

## President's Report: Dr. Michele Haney May 2022

### Transform the student experience.

- The RRCC Commencement ceremony marks the culmination of a student's time on campus and celebrates an important milestone. We honored the 52<sup>nd</sup> graduating class on Saturday, May 14, 2022 on our multi-purpose fields. One hundred and sixty-three of our students participated in commencement exercises this year. The Outstanding Graduate was **Kayley Smith**. The Outstanding Faculty of the Year was **Martha Stevens**; Full-Time Instructor of the Year was **Toni Nicholas (HIS)**; Part-Time Instructor of the Year was **Jeremy Savage (PSY)** and the Arvada Instructor of the Year was **Lynne Albert (BIO)**. Over 2,151 degrees and certificates were awarded to graduates from summer 2021, fall 2021 and spring 2022. RRCC granted Associate of Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of General Studies degrees, plus certificates in dozens of fields at the ceremony.
- **FEATURED IN WESTWORD |**  
***Fine Art in Furniture: The Woodworking of Laura Kishimoto***



Laura is an instructor in the woodshop at Red Rocks Community College, where she continues to teach today, and where she is able to use her position to empower her female students in a traditionally male-dominated

discipline. "You often have to give them permission to take up space," she notes. "They'll be really nervous, doubting themselves and doubting their right to be there. You have to be like, "No, you're supposed to be here! Go try that

thing! I know it's scary, but just go try it." One of her first spec pieces after she moved to Colorado was "Yumi Chair II," a second rendition of the original prototype that she created while at RISD. It went to a show in Philadelphia called *Making a Seat at the Table: Women Transform Woodworking*, which was the first women-only woodworking show since the 1970s.

It's easy to create a false dichotomy between fine art and design, between form and function or even between art and science. But for Denver-based furniture and object designer **Laura Kishimoto**, it is the intersection and overlap of these worlds that allow her to create her bold, dramatic and beautifully organic pieces.

"I'm always looking for something that looks like it could have just appeared out of thin air," she says, "so it doesn't necessarily look like it was made, [but that] it just formed." This is certainly the case for her iconic "**Yumi Chair**," now a part of the permanent collection at the **Denver Art Museum's** newly renovated Martin building.

### **Transform our own workforce experience.**

- **Student Excellence Award Winners**



**Inclusive Excellence Champion, Marie Lim** is a student at Red Rocks Community College, Marie serves in many roles. She is the President of our Women in STEM club, Programming Assistant for the LSAMP STEM Scholars program, an Engineering Fellow, and is developing a chapter of the Rainbow Coalition. She is also working full-time towards her degrees in Hydrology & Chemical Engineering while raising a toddler. Marie is an immigrant of Korean descent who came to Colorado from

Hong Kong in the mid-1990s



**Rising Star, Jamie O'Reilly** came into Red Rocks in January of 2020 after experiencing homelessness with her two kids, realizing that she wanted a better future for her family and that becoming the first college graduate in her family, was the best way to do it. While at Red Rocks, she realized that helping marginalized people overcome barriers is her passion. Jamie has been focusing on finding herself and building community. She has an amazing talent for connecting people to people,

and people to resources. She brings a unique abstract thinking and problem-solving mindset to Red Rocks.



**Rising Star, Ania Poisson** returned to school part-time in Fall 2020 to pursue her long-time passion for visual arts at RRCC. She has been working toward an AAS degree in Professional Photography. She enjoys the engaging classes in Visual, Audio and Media Arts department as well as exchanging with her fellow students. In the fall of 2021, she started “The Red Rocks Foto Klub” to offer a platform for discussions and enriching activities for all students interested in visual

arts. With her European background she believes in indiscriminate and affordable higher education for everyone and is passionate about community colleges that make it possible for students from all walks of life to experience the amazing path of higher and lifelong education.



**PTK All-Colorado Academic Team, Lila Bear**, was raised in Memphis, TN before moving to Denver, CO to pursue stand-up comedy. Although comedy was fulfilling, she always knew she eventually wanted to return to college and eventually stand-up fell to the side as she focused on that. With the support of her partner, Keiton Smith, she managed to return to college after 10 years. She is graduating Red Rocks as a member of the honor

society Phi Theta Kappa and transferring to Metropolitan State University of Denver with dreams of pursuing a career in publishing. Currently, she does freelance editing on the side.



**Leisa Menchaca** returned to school in January of 2021 after leaving a career in corporate recruiting. She chose to attend Red Rocks because of their many programs that help marginalized groups of people. She has maintained a cumulative 4.0 GPA and will be attending University of Colorado Denver in the Fall. At UCD she will pursue a Bachelor of Philosophy. After her undergraduate degree Leisa will go onto graduate school.

She plans on pursuing a dual Philosophy Ph.D. and J.D. She hopes to work in administrative law drafting policies that will have a positive impact on society. Another team member of the **PTK All-Colorado Academic Team** is **Justina Ranneberger**. The State Student Advisory Council Representatives are **Nico Gambone** and **Paul Kooyman**.

### **Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.**

- **The Student Undergraduate Research Expo – May 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>!**

In person or virtually viewed student undergraduate research projects were provided for the campus. If any faculty or staff would like to help give feedback to students, you can fill out an evaluation in-person or virtually. Paper evaluations can be picked up at the check-in table on the west end of

the Bridge. Virtual evaluations must be submitted by Monday 5/9 end of day in order for them to be compiled and shared with our student researchers

**Sponsored by the Trefny Honors Program!**

**Poster Presentations on The Bridge**

10am-12pm & 12pm-2pm

Virtual Student Presentations:

- **On the Virtual Student Union!**  
Virtual Presentations Playlist #1  
Virtual Presentations Playlist #2
- In-Person Student LIVE Talks - Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>
- 12-12:15pm – Torreys Peak  
**Richel Peacock & Tenna Fehling: In pursuit of Hope: Search for Novel Antibiotics in Our Environment**
- 3-3:15pm – Grays Peak  
**Caleb Willman: Measuring Gravity at Different Elevations**
- 5-5:15pm – Grays Peak
- **Dan Volkel: Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals in Wastewater**
- 5:15-5:30pm – Grays Peak  
**Donna Hargroder: Wastewater Operator Internship at Metro Water Recovery**
- **Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**
- 12-12:15pm – Grays Peak  
**Dalilah Guerra: Parents Through an Ever-Growing Global Trend- Anime**
- 1-1:15pm – Grays Peak  
**Andrew Vu, Mariah Espinoza & Veronica Labra: Isolating Soil Bacteria Capable of Antibiotic Production**
- 1:15-1:30pm – Grays Peak  
**Margaret Devlin & Kelsey Park: Identification and Isolation of Unknown Soil Derived Microbes and Their Potential to Produce Novel Antibiotics**
- 1:30-1:45pm – Grays Peak  
**Rocks Community College Blood Drive**



Student Life Great Hall

Schedule your donation now: [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org)

Blood Drive Code: 0074

Vitalant urges all who are eligible to give blood to make an appointment now to give during April, National Donate Life Month. For a limited time, Vitalant donors can also find out their COVID-19 antibody status and potentially help immunocompromised COVID-19 patients.

Learn more at [vitalant.org/antibody](http://vitalant.org/antibody).

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

- **The Red Rocks Community College Foundation Board of Directors is thrilled to announce the winners of this year's Innovation Challenge grant funding.**

**AI Access and Equity**, submitted by Sara Fall and Adam Forland, was the first project funded at \$10,000. The grant will assist this collaborative faculty venture between the English and Mathematics departments to remove barriers of access for community college students and teachers who wish to investigate how different AI solutions will impact their teaching and learning. The team expects to draft an AI policy and make recommendations at Red Rocks to set us up to become a leader in responding to AI access and its impacts on higher education. And, no, this text was not written using AI. *But would you know if it was?*

- The second winning project, **Community Creative Writing Workshops**, was funded at \$6,000. Sandra Sajbel is once again engaging area communities that we serve by offering creating writing workshops. The program is an expansion of her 2019-2020 mini-grant project. She will be targeting and engaging adult learners throughout Red Rocks' service area with minimal cost workshops. The program exposes new populations to the Red Rocks faculty and classes with minimal time and monetary commitments to engage them in lifelong learning.

- **Other News**

Each month the RRCC Wellness - Fit Like a Fox committee supplies a variety of helpful wellness tips and ideas to lift the spirits of employees on a weekly basis. This was an idea that was birthed during the pandemic and enjoyed by all! Provided were calendars with (RAK) Random Acts of Kindness ideas on each day pertaining to work and RAK calendar for daily life in general. For May, all are invited to dress up their office doors to be judged by the president and other folks for prizes; butterflies and a basket full of flowers to color. Also, a cross word puzzle and many more items that are enjoyable to read or participate in. Examples below.

# MAY 2022

## INTEGRITY


CHOOSING COURAGE OVER COMFORT; CHOOSING WHAT IS RIGHT OVER FAST, FUN OR EASY; AND CHOOSING TO PRACTICE OUR VALUES RATHER THAN JUST PROFESSING THEM. —BRENÉ BROWN









Integrity is the foundation of trust and confidence. Doing what you say builds an environment of respect and mutual appreciation. Employees are the biggest asset of any organization and it's important that leaders recognize their value.

When leaders provide a space for employees to feel heard, respected, and safe, they not only encourage individuals to do their best, but provide a place for everyone to feel valued and trusted.

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MOTHER'S DAY Be responsible and caring.	8	9	10	11	12	13	14																																																																																																																	
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Admit your mistakes and ask for forgiveness.	Do not gossip or talk badly about others.	Be upfront with important information.	Own up to your mistakes.	Give credit where it's due.	Never share a secret someone shared with you in confidence.	Keep your promises.																																																																																																																		
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Follow the rules.	Do what you say.	Keep your employees informed.	Lead by example.	Use materials for work and not personal use.	Give respect to everyone.	Stand up for what's right.																																																																																																																		
29	MEMORIAL DAY	30	31	1	<table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="7">APRIL</td> <td colspan="7">JUNE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>H</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>H</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td> <td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> </tr> </table>		APRIL							JUNE							S	M	T	W	T	H	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	H	F	S	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Treat everyone with respect.	Model positive behavior and habits.	Don't procrastinate.																																																																																																																						

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1 Ask your neighbors if they need you to pick up groceries while you shop.	2 Write a sweet, encouraging note and put it in your child's lunch box or under their pillow.	3 Pay the toll for the driver behind you.	4 Star Wars Day Treat the children in your life to a sci-fi movie today.	5 Cinco de Mayo Invite friends over for dinner to celebrate Mexican culture and heritage today.	6  Plan a family camping trip.	7 Free Comic Book Day Buy the child in your life their favorite comic book.																																																																																																																		
8 Mother's Day  Gift your mother a scrapbook of shared favorite family memories.	9 Organize a "Charity Day" at work.	10  Slip a \$10 bill in with a random box of diapers at the store.	11 Eat What you Want Day Eat what you want today and savor every bite.	12 International Nurses Day  Take flowers or treats to the nurses' station at your nearest hospital.	13 Friday the 13th Spend time in nature and recharge by going on a hike.	14  Watch the sunset on a hammock with someone special.																																																																																																																		
15 Chocolate Chip Cookies Day Deliver homemade cookies to a neighbor.	16 FREE DAY! Get creative! Make up your own random act of kindness today!	17 Donate to an endangered species charity.	18 No Dirty Dishes Day Show your appreciation by doing a household chore that your partner normally does.	19 Bring gently used clothing and footwear to your local donation station.	20 Tip your waitstaff generously with a note thanking them for their great service. 	21 Set aside some time today for self-care.																																																																																																																		
22 Buy a Musical Instrument Day Commit to learning how to play a new musical instrument this year.	23 Use reusable grocery bags and hand a few extras out to other shoppers.	24 Plan to attend a cultural event in your community.	25 Africa Day Take a long walk on the beach or a quiet trail on a sunny day.	26 Put together a self-care basket for a stressed-out friend or relative.	27 Sunscreen Day Purchase small sunscreen bottles and pass them out to friends/coworkers to use this summer. 	28 Invite a friend, neighbor, or co-worker home for dinner.																																																																																																																		
29 Shop small. Support your local mom and pop shops.	30 Memorial Day  Have a yard sale and donate the profits to your favorite charity.	31 Volunteer with your local fire station or rescue team.	1	2	<table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="7">APRIL</td> <td colspan="7">JUNE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>H</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>H</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td> <td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>1</td><td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> </tr> </table>		APRIL							JUNE							S	M	T	W	T	H	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	H	F	S	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Visit [www.randomactsofkindness.org](http://www.randomactsofkindness.org) for more kindness ideas. © The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation



## FIT LIKE A FOX – EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

WEEK OF MAY 2, 2022 – MAY IS NATIONAL ASPARAGUS MONTH

MONDAY – Take on the week with these confidence boosters

TUESDAY – National Teacher Appreciation Day! Thank you to all the teachers out there – you impact some many lives every day! Is there a teacher that has made an impact on your life?

WEDNESDAY – Simple mindset shift that may help you get better sleep

THURSDAY – 7 reasons to eat more asparagus

✓ Tonight from 5:30-6:30pm **FREE virtual YOGA** with Shanti

Join by the meeting link.

<https://cccs-meeting.webex.com/cccs-meetings/j.php?MTID=m6736daf91ab6d2b968577eb8dbd8d5a0>

Join by meeting

- ❖ ARVADA Campus – Yoga meet-up – Join Stephanie Studebaker from 5:30-6:30pm.

FRIDAY – May is National Strawberry Month – Have some fresh strawberries with at least one meal today. Strawberries are low in sugar and are good sources of vitamins C & K and packed with antioxidants. Studies have shown that strawberries (and other berries) can help protect your heart, increase HDL (good) cholesterol, lower blood pressure and guard against cancer.



It is the Foundation Board of Directors honor to announce the **2022 Mike Leprino Family Foundation Endowed Teaching Chair winner, Toni Nicholas!**

Toni joined Red Rocks Community College as an adjunct faculty member in 2009. She is currently Associate Professor in RRCC's History Program. In addition to her strong portfolio submission, the selection committee stated that Toni stimulated conversations and made complex issues approachable to learners. In addition to the classroom, Toni has been active in numerous College initiatives since 2009 including her recent work on the CCCS Teaching Excellence Equity grant and acting as a co-sponsor in welcoming holocaust survivor, Maud Dahme, to campus.

Our faculty are the heart of our work here at Red Rocks. We could certainly see that in the students' faces when we surprised Toni with the award. As one student said about Toni, "I learned more in your class than I have in my entire life. It was challenging for me (to say the least) and it changed my awareness of life and history...I am proud to say I survived your class. I will never forget you." – Sara Mitchell, Women in US History course feedback. Toni will be awarded \$22,500 over the next three years with salary enhancements and professional development funds. We would also like to extend our congratulations to our two runner ups: **Tracy Gray (Biology)** and **Valerie Paulson (Physician Assistant)**. Each runner up will



also receive a \$2,500 professional development stipend to continue providing exceptional educational experiences for our students. The Foundation's Board of Directors is extremely proud of all our faculty members and the teaching excellence demonstrated by all three finalists. Each walked away from the morning of classroom time feeling confident that our RRCC students are receiving a high-level education, due to the passion and commitment of our Faculty.

