Disaster Management Institute to be unveiled Sept. 20

The Disaster Management Institute of Colorado at CCA, formerly the Critical Incident Theatre, will hold a Sept. 20 grand unveiling. Attendees will experience a simulated disaster and see the state-of-the-art facility in action.

Under the Center for Simulation, the Institute and its functional emergency operations center will allow both CCA students and working professionals to experience and manage simulated disasters of all types and sizes.

Thanks to support from U.S. Rep. Ed Perlmutter (CO-07), Congress appropriated $331,692 in 2008 and $235,620 in 2009 toward equipping the DMI. Congressman Perlmutter plans to attend the grand opening.

The field of emergency management has been hailed by U.S. News & World Report magazine as one of the 50 best careers with strong growth projected over the next decade. According to DMI Director Clinton Andersen, a degree in emergency management and homeland security is a good foundation for a career as an emergency program manager, security

Richard Gentile: “wired to innovate”

Competency-based education. Instructional scaffolding. Richard Gentile takes lofty academic terms and makes them sound, well, interesting to the layperson. His enthusiasm is contagious, and in a recent conversation, he can’t sit still—he gets up to show his interviewer a book, a brochure, a published study demonstrating improved ways to educate. This is someone who is passionate about his work and enthusiastic about giving people the resources and skills they need to be successful. Appointed dean of instruction for math, science, and public service at CCA, Gentile, who also will oversee the Center for Simulation, started work July 5 and hasn’t looked back.

He comes to CCA from Central New Mexico Community College, where he was the senior associate dean for the School of Health, Wellness, and Public Safety. There, he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of a department with more than 100 faculty members educating nearly 2,500 students in 14 allied health programs and six programs in wellness and public safety. Yet coming from the largest college in New Mexico—30,000 students—has been an easy transition for Gentile. While CCA is much smaller, “the number of students doesn’t matter. In many ways, the colleges are much the same,” he says. “You have to complete the same procedures, the same activities and similar processes. But what’s different here is that there is tremendous opportunity to build programs.”

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United Way Pathways Scholars earn unparalleled opportunity

A group of 30 recent graduates from Aurora high schools is participating in the Mile High United Way Pathways scholarship program at CCA and the young people are hearing, firsthand, that they can excel in school and in life.

coached the students that they should never accept anything less than their best.

“You are capable of doing anything you want to do,” he told them, but “you’ve got to have fire and passion or you’ll never make it through to get your degree.” Easley spoke of growing up in the Montbello neighborhood and the challenges that posed for him, and he advised the students to learn their history. “Talk to your parents, your grandparents, and others before it’s too late,” he said. “Anything is possible when you know who you are and where you come from.”

Bradley Jacobson, coordinator of Scholarship Programming, explained why students will benefit from hearing from speakers such as Easley. “By exposing them to successful members of the Aurora and east metro communities, we are showing them that no obstacle is too tall, and that with the right attitude and perseverance, each and every one of them can be successful,” he said. The speakers come from diverse backgrounds, many similar to those of the students themselves.

Jacobson said the intent of the program is to reach down and pull students up. “Such a combination of financial and intensive personal support for students who often struggled in high school and are the first in their families to attend college is rare,” he explained. Each student has received a tuition, fee, and book scholarship to attend CCA and then Metropolitan State College of Denver. The program was made possible by the CCA Foundation and the Mile High United Way. “The program provides these students an unparalleled opportunity to fulfill their dream of acquiring a bachelor’s degree,” he said.

Other speakers will be Tracey Lovett, assistant vice president, and Mary Haynes, scholar relations coordinator, the Daniels Fund; Dr. Greg M. Anderson, Dean, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver; Wil Alston, Executive Director, Five Points Business District; and Rico Munn, J.D., Executive Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education.

CCA welcomes the following individuals who have recently joined the faculty and staff of CCA:

- **Sharon Connelly**, Administrative Assistant III, Human Resources
- **Angela Johnson**, TANF Job Transition Specialist, Center for Workforce Development
- **Joy Ford**, Coordinator of Annual Giving and Alumni Affairs, CCA Foundation
- **Cheryl Waite**, Academic Advisor, Advising
- **Rodney Lanham**, TANF Job Transition Specialist, Center for Workforce Development
- **Christopher Rucks**, TANF Job Transition Specialist, Center for Workforce Development
- **Michael Broadbent**, Director of Fiscal Operations
- **Steve Marshall**, Director of Security
- **Richard Gentile**, Dean of Instruction for Math, Science and Public Service
- **Trent Wolf**, Instructional Technology Trainer
- **Benjamin Johns**, Custodian
- **Ruthanne Orihuela**, Spanish/chair of performing arts and humanities
- **Will Dickerson II**, Scholarship Support Specialist, Student Services
- **Will Hicks**, film/video/television writing/producing faculty
- **Sasa Jovic**, math faculty
- **Tracy Schnorr**, biology faculty
- **Scott Wakefield**, faculty/chair, art and design
- **Bobby McKie**, grounds and nursery, facilities.
Integrated Nursing Pathway program announced

When the Integrated Nursing Pathway program was unveiled this summer, Nancy Kiernan Case, CCA dean of health sciences, knew the offering would be popular. What she didn’t anticipate was her phone ringing off the hook for weeks with calls from interested students.

With its first classes underway this fall, the first group, or cohort, of nursing students is already simultaneously enrolled in CCA and the University of Colorado College of Nursing at the Anschutz Medical Campus, the partner institution in the program.

“Now that classes are about to get started, there is a lot of excitement surrounding this collaboration,” Case said. The program—its full name, the Integrated Pathway to Baccalaureate Nursing Education Program—will benefit students looking for a meaningful career as well as health care providers who seek to hire baccalaureate-prepared nurses. Students accepted into the program will earn an associate of general studies degree from CCA before moving seamlessly to the University of Colorado College of Nursing to earn a bachelor of science degree in nursing, where they will continue their education at the new, state-of-the-art University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

The program was crafted to pave the way for community college students to earn a bachelor’s in nursing, and its creators say this partnership is among the first in the country and is the first in Colorado.

“This new approach to nursing education in Colorado has culminated in an exciting program that capitalizes on the strengths of community college education, builds on the academic resources at both institutions, and transitions community college students to the baccalaureate degree in less than four calendar years,” Case explained.

CCA students will enjoy the benefits of working together with their University of Colorado College of Nursing classmates to share experiences, questions, best practices, challenges, and successes in a demanding curriculum designed to prepare them for a rewarding career.

Case adds that the Pathway emphasizes the value of a diverse student population as a way of achieving excellence in practice that is reflective of the cultural diversity of health care recipients. Program creators say that the diversity of these nursing students will help to prepare them to better serve the patient populations they reflect.

She added that bachelor’s-prepared nurses have a distinct advantage in the workplace. “They are in high demand, have greater employment opportunities, and are more likely to move into leadership roles with the possibility of higher salaries,” she said.

Case says she is grateful for the patience of this summer’s applicants. “There was such a short timeframe for the application process this go-around, and our first cohort should be applauded for their flexibility,” she said. “This will stand them in good stead as they embark on their education and begin their careers as professional nurses.”

“In Times of War” continues to garner attention

“In Times of War,” a film that has its origins in the 7th Congressional District Veterans Oral History Project supported by U.S. Rep. Ed Perlmutter, has earned the Colorado Spotlight Award at the Indie Spirit Film Festival held recently in Colorado Springs. The film also was invited to screen at the recent Film Festival of Colorado in Denver, and has been accepted into the Estes Park Film Festival to be held in September.

Faculty members and students at CCA’s Colorado Film School are behind the creation and production of the film.
Higher Learning Commission approves concurrent enrollment initiative

Last April, a two-member team representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visited CCA and Aurora Central High School to evaluate the college’s concurrent enrollment initiative. Following a positive preliminary report, the college now has received official approval of its request to recognize Aurora Central, William Smith, Rangeview, and Overland High Schools as educational sites for CCA, according to President Linda Bowman. This means that CCA continues to have the ability to offer concurrent credit for eligible high school students in these partner high schools. The HLC of the North Central Association is the independent accrediting agency for CCA.

The visiting team based its evaluation on many factors, including interviews with faculty, staff and students, and a review of resource materials.

“The visiting team and the Higher Learning Commission reviewers were impressed by our vision, philosophy, systems, and procedures,” Bowman said. “This is a wonderful validation of the quality experience that we are ensuring for all of our students. The HLC has clearly shown that our plan for assuring quality and assessing outcomes is one in which they have confidence.”

Excerpts from the HLC report:

“Based on all the evidence considered and the many interviews conducted, it is the team’s judgment that CCA has established the solid foundation of a best practice model for concurrent enrollment . . . it is apparent that the College has given careful consideration to all the facets of assuring the quality of the high school-based concurrent enrollment of college curriculum. It is determined that this initiative is driven by the State and will only increase the College’s service to the district, students, and the State.”

Additionally, “ . . . the commitment to the program by the administration, faculty, and staff and the partnerships with the public school district is a unique model and should be shared with other community and technical colleges. The college is encouraged to submit a proposal to present their model of concurrent enrollment programs at the Higher Learning Commission’s Annual meeting and at the American Association of Community Colleges Convention.”

Aurora Central, William Smith, and Rangeview High Schools are in the Aurora Public Schools district; Overland High is in the Cherry Creek Schools district.

Dr. Edwin Ray named interim VP of Instruction

Dr. Edwin Ray has been named interim vice president of Instruction following the departure of Dr. Bernice Harris, who has joined the staff of the Community College of Denver.

According to President Linda Bowman, Dr. Ray has served the community college system in Colorado for 37 years, including 18 years as vice president at Pikes Peak Community College, from which he retired in March.

A native of Arkansas, Ray attended the University of Denver, receiving bachelor of science and master of science degrees. He holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry at the University of Washington in Seattle.

After Ray’s graduation, he and his family moved to Fort Morgan, Colo., where he taught chemistry and mathematics and became chief academic officer at Morgan Community College. Following 15 years there, he served four years as the associate vice president for educational services for CCCS. Following that he became vice president for educational services at PPCC.

Ray returned to work at PPCC on a post-retirement appointment, still serving as VPES. When CCD asked if he would be willing to come to Denver and assist them as Interim Provost until the position could be filled, he agreed.

Ray said he is eager to serve at CCA, where he will be on campus two to three times each week. “When the opportunity arose to lend a hand at a college with the high reputation enjoyed by CCA and at the same time to work with such talented individuals, how could I resist?” he said. “I’m looking forward to working with Linda and her team and with all the faculty and staff at this outstanding institution.”

Disaster Management Institute ...continued from page 1

specialist, disaster preparedness and recovery specialist, or risk management professional.

“In an increasingly complex society, communities and institutions more than ever rely on highly trained professionals to lead them through the crucial process of planning for potential emergencies, as well as response to and recovery from major disasters,” he said.

The program welcomes students seeking to get into this field as well as working professionals looking to refresh and update their skills. All classes are developed and taught by professionals who have worked or are working in the emergency management and homeland security sectors.
Community ESL program within the Aurora Language Center, were invited to share their expertise in working with non-native English language learners in higher education.

The conference was a gathering of student services advisors for Educational Opportunity Centers, student support services, and Veterans Upward Bound programs in Colorado. The event was sponsored by Colorado ASPIRE, an organization whose mission is to increase educational opportunities for low-income and first-generation college students through professional development and legislative advocacy.

Tombari and Lawton introduced their presentation in an attention-grabbing manner. “We started off having the attendees fill out a form that is written in Amharic and used the experience as a metaphor for difficulties of navigating the higher education system,” Tombari explained.”After briefly describing the Aurora Language Center and its relationship with CCA, we had a good discussion on the needs, expectations, and challenges advisors experience in working with English language learners.”

Richard Gentile  ...continued from page 1

In his role, Gentile works to implement the ‘best of the best’ he has observed over the years. “I bring all of my experiences with students, mentors, and others who have had an impact on me,” he explains. “I have been fortunate to work in numerous environments of innovation and learned much there. This is who I am—a reflection of these influences.”

He cites his travel around the country with medical doctors and health sciences instructors who employed innovative approaches to health care and education in shaping him as an educator and administrator. He also credits his experiences working in progressive programs in Milwaukee, Atlanta, Houston, and Albuquerque with setting him on his path.

Gentile understands the unique needs of the community college student. “Most are working, have families, or are taking care of family members,” he says. “This sets up, for them, a different world of education. And community colleges adapt every day. We uphold high standards, but, where possible, we take circumstances into consideration. We educate, we measure success—and we recognize that there are ways of maintaining quality while giving a little leeway to see that our students succeed.”

He is an advocate of a strengths-based model and a coaching approach to working with students—identifying individual strengths to help students do well. “I believe in early intervention, and we must take care to direct students to the resources they need,” he says. “It isn’t until you build relationships that they will tell you what’s going on in their lives, and only then can we help.” He offers the example of a student getting a flat tire on the way to school. “This might not be a big a deal to you or me, but it may seem overwhelming to a student. We just get it fixed, but to a student, it can be a financial problem and a transportation problem and it can set in motion a whole chain of events that are barriers to getting to class.”

A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, Gentile is an advocate of community colleges because he is the product of one. He earned an associate of applied science degree from Milwaukee Area Technical College and a bachelor of science degree from Georgia State University, both in respiratory therapy, and a master of education degree from the University of Houston. He holds a graduate certificate in Allied Health Education and Administration from Baylor College of Medicine.

Gentile has been recognized with the Certificate of Appreciation for Professional Leadership and Service from the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment Association and has received other awards for his leadership. He also served in appointed and elected positions in the New Mexico Society for Respiratory Care, including a year as president of the state professional association and chair of the state licensing board.

With his extensive background in health care, Gentile is building connections with the medical and education community in Aurora and sees mutual opportunities. “There are partnership opportunities with Pickens Technical College, The Children’s Hospital, University of Colorado and Anschutz, and a new VA hospital coming—we need to determine our niche so that we can help meet their needs for trained employees,” he says. He sees exceptional potential in the fields of medical diagnostic testing and the medical lab sciences. He also embraces the possibilities for the Center for Simulation at CCA. “I’m wired to innovate, start something, and encourage it to grow,” he says.
Lowry facelift in the offing

The Lowry Campus is home to nearly half of CCA’s enrollment, and, while the building interiors are nicely updated and highly functional, their exteriors have the look and feel of the military base they used to be a part of.

All that is about to change thanks to the CCA Foundation, which has granted the college $250,000 to launch a first phase of a Lowry Campus transformation.

The pending remodel will provide a recognizable and accessible main entrance, along with a full-service student success center offering information on admission, registration, financial aid, and career options. Other upgrades will include lighting, signage, and maps to make the campus more navigable.

In light of these developments, President Linda Bowman recently held a series of information sessions to showcase the proposed changes. “As we get closer to these long-talked-about improvements, we need to review our needs and ensure that we consider how our growth has impacted our priorities,” she explained. She said that architects are working on plans and cost estimates based on past and current faculty and staff feedback, combined with other Lowry planning conversations.

Data from the college’s Office of Institutional Research shows that for the spring 2010 semester, nearly 50 percent of all CCA students took at least one course at Lowry, translating to nearly 3,000 students who took at least one college-level course there. This is a 19 percent increase over the same timeframe two years ago.

Bowman confirmed that a broader fund-raising campaign to build on the CCAF gift is in the planning stages, and, when under way, the college, through the Foundation, will “go to our internal and external communities to raise money for additional phases that will continue our efforts to enhance the campus and increase its utility.”

Ritter, Spence, Sobanet, Carpenter to offer in-class political analysis

In this busy election year, one of the most talked-about new classes at CCA is “Current Political Issues.” The course will feature presentations by well-known guests, and the talks are free and open to the public.

Presenters include:

- Oct. 5: “Topics in Health Care,” Cody Belzley, vice president of public affairs, Colorado Children’s Campaign
- Nov. 9: “K-12 Education Reform,” state Sen. Nancy Spence
- Nov. 16: “Higher Education Finance,” Dr. Linda Bowman, president, Community College of Aurora

With the exception of Gov. Ritter’s presentation, which begins at 6:30 p.m., all lectures will start at 6 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building Forum.

The course’s instructor is Dr. Matt Gianneschi, vice president for student services and enrollment management.
High schoolers discover realities of first responder careers

EMS Skills Rodeo, anyone? More than 50 high school students from around the state participated in a full day of instruction in emergency medical services at CCA over the summer. The students, all exploring careers in the medical profession, got a taste of what it’s like to be a first responder.

Students toured the Center for Simulation, learned to splint and bandage, performed CPR on high-tech mannequins, practiced taking vital health readings, and acted out real-life scenarios while serving in the roles of firefighter, police officer, and emergency medical technician.

Their day ended with a Skills Rodeo to put their newly acquired abilities to the test.

CCA is a regular host for teen participants in the AHEC program. The program is sponsored by the Colorado Area Health Education Center at the University of Colorado Denver Health Sciences Center.

Garden Party spruces up CTC

“I went to a garden party / reminisced with my old friends / a chance to share old memories . . . ” and build some new ones, as a number of CCA volunteers gave of their time in the summer heat to spruce up the grounds at the CentreTech Campus.

Under the direction of Grounds and Nursery staffer Rudy Herrera, employees from throughout the college (and, in some cases, their children) showed off their inner green thumbs on July 16 as hundreds of flowers and other flora were planted in the main median at CentreTech.

Bhutanese refugees receiving EMS training

Following the occurrence of a tragic medical episode in their community, a group of Bhutanese refugees participated in a two-day basic first aid and CPR training session at the college in July. The workshop was designed to familiarize participants with important medical life skills and teach them about the availability trained professionals who respond to medical emergencies.

Working on a medical training mannequin, and in turns by partnering with others in their group, the students practiced resuscitation following a series of scenarios, including shock, heart attack, and bleeding.

The training was arranged through a partnership between CCA and the Original Aurora Community Integration Collaboration.
Military/Veteran orientation a success

A special orientation held Aug. 10 addressed the unique questions about higher education that are often asked by active military, veterans, and members of their families.

According to Rene Simard and Tom Dury of CCA’s Veteran and Military Center, students and prospective students with a military background often need assistance in maneuvering the maze of benefits and opportunities they are entitled to.

The orientation offered attendees a chance to learn more about enrolling and studying at CCA and provided a forum for participants to share ideas and advice with each other.

Other highlights of the event included the presentation of information on VA benefits and financial aid, the college enrollment process, assessment testing, and the Student Military/Veteran Organization.

Dedicated to serving this important population, CCA has been named one of the top military-friendly colleges in Colorado for 2010 by G.I. Jobs magazine.

Office of Student Life named “Public Health Hero”

In recognition of its commitment to providing public health services and information for students, as well as for members of the Aurora community, the Office of Student Life has been named Public Health Hero of the Year by the Tri-County Health Department. The Office is managed by Angie Tiedeman, director, and Julie Johnson, coordinator.

The award recognizes an individual, business, or organization in the tri-county region—Arapahoe, Douglas, and Adams counties—working to improve or promote public health. Tiedeman and Johnson were recognized for their efforts at a June 17 luncheon.

Police Academy Classes graduate

The CCA Police Academy Class 09-3 graduated July 1 prepared to enter the field of law enforcement. Held in the Student Centre Rotunda, the ceremony was a celebratory occasion held before a standing-room-only crowd of family and friends.

In addition, CCA Police Academy Class 10-2 graduated on June 8. Michael Carter, director of police and fire academies, said that the students in each class were selected from numerous applicants to the program. “These two classes represent the cream of the crop,” he explained. “We are always looking for outstanding young men and women for our Academy, and we certainly found it with these classes.”

Aurora resident Kevin Nagy, class valedictorian and student speaker at the graduation, noted that he has wanted to pursue a career in law enforcement for some time. “In evaluating programs to further my education, I looked around, and by far, this is the best program in the state,” he said.
CCA Events

Public Observatory Nights offered

Members of the community are invited to participate in Public Observatory Nights at CCA this fall. The first event will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 10. The evening includes a talk in CCA’s Fine Arts Building Forum, as well as observing through the telescope (weather permitting).

Other public observatory nights will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 15, and at 6 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 12. Each event is free and open to the public. The events all will be held at 16000 E. CentreTech Parkway in Aurora.

CCA now tobacco-free

CCA is now tobacco-free on both campuses. The recommendation to go tobacco-free was made by the college’s Tobacco Task Force. According to Angela Tiedeman, director of Student Life, CCA is the fifth college in Colorado and the third community college in the state to do go tobacco free. In a recent survey of faculty and staff, a majority agreed or strongly agreed that they would support an initiative to “prohibit smoking and all forms of tobacco everywhere on campus.”

Kudos to . . .

Human Resources Director Cindy Hesse, who was invited to present at the American Association for Women in Community Colleges regional conference in Loveland on Aug. 5. The theme of the conference was “Mapping Your Path to Leadership,” and Hesse delivered a 45-minute seminar titled “How Leaders Make Difficult Decisions in Personnel.” AAWCC is the leading national organization that champions women and maximizes their potential. The organization is an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges. Presenters and participants at the August conference came from throughout Colorado and the west.

Save the dates! CCA is collaborating with the City of Aurora and the Aurora Public Library to present the following lectures. Admission is free. All events will be held at the Aurora Central Library, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway.


Walk Where the Dinosaurs Walked. Sept. 11 at the Aurora History Museum. Hop on a bus and explore the Front Range for evidence of dinosaurs. See rock formations, dinosaur footprints, and fossils with geologist Dick Jensen. $21 ($16 Aurora residents). Call 303-739-6666 for more information.

Music Benefit: The Urban Farm at Stapleton. 1-7 p.m., Sept. 18. The Farm is dedicated to improving the lives of children living in high-risk, urbanized neighborhoods by helping to create a sense of positive self-regard and self-reliance, a strong work ethic, and hope. Families are welcomed. Activities for all ages; local bands. Come enjoy the Farm at 10200 Smith Rd., Denver, CO 80239.

For more events, see www.auroragov.org.

CCA News Briefs

September: National Preparedness Month

Did you know that the simple act of changing fonts before you print can actually save resources? According to several sources, including printer. com, top font picks for saving ink are Century Gothic, Ecocent, Times Roman, Calibri, and Verdana. For more research, see http://blog.printer.com/2009/04/printing-costs-does-font-choice-make-a-difference/.

September is National Preparedness Month, and citizens are encouraged to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities. Take steps to prepare for potential emergencies and disasters; put together an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, be prepared to help your neighbor, and work as a team to keep everyone safe. For helpful tips and more, visit ready.gov, call 1-800-BE-READY, TTY 1-800-462-7585.

CCA “Green” tip of the month

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