Out of the Darkness

Nearly 50 years in education, done in a flash / 5

Hiding from the world after the Aurora Theater tragedy, one survivor found comfort in college routine, and managed a family first: a diploma

Sheer joy, and the sense of accomplishment that comes with being the first in a family to graduate college, were palpable during Heather Woten’s shuffle across the stage at last month’s commencement.

The moment even featured its own indelible soundtrack. “Heather Ree!” her father, Tom, could be heard shouting as Woten’s turn to rub elbows with CCA officials was announced and the obligatory poses were snapped. The nickname originally was a byproduct of her brother’s inability to pronounce the middle name ‘Marie’ as a child and has stuck with Woten as family tradition through the years.

On the surface, it was about as normal as these celebratory moments get. Woten’s new husband, Sean, knew otherwise. Tucked far outside the stage, sitting alone amid a row of empty folding chairs, he soaked in the scene full of pride – and context.

Heather Ford, since married with the last name Woten, was one of the lucky ones last July 20, able to get out of Theater 9 before she could incur an injury, or worse. But there were deep mental scars that needed to heal. Going through CCA’s graduation ceremony was one giant step for the young woman, who wore her survivor necklace under her gown.

See Woten / Page 10
Colorado Film School students John McSween and Benjamin Dunn suddenly are a hot commodity, with a potential feature movie in the hopper.

It beats the cold shoulder, which best describes the duo’s introduction.

“We actually are those kooky people who went to a new student orientation and we had slightly burned cheeseburgers and sat next to each other,” Dunn recalled. “We chatted a little bit. I ate my burger, got my packets, got in the car and was like, ‘I’m never working with that guy again.’”

McSween, believe it or not, had a considerably more dismissive mindset. “I didn’t really think about him.”

The two, however, envision themselves as long-range working partners — not only produced a $5,000 payout and a gold cup that will reside at Community College of Aurora for the next year. Two veteran movie producers already have vowed to raise the $500,000 to $1.5 million needed from investors to build out their short film into a full-length project.

Sara Risher, current managing partner in Chick Flicks and former president of New Line Cinema, and Colorado Film commissioner Donald Zuckerman have committed to get the project financed for a shoot beginning next fall. Zuckerman and Risher between them have produced about 70 feature films.

To gauge the changing nature of the students’ relationship, one must only look inside the creative process that led to “Peak of Terror.” The CFS held a script competition, which they entered, with some prompting, since horror isn’t their usual genre of choice.

“Over a six pack in an afternoon” they had the 20 pages necessary for inclusion in the competition. A few days later McSween and Dunn discovered they’d won.

And while the two remain very different in terms of personality, they have developed a certain kismet when it comes to the work process and a willingness to hear each other out on ideas that’s led to that successful partnership.

“He’s a little bit country and I’m a little bit rock and roll,” Dunn said with a laugh, adding quickly, “Oh no, that was bad…”

That victory in February, though, was all good. It meant $2,500 to shoot a sizzle reel, which is essentially a short film. Shooting took place around the state, in Idaho Springs, Red Feather Lakes outside of Fort Collins, Keystone and Echo Lake Lodge at the foot of Mount Evans.

By late April, McSween already was driving his computer with the film on his hard drive to deliver the finished project to the film festival, which one day hopes to become to horror and student film what Sundance became to independent filmmaking.

Clockwise from top:
At the Stanley Horror Film Festival, receiving the $5,000 check for winning the judge’s award for “Peak of Terror,” John McSween directs lead actress Emeli Emanuelson in a scene; the entire cast and crew celebrates after the festival win — and a promise to try and secure financing for a full-length feature film that expands upon the 20-minute sizzle reel.

See Terror / Page 3
Filmmakers laud training received at Colorado Film School

From Terror / Page 2

Should “Peak of Terror” get the full-length treatment, it can do nothing but enhance the Stanley Hotel's cache among prospective filmmakers.

And the prospect of getting funded is real. Frederic Lahey, director of the Colorado Film School, noted that the producers “think it will be pretty easy when they have a 19-minute, high-quality, professional piece of work already in hand.”

It was Lahey who approached the two and asked them to join the in-house script writing contest that preceded the whirlwind that has become the following months.

“As Donald Zuckerman told them, it will change their lives,” Lahey said of the prospect of a feature film and its potential impact on McSween and Dunn. “And what it means is that the professional focus of the school is paying off in the professional realization of our students.”

“Peak of Terror” in a tangential sense is an homage to the style of the film “Jaws.” The latter was a horror film ranking near the top of both of their favorite’s lists because of its slick juxtaposition not only of humor and fear, but of great characters and story.

“Essentially this is a best-case scenario for a short film,” Dunn said. “A lot of people don’t realize the potential in the short films you can make at the Colorado Film School. We have amazing resources at our disposal, and I feel like what we did is we wrote a short with room for a feature. We wrote a short that was maybe too big for its britches and a little too big for 20 minutes and executed it well.”

Expanding into a feature film, McSween added, will allow for “connecting and exploring the characters more … while bringing up the highs higher and the lows lower to be just that much more fun.”

Still, there’s no plotline that can top the time of their lives both filmmakers currently are experiencing.

It seems like ages ago that burnt burgers was their shared connection.

“That’s actually one of the things crucial to our success is we do have our eye on the prize,” Dunn said. “And the eye on the prize for me is never having to work in the furniture store again. I started doing film when I was very young … So that’s where I am (mentally) most of the time.”

Physically, McSween and Dunn are on the Lowry campus at the film school just as often.

“In terms of film, it’s given me everything.”

Maybe more, should greenbacks lead to that coveted greenlight.
**Talking points add up to victory**

**Student calls competition “confidence builder”**

Persuasive speaking came easily to Matt Jensen, even at an early age. “I’m pretty sure I invented, ‘If mom says no, ask dad,’” he joked.

Jensen then honed his skills the last six years as a bartender, a petri dish of persuasive speaking, with some pitches more effective than others. He could serve as a mixologist and persuasive speaking judge, with ‘on-the-hour’ the customer’s desired prize.

Jensen’s role in theater projects and music only sharpened his ability to deliver to an audience in unaffected fashion.

All that practice paid off handsomely May 3, when the Community College of Aurora student won the City Wide Persuasive Speaking competition at the Blackbox Studio Theatre on the campus of Community College of Denver. Winning speakers from satellite events at five community colleges – CCA, CCD, Arapahoe, Front Range and Red Rocks – competed for the title of metro-Denver area champion.

Jensen’s topic was entitled, “For a Few Dollars More: Popcorn, 3D, & IMAX,” which touched upon the inflation of movie prices.

“My thesis was that despite Hollywood’s best efforts to regain audiences – because they’ve been losing audiences for the last 75 years – their efforts to regain the audiences have actually served to drive them further away.”

The main points must be supported by sufficient evidence, while the speech is clearly organized and easy to follow. Vicki Graham, Jensen’s faculty in Communication 115, started the CCA project by setting rigid standards on sourcing, including a hierarchy of the most credible sources, which had to be produced in hard-copy form.

Each competitor’s 6-8 minute speech had to be memorized, though participants once competition started could use note cards or an 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet of paper. No visual aids of any kind were allowed.

Criteria included aspects of the speech’s introduction, body, conclusion, and delivery.

Karen M. Buchanan of Regis University, Mike Monsour of Metropolitan State University of Denver and Maisha Fields Vogel of the University of Colorado comprised the judging panel.

Jensen said he actually felt more comfortable in the city-wide competition because of his experience speaking on stage in front of an audience but still never was quite confident of his standing in the competition until his name was announced in first place.

Jensen actually went first and had to watch the other four competitors give their speeches before learning that outcome.

The four other finalists and their speech titles were: Andrew Friedrich (“Ethically-Eating”); Ashia Greenleaf (“Unique Minds”); Josh Myrick (“Not Another Love Story”); and Sarah Moldenhauer (“Demystifying Eating Disorders”).

“I never, ever feel like I’ve ‘nailed it,’ since there’s always 10,000 things you tell yourself you could have done better,” Jensen said.

Jensen won numerous prizes, including a Swedish massage and a facial, a Moroccan purse (“which actually became my mom’s this weekend.”), prime Colorado Rockies tickets, plus bookstore and restaurant gift cards.

But winning was a reward in itself. “I’m very proud to have this. It’s a confidence builder,” he explained.

Matt Jensen poses with Communication faculty Vicki Graham after taking first place at the City Wide Persuasive Speaking competition at Community College of Denver. Jensen beat out four other finalists for the title.

“This is my first year back in school after a long hiatus and I had a lot of doubts about how I’d perform as a student. This very much reassured me and reminds me that I still have skills that I haven’t really addressed in about seven years.”

Jensen added that the skills he’s learned in his communication class are useful on a daily basis, through various interactions with people from all areas of his life.

Jensen is studying Film and wants to be a movie screenwriter in the future.

At the very least, he already has a head start on the proper form for a convincing pitch.

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**Student center hands out annual awards to its success stories**

Shawna Bauer, Anthony Alexander and Robert Rhodes show off their hardware after winning special awards from the Trio program.
Student Carla Diaz turned in her test and was the last one leaving Classroom Building, Room 102 on May 13, putting a period on CCAs spring semester in College Algebra.

"I'm done. I torture you no more," Diaz said to her instructor, Charlie Morrison, as she approached the door.

Morrison took the joke and went with it, "Well, I torture you no more, either," he replied.

Little did Diaz know how much the spirit, if not the exact meaning of Morrison's words resonated.

This would be the last time Morrison would formally be in the classroom setting as a teacher. That Monday class officially ended a career that began at what is now known as East Middle School but was dubbed East Junior High in 1965 when Morrison started.

By any math, that's a 48-year run as a faculty member, done in an instant.

"That's impressive, for sure," Diaz said. "He has a lot of tolerance for us."

The student stopped at the door, before adding, "How many times do you wish you'd thrown in the towel?" to Morrison, who quickly responded.

"Never," he said. "I really mean it. Seriously."

Talk to Morrison and you understand there's no reading between those lines. Other than maybe baseball, there are few endeavors he's loved more over the years than standing in front of a classroom and imparting knowledge. He's done it with equal parts equation and elation, always handy with a story and the arrogance of knowing exactly what he's doing.

"Life is just fun," he said. "I'll laugh at my own funeral."

And yes, some habits do die hard after nearly five decades. Morrison still carries a pocket protector, filled with pencil, pen, paper clips and Cecil, the red pen he nicknamed and still carries a pocket protector, filled after nearly five decades. Morrison would formally be in the classroom the last five at CCA, including 42 at William C. Hinkley High School and the last five at CCA, and with a million stories. It's probably in his blood.

"That's impressive, for sure," Diaz said.

Yet, the serious side of Morrison also will miss the mechanics of teaching, and the discussion of the craft with other like-minded professionals who enjoy talking shop as much as he did.

Morrison insists to this day that the first 20 minutes of each class are the most vital of any moments in any semester. "You set the tone right there," he added.

And if done right, "They quickly realize we're all in this together, and while we have a job to do, we can have a good time doing it."

Morrison primarily has been an Algebra teacher at the middle school, high school and community college levels but also has led Pre-Calculus, Trigonometry and Statistics courses. The youngest students he ever taught were eighth graders, which is juxtaposed in recent years against the many adult learners in his classes during his CCA tenure.

Morrison admitted there are differences in teaching methodologies since 1965, but insisted students aren't much different. It's the parents' involvement and attitude that's widely changed.

"We're afraid to take ownership of our failings. There's a phrase, 'I got an A. The teacher gave me an F. Hear the difference? No, you got an ‘F’ also. It's too bad that you did, but you earned it."

Morrison has earned his time off, too. As he prepared for his last official day as teacher, the thought crossed his mind that it would be the last time he'd walk out of his car down the hallway into the classroom. Yet, he still plans to come back to CCA to "harass James Gray, pester Mary Westendorf or just to bring my infamous peanut brittle" to the college.

"I do love teaching and will miss it," he said. "But it's time."
CCA’s 2013 commencement ceremony took place May 11 before a crowd of about 2,200 people at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Denver International Airport. A group of 239 students walked in the graduation ceremony, and shared laughs, shout-outs from relatives and plaintive moments regarding their accomplishments. Among the many CCA volunteers on hand were Kristen Cusack and Nicole Hockert, while staffer Javon Brame, JoAnn Burkhart and Renie Del Ponte, and VP of Instruction Xeturah Woodley helped keep the mood light.
The May 11 commencement ceremony featured numerous facets, including colorful fashion choices (top left), camera-loving grads Marisa Garibay and Laura Serrano (above), some CCA security office camaraderie between Selina Martinez and Kendrick Washington (first row, top), and a post-ceremony sigh of relief from faculty Elizabeth Hirsch and Rachel Blue Ankney (first row, second from top). Of course, the diversity at CCA was obvious in the breadth of its graduates.
Christina Seraile kicked off commencement with the National Anthem. But then the lighter mood began to fill the Crowne Plaza auditorium, reflected by unique SGA caps, swirling tassels to signify graduation, the smiling entrance to the graduation hall pre-ceremony, a student’s near miss with CCA President Alton D. Scales and VP of Student Affairs Betsy Oudenhoven and student speaker Crystal Smith sharing a laugh on stage.
CCCS Provost Dr. Geri Anderson's speech was a big hit (top), as was faculty Stacey D'Angelo's pre-ceremony meeting with student Michelle Eghotz (right row, middle). Meanwhile, ESL adjunct Elizabeth Scroeder tries not to get choked by faculty of the year Chris Tombari while adjusting her outfit. Faculty Heather McMichael takes matters into her own hands by checking her look in a mirror in the dressing room (bottom, left corner).
Woten returns to school to help keep trepidation at bay

From Woten/ Page 1

It wasn’t even a year that he and Heather, that same brother, Shawn, and two close friends, were in a crowded place just like this, with excitement and anticipation surrounding them.

Aurora’s Century Theaters, Theater No. 9 specifically, was supposed to be a feel-good outing to see a much-anticipated feature film. It became another life-altering moment, but one unwelcome, unwanted.

The interceding months in Woten’s case weren’t spent in physical therapy, or worse, filled with memories of her passing. Fear. Confinement. Paranoia. Those instead had been constant companions since last July.

But arming herself with determination, focus and courage, she would persevere. Accepting her diploma, and walking through graduation meant that much.

“But it’s going to be in the back of my mind,” Woten admitted before the ceremony. “But it’s a safe place and you can’t ruin everything you go through, every crowded event, a graduation, a sporting event, because of one situation that happened. I say that like it’s easy. I still can’t even do it, so I’m still going to be nervous and looking around. But I will be able to do it. … You’ve got to get through it.”

Demons, begone. Heather Ree’s moving on.

“It means the world to me,” her husband said, wiping away tears only moments after his bride of three months was officially recognized with the announcement of her name.

“I’m just so happy to see her be able to get back to her life, after seeing how it was going through that. She was nowhere OK for a while. And to see her back to her normal life means the world. … It’s one of the greatest moments of my life to see her go across that stage.”

CCA helped sharpen focus

Attending CCA just a month after 12 were killed and numerous injured in the Aurora tragedy was one small step among many Woten took to try and recapture her equilibrium.

Hitting the books, attending classes, concentrating on assignments were mundane tasks that could temporarily remove her from what seemingly had been an out-of-body experience.

Yes, sitting in the second row on the left side at a theater Woten had attended countless times as an Aurora native to watch the opening of “The Dark Knight Rises” remains etched in her memory. Hearing a gunshot, then another, sitting frozen, then feeling herself being pulled down by Sean and crawling out of chaos before law enforcement arrived remains tangible.

But even today, these elements periodically seem unreal in the mind’s eye. It’s as if an unseen ghost provides a smoke screen to the horrors experienced, but occasionally airs out the scene, leaving reality staring back at her, unblinking.

The show of strength embodied by her mere attendance at graduation was a long time coming, given the continued existence, if fading, of such a capricious mind – aided by therapy.

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“And you’ve got to get through it.”

- Heather Woten
Graduation is more than ‘baby step’

From Woten/ Page 1

Heather Woten ran through the gamut during the college’s commencement ceremony. Commencement is an act of defiance as much as recognition of accomplishment, in her mind. Having her name called aloud, and telling her story publicly, expose her in a way that’s uncomfortable. But it’s also part of combatting the overwhelming sickness she’s felt living in fear, and hiding to an extent.

“I want to be able to say, ‘I did it,’” she said in the days leading up to graduation. “And I’m not going to let one jerk ruin it for me.”

At graduation, there were the anticipated nerves and numerous sideways glances checking out the auditorium scene. But there were strong counter-balances, which, like burying herself in schoolwork had done for her previously, put mistrust in the rear view.

Woten laughed at the speeches. She smiled at her dad’s shout-out. She absolutely beamed afterward.

“Now, unless it’s on my mind then I don’t care and I can do anything I want to,” recalled Woten, who attended CCA under her maiden name Ford. “But if there’s a little speck of, ‘Oh my God, what was that?’ if any of that enters my mind then I’ll be paranoid for the rest of the day.”

Woten admitted that even before last July’s tragedy she would always a cautious person, though not lacking independence.

The Hinkley High School graduate described herself growing up as the go-to person for people with difficulties solving problems or having trouble extricating themselves from life’s situations.

That ability to coax answers and assuage fears led her to study Psychology at CCA and plot a future career as a counselor as she continues her education with a focus on Human Development/Human Studies coursework online at Colorado State University.

But an understanding of the human condition, and time, so far hasn’t been enough to sufficiently tackle her own lingering issues.

“Every once in a while you just have a bad dream or a bad thought. I’m still dealing with that,” she explained. “I don’t know if that’s good to say, but I’m jealous of people because they’re over it and I’m not. And I’m like, ‘Why can’t I be like that?’ They can deal with it a lot easier than I can.

“That’s the hardest part for me. I want to get over it so bad, but I can’t.”

Attending CCA graduation is one giant leap in that direction after what she calls “baby steps” in the healing process, such as attending a ball game.

A glittery reminder

Last July 27, a week after the theater tragedy, a surprise birthday party was planned for Woten.

Obfuscation was planned to pry her from the house, so that the festivities could be executed behind the scenes in secrecy. Only, the center of attention wouldn’t go along with the plan to get her to a flea market for the day with Sean, because she feared the public outing.

So, a quiet family celebration replaced the surprise. “I did get the best present I could ever have,” she said. “Still being here.”

There were other wrapped gifts, and plenty of them. Woten admitted to being “spoiled,” for this particular celebration. One of those presents came from her aunt. It was a necklace adorned with a ribbon, encrusted with small diamonds.

It was designed to serve as a bejeweled mark of
DevEd courses undergoing metamorphosis

**Time streamlined to get into college-level classes**

Developmental education courses are undergoing a much-needed makeover, with English’s new look unveiled in the fall semester; Math in the spring.

The change comes on the heels of a mandate to reduce the time, courses and credits to get students into college-level classes. The change was initiated through the work of the Colorado Community College System and a task force charged with the curriculum re-design.

One of the bottom-line results is that those testing at the lowest levels in Math, English and Reading might have previously needed 1 1/2 to 2 years to earn the proper credentials to join college-level courses.

The new approach shaves that time period to a single semester, using an integrated, systematic reboot of course offerings. That sea change is vital considering that CCCS success rates mirrored those in many states in that less than five percent of students who started in developmental courses ever completed a college degree.

But there are ancillary advantages, too.

“The nice thing that I see is that it isn’t just dumping students into college-level classes but giving them the help they need along the way to succeed,” said Janet Brandau, CCA’s assistant VP of instruction.

An overriding issue with the previous setup was that the large number of developmental-education courses needed prior to simply gain admission to college-level classes was adversely affecting retention.

It wasn’t that students seemingly couldn’t handle the course work offered; instead, the time-intensive period it took to get to college-level work was too daunting a commitment for many to keep.

Starting in the fall, there will be limited pathways for students testing at pre-college levels, but the available options cut time and money, since there are fewer courses needed to reach college-level proficiency.

“We’ve been moving towards this change for four years and we’ve produced a lot of data and research to show the effectiveness of the integrated and accelerated pathways,” said Ashley Moorshead, department chair of Academic Enrichment and a member of the statewide Developmental Education Task Force.

Traditionally those at the 60, pre-college level needed two six-credit courses in Reading and English. That coursework now will be merged into an integrated five-credit class in one semester covering writing/reading intensively, with a supporting studio course in those disciplines.

Those individuals testing at the 90 mark starting in the fall in English get a composite, three-credit course (that merges English 90 and Reading 90), paired with an English 121 co-rec or have the option to concurrently link English 121 to a content-area course, which beginning in August will be Psychology 101.

The developmental series has essentially been eliminated.

“What it’s allowed us to do is to offer one option to students, rather than taking pieces in the existing system and putting them together,” Moorshead explained. “It’s easier for students to navigate than our current system, but it will still reach the same end goal, which is completion of developmental requirements in one semester, which has always been our focus.”

A phased rollout in Math will begin to take effect in Spring 2013, with full implementation anticipated the following fall. Courses such as Math 045 and 060 will be phased out, or reduced while Math 50 – Quantitative Literacy, will cater to students who test on the upper end of Math 45 and also include students in Math 60 and 90. The goal of that course is to prepare students for Statistics and Math for Liberal Arts. Limited sections of Math 55, or STEM Prep, will train students for college-level Algebra.

But as Moorshead explained, all of these class shifts in total should have an overarching effect on the people taking these prep classes.

“We’ll no longer have a system that essentially tells students there’s something academically wrong with them. We’ll have a system that supports them as capable students -- and increase the likelihood of students persisting through 100-level courses and graduating.

“The system no longer says that by only having one semester of preparation or mainstreaming students into classes with additional support. In effect, we’ve changed the paradigm of who a developmental student is and what they need,” she added.

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**Woten**

*From Woten/ Page 11*

A survivor, of which Woten certainly qualifies. Some may argue that only those who were hurt or fatally injured in the Century Theaters incident have been victims of crime. The mental anguish Woten has experienced tells her otherwise.

But she also says that she feels fortunate, in a sense. She got out of the darkness and back into the light. Others weren’t as fortunate.

“The first time I wore the necklace was in November, because I didn’t feel right wearing it. I felt like I shouldn’t flaunt anything. Yes, I made it out but 12 people didn’t. So it was very uncomfortable in a way,” she explained.

As Woten stood in the waiting area, just minutes before the commencement ceremony, that very necklace sat loosely on her graduation gown, swaying as she moved.

Heather Woten delivers a wide smile as she poses after the commencement ceremony with the prize she valued all along.

The juxtaposition of the necklace and her outfit was stark, given all the circumstances of the previous 10 months. Both signified moving on in a sense: one mentally; one physically.

Woten explained that she wasn’t wearing the ribbon for herself, but in honor of the four CCA students who lost their lives the night she was somewhere spared, and for “everybody that was going to attend CCA, because they deserve it.”

What’s clear is that Woten may never fully comprehend why she crawled out of that theater on that violent night without a scratch. To this day, she questions even why she was there in the first place.

Her dog was acting oddly as she prepared to leave for the theater that night, as if, providing a warning. Then, Woten and her party arrived at Century Theatres, and Heather’s mind harkened back to a shooting at that site a decade earlier – something that had never previously occurred.

She didn’t listen to her dog, or her gut, and it changed her life.

Perhaps as a counselor she’ll now bring an undercurrent of understanding she never would have exhibited in the profession without the horror she experienced.

Maybe it was necessary to reinforce the notion that helping people, whether it’s families, children, those in grief or troubled marriages, was unequivocally the right path.

There was no such nagging thoughts going through commencement. This was another life-changer, but with heartbreak taking a back seat.

“I think this will get her back to the Heather of five years ago when I first got together with her,” husband Sean predicted.

The two plan on starting a family once she graduates CSU in December 2014. They also are intent on doing so in Aurora, their hometown – with accompanying scars and all.

There will be no more hiding.

“The theaters been ruined for me but Aurora will never be ruined for me,” Woten said. “I will not let that be taken away from me.”
Angie Tiedeman will be moving back over to the CentreTech campus by the beginning of June to begin a new position that focuses attention on proactively addressing student behavioral concerns.

Increased demands on the college to address student behavior, mental health, safety, emergency preparedness, and such legislative mandates as Title IX and Clery, uncovered the need for a point person in this area. The idea also emanated out of spring training sessions on these issues. Tiedeman already had chaired the college’s student consultation team and was heavily involved in student conduct issues, making her a prime candidate for the new post.

Tiedeman’s shift in responsibilities will come in concert with the installation of software that will allow concerns to be addressed more efficiently.

The 2013-14 CCA Foundation Fall Scholarship application deadline will run through June 15.

The process will be streamlined through new scholarship software that allows students to easily submit their application, essay, letters of recommendation, and scholarship tracking. It also allows references to easily submit commendation letters and highlight donor biographies.

Please contact Regina.Edmondson@ccaurora.edu for more information.

Nicole Hockert begins her new position as Admissions Specialist on June 3. Hockert previously has been working with concurrent enrollment and ASCENT students, parents and high school counselors. Her new role in Admissions, Registration and Records will encompass helping students through all aspects of the application and registration process as well as supervision, leadership and scheduling of the AR&R work study and temporary staff.

Tracey Dillon joined the Fiscal Affairs Department as Accounting Coordinator.

Dillon spent seven-year stints as Manager of AP and Purchasing at Alta Colleges and Accounts Payable Manager at IT consulting firm CIBER before accepting her current position, where she’ll help implement the Banner Fixed Asset module and adapt and adopt required changes to implement the system.

A crowd of about 700 attended the Colorado Film School’s Spring Student Show at Harkins Theaters on May 9. Jennifer Scott, Jordan Meyersiek, Jim Tharp, and Teddy Welle were among those playing integral parts in ensuring the event came off without a hitch.

Registration for Summer Community ESL and Citizenship classes at the Aurora Language Center will take place June 12-18, with classes running from June 22 through Aug. 29. A variety of class times are available, including mornings, evenings and Saturdays.

The two-hour registration process is open to anyone 18 and older and includes a placement test and registration, followed by payment. More specific times available are: June 12, 13 and 15 (10 a.m.) and June 17-18 (6 p.m.). No children, please.

ESL and Citizenship classes cost $140 for 10 weeks of classes (four hours per week), and American Language and Culture classes are $225 (five hours per week). All Aurora Language Center students are eligible to take free computer classes in addition to these course offerings.

Also available is an “American Language and Culture” course for advanced ESL students and au pairs. That class runs from June 24-Aug. 29 on Mondays and Wednesdays (6-8:30 p.m.) and Tuesdays and Thursdays (9:30 a.m.-noon). Registration is available in the Aurora Language Center office, located on the Lowry campus in North Quad, Building 901, Room 105.

Current and past Police Academy cadets were given the opportunity to intermingle with representatives from 15 agencies at a May 7 job fair. Representatives from sheriff’s offices in Adams, Arapahoe and Eagle counties and Colorado State Patrol were among the potential hiring organizations. Other cities with tables at the event included police departments of Aurora, Castle Rock, Denver, Dodge City (Kansas), Englewood, Evans, Golden, Lafayette, Lakewood, Lone Tree, Longmont and Monument.

Three faculty will be leaving CCA to start anew in their lives and careers. Performing Arts and Humanities chair Ruthanne Orihuela was hired as dean of the Center for Language, Arts and Behavioral Sciences at Community College of Denver. Orihuela also will participate in the WorldDenver Fellows Program and has been accepted to University of Northern Colorado’s Ph.D. program in Higher Education Student Affairs Leadership.

Ashley Moorshead, Academic Enrichment Chair, will exit July 30 and move to Dallas, where she will begin married life and doctoral studies at Southern Methodist University in Postsecondary Literacy. Moorshead received a full fellowship in the graduate program.

Laura Woodward of the math department is relocating to Lynchburg, Va., where she can be closer to family and help her husband’s transition to a new job.

CCA’s Art & Design department announced the implementation of a Foundations program, which entails a collaboration of faculty to integrate course curriculum and prepare students systematically for a creative career and potential entrance into the marketplace. All first-year Art & Design students will be required to take a rigorous cluster of foundational courses that will ensure they have the core tools necessary to succeed, including drawing creativity, design, technology, and presentation.

These Foundations courses precede specialization in various creative fields, with the overarching idea being that students can identify their own strengths before branching out into design, animation, graphic storytelling, and other artistic fields.

The revamped approach already is favored by many Art & Design institutions.

President Alton D. Scales announced a comprehensive set of organizational guidelines that are now available on the employee tab of MyCCA in the Policies and Procedures section. The guidelines are considered a living document that will be updated as needed.

Tim Cali has been hired as the college’s new coordinator of student life. Cali will join CCA on June 3 and be situated in an office in the Lowry West Quad. Cali comes to Colorado from Chicago, where he was manager of student services at the Chicago metro campus of DeVry University/Keller Graduate School.
Around campus

Clockwise from top left: Seth Cardin and Jennifer Bird present “20th century Terror: A Study in American Horror Literature” as part of the American Literature Honors Lecture Series for faculty advisor Rachel Blue Ankney. Bird tackled the life and works of H.P. Lovecraft; Cardin took on Pet Sematary, by Stephen King. The Gaumard Co. came to the Disaster Management Institute to give local educators a look at their line of patient simulators for higher education. Among the tetherless, high-tech dummies on display was “Combat Hal,” who simulates some of the wounds he bore during combat, including a detached limb (not shown). Franck Adji, Franklin Nji and Raymond Yves Kouadio pose with CCA President Alton D. Scales during a May 3 barbeque sponsored by the International Mentor Association and the International Student Association. The end-of-semester party included an awards ceremony, where mentors were issued certificates of appreciation and mentees were issued certificates of completion. The three pictured students all were mentees in the program. Janel Highfill represented CCA during a tour of the Dawn Foods facility on May 7. The visit was tied to the college’s involvement in grants and planning with Colorado industry, including the facilitation of applications for grants and administrative processes. The college connects companies to grants through the Colorado Office of Economic Development. Dawn is taking part in the Colorado First/Existing Industry Customized Training Grant Program.