). Topics for this course included identity development, leadership style, understanding empathy, clarifying values and transition theory. The course would be provided to JLs in order to equip them better for large and small group facilitation during

Fall Welcome events. Journey leader mentors (JLMs), students who have worked with our office as JLs and return to take on greater responsibilities with event planning and JL cohort support, would serve as undergraduate teaching assistants (TA) for each section of the class and build strong relationships with incoming JLs.

During the next step of course preparation, three JLMs provided a student perspective on adding reflection questions and activities to each week’s topic. Abbey then created outlines and presentations, collaborated closely with School of Education partners to approve topics and content and delegated each week of the course to different NSFP team members to flesh out lecture notes and presentation slides.

Prior to the first week of class in March 2022, JLs were administered a survey to assess their current perspectives on leadership. Once the class concluded, they completed a post-assessment, responding to the same questions in order for NSFP staff to assess how their leadership awareness and perspectives had developed. When asked in the pre-survey to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “I am a leader,” 82 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. After the course, that number had risen to 94 percent, with the “strongly agree” response rate increasing dramatically from 39 percent pre-course to 69 percent post-course.

Other key responses included a shift pre-course from only 48 percent of JLs strongly agreeing with the statement, “I am aware of the identities I hold,”

to 77 percent strongly agreeing post-course. The number of JLs strongly agreeing with the statement “I understand empathy” rose from 66 percent to 71 percent. Finally, the number of JLs responding that they agreed with the statement, “I know what my values are,” rose from pre-course 57 percent “strongly agree” to post-course 74 percent.

With this self-reported growth in JL leadership, NSFP is curious to see how JLs use the skills they’ve learned during Fall Welcome programs and events. We hope a reflection activity at our end of year banquet will provide further data and insight into the effectiveness of this year’s inaugural leadership class.

Learn more about New Student and Family Programs: colorado.edu/orientation

FIGURE 1: Journey leader pre-course responses

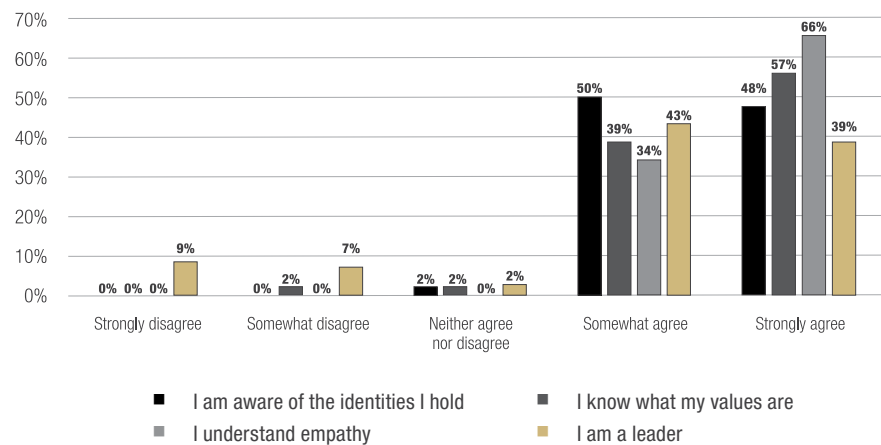
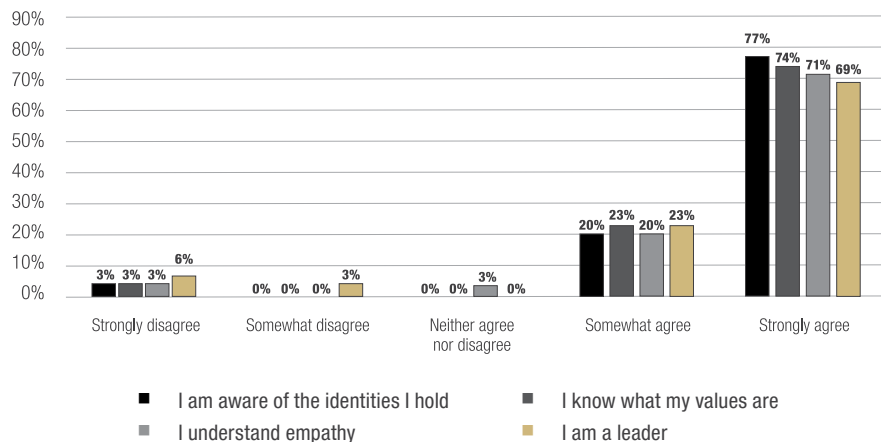


FIGURE 2: Journey leader post-course responses





EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, INNOVATE: IMPROVING THE CU STUDENT OFF-CAMPUS LIVING EXPERIENCE THROUGH LEGAL ADVISING

The multiple semesters of remote teaching CU Boulder experienced from 2020-21 confirmed that learning can happen anywhere. While a student seeking a degree will receive much of their education in their classroom, the importance of skill building and growth that happens outside of the traditional classroom setting can be overlooked. A central part of the college experience is transitioning to independent living and making important decisions that will shape personal and community success. Molding students into positive and productive members of society has long been a value of the CU community as stated in our Colorado Creed at CU Boulder:

COLORADO CREED

As a member of the Boulder community and the University of Colorado Boulder, I agree to

- Act with honor, integrity and accountability in my interactions with students, faculty, staff and neighbors.
- Respect the rights of others and accept our differences.
- Contribute to the greater good of this community.

I will strive to uphold these principles in all aspects of my collegiate experience and beyond.

A student's living environment is fundamental to fostering these important values and skills. Searching for housing, signing leases, experiencing conflict with non-student neighbors and understanding responsibilities as a tenant and resident of Boulder are some of the first experiences a CU student may have independent of their families or campus community. Off-Campus Housing & Neighborhood Relations (OCHNR) encompasses a wide array of programs and services that support our students in nearly every aspect of their off-campus experience so that they are not left to navigate on their own. One OCHNR service that assists students in a detailed, case-by-case approach is free legal advising.

The position of legal advisor to students, held by Bruce Sarbaugh, is a multi-faceted approach to supporting and advocating for our students in ways that encompass non-academic education of life skills, including critical thinking, interpersonal

relations, self-advocacy and accessing and utilizing governmental, institutional and local resources.

Through networking with members of the International Town & Gown Association (ITGA) we have discovered that the legal advisor role within OCHNR is unique among our peers. Having a legal advisor to students is an innovative approach to supporting students living off campus that provides legal advocacy through participating in local governmental policy-making specific to the rental market and ordinances that impact student tenants. Starting in 2020, our legal advisor began meeting with the Boulder Area Rental Housing Association and the Boulder County District Attorney's office on a regular schedule to advise on important recurring issues our students face in their rental housing: unwarranted fees, fines and security deposit deductions; concerns regarding violations of the Warranty of Habitability law; renting as an international student, undocumented

student or independent/emancipated student when requiring co-signers or guarantors is common practice; and much more.

The position also provides educational seminars and presentations to students and their families regarding a variety of topics such as finding and securing rental housing for the first time, teaching basic precepts of constitutional and local laws to upperclassmen living off campus and bringing awareness of the programming and resources of OCHNR to local boards and organizations in the rental market and other institutions of higher education.

To showcase the demand for legal advising, figures 1 and 2 consultations made each month from 2018-21 but also the number of students served (these numbers differ as many consultations will involve multiple students). Common issues presented to our legal advisor during consultations are also shown below.

FIGURE 1: Consult Issues Addressed 2018-2021

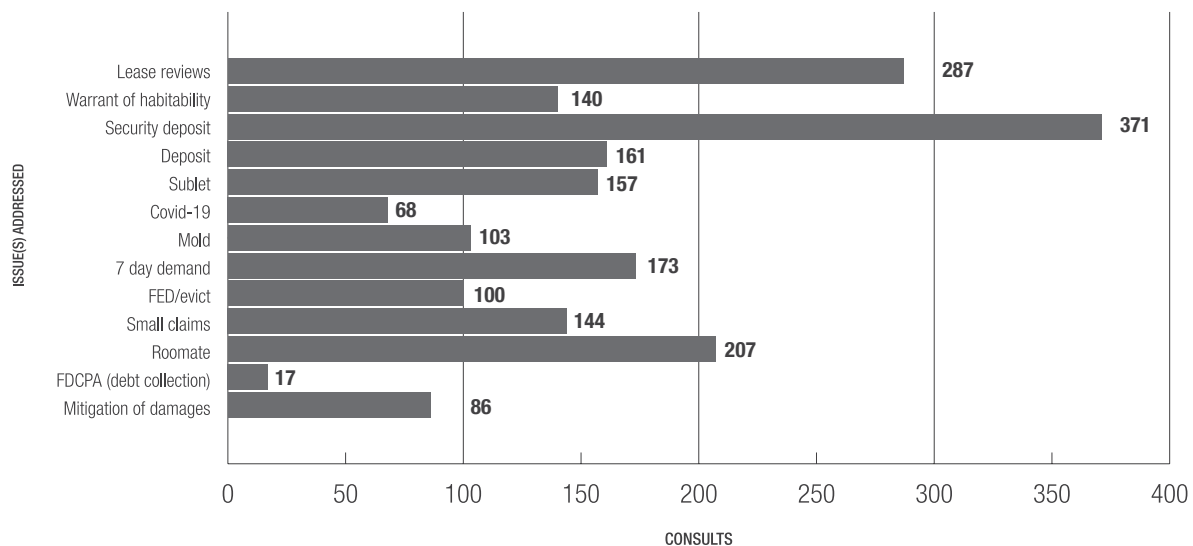


FIGURE 2: Consults 2018-2021

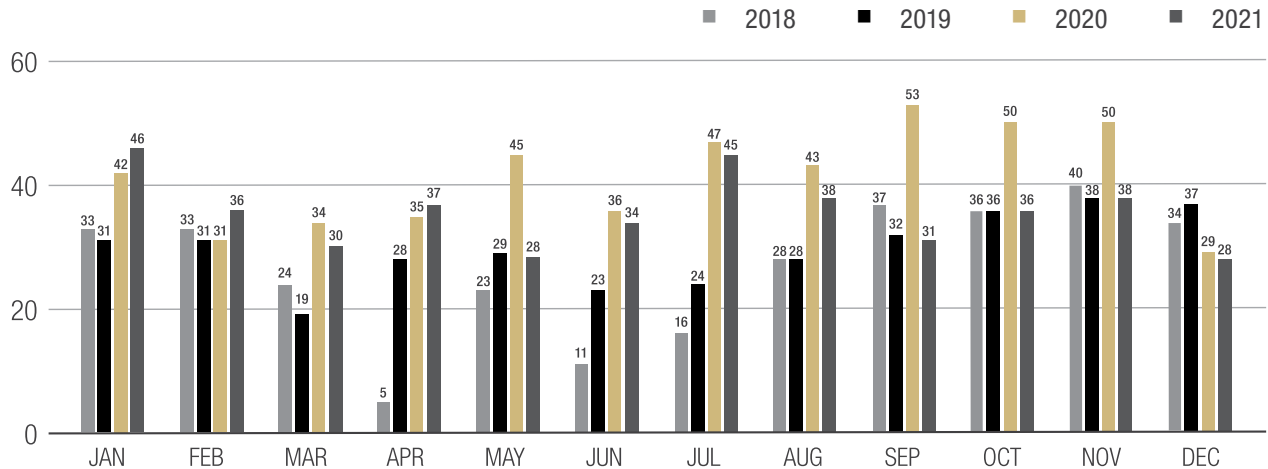
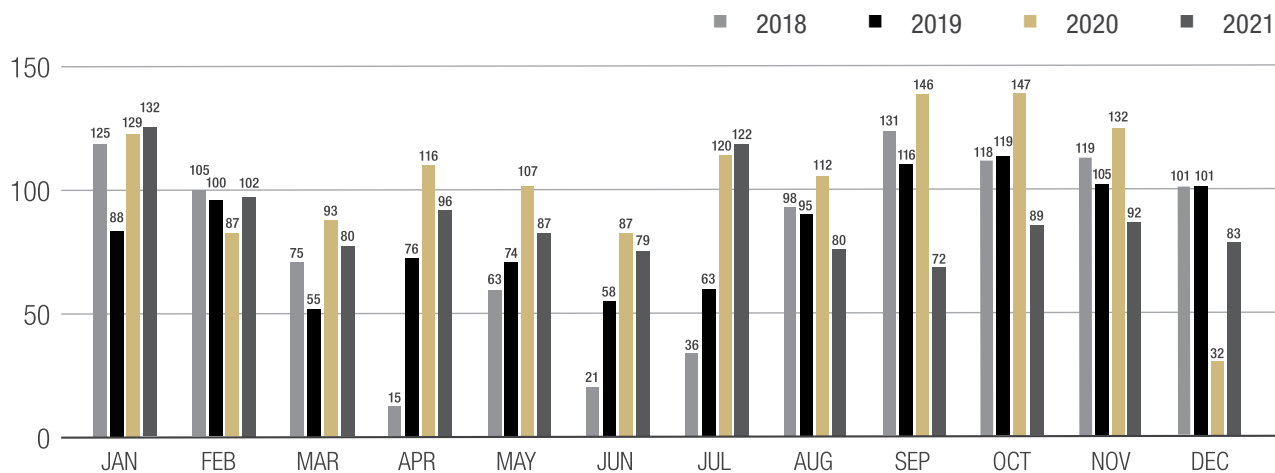


FIGURE 3: Unique Students Served 2018-2021



The above data show high demand for legal advising during fall semesters which aligns with the time of year students are signing leases or attempting to receive security deposits back from their previous rentals. We then see slight decreases over the spring and summer when fewer students are signing leases or are nearing the end of their lease. OCHNR saw a noticeable increase in consultations in 2020 when CU

went remote due to COVID-19 and many students were seeking advice on breaking leases or how to work with landlords and roommates on their COVID-19 related concerns. An important note is all appointments over the course of this data were scheduled for Tuesdays or Fridays when our legal advisor was working part time. As of July 1, 2022, the advising role became a full-time position to better meet student demands.

OCHNR looks forward to adding innovative educational opportunities as well as methods of assessing student learning with the expansion of the legal advisor role. Any CU Boulder student looking to learn more about signing and navigating their off-campus lease can make a free appointment on the OCHNR website (colorado.edu/offcampus) or by calling 303-492-7053.



RESPONDING TO TRAUMA ON CAMPUS

The Office of Victim Assistance (OVA) provides free and confidential information, consultation, support, advocacy and trauma-focused short-term counseling services to University of Colorado Boulder students, faculty and staff who have experienced a traumatic, disturbing or life-disruptive event. Our goal is to ensure that members of our community feel supported after a potentially life-altering event that can impact all areas of

their life, including their mental health, academic career and employment.

WHAT IS OVA?

OVA's counselors and advocates are highly trained and experienced in the area of trauma counseling and advocacy and serve as CU Boulder's trauma experts. All clinical staff are licensed therapists at either

the master's or doctoral level (i.e. psychologists, LPCs and LCSWs), and all are specialists in victim advocacy as well. Typically therapists are not trained in victim advocacy, and victim advocates are not licensed therapists.

Counseling offers clients a safe space to explore and process what they have experienced and to develop skills to move forward in their lives. Advocacy services vary from person to person, and are unique to each person's lived

experience. Advocacy can include receiving information about rights and reporting options, help navigating complex systems (e.g. criminal justice, legal, educational, hospital/medical), resource accompaniment and connection with/referral to other resources.

This year, OVA provided 2,626 appointments and outreached individually to 2,244 people. We typically see a relatively even split in terms of type of service utilized, with approximately half of clients using

counseling and half using advocacy. Many of our clients utilize both.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Our small but mighty team of seven serves our entire campus community of more than 47,000 people, including faculty and staff. This team includes five advocate counselors, one embedded police advocate and an office manager. OVA primarily serves undergraduate students, as shown in figure 1, staff

members make up the second largest group served. Additionally, OVA sometimes serves people who are not affiliated with CU Boulder, if they are harmed on our campus or by someone affiliated with the university. Alumni of the university also frequently contact OVA for support with an incident that occurred while they were a student.

When people think of OVA, they often think about sexual misconduct, which encompasses the areas of sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse and stalking. Sexual misconduct remains a top reason for people to utilize OVA services and is an ongoing concern for our community. What many people don't know is that we also are a resource for a number of other concerns.

Two of the top topic areas for the 2021-22 academic year were experiences of bias (i.e. racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc.) at 19 percent of 2,395 cases, and discrimination (i.e. conduct that deprives an individual of a benefit of employment or opportunity on the basis of identity) at 9.5 percent of 2,395 cases. Additionally, in the Campus Culture Survey conducted in fall 2021, 21 percent of students, staff and faculty who participated indicated that the "incivility behaviors" they had experienced during their time at CU were related to one or more of their identities. Of this group, 55 percent indicated that this experience affected their mental health. Traumatic events and experiences of oppression have been and remain important mental health issues.

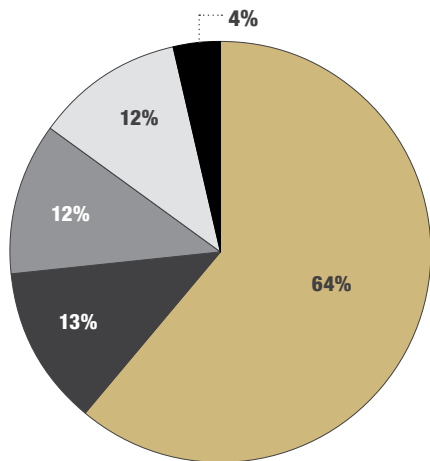


FIGURE 1: OVA Clients 2021-22

- Undergraduate students **64%**
- Staff **13%**
- Alumni, non-affiliate **12%**
- Graduate students **12%**
- Faculty/instructors **4%**

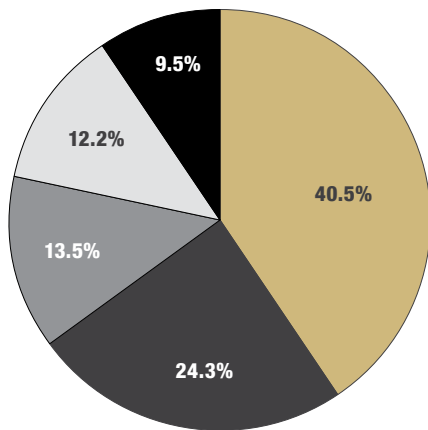


FIGURE 2: Top 5 Topic Areas 2021-22

- Experiences of bias **40.5%**
- Sexual assault **24.3%**
- Discrimination **13.5%**
- Sexual harassment **12.2%**
- Intimate partner abuse **9.5%**

ADDRESSING CONCERNS AND MEETING NEEDS

New Training Offerings

While there are many things to be done about experiences of bias and discrimination at all levels of our institution, OVA wanted to contribute beyond the individual advocacy and counseling support that we offer.

OVA continues to provide our primary training, Supporting Survivors, across campus. This year we offered this presentation to 1,187 individuals, including 754 students, 328 staff members, 33 faculty members and 72 “others,” (i.e. community members such as regents, parents and community partners such as staff members at Moving to End Sexual Assault). The purpose of this training is to provide information about OVA’s services and how to refer, to discuss the impact of traumatic events and to teach participants skills to respond to someone in a supportive manner after they share about a traumatic or life-disrupting event. Some presentations also include a section about trauma-informed mandatory reporting for “responsible employees,” (i.e., those CU employees required to report sexual misconduct, discrimination and protected class harassment to the university). Ninety-nine percent of training participants were able to correctly identify two ways to respond to a survivor of trauma in a supportive manner. Ninety-seven percent agreed with the following statement: “I know how to refer to OVA.”

Additionally, we created two new educational offerings for the CU Boulder community. The Trauma of

Oppression is a one-hour training that covers valuable information about how repeated discriminatory experiences can produce a traumatic response. Participants learn about how experiences of oppression can impact our fellow Buffs’ stress responses and neurological development. Additionally, this offering includes guidance and a discussion about how we can hold ourselves and others accountable when we enable oppression, regardless of our intent. This program was created due to discrimination and protected-class harassment being one of OVA’s top five topic areas over the last three years. The need for this information is even further supported by the data from the Campus Culture Survey, highlighted above.

We also created a one-hour training called Love Shouldn’t Hurt. This offering provides psychoeducation on intimate partner abuse (IPA), with an emphasis on increasing awareness and understanding of domestic violence,

exploring its psychological impact and empowering both survivors and secondary victims (i.e. those who support people with abusive partners) with knowledge of their rights, options and resources. This program was created as a result of data from last year related to the increase in severity of domestic violence issues that arose as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, according to the American Journal of Emergency Medicine, U.S. police departments reported an increase in domestic violence calls as high as 27 percent after stay-at-home orders were implemented in March 2020.

Including our new Love Shouldn’t Hurt and The Trauma of Oppression sessions, OVA staff presented a number of additional sessions (such as The Neurobiology of Trauma and Self-Care for Vicarious Trauma) and was on various panels throughout the year, reaching an additional 1,063 students, staff and faculty.





Embedded Victim Advocate in the CU Police Department (CUPD)

In June 2021, OVA embarked upon a new partnership with the CU Police Department (CUPD) to embed an OVA victim advocate who works directly with police to respond on-scene to calls related to OVA topic areas (primarily domestic violence and sexual assault). However, officers will utilize this advocate's services in additional types of calls as deemed appropriate. Additionally, this advocate reaches out to victims based on police reports, follows up on cases that have been assigned to a detective when needed and assists in training officers. This advocate provides an empathic ear, informing victims of their rights and connecting them to OVA and other community resources for longer-term support. This role allows victims involved in police calls to immediately connect with a supportive resource. The sooner a victim connects with an advocate, the more likely they are to stay engaged in reporting (if desired), experience less distress when being involved in the criminal justice system

and reach out to other resources for on-going support. (Lonsway & Archambault, 2020). Since June 2021, this role has connected with 158 victims/witnesses through CUPD calls and reports.

Hybrid Model

In the 2021-22 academic year, we planned to offer a hybrid model of telehealth and in-person services to clients as we returned to having our students fully back on campus. When initiating services, 47 percent of our clients state that they prefer an in-person session, 28 percent prefer a telehealth session and 25 percent have no preference. However, in reality 38 percent of clients had in-person sessions, 38 percent had telehealth sessions, and 13 percent of clients engaged in both in-person and telehealth sessions, depending on their changing needs. Ninety-seven percent of respondents (n=87) on our client survey agreed that their chosen way of accessing OVA's services (in person or secure Zoom/telehealth) was "easy." It is important for us to be able to continue offering clients flexible

options for sessions. The mental health and advocacy fields are evolving; in order to continue to meet our mission to increase access to services and decrease barriers for survivors, we need to continue to meet clients where they are.

Meeting in-person makes sense for many students and staff who live and/or work on campus, particularly students who have a roommate or live with an abusive partner and need privacy for their session. Telehealth works well for folks who want more privacy, have safety concerns related to coming to campus, have full calendars or are not in Boulder that day. Prior to 2020, when we added telehealth services, these Buffs would not have otherwise been able to be seen as easily or quickly.

Next Steps

As we look ahead to the next academic year, we plan to build on our successes and new programming by offering our new presentations to more people across campus and to continue to serve more people with the CUPD embedded advocate position.

Ninety percent of respondents on our client survey this year agreed with the statement, "I regard OVA as a necessary part of the university." We celebrate our department's innovations and wins for clients during the 2021-22 academic year to help our fellow Buffs get vital information, address their health and feel supported by our community when the unthinkable occurs. We look forward to continuing to serve as a necessary part of the university into the future.

Learn more about the Office of Victim Assistance: colorado.edu/ova



REBOUND AT THE REC

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the landscape of recreation and wellness for much of the last two years. The Recreation Center faced capacity and membership restrictions, mask policies, suspension of programs and adjustments to our traditional offerings. Out of those challenges, innovative opportunities were created to engage our valued members: virtual and pre-recorded fitness classes, intramural esports leagues, team building activities, 10K training programs and more.

We have no doubt that students were ready to return to in-person programs and services for the 2021-22 academic year. This was evident based on the amount of engagement we received on our website, social media profiles and video promotions. Our reopening

promotional video received twice as many views as our next most popular video available, reaching 11,337 unique viewers. Not only did we increase online social engagement, but we witnessed changes with our in-person engagement as well. Facility utilization increased, program participation returned to nearly pre-COVID levels and some programs even saw higher rates of participation than ever before.

FACILITY UTILIZATION

By the numbers

In fall 2019, the last full semester before COVID-19, the Rec Center welcomed members 457,659 times between the main facility and Williams Village Rec Center. Seventy-two percent of the

student body utilized our facilities and there were 25,529 unique visitors. Fall 2020, during the height of the pandemic, was a completely different story. We welcomed members just 87,346 times to our facilities with 27 percent of the student body reached and 8,883 unique visitors.

After we returned to traditional programming in fall 2021, we saw our facility numbers begin to increase once again. Students were ready to be back, and it showed. Members of our campus community came through our doors 384,626 times, 63 percent of the student body utilized our facilities and we had 22,876 unique visitors. Figure 1 shows the fluctuation of total facility access between fall 2019 and fall 2021.

By student experience

Before the pandemic, Brennan, president of the Men's Club Hockey Team and a member of ROTC, used to frequent the Rec Center six to seven times per week, sometimes for as long as two to three hours each day. However, during the pandemic his visits became less frequent. Brennan reported only coming to the Rec Center once or twice a week, depending on the current guidelines/mask rules and whether our ice rink was open. If he could find a place to work out where he did not have to wear a mask, he would go there. However, when we announced our return to in-person programs, Brennan shared that he was "pumped."

Fast-forward to fall 2021 when many COVID-19 restrictions were lifted on

FIGURE 1: Facility Utilization

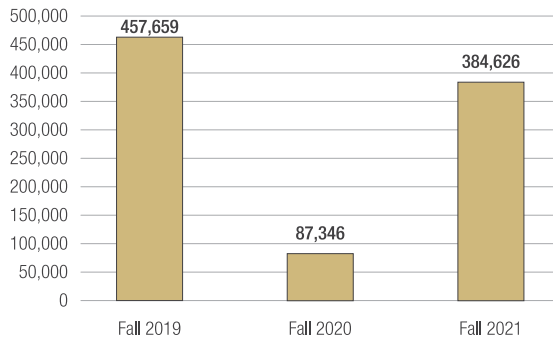


FIGURE 2: BeFit sales vs. Attendance

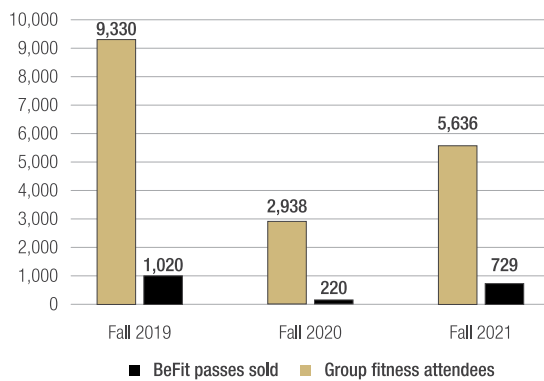


FIGURE 3: Climbing Gym Sales vs. Utilization

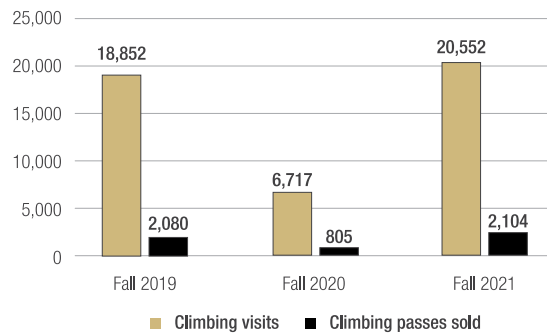
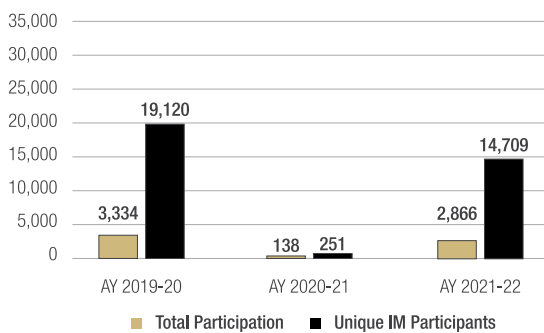


FIGURE 4: IM Participation



campus. Caroline, a frequent Rec Center user turned Guest Services staff, shared her excitement about the return to in-person activities. “The first day back working at The Rec was the most fun I’ve had on a shift,” she told us. She also noted that everyone was happy to be there. She got to see people she knew in real life again, and it was nice being back to “normal” without so many restrictions or reservation requirements.

FITNESS AND WELLNESS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

By the numbers

Much like our facility utilization numbers, program participation took a hit during COVID-19 but has rebounded well during the 2021-22 academic year. In fall 2019, we sold 1,020 BeFit Passes, which give members full access to group fitness classes provided by Fitness and Wellness. During the fall 2020 semester, Fitness and Wellness pivoted their programming approach by offering in-person, live and on-demand fitness classes. 2020 represented a swift decrease in the number of BeFit Passes sold. However, in fall 2021, we more than tripled our BeFit Pass sales compared to the previous academic year, as shown in Figure 2.

OUTDOOR PURSUITS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

By the numbers

Outdoor Pursuits is another area that had to get creative to provide services to our students during the pandemic in the absence of traditional in-person programs like adventure trips. In addition to keeping the climbing gym open, Outdoor Pursuits offered virtual programs such as team building, clinics, blogs from student ambassadors and other outdoor resources. In fall 2019 we sold 2,080 climbing gym passes and climbers utilized the rock wall 18,852 times. Eight hundred five climbing gym passes were sold during fall 2020 and members used the rock wall 6,717 times.

These numbers were by far the lowest the climbing gym had seen, but they rebounded so well during the 2021-22 academic year that Outdoor Pursuits sold more climbing gym passes and welcomed more climbers than ever before. In fall of 2021, 2,104 passes were sold and the rock wall had 20,552 visits. Figure 3 illustrates how climbing gym pass sales and utilization shifted throughout the pandemic from fall 2019 through fall 2021.

By student experience

Kieran, a first-year student and Outdoor Pursuits (OP) employee, was a high school student when the pandemic started. He told us he felt burned out from the impacts of COVID-19 on his student life experiences, and that he was excited to get to CU Boulder for the fall 2021 semester. Upon his arrival on campus, he participated in an incoming student trip hosted by Outdoor Pursuits and was able to make meaningful connections with other first-year students and OP staff. Kieran became an active member of our indoor climbing gym, which he told us was a great place to climb with friends and take breaks between classes. Because of these experiences, Kieran was encouraged to apply to become a trip leader with Outdoor Pursuits, where he now guides other students through recreational activities and trips.

Teagan was a first-year student during the 2020-21 academic year and regretfully did not have a traditional on-campus experience. Teagan was not a frequent visitor to the Rec Center but did attend a few



yoga classes in person and virtually. The summer before her sophomore year, Teagan was able to attend a second-year student trip offered by Outdoor Pursuits. Teagan told us this experience allowed her to find her passion for rock climbing, meet people that shared her love for the outdoors, get an introduction to the Rec Center and become more comfortable using our facilities. It was also clear after talking with her that she felt comfortable and safe in the climbing gym and it served as a place for her to relax, take breaks and learn transferable skills like teamwork and planning.

TEAM SPORTS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

By the numbers

Intramural (IM) Sports and Sport Clubs provide opportunities for students to get connected and find their community while competing in recreational or

intercollegiate sports. As a result of the pandemic, in-person competition was suspended for both Intramural and Sport Club teams during the 2020-21 academic year. In order to help students grapple with the inability to play in a traditional setting, Sport Clubs conducted virtual meetings throughout the year and Intramural Sports provided esports opportunities to students.

These virtual opportunities provided an opportunity to connect, but they could not replace the in-person experience. With the restrictions in place, Intramural Sports saw only 197 unique participants and 458 total participations in the 2020-21 academic year, a stark contrast to traditional years. During the 2019-20 academic year, in which the Rec Center closed in March due to the pandemic, there were still 4,626 unique participants and 29,953 total participations. This past year, 2021-22, participation rebounded strongly with 4,275 unique participants and 27,668 total participations.

Similarly to IM Sports, Sport Clubs were

unable to play, practice or compete in person during the 2020-21 academic year. With the start of the 2021-22 academic year, Sport Club participants were ready to get back in action. Our 30+ Sport Club teams and more than 1,500 athletes resumed formal competition with travel that included national championship opportunities.

By student experience

Brennan, mentioned previously, shared that playing hockey at CU Boulder was one of the primary reasons he chose to attend. Building connections with his teammates and representing his fellow Buffs on the ice has been a “game changer” for him. Hockey also serves as an outlet for him through tough times.

MOVING FORWARD

While our facility utilization and program participation numbers improved over the past year, we continue to face challenges that have prevented us from returning to our pre-COVID numbers. Despite returning to mostly in-person activities, we continued to wrestle with COVID-19 restrictions, especially related to mask mandates. Through various feedback methods, including email, web, in-person and app interactions, we repeatedly heard that these restrictions pushed some members to seek out other recreational facilities outside of the university.

We have also faced hurdles for recapturing our non-student memberships, as we limited facility access to only students during the pandemic. As a result, faculty, staff,

affiliates and their partners, spouses and dependents looked elsewhere to fulfill their wellness needs. This has represented a significant loss for us, as we had more than 1,000 non-student members before the pandemic.

As we begin transitioning into a new academic year, The Rec anticipates continued growth with renewed participation in pre-arrival programs, athletic sport camps and reinvigorated connections with our campus community. The Rec will continue to incorporate innovative programming and add an additional 3,500 square feet of functional training and martial arts space to meet the needs of our members over the next year. While rebounding at The Rec hasn’t been easy, we are excited to see what the next academic year will hold!

Learn more about Recreation Services:
colorado.edu/recreation





CONNECTION IN A CHANGING WORLD

For many students entering CU Boulder, their on-campus living experience will be pivotal in framing their collegiate journey. With 24 residence hall communities housing over 8,000 students, stepping into residential life at CU is a dynamic opportunity for students to engage meaningfully with each other and the world around them. A robust residential curriculum is presented for students to navigate their experiences intentionally through the lens of connection: to self, to the community around them, to academics and to larger social justice opportunities.

A big part of the residential experience is

connection to students' resident advisor (RA). RAs play a very important role in the lives of students living on campus. They act as mentors, event planners, problem solvers, relationship builders and so much more. To model and prioritize the importance of connection, RAs engage one on one with each student living on their floor/in the wing of their hall six times during the academic year in conversations called Buff Chats.

The purpose of Buff Chats is to help residents feel valued and connected at CU and in the residence halls while challenging them to think critically, set and attain goals, develop meaningful relationships and become more self-

reflective. Data tells us that Buff Chats make a positive impact on students' college and residential experiences. In the next section, we will review the evolution of Buff Chat conversations over the years and explore the kinds of impacts Buff Chats have had on students' experiences. Finally, we will share thoughts from RAs about how they observe connections happening for and among their residents living on campus.

The Impact of One-on-One Connection: Buff Chat Data

Buff Chats are intentional connections RAs are making with their residents. The RA facilitates a Buff Chat in an individual or group setting. The goal of the conversation is to focus on various themes that may relate to the resident's development, CU experience and their overall journey as a Buff. Generally, residents experience milestones that may occur at specific times throughout the year, these are called cornerstone periods.

Cornerstone conversations allow RAs to engage with residents during a pivotal time on their CU journey as many students are transitioning to living alone for the first time away from family, and finding a new sense of independence and personal responsibility. Additionally, each Buff Chat period has learning outcomes that guide the conversation between RA and resident. RAs must engage in a cornerstone conversation with each resident during specified periods. For example, the cornerstone topic for period 2, transition, and the cornerstone for period 3, self-care and wellness, occurred in the fall semester. There are six periods overall that occur during the course of an academic year. RAs electronically submit brief notes about

FIGURE 1: Individual Statements of Belonging by Number of Buff Chats

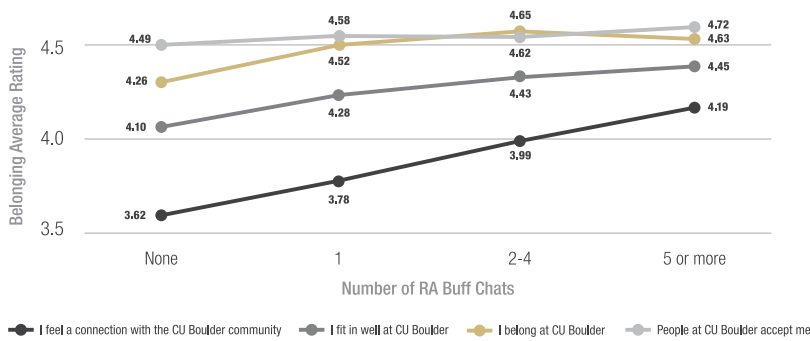


FIGURE 2: Individual Statements of Mattering by Number of Buff Chats

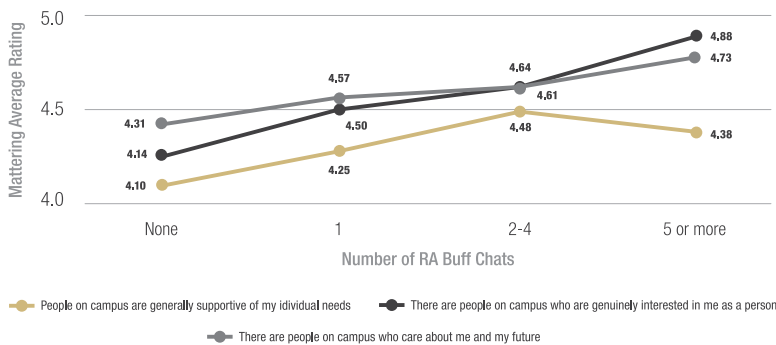


FIGURE 3: Average Sense of Belonging by Number of Buffs Chats

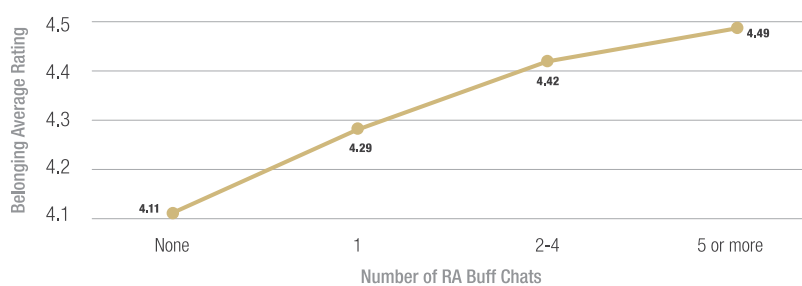
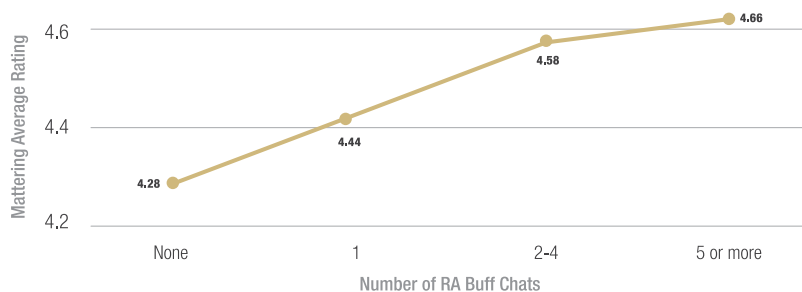


FIGURE 4: Average Sense of Mattering by Number of Buffs Chats



each Buff Chat they engage in and these notes are analyzed for themes.

At the end of the year, residents report back on their experiences in a survey. Through that survey data, it is clear that student participation in Buff Chats indicated a generally positive impact on their sense of belonging and mattering.

Data from the 2021 End-of-Year Survey (administered in April 2021) generally indicates a positive relationship between the number of Buff Chats students participated in during the 2020-21 academic year and their level of agreement with questions related to belonging and mattering on campus. As students engage in more Buff Chats during the academic year, their reported sense of belonging and mattering generally increases.

Figures 1 through 4 highlight the average sense of belonging and mattering students experienced based on the number of Buff Chats participated in over the course of the academic year (this data is also from the 2021 End-of-Year Survey). The more Buff Chats in which they participated, the stronger agreement students indicated with survey statements assessing belonging and mattering. It is clear to see the positive impact these intentional connection points can make on students' experiences overall while living on campus.

Buff Chat Connection: What Are They Talking About?

It likely comes as no surprise that more connection relates to a more favorable and positive experience for CU students in regards to their sense of belonging and mattering. While Buff Chats are a great intentional and required opportunity for connection, what topics of conversation are meaningful for students to connect on that can lead to this greater sense of belonging and mattering? In addition to the “what” in regards to conversation, it is also important to consider the “how:” during the 2019-20 academic year, Buff Chats happened completely in person up until the start of COVID-19 precautions; for the 2020-21

academic year, there was a priority put on keeping conversations virtual; in the 2021-22 academic year, there was a return to connection in person but with some adaptation for the changing nature of COVID-19 requirements and students' needs.

As the nature of connection has changed so has the conversation itself. Each Buff Chat has a specific prompt related to what students may be experiencing during that time of the academic year. We looked at the data from conversations during Period 2 (transition, occurring in October) and Period 3 (self-care and wellness, occurring in November and December) to note any similarities or differences between these conversations when comparing the fall semesters of 2019, 2020 and 2021.

For Period 2, the overall goal was to motivate residents to intentionally reflect on their transition to CU. All residents were asked to reflect on the single question: how is college different from where you previously lived? Not surprisingly, students in 2020 indicated being challenged by the isolation they experienced and gaining confidence to find new ways to connect with others while students in 2019 and 2021 talked more about the sense of independence gained in the college transition that gave them the opportunity to find their own connections and engagement opportunities that formed a deeper sense of belonging. Across all three years, students articulated a general idea of the resources available to them as they transition into their new living and school environments to help them navigate the differences experienced in college life.

For Period 3, the overall goal was to assist residents in identifying resources on campus that can support the

development of their physical and mental wellbeing. These conversations aimed to lessen the hesitation residents may feel in examining their own physical and mental well-being and connect residents to resources provided by CU Boulder. Self-care and wellness in the Buff Chat prompts were defined as any element impacting a resident's physical, mental or sexual health. All residents were asked to reflect on the single question: When have you recently felt stressed at CU? In addition to the typical stressors of academic obligations and extra-curricular involvement, students in 2020 indicated virtual learning fatigue as a main cause of stress. Students in 2020 also emphasized the importance of self-care and wellness more than in 2019 or 2021. Examples of self-care activities indicated were getting outside for activity and utilizing resources for mental health and academic support.

Connection Points: RAs' Perspectives on What Makes Connection Meaningful

Three RAs were asked to share their experiences with Buff Chats, connecting with residents, and what that looked like before the pandemic, at the height of the pandemic and now. The RAs we spoke to reiterated how important prioritizing connection with their residents can be. And, while prioritizing connection is important, it can also be challenging. RAs noted that connection happens with their residents in many ways—group messaging, programs, meals together, outings—and that these connections make individual connection, such as Buff Chats or otherwise, easier to follow through with. One RA noted, “thinking back on it, having been an RA they [residents] definitely were intentional about when they were reaching out.” RAs spend a lot of time and energy making sure students feel that sense of

matter and belonging highlighted in the data above. Another RA added, “Normally it's a pretty natural conversation. I explain to them that I want to make sure I'm seeing all of them regularly so that they know that I can support them.”

Across the board, RAs recognize how much easier connection is with less isolation and more in-person interaction possible with their residents. Most interactions during periods with stricter COVID-19 guidelines needed to be planned and intentional; whereas, now there is more opportunity for spontaneous connection to take place. An RA observed, “you interact differently when you see someone unexpectedly... if you didn't plan to see someone during the pandemic you wouldn't see them. Now you can. You can just sort of run into someone.” Balancing intentional interaction with Buff Chats and the joy of being able to simply bump into a friendly face adds to students' connection and perception of belonging on campus.

As students navigate from their initial on-campus living experiences into whatever they choose next, they have the opportunity to take a sense of connection and belonging with them when they go. Though structure may change, the foundations of connection can be maintained to help CU students thrive through the rest of their collegiate journey. Through the different changes students have experienced, the importance of connection remains the same, and Buff Chats are one way to highlight how these intentional connections occur for CU students.

Learn more about Residence Life: colorado.edu/living/housing/undergraduate-housing/residence-life



KICKSTARTING THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE THROUGH STAMPEDE LEADERSHIP CAMP

Pre-arrival programs at the University of Colorado Boulder are the first opportunities for first-year and transfer students to get involved on campus. Stemming from the mission to enhance student retention and success, pre-arrival programs focus on helping students build early relationships with their peers, university departments and staff and 'fast track' their involvement at CU. Pre-arrival programs have historically included Stamped Leadership Camp, EcoReps: Sustainability Leadership Program, Outdoor Pursuits: CU Bound – Camping and Adventure, Outdoor Pursuits: CU in the Rockies, First-Year Service Experience

and Mind and Body Buffs. Students in the pre-arrival programs receive advanced move-in, earlier access to campus resources and closer relationships with faculty and campus leaders and experiences and relationships that could last well beyond graduation. Fall 2021 was the first time that all pre-arrival programs joined together to support this collective purpose, increasing resource sharing and encouraging us to think about these programs in a new way. While we have a few signature pre-arrival programs, this past year we dug into assessing the impact of a leadership development focused program featuring the largest

participant numbers, Stamped Leadership Camp.

Stamped Leadership Camp returned in August 2021 after a one-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic and experienced some of the largest programmatic changes. Stamped Leadership Camp allows incoming students the opportunity to connect with upper-class mentors to learn about being a CU Buff, learn about clubs and organizations, as well as discover and participate in various activities and leadership development sessions hosted by Residence Life, Center for Student Involvement and other Student Affairs departments.

Prior to Stamped Leadership Camp 2021, the program was coordinated by the Residence Hall Association student leaders but transitioned to Residence Life and Center for Student Involvement staff to bolster the student experience. This new coordination structure allowed us to refocus on three core objectives: support students in learning about opportunities to get involved on campus, facilitate early small group conversations on social justice topics and help students develop connection with their peers early on.

MEASURING THE PRE-ARRIVAL IMPACT

Following Stamped Leadership Camp, a survey was distributed to the 102 participants, with 57.8 percent of participants responding.

- **Connections**

Coming out of a year of social distancing and reports of students feeling high levels of isolation, Stampede Leadership Camp committed to helping students build connections within our largest pre-arrival program of 102 participants. Stampede Leadership Camp featured eight small group breakout sessions with a cohort of 13-21 students led by their peer mentor, three breakout sessions focused on students living in the same residential neighborhoods and four socials that brought together all pre-arrival programs. After the programs concluded, 83 percent of our campers reported feeling connected to their mentor and 90 percent of our campers reported feeling connected to their peer campers. These achievements are important to note as 14 percent of first-year student participants in the fall 2021 CU Boulder Campus Culture Survey reported they did not have a friend they felt close to at CU Boulder. Additionally, 48 percent of first-year students reported on the Campus Culture Survey they did not have anyone at CU whom they considered as a mentor.

- **Campus Involvement**

One new key development for Stampede Leadership Camp in fall 2021 was the connection to the Center for Student Involvement. This new relationship allowed for more opportunities to showcase how to get involved in student organizations, the Core Leadership Program sponsored by CU GOLD and CU Student Government in addition to residential student leadership opportunities

such as community councils, the Residence Hall Association and the National Residence Hall Honorary. Nine sessions throughout the week focused on different organizations and departments that students can get involved with as student leaders or as student employees. As a result of these sessions, 83.7 percent of campers listed at least one involvement opportunity they were actively pursuing.

- **Inclusion and Social Change**

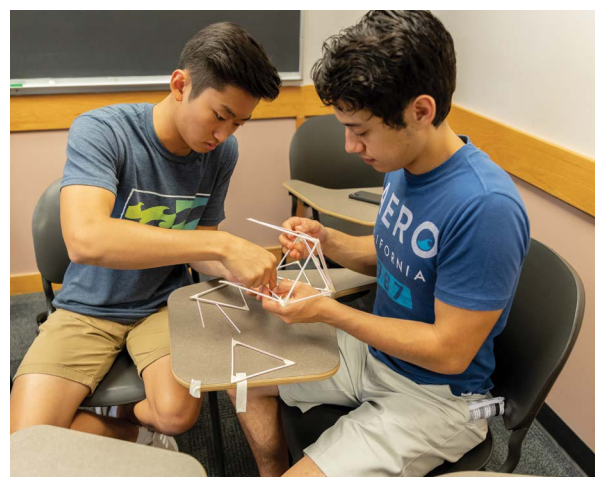
In 2018 and 2019, Stampede Leadership Camp incorporated the social change model of leadership into sessions in support of CU Boulder's commitment to inclusive excellence. In 2021, Stampede Leadership Camp refocused toward explicit use of this model to develop sessions. We took a scaffolded teaching approach to help students understand how to start their inclusive leadership journey through a session with the Center for Inclusion and Social Change, and supplemented this session with three small group social change conversations led by our peer mentors to help students dive into deeper conversations. As a result of these conversations, 79.7 percent of campers reported feeling comfortable engaging in inclusion and social justice conversations with their peers.

THE FUTURE OF PRE-ARRIVAL PROGRAMS

Throughout the 2021-22 academic year, we have continued to evaluate how

to enhance the pre-arrival experience across all programs. This has included efforts to standardize communication plans and selection processes, re-evaluate outcomes for the various programs, enhance the roles of peer mentors and explore ways to provide more opportunities for students to build connections across the pre-arrival programs. Beginning in August 2022, two new pre-arrival programs joined the six signature pre-arrival programs – TRiO Support Services' Fall Gateway program and the Hallett Hall Living Learning Communities Pre-Arrival Experience. Additionally, we are developing a comprehensive pre-arrival program evaluation to help ensure we are meeting the needs of students across all programs and improve experiences every year. Finally, we are exploring new and innovative pre-arrival experiences to add each year to ensure that we are helping students find their place on campus from the very first day they arrive.

For more information about pre-arrival programs or about creating a new pre-arrival program, please visit colorado.edu/orientation/pre-arrival-programs.





STUDENTS LEARNING THROUGH CONFLICT

Experiencing conflict can be one of the most trying times of a student's college career. Conflict can create uncertainty, discord, confusion, frustration, anger and apathy. As students experience these emotions, the negative effects of conflict can have a detrimental impact on their time at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution (SCCR) aims to address these negative experiences through a variety of services that the Conflict Resolution

Program offers. The program provides different interventions that uniquely fit each individual student's situation and their conflicts. For example, if a conflict leads a student to commit a policy violation or prompts them to seek support, SCCR may refer the student to the following services:

- Conflict coaching to build skills to address the conflict with one party.
- Staff mediation when students want to address the conflict together.
- Training to build students' skills on campus to manage conflict effectively.
- SCCR's Social Decision Making Workshop that helps students think through how they make decisions and the role of social settings.
- SCCR's Conflict and Anger Management Course which engages students over six hours on how to manage their anger and responses to conflict.

In the 2021-22 academic year, 141 students participated in conflict resolution workshops and courses. In a subsequent survey, the students reported that they gained the following knowledge and experience:

Skills to handle conflicts

- 94 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop felt they learned valuable concepts in decision making.
- 99 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop reported they acquired strategies to address conflict in the future.
- 100 percent of students in the Conflict and Anger Management course reported they gained the skills to effectively manage conflict in the future.
- 89 percent of students who participated in Conflict Coaching communicated they learned skills to effectively manage conflicts in the future.

Importance of values and responsibility in making decisions

- 99 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop agreed they understand the importance of grounding decisions in their values.
- 98 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop stated they are determined to take proactive

responsibility for their decisions in the future.

- Despite being assigned to take the Conflict and Anger Management course, 79 percent of the participants reported they would seek support from the Conflict Resolution Program in the future.
- 84 percent of assigned Conflict Coaching students would recommend the service to a friend.

Relationship and connection to others in the community

- 75 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop feel more connected to the other participants in the workshop.
- 68 percent of students who participated in the Social Decision Making workshop felt more connected to the CU Boulder community after attending the workshop.

Through the Conflict Resolution Program, students learn different perspectives on conflict, gain skills to address conflict more effectively and engage in processes that help resolve these paralyzing conflicts. As demonstrated by the student survey results, referring students to the Conflict Resolution Program can have a positive impact on their learning and ability to address conflict throughout their college career.

Learn more about Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution: colorado.edu/sccr

“

This process helped me understand that I was not the only one negatively affected [by my actions],” one student reported to encapsulate their experience with the Conflict Resolution Program. “I also understand the magnitude of my actions, how it affected the community, that I do have the voice to speak up and that if others aren’t willing to listen, it is fine if I decide to leave a situation I don’t agree with.

”





AFFORDABLE LEGAL SERVICES BENEFIT BOTH STUDENTS AND CU

Student Legal Services (SLS) is a small law office on campus that serves CU Boulder students courtesy of CU Student Government (CUSG). CUSG has supported SLS since the 1970s in order to provide students with access to affordable legal services. SLS assists students with a variety of legal issues they might encounter during their time in Boulder including, but not limited to, criminal, student conduct, Honor Code, landlord/tenant, employment, immigration, debt collection, insurance and traffic matters. SLS also educates students and campus organizations on

individual constitutional rights, how to deal with the police, the Student Code of Conduct, knowing what to look for in an apartment lease and other topics relevant to the student population.

SLS BENEFITS INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Many college students may find themselves making their own major decisions for the first time and may inevitably make errors in judgment from time to time. While these errors

in judgment can be a right of passage to adulthood, there are times these decisions result in legal issues for students. Legal issues also sometimes just “find” students through no fault of their own.

Whatever the cause and whatever the situation, having a legal issue causes stress. That stress can come in different forms, such as psychological, financial or familial, and for students it often affects their ability to focus on school. In fact, 87 percent of SLS’s student clients report that their legal issues affected



their studies. Of those students, 86 percent report that the assistance they received from SLS helped them with their academic focus.

SLS helps students regain that focus by providing them with high-quality legal advice and representation which, in turn, helps them learn to navigate and manage the outcomes of their situations. The work performed by SLS also supports students in the longer term, such as with future educational and career endeavors. In FY22 alone, SLS has:

- Helped students prove they were actually innocent of what they had been accused.
- Ensured that international students who made various mistakes kept their visas (and, thus, their student statuses).
- Helped students and their families secure stable housing.
- Assisted students in resolving their cases without criminal convictions.
- Protected the constitutionally guaranteed civil rights of students.

- Negotiated and litigated the resolution of disputes between students and their landlords including:
 - Dismissal of an eviction case after a student had already been evicted.
 - Payment for the entire contents of a student's apartment that was wrongfully discarded by the landlord.
 - Recoupment of over \$3,300 in security deposit monies wrongfully withheld from a student for over two years.
- Assisted students with disclosure requirements for graduate school applications and job searches.
- Helped students successfully represent themselves.
- Assisted students seeking treatment for mental health and substance abuse issues.
- Helped students resolve their cases in ways that allowed them to keep their federal financial aid.

- Negotiated the resolution of cases through student education.
- Negotiated and litigated the resolution of cases allowing students to keep their driving privileges.
- Helped a student navigate the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution process and avoid almost certain suspension.
- Assisted students affected by the Whittier and Marshall fires.
- Negotiated dismissal of a claim for damages against a student by a large national corporation.

Of SLS's student clients, 94 percent report that they were better able to understand their legal options after meeting with SLS and that they would recommend SLS to other students in need of legal assistance.

SLS BENEFITS STUDENTS AS A WHOLE

While SLS's goal must always be to advise and advocate to the best of its ability for its individual clients on their respective legal matters, the natural side effects of the office's work also directly benefit these students in other ways. SLS attorneys know from conversations with their clients that such side effects include students learning about constitutional principles; legislative, court and administrative processes; objective analysis of facts; logical organization of arguments; the collection and presentation of documentation supporting a given position; negotiation strategies; resiliency in the face of difficult circumstances; accountability

and self-advocacy. As a result of its work, 80 percent of SLS's clients report that they felt better equipped to prevent similar legal situations in the future.

Through its educational outreach efforts, SLS also benefits more students than just its clients. In FY22, SLS has:

- Supervised CU law students in court in conjunction with the law school clinical program.
- Reviewed proposed legislation for CUSG at its request.
- Together with Career Services, sponsored two presentations for students thinking about law school.
- Partnered with the First-Generation Scholars program to meet with first-generation students about legal careers.
- Presented to international students through the International Student Scholars Program on legal tips for living in the U.S. and potential immigration issues they might face while here.
- Presented on what a person should know before signing a lease to students and their families during Family Weekend along with Off-Campus Housing & Neighborhood Relations.

SLS BENEFITS CU BOULDER AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

The ability of students to focus on their studies undoubtedly affects their grade point averages, and better grades have long been shown to have a direct

and positive effect on college student retention. SLS's work contributes to retention by helping students who are facing legal issues to regain that focus. As a result of working with SLS, students also often learn lessons, gain knowledge and develop skills that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. In addition, SLS attorneys fight hard every day to ensure that students are treated fairly in court and before administrative tribunals regardless of protected class or socioeconomic status.

When it comes to how SLS's services benefit CU Boulder and the Division of Student Affairs, the office's work relates directly to the University's Strategic Imperatives and the Division of Student Affairs Key Commitments. Specifically, SLS promotes a student-centered environment and equity, inclusion and social justice; helps to retain and graduate students; and helps students be accountable for their actions, develop their critical thinking skills and creatively address what are often complex legal issues. Further, because SLS helps students focus on school, it contributes to their future career plans and thus their abilities to positively impact humanity after they graduate.

SLS IS AFFORDABLE

Finally, it is important to emphasize the highly subsidized—and therefore affordable—nature of SLS's services. Thanks to CUSG's support, while SLS attorneys are highly experienced, the office is nonetheless able to offer its services to students at a fraction of the cost of a private lawyer. This is especially important given that 69 percent of SLS's student clients report they would not

have sought help from a lawyer had SLS not been available to them.

This high percentage is likely due to the fact that students often come to SLS without the financial support of a parent. Their reasons include embarrassment, fear that they will be forced to leave school, the desire not to ask for more money and the desire not to worry a parent who is ill. It is important these students have access to affordable legal services regardless of any perceived ability to pay. And, of course, some of the students who come to SLS are simply from families that cannot afford private attorneys. In fact, 79 percent of SLS's clients are receiving at least one form of financial assistance to attend CU.

For this latter group, SLS has a special program. In 2016, SLS received a \$20,000 donation to be used to defray the cost of its services for clients who qualify for a Pell Grant, which is a federal grant awarded to students who have high financial needs.

For more information on Student Legal Services, please visit colorado.edu/studentlegal.





COLLABORATING WITH CAMPUS PARTNERS TO SUPPORT POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

The hasty progression of the COVID-19 pandemic provided unique circumstances that shed light on areas of growth within Student Support & Case Management's (SSCM) processes, including how we collaborate with our campus partners. Working remotely required SSCM to develop a more streamlined system for communication and to promote liaison relationships across campus that did not exist before.

Student Support & Case Management

provides support to students throughout their college career and helps them achieve their academic and personal goals. SSCM does not solve a student's problems for them, but helps identify issues, connects the student with appropriate resources and works collaboratively with them to develop an action plan. Students who are facing extenuating circumstances relating but not limited to, mental and physical health concerns, hospitalization

and family emergencies, are often supported by SSCM case managers. These same students are frequently supported by Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) as well. Given that CAPS' focus area and students they support often overlap with SSCM, our collaborative relationship with CAPS has had the most considerable impact.

Supporting similar missions

With CAPS serving as the university's counseling and psychiatric team and

SSCM serving as a starting point for students impacted by mental health concerns and hospitalizations, our teams are often collaborating on how to assure the student’s mental health is prioritized while also reducing the impact on their academic career. In spring 2022, 37 percent of SSCM’s interactions—via phone, email and Microsoft Teams—with campus partners were with CAPS. Often, the communications between these offices pose a unique challenge, as SSCM is a non-confidential service which operates under FERPA laws and CAPS is a confidential service abiding by HIPAA laws. In the times our offices connect, the main priority for both teams is to protect student privacy and safety by only sharing information that is necessary and within the scope of the law for both teams to appropriately support the student.

By creating a crisis-focused Microsoft Teams chat and continuing to utilize

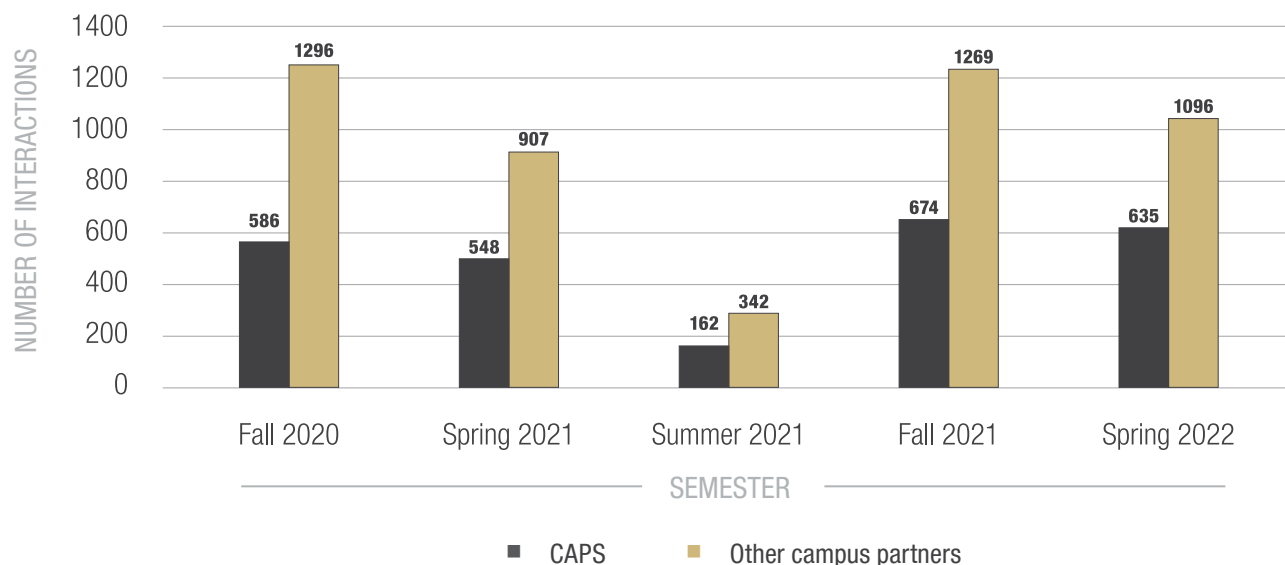
releases of information (ROIs), SSCM and CAPS have developed a system for relaying urgent concerns and referrals regarding students who would be best supported by both offices simultaneously. As these processes have expanded and developed, SSCM has seen a 16 percent increase in overall interactions with CAPS from spring 2021 to spring 2022, with many of these interactions surrounding sharing information on mental health hospitalizations and updates on students’ cases. Through this partnership, SSCM can refer students who are seeking support regarding their mental health to CAPS, and CAPS can relay how students facing these struggles can use SSCM’s support in navigating their next steps and resources.

Connecting students with other campus partners

While SSCM saw a 16 percent increase in interactions with CAPS between

spring 2021 and spring 2022, SSCM also saw a 21 percent increase in interactions with other campus partners, including but not limited to Advising, Continuing Education and Disability Services. SSCM can connect with these campus partners to offer an additional layer of support to students. SSCM case managers will utilize their own extensive knowledge of various university resources and processes to help the student advocate for themselves, and when a student requires additional assistance outside of self-advocacy, case managers are available to help them navigate these conversations with the applicable office(s). Figure 1 reflects SSCM’s interactions with CAPS and other offices in support of students who are currently on a SSCM case manager’s caseload; however, it does not reflect the times SSCM is connecting with these campus partners to determine which office is the appropriate referral for the student and vice versa.

FIGURE 1: Collaborating with campus partners



Developing relationships across campus

In order to expand Student Support & Case Management's presence across campus, it was determined that an effective path would be developing a liaison program to intentionally create relationships with various support services and departments. Through the liaison program, SSCM has established partnerships with 22 offices and departments across campus. These partnerships start with SSCM giving a presentation to another office about its mission, goals and services, how to support students who are in crisis and what other campus services are available if SSCM is not the best resource for the student. The staff member who gave the presentation then serves as the SSCM liaison to the office they presented to and is available when that team inquires if a student is best supported by SSCM or another department. Additionally, SSCM seeks out a liaison in that partnering office, so that we can ask them specific questions as well. In creating and maintaining these relationships, SSCM can learn processes from other teams and continue to strategize how we can support each other and the student experience.

Though the liaison program has only been around for a short while, connecting with the various academic departments and colleges on campus has been beneficial in expanding SSCM's understanding of what processes are department and college specific compared to what the university-wide expectations are for all of them. Gaining this information

has allowed SSCM to better relay the most accurate information to students and assure that we are providing as much information as possible before recommending a student connect with another resource. This has proven especially helpful in more stressful times during the academic year, as it cuts down on the number of resources a student needs to contact before getting the support they are looking for.

What is next

As SSCM moves forward with the information we have learned about collaborating with campus partners since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognize the importance of assessing the impact of these changes and how they relate to positive student outcomes. Recently, SSCM has added a survey that allows students to address whether they feel supported and cared for on campus to pre-appointment confirmation emails. That same question is also asked on an end of the semester questionnaire sent to students that have worked with SSCM during that previous semester. These surveys will allow SSCM to better track any changes in the students' answers before and after meeting with case managers.

While no office can ever guarantee positive student outcomes, we can always approach our processes with a growth perspective to constantly reassess our role in supporting these outcomes. By continuing to build and develop relationships with campus partners, we become a more knowledgeable campus community that is better informed to support students.

It is also important for SSCM to continuously evaluate how we measure positive student outcomes, beyond retention rates, and the steps SSCM has already put into place. Student Support & Case Management is a resource designed to support students facing extenuating circumstances, and the office will continue to expand its presence across campus as well as improve practices to best support and assess outcome achievement for the students who work with us.

Learn more about Student Support and Case Management: colorado.edu/support/sscm





INCLUSIVE CHANGES IN THE HOUSING APPLICATION PROCESS

For many years CU Boulder student housing assignments were based on date priority, meaning students were at an advantage if they submitted their housing application earlier than others. Students who were accepted early to the university would rush to confirm their acceptance by paying a \$200 confirmation fee and submit a \$300 non-refundable deposit with their housing application, which was required for first-year students. This gave financially privileged students an early date/time stamp and priority for receiving their first or second choice

in residence hall assignment, even if they weren't fully committed to CU Boulder. Additionally, if a contract was terminated at any time and the student was taking classes at CU, they were charged a 15 percent cancellation charge of room and board from date of cancellation to May. This often resulted in thousands of dollars assessed to the student, a risk that financially privileged students were willing and able to take.

Around 2015, University Housing began reviewing our contract and policies for ways to be more equitable in the

student housing experience. The first change was made in 2015-16 when we changed the termination charges from a full academic year contract to semester charges, reducing the cancellation charge from thousands to hundreds and possibly even zero. In 2020, unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic, we changed our non-refundable deposit (if someone canceled) to a \$250 refundable deposit and \$50 application fee. Students were still paying \$300, but the \$250 was returned when the contract ended, less any damages.

We also reflected on how we could make the process of paying the deposit more equitable for students who needed to wait for financial aid or who experienced financial challenges in getting the totality of \$500 paid to confirm acceptance to CU Boulder and apply for housing. We explored ways to do so and still have their housing preferences considered, since we were date/time priority for preferences. At this time, we worked with Admissions to identify Pell Grant eligible students who could defer their \$500 to the fall tuition and fees bill, and these students were then able to apply within the first round of assignments, in early April.

In an effort for all students to have equitable access to our Residential Academic Programs (RAP), Living Learning Communities and traditional housing options, a historic change was implemented for the 2021-22 academic year in which we eliminated the date priority process. Beginning that year, we set a priority deadline for early May and all applications received were granted housing assignments by random selection, giving all students the same opportunity to be assigned to one of their hall experience preferences.

There have been many positive impacts to students, families and our operations with this change.

- **Fewer cancellations:** With this change, we have experienced 57.6 percent less cancellations prior to move in.
- **Fewer phone calls and emails:** With this process in place, communication with families about student housing has improved. Our call and email volume during the first year decreased by 1,998 from April-August. Families better understand that their student could be assigned to any of our 24 halls rather than having their hearts set on the central campus halls they visited during their campus tour.
- **Positively impacts the university community:** Students don't feel pressured to decide or feel left out that they don't have a housing assignment if they are a later confirmed applicant or came off the waitlist. Previously, families shared concerns with us that they felt punished for "following the rules" and waiting until May 1 to confirm if they were deciding between schools. Additionally, with the early housing commitment, many would cancel and leave ideal vacancies that we could then only fill with students who applied late or were waitlisted. This was very upsetting to those who applied in the middle tiers as they felt they were not able to secure those spaces. We have received many positive comments and appreciation from families regarding our new process and decision to eliminate the date priority process. This new deadline has positively impacted our families





and their experience when deciding to choose CU. Anecdotally, we are encountering much happier students and families in their interactions with us.

So far in 2022, we are experiencing these positive impacts:

- Admitted Students Day (ASD):** Previously, when we used the date priority process, more than 3,000 students would have their housing assignments prior to visiting campus for ASD. Families would visit our offices with concerns about their student assignments and lack of opportunity for placement in a RAP, rather than explore other halls. For the 2021 ASD virtual event, we worked with Admissions to send out the halls each student was eligible to select in their housing preferences. This encouraged them to virtually visit the halls they were eligible to consider. For the 2022 ASD, we sent the same eligibility

email prior to ASD so families could plan visits to halls that their students could select for their eligible housing preferences. We had the most families in ASD history visit the Williams Village community. Our office saw significantly fewer families with housing concerns than the historically 300+ visiting our office.

- Timeline:** This year we are able to release assignments two weeks earlier than previous years, due to this new process. This allowed us to be better campus partners to support RAPs and course registration. This change also allows us to offer two housing change processes. Our office annually manages more than 500 housing assignment changes.
- Enrollment management:** Anticipated census numbers were higher this year than previous academic years. This estimation

guides our housing capacity decisions for the year. Due to the first-year live on requirement, we are obligated to house all first-year students. When that number trends lower than first predicted, it allows us to increase housing options for transfer students as well as continuing students. This new process allows us the time and flexibility to be more accommodating to more students as well as university needs.

Overall, the change from confirmed date priority to one date for all students to complete their application was one that was long overdue. It has created a more positive experience for students and families in their housing selection, a more equitable selection process particularly for low-income and working class students and greater efficiencies within University Housing.

Learn more about University Housing: colorado.edu/living/housing



RETURNING TO THE HEART OF CAMPUS



During the 2018-19 academic year, the last full year of regular UMC operations before COVID-19 changed our world, the University Memorial Center (UMC) saw an average of 10,500 guests through its doors each day. During the pandemic, occupancy was limited to a total of 770 people, in-person events were halted, furniture was stored away, food vendors shuttered their doors and the exciting buzz of the building was quieted. Over the course of the last year, the UMC returned to its endearing moniker as the “heart of campus.” As the UMC navigated the pandemic, it provided us with opportunities to create new efficiencies that will last well into the future, find new and innovative ways to keep our community informed and connected, and implement technology

that will enhance student and staff experiences in the facility.

Developing the “New Normal”

As campus returned to a fully in-person experience in fall 2021, the UMC made it a priority to ensure that the building felt both safe and welcoming as the CU Boulder community adjusted to its “new normal.” The goal was to be thoughtful, proactive and understanding that users of the space may navigate it differently than before, and to ensure that the facility offered a variety of ways for visitors and tenants to enjoy the space. The focus of developing the “new normal” centers around embracing the hybrid environment and utilizing building usage data to best serve the CU community.

Embracing the Hybrid Environment

With an understanding that work and study environments had changed during the pandemic, the UMC set out to ensure that they could accommodate the new needs of guests. The audio visual team researched ways to provide a more immersive experience for clients that desired hybrid meeting options. The Meeting Owl hybrid meeting system is now available via reservation through CU Events Planning & Catering for meetings and conferences within the UMC. The system is equipped with a camera offering 360-degree views so remote participants can see everyone in the room, omnidirectional microphones for advanced sound quality, “smart focus” to automatically focus on the person who is speaking,



and 360-degree speakers so all participants can hear clearly wherever they are. These cameras also allow more flexibility for students to meet and host events in a hybrid format, improving inclusivity by allowing access for participants who may not be able to make an on-campus commitment for meetings or study sessions, to participate in a student organization or to attend an event. Moving forward we will analyze our reservations processes by comparing and contrasting hybrid and in-person events, looking at how they are structured and what the most common types of events take place in a hybrid format. This will help us

determine how we can best service those events and what additional resources we need to provide.

Capacity Tracking

Data from the SenSource capacity tracking system is used to inform decisions around operating hours, services, space utilization and revenue generation. Year-to-date entry comparisons from the 2020-21 to the 2021-22 academic year reveals a 171 percent increase in building traffic as students, faculty, staff and guests began returning to the UMC. These entry statistics allowed us to anticipate staffing, cleaning and maintenance needs to ensure that we created the

safest and most welcoming environment possible as we navigated the pandemic. Moving forward, disaggregation of this data will improve our understanding of hourly building utilization and specific entry locations which will help us determine the most effective ways to operate the UMC and provide the best guest experience possible.

Creating Community

Rebuilding community post-pandemic was a high priority for the UMC in its mission to return to its role as the “heart of campus” and create a renewed sense of belonging. Focusing on reengaging students, faculty and staff as building traffic increased and creating a welcoming environment were key components in our effort to rebuild our community.

Space Updates

The UMC has focused on refreshing areas throughout the building to create inviting spaces for students and the CU community to study, work and relax. Several spaces have been remodeled, including the reception desk (which serves as the information center for both the UMC and the CU Boulder campus collectively) and larger meeting spaces that serve 50 or more guests. New furniture in the larger event

FIGURE 1: UNIVERSITY MEMORIAL CENTER 20-21 and 21-22 Academic Year Building Entries

August 2020	72,666	August 2021	156,818
September 2020	48,782	September 2021	152,812
October 2020	43,682	October 2021	161,723
November 2020	37,662	November 2021	106,434
December 2020	15,265	December 2021	69,733
January 2021	25,637	January 2022	65,715
February 2021	44,602	February 2022	133,148
March 2021	66,231	March 2022	130,348
April 2021	69,484	April 2022	170,887
Total Entries	424,011	Total Entries	1,147,618
Total Percentage Increase 20-21 to 21-22 = 171%			



spaces provide for a sleek, updated appearance. The fifth floor terrace has also been revamped with new, modern outdoor lounge furniture to allow visitors to relax and take in the unique view of the Flatirons. In the upcoming year, we look forward to a full academic cycle with these updates in place, and assessing their use through guest interactions and client surveys.

Zen Zone

The UMC launched its new pop-up space, the Zen Zone. The space is located on the first floor for the last two weeks of the semester as students finish up classes and complete their final exams. The Zen Zone invites students to take a break, relax or meditate in a comfortable area. The space is filled with comfortable furniture, pillows, rugs and soft lighting. There are also resources available to help students manage stress, sleep better, study for finals and practice breathing exercises. This area provides students a space

to both converse and relax amongst their peers, while offering a unique opportunity to bring students into the building who otherwise may not have visited us. With plans to more prominently feature this space in the upcoming year, we will be seeking student feedback via surveys to determine the growth possibilities and student demand for this space.

CU on Friday

After a long hiatus due to COVID-19, CU on Friday returned to hosting in-person events in the fall of 2021. This UMC tradition is hosted on the first Friday of each month in The Connection. The program is aimed at bringing the CU community together in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. The committee hosted six events with a total attendance of 900 participants. These participants included students, faculty and staff and provided a unique opportunity for these groups to interact with each other in an informal setting. The interest in

this event series will push us to look at expanding the size and scope of CU on Friday in the future with a goal of growing the program to 200+ attendees per event.

There is a renewed sense of vitality within the UMC's nearly 70-year-old walls. Regularly scheduled programs and events have returned, student employment rosters are nearly full, recognized student organizations are back in their offices, study spaces are no longer empty and the sound of music and bowling pins can be heard in The Connection. We are confident that the future of the UMC is incredibly bright. While we will continue to develop the "new normal" in the days and months ahead, the groundwork has been laid to further assess building usage, the guest experience and the effectiveness of new technology in our facility to ensure that the UMC is viewed as the "heart of campus" for another 70 years.

Learn more about the UMC: colorado.edu/umc

THE VETERANS SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM: SUCCEEDING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC



Each year in early August, while CU Boulder awaits the return of students, a small group of new student veterans make their way around campus: visiting far-off classrooms, hearing from staff in various departments and spending their mornings refreshing math and writing skills. The Veterans Summer Bridge program has been held each August since 2017. It began as a pilot program to help address the academic preparedness gap between high school and university, which many veterans experience due to their military service. In recent years, the evolution of the program from fully in-person to remote (and back) has allowed for a unique ability to compare outcomes for in-person and remote cohorts.

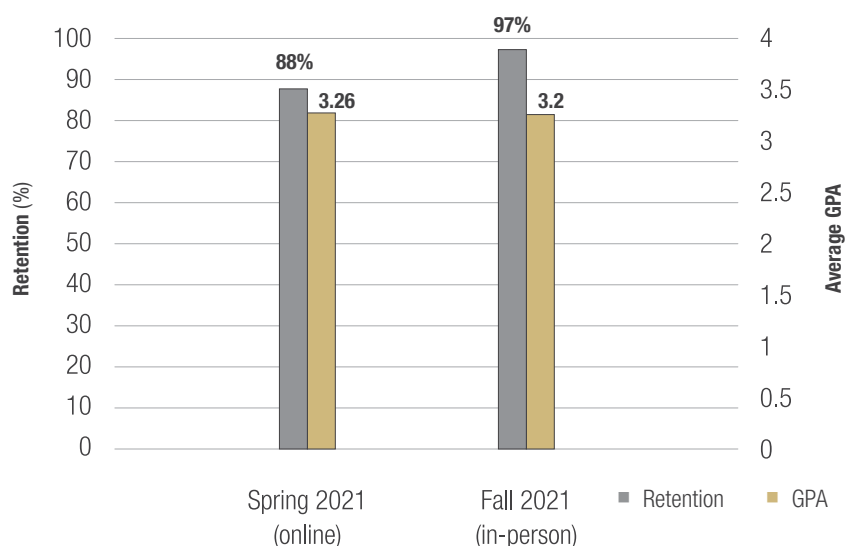
Development and First Years

Since the first cohort of 19 students in August 2017, the structure of the program has remained roughly the same. Students spend each morning working on math and writing skills, taught by instructors from CU's Program for Writing and Rhetoric and the Department of Mathematics. The instructors introduce students to the software platforms used in classes and help students define their strengths and weaknesses in these foundational areas. During the middle portion of the day, representatives from various campus offices provide briefs on topics of specific relevance to the student veteran experience, including financial aid, the psychology of transition, academic

skill development and using the library. A highlight of the program has been a faculty panel of top scholars from around campus. Upon completion of the program, the students receive a \$1,000 stipend to offset the living expenses they incur while attending the program. As a not-for-credit program, attending does not cost the students military benefits.

Student feedback has been universally positive. In the follow-up survey, one student stated, "I would have spent the first semester in Boulder isolated and alone, learning the ropes in a new town, but because of the Bridge program, before school even started I had a strong network of friends and people to turn to. I still hang out with and have a group

FIGURE 1: Online cohort vs. in-person cohort



chat with almost every member of the Bridge program.” Of the fall 2017 cohort, 100 percent of the students were retained into the second semester; 90 percent of them were retained or had graduated by fall 2020. The average GPA at the end of the first semester was 3.31. These trends have carried forward in subsequent years of the program: grade point averages for each cohort have consistently been in the 3.30 range at the end of the first term, with retention over 90 percent from the first to second semester. An unanticipated but equally gratifying outcome has been the sense of community developed among the students. For example, many of the fall 2017 students became roommates in future years, participated on an intramural team together and held “friendsgiving” with one another. Many still keep in contact, regularly volunteering to assist in subsequent Bridge programs and also taking leadership roles within the Veteran and Military Affairs (VMA) office.

Adjusting to COVID-Era Restrictions

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 presented significant challenges. The program had run almost exclusively in-

person to that point. Occurring during a summer dip in cases, the August 2020 Veterans Bridge program was the only in-person programming held on the CU Boulder campus during the month of August. Instructors and students adjusted to sessions held outdoors, and significant portions of the program were moved to Zoom and other online platforms. This was good preparation for spring, when the program moved fully online.

Keeping the structure of the program consistent with prior years has allowed for direct data comparison of the online version of the program against the in-person cohorts from recent years. Survey feedback found that most students would have preferred at least some in-person components to the program. Retention of the spring 2021 cohort to fall 2021 fell to 88 percent (and further to 77 percent, after the second semester), in comparison to the spring 2020 to fall 2020 cohort in which retention was over 90 percent. The GPA average was 3.26 for students who completed the term. By comparison, in August 2021, the Bridge program was

able to return to a hybrid experience, with some sessions held in person and some via Zoom to help familiarize students with the Zoom class format. Retention from fall 2021 to spring 2022 was 97 percent, with only one student deciding not to return out of the group of 37 students, in keeping with prior years of in-person August programs in which retention averages at 95 percent at the end of the first term. The GPA average was 3.2 for students completing the term.

Though the January 2021 and January 2022 Bridge program participants universally recommended the program to future incoming veterans on the CU campus, they also indicated a strong desire to meet in person. The comparison of retention data for fully online versus in-person cohorts allows VMA to make the case that in-person programming is vital for impacting student retention on campus.

Looking to the future

As of January 2022, 211 students have attended the Veterans Bridge programs; a shortened January version was started in January 2020. On the post-program survey, every student who has participated in the program agrees that they would recommend it to future incoming veterans to CU. The success of the program contributed to the interest of corporate and philanthropic donors in 2019; the Anschutz foundation and Phillips 66 have both contributed to the support and future expansion of the Bridge program to include more student participants and adjust the programming as needed to best serve the needs of incoming veteran students at CU Boulder.

Learn more about Veteran and Military Affairs: colorado.edu/veterans



CREATING CONNECTIONS THROUGH SERVICE ENGAGEMENT

As students began the academic year in a world that was starting to feel more familiar with pre-pandemic life, they were still faced with a world of challenges. Two senior classes didn't get to experience an in-person commencement, a cohort of first-year students lost the chance to have a typical residence hall experience and an entire generation of student leaders struggled to realize and develop their skills since March of 2020.

The consequences of the pandemic

on college students have been measured in-depth, and this article isn't meant to rehash those struggles or highlight more consequences of the pandemic. It is something with which we are familiar and will see research for years to come. Instead, the Volunteer Resource Center (VRC) is focusing on a year of success and growth, and our attempt at addressing one of the many consequences of the pandemic – damage to CU students' sense of belonging.

Before discussing our contributions to the issue of student sense of belonging, we'd like to highlight several successes we've had throughout this academic year. First, the VRC successfully brought back the First-Year Service Experience. Eight incoming students were able to move into their Residence Halls early and spend their Fall Welcome serving the local community. After a two-year hiatus, the Alternative Breaks program was held once again. During spring break we successfully sent three trips

and 30 students across the country where they gave their time doing various projects in those local communities. These trips accounted for more than 1,600 volunteer hours completed by the student participants. These trips accounted for more than 1,600 volunteer hours completed by the student participants. Leadership was also an incredible part of the Alternative Breaks experience. Of the six site leaders, 100 percent stated through post-program surveys that the experience met or exceeded their expectations. The site leaders also reported a significant amount of learning with five stating that prior to starting their role they only knew a little or a moderate amount about their trip topic which increased to five total knowing either a lot or a great deal. One student stated after their trip that, "I am confirming that leadership is in my nature."

The VRC also grew the Volunteer Placement Program by adding two new recognized community partners and placing 114 students within seven total organizations. Students committed to a six-week placement, serving at least three hours each week. The program had a 79 percent completion rate, with 90 students completing their commitment. We also saw growth in the CU in the Community day of service programs in which 91 volunteers participated in 378 hours of service throughout four events (including MLK Day of Service and National Volunteer Week).

The VRC also oversaw the successful rollout of the CUServes volunteer management platform. CUServes is the new way in which students, faculty and staff can find and connect with community organizations and volunteer opportunities within the community. Through this platform, 6,550 volunteer

hours were logged equating to a \$183,397 economic impact on the greater Boulder community.

A SENSE OF BELONGING BOTH ON AND OFF CAMPUS

Although the return of Alternative Breaks and the growth of the Volunteer Placement Program are viewed as great successes within our office, the data we collected from the student participants regarding their experiences tells an even greater story. Throughout the pandemic, students across the country struggled with feeling as though they belonged in their college community. Online classes, closed offices, restricted housing policies and occupancy limitations resulted in students to not being able to connect in ways they had in the past. CU Boulder was no exception to this. The Campus Culture Survey of fall 2021 showed that 23 percent of undergraduate

student respondents did not feel they had a sense of community at CU and 34 percent said they felt left out.

Our efforts at improving the sense of belonging among CU students centered on providing longer-term service opportunities in which students could participate. The Volunteer Placement Program asked students to commit to six weeks of volunteer service and the Alternative Breaks required students to participate in four pre-trip meetings leading up to the trip, traveling across the country and volunteering together for a full week. Through these longer-term commitments, students have an opportunity to make a bigger impact on the community and are also able to spend more time getting to know other participants and ideally building close relationships.

When examining the Alternative Breaks program, 16 of the 30 participants



responded to the post-program survey following the completion of the trips. Of those respondents, 95 percent stated that the Alternative Breaks experience helped them feel more connected to other students at CU. Further, 73 percent agreed that they would continue to get involved within the local community. These results indicate some connection between participation in Alternative Breaks and a connection to their community, the very foundation for a strong sense of belonging.

Next, we examined the Volunteer Placement Program and its impact on participant connection as well. 67 percent of the 11 post-program survey respondents from the spring 2022 cohort stated that their daily actions and behaviors were impacted based on what they learned during their experience in the program. Further, 95 percent of participants stated they felt a sense of

belonging to CU Boulder.

Although the sample size is small compared to other programs across campus, the data is promising. Participation in the Volunteer Placement Program grew from 20 students in the 2020-21 academic year to 107 in 2021-22. Further, 73 percent of Alternative Breaks participants indicated they would recommend the program to friends and 34 expressed interest in returning as a site leader. This will hopefully allow both programs to continue the growth we've seen and demonstrate their positive impact on the student experience and sense of belonging.

The VRC is striving for additional growth throughout its other programs and the creation of new opportunities. The CUServes platform has now officially rolled out and usage is increasing, with a focus on outreach and marketing it to our campus and community populations.

This platform allows students and organizations to record their impacts, including volunteer hours served, funds raised for philanthropy, goods donated in a food drive and anything else related to community service. Through students and organizations logging these, we can better observe the impact that our students make on the surrounding community. It will also allow us to better tell our story while demonstrating what the CU population can bring to the greater Boulder community. Lastly, the VRC is building programs around service-learning and civic engagement as we hope to put a greater focus on learning and advocacy through experiential opportunities and community engagement. Ultimately, the VRC is excited about the future and continuing to see its programs grow.

Learn more about the Volunteer Resource Center: colorado.edu/volunteer

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