



FRCC September 2021 Board Report

Andrew Dorsey

President

Transform the student experience.

In an effort to support equity and remove barriers for students, the FRCC Math 120 team worked over the last several months to compile [open educational resources](#) (OER) for all of the college's math 120 sections. Almost all sections have now moved to "low textbook cost"—meaning that students will pay less than \$25 for their course materials. (Math textbooks typically cost more than \$100 per student.) The team worked on this project with the help of an internal FRCC grant. Similar OER work is also underway in several other disciplines, and the biology team has already created zero-cost courses resources for several courses.

Several FRCC students participated the **Summer Undergraduate Research Experience** through a National Science Foundation [LSAMP grant](#) (Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation). The grant was sponsored by Community College of Aurora and covers all the metro Denver community colleges. FRCC's navigator for the grant provided 10 STEM students—all from underserved communities—opportunities to participate in different research projects. She also organized a presentation event for the students to exhibit posters describing their research experience, giving them a chance to make valuable connections and learn about real work in their field of choice.

A member of FRCC's Admissions & Outreach team got to meet Joseph "Joey" Huneycutt in 2020 while doing an outreach presentation at a local **Alternative Sentencing Department (ASD)**. An ex-offender, Joey was excited to learn about degrees that he could complete in two years and then be off to a rewarding career in cloud computing. He said his body was worn out from working in construction and it was time for a change. After completing his time at ASD, he enrolled at [The Learning Source at FRCC](#), and has just completed his GED. He credits his instructors and the staff there for their unwavering support and confidence in him. Joey was nominated and selected to receive the Wolf Pack \$500 scholarship for this semester. He plans to pursue an Associate of Applied Science degree in cloud computing and virtualization.



Joey (center) with FRCC staff members Margie Wagner (left) and Dion Duran (right)

Transform our own workforce experience.

The FRCC student communications and marketing teams partnered to create a [video](#) featuring two of our nursing faculty members sharing their expertise and thoughts on the **COVID-19 vaccine**, its safety and its effectiveness. Both teachers spoke about the benefits of receiving the vaccine—and encouraged students to consider getting vaccinated at one of the college's [back-to-school vaccine clinics](#). The video is being shared with students and the community through FRCC's website and social media pages.

Safe. Easy. Effective.
Help protect your pack.



Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.

Based on the recent [engineering pathway agreement](#) between CCCS and the Colorado School of Mines, FRCC is introducing its new **Associate of Engineering Science (AES)** degree. This will be a general engineering degree and the first of its kind in the system. Faculty member and Engineering Coordinator Christy Gomez worked with the FRCC team, CCCS and Colorado School of Mines to create the degree and the systemwide articulation agreement to support students from across the state. The degree should be available to FRCC students in summer of 2022 once HLC approval is received.

FRCC's Admissions & Outreach team hosted the first-ever Northern Colorado **Veterans Resource Fair** to connect veterans and their families with resources available to support them in the area. "There's a lot of help available in our communities for veterans," said FRCC [Veterans Support](#) Advisor Chuck Crews. "We gathered a lot of those partners together in one place to make an easy one-stop-shop for vets and their families to find out more and get some guidance." The event featured numerous agencies that serve veterans—giving them the chance to learn more about:

- Employment
- Housing
- Health and wellness
- Post-secondary education options
- Family resources
- PTSD resources
- Substance abuse support and resources



The event wrapped up with a \$500 scholarship drawing. The lucky winner is a vet tech student at FRCC, and she's a family member of a Vietnam War era disabled veteran. She hopes to become a veterinarian through CSU.



Faculty member Blake Welch and two of his **graphic design students** just completed the 2020-2021 Annual Report for [Mental Health Colorado](#). The organization advocates for mental health, working to end the shame and discrimination faced by individuals who seek help, and ensuring they can access the resources they need. Vincent Atchity, president and CEO of the organization, describes the students as “incredibly talented” and “exceptional” in their professionalism. “The responsiveness and professional quality of their work is better than many of the seasoned designers we have worked with,” he said. Mental Health Colorado has worked with Professor Welch and his students for the last three years to produce their annual reports, providing the students a great opportunity to get real-world experience.



In spite of COVID disruptions, the **concurrent enrollment** team at our Westminster Campus managed to increase concurrent enrollment from 1,723 students (in fall 2019) to 2,059 (in spring 2021). These students are taking nearly 10,000 credits with a pass rate above 90%. In the same period, the number of sections offered through our high school partners grew from 86 to 121— from the Westminster campus alone. High schools are poised to increase their concurrent enrollment sections again in spring 2022, if COVID has abated.

FRCC has been awarded a renewed National Science Foundation grant to continue our **Geo-Launchpad program**, which gives students [opportunities for paid internships in the geosciences](#). The program provides students a pathway to careers in science, engineering or technology—and is dedicated to increasing the diversity of students entering the geosciences. The Geo-Launchpad initiative is the result of cooperation between FRCC and [UNAVCO](#)—a non-profit consortium in Boulder that facilitates geoscience research and education. The renewed grant will continue Geo-Launchpad's excellent work with additional focus on faculty mentoring. The program is being expanded to include New Mexico's and Wyoming's community colleges. The total NSF grant amount is \$337,349 (with \$135,054 of that funding going to FRCC).



Geo-Launchpad

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

Biology faculty member Ann Riedl recently had a paper published in [Life Sciences Education](#) in which she demonstrates how **active learning** courses in first-semester general biology at FRCC's Westminster Campus improved student performance in subsequent biology classes—and increased graduation rates. Active learning has been shown to improve student learning and engagement in many four-year institutions; however, large-scale studies on the efficacy of active learning in community colleges are lacking. In [her study](#), Ann investigated the effects of active learning by designing and implementing a [flipped active-learning model](#) in the course. The study included 33 sections of general biology class, 16 instructors and ~800 students. Ann's review found that students in active-learning sections performed significantly higher on common exam questions than their peers in traditional sections (which used primarily didactic pedagogy). Although students from the active-learning sections had similar pass rates and grade distributions, they passed subsequent biology courses with significantly higher grades. The three-year graduation rate for students from active-learning sections was also significantly higher. These findings suggest that a flipped active-learning pedagogy is more effective than traditional didactic methods for teaching general biology concepts, and that the improvement in student learning may lead to higher graduation rates.

Staff at FRCC's **Brighton Center** this summer hosted college information nights (both in person and live streamed) in order to raise community awareness of our fall course offerings. The events focused on application, placement and enrollment processes, as well as degree and certificate options, financial aid and scholarships. The Brighton Center also hosted four open-house events to assist students with enrollment, advising and registration.