CCA students Matthew Downey and Joshua Harges have been nominated to the Phi Theta Kappa All Colorado Academic Team and will be recognized during a special ceremony and luncheon to be held at the Grand Hyatt Denver on March 9.

Joshua Harges will graduate with a degree in accounting and is bursting with ideas about his future: transfer to University of Denver or Baylor; an internship at Ball Aerospace, followed by employment there, with eventual promotion to CFO; forays into stock and real estate investing.

Harges juggles a 15-credit-hour schedule and two full-time jobs (assistant manager of a retail store; para-educator at a childcare center). Vice president of service at CCA’s PTK chapter, he also volunteers as a basketball coach. His favorite pastime? “Give me a boat, and I’d fish every day for the rest of my life,” he says.

When the robotics revolution comes, Matthew Downey plans to be a part of it. Following graduation, Matt will study software engineering at Regis University. An admitted “tinkerer” since childhood, Matt, a Miami native, took advantage of CCA’s Open Entry program.

Black Heart fast approaching

CCA students Crystal Bergeron, at left, and Mel Davis, rehearse for callback auditions for the spring theatre performance of “Black Heart.” The production will feature two British farce pieces: “Heart’s Desire” by Caryl Churchill and “Black Comedy” by Peter Shaffer. The theatre department promises “lovers, nosy neighbors, unexpected intruders, laughs, falls, a blackout, a millionaire, starving artists, the ex-girlfriend, quirky visitors, mistrust, mishaps, zaniness: in other words, an evening of all-out fun!”

Mark your calendars for “Black Heart”: 7:30 p.m. March 17-19 and March 24-26; 2 p.m. on March 19; and 12 p.m. on March 25.

All performances will be held in the Larry D. Carter Theatre, Fine Arts Building, Community College of Aurora, 16000 E. CentreTech Parkway, Aurora CO 80011.

CCA’s presentation of “Black Heart” is directed by Colleen Mylott.

Downey, Harges to receive PTK honor

CCA students Matthew Downey and Joshua Harges have been nominated to the Phi Theta Kappa All Colorado Academic Team and will be recognized during a special ceremony and luncheon to be held at the Grand Hyatt Denver on March 9.

Matthew Downey
D’Angelo named “Faculty of the Year”

Theater Director Stacey D’Angelo was named Faculty of the Year for CCA during the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education meeting on Feb. 9. The awards ceremony was held in the Rotunda at CCA.

D’Angelo’s accomplishments were highlighted in a keepsake program featuring honored faculty for 2010. The entry on D’Angelo reads: “D’Angelo has been a presence on campus since 2008. Her theatre appreciation and acting classes are popular, but her theatrical productions have set the community abuzz.

“Her first production, an original, evolved out of personal stories from CCA's diverse student body and was selected as a showcase performance at the Rocky Mountain Theatre Association Festival. Students in subsequent productions have wowed audiences with their performances, including a modern retelling of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, reinterpreted and set in a world where deaf and hearing cultures collide. ‘Have you seen her theatre productions?’ one student asks. ‘She never settles in any aspect of her art.’”

D’Angelo holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in musical theatre and acting from Ithaca College and an MFA in contemporary performance from Naropa University.

Tax Help Colorado begins with a bang

By mid morning on kickoff day, Saturday, Jan. 29, scores of people were in line to take advantage of the Tax Help Colorado service offered by CCA volunteers and the Denver-based Piton Foundation. Many were familiar with the routine, having used the service before. Others were new to Tax Help Colorado and were happy to discover the program, in which eligible individuals and families have their income taxes prepared and e-filed by trained volunteers.

Families receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or who earn less than $49,000 a year may have their taxes prepared and filed electronically for free through the program.

In its first week of operation, more than $613,400 in tax refunds were realized by people using the service at CCA. The number increased to $1,013,480 by the end of the second week. In 2011, the Piton Foundation is running free tax assistance sites at 18 colleges around the state. CCA was the pilot site for the program in 2008.

The service is quick and confidential. Assistance is offered on a first-come, first-served basis Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. through March 12; Tuesdays from 6-9 p.m. through March 8; and Wednesdays from 4-9 p.m. through March 9. Volunteers are available in Room 113, West Quad, Lowry Campus.

Tax Help volunteers include CCA students who have completed accounting courses to learn income tax preparation and how to run tax sites. These courses are accredited and certified by the Internal Revenue Service.
“Flu” experiment engages Math Girls

The experiment is compelling enough to hold the attention of an entire roomful of teenagers: Take a room of 125 girls and assign each one a test tube filled halfway with liquid representing bodily fluids. Then, in groups of 25, have the girls interact with each other to mix the contents of the test tubes. Add a chemical to turn any “infected” liquid bright pink. Then, challenge the groups to determine who spread the original illness.

The activity illustrates how quickly the flu can spread from one infected person to another, and it engaged high school girls from Aurora who took part in “Math Day for Girls” at CCA on Feb. 11.

The day emphasized how math skills contribute to success in health careers. The simulated spread of an infectious disease challenged the girls to test their math and medical acumen. Following the “flu” exercise, they estimated the rate at which disease spreads and looked at the mathematics of exponential increase. They discussed aspects of disease transmission and ways to prevent the spread of an infectious disease. They also explored other factors that influence the risk of getting an infectious disease and completed a graph of exponential growth to demonstrate rapid transmission of the flu.

Participants heard from featured speaker Maranke I. Koster, Ph.D., assistant professor at the University of Colorado Denver, and they engaged with a panel featuring Kathy McCreary, University of Colorado Hospital; Kelley Nicholson, University of Colorado Hospital; and Margaret Ann Foy, United Airlines.

CCA welcomes faculty, staff

CCA welcomes the following individuals who now are full time or have recently joined the faculty and staff: Brad Warren, Custodian, Facilities; Tyler (Laffrey) Witbrod, Colorado Film School Equipment Room Manager; Jodi Allen, Financial Aid Counselor; Mary Westendorf, Administrative Assistant III, Instruction; Libby Klingsmith, Coordinator of Student Retention, Student Services; Megan Kinney, Director of Library Services; Pablo Machado, Business Faculty; Debra Lodge, Developmental Coordinator, Center for Workforce Development; Enrique Garcia, Director of Information Technology; Matthew Earnhardt, Business Faculty; Jennifer Scott, Administrative Assistant I, Financial Aid.

Additionally, CCA welcomes Ariel Mendez, Administrative Assistant I, Financial Aid; Elena Sandoval-Lucero, Dean of Enrollment Management, Student Services; Jennifer Kenney, Senior Accountant/Lead Accountant, Fiscal Affairs; Manny Lizarraga, Pipe Mechanic Trades II, Facilities; Justin Pfluger, Security I, Security; Robley Welliver, English Faculty; Laura Woodward, Developmental Math Faculty, Academic Enrichment; Heidi McKinnon, Administrative Assistant III, Human Resources; Daniel Sandoval, Director of TRiO, Student Support Services, Student Services.

PTK honor ...continued from page 1

classes to learn at a faster pace. Seeking to better support his two-year-old daughter, Matt knows that a degree is crucial to his success. Down the road, he sees himself working at a small startup company – possibly doing cell phone programming, which he does on the side as a hobby. “When I’m not studying for school, I’m writing code,” he says.
Parent Institute a roaring success

After a great response from the first America's Promise Parent Institute, spearheaded by the City of Aurora and held in late 2010, a second session was held Jan. 27 for Aurora families. CCA served as host institution, and parents and students gathered in the Fine Arts Building Forum to learn more about helping children succeed in a session titled “Prepare for Success: Life After High School.”

The evening provided valuable information about organizations that work with Aurora students before high school, after high school, and beyond. Several organizations were represented on a panel, and panelists stressed evolving educational opportunities.

“We’re creating a bridge for students to have opportunities,” said Brooke Gregory, principal of Cherokee Trail High School. “If you, as a parent, asked me in September about the options that existed for your student, come ask me again, because they’re all different now. Our state is really leading the way in expanding opportunities for high school students.”

CCA’s Cheryl Tomlinson said that parents often speak of their excitement for their children. “Their kids have opportunities that they themselves never had,” she explained.

Nancy Hernandez of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund advised students who want to go to college to be organized, set goals, and learn from their mistakes. “And don’t give up,” she counseled. “Scholarships are not for ‘nerd’ students, they’re for motivated students.”

Additionally, Bradley Buum of the Colorado Pipe Trades discussed apprenticeship programs that offer on-the-job-training so that “you can learn while you earn,” he explained.

Gully Stanford, director of partnerships for College in Colorado and master of ceremonies for the event, told students that it is vital to take rigorous and challenging courses while in high school. “With all the options you have to attend college and the scholarships available to help you earn a higher education, you can live your dream, but you must make sure you have a road map,” he said.

Stanford moderated the panel, which also included Robert Baronas, workforce specialist for Arapahoe/Douglas Works; John Barry, superintendent, Aurora Public Schools; Don Keeley, coordinator of the Pacesetter Program for APS and CCA; Abenicio Rael, assistant director center for precollegiate programs, University of Colorado Denver (UCD), and Deneshia Hearon, office of admissions, UCD.

Pfaff, Sessions honored with Brosh Award

Two faculty members have been honored with the Tom Brosh Award for Adjunct Faculty. This award recognizes instructors who have at least five academic years of teaching at CCA and have provided outstanding service to CCA students and to the college.

Mathematics instructor Mike Pfaff’s dedication is well demonstrated. Students say that Pfaff is a creative and excellent professor. Pfaff launched his career at CCA as a tutor and continues to spend a significant amount of time in the tutoring lab, where his workshops are highly sought after. He has tutored at the college longer than any other math tutor. He also is the primary administrator of the Student Preassessment Math Workshops, and, after being asked to put his workshop on film for the web, his videos get many “hits” from future CCA students and from students at other colleges who have heard how instructive his online sessions are.

A former planetarium director in Little Rock, Fort Worth, and Denver, CCA is fortunate to have Larry Sessions as one of its adjuncts. Sessions brings his passion for astronomy to students, who say his labs and classes are engaging, creative, and thought-provoking. One student reports that Sessions’ class has him “looking at life from a totally new perspective.”

...continued on next page
Brosh Award  …continued from page 4

At the forefront of distance learning at CCA, Sessions created the college’s two online astronomy classes from nothing. He developed every activity and generated a series of labs to be completed independently while maintaining the college-level rigor of the class. He shares his work with other CCA instructors, requesting nothing in return. Over the years, he has upgraded his online class to where it now is a model for all others.

Sessions also created and maintains the CCA observatory website and often delivers community lectures on public observatory nights. He also helped to construct the observatory a few years back, on a 20-degree January day.

Winners announced in MLK poetry contest

Budding young writers from Aurora were honored at a Jan. 12 event celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr., when six middle school, high school, and college students were announced as poetry contest winners and had the opportunity to read their works aloud before a gathered audience. The event was held at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Library on East Colfax Avenue in Aurora. Winners were:

Middle School:
First place: “I Believe,” by Ellery Bock, 6th grade, Falcon Creek Middle School. Second place: “What We Are,” by Chris Peltola, 8th grade, West Middle School.

High School:

College:
First Place: “Freedom Longevity,” by Ineesha Williams, CCA. Second place: “From Dreams to Reality,” by Fekade Senbeta, CCA.

The contest was hosted by the college’s Global Initiatives Committee, in partnership with the City of Aurora, to promote the ideals that Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many others stood for and continue to actively support.

Winners were presented with a certificate and awards donated by the CCA Bookstore and Tattered Cover. Entries were judged by the faculty of the Performing Arts and Humanities and the Communications Departments at the college.

CCAF reception celebrates $1M year

The Community College of Aurora Foundation held a Jan. 20 donor reception in the Aurora Municipal Center to recognize a “year of incredible fundraising success,” according to Diana Whye, executive director of the foundation. The event celebrated the completion of Phase I of the Lowry Expansion Initiative. To learn more, visit http://www.ccaurora.edu/lei.

According to President Linda Bowman, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education on Feb. 9 gave final approval for CCA’s Lowry Campus project, in which a proper entrance will be built and the West Quad building remodeled to add full student services, a lobby, and a large gathering space. “This is just the first phase of a transformation of the campus that will take place over years,” said Bowman.
College hosts legislators
State Rep. Rhonda Fields (HD 42) addresses attendees at the annual Legislators Breakfast, held Jan. 10 at the Community College of Aurora.

Police grads a standout class
A “standout” class of cadets graduated Dec. 21 from CCA’s Police Academy ready to take on the rigors of a career in law enforcement. Academies Director Michael Carter led the ceremony, and he acknowledged the outstanding academic achievements of the class in addition to its high marks in required skills categories. Retired Aurora Police Department Officer Kevin Moriarty offered keynote remarks and credited the graduates with wanting to make a difference in their communities. Pictured here: graduate David Chavez.

Students enjoy solitude of science library
Students Jasmine Eason and Stacee Sparks take advantage of quiet study space in the Science Library.

CFWD offers annual update
The Center for Workforce Development held it annual community update on Jan. 21. Staff members provided an overview of CFWD’s programs and services as well as the individuals they serve. Primary programs include TANF, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, which serves more than 300 individuals, and CHOICES, or Career and Household Opportunities for Income and Community Enhancement Services, which serves nearly 200 participants. CFWD’s clients are in need of enhanced skills and support to reach their employment goals, according to Diane Postell, director of the program. Pictured here: Debra Lodge, employment developer (at left) and Barbara Guion, program assistant.
Kudos to... Margaret Ann Uchner, who was appointed Pacific Regional Director of the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) at its annual conference in Indianapolis. She is one of five regional directors of AAfPE in the United States. AAfPE is a national organization that serves the needs of paralegal educators and institutions offering paralegal educational programs. The Pacific Region serves 13 states and 64 member colleges and universities, and its upcoming conference will be held in Denver in March.

College hosts Bacchus Network workshop

Individuals working to empower teen leaders in Aurora attended a Bacchus Network workshop at CCA on Feb. 26. This citywide project aims to reduce the number of kids becoming addicted to tobacco. The six-hour training covered how the tobacco industry addicts youth, current ways to reduce the number of young people starting tobacco use, and how to create an effective, strategic campaign to reduce tobacco use among youth.

College Goal Sunday attracts many

College Goal Sunday, held Feb. 13, attracted more than 100 students and parents seeking help in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The event offered a chance to learn about paying for college with the help of grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and student loans. College Goal Sunday is an annual event held at colleges around the country.

Volunteers sought for High Line Canal Clean-up

The Great High Line Canal Clean-up is scheduled for March 12 from 8:00 am to noon, and volunteers are needed to clear trash and debris from the eleven-mile stretch of canal that runs through Aurora. The event provides an opportunity to learn about problems caused by littering and the importance of protecting and caring for our waterways. For more information, contact Mary Dawson at the City of Aurora at 303-739-7372 or mdawson@auroragov.org.

CCA “Green” tip of the month

Make it a habit to think before you print: could this be read or stored online, instead? When receiving unwanted catalogs, newsletters, magazines, or junk mail, request to be removed from the mailing list before the item is recycled. And, remember, just about any kind of paper found in an office, including fax paper, envelopes, and junk mail, can be recycled. So can cell phones, PDAs, or pagers.

Tips courtesy of the Sierra Club

Save the dates: National Alcohol Screening Days. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., April 6, and 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., April 7. CTC: Rotunda. Free and open to the public.

Visit http://ccaurora.edu/news-events/event-calendar for future events.


Join Colorado author Randi Levin as she speaks about her new cookbook that will inspire creativity in the kitchen for kids and parents. Levin will have copies of her books available for sale and signing and will donate a portion of her proceeds to the Aurora Public Library.

Flickers of Light Student Film Festival. 2-4 p.m., April 17. Aurora Central Library, 14949 E. Alameda Pkwy., Aurora CO 80012.

The library presents an all-new student film festival in conjunction with CCA’s Colorado Film School. Watch the films, meet their creators, and learn more about the art of film-making. Free.

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