



President's Report: Dr. Michele Haney December 2023/January 2024

Transform the student experience.



Executive Leadership Team/Student Government meeting/dinner



Eurydice Performance

Captivated a journey into the depths of love, grief, life, and death with the RRCC Theatre department's production of "Eurydice" by Sarah Ruhl.

The Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) Theatre Arts and Dance Department presented Sarah Ruhl's Eurydice, in December 2023 the RRCC Theater. The show, directed by Stephanie Murry, was presented by arrangement with Concord

at

Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com(link is external). "Sarah Ruhl's adaptation of the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice stays (mostly) true to the original story, while updating the language beautifully for modern audiences," says director Stephanie Murry.

- **Red Rocks Community College Hosted the Outdoor Education and Park Ranger Career Fair** - The Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) Outdoor Education and Park Ranger program hosted a career fair on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, on the Lakewood campus. This free event kicked off at 10am and was the largest outdoor education career fair in Colorado. With up to forty-five agencies and organizations attending, this career fair was a wonderful opportunity to explore jobs and internships. The event was open to the public and RRCC students. Some of the participating exhibitors: REI Experiences, American Conservation Experience, Avid 4 Adventure, Boulder County Parks and Open Space, South Platte Park, Resort Outfitters, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Golden Mountain Guides, Outward Bound, United States Forest Services, Jefferson County Open Space, Keystone Science School, Veterans Exploration Therapy, and more.

Transform our own workforce experience



Fine Woodworking

Showcase Highlights!

The Fine Woodworking department proudly presented their end-of-semester exhibition on Saturday, December 16, featuring the incredible masterpieces crafted by our talented students.

Over 250 attendees, including students, family members, business professionals, and local wood enthusiasts, gathered

to celebrate the craftsmanship. The two-hour event was filled with live music, food, and a stunning display of nearly 100 student projects.

- **Print Educators of Colorado Exhibition: Lakewood Campus**

This group exhibit included current Print Educators of Colorado from the Universities, Colleges, Community Colleges, and ART Schools around the state. A wide range of print making processes, installations and methods were on view in this dynamic, richly layered exhibition. The event takes place in the newly designed Art Gallery at the RRCC Lakewood Campus Monday, January 8 at 8:00 a.m., to Friday, March 15, 2023 – 9:00 p.m.

Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.



Denver Indian Center Toy Drive 2023 - Red Rocks Community College employees donated to the College Gateway Program "Christmas Toy Drive" for the children from the Denver Indian Center Inc.

- Workforce Services recently brought on an Americorps service member as a "Digital Navigator". This navigator provides free technology navigation services (finding low-cost internet, free computers, and free help with technology to the community. The Navigator is **Jean Tuyishime** and he also helped us launch a digital literacy open lab, as well. We plan to launch that open lab at the end of the month.

Red Rocks Community College and Arizona State University Partner to Offer College Students Transfer Pathways with MyPath2ASU® Collaboration.

Red Rocks Community College is pleased to announce a new alliance with [Arizona State University\(link is external\)](#) to provide students a seamless transfer experience with the MyPath2ASU® program. [MyPath2ASU\(link is external\)](#) allows students to take the steps needed, at the start of their college experience, to successfully plan their transfer to ASU, ensuring a smooth transition process and student success. MyPath2ASU is a set of customized tools available to transfer students from accredited, U.S. regional institutions. These tools ensure a seamless transfer experience to ASU after earning credits or an associate degree from a U.S. community college or university and shortening the time to degree completion.

- Through this partnership, students using MyPath2ASU will find their transfer experience simplified. They will have access to personalized benefits to help them navigate the transfer experience, to include:
 - end-to-end learner navigation through course-by-course guided pathways.
 - ensure course applicability by assisting students with taking courses that apply to their associate and ASU bachelor's degree.

- guaranteed general admission to ASU and admission into MyPath2ASU major choice if all requirements are satisfied; some majors have additional or higher admission requirements.
- more than 400 course-by-course guided pathways into immersion and online ASU degree programs.
- self-service, degree progress tracking through My Transfer Guide to minimize loss of credit.
- connected experience through personalized ASU communications to prepare academically and build a connection to ASU.
- **ASU and Red Rocks Community College** will work collaboratively to promote educational degree pathways containing ground and online course offerings. These pathways will ensure their courses are applicable toward their degree in their chosen major and minimize credit loss. Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.



Michele reading to children in the Children's Center.



Law Enforcement Academy had 14 cadets' graduate December 21st. We have 24 cadets for Spring 2024 semester; this has been our largest cohort since 2021. We have the most diverse cohort that RRCC has ever had.



The Emergency Medical Services Program Ceremony was celebrated on Wednesday December 13th at 6:00 p.m. in the community room.



Fire Science Graduation had 24 recruits graduate December 19th. We have 17 recruits starting Spring 2024.

- CRJ and PSY departments are working together with the Chicago School to launch The Mental Health Academy at Red Rocks. The Mental Health Academy (MHA) at Red Rocks Community College offers a streamlined pathway to a career in providing mental health services as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Colorado through a partnership between Red Rocks Community College, The Chicago School, and Mile High Behavioral Healthcare. MHA students receive access to academic and peer mentors, career and professional development workshops, community engagement activities, and special tuition rates for their bachelor's and master's degrees at The Chicago School, at both online and on-ground campuses. The MHA provides a guided experience for students to pursue their career goals through two distinct pathways toward a Licensed Professional Counselor in Colorado:
 - Criminology to Forensic Psychology
 - Psychology to Clinical Mental Health Counseling

MHA students begin their academic journey at Red Rocks Community College by pursuing an Associate of Arts in either Psychology or Criminal Justice. They are eligible for early acceptance to The Chicago School with a partner tuition rate of 80% to pursue their bachelor's degree either totally online or at one of their ground campuses (BA Psychology only). Within the bachelor's program, students become eligible to begin their master's degree courses early in forensic psychology or clinical mental health counseling (through an articulated process), which can lead to becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor in Colorado (and other states).* The MHA also provides students with high-impact learning opportunities, such as service and experiential learning activities that include hands-on experiences, internships, and events with Mile High Behavioral Healthcare, a nonprofit community mental health organization that provides mental health services to underserved populations in the Denver Metro Area and beyond.

Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.

- What is Tax Help Colorado? Every year RRCC's accounting students learn how to prepare taxes and get certified through the IRS to prepare (relatively simple) tax returns. During spring semester, we run a tax site on campus where qualifying individuals and families can have their taxes prepared and filed for free. We expect to prepare 200 or so returns, which saves our community members approximately \$40,000 in tax prep fees. It is a wonderful service to our community, as many people find tax prep a daunting undertaking and express immense gratitude for our site and students. Our students complete the program with a certificate that qualifies them to work immediately in the field of tax preparation (which is in unusually high demand because of baby boomers reaching retirement age). The students sit eyeball to eyeball with other humans and learn communication and customer service skills. Priceless.
- Our new accounting faculty, **Jake Webb**, will lead the tax site this year. Jake

came to us from CCD, where they run a robust tax site. We are so grateful for his experience and leadership as he steps into this role here at Red Rocks. His assistant site coordinator will be **Tim Cloran**. Tim was a student at Red Rocks and has been serving in the assistant site coordinator role for many years. Every year he not only leads our site, but volunteers at other sites around the metro area, accumulating well over 100 volunteer hours annually. He has been instrumental in the success of our site over the years, and our students love him. We are so grateful for his continued support in this role at Red Rocks. The site will be open on Saturday's, February 10 – March 16, 9am – 3pm. Taxpayers can book an appointment for the 9am – 1pm time frame (book here: taxhelpcolorado.as.me/RRCC), and we will take walk ins on a first come first serve basis 1 – 3pm. See if you qualify for this service go to <https://taxhelpco.org/> and click on “See if you qualify.”

Other News:



EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR – from left to right

- **Ellie Ponce**, Case Manager, Student Outreach & Recruitment - selected by her peers as the Outstanding ATP of the Year! Congratulations Ellie!
- **Adam Forland**, MAT Faculty - selected by his peers as the new Outstanding Faculty of the Year! Congratulations Adam!
- **Christine Najera**, Facilities, for being selected by her peers as the Outstanding Classified of the Year! Congratulations Christine!

- **Dr. Landon Pirius Named President of Red Rocks Community College - Innovative higher education leader to begin tenure in March 2024**



Joe Garcia, chancellor of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), announced **Dr. Landon Pirius** as the tenth president of Red Rocks Community College (RRCC). Enrolling more than 10,000 students annually, RRCC is one of the largest colleges within CCCS and is home to two campuses in Lakewood and Arvada. With 25 years of experience in higher education, Dr. Pirius has led impactful, statewide initiatives to advance

student outcomes, promote equity and inclusion, and forge community and industry partnerships. He currently serves as the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for CCCS and will succeed current president Dr. Michele Haney on March 18, 2024, following her planned retirement.

- Dr. Pirius emerged as the successful candidate following an extensive nationwide search process. An advisory committee carefully reviewed applications from over 80 experienced applicants. The college also hosted campus visits and open forums that sought input from community members.
- “Dr. Pirius has been behind some of the most transformative work we have undertaken at CCCS and has a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our colleges,” said Chancellor Garcia. “This experience, paired with his extensive background in student and academic affairs, will allow Dr. Pirius to make an immediate impact at RRCC and deliver a clear vision for its future.”
- After accepting the position, Dr. Pirius expressed excitement for the opportunity and reiterated his commitment to Colorado students.
- “Upon joining the Colorado Community College System, I quickly discovered that Red Rocks Community College is a special place with a welcoming community,” Dr. Pirius said. “From its strong academic offerings to its groundbreaking collaborations with industry and the community, RRCC has pioneered some of the most unique programs in the country. I am honored to continue my service as Red Rocks’ next president and look forward to providing leadership that inspires innovation, fosters inclusiveness and trust, and empowers students and employees to thrive.”
- At CCCS, Dr. Pirius has overseen several systemwide initiatives to expand access to education and training. He has spearheaded the implementation of Colorado Online(link is external), a next-generation online learning model that allows students to take asynchronous courses and programs from all 13 CCCS colleges. He also supported work to establish the Rural College Consortium, which streamlines courses and services across several rural institutions to provide joint synchronous programs and received an \$8.6 million investment from the General Assembly.

- Working closely with faculty, Dr. Pirius led the transformation of developmental education by deploying a co-requisite model systemwide. Today, just 3 percent of CCCS students enroll in traditional development education courses—down from 15 percent—and pass rates have improved for gateway English and math courses. The shift has also narrowed academic success gaps among white students and students of color.
- Beyond these efforts, Dr. Pirius played a critical role in expanding workforce development programs in Colorado. In recent years, his strategic planning played a critical role in securing more than \$100 million in federal, state, and philanthropic funding to build stackable education pathways in high-need sectors, including health care, behavioral health, and renewable energy. Dr. Pirius’s leadership also paved the way for the state’s zero-cost training programs for community and technical colleges, Care Forward Colorado and Career Advance Colorado, that have already trained more than 5,000 students for in-demand jobs.
- Prior to joining CCCS, Dr. Pirius served as the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs for North Hennepin Community College in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. There, he administered a multimillion-dollar budget and led strategic planning for the college’s academic offerings. He also built relationships with K-12 school districts that boosted participation in the college’s dual enrollment program and established an on-campus transfer center with six universities.
- Dr. Pirius graduated from the prestigious Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship(link is external) and has served on many boards and commissions, including the Colorado Commission of Higher Education and the WICHE Alliance Executive Committee. He is eager to bring this state and national expertise back to a college campus, where he began his career in higher education.
- “I believe that people and institutions are stronger when we build on our collective
- success,” Dr. Pirius said. “RRCC’s distinguished 50-year history and nationally known reputation reflect the positive impact of visionary, dedicated, and resourceful faculty, staff, students, and partners. I am eager to join this exceptional community and will be dedicated to further bolstering its thriving campus culture and future where all graduates have pathways to prosperity and a vibrant learning environment.”



Sean Dugan Retirement - Chief Dugan has been with our Campus Police for 10 years and has contributed so much to our Police Department and our community within that time. He was celebrated and retired on January 10.