Visible progress made in Lowry Phase One

The construction now taking place on the Lowry Campus is the first phase in a series of upgrades to be made as part of the Lowry Campus Strategic Development Plan, and the progress is clearly visible to passersby. The Plan “provides both a framework and a roadmap for reinvigorating Lowry as a major community asset,” says President Linda Bowman.

The plan utilizes existing buildings and enhances spaces to connect students, faculty, staff, and visitors who come to CCA in order to build a future, Bowman notes. Construction on Phase One Improvements—a “New Lowry Campus Entrance”—began in mid-April and will be complete by mid-August. Building space will be reconfigured to accommodate services that students obtain primarily at CentreTech: enrollment, financial aid counseling, student life, tutoring, and gathering places.

The project also comprises a new plaza and building entrance, lobby improvements, way-finding signage, a revised parking layout, expanded pavement, new outdoor seating and landscaping, shade...continued on page 4

The bright day matched the mood of the more than 1,000 people who attended CCA’s graduation ceremony on May 7 at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds Event Center. Photos from the day can be found at http://www.facebook.com/ccaaurora?v=photos and http://www.facebook.com/ccanetwork?v=photos.

President Linda S. Bowman congratulated the graduates. “You have created for yourselves and your families and communities a future that will be better and more prosperous and brighter,” she said. She encouraged them to give back in as many ways as possible. “Help other students have the same opportunities that you have had,” she said. “Give back to your communities, and show the leadership skills you’ve learned and honed here at CCA.”

Stacey D’Angelo, theater director and CCA’s faculty of the year, offered an overview of the students who come to the college and...continued on page 3
"Dialogue with our Muslim Neighbors" inspires frank discussion

The words came up over and over again: Terrorist. Tolerance.

When three Muslim students at CCA were invited to share their experiences as immigrants to America, their stories were remarkably similar. They love their new country, but say that some Americans aren’t so quick to make them feel welcomed here.

In an effort to demystify what it means to be Muslim, the college’s Global Initiatives Committee and English as a Second Language Department collaborated on an April 20 presentation titled “Building Bridges: A Dialogue with our Muslim Neighbors.” Faculty members Elizabeth Hirsh, Daniel Schweissing, and Sasa Jovic hosted the event, and student panelists were Ihab Alshawi of Iraq, Siham Mouhieddine of Morocco, and Dima Ahram of Syria. The panelists are students in CCA’s English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

The Rotunda quickly filled to capacity as Jovic introduced the discussion. After panelists shared their stories of coming to the United States, hands shot up as people wanted to know: “Do you practice your faith differently here than at home?” and “What is one of the biggest challenges that faced you as an immigrant?” Alshawi quickly fielded the latter question: “The language!” he said, adding that finding a job was hard because of the language barrier—which is how he came to enroll in ESL classes.

Mouhieddine said her most difficult moment came when she decided to wear the hijab, a traditional head covering worn by some Muslim women. “I feel the media has given the wrong impression of what being Muslim is about, of what Islam is about,” she said, recalling a shopping trip to a major department store in which she was deliberately overlooked by employees.

Ahram said she, too, has been criticized for wearing the hijab, and she feels people are afraid of her. “Wearing the hijab does not make us less than other people! This is just who we are,” she explained.

Alshawi noted that immigrants must learn about the Bill of Rights and the Constitution and other American documents, but noted with interest: “The founding fathers say there is a freedom of religion, but you criticize us for our dress,” he said.

Mouhieddine admitted she is getting used to people’s reactions when she tells them she is Muslim. “People tend to be afraid; they say, oh, my, you might be a terrorist,” she said. “But, without the hijab, you wouldn’t know if I’m Indian or Mexican!” She advised Americans to experience and read about other cultures so that they can better understand them.

Despite his sense that many Americans have some level of fear of Muslims, Alshawi said he also feels hopeful. “You can see in their eyes that they are interested in our culture,” he said. “Not everybody misunderstands us, but when people are curious about us, we say, please ask us! We are happy to answer your inquiries about our dress, our religion, our way of life.”

To read the rest of this story, visit http://www.ccaaurora.edu/news-events/news-releases/panel-inspires-discussion.

Sherlin Lecture: to the moon!

Dr. Jack O. Burns from the University of Colorado Boulder delivered the spring Sherlin Lecture and drew his audience in with a multimedia presentation on “Exploring the Cosmos from the Moon.”

Calling the Moon “the library of the solar system,” he sounded the call for further exploration. “The history of the solar system and of the earth is all there, on the moon, for our taking,” he said. “What if Lewis and Clark came back and said to President Jefferson, well, we’ve seen all there is to see; there’s no reason to go (back west),” he offered. He explained that the far side of the moon is of particular note to astronomers for many reasons, including the fact that there is no “radio noise,” or interference, there.

He also spoke about the discovery of water on the moon in the form of ice, saying, “this is a game-changer.” He added that astronomers have already scouted out a location for the first human lunar base—on the edge of the Shackleton Crater, parts of which are exposed to near-constant sun—and he hopes that such a base can be established there in the not-too-distant future.
Rich Bogdanovich earns prestigious award from Mathematical Association of America

Math instructor Rich Bogdanovich has been awarded the 2011 Burton W. Jones Award for Distinguished Teaching from the Rocky Mountain Section of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). This is the first time a community college faculty member has earned this award in the Rocky Mountain region.

The MAA Section Awards were established in 1991 to recognize extraordinarily successful teachers of mathematics at the post-secondary level. James Gray, math department chair, nominated Bogdanovich for the award, which was presented April 8 at the RMS meeting banquet in Boulder.

Bogdanovich is now invited to deliver the opening lecture at next year’s RMS meeting. He has also been invited to serve a one-year term on the award selection committee and becomes the section nominee for the national Deborah and Franklin Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics.

“The selection process is always difficult, due to the extremely high caliber of the nominees; however, Rich’s nomination stood out for his tremendous impact on student learning,” said Michael A. Brilleslyper, Ph.D., chair of the MAA RMS teaching award committee and professor in the department of mathematical sciences at the United States Air Force Academy. “Rich is representative of the highest caliber of teacher we look for when we bestow this award. Recipients are outstanding teachers who foster curiosity and generate excitement about mathematics in their students, and we are pleased to recognize Rich for his significant contributions to the field.”

Bogdanovich said it was gratifying to earn the award. “It’s always a pleasure to be recognized for your work, but when the recognition comes from a prestigious organization like the Mathematical Association of America Rocky Mountain Section, it’s a distinct honor, as well,” he said. Bogdanovich credits CCA math department chair Gray for having a supportive management style that sets a positive tone for teaching at the college, which benefits both students and faculty.

For more on this story, visit http://www.ccaurora.edu/news-events/news-releases/bogdanovich-earns-maa-award.

Commencement ...continued from page 1

outlined the struggles they often face. “If we could glimpse into the lives of each one of you sitting here today, we would find that you all have a story to tell – a story of strength in your heart, mind, body, and soul that led you to this present moment,” she said. “Don’t lose sight of what you’ve accomplished! Allow yourself to succeed. Ask for what you want from the universe, and be unrelenting in your quest to get it,” she continued. “Step forward when nobody else will. Create your own opportunities. Sing and dance your way through life, and enjoy each and every phase of your story.”

Student remarks were offered by William Kleinman. Born with a visual impairment, Kleinman was once told that he would never be successful in college because of his disability. “Over time, I learned a valuable lesson: I learned not to focus on the problems that I have but to strive and excel through them. Let us celebrate today and reexamine the trials we face and let us vow that these trials will not hinder the potential that each and every one of us possesses.”

Dr. Matt Gianneschi, deputy executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, delivered the commencement address. “You are graduating during a time of economic recession of historic proportions; unemployment is at near record highs; but your degree makes you more valuable, more versatile, and more critical to the efforts to grow and attract business to Aurora and to Colorado,” he said.

He encouraged graduates to follow their dreams. “Today, you are ready to step out into that world with sharp minds and adventurous spirit—a spirit of adventure that made this country great, if not perfect,” he said. “As you set out to live your own story of success and achievement, it’s your turn to keep this daringly radical, but unfailingly simple, notion of America alive—that no matter where you were born, how much your parents had, no matter what you look like or what you believe in, you can still rise to become whatever you want.”

Lowry Campus hosts its first Scholarship Luncheon

More than 400 guests attended the CCA Foundation’s annual Scholarship Luncheon on April 21, and it was “a remarkable example of what CCA offers our students and our community,” said President Linda Bowman. The gathering celebrated scholarship donors and recipients and was held for the first time on the Lowry Campus Quad so that attendees could see the dramatic changes taking place there.

The event’s theme of “Honoring Traditions” seemed fitting, given the history of the former Air Force base. Guest speaker retired Major Gen. Dale Tabor spoke on behalf of the Mile High United Way, where he serves as manager of major gifts. Tabor was among the first class of cadets to attend the Air Force Academy when it was located at Lowry, and from 1988 to 1991 was the Center Commander of Lowry Air Force Base. “Students can’t do it alone,” he said, recalling a teacher who recommended he attend the AFA. “It takes the support that CCA gives to students, along with scholarships, for them to make it. For you students, it’s the person you see in the mirror each morning who gets it done. It’s your commitment that counts. For students, the prize is there—go get it.”

April Loyd and Kimberly Ballard were acknowledged as recipients of Student Success Award Scholarships, and Indigo Brown was honored as the Chair’s Choice Scholarship Recipient for 2010-2011. CCAF Board President Brad Pierce acknowledged the Assistance League of Denver, the Aurora Rotary Club, and Citywide Banks for their long and generous tradition of supporting scholarships at CCA.

Mike Hanley, vice president at ADT Security Services, was given a plaque acknowledging ADT as the presenting sponsor of the luncheon for two years in a row and for establishing the ADT Scholarship at CCA. Hanley spoke of the importance of Colorado-based corporations having an educated labor pool from which to hire.

CCAF scholarship recipients Cary Caruthers, Joanna Pavlik, and Andrea Felton thanked donors from the stage and praised the impact CCA has had on them. Math chair James Gray paid special tribute to former math chair and professor Frank Neckel, who passed away earlier this year. Gray was joined on stage by former math department chair Cheryll Wingard and President Bowman to announce the establishment of the Frank Neckel Scholarship.

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For the third year in a row, CCAF board member Diane Simard and her husband, Rene, offered to match up to $10,000 in gifts made for up to two weeks after the luncheon, and results are now in: more than $60,000 was raised for CCA student scholarships.

9News education reporter Nelson Garcia served as Master of Ceremonies for the event.

Lowry Phase One ...continued from page 1

trees, and lighting.

Denver-based firm AR7 is the architect and rand* construction corporation is the general contractor. Funding for Phase One, a $1.4 million project, was made possible by the CCA Foundation, the Boettcher Foundation, the Lowry Redevelopment Authority, CCA, and numerous private supporters.

Bowman adds that Phase One is the first of three phases that will take place as finances allow. She envisions that waves of construction and redevelopment will occur at Lowry over the next 10 to 20 years. “The Lowry Campus represents not just the future of CCA, but the future of the community,” Bowman says. “Generations to come will benefit from our vision and commitment today.”

CCA Takes Back the Night

Among the events held April 21 as part of the national “Take Back the Night” movement was a self-defense workshop. Here, Elizabeth Hirsh takes part in a demonstration with Chris Turnquist from the Parker Academy of Martial Arts as students look on.

International Festival: Island Cultures

Students give a presentation at CCA’s sixth annual International Festival on April 26. This year’s theme was “Island Cultures” and featured student presentations from English composition, music, ESL, and many others. Organizers called the event “a wonderful celebration of CCA’s diversity.”

Students share a cross-cultural tale for a crowd at the International Festival. Kristen Johanssen (pictured left) and Daniell McGraw perform a scene from “Bony Legs.” More than 550 people attended festival events throughout the day and night at both campuses.

Fulbright Scholar shares insights into street gangs

CCA student, at left, listens to Fulbright Scholar Jon Bendall, who spoke to students on April 5 about “Comparative Law Enforcement Practices and Street Gangs.” A police officer in Norwich, England, Bendall is studying at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs and is working on a criminal justice doctorate on gangs.
CFWD celebrates students
On April 15, the Center for Workforce Development recognized a group of students who passed their GED tests. Each student was acknowledged by her mentor and presented with a certificate of accomplishment.

Retirees get CCA updates at luncheon
A Retiree Celebration was held on April 18, giving CCA retirees from the region a chance to get together and hear updates on goings-on at the college. Attendees included Ray Asrari, Tom Brosh, Alvin Bryant, Jo Castillo, Karel Clift, Rella Douglass, Bob Lind, Jim Lund, John McGuire, Mark Ortiz, Pat Pendergrass, Ron Ross, Larry Steele, Florian Supercyński, Cindy Thomas, and Jim Weedin.

Cybersecurity efforts shared with forensic anthro class
When anthropology instructor Gary Scott invited Jefferson and Gilpin Counties District Attorney Investigator Mike Harris to speak with his class, he had no idea that the presentation would be preempted by breaking news: Harris would be unable to attend because he was about to make an undercover arrest. Harris, of the Child Sex Offender Internet Investigations Department, was to discuss how he portrays himself as a teenaged girl to apprehend online sex predators. Filling in for Harris was Carly Stratka, investigator for the 1st Judicial District Attorney’s Office in Jefferson and Gilpin Counties, also in the Internet Investigations department.
June 10 EMS Career Fair to showcase job pathways

The EMS department will hold an Emergency Services Career Fair from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on June 10 to demonstrate the numerous career pathways that are available to current or future EMS providers.

According to Mike Stanley, up to 50 employers, colleges, universities, and recruiters will offer information and field questions. Participants to date are American Medical Response, Aurora Fire Department, Rural/Metro Ambulance, Emergency Medical Services Association of Colorado, Elizabeth Fire Department, Federal Heights Fire Department, Sable Altura Fire Department, and the Medical Center of Aurora.

The event is open to those interested in becoming professional first responders, are thinking about making a career change, or are actively seeking employment in this fast-growing field. The Fair will also offer workshops to help candidates better prepare themselves for career development and job searches.

The Fair will be at the Center for Simulation, 9235 E. 10th Dr., Bldg. 859, Lowry Campus, Denver, CO 80230.

Tax Help Colorado breaks records again!

Student volunteers from seven Colorado Community College System colleges, including CCA, have helped return $6 million to the bank accounts of Coloradans via a unique program that pairs taxpayers with aspiring tax professionals. Refunds generated by CCA volunteers this year totaled $2,797,451.

The program, Tax Help Colorado, is a Piton Foundation-sponsored initiative that relies on CCCS colleges to provide free income-tax return preparation to lower- and moderate income working families.

Tamra Schmitt, coordinator of the program for CCA, said: “It is rewarding to see how our positive reputation has brought more and more taxpayers to seek our services each year, resulting in such tremendous growth.” She said that “a pretty impressive” 1,265 volunteer hours went into the preparation of the returns this year.

CCA “Green” tip of the month

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that Americans waste 30 percent of all edible food produced, bought, and sold in this country. 25 percent of all fresh water and four percent of all oil consumed here are used to produce food that is never eaten. Much food waste ends up in landfills where it produces methane, a contributor to global climate change.

To minimize food waste, buy and cook only as much as you need and use up leftovers. And when you must throw out food, throw all non-meat foods in the compost. (Source: Greenfield Community College)

Emergency Services Career Fair. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., June 10. Center for Simulation, 9235 E. 10th Drive, Bldg. 859, Denver, CO 80230.

Learn about the many career pathways available to current and prospective first responders. Free and open to the public.

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

Emma Lazarus: Voice of Liberty, Voice of Conscience. May 11 – June 23. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday; 12:30 to 6 p.m. Sunday. Aurora Central Library, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway, Aurora 80012.

This American Library Association traveling panel exhibit explores the life of Emma Lazarus, a fourth-generation American from a prominent Jewish family in New York City who is known for the iconic words of her 1883 poem, “The New Colossus,” which reads: “Give me your tired, your poor, /Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” Admission is free. Contact 303-739-7473 for more information.

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