Edith Ortega jokingly refers to the complicated dynamic in her large Hispanic family as "splitting the tortilla."

There are seven children in total, spanning three relationships and two countries, Mexico and the United States.

Three of those siblings – sisters Michelle (age 20) and Ivonne (29), along with Edith (35) – share much more than a father within that prism. To build upon the cultural analogy, they've experienced the whole enchilada, both together and apart.

Depression, abuse and drugs touched them all, either from a distance or directly.

They've "borrowed" each other's shoes and makeup, and shared stolen moments.

They've sometimes lived together and, often, far apart.

DNA binds them together. Experiences have strengthened the bonds, as has another common strand: a commitment to education.

Last December, at the annual Student Success Awards that celebrates unique pathways that have led to academic perseverance, May 2005 CCA graduates Ivonne and Edith had front-row seats as little 'sis Michelle was cited for her ongoing achievements.

Once characterized for her rebellious side, Michelle had found the strength to put what some close to her had hoisted upon her as a pre-determined future of early motherhood, dropping out, and partying and managed to ignore them all. Low expectations instead were trumped by the pursuit of high grades. And here she was, being celebrated for As and Bs, with sisters who also didn't buy into the gloomy forecasts and set an example

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for her to follow, serving as cheering section.

“They were sitting there, chatting, saying, ‘Oh, my God, I can’t believe you’re on the President’s List,’” Michelle recalled. “I swear Ivonne said it 20 times. ‘I can’t believe it … I can’t believe it …’”

It wasn’t unbelievable. Maybe unexpected, given actions not so far from the rearview mirror.

It took lessons learned, decisions made, and, yes, obstacles overcome, for all three sisters to break a seemingly vicious family cycle replete with early school exits and substance abuse.

“It’s definitely a proud moment to know that even though we’re from different moments in time, we have things in common now,” Edith said, wistfully.

**Mexican roots**

Arturo, the sisters’ shared patriarch, was a law student in Juarez, Mexico. Edith described him as “studious,” but as unfulfilled and regretful after leaving college before graduating, migrating to the U.S., and starting a construction career.

Edith and Ivonne stayed south of the border with their mom, Guadalupe, save for a year in Chicago when Edith was around six and Ivonne a newborn.

“As far as I could tell, life in Mexico was great,” Edith said. “I was from that generation of kids who played outside and left the doors open.”

At age 11, Edith said her goodbyes to Ivonne and her mother and joined her father in Denver. He’d soon remarried. Yet, even with the move and the family shell game, the hardest thing Edith had in her life was the expectation that she receive good grades.

It wasn’t much of a challenge, given what she called her “nerdy, straight” personality.

“One of the things my dad told me a long time ago that really sticks with me is that he wanted to give us as much as he could so that we could strive for a little more,” she said.

Edith graduated from Aurora Central at age 17. She’d leave a household that, by that time, included Ivonne, who had taken a similar path.

Divorce followed. Full-time work became a necessity along with her coursework. A diploma remained at arm’s length. But she didn’t quit.

“Along the way I had many, many jobs and I realized it sucked to be at the bottom, and it wasn’t fair to be on the bottom,” Edith related. “I figured out the only way to move up where I wanted to move up where I wanted to be was to be the boss. So, I had to keep going to school or else I’d never make it out of the sucky jobs.”

Edith originally studied Computer Information Systems but changed course. She’d fail the test for her real estate certificate and gave up that potential pathway, too. General studies was next, and so much time had passed in her journey; it allowed Ivonne to catch up and enroll at CCA at her side.

“When I was 18 and Ivonne was 12, I didn’t want to talk to her,” Edith said. “She had nothing interesting to tell me. This continues in my head until she’s 25 and then I think, ‘Oh my God, she has something interesting to say that I want to hear.’”

The two ended up graduating at the same time, first at CCA and then at four-year schools. The two are currently finishing up advanced coursework, with Ivonne choosing the counseling route and Edith business management.

“I was glad that I at least made it to the finish line with her and not after her,” Edith said with a smile.

**A grueling decision**

It was expected that Ivonne would take advantage of an American education from the time her mother made the sacrifice of sending her to Denver to join her father’s burgeoning family.

“That was very hard for me,” Ivonne related. “I had been with my mom growing up. I was starting to be a teenager, and now I would be away from my mother. But back home in Juarez, the border town with El Paso, Texas, things were really, really bad. Most of my friends were getting pregnant and dropping out of school, and my mom didn’t want that for me.”

The separation was expected to be temporary but became permanent. And despite her mother’s wishes, when Ivonne graduated Aurora Central, college didn’t appear to be possible due to financial constraints.

Ivonne was told by her father that she would have to get a job to pay for college or forego it. But she found a way. As a student from a low-income family, the financial aid she received ended up covering most of the expenses and allowed her to exit higher education nearly debt free.

“I was determined to get an education,” she said.

Ivonne lived for a spell with Edith and witnessed many of the hard times in her older sister’s personal life. Edith’s struggles also resonated when considering college.

“My sister was a big inspiration because she was going to school, working, and she was a parent,” Ivonne said. “And I just didn’t have a good enough excuse not to.”

Ivonne learned from her father’s example, too. After failing to complete his law degree in Mexico, he didn’t give up, either. Arturo Ortega learned English as an adult by enrolling in Parks Junior College (now Everest College in Aurora) to finish some of what he had started academically.

“I remember him studying and trying read textbooks and him not understanding because it was in a different language and at college level,” Ivonne recalled.
Ortegas

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“So you had a very smart person, but one facing language barriers. And he had such a hard time presenting to classmate. He knew they would make fun of him because of his heavy accent, or that they wouldn’t understand. As an adult, it hurt him, yet he kept going. He didn’t let it tear him down. So he was definitely inspirational in that sense.”

Ivonne and Edith both were in attendance when their father received his Paralegal degree. The emotional scene resonated for both as they entered CCA together.

Shared determination to earn their own diplomas served as a driving force. But it was also an enjoyable time, too, sharing an education.

“That was a great, great experience,” Ivonne said. “We were partners in crime. We would study together. We took a lot of the same classes. Edith was really, really good at writing papers.

“I would offer to pay her to write my papers and she would never accept,” Ivonne added with a laugh. “But we had a literature class that we had to memorize a poem for. That came easy to me.”

After CCA, Edith graduated from Johnson and Wales University, where she studied business and management. She's currently finishing certification work at Metropolitan State University before sitting for her Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam. Ivonne earned a Psychology degree at Metro State and is currently wrapping up her masters through University of Phoenix.

At the same time, one of the most important accomplishments both would achieve fell into that particular time period:

Getting their younger sister on board with this whole noble pursuit of academia.

A difficult switch

Michelle Ortega was caught in the middle between two different paths. Edith and Ivonne represented one direction. Life at home, watching as some family members in her peer group fell into bad habits, was the other.

And, really, Michelle could have gone either direction at any given her fragile mental state.

She shifted between Hinkley and Overland High Schools, watched as her parents divorced, experienced kind of sad because all of my friends were going to universities and I didn’t know what I wanted to do.

Ivonne would play an influential role in getting Michelle to turn course.

“The quote she always told me is that you can’t always be pretty, you have to be pretty and have brains, and that stuck with me because she’s really beautiful and has the brains,” Michelle said. “It finally clicked. I couldn’t stop. I had to keep going.”

Michelle registered at CCA one month before fall semester in 2012. Ivonne and Edith’s experiences at the college entered into the decision, perhaps subliminally.

“They actually have been the only ones in my family that graduated high school and went to college. They pursued way more, so they’re my brighter side,” Michelle said.

Things became fully illuminated after she took a Women’s Studies class.

Michelle had to take pre-college math but ended up falling in love with the subject, generally. She joined TRIO and got more involved with her teachers and other students. She worked at the college.

She found a home as much as a place to learn. “It just feels great to be known,” Michelle explained. “To walk into an office and someone knows my name, it just feels great. I love CCA. I love being here. It’s my total escape.”

The Student Success Awards ceremony was just a tangible example of the massive strides she made in a short period of time.

“I still say, ‘I can’t believe it,’” Ivonne said, chuckling. “I always pushed her so hard. But we all have our own timing. I’m glad her timing fit that certain negative patterns which have festered during her life, and her sisters’ lives, can be broken.

“Michelle really values education now, where back in high school, we’d have talks about why high school was so important and she wouldn’t necessarily see the whole picture,” Ivonne added.

Important steps

The Ortega sisters are a story of blended families, which can be difficult in itself.

They are a story of immense strides they made in a short period of time, generally. They are a story of immi
Deeply personal experiences, teaching and the scholarship of others all contributed to “Sanity in Acting,” below.

First, do no harm.

Normally, that phrase is associated with the medical profession.

But acting? Where’s the harm in that?

Everywhere, if done the wrong way, a thematic message that runs throughout Galina Boulgakova’s recently published first book, Sanity in Acting.

The Colorado Film School faculty member collaborated on the publication with CCA adjunct Margaret Norwood. The pair digs deep into the widely embraced Stanislavski System and its offshoots to go beyond acting techniques and into the all-too-common dysfunctions that surface in order to play a raw, emotional part.

The book delves into solidly connecting to characters and bringing truthful behavior to the screen while still being able to disconnect, while offering tangible ways to harness emotions so that an actor can go home and be a sane, happy and whole person.

“Each actor has to be their own psychiatrist, therapist and doctor because they have to understand their instrument – their psyche” Boulgakova said.

Stanislavski’s primary tenet involved theater actors tapping into imagination to portray characters. An American derivative known as “method acting” later emerged, where real-life experiences and memories drove emotions on stage (and later on screen).

Boulgakova, who trained at the prestigious Moscow Art Theater, saw early in her career the damage these types of inward searches created.

Sitting on a couch in a back room of the film school, Boulgakova suddenly welled up as she recounted her early training, when she was tasked with playing a World War II widow in a production entitled “Alive Forever.” The character’s core was wracked with guilt. Day after day, for four months, that guilt turned inward on the actress.

It was killing her. And, three decades later, she still can access that part of herself.

“It’s knocking me down because it’s been in my system so deep,” she explained. “I used imagination, life experience. But I was living my life – unhappy, moody, and emotional. At the time, I was happily married and had a good career, but nothing was joyful for me because I came home and brought the baggage with me.

“I was guilty,” she continued. “I needed to change who I am.”

Boulgakova was so adept at playing broken, blistered, sick women that she was invited to play some of those same kinds of parts in the Moscow Theater and in Russian films. Much later, when she began to teach, she began to rebel against the notion of suffering for her art.

“It’s part of being an actor, connection to the character, but that’s just the first part of the training,” Boulgakova maintained. “When I was studying, my teachers taught me connection to the character but not how to disconnect from the character and come back to your senses again.”

Boulgakova didn’t know how to get that aspect across to students when she began teaching at CCA 11 years ago, either.

That’s when the journey to “Sanity in Acting” began.

“I felt I owed American actors something better, because the Stanislavski System came from my country,” she said. “You can’t teach them to copy what they taught me in Russia. I knew it wasn’t safe.”

Boulgakova saw actors replete with feeling but with nowhere to turn. She knew she had to go beyond what was taught in Russia, so she went back to her Russian teachers to see what they would say.

They were against what was being done, and she decided to go back to that original Stanislavski System.

“Where did it go wrong?” Boulgakova said. “I was visiting a psychiatrist and asked him, ‘How do you suggest I work with the character? How do I let go of that character?’

He said, ‘You have to disconnect from the character. You have to let it go. It’s not your job to lead the audience around the character. You have to let them come to the character.’

Boulgakova realized that she was teaching an aspect of the Stanislavski System that was not even in his original system.

“I have to teach it to the students so they can go home,” she said.

The book is filled with specific stories that she used to teach her students. She says it is a true story, but it’s in fictional form.

“Let’s say you have a character who is a wife of a serial killer,” she said. “What if you love him and want to make sure he doesn’t kill anyone else? It’s not your job to make sure that he doesn’t kill anyone else, it’s your job to understand the character who is killing already.”

Boulgakova doesn’t believe in playing the character; she believes in playing the character and letting the audience decide what the character is like. That’s the only way an actor can stay sane while working.

“InterCom is an intermission,” she said. “If you have a long show, you have to have an intermission. If you have a long life, you have to have an intermission.”

Underneath it all, Boulgakova says, is one thing – the need to be a whole person. She wants her students to be whole people when they go out into the world, not broken people.

“Tell your story. Be all things you are, and let the audience make up their mind on the character,” she said.
Partnerships to benefit Colorado Film School

Toyota, marketing giant Saatchi and Saatchi to underwrite student shows, receive content

The Colorado Film School at Community College of Aurora has entered into partnership agreements with local Toyota dealers and Denver-based Oster Jewelers to produce content for distribution on web and other commercial channels.

Students will be creating full commercial spots for both company’s consideration via a newly created one-credit class in Commercial Production at the film school, which repeatedly has been named one of the world’s premier film schools by Hollywood Reporter. The underlying goal is providing world’s premier film schools with fresh, inventive, edgy outlets for both company’s consideration.

In return, Toyota has agreed to provide student scholarships and sponsor Colorado Film School’s bi-annual student shows held at Harkins Northfield 18 Theatres.

Costs previously associated with producing the shows held in December and May included rental of two theaters, trophies, an after-party, catering for the faculty jury, and printing costs attached to programs and show announcements.

“The Denver Toyota Dealers Association strives to make a difference within our community, and we are excited to launch this unique partnership,” said Brent Baribeau, account supervisor for Saatchi and Saatchi.

“We get to provide a challenging opportunity for some talented students that might just net us some fun, innovative media content. We also feel great about helping students with scholarships and using our sponsorship dollars to support Colorado Film School’s bi-annual student shows.”

Toyota’s national advertising arm already supplies footage for use in commercials and other applications.

The film school can provide a regional flavor by submitting footage unique to the state.

“The Denver Toyota Dealers Association is a group of six Toyota dealerships that work collectively on mutually beneficial business endeavors.”

Oster Jewelers is a designer watch and jewelry store located in nearby Cherry Creek North. Work produced by CCA students will be showcased throughout the 2014 Starz Denver Film Festival, held at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, the Sie Film Center and other venues.

“Many, many people in the film industry make their bread and butter shooting commercials. All the top directors of photography and directors shoot commercials.”

“They’re fast – just 30 or 60 seconds. But it’s also some of the most detailed filmmaking there is,” Lahey said.

Acting

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with grief even in her own early classes and feared pushing them past their limits. She began conducting extensive research on teaching acting, gleaning information from people considered the masters in the field. She studied psychology and spirituality, and tested new ways to control the mind herself before bringing the concepts into the classroom.

All of that work is now encompassed in the book, which she will begin using as a textbook in the fall in the course Understanding the Actor’s Process. The ultimate aim is that other film schools begin using the book, which already boasts sales on Amazon from Germany and England.

“The book in many ways is a codification of what she had been doing and what she found worked,” said Norwood, who Boulgakova joked was tasked with “putting my English to real English.”

“What’s so unique about Galina’s work is her holistic look at the person and using these techniques to really solidly connect to the character and bring truthful behavior to the screen and then being able to go home and be sane and happy and a whole person who hasn’t been damaged by this psychological work. And that right there is something you don’t find in other textbooks.”

Norwood, who herself has a theater background in Stanislavski, and Boulgakova met for two to three hours on Saturdays for months working on the text. Once the body of the text was constructed, about 50 students at the film school, then faculty provided feedback.

“This is step by step what I’ve been teaching for years, class after class,” Boulgakova said. “Everything I was doing in class is in this book and I hope that the result of this work is that people – actors and non-actors – will better understand why we are in trouble and why we’re not happy and help them connect to who they are better.”

For actors employing the methodology espoused in the book, performances still can manage to be fresh and original – without, as George Harrison once aptly put it when speaking about The Beatles, paying with their nervous systems.

“Acting does not have to equal crazy, destructive or dead,” Boulgakova said. “It can be about balance, safety, health, happiness, and joy. You can still connect to who you are by doing your craft.”

“I wish I had this book when I was 20 when I started my career, because my life would have been different with a book like this.”

Sanity in Acting

the teachings of Galina Boulgakova, a Stanislavski-based approach to acting for the screen

Don’t think about the flower, just water the roots.
– Constantin Stanislavski
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Aurora the Explorers

On July 28, a group of intrepid CCA employees were ushered through the city in which they toil to glean a better understanding of the community, its history and business climate. Much was learned. Many Hershey Kisses were thrown.
Clockwise, City of Aurora tour guide Margee Cannon gets the group laughing in council chambers; Mayor Steve Hogan addresses the present and future of the area; Dr. Betsy Oudenhoven passes it down; Samuel Thomas takes the long view to watch the moving presentation; Jenn Dale, Christopher Tombari, Martha Jackson-Carter and Geoff Hunt watch a storm front from Heritage Eagle Bend; Andrea Flynn chucks Hershey’s Kisses to trivia contest winners.
Jim Weedin always has been, first and foremost, a geologist. He's become something of a rare find himself as CCA faculty, predating even the college’s formal birth. Now, he's retiring.

Jim Weedin has been a part of Community College of Aurora so long his longevity actually precedes the institution's official formation.

Weedin, who will retire this month after nearly 34 years, started at the Aurora Education Center (AEC), a precursor to CCA. He originally answered an advertisement in the old Rocky Mountain News, not quite sure to what he might be aligning himself. And, as long as his tenure ended up being in these parts, with geology a main emphasis in the classroom, the hiring process was just the opposite. He made a phone call, put on a suit, toted his resume from his then-home near Sloan Lake, and was hired on the spot upon his Aurora arrival.

"I didn't even ask the pay rate," Weedin recalled. "I just thought it would be a good thing."

Weedin for more than three decades has been more than good. He's been an essential part of the CCA fabric. He attended the hearings when then-Sen. Robert Allshouse argued for the legal establishment of the college – calling it "University of Aurora," which eventually created CCA legislatively in 1983. He taught classes before there were campuses at Smoky Hill High School.

Weedin was in the room when Dr. Nai-Kwang Chang was voted first president of the college.

He played on the softball team that second CCA President Larry D. Carter helped organize. Weedin helped raise partitions with former operations head Bud Ulrich at the old building on Sixth and Elmira, before CentreTech and Lowry even were considerations, so that part-time faculty could have individualized cubicles in which to work.

And, all along, he found creative ways to teach – especially in the early days.

He borrowed microscopes that he had to return weekly from Red Rocks Community College for use in his various disciplines, which also included geography, anatomy and physiology. He borrowed a skeleton for a year from old Fitzsimons Army Medical Center. Only they didn't know it. Weedin went to local streams to collect pond scum to use in labs. He toted into class rocks he had accumulated over the years in his private collection.

He even negotiated a better deal to acquire preserved cats, convincing Chang that the mileage back and forth to Red Rocks would be more than offset by cats he could obtain from a Castle Rock supply house.
The constant one has been the students whose lives he’s touched. Proof exists at Red Lobster, of all places, where on a recent night out for dinner the waitress recognized “Mr. Weedin,” and went on about the geology field trips that also were one of his annual staples.

Some names I don’t remember well, and faces from 30 years ago have changed,” Weedin said. “But there are thousands of students, and I feel like I’ve made a contribution to their life. Some more than others. Some just got credit. But I tried to give my best, and I think that was installed from my parents: ‘Give your best for however long you’re there.’

In no form or fashion did Weedin ever believe he’d see 2014 as a CCA employee through the 1981 eyes of his hiring. He was just 27 years old when he moved to Colorado. He had just taught three years of middle school earth science at an independent private school in Houston and finished his master’s degree in biology when his wife’s job nudged the family west.

Informing students of new trends in the sciences was in his blood. Every Monday, he did something called “Earth Week,” which touched upon major planetary occurrences in the geography realm worldwide.

“I call myself a biogeographer,” Weedin explained. “I want to know where it is and what it is, and that covers both ancient and modern. That’s where my interests fall.”

Yet, when Weedin started, the scientific supplies on hand were confined to three pieces of sandstone and two desiccated frogs. “I thought, ‘Oh boy, what am I getting myself into?’

It turns out, he was entering what in the future would be looked upon as some of the best times of his professional life. Weedin wasn’t sure if AEC was going to be anything more than an extension of The Community College of Denver, which it was. But when CCA was created as a standalone entity in ’83, it was an exciting time for the original college ‘pioneers.’

Weedin can still recall a tour with former Dean of Instruction John McGuire, along with division chairs and vending machine mons and vending machine sandwiches at the old CCA-owned Buckingham building that became biology projects. There was plenty of bad coffee, and “some of the rooms you got two lectures for the price of one.”

The inconveniences faded away when ground was broken on a permanent campus. “We were so busy. It was like it never stopped,” he remembered. “But when CentreTech was approved, that said to me, ‘We’ve got a home.’ Before that, it was all rented office space, which could come and go. I could just see the state having a bad budget year and losing this or that. But when the campus was approved, I thought, ‘We’re here. We’ve finally made it.’

Weedin himself had finally arrived. He didn’t have a full-time contract for his first six years, but right before CentreTech was erected, McGuire marched Weedin and then-Social Sciences chair James Ford to Jerry Wartgow at the community college system office and insisted the pair get 40-hour weeks. Wartgow agreed.

“Jim was part of that initial group that had the vision, sticktuitiveness and energy to get this college up and running. And I think of the fact that CCA students, the college, and community were so incredibly fortunate that this person— who is a renowned scholar in his field— stayed all these years, and found the satisfaction and rewards slowly petrifying,” he joked. “But like I said, I’m a biogeographer, and with that comes exploration. And what I’ve felt as I’m approaching 65 is that I know I’ve got a limited number of years to walk to the field. So I want to spend more time out there.”

And as his time at CCA runs out, it’s apparent there will be few, before or after, Weedin’s exit, quite like him.

Jim Weedin has an unmistakable laugh, which he shared with co-workers during a recent retirement ceremony thrown by the Science department.
Information bank

Outreach and Recruitment and College Communications teamed up from July 11-18 to promote the college at the Lacrosse World Championships in Commerce City. Outreach and Recruitment staffed a booth at the event, and College Communications designed radio spots that aired as part of the event.

- CNN featured CCA on its July 13 broadcast of “Fareed Zakaria GPS,” which delved into the roots of concurrent enrollment in Colorado. The segment was part of a five-part series entitled Where America Works focusing on hot-button topics in five cities that used collaboration and smart leadership to problem solve. The CCA piece focused heavily on the work of former CCA President Linda Bowman and former Aurora Public Schools Superintendent John Barry and highlighted the journey of CCA and Hinkley High School graduate Salamasita Fifita, who along with her sister, were the first two in their large family to earn college degrees.

- After the first full year of implementation, the redesign of developmental English and reading instruction has been successful, with 90 percent of students receiving an A, B or C in CCA’s developmental English course (CCR 094) also receiving an A, B or C in college-level English (ENG 121). Additionally, CCR 094 students withdrew at a lower overall rate than ENG 121 students, and CCR 094 students had an overall success rate that was comparable to students who did not need remediation.

- The School of Liberal Arts Student Tracking Database “back end” is complete and the “front end” queries are under development. The database will be used to identify at-risk students in developmental education English courses (CCR 092, CCR 094) and ENG 121 courses to improve their chances of success. The database also will be used to assist students in selecting a degree with designation aligned with their interests and goals.

- The Learning Resource Center will be launching new software this fall entitled LibGuides, which is a content management system used by libraries around the world. Librarians, or content creators, create online guides for specific disciplines, topics, subjects, courses, processes, and more. LibGuides are an effective way for librarians and instructors to collaborate in order to improve student learning. These guides can be integrated into D2L so students are able to access information quickly. Details available soon.

- CCA received $20,072 from Caring for Colorado to support the launch of the new ESL Healthcare Bridge program. The program is designed to move non-native English speaking students further and faster into healthcare training programs. Rather than offer generic English language courses, which are disconnected from a student’s area of interest, the Bridge program places English instruction in a specific vocational context to accelerate student learning. Employment of home health aides/assistants is expected to grow by 69 percent from 2010 to 2020, much faster than the average for all occupations.

- Dr. Christina “Chris” Murray began her new job as Associate Dean of Liberal Arts in July. Murray previously served as a business systems analyst and admissions counselor at Widener University; assistant director of graduate student services and academic advisor at University of Denver; and associate registrar at Colorado School of Mines. She holds a bachelor’s degree in English Literature, a masters in Educational Psychology from Widener University, and a doctorate in Philosophy in Higher Education from the University of Denver.

- The college held a Law Enforcement Job Fair on July 8 at Lowry. Local, state and federal agencies – 20 in total – were in attendance, recruiting cadets for possible hiring. Nearly three dozen CCA graduates of the Law Enforcement Training Academy took advantage of the event.

- John McDonald and A.J. DeAndrea from ERCM Consultants, hired by CCCS to review college emergency plans, presented to the Incident Command Team on July 14. ERCM praised CCA’s existing emergency plan but also identified opportunities for improvement to ensure CCA is prepared for internal and external emergencies and the proper people are in place during an actual response. ERCM will counsel CCA in future meetings on specific actionable steps.

- The CCA Foundation has entered into a partnership with The Nuñez Foundation to benefit local youth. The collaboration could double the number of students served by the Nuñez family, which has provided Aurora and Metro Denver high school seniors with more than $80,000 in scholarship and career development opportunities over the last decade. Contributions to The Nuñez Foundation will be matched by CCA Foundation for those local students attending CCA. The Foundation will raise matching funds through individual appeals and targeted direct marketing. On Aug. 3, Pedro Saenz, co-founder and president of The Nuñez Foundation, bestowed a $5,000 check to CCA Foundation.

- Work related to the extensive energy performance improvements that have encompassed both campuses over the last eight months is slated for completion by Sept. 1, according to Mike Davis in Lowry facilities. The project mainly has centered upon HVAC control upgrades and repairs in other high-priority areas that weren’t part of the original contract. Yet, there have been a slew of energy efficiency upgrades in total. Those repairs/replacements have included installation of low-flow faucets and toilets, a reduction in printers, computer optimization, weatherization of doors, and the retrofitting and replacement of about 90 percent of the lighting at Lowry and CentreTech. The college is expected to “earn back” nearly the entire $2.3 million outlay for installed equipment in energy savings over the next 15 years.
Clockwise from top: Stacy Brown of Outreach and Recruitment mans the booth at the World Lacrosse Championships in Commerce City; actor Hunter Balch channels Juliet as part of the Complete Works of Shakespeare: Abridged; CentreTech welcomes a small, furry visitor; children from the Downtown Aurora Visual Arts program watch playback during a summer session at the Colorado Film School.