

RECORD ENROLLMENT :: CAN'T STOP THIS COUGAR CUB :: NEW NURSING PATH LAUNCHED :: FALL 2018

BEYOND

COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

LIBERAL ARTS: THE REST OF THE STORY

The humanities bring value in
an ever-changing world

[Feature Story, page 12]



COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Grace and Truth



Dear friends,

“There’s more wisdom in two classes at Colorado Christian University than in four years at a secular University.” That powerful statement is how author and syndicated radio host Dennis Prager described a CCU education during a recent event on campus. It was a humbling moment.

At CCU, we do believe that a Christian, liberal arts education is the best education available to humanity. Through our work we have the opportunity to provide a life-changing, church-building, nation-strengthening, and University-enhancing experience to thousands of students from all over the world. In this edition of *BEYOND*, our new Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences (and CCU alumnus) Dr. Ryan Hartwig ’00, explains why a liberal arts education matters today more than ever.



CCU is indeed a university of the liberal arts and professions that affirms the authority and truthfulness of Scripture, the greatness of the gospel, and the blessing of pursuing wisdom, goodness, beauty, and truth. We believe that the arts and sciences belong to God and are to be prized, explored, enjoyed, and influenced by Christians. As a result, our students gain broad exposure to art, history, literature, music, philosophy, science, theology, and other fields of study, all of which are informed from a biblical perspective.

This perspective is very unique in the world of higher education today — and it’s getting noticed. We were honored to be named by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) in the top 2 percent of colleges and universities for our general education curricula for the seventh consecutive year.

In addition, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has ranked Colorado Christian University as the fifth-fastest-growing private nonprofit master’s institution in the nation; these results were published in *The Almanac of Higher Education 2018-2019*. This fall, CCU broke another enrollment record in the College of Undergraduate Studies, welcoming more than 500 new freshmen and transfer students for the first time in University history. In our College of Adult and Graduate Studies, enrollment has experienced three years of explosive growth, highlighted by a 77 percent surge in graduate students since 2015.

It’s exhilarating to be at CCU during this exciting time of growth and renaissance as we seek to bring life and light back to liberal arts education. My hope is that you continue to see God glorified in and through Colorado Christian University as we seek to transform students to impact the world with grace and truth.

Yours in His service,

DONALD W. SWEETING, Ph.D.
President
Colorado Christian University

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BEYOND

A publication of Colorado Christian University

Our Magazine

In BEYOND, our goal is to share the story of CCU, as well as God's faithful provision for more than 100 years. We also aim to share the stories of the people who go beyond and make CCU the great university it is today. Whether you're an alum or a friend, this magazine is designed for you, because your story, our story, His story, is meant to be told.



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Mission

Christ-centered higher education transforming students to impact the world with grace and truth.

Colorado Christian University cultivates knowledge and love of God in a Christ-centered community of learners and scholars, with an enduring commitment to the integration of exemplary academics, spiritual formation, and engagement with the world. We envision graduates who think critically and creatively, lead with high ethical and professional standards, embody the character and compassion of Jesus Christ, treasure the gospel, and who thereby are prepared to impact the world in their callings.



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News & Highlights

Here's an overview of what's happening at CCU.



Record-breaking Incoming Class Boosts Enrollment to Highest Level in University History

For the first time in its 104-year history, Colorado Christian University welcomed more than 500 new freshman and transfer students to the College of Undergraduate Studies. The record-breaking incoming class continues a nine-year trend of enrollment increases at the Lakewood campus, boosting the University's total traditional undergraduate enrollment to nearly 1,400 students for the first time. The milestone marks a 60 percent increase in total traditional undergraduate enrollment since 2009. [Learn more on page 8.](#)



Dan Cohrs Named in *Denver Business Journal* List of Top Executives

Daniel L. Cohrs, Colorado Christian University's vice president of Business Affairs and chief financial officer, has been named one of the Denver-metro area's top executives by the *Denver Business Journal*. Cohrs joins 25 top executives whose organizations have a significant presence in the Denver area. The *Denver Business Journal*'s annual C-Suite Awards are chosen based on individual and organizational achievement, contributions to management and innovation, and community involvement, according to the publication's website. Honorees were chosen from a list of reader nominees.



President Sweeting Addresses the U.S. Department of Education

Colorado Christian University President Dr. Donald W. Sweeting addressed the Negotiated Rule-making Committee of the U.S. Department of Education during a public hearing in Washington, D.C., about proposed changes to the Higher Learning Commission's standards for accreditation. Dr. Sweeting also joined a delegation of Christian university presidents who recently met with Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to discuss the important mission of faith-based colleges and universities.



New Director of Alumni and Parent Relations Named

Kara Johnston, a seasoned professional in alumni relations and annual giving, has joined Colorado Christian University as the director of alumni and parent relations. [Read more on page 26.](#)



David McNeil Named Colorado Christian University's Director of Choral Studies

David McNeil Jr., a well-rounded and highly experienced conductor and music educator, joined Colorado Christian University's faculty as the director of Choral Studies. McNeil brings extensive experience teaching and conducting at the primary, secondary, and collegiate levels. McNeil is currently in his second year of coursework for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting at the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music.



CCU School of Music Accreditation Extended Through 2026-2027 Academic Year

The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) has extended Colorado Christian University's School of Music accreditation through the 2026-2027 academic year. NASM is the national governing body for music higher education institutions. The accreditation process with NASM has two components — organizations are evaluated on educational quality and institutional probity. This is accomplished through self-study and peer review on a regular basis. The University has been accredited with NASM since November 2004.



New BSN Pathway Launched for the College of Undergraduate Studies

The Colorado Board of Nursing approved CCU’s request to double its total number of Bachelor of Science in Nursing students, allowing for the launch of a new Pre-Nursing pathway for traditional undergraduate students in the College of Undergraduate Studies. **Read more on page 21.**



CCU Music Professor Tops Charts with Latest Album Release

Colorado Christian University music professor Charles Denler’s latest album, *Wild Mustang Suite*, went to No. 1 on the June and September Radio Spin Charts and has more than 12 million plays on SoundCloud. The new orchestral suite received the prestigious Gold Medal at the 2018 Global Music Awards for Best Neoclassical Album. The music was recorded with the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra and features a six-movement suite followed by seven pieces for solo piano.



CCU Hosted World Premiere of New Musical, Prodigy

Prodigy, a new musical written by Colorado Christian University theatre director Jenny Stafford with music from Willem Oosthuysen, debuted this summer at the CCU Music Center. “This piece has come very close to having a full production many times — including an off-Broadway production — but I think other opportunities fell through because it was meant to be debuted here, with this group of actors, and this creative team,” said Stafford.



Record Growth in CCU Online

Colorado Christian University’s College of Adult and Graduate Studies surpassed 7,000 enrollments for the first time in its history. The milestone comes on the heels of three years of explosive growth, highlighted by a 77 percent surge in graduate students since 2015. Students come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several foreign countries. Out-of-state and international students now make up nearly 55 percent of all enrollees.



CCU Moot Court Team Scores Near Sweep at Rocky Mountain Moot Court Invitational

The Colorado Christian University Moot Court Team had a strong showing at the Rocky Mountain Moot Court Invitational, taking five of the top eight individual honors and three of the top five team honors on October 12 and 13. The competition featured 28 total teams from California State University-Long Beach, CCU, Holy Cross, San Francisco State University, The College of Wooster, and the University of North Texas.



CCU Earns Top Rating for Seventh Consecutive Year

Colorado Christian University has been named in the top 2 percent of colleges and universities by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni in its annual *What Will They Learn?* survey of college general education curricula. CCU was one of only 23 institutions to earn an “A” rating out of more than 1,100 four-year public and private institutions surveyed.



Boy Battling Cancer Signed as Honorary Soccer Player

Colorado Christian University men’s soccer held a special draft to sign the youngest and perhaps toughest athlete in program history. Joel Zamora, a 10-year-old Littleton resident and cancer survivor, inked his intentions to become the newest Cougar soccer player at CCU. **Read Joel’s full story on page 16.**



CCU Alum, Sophia Proano, Named NCAA Woman of the Year Finalist

Former Colorado Christian University volleyball student-athlete Sophia Proano has been named a Top 30 finalist for the NCAA Woman of the Year award. Proano was one of 581 nominees for the nationwide honor. The NCAA Woman of the Year selection committee identifies the Top 30 — 10 from each NCAA division — and from there selects three finalists from each division. Proano was named the RMAC Woman of the Year earlier this year. **Read more on page 24.**

FALL 2018

For information on upcoming events, visit ccu.edu/events.

CCU: 8,000

Record online and undergraduate

If you have visited campus recently you were sure to have noticed a building boom that has included a new academic building, student center, and residence hall. And while the physical transformation in Lakewood is impressive, possibly even more astounding is the incredible growth the University has seen in enrollment. From 2006 to 2016 (the most recent timeframe for which nationwide data is available) CCU grew by 224.7 percent, making it the fifth-fastest-growing private master's granting institution, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Growth over the last decade has coincided with the University eclipsing several previous enrollment records. As of August 2018, the College of Adult and Graduate Studies surpassed 7,000 enrollments for the first time. Spurring the growth has been a continued climb in CCU Online offerings and students, and a 77 percent surge in graduate students since 2015.

“God’s blessings and provision are evident across Colorado Christian University as we seek to advance His kingdom through Christian higher education,” said Allison Sievers, vice president of Enrollment for the College of Adult and Graduate Studies. “The comprehensive integration of faith, flexibility in scheduling, generous transfer credit policy, University reputation, robust online community, and academic excellence are vital to CCU’s online program and enrollment growth.”

In 2018, more than 95 percent of students in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies took at least one class online, and more than 88 percent of students took classes exclusively

**CCU grew by
224.7 percent, making it
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private master's
granting institution.**

.....
Chronicle of Higher Education
(2006 - 2016, most recent timeframe)

& COUNTING

growth propels University to new heights

online through CCU Online. The total number of students enrolled in online classes exceeded 6,700 as of August 2018, an increase of 57 percent since 2015.

“Through the exceptional work of our faculty and staff, CCU Online is meeting the educational needs of students not only from Colorado, but from around the nation and internationally,” Sievers said.

“CCU is a hidden gem in higher education.”

The University, through CCU Online, offers more than 80 academic program options designed for adult learners that can be completed 100 percent online.

While graduate and online programs have paced the University’s rapid expansion in enrollment, the College of Undergraduate Studies has seen an equally impressive increase in enrollment. This fall, the College of Undergraduate Studies welcomed more than 500 freshmen and transfer students to class, pushing traditional undergraduate enrollment to nearly 1,400 students. This marks a 60 percent increase since 2009.

“Adding almost 600 students to the student body since 2009 has provided the University with a more diverse student body that has contributed widely to the student experience at CCU,” Jim McCormick, vice president of Enrollment and Student Life for the College of Undergraduate Studies, said. “With retention rising to 80 percent for freshmen, the student body continues to strengthen in academic excellence.”

The incoming class is not only the largest on record, but also the most academically accomplished to date, with an average ACT score of 25 and high school GPA of 3.7. This is an increase of nearly five points for average ACT scores since 2010.

“CCU is a hidden gem in higher education. With outstanding academic programs and faculty coupled with our beautiful location on Colorado’s Front Range, the University offers something very special,” said Jo Leda Martin, director of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. “Most importantly, the University has remained true to our mission to provide Christ-centered higher education that transforms students to impact the world with grace and truth, and we believe our continued growth has been a reflection of this.”

Helping drive the University’s traditional undergraduate growth has been increased enrollment in science and engineering programs. Since 2014, enrollment in health sciences, pre-medicine, biology, engineering, and science programs more than doubled, prompting the formation of the new School of Science and Engineering in the spring of 2018.

“This growth is affirmation of the outstanding, top-notch, quality education that our faculty deliver. Our holistic education of uncompromising faith in Jesus Christ integrated within our curriculum is proving to be of great demand in university education. We are humbled that many parents throughout this nation have chosen to entrust their children, indeed, our future in this world, to CCU,” said Dr. Kyle Usrey, vice president of Academic Affairs for the College of Undergraduate Studies. •

5th

fastest growing
master’s granting
private institution

8,421
total students
as of Fall 2018

500+

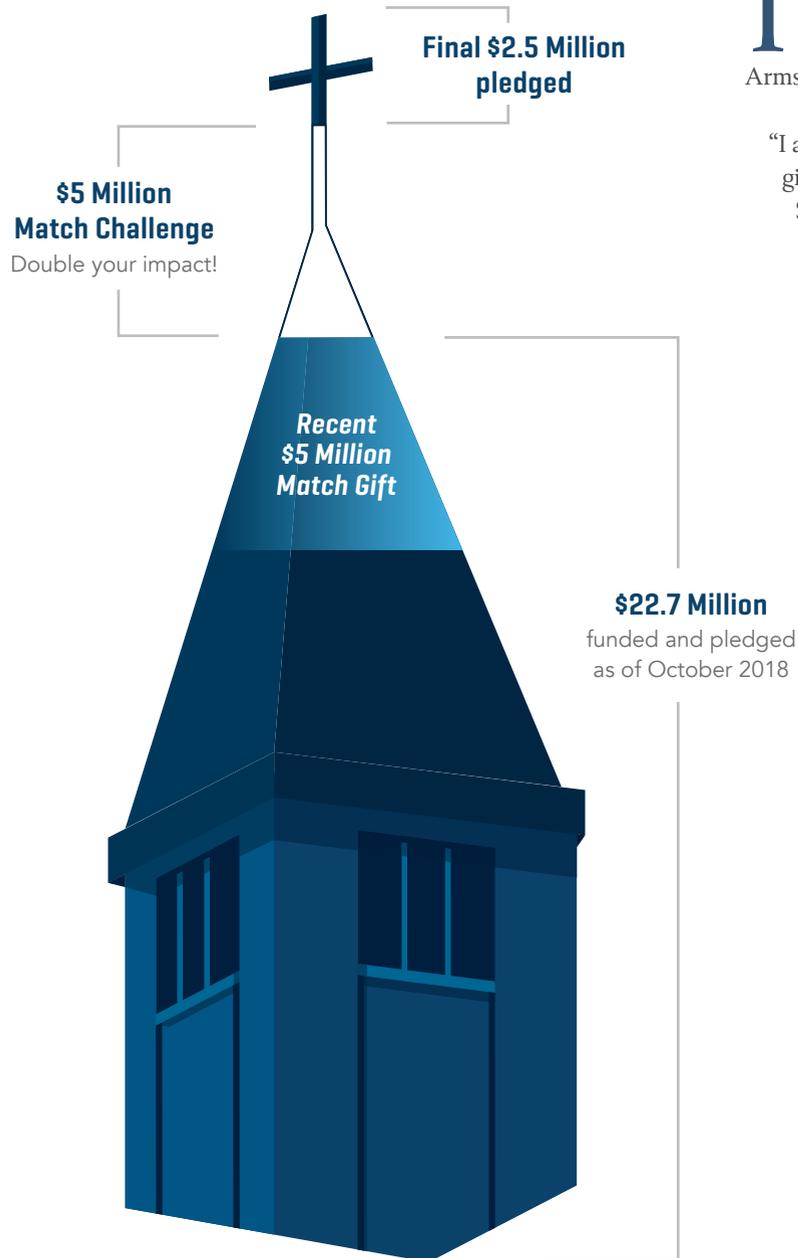
freshmen and transfer
students enrolled
for Fall 2018

(College of Undergraduate Studies)

77%
increase in
graduate students
since 2015

THE ARMSTRONG CENTER

DRIVE TO THE FINISH



The redevelopment of CCU's Lakewood campus took a giant leap forward this fall as a \$5 million matching gift, the second-largest gift in University history, was pledged for the Armstrong Legacy Campaign by an anonymous donor.

"I am more than pleased to announce this transformative gift to Colorado Christian University," said Dr. Donald W. Sweeting, president of CCU. "This incredible generosity will propel the University to new heights as we aspire to fulfill God's plan to serve and educate with grace and truth."

Today you have the unique opportunity to positively affect the University and be a part of God's significant work as every dollar donated will be matched up to \$5 million.

Named for CCU's late president, Bill Armstrong, the campaign is the University's most ambitious to date as it seeks to secure funding to construct a state-of-the-art facility that will be home to CCU's first dedicated chapel, academic space for media production and the School of Music, and the University library. The new facility will be known as the Armstrong Center and will form a new backbone of campus — complementing the Anschutz Student Center to its north and Yetter Hall to its south.

Every dollar donated will be matched up to \$5 million

Don't miss your opportunity to be a part of God's plan as He provides for Colorado Christian University's future. If you would like to speak with Eric Hogue, vice president of University Advancement, to discuss how you can be a part of God's plan for CCU, please call 303.963.3093 or email ehogue@ccu.edu.

For more details visit ccu.edu/armstrong-legacy.

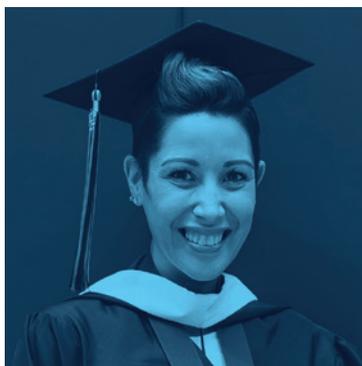
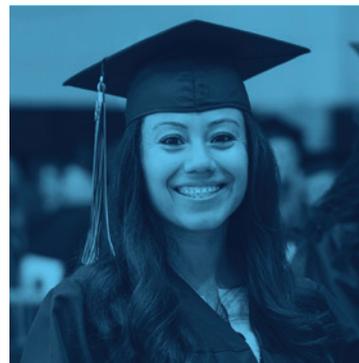


OUR MISSION:

Christ-centered higher education transforming students to impact the world with grace and truth.



LIBERAL ARTS:



THE REST OF THE STORY

*By Dr. Ryan T. Hartwig '00
Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences*



Return on investment — ROI — has become the key indicator of a successful university education for many people, and largely, for society as a whole. Over the last several years, higher education has been swept by rethinking of education in business terms and a redefining of the purpose of higher education to be primarily, if not solely, professional preparation.

Understandably, parents funding their children's education want their sons and daughters to land good jobs after graduation, and federal agencies and accrediting commissions are increasingly looking at student outcomes such as finding gainful employment and passing licensure exams when evaluating colleges and universities.

Consequently, colleges and universities have partnered with corporations and industry leaders to design and deliver programs that strictly prepare students to get good jobs with good wages upon graduation. Not surprisingly, universities now offer a great number of pre-professional educational programs and students readily enroll in them. Such programs (seemingly) meet the needs and desires of efficiency-minded students, paying parents, evaluating accreditors, and hiring executives.

Accordingly, the chief aims of yesterday's colleges and universities — to cultivate people of character who can positively contribute to society — has been lost on many campuses. Making the argument that studying Plato and Aristotle is relevant in a higher education landscape dominated by talk of “what job does that major lead to?”, “how does your degree increase your earning potential over your lifetime?”, and “what's the ROI of your college education?” can be a tough sell.

But the truth is that studying the liberal arts and engaging in a liberal education just might be the best thing that savvy students can do to get a huge ROI from their college education.

You see, common perspective says that liberal arts and some social science degrees are a luxury option for wealthy students who don't actually need to get jobs quickly after graduation or the preferred choice for free spirits, out-of-the-box thinkers, and tree huggers who want to only make enough money to live in a van down by the river.

But that's not the whole story, or even most it.

WHY THE LIBERAL ARTS MATTER, PERHAPS NOW MORE THAN EVER

Contrary to popular opinion, studying the liberal arts, also often referred to as the “humanities,” which generally consist of the studies of languages, literature, history, and philosophy, and the closely related social sciences, including communication, psychology, and politics, during college — either as a major component of the general education core or as a major — is exactly what creates massive value in the university educational experience, especially one at a private, liberal arts, Christian university like CCU.

Maybe you're not yet picking up what I'm laying down, so let me explain why, while sharing how at Colorado Christian University, we deliver our unique brand of Christian liberal arts education in our College of Undergraduate Studies.

First, education in the liberal arts challenges students to consider what is good, beautiful, and true. Students are encouraged to examine what it means to be human in a world that is deeply confused about goodness, beauty, and truth.

At CCU, flowing from our commitment to help our students understand a biblical view of human nature as one of our Strategic Priorities (see ccu.edu/about/strategic-priorities), we help them think deeply about who God is and who they are

in relation to the Creator. We push students to consider what it means to be made in the *Imago Dei*, and who they are called to be and what they are called to do as part of the Created Order.

Our Strategic Priority to “be seekers of truth” focuses on and undergirds the readings, discussions, and assignments in courses ranging from Western Civilization, American History, Literature, Philosophical Inquiry, to American Politics. The foundational understandings of truth, justice, prudence, wisdom, beauty, and goodness that emerge from these courses provide an anchor to our graduates, strengthening whatever they do as business men and women, strategic communicators, lawyers, judges, pastors, ministry leaders, and educators.

This is why the American Council of Trustees and Alumni has rated CCU with an “A” grade for our general education core for seven years in a row. CCU is one of only 23 institutions in the nation and only two in the state of Colorado (the other is the United States Air Force Academy) to receive an “A” grade. CCU's ACTA rating affirms that our general education curriculum provides our students with a firm grounding in the areas of knowledge they will use for a lifetime, particularly by requiring every student to take courses in composition, literature, U.S. government, history, economics, mathematics, and science.

Second, the liberal arts serve an intellectually liberating purpose. Not to be confused with political or theological liberalism vs. conservatism, a humanities education is liberating in the sense that, as that higher education commentator Willard Dix suggests, it “provides a multi-faceted view of the world that enables students to see beyond one perspective, encouraging them to understand others' even if they don't agree.”

The liberal arts teach students to base opinions on reason rather than emotion. Too often in today's world feelings trump

thinking and entire swaths of culture hang in the balance. But here at CCU, we want our students to learn to reason effectively based on truth, and not any truth, but God's truth as revealed in His Word and in His World.

Beyond that, we want to help our students see the world most fully and understand others, whether they agree with them or not. Students should be able to build relationships with others and be able to challenge them to consider ultimate Truth. Indeed, we seek that everything we do is anchored in our mission to provide Christ-centered higher education that transforms students to impact the world with grace and truth.

Thus, our studies here are anchored in the truth of Scripture, and focused on helping our students think "Christianly" about every topic, every controversy, every news story, and every argument in every class session and every class assignment. Indeed, we don't indoctrinate here; students need to be exposed to different perspectives and understandings of history, social movements, and the world. But wherever they land, we urge them to center their convictions on the transforming message of the Gospel and the truth of God's Word.

Third, liberal arts classes cultivate the skills that employers from all sorts of industries are looking for in new hires. In fact, a 2015 research study commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and

Universities found that employers most want employees with skills in oral and written communication, teamwork, ethical decision-making, and critical thinking, with the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings. That's partially because savvy managers know they are already going to have to train their new hires in the technical, industry skills once they come aboard.

Arguably, there is no place on the college campus where these desirable skills — to think well, communicate effectively, work well with others, and make good, ethical decisions — are cultivated more than in liberal arts classes. For instance, at CCU, in our general education history classes, students wrestle with real-world historical contexts and develop critical thinking skills when challenged with competing narratives of the past and conflicting bodies of evidence and source material. As students study poetry in our English department, they wrestle with finding exactly the right word to express their thoughts and provide peer-level feedback to their colleagues on both sound and sense. Through this, they learn essential skills in developing powerful messages and providing constructive feedback, skills that they will, in the future, use in diverse workplaces. These foundational skills are exactly what employers are looking for, and students steeped in the liberal arts will be ready to enter the workforce and make outstanding contributions.

Fourth, liberal arts majors often earn much more over the course of their career than their counterparts who take more professionally-oriented degree programs. I know this sounds crazy, but it's true. In fact, Dr. Paul T. Corrigan, a professor at Southeastern University, one of our sister schools in the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, confidently claimed that "Jobs Will Save the Humanities" in a June 2018 column in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. He argues from a significant data set that most liberal arts majors fare quite well in terms of employment and wage earnings.

Indeed, a recent report by the Hamilton Project shows that many graduates from, for instance, history and English departments, earn significantly more than their counterparts from more professionally-oriented programs.

That's not to say that there's any problem with professional preparation programs — far from it. But it is misleading to suggest that those programs are preferential for all, or even most, students because of the job prospects they'll hold.

What's important is that students develop not only a strong intellectual foundation through their coursework, but also gain exposure to the various kinds of jobs they can engage after college. They learn to eloquently articulate the unique approach and preparation they bring to their occupation because of their liberal arts experience.

CCU'S COMMITMENT TO THE LIBERAL ARTS

For all these reasons, we're not putting the liberal arts out to pasture at CCU. Instead, we're featuring them front and center, and we're continually investing in the extent and quality of our liberal arts education.

In the general education curriculum, we won't succumb to external pressures to



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ryan T. Hartwig, Ph.D.

*Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and
Professor of Communication, College of Undergraduate Studies*

Ryan Hartwig rejoined CCU's faculty in 2018 after serving as the chair of the Department of Communication and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Azusa Pacific University. He is a CCU alumnus.



*CCU 2018 graduates
from the College of
Undergraduate Studies
and the College of Adult
and Graduate Studies*

reduce the number and nature of foundational, liberal arts courses that students have to take. Our students — no matter their degree program — will take classes in literature, history, government, composition, and economics. We appreciate the vote of confidence given to us by ACTA, and we plan to remain rated in the top 2 percent of all universities nationwide.

Furthermore, we're currently building a great books-focused honors liberal arts program. This will give some of our best and brightest students the opportunity to double major by completing a major in their discipline of choice, as well as an Honors Liberal Arts major through the honors curriculum.

And just as we have done for many years, we'll keep our outstanding regular faculty teaching the lion's share of our general education courses. Our core faculty are deeply engaged with our students in their freshmen and sophomore years while they wrestle with the big questions that the liberal arts feature — questions about goodness, truth, and beauty.

But at the same time, we're also not assuming that our students, their parents, and their future employers will tacitly understand the value of their liberal arts core education, or a major in the liberal arts.

So, we're also helping our students to:

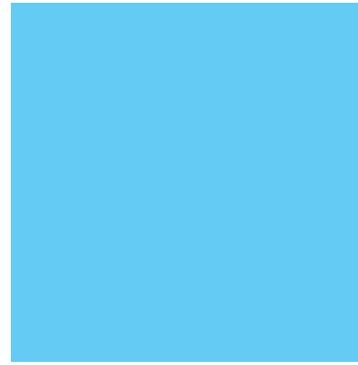
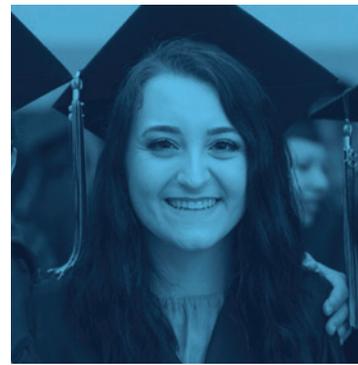
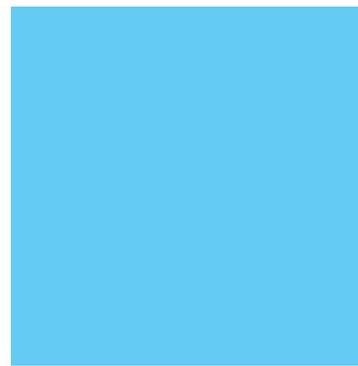
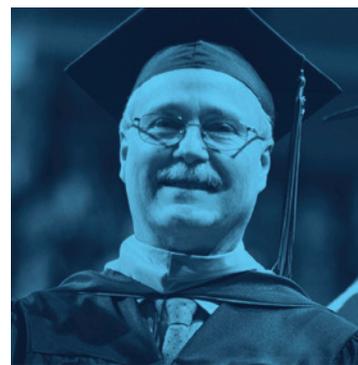
- articulate the unique skillsets they bring to the business world, even as history, English, or politics majors.
- cultivate professional connections through alumni networking to advance their transition into employment upon graduation, and
- highlight and take advantage of applied learning experiences that enable them to connect what they're doing in class with challenges outside of the academy.

HOW YOU CAN PARTNER WITH US IN OUR MISSION

Here are a few ideas:

1. Encourage students in your circle of influence to consider the liberal arts as they choose their college and their major. Challenge them to give a liberal arts education an in-depth look to see if it might be a good fit for where they want to go and what they want to do. And regardless of what major they choose, encourage them to not just check off the liberal arts components in their general education, but to take them seriously — for they might be the most important part of their university education.
2. Continue your own liberal arts education. To what extent are you challenging your beliefs and perspectives, reading books that push your understanding of a topic, maybe even just to understand better how the “other side” thinks? The liberal arts liberate us from closed, narrow thinking, and should be a lifelong exercise. We hope you'll join us in our pursuit of goodness, beauty, and truth.
3. Pray for us! What we're doing isn't easy, and in many ways it is counter cultural. But so was what Jesus did 2,000 years ago.

We covet your prayers that we will be seekers of truth and boldly follow Jesus as we continue on our mission of providing Christ-centered higher education that transforms students, who are, in turn, prepared to impact the world with grace and truth. •



*For more information and references,
visit ccu.edu/beyond.*



CAN'T STOP THIS COUGAR CUB

10-year-old battling cancer signs on with CCU soccer team

Colorado Christian University men's soccer held a special draft in September, signing the youngest and perhaps toughest athlete in program history. Joel Zamora, a 10-year-old Littleton resident and cancer survivor, inked his intentions to become the newest Cougar soccer player at CCU.

Joel was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a bone cancer, and underwent a partial amputation of his left leg. He still faces one more surgery, but the Cougar cub isn't letting adversity get him down. Through a partnership with Team IMPACT, the fourth grader is serving as an honorary CCU soccer team member for the 2018 season.

"Joel gives our team inspiration and perseverance through hard times," said Bret Folks, a sophomore goal keeper from

Eudora, Kansas. "Joel always shows up with a contagious smile on his face, a 'can do' attitude, and a competitive nature that brings more out of the players. The CCU men's soccer team is honored to have signed such an amazing man onto our team."

"Joel's strength and determination are very inspiring. It is impossible not to be affected by his resolve."

Joel signed a "national letter of intent" to join the Cougars in a ceremony at Anschutz Student Center attended by coaches, family,

students, the soccer team, and the cheer squad. He's since joined the soccer team at Trailblazer Stadium in Lakewood as the team battles its Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference foes.

"This is such an obvious connection," said head coach Gary Evans. "We have really enjoyed getting to know Joel and his family. Our team has already embraced



this young man and I can't wait to see how we can help him battle this illness. Joel's strength and determination are very inspiring. It is impossible not to be affected by his resolve."

Even though Joel's amputation requires him to wear a prosthetic, he's not letting it slow him down.

Assistant coach Graham Delano added that Joel has become a member of the team in the truest sense. "He comes to practices with us, we got him gear and a little locker. He's in the locker room before games, he walks out with us, does the whole team chant, everything that we do."

Even though Joel's amputation requires him to wear a prosthetic, he's not letting it slow him down.

"He doesn't even realize or even care that he has this now," said Becky Zamora, Joel's mother, of the prosthetic. "He just keeps going and going and smiling. He smiles all the time."

Joel enjoys playing video games, eating pizza, and is an Aaron Rodgers fan.

Team IMPACT was founded in 2011 and has been connecting children undergoing medical treatment with college athletic programs ever since.

Children gain support as they face medical challenges, while student athletes gain a new perspective. Through the power of teamwork, kids and student athletes accept, motivate, and inspire one another. Participants are officially drafted to the team and attend practices, games, team dinners, events, and more.

Joel is CCU's first team member drafted through Team IMPACT, but keep an eye out for other inspiring Cougar Cubs in the future. •



Following God's Lead

| *Scott Russo '18*
| *Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice*



Scott with one of his sons

Discerning God's calling for one's life can be a daunting endeavor. Following that direction can prove to be just as challenging. For active U.S. military serviceman Scott Russo this was no exception. The 39-year-old graduated in May from CCU's College of Adult and Graduate Studies with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice.

"Going back to school for any adult, especially a busy adult, is scary," Russo said. "It is absolutely 100 percent scary."

Russo intends to work as a probation officer and further his education with a master's in counseling. Although he has accomplished one of his goals in earning his bachelor's degree, the path has not always been easy.

"You're diving into something that maybe you've done before and you're trying to get used to it again, or you've just never done it and you want to get your feet wet because you want to better yourself," the recent graduate said. "The best advice I can give is to stick with it."

Russo's journey to Colorado Christian University was not a direct one, but shows the hand of Christ steering Russo's decisions. The father of four boys discovered CCU and what it offered only after his wife, Heather, began researching her own higher education options.

"My wife was actually going to attend CCU, and with being in the military and leading an active lifestyle, I looked into it too after she found it and I saw how it would suit my needs with their time blocks and how they do their courses," said Russo, adding that he felt the pull of God's hand in choosing CCU. "I believe God wanted me here because He needs me to understand biblical scripture and how it incorporates when interacting with people who may be lost or hurting."

That sense of direction and calling has driven Russo to take full advantage of his time at CCU.

"It's important to be God-centered because there is a life after this one. I want to make

sure what I'm doing is what God's asking from me," Russo said. "When I'm standing before Him and He says, 'What did you do with the time I gave you?' I will be able to answer wisely and say, 'With the time you gave me, I discovered that you gave me this calling. You sent me to CCU to obtain this degree to do this job. I've done those things for you.'"

The pathway to a degree, especially as an adult learner, is not always smooth. Life and its myriad of responsibilities forced Russo to draw strength from his relationship with Christ to push through and complete his undergraduate degree.

"The best advice I can give is to stick with it."

"It takes a strong person to say, 'I'm weak and I need Jesus to get through this.' That is where I've been," Russo said. "There were times where I felt frustrated and I wanted to quit and I looked to God and he said, 'No, you're not going to quit. You're here and I've got you here for a reason,' and He's pushed me through."

The active-duty soldier hopes his perseverance and dedication to earning his degree will serve as inspiration for his four sons, both now and in the future.

"I cannot in good conscience sit and harp to my children about getting a degree if I don't have one. That's not fair. I think that makes me a hypocrite," Russo said. "And when I'm out there doing the work, they can see that it's not easy, you actually have to put in the work. When they see me walk across that stage I'm going to want them to want that. I want them to hunger for that."

He added that his desire goes beyond inspiring his boys to continue their education, he wants to mold their world view and approach to life.

"I want to know that I made an impact, especially on my boys. When they marry and

have children, they can say 'my dad taught me this,'" Russo said.

"That time is so precious because you've got just a little bit of time to make that difference for them," noted the father of four. "And actually it goes both ways, because they have a little bit of time to make it important for me to know what's going on in their lives."

Looking beyond the impact on his immediate family, Russo is excited by potential ministry opportunities as he works toward a career in the criminal justice field — specifically working with individuals who have previously offended.

"As a probation officer I can reach people who have already stumbled," Russo said. "That will allow me to help them get better and I believe that is where the Lord is calling me to do His work, to help people by getting in the trenches with the poor, the needy, and the ones that really need the help."

Russo hopes to follow God's plan for his life even though he's not sure where it will lead.

"I'm following this career path because I believe I'm called to help people. I never knew how to help people. I didn't know if it was starting my own ministry. I didn't know if it was just randomly helping people. I really didn't understand where I was supposed to be," Russo said.

In listening to God's direction, the recent CCU graduate has found his calling and purpose in life. He hopes to help others find theirs.

"I started with probation because I have a strong sense that is where I need to be because those are the people that are hurting. Those are the people that may have been left behind, that don't have anybody. And they may not realize that Jesus is there. The only way they are going to know that is through somebody that knows Jesus, and to give them that guidance, that sense of purpose as to why they're here and help them find their calling." •



Chloe (right) and Brooke Grout '18 channel their inner princess

Starting down a life-threatening illness can leave you feeling like you are all alone in the world, even when surrounded by family and a caring staff. For the kids at Colorado Children's Hospital in Aurora this is no different.

All Things, the organization I volunteer with and serve as the chapter president for, strives to bring a smile and brighten the day of patients at Children's Hospital. Twice each month, Colorado Christian University students dress up in costumes and host a crafting time open to anyone at the hospital.

Our goal is to help patients feel like normal kids again. We try to give them a little bit of joy and happiness. Through crafts, activities, and parties we shine Jesus through our actions and bring joy to the patients at Children's Hospital.

All Things was started six years ago by a CCU student, Abi Gordon. Abi has struggled with ongoing illness for most of her life, and she spent much of her childhood in Children's Hospital. Because of this, she wanted to give back to the place that helped her so much, as well as help out the kids. She knew what it felt like to feel down and out as a child, and she wanted the children to know that they are still loved, just like she was as a child.

Costumes, Crafting & Christ

Told through the eyes of Chloe Wilkie '20

She named it All Things after Philippians 4:13 (ESV), "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Abi wanted the children to feel hope in

knowing that they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them, even fighting off disease at such a young age.

From one student's desire to make a difference, All Things has grown to one of the most successful outreach ministries at CCU. It started as a once-a-month ministry, but has grown to twice a month as the number of students volunteering has increased. The smiles we see from kids when they walk in is amazing. Our parties are open to all patients and their families.

For me, this ministry has opened my eyes to God's direction for my life. I started out with All Things two years ago and it has changed the trajectory of my life. I was an elementary education major and began to volunteer at Children's Hospital to gain experience with kids. I ended up falling in love with the hospital environment. God was telling me to spend my life there. I realized I want to be a nurse and help others.



Chloe visiting Mackenzie, a patient at Children's Hospital

Seeing how God used All Things to show His plan for my life has increased my passion for the ministry. When you're faithful and follow His direction, God blesses you and what you are doing.

Costumes, crafting, and Christ — more than just an alliteration, they are the cornerstones of the outreach ministry, All Things. •



CCU students ready to bring joy

NURSING

NEW PATHWAY LAUNCHED

Traditional CCU undergraduate students can now earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Colorado Christian University is excited to announce a new pathway for traditional undergraduate students to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The Colorado Board of Nursing approved CCU's request to double its total number of BSN students, allowing for the launch of a Pre-Nursing pathway for students in the College of Undergraduate Studies.

Traditional undergraduate students accepted to the Pre-Nursing pathway will complete prerequisite courses through the College of Undergraduate Studies during their freshman and sophomore years. Upon successful completion of BSN admission requirements, pre-nursing students will have direct admission to the BSN program in the School of Nursing and Health Professions beginning their junior year. The first cohort is expected to start in fall 2019.

"At CCU, nursing is in our DNA. We equip the next generation of Christian nurses to become exceptionally compassionate and competent professionals who are leaders in the industry — leaders ready to impact their world and transform healthcare by showing Christ's love as they minister to the needs of hurting people," said Dr. Donald W. Sweeting, president of Colorado Christian University.

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Colorado Christian University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The new pathway is designed for undergraduate students who

are seeking licensure as a registered nurse through a traditional in-seat program. Grounded in not only liberal arts and sciences but also in biblical truth, the BSN curriculum will provide students with an intensive, state-of-the-art educational experience that combines theory, simulation, and clinical learning.

"At CCU, nursing is in our DNA. We equip the next generation of Christian nurses to become exceptionally compassionate and competent professionals..."

"We're excited for this new chapter in nursing education at Colorado Christian University," said Dr. Barbara White, dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions. "The Colorado Board of Nursing and our clinical partners recognize CCU's quality education and the servant-leader reputation our students have in the community. They have helped to make this expansion possible. At CCU, nursing is more than just a scientific discipline, it is a sacred calling. Nursing is ministry."

CCU has a history of more than a decade of providing high quality nursing education, starting its first nursing program in 2007.

The University's BSN program for adult undergraduate students began in 2011, and has consistently produced graduates whose test scores have exceeded state and national averages for first-time National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN). The most recent cohort had a 97 percent pass rate for first-time testers, 10 points above the national average.

Helping to facilitate the expansion is the opening of CCU's School of Nursing and Health Professions Simulation Center, a 4,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility. •



Discipleship



Discipleship. What does it mean? For Heidi Ross '98, M.A. '03, the answer to that question is constantly evolving.

Ross, who has served as the director of Discipleship for CCU's College of Undergraduate Studies since 2011, is tasked with providing a campus-wide program that both strengthens and grows the student body's connection to Christ.

"I've often said I'm addicted to spiritual growth. I love to see what the Lord does here," Ross said. "The students are so ripe for it. Most of them want it, they are looking for it, and they are hungry for it."

To accomplish this, Ross oversees a robust infrastructure of volunteer student leaders designed to lay the foundation upon which new CCU students can build their relationships with both Christ and the University community.



Heidi Ross, Director of Discipleship

“We want to capitalize on this pivotal time in their life,” Ross said. She noted that for many students the discipleship program and the CCU community provide a unique opportunity to discover God’s hand working in their lives.

“Spiritually speaking, even if they grew up knowing Jesus, if they grew up in a Christian home, it’s forming their own faith and really establishing their identity in Christ,” Ross said. “They realize, ‘Oh my gosh, I have been putting my identity in other things, my accomplishments, sports, boys or girls. Now it’s time to put my identity in the Lord.’” That awareness doesn’t occur on man’s schedule, but rather on God’s timeline, said Ross. “Sometimes that doesn’t happen until their junior or senior year, and sometimes that is immediate in their freshman year.”

First-year freshman and transfer students at CCU are required to take a first-year integration (FYI) class where they are introduced to the University’s processes, resources, and culture. Additionally, they are assigned discipleship groups (D-groups) — small groups facilitated by sophomores, juniors, and seniors who serve on a volunteer basis. For many students it is the first time they’ve had to actively live their faith on their own.

“It is huge for students to be immersed in community. To actually be with like-minded people, even if they’re in all different stages of their faith and growth,” Ross said. “We’ve signed this statement of faith, most students know what they’re getting in to. They want that, they want to grow. So just getting immersed in a true biblical community is huge for them.”

A key aspect of the discipleship program is developing personal and communal accountability. Ross said D-groups help students ask tough questions that lead to self-reflection and growth.

“Automatically, we’re seeing what does accountability look like? What does

actually sharpening each other look like? What does carrying each other’s burdens look like,” asked Ross.

She added that as students develop spiritually, discerning their Christ-centered calling and gifts becomes important.



“Spiritually speaking, even if they grew up knowing Jesus, if they grew up in a Christian home, it’s forming their own faith and really establishing their identity in Christ.”

“What we like to see is the idea of calling,” Ross said. “How is the Lord going to use that? How is He going to grow you? How can you now lead in that area?”

For Ross, training up D-group leaders is a big aspect of her job. She works to develop them both spiritually and as leaders.

“My role in that is to sharpen it, tighten it,” Ross said concerning students’ personal faith and relationship with the Lord. “I want them to at least feel equipped. You learn to lead by leading.

“Since it is a learning experience as well as a leading experience, they have their training under their belt,” Ross noted about the student leaders. “They have their discipleship advisor and me to walk alongside them and

pour into them along the way and say ‘you’re not alone in this, we’re walking with you.’”

That journey alongside students continues to inspire Ross.

“I leave and the job is never done, so I have to make myself leave to go home to the family,” said the mother of two teenage boys. “I love it, it’s just like any role like that. It’s just like being a wife or a mom, it’s never ending. You can always be doing more. You can always be loving more, loving on the students more, mentoring and making sure the programs happen.”

Her current role with the discipleship program allows her to follow one of her callings, a calling she didn’t fully realize at first.

“When I was an undergrad student I had no idea what it would look like, I just wanted to be a part of God’s kingdom and impact it. I wanted to do my part. I had no idea what that would look like.”

The desire to make a difference for God’s kingdom — whether through her own actions or those of students — has allowed her to harness her own spiritual gifts.

“I love people and I love seeing what the Lord does in people. I love seeing Him move, whether that’s my personal life, or whether that’s students,” Ross said. “That’s where the Lord has been gracious to me, because I didn’t go to seminary, so I never had that vision of I’m going to be a pastor someday, but I always had that heart of ‘what’s the Lord doing in your life, I really want to know.’”

Ultimately though for Ross, the goal is to create leaders to spread the love of Christ through discipleship.

“I think most of the students in our program would tell you I’m being trained to love others well, how to lead well,” Ross said. “If at the end of the day we’re teaching them to lead well and to disciple well, to go out and do that, I love it.” •



TOP OF HER GAME

Former CCU volleyball star Proano '18 named to NCAA Woman of the Year Top 30 finalist list and RMAC Woman of the Year

Bump, set, spike — the rhythmic flow of a volleyball match. Study, paper, test — the four-year journey to a degree. For Sophia Proano the two cadences went hand-in-hand as she exemplified excellence on both the court and in the classroom. The standout volleyball student athlete and recent graduate (B.S. Biology '18) was named a Top 30 finalist for the 2018 NCAA Woman of the Year award.

The award honors the academic achievements, athletic excellence, community service, and leadership of graduating female college athletes from the NCAA's three divisions. To be eligible, a nominee must have competed and earned a varsity letter in an NCAA-sponsored sport, must have completed eligibility in her primary sport, and must have earned her undergraduate degree by Summer 2018.

"I feel honored and humbled to have been selected for this prestigious Top 30 award. At the beginning of my collegiate career, my goal was to create a legacy of pursuing excellence, serving others, and glorifying God through volleyball and academics," Proano said. "I am so thankful for all my teammates, coaches, classmates, faculty, and staff who have made an impact in my life over the past four years as an NCAA student athlete."

Proano was one of 581 nominees for the nationwide honor. The selection committee identified the Top 30 — 10 from each NCAA division — and from there selected three finalists from each division. The Committee on Women's Athletics then selected the winner from the nine finalists. The 30 honorees were recognized, and the 2018 Woman of the Year announced, at an awards dinner in Indianapolis at the end of October.

In the process of being named a Top 30 finalists, Proano was named the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference (RMAC) Woman of the Year earlier this summer.

“Sophia was a model of consistency as a leader during her time here at Colorado Christian. She demonstrated excellence not only in her work but in the reliability of her character,” said head coach Bobby Blanken. “As a teammate and friend, Sophia gave of herself regularly and invested in a group of young women that are even now reaping the benefits. Coaching Sophia was a joy in that she was bought into the team’s mission and was willing to do her best to see those around her catch the vision.”

Added Athletic Director Brian Wall, “Sophia is the consummate student athlete. She maintained a 4.0 GPA while studying health sciences in preparation for her acceptance to a physician assistant program. Additionally, in the midst of her rigorous academic program, as senior captain, Sophia earned NCAA All-American status while leading her team to one of the most successful records in CCU history. Sophia was highly respected by her teammates as a leader both on and off of the court. Her career academically and athletically personified excellence.”

“At the beginning of my collegiate career, my goal was to create a legacy of pursuing excellence, serving others, and glorifying God through volleyball and academics.”

The native of Thornton, Colo., graduated in May with a degree in biology with a 4.0 GPA. She is currently attending physician assistant school at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. She was named to the RMAC All-Academic First-Team twice and last season was named the league’s Female Academic Athlete of the Year.

On the court she was just as outstanding. Proano earned first-team RMAC twice and earned AVCA All-Region during her final two collegiate seasons and All-American honors her final season. She is one of just three players in school history to reach the 1,000-kill plateau.

Outside of Colorado Christian, Proano was an active volunteer in the local community. For five years she volunteered at Water’s Edge, which mentors teenage girls. During the summer of 2016 she conducted research on incubators in the neonatal ICU at the Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford in Palo Alto, Calif. Proano has also spent numerous hours volunteering at the Children’s Hospital of Colorado. •





Kara Johnston, a seasoned professional in alumni relations and annual giving, has joined Colorado Christian University as the director of alumni and parent relations.

“I am excited to share my expertise with the CCU community,” Johnston said. “I am delighted to deepen relationships between alumni, parents, and the University community, for the glory of God and the fulfillment of CCU’s important mission.”

Johnston brings more than a decade-and-a-half of experience in higher education to her new role at CCU. She previously served as the director of development and alumni relations at the Denver campus of Johnson & Wales University for eight-and-a-half years. Johnston also spent seven years as the director of alumni relations and annual giving at Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

“Ms. Johnston brings 19 years of alumni and parent relations and beneficial strategies to CCU,” Eric Hogue, vice president of University Advancement said. “As enrollment continues to climb at a historical rate, CCU faces a great need in assisting,

supporting, and cultivating alumni and parent relations; Kara is uniquely qualified for the road ahead.”

“I am excited to share my expertise with the CCU community.”

One of Johnston’s key responsibilities will be growing the new CCU Fund, which has been launched to supplement scholarships, academics, and the student experience for all enrolled and attending CCU.

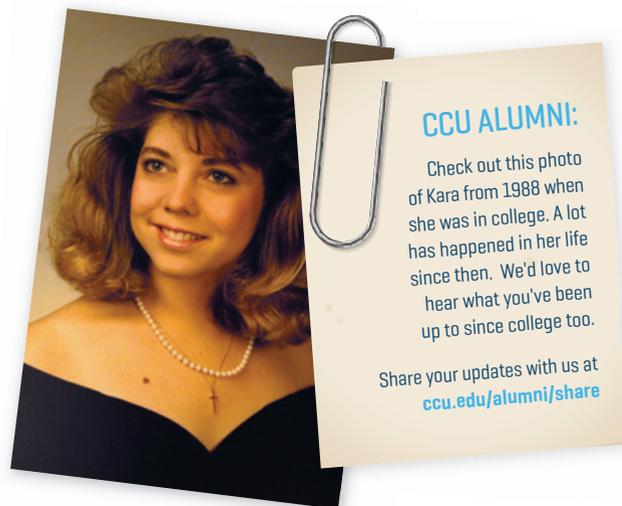
Johnston is also spearheading several projects intended to deepen bonds between alumni, students, and their families and the University. She has been tasked with establishing a comprehensive and professional parent relations department for the College of Undergraduate Studies.

For the College of Adult and Graduate Studies, Johnston will be developing an

overarching effort to better connect alumni to their alma mater.

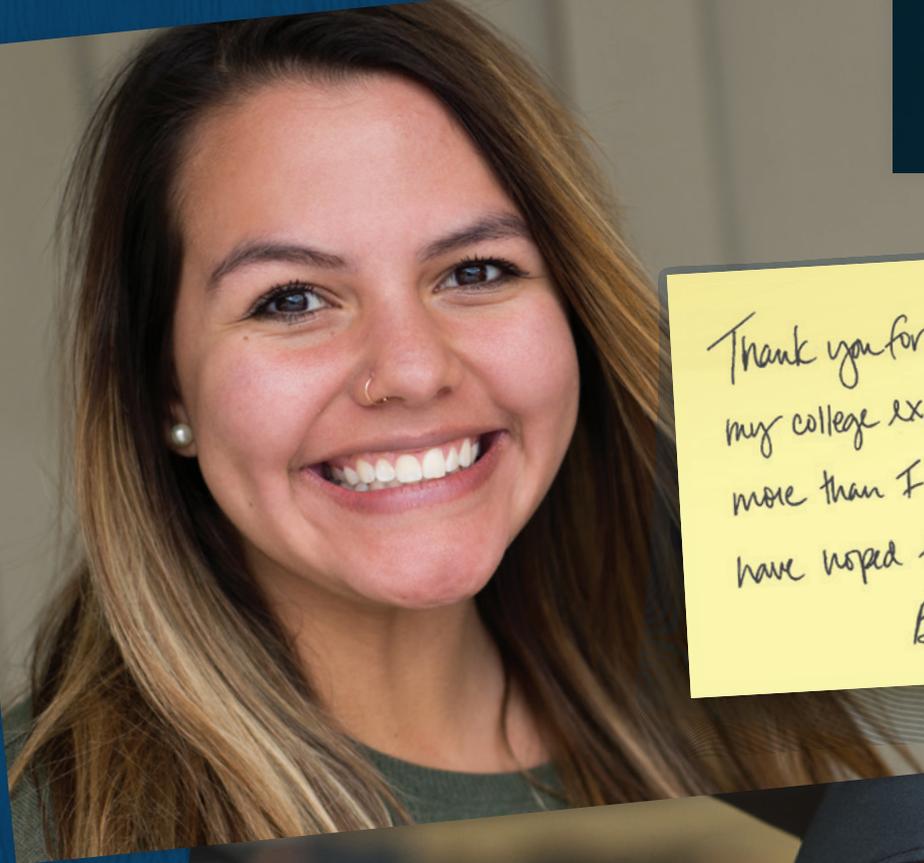
Additionally, Johnston will be orchestrating an annual homecoming, parent, and family experience that incorporates legacy alumni of Denver Bible Institute, Western Bible, Rockmont College, and CCU.

Johnston, a native Coloradan, has one son serving in the U.S. Army and two teenage daughters. She enjoys serving as a vocalist in the contemporary worship group at her church, hiking, and camping. •

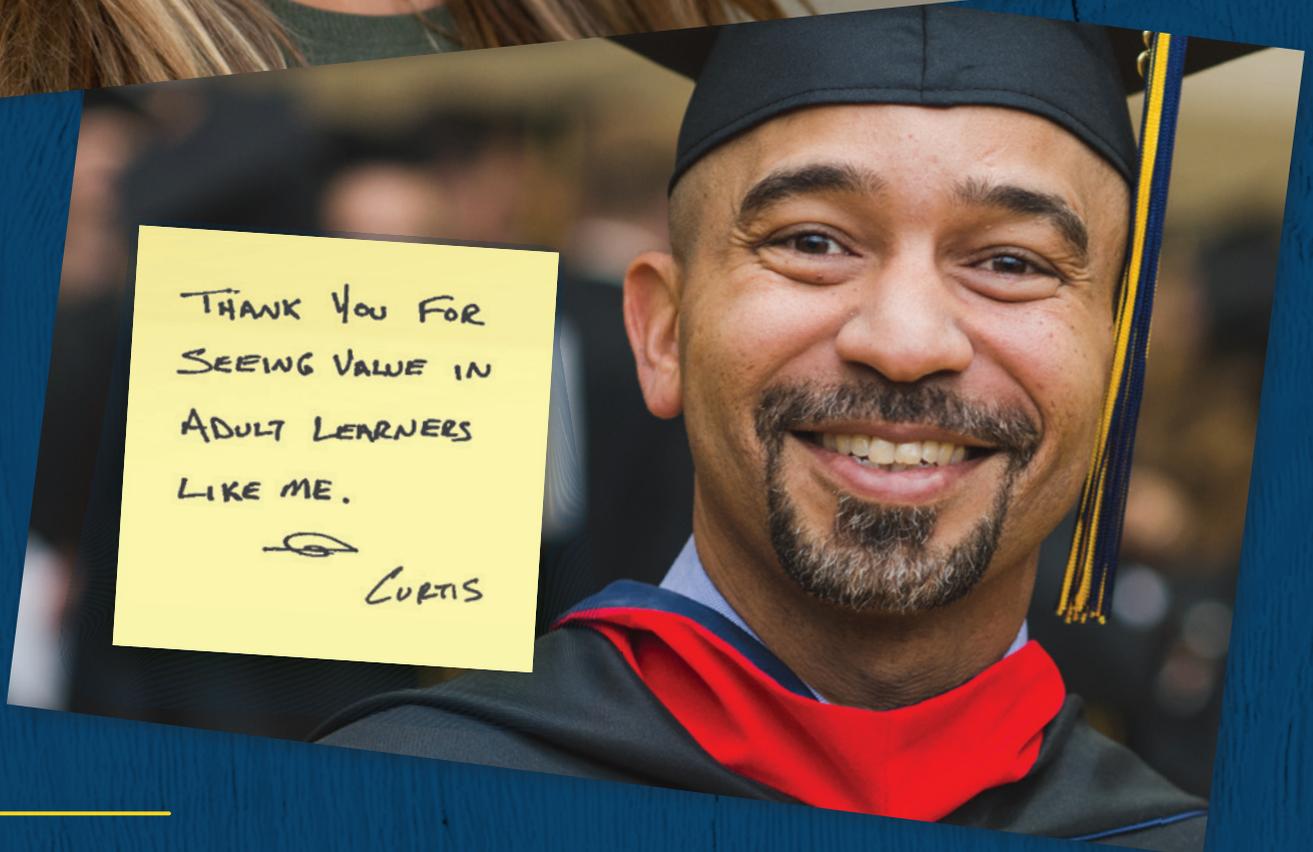


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COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

LIBERAL ARTS: THE REST OF THE STORY

.....
The humanities bring value in
an ever-changing world

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