

AROUND THE OVAL

A PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

**A Champion
for Change**

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



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Hello, Rams!

We welcomed more than 8,500 spring and fall Class of 2020 graduates into our alumni family this year under circumstances that I can't resist describing with one of the year's most overused words: unprecedented. And though many of the traditional commencement experiences were deferred or reimaged, the essential foundation of that experience remained the same, thanks to you.

Rams around the world, including many Alumni Association members, personally reached out to the Class of 2020 with words of wisdom, helping hands, and other kinds of much-needed assistance that made all of our newest alumni feel appreciated, affirmed in their accomplishment, and optimistic about their futures, despite the challenges of our time.

I'm convinced that the way we welcomed the Class of 2020 exemplifies Ram values in action; values grounded in the University's land-grant mission and ongoing commitment to inclusion and respect for the dignity of all people. This issue's feature stories highlight alumni who uphold our community's highest and best standards of equity and opportunity, including CSU Vice President for Diversity Mary Ontiveros, who retires this year after 45 years of service. As always, if you have a story to share with fellow alumni, we'd love to hear about it!

Stay stalwart, be healthy, and Go Rams!



Ram proud,

Kristi Bohlender

Kristi Bohlender, B.S., '93; M.B.A., '95, and Life Member

YOU make an impact

Your membership makes it possible for us to strengthen the lifelong connection of alumni and Colorado State University through meaningful and engaging opportunities. Thank you!

CSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBERS LIKE YOU MAKE THIS PUBLICATION POSSIBLE

AROUND THE OVAL WINTER 2020

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Around the Oval is published twice a year by the CSU Alumni Association as a benefit of membership.

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ON THE COVER:

CSU Vice President for Diversity
Mary Ontiveros



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A CHAMPION FOR CHANGE

Progress always needs a champion,
and it found one in Mary Ontiveros

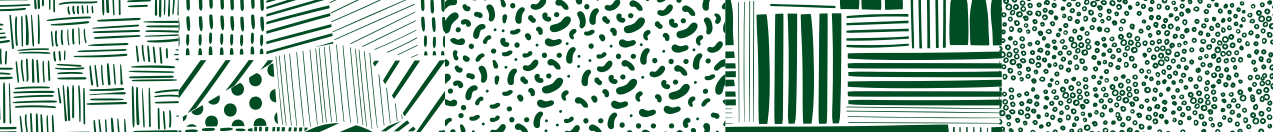
By Matthew S. Helmer

Photos by Joe Mendoza, CSU Photography

Steadfast. Role Model. Advocate. Difference-Maker. Hero.

These are just a few of the words used by colleagues to describe Colorado State University's first vice president for diversity and two-time alumna, Mary Ontiveros. In the more than half a century since first arriving in Fort Collins as a freshman, Mary O. – as she is affectionately known across campus and around the state – has had a transformative effect on the lives of thousands of students, faculty, and staff, and played an integral role in shaping CSU's commitment to diversity and inclusion. For Ontiveros, the commitment is personal, one that was nurtured in her upbringing.





“My father was an activist, and he taught us very early that if you see something is wrong, you need to speak up, you need to make a difference. He instilled in us the importance of saying something and doing something.”

— MARY ONTIVEROS

“My father was an activist, and he taught us very early that if you see something is wrong, you need to speak up, you need to make a difference,” Ontiveros said. “He instilled in us the importance of saying something and doing something.”

Originally from Pueblo, Colorado, Ontiveros graduated high school with honors and was the first in her family to go to college. Despite landing on academic probation during her first year, Ontiveros chose to stay at CSU and said the decision ultimately changed the lives of her entire family. Nine others in her immediate family have since attended CSU, and Fort Collins has become their familial home.

“I thought, I have got to do whatever it takes to stay,” Ontiveros said. “So, I did, and staying here made all the difference in the world.”

That decision eventually changed CSU, as well. After graduation, Ontiveros enrolled in graduate school and began working in CSU’s Office of Admissions. She discovered that years of part-time jobs and active co-curricular involvement as a student had prepared her to speak knowledgeably about the campus experience. She also realized



Mary Ontiveros and Vice President for Student Affairs Blanche Hughes give a historical perspective during CSU Unite at Lory Student Center, March 29, 2018.

early on that she could have an impact on systems, policies, and people at CSU in ways that moved the institution toward greater inclusivity.

“I found that, right from the beginning – from my very first interaction as a student – I needed to explain and talk about who I was,” Ontiveros said, recalling the story of someone knocking on her door the day she moved into her residence hall to ask, “Are you a Mexican?”



Mary Ontiveros with the Principles of Community display in the Lory Student Center.



“Talking about my Mexican American identity became part of what I needed to do to help inform and educate others,” Ontiveros added. “Back then, there were not a lot of resources available. People didn’t have answers. People would look at us and wonder. People would ask questions; I wanted to answer their questions.”

Ontiveros incorporated this mission into a distinguished career spanning five decades at CSU, inspiring countless colleagues and students with an unwavering dedication to the struggle for equity.

“Mary’s commitment is to not just the ‘idea’ of equity, but the felt realities and consequences of inequity,” said Paul Thayer, who retired in 2016 following a 40-year career that included working alongside Ontiveros as associate vice president for student success. “She wrestled every day, in every position she held, with ways to advance equity for every person and every group. Equity for Mary was always very personal, even as she pursued it strategically.”

Having spent years spearheading initiatives to increase student enrollment among underrepresented populations, fostering a commitment to diversity among her staff and peers, and leading Universitywide efforts to create a more inclusive campus, Ontiveros was asked by then-President Tony Frank to become CSU’s vice president for diversity in 2010. Originally cast as a halftime role in addition to her work as associate vice president of enrollment and



Mary Ontiveros, center, is presented with the President’s Council on Culture Award for Notable Contributions to the Culture of Colorado State University, on behalf of the Principles of Community development team, by Blanche Hughes, left, and Sue James, right, at the *Celebrate!* Colorado State Awards ceremony, May 9, 2019.

access, Ontiveros relied on the contributions of numerous volunteer committees to advance the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion while building the infrastructure for the VPD office. With the VPD’s guidance, these efforts led CSU to implement a campuswide assessment tool to gauge and improve the working climate for employees, create a bias incident assessment team, and adopt more inclusive employment policies.

Perhaps the most well-known aspect of these initiatives was the creation of CSU’s Principles of Community, a collection of five value statements that



PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

The Principles of Community support the Colorado State University mission and vision of access, research, teaching, service, and engagement. A collaborative and vibrant community is a foundation for learning, critical inquiry, and discovery. Therefore, each member of the CSU community has a responsibility to uphold these principles when engaging with one another and acting on behalf of the University.

INCLUSION

We create and nurture inclusive environments and welcome, value, and affirm all members of our community, including their various identities, skills, ideas, talents, and contributions.

INTEGRITY

We are accountable for our actions and will act ethically and honestly in all our interactions.

RESPECT

We honor the inherent dignity of all people within an environment where we are committed to freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge.

SERVICE

We are responsible, individually and collectively, to give of our time, talents, and resources to promote the well-being of each other and the development of our local, regional, and global communities.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

We have the right to be treated and the responsibility to treat others with fairness and equity, the duty to challenge prejudice, and to uphold the laws, policies, and procedures that promote justice in all respects.

THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY

Diversity Task Force established to research, debate, and advise leadership on the best structure to ensure that diversity is central to CSU's operations and planning.	2009	
	2010	Office of the Vice President for Diversity officially established.
Consultation Team for Incidents of Bias established to coordinate University responses to incidents of bias.	2011	Mary Ontiveros named vice president for diversity.
	2012	First Universitywide Campus Climate Survey for faculty and staff reveals need for diversity and inclusion training programs.
First Diversity and Inclusion Retreat for CSU leadership helps set expectations that an institutional focus on diversity and inclusion is paramount.	2013	
	2014	<i>Spring:</i> The VPD office launches the Creating Inclusive Excellence Program to develop awareness, knowledge, and skills around issues of diversity and inclusion at CSU.
<i>January:</i> The Faculty Institute for Inclusive Excellence launched to help faculty engage in topics of diversity and inclusion in pedagogy, curriculum, and campus communities.	2015	<i>Summer:</i> VPD office launches the Social Justice Leadership Institute . Participants gain key concepts for social justice education and implementation.
<i>November:</i> The Multicultural Organizational Development Model is adopted to track progress toward diversity and inclusion at CSU.		<i>Summer:</i> VPD office forms a committee of representatives across campus to start drafting what would become the Principles of Community .
<i>December:</i> CSU Cabinet endorses the Principles of Community , which the campus community embraces and begins rapidly adopting.		<i>Fall:</i> Council on Strategic Diversity Initiatives unites people from across campus whose job includes diversity and inclusion efforts. Later replaced by the President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion.
<i>Spring:</i> President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion is officially commissioned.	2016	<i>Fall:</i> The Women of Color and Allies Network re-established to provide professional development and leadership training and opportunities to build community for women of color at CSU.
<i>May:</i> CSU Cabinet approves the Inclusive Physical and Virtual Campus policy to eliminate barriers that can prevent individuals from fully accessing and enjoying the benefit of CSU facilities, educational opportunities, and information.	2017	
<i>Fall:</i> Hundreds of single-stall restrooms on campus converted to "All-Gender" restrooms .	2018	In collaboration with the President's Office and General Counsel, VPD hosts the First Amendment Conversation Series and the "Think Tank: Free Speech Summit" that included sessions on the First Amendment, free speech, and hate speech on campus.
<i>December:</i> Mary Ontiveros retires from her role as vice president for diversity.	2020	<i>July:</i> The Women and Gender Collaborative joins the Vice President for Diversity team and works to connect and promote efforts to make CSU the best place for women to work and learn.

There's Something About Mary

"In the spring of 1982, I was a high school junior from a low-income African American, single-parent family in northeast Denver. I wanted to go to college, but I had no idea what it felt like to be on a college campus. Thanks to Mary's commitment to diversity,

I remember getting a note from my high school counseling office inviting me to an overnight trip to CSU. After getting over the shock that a university was so interested in me that it was inviting me to a special visit, I signed up for the trip! And the rest is history.

I loved the campus from Day One, going on to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees at CSU. Today, I am honored that my career in education has led to an appointment to the CSU System Board of Governors, where I am able to support CSU's commitment to diversity on a much broader scale. I owe my career to Mary's commitment to diversity, and I am sure there are thousands of people like me who have similar stories to tell."

— **NATE EASLEY**
(B.A., '88; M.S., '93)
*Founding CEO,
The Ganas Network;
A Public Charter School
Alumni Empowerment
Group; CSU System
Board of Governors*

"Having graduated from Colorado State has allowed me to place things in perspective and also develop an understanding about the hard work it takes to make progress."

— MARY ONTIVEROS

Ontiveros described as "reference points for how we interact with each other day to day."

"One of the most impactful initiatives Mary O. has spearheaded is the creation of the Principles of Community," said Leslie Taylor, CSU vice president for enrollment and access. "The outcome of the work has quickly become ingrained in our campus culture. The thoughtful investment of time, energy, and intellect by Mary O. and her volunteers has given us all a voice that makes clear what we aspire to achieve as a campus community."

The Principles of Community assumed even greater significance throughout 2020, as Ontiveros and her team endeavored to support faculty, staff, and students in navigating numerous challenges, from a national reckoning centered on racial injustice to incidents of bias on campus. The VPD office – now a team of nine – also is celebrating its 10-year anniversary and planning for transition as Ontiveros prepares to retire at the end of December. While the work will and must continue, Ontiveros said CSU is different today

because conversations about diversity and inclusion have become part of who we are and how we do business. Although she is eager to shine a spotlight on the efforts of others, many would agree that Mary O.'s influence has been instrumental in making CSU a more welcoming place for all and better prepared for what comes next.

"My father stressed that if you're really going to make a difference, you need to do it from the inside. If you are going to change anything systemically, you need to do it from the inside," Ontiveros said. "I have seen the University transformed over time and recognize that although there is no question that much work is yet to be done in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion – much HAS been done. All too often, people arrive on campus and focus on the here and now without any understanding of the work that has been done to reach the place we are. Having graduated from Colorado State has allowed me to place things in perspective and also develop an understanding about the hard work it takes to make progress."

 Life Member



Alisha Zellner overlooks Fort Collins from Horsetooth Reservoir, along one of her favorite cycling routes.

ON THE ROAD TO PROGRESS

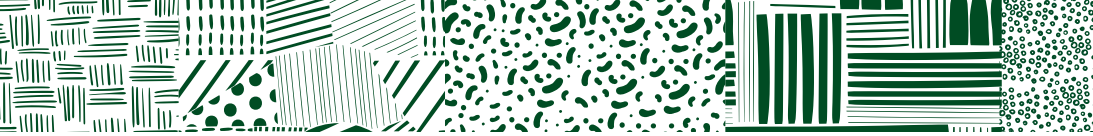
CSU police officer Alisha Zellner shifts gears for social justice

By Tony Phifer
Photos by Joe Mendoza, CSU Photography

Alisha Zellner is a fixer. When she sees a problem, she does something about it.

Take, for example, that night in high school, cheering on her friends at Mitchell High School in Colorado Springs as they suffered through another loss in a 1-9 football season, when she half-jokingly declared that she could play better than some of the guys on the field. That next fall, after a summer filled with weightlifting and grueling workouts, she became the first young woman in her school's long history to earn a spot on the varsity team. Even though an injury prevented her from playing that year, she went on to play several seasons of football, including at the semiprofessional level.

And let us not forget her junior year at Colorado State University, when she was serving as a resident assistant in Braiden Hall. She



“I thought of the quote ‘Be the change you wish to see in the world.’ I could be that instrument of change. I could be an officer of color and make a real difference.”

— ALISHA ZELLNER

embarked on a mission to lose weight and improve her exercise and eating habits after injuries and a lifelong battle with emotional eating led her to her highest weight. She lost 100 pounds in 10 months, became an avid runner and cyclist, and changed her life. Now 33, she has run a full marathon (in Athens, Greece) and two half-marathons, competes in triathlons, and rides her bike whenever she can.

“That’s just how I am,” said Zellner (B.S., psychology and sociology, ’09).

Which helps explain her journey to become a corporal in the CSU Police Department. Even though she had never seriously considered police work while growing up, her psychology degree, work in the mental health field, and master’s degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio provided the necessary tools to be an effective peace officer. Her final bit of motivation came when Michael Brown, a Black man in Ferguson,

Missouri, was shot and killed by a white police officer in 2014.

“That was monumental for me,” said Zellner, a Colorado Springs native. “With Ferguson being a predominantly Black city, Brown’s death really hit home for me.

“I thought of the quote ‘Be the change you wish to see in the world.’ I could be that instrument of change. I could be an officer of color and make a real difference.”

Five months after Brown’s death, she became a member of the CSU police force. She loves her job and is able to use her mental health training in a variety of ways to help students and promote campus safety.

Still, she was facing an inner conflict. As a Black woman, she understood the angst many in her community felt about police brutality. As a member of the police force, she understood the important – and sometimes dangerous – role she was playing in keeping the peace.





Alisha Zellner stands outside the west entrance of the Lory Student Center.

It was not until the summer of 2016 that Zellner truly felt the weight of her unique situation. She and five other CSU police officers drove 12 hours in a van to support fellow officers in Dallas following the killing of five officers and the wounding of nine others by a lone gunman just days after Black men were killed in Louisiana and Minnesota.

“That event had a profound impact on me,” she said. “It was the first time I had been around more than two officers of color. I saw women and men in uniform who

understood what I was feeling.

“That was also the first time I realized I was living in two worlds. I realized that I could be the next tragic story – as a police officer or as a Black woman.”

Recent events, including the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Breonna Taylor’s death in Louisville, Kentucky, left her empty.

“I was home, by myself, recovering from surgery at the time of George Floyd’s death,” Zellner said. “I was in a very dark place. I am Black, but I also wear blue. My

heart was breaking for my Black community, I felt empathy for my law enforcement friends, and I didn’t know how to find my voice.”

She needed to do something – something profound. She could not join the protests, so she turned to her love of cycling and found a way to heal and help others: Bike Ride for Black Lives.

Zellner pledged to ride 400 miles in July to honor the 400 years the Black and African American community has been fighting for social justice. And she also put

together a community awareness ride on July 12, asking anyone who wanted to join in to ride 12 miles in solidarity around Fort Collins.

She had earlier launched a GoFundMe page, hoping to raise \$2,500 and split the money evenly among five organizations: Black Lives Matter, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Equal Justice Initiative, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the National Center in Atlanta.

“I felt like a bike ride would be a unique platform that people could support,” she said. “It wasn’t marching or protesting; it was on a bike, doing something positive. It was a perfect event for the pandemic, and I felt like movement would help me get my voice back.”

To her surprise, the bike ride attracted more than 200 participants. And by the end of August, her GoFundMe page had raised more than \$7,000.

“I kept upping my goal by \$500, and we kept reaching it; I was blown away by the support,” she said. “I’ve heard from people around the country, and not just police – EMTs, firefighters, and others. I’m tremendously thankful to every person who has donated and those who participated in the community ride.”

Zellner hopes to make the ride an annual event and expand its reach. She said recent events have helped her evolve as a police officer and as a person.

“I’m still the same person, but now I’m just a little more vocal,” she said. “I do think we’re making progress on these issues but the fight’s not over. History has taught us that we’re nowhere near where we need to be.”

 Annual Member



Extending the Conversation

Last October, the words “Black Lives Matter” were painted north of the Visual Arts Building on the Colorado State University campus. The mural is the first installment in the Engaged Art Walk, an educational initiative of the Department of Art and Art History, which partnered with other campus units, including the Department of Ethnic Studies and the Black/African American Cultural Center, with input from the Office of the Vice President for Diversity. The installation launched a series of events integrating art, education, and civic engagement. Like Zellner’s bike ride, the mural is not a solution. Instead, it’s intended to bring people into a conversation about difficult subjects.





Paul Chambers, left, with former director of Black Student Services, Dr. Jennifer Williams-Molock (B.S., '84), and Manuel Ramos (B.A., '70).

A MAN OF COURAGE AND WISDOM

Making progress, one conversation at a time

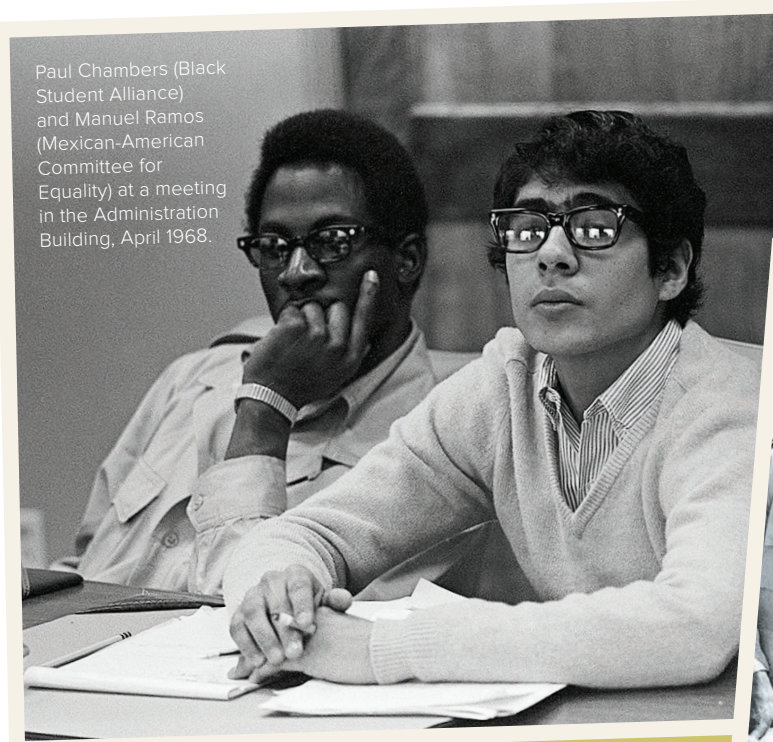
By Ann Gill (M.A., '76)



Paul Chambers, Black Student Alliance, speaks into microphones at the minority recruitment demonstration.

Paul Chambers (B.S., '70) was inducted into the Colorado State University Alumni Association's 50 Year Club this fall. Discussions he engendered and protests he led during his time on campus had a significant and transformative, albeit not as immediate as hoped, effect on our University. Chambers went on to a very successful career in business, but he never lost his passion nor his commitment to CSU students.

Born in Houston, Chambers moved around as a child. His uncle was in the military, and they moved to various bases. He spent several years in Cheyenne, where he earned All-State honors in football. He then attended Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colorado, on a football scholarship. His next stop was CSU, where he



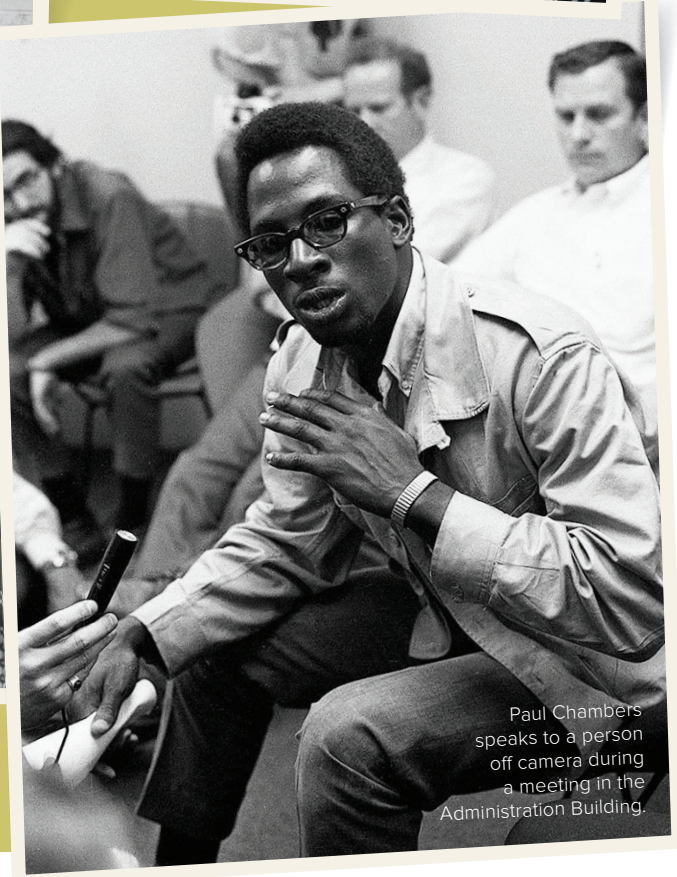
Paul Chambers (Black Student Alliance) and Manuel Ramos (Mexican-American Committee for Equality) at a meeting in the Administration Building, April 1968.



Below: Paul Chambers (far left) and four other members of the Black Student Alliance listen to a speaker during the minority recruitment demonstration.



Above: Manuel Ramos, Mexican-American Committee for Equality, speaks to the crowd from the steps of the Administration Building. Joseph Angell is behind him and Paul Chambers, Black Student Alliance, is to his left.



Paul Chambers speaks to a person off camera during a meeting in the Administration Building.



Paul Chambers working in an organic garden.

immediately encountered a variety of challenging and upsetting issues, including difficulty finding a place to live. In the late 1960s, many Fort Collins landlords would not rent to Black students. After he became acquainted with Manuel Ramos, a Mexican American student, they started discussing the issues they faced and the need for change. These discussions attracted other students with similar issues and concerns. They also received significant support from history Professor Jim Hansen and sociology Professor T.R. Young.

A result of these discussions was formation of the Black Student Alliance, with Chambers as president, and the Mexican-American Committee for Equality, with Ramos as president. The two groups worked together to formulate demands for elimination of racial segregation and the advancement of civil rights, which they presented to the University administration on April 7, 1968, and to the Board of Agriculture on April 8. The following day, BSA and MACE members occupied the Administration Building, then moved their nonviolent protest to the front lawn of President William E.

“There is so much to be learned by and from diversity.”

— PAUL CHAMBERS

Morgan’s home, located at the west end of Laurel Street. The University formed a task force to consider the demands, and it recommended adding “400 new Chicano, Black, and Indian students of academic year. However, the Colorado General Assembly rejected a special funding request to support that effort, and the student body did not support a 50-cent student fee increase for minority student recruitment. Undeterred, both BSA and MACE continued their efforts to effect change at CSU.

After graduation, Chambers earned a master’s degree in educational administration at the University of Colorado. He then accepted a marketing position with IBM in Denver, where he was named “Rookie of the Year” and earned membership in the IBM 100 Percent Club each year he worked for the corporation. After several years with IBM, he left and decided to teach social studies at Smoky Hill High School in Aurora, Colorado, also serving as assistant football and wrestling coach. He later left teaching and went to work for Xerox Corporation in Denver and was transferred to San Antonio, then back to Denver. Next, he accepted a position as area manager for Miller Brewing Company based in Lincoln, Nebraska. A few years later, he took a position with Chevrolet Motor Division as a district sales manager, first in Kansas City, then in Richmond, Virginia, and in Harrisburg and Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania. His next positions were in advertising for Audi of America, then as area executive for Volkswagen of America in Houston. Never one to take it easy, after retirement he started Chambers Remodeling Inc., which did housing rehabilitation in low-income areas in Wilmington, Delaware. He also developed a love for organic farming with his brother in Oklahoma.

While change did not come to Colorado State as rapidly as Chambers hoped during his undergraduate days, the University owes him and other members of BSA and MACE a great debt of gratitude for fomenting significant changes. In a delightful bit of irony, the sign that now sits on the lawn at the end of Laurel Street, where the protesters stood more than 50 years ago, reads: “Diversity House”; the former home of CSU’s president now houses CSU’s Office of the Vice President for Diversity.

Like the rest of the country, Fort Collins and CSU still have work to do to create a truly equal, fair, and just society. But the important progress that has been made began with two students’ conversations more than 50 years ago. Each year, the University awards the Paul Chambers Excellence in Leadership Scholarship. We are deeply grateful for Chambers’ courage and leadership as a student and his continued support of students. As he says, “There is so much to be learned by and from diversity.” ☺

Life Member

DIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

By Jerick Flores (B.A., '10)

As part of its land-grant mission, Colorado State University exists to provide a world-class education to any individual with the desire to receive one. To do this, the University works to create a welcoming environment for its entire community. Since its inception in 2001, the Diversity Symposium has been part of this effort – creating opportunity for the CSU community to come together, learn, discuss, and envision CSU’s future regarding the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The first symposium was a one-day Diversity Summit, sponsored by the Office of Equal Employment. Since that first event, it has grown organically into a multiday program because of its positive reception and support. The event is now led by the Office of the Vice President for Diversity (established in 2010 and celebrating its 10th anniversary this year), which continues to find growing support for the symposium.

“Each year, there are more colleges eager to sponsor events, more presenters hoping to share their knowledge, and more community members seeking education on a wide variety of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics,” said program coordinator, Alicia Sprague (B.S., '13). “As the Office of the Vice President for Diversity has grown, we’ve also been able to include sessions that highlight some of the diversity initiatives and programs happening across

campus and to have more support and bandwidth to grow the event as demand increases.”

The Diversity Symposium Planning Committee works hard each year to ensure the event is serving the CSU community by increasing knowledge and exposure on relevant topics. A subcommittee spends hours reviewing presentation applications to ensure they are creative and engaging, include academic sources, and are aligned with the office’s mission and vision.

Though this year’s event was not spared from the challenges of 2020, it turned out to be incredibly rewarding. Attendance numbers shattered expectations, with some individual sessions reaching upward of 300 attendees. Community members expressed that the virtual version made it incredibly accessible, and for the first time in its history, all sessions are available on YouTube.

2020 marked the symposium’s 20th anniversary, and the Office of the Vice President for Diversity remains focused on the quality and reach of the event. When asked about its future, Sprague said, “We want to continue to host a high-quality, free symposium where our community can come together to share expertise and educate ourselves around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion – with the goal that this will make CSU a better place to work and study for all of us.”



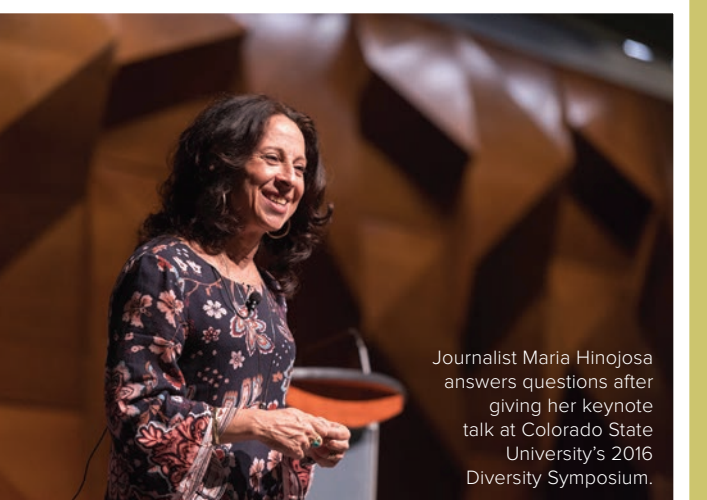
The 2020 Diversity Symposium celebrated 20 years of impact with the most-attended Symposium to date! In a virtual environment, by way of a variety of live Zoom sessions, prerecorded videos, powerful keynotes, and dozens of opportunities for learning, our community came together to engage with the critical topics of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. This pivot in delivery has allowed us to share the recorded files of all Symposium presentations, educational sessions, and content with our alumni and Rams community. All Diversity Symposium content can be accessed at diversity.colostate.edu/symposium.



Vice President for Diversity Mary Ontiveros, President Joyce McConnell, and Vice President for Student Affairs Blanche Hughes hold a fireside chat at the Diversity Symposium, Oct. 16, 2019.



Author Helen Zia delivers the keynote address to the 2009 Diversity Conference.



Journalist Maria Hinojosa answers questions after giving her keynote talk at Colorado State University’s 2016 Diversity Symposium.



The 2018 Diversity Symposium featured a panel discussion on “How Men Engage in Culture Change: Advancing Gender Equity with Critical Reflection and Action,” moderated by Cori Wong, assistant vice president for gender equity, featuring Tom Biedscheid, director of financial aid; Carl Olsen, program coordinator for men’s programming and violence prevention; Tony Frank, chancellor and then-president; and Herman Shelton, executive director of the Access Center.



John Amos, actor, activist, and CSU alum, delivers the keynote address for the 2013 Diversity Symposium.



Michele Norris, host of NPR’s *All Things Considered*, delivers the 2011 Diversity Symposium’s keynote address.

FINDING SUCCESS THROUGH CAREER SERVICES

By Angie Dixon (B.A., '94)

When it comes to careers, Jack Gordon (B.S., '17) says he hit the jackpot. As a business development representative for Four Winds Interactive, a digital signage software company in Denver, Gordon feels like his job is tailored just for him because it blends his past experience with his personal interests and strengths.

But when someone hits the jackpot, it usually means a little, or a lot, of luck was involved. Gordon believes, though, that luck took a back seat when landing his job because of advice he received from his dad.

“When I started my job hunt, my dad, who is also a Colorado State University alum and Alumni Association life member, suggested that I reach out to the Alumni Association for help,” said Gordon. “He knew they offered career services, so I called them and made an appointment.”

Through that appointment, Gordon connected with Angela Hayes, the associate director for alumni and online career engagement at CSU’s Career Center. Through a series of meetings, she helped Gordon identify what was most important to him as he established his career.

“Angela taught me how to write effective resumes, gave me interview preparation training, and helped me identify and match my skills to job opportunities,” Gordon said. “I really feel like Angela took me under her wing.”

It’s that career coaching that Gordon found to be the needed link to his career goals. After all, Gordon’s journey from CSU student to young, professional alum is like that of many students on a mission to land their dream jobs.

As a student, Gordon thrived on meeting different people around campus and was very active. During his first year, he became a member of Greek life and CSU’s

club lacrosse team, and he established his connection to the College of Business. There, he discovered the opportunities available to help students get a jump on their career goals, including the CSU careers website.

“I landed my first sales job through that website,” said Gordon. “It was for a T-shirt shop in Old Town (Fort Collins). It was my first venture in sales and, to this day, I still do T-shirt sales for them.”

At the same time, he also checked out a job fair that connected third-year business students with companies that were hiring soon-to-be graduates.

“I showed up to that job fair as a freshman, wearing my shorts and a T-shirt, standing next to students in coats, ties, and suits. I was totally unprepared,” chuckled Gordon. “But, I ended up connecting with a woman from Target. She knew I had no clue what I was doing, but she liked my ambition.”

Gordon stayed in touch with the woman from Target, who was also a CSU alum, and when he returned to the job fair as a junior, she offered him a summer internship. It was a management training position, and after passing several requirements, he was offered a job at the end of the summer.



“I felt so fortunate that I didn’t have to worry about getting a job after I graduated,” he said.

He spent two years at Target, where he learned a lot about large organizations, retail, customer service, and respect for essential workers. But he wanted to continue growing. To do that, he knew he had to make a change.

Without having another job lined up, Gordon resigned and prepared himself to dig in and spend time looking for a job that combined his personal interests with his career goals.

So, Gordon called the Alumni Association and connected with Hayes.

“Angela gave me strategies for finding meaningful jobs,” Gordon recalled. “She helped me set goals, taught me about informational interviews, and showed me ways to look for jobs outside of LinkedIn. She even shared a channel with me specific to technology jobs.”

After initiating several informational interviews, he participated in multiple phone screenings, 15 first-round interviews, and eight second-round interviews, learning more about the interview process along the way. Finally, he found a job that seemed to be the perfect fit.

“I was super-excited when I discovered the position at Four Winds,” said Gordon. “I ended up going through four interviews before I was offered the position.”

But before he accepted the offer, Gordon relied on his interview experience and shared with his future employer his desires for the position.

“Initially, I turned the position down,” said Gordon, “but I shared with the leadership team my goals and, through that discussion, I knew they would help me take my career to a new level.”

Gordon says his job hunt wasn’t easy, but the support from Hayes kept him going.

“My connection to Angela helped me realize that CSU wants us to be successful. I would encourage other recent grads, like me, to get involved with the Alumni Association and take advantage of the resources available to us.” ☺

 Life Member

“I would encourage other recent grads, like me, to get involved with the Alumni Association and take advantage of the resources available to us.” – JACK GORDON

The Alumni Association partnered with Jack Gordon’s company, Four Winds Interactive, to develop content for touch screens in the Iris & Michael Smith Alumni Center’s Mindock Hall, shown here in 2017.



MOVE YOUR CAREER FORWARD

Just as Jack Gordon mentions in the previous story, your Colorado State University Alumni Association is here for you long after graduation. We work to meet you where you are in life, with programming that speaks to your personal and professional development.

As such, you have access to a robust menu of career services resources, including:

- 1:1 career consultations with our in-house career counselor, Angela Hayes. All alumni receive the first consultation free, and Alumni Association members receive two additional sessions at no cost.
- Access to Handshake, an online job system designed to assist you with your career and employment needs.
- A career resource center where you can personalize your search to gain information about exactly what you're looking for, from resumes and cover letters, to interviewing, networking, and much more.
- Invites to national alumni career fairs, as well as smaller, industry-specific career fair opportunities through CSU.
- Access to a library of archived webinars and invites to live virtual events on topics such as salary negotiation, managing change, networking, and more. ☺

Scan the QR code below for more information, including a short video from career counselor Angela Hayes that shows you how to take advantage of these valuable tools and start making moves in your career.



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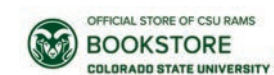
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Graduation procession on the Oval, early 1900s.

YOUNG
ALUMNI

WELCOMING THE CLASS OF 2020

The week before fall break in November, all 2020 graduates were invited to participate in a ceremonial walk around the Oval. The walk replaced the traditional spring and fall commencement ceremonies, which had to be canceled due to the global coronavirus pandemic.

While the outdoor procession was a necessary change intended to protect the health of our graduates and their families, it was no less meaningful than previous ceremonies held in Moby Arena. In fact, graduates took part in similar ceremonial walks through the Oval when its iconic trees were young, albeit in a less socially distanced manner. This year's walk, in a sense, marked a return to our roots and renewal of a tradition.

The Alumni Association was thrilled to play a leading role in that renewal, as well as Universitywide efforts to applaud the Class of 2020's achievements and welcome them into the alumni family. These efforts were made with great appreciation for the unique challenges that the Class of 2020 faced during their final year of college and entering the next chapter of their lives.

All graduates were gifted one year of free Alumni Association membership, which comes with access to numerous benefits – including career services and programs designed specifically for this stage of life, as well as opportunities to connect with the global CSU community.

Past and ongoing programs include a young alumni series centered around financial education, with workshops on student loans, bouncing back from challenge, and home buying. The Alumni Association also provided professional development opportunities,



such as internship and career fairs; a career connections series with industry experts and distinguished alumni who provided advice on networking, interviewing, and more; regular communications with content tailored specifically to the class's needs; and personal care calls from our Call-A-Ram student employees. All professional development and young alumni programs were provided with generous support from Canvas Credit Union, alongside established Alumni Association members.

In addition to providing practical resources, the Alumni Association welcomed the Class of 2020 with heartfelt messages of congratulations and support from other alumni. According to young alumni and student engagement specialist, Alexandra Schweigert (B.A., '17), these connection points were every bit as meaningful as the virtual learning opportunities. "Making the transition from student to alum is a huge accomplishment, and there were hundreds of Rams across the country celebrating alongside this class, eager to welcome them into the next phase of life and help fuel their successes moving forward." ☺

WELCOME, NEW LIFE MEMBERS!

April 1-Oct. 31, 2020

Brian V. Adamo, '96
Brandon J. Alcorn, '10
Anna D. Arevalos, '75, '80
Paul B. Atkinson, '96
Lori A. Bender, '87
Christopher S., '04 and Monica S., '04 Bengier
Gary A. Benitz, '85
Charles R. Benson, '72, '76
Kevin H., '84 and Leslie A., '83 Blackham
Barbara A. Boles, '78
Audrey E. Brandon, '02
Michael A. Carrillo
David C., '80 and Lois Cawrse
Dorian A. Cleary, '14
Chris C., '05 and Teresita Dittmer
Blaine, '11 and Lindsey R., '10 Dunn
Curtis D. Emery, '91
Anthony P. Espinoza, '77
Carla R. Farrand, '19
Nathan M., '12 and Heidi M., '09 Fetig
Cody and Kerry L., '11 Fields
Humberto A. Gallegos, Jr., '01
Mitchell L. Goble, '16
Edward B. Hamill, '73
Ervin L. Hammond, '62
Meggan J. Harris, '97, '10
Steven L. Hill, '91, '95
Ye Hong, '14 and Weiwei Lu
Gerald C. Isaacson, '74, '77
Eric T. Johnson, '89
Joshua R. Johnson, '20

Erin D. Karney, '12, '14
Keanu K. Kikau, '20
Kenneth N., '73, '91 and Marjorie G., '74 Larsen
Paul R. LeBrun, '78
Doris E. Lovato, '10
Kristine J. Lund-Briski, '72
Wendy F. Macias, '96
John K. Mahrdt, III, '95



Life Member Chris Dittmer ('05) and his wife, Terisita, at Canvas Stadium. "Becoming life members is very special to us," says Dittmer. "We love everything CSU stands for and strives for athletically, academically, and in the Fort Collins community. Green and Gold is our way of life!"

Rosalio A. Manuel, Jr., '76
kylan C. Marsh, '96
Jack A. McClurg, '91
Edwin C. McDowell, Jr., '65
David A., '74, '76 and Sheri L., '73 McKelfresh

Alan S. Miller and Tracy L., '87 Livingston
David K. Morrill, '77
Diane E. Murata, '76
Carl J. Patty, Jr., '97
David H. Peterson, '67, '69
Donald A. Reeves, Jr., '73
Dana L. Rinderknecht, '86
Jennifer R. Rodgers, '98
John A. Ruibal, '86
Denise R. Rutherford, '89
Justin A. Santarosa, '06
Samantha M. Schwind, '09, '16
David A. Seidl, '85
Clayton D. Smith, '14
Justin D. and Amy M., '92, '96 Smith
Michael C., '08, '09 and Nicole M., '08, '09 Smith
David E., '97 and Renee J. Southard
Jacob R. Stein, '17
Henry P. Thode, III, '05, '09
Adam Thodey, '19
James T., III, '82 and E. Ann, '80 Turner
Jason D. Walsh, '11
Aaron M. Washburn, '20
Brian R. Werner, '81
Susan N. Whitmore, '77, '80
Bradley A., '99 and Marci E., '99 Wickham
Alli A. Williams
Bruce W. Wilson, '71
Weston K. Winter, '86
Jeffrey D. Wood, '86
Roberto Yslas, '89



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