Gov. Ritter engages students

Introducing himself as a “product of Aurora” from a family of modest means, Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr., visited CCA on Nov. 30 to address students in Matt Gianneschi’s “Current Political Issues” course. Ritter talked about putting himself through college and law school with the help of grants, loans, and scholarships, and how he worked in construction throughout to help with finances. “From a policy perspective, your personal experiences matter, a lot,” he explained. “It has been interesting to see how my experiences, as they relate to higher education, have informed the work that we have done in the government.” A major focus of the Ritter administration has been to implement education reforms “to give Colorado children the skills and knowledge they need to compete and succeed in a 21st century global economy,” according to colorado.gov.

“I want to publicly thank Matt Gianneschi, the architect of much of our education agenda,” he added.

Larry Pisciotta, longtime supporter and a member of the Foundation board of directors, offered keynote remarks. He recalled his decision to attend community college in Pueblo, Colo. “I wasn’t ready for a four-year college,” he said. “It was a big step in my life. I was introduced to new thoughts and ideas while there. I got acquainted with professors, and they encouraged me to succeed.” He continued: “Community college was my base, my foundation—and having a foundation is the whole crux of success.” How important is a college degree? he asked. “It puts you at a different level. An employer knows you have what it takes for success if you have a degree, and they’ll take a chance on you.”

Pisciotta, who found professional success at Firestone Tire and Rubber Company and as founder of Brakes Plus, summarized: “My main message: Do what you love. Find what you love, and go after it. Then, do the best you can at it. Play hard, but always work hard, and you will be successful.”

The 2010 Student Success honorees are Heath Wolfe, Komi A. Agbo, Keren Vargas, Bridgette Williams, Debra Kingsley, Darren...continued on page 3

CCA staffer Stephanie Agner, a 2007 award winner, was master of ceremonies. President Linda Bowman congratulated students for their hard work and thanked the CCA Foundation for its sponsorship of the event and its support of the educational mission of the college. “I’m here at CCA for the same reason all of you are,” she told the crowd. “Wonderful students, wonderful faculty and staff – by all of us being here together, the world changes.”

One by one, their stories were told: moving tales of perseverance and resolve, offered by faculty and staff, highlighting the determination of 17 CCA students. These students were recognized Dec. 3 at the sixth annual Student Success Awards ceremony and were lauded for their tenacity in pursuing a higher education.

Student Success Award winner Pearl Ogbonnaya with friends and family.

“Play hard, but always work hard”
Aurora event acknowledges “Top 100” status

The City of Aurora celebrated its recognition by America’s Promise Alliance as one of the top 100 best communities for young people in a community-wide event on Dec. 9. CCA was recognized as a community partner.

The 100 Best honors communities that make youth a priority by implementing programs that help keep children in school and prepare them for college and the 21st century workforce. Aurora was named to the list because of its commitment to increasing the city's graduation rate and providing critical resources for youth development. Aurora boasts a history of community collaboration with groups working together to tackle specific issues, with youth development a top priority.

America’s Promise Alliance was founded in 1997 by Gen. Colin Powell.

Students offer Veterans Day tributes

A Nov. 11 Veterans Day tribute proved a moving occasion as students recognized courageous members of the nation’s military. “Because of you, I can speak my mind, I can run for president, I can stand before you today,” said one student. “I, and my fellow classmates, express our thanks.” Another: “Thank you for giving us the things so many other countries only dream about.”

In a class of about 20 students, nearly everyone spoke of a family member who served or is serving in the U.S. armed forces. Most talked about the personal sacrifices that members of the military make every day. Poems were shared, and all offered their gratitude to veterans past and present. “To those who have paid the ultimate price, you are the reason I get to lead the life I live,” said one. “Today, we honor our veterans, and we say, thank you for defending our country,” said another. “You risked your lives for complete strangers—for people you don’t know, and likely never will know. It’s unfortunate that we take only one day to honor you. You should be thanked for your strength, courage, and determination each and every day.”

CCA gym now open

The Lowry Campus Gym, located at 1081 Beeler Way, is open to CCA faculty, staff, students, and Lowry CCCS employees. Hours of operation are Tuesday and Thursday nights from 4 to 9 p.m. Those wishing to use the gym must show CCA/CCCS identification when entering the facility, and first-time participants will be asked to sign a waiver and complete an orientation tour.

The gym offers barbell/dumbbell free weights and Hammer Strength free weight machines, as well as a cardio circuit line of treadmills, ellipticals, multi-function machines, and universal weight machines.

Instructors will offer general fitness-oriented classes (similar to cross-fit and P90X) on the mat area from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Future offerings will include kettlebell classes and training; Tai Chi; mixed martial arts self-defense classes; and boxing/self-defense classes for women.

Gym instructors come from CCA’s Personal Trainer Academy program and will offer fitness evaluations and exercise prescription programs. Locker room facilities are available for men and women. For more information, call Mike Carter at 303-340-7211.
Phi Theta Kappa inductees celebrated at ceremony

Nearly two dozen CCA students were inducted into the Alpha Pi Pi chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society during a recent ceremony at the college.

The event featured a procession of inductees, a welcome from Dr. Matt Gianneschi, and remarks from student Christopher Wilkins, president of the CCA chapter.

Guest speaker Bobby Pace, CCA adjunct instructor in political science, spoke of the importance of access to technology in students’ daily lives. He referenced the plight of Liu Xiaobo, recipient of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, who is serving a prison sentence for using his home computer to write a blog about human rights conditions in China. “Because of a nationwide censorship policy, most Chinese are unaware that Liu even won the prize, or of his arrest,” Pace said. After citing other examples of citizen persecution for sharing information, he reminded students that “technology has served as a lifeline for the advocacy of democracy” and urged them to consider the liberating power of technology. “As members of Phi Theta Kappa and the Community College of Aurora, you have the potential to reach out beyond the limits of time and space and leave a lasting contribution to the pursuit of democracy and human rights, not only for this generation, but for generations to come,” he said.

Phi Theta Kappa is the largest honor society in higher education, serving 1,250 two-year colleges around the world and offering exclusive programs and benefits for members that contribute to a dynamic, multi-dimensional college experience. CCA offers a well-established PTK chapter for eligible students right on campus.

Play Hard ...continued from page 1

Mans, Pearl Ogbonnaya, Ermias Nagash, Jaime Corchado, April Loyd, William Kleinman, Cary Caruthers, Samantha Nieto, Kimberly Ballard, William Robinson, Christopher Wilkins, and Devon Tate.

Awards committee members include James Gray, Peggy Norwood, and Margaret Uchner. Gray, the acknowledged “father” of the Awards, said that CCA has many students juggling families and full-time jobs who put in the time and effort to improve their lives and the lives of those around them through education. “The Student Success Awards give a simple acknowledgement of these stories,” Gray said. “We set aside this special time to recognize those who exercise determination, leadership, perseverance, and attributes of success other than academic performance.”

Gov. Ritter ...continued from page 1

“...In my position, you have to rely on great minds to help you think and envision how you want to lead, and Matt was very much involved in this.” He also credited President Linda Bowman’s service on the P-20 Council, which helped to build an education agenda from preschool through post-grad. “I’ve signed some of the most important legislation in the country on this,” he said.

He touched on other aspects of his agenda. “We wanted to change the way people think about energy in this state—the New Energy Economy, we called it—and we believe we’ve been successful in transforming the production of energy and how we think about consuming energy. We brought a lot of jobs to the state, and I’m very proud of that,” he said.

He addressed the topic of health care and acknowledged that he didn’t get as much done on that front as anticipated. “I would like to have had every uninsured person covered, but we were unable to do that,” he said.

Ritter admitted that “the business of government is never done. It’s just never done,” he said. “My hope is that we’ve put in place layers upon layers in all different places that future governors, legislators, and leaders can build upon. (I hope) that we put in place a way of thinking about energy that helps us address energy security, environmental issues, and jobs.”

He said that many of his administration’s successes with education underscore an important point about American culture. “We want something done in the first 100 days and we want to see results within a year,” he said. “But so many of the things we did won’t have an impact for 10, 12 years, maybe even longer.”
Moncada on 9 News

Rosalie Moncada (second from left), Lowry One-Stop Services Coordinator, participated in a Dec. 2 event at KUSA-9News Denver. The “9News Helpline” call-in was designed to help students with questions about the Complete College Colorado initiative. Moncada fielded questions about college admission and financial aid.

P-20 partnership unveiled

President Linda Bowman joined Gov. Bill Ritter, Aurora Public Schools Superintendent John Barry, and others at a Dec. 1 press conference to introduce the Community Workforce Planning Team (CWPT) and its collaborative efforts. The CWPT involves APS and more than 30 community groups and organizations.

Before a full complement of news media, Ritter, Barry, Bowman, and CWPT members spoke of their commitment to the alignment of economic and educational initiatives for the benefit of students, local industry and career sectors, and the community at large.

Employees of year named

Mary Graham, administrative assistant for Social Sciences and the Office of the Vice President of Instruction, has been named Classified Employee of the Year, and Sarah Grace Pretzer, public relations coordinator, has been named Exempt/Administrative Employee of the Year. The awards were presented at the college’s holiday party. Among the nominees for the classified award were Sheryl Broadnax, Janice Davis, and Denise Oakeley. Exempt/administrative nominees included David Bailey, Carla Hoskins, Julie Johnson, Reniece Jones, Andrew Marah, and Rosalie Moncada.

Dr. Dave Hnida speaks at Global Citizens conference

Dr. Dave Hnida, physician and journalist for Denver’s CBS-4, spoke Nov. 17 at the annual Global Citizens Student Conference. Hnida, a combat-decorated Major in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, has served two tours of duty in Iraq since the war began in 2003. Hnida’s presentation focused on his two tours of duty in Iraq as a combat and trauma surgeon.

The Conference offered sessions in numerous disciplines. Topics included global mental health, culture and medicine, healing practices around the world, AIDS around the world, Third World emergency medical services, medicinal plants, and medicine before 1650. Presentations by CCA honor students also were featured. Approximately 400 people attended the two-day event.
Shakespearean scholar enlightens students

James Hirsh, Ph.D., visited CCA in connection with the theatre department’s production, "Romeo and Juliet Reinterpreted." A professor of English at Georgia State University and winner of the 2004 South Atlantic Modern Language Association Book Award, Hirsh addressed whether William Shakespeare wrote his own works and why he wrote so many history plays. Shakespeare’s language was at least as strange to his audiences as it is to modern audiences, he explained. “He introduced more words to the English language than any other person,” he said, words commonly used today: “amazement,” “assassination,” “obscene,” and “premeditated,” among others. Shakespeare’s writing is challenging, he said, because it is filled with metaphors. He cited Hamlet: “I will speak daggers to her, but use none.” His language is dense with these, and “this requires people to use their imaginations,” he said.

State Sen. Nancy Spence talks education

State Sen. Nancy Spence spoke to students in Matt Gianneschi’s “Current Political Issues” course on Nov. 9, and she touched base on a wide variety of topics in education including school finance, school choice, reform, and the federal role of education in Colorado. Spence fielded questions on charter schools and school choice and told the class that there is “much momentum in this country right now for educational reform.”

Special celebration in CCA Security

The CCA CentreTech Security Department had special reason to celebrate one of its own earlier this month: Security Officer Haddis Bekele passed his U.S. citizenship test and is the first in his family to become a citizen. Haddis, who began work at CCA as a work-study student while earning an associate degree from the college, now is working toward a master’s degree in business at Regis University. From left: Scott Hostetter, Haddis Bekele, Rachel Silva, Steve Marshall, and Jordan Odneal.

First Snow

The CentreTech Campus received its first measurable snow of the season on Nov. 9, and the sculptures between the Classroom and Fine Arts Buildings appeared to be dancing among the snowflakes.
Holiday party draws families

The holiday party drew many faculty, staff, and members of their families. Enjoy these images from this year’s gathering!

5 years at CCA

10 years at CCA

15 years at CCA

20 years at CCA

25 years at CCA

Seen Around Campus
CCA News Briefs

Kudos to . . .
Dr. Nancy Jackson, who was elected Arapahoe County Commissioner for District 4. “The County’s gain will be our great loss, as Nancy takes on her very full-time and critical responsibilities in January,” said President Linda Bowman. See http://www.aurorasentinel.com/email_push/news/article_962ce010-f0ed-11df-86b9-001cc4c03286.html.

And kudos to Dr. Matt Gianneschi, who was appointed co-chair of the John Hickenlooper/ Joe Garcia education transition team following Hickenlooper’s election as Governor. Gianneschi chairs the committee with State Board of Education Chair Bob Schaffer.

Launch of nursing program celebrated
A reception celebrating the inauguration of the Integrated Nursing Pathway program, a collaboration between CCA and the University of Colorado School of Nursing, was held Nov. 4 at the Health Sciences Library on the Anschutz Medical Campus. The program is designed to increase access for community college students to baccalaureate nursing education and is among the first such models in the country. The partnership has welcomed its first cohort of 17 students, most of whom were in attendance at the event. Attendees also included members of the students’ families; Melissa Miller, Aurora city councilwoman; Ledy Garcia-Eckstein, senior management analyst from Denver’s Office of Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development; Bernice Harris, Ph.D., formerly with CCA and now provost of Community College of Denver; CCA President Linda Bowman, Ph.D.; UC-CON Dean Patricia Moritz, Ph.D., RN, FAAN; Nancy Case, Ph.D.; RN, Dean of the CCA Health Sciences Division; other CCA and UC-CON faculty and administrators; UC Denver Provost Roderick Naim, Ph.D.; and chief nursing officers from area hospitals.

CCA Events

Annual Legislative Breakfast. By invitation. 7:30 a.m., Jan. 10, Student Centre Rotunda.
Visit http://ccaurora.edu/news-events/event-calendar for future events.

This photographic tour explores Googie architecture and graphic signage in the metro area. The style originated in the 1940s and was influenced by the car culture and the Space/Atomic Age. Free admission. Call 303-739-6666 for hours.

The Art of Sheet Music: Sheet Music from 1890-1940. Dec. 21 – March 6, Aurora History Museum.
Before record albums and CDs, songs came as sheet music with elaborate covers to entice buyers. See how this artwork changed over the decades. Free admission. Call 303-739-6666 for hours.

Otto Mears: A Brown Bag and White Linen Lecture. 12 – 1 p.m., Jan. 19, Aurora History Museum.
Learn about the Pathfinder of the San Juan Mountains. Born in Russia in 1840, Otto Mears emigrated alone to the United States at age 10. Storyteller Steve Lee presents Otto Mears in a first-person presentation. $4 ($3 Aurora residents). Call 303-739-6666 for more information.

See http://www/auroragov.org for more events.

Aurora Events

CCA “Green” tip of the month
Looking for information about going green? Check out greenlivingtips.com to learn about reducing your environmental impact in the home, at work, and in business. Or check out thegreenguide.com, a web site produced by National Geographic. A simple web search will provide many ways to get the new year off to a green start!