



# President's Report

Dr. Mordecai Brownlee

August 2024 | Issue Number 6

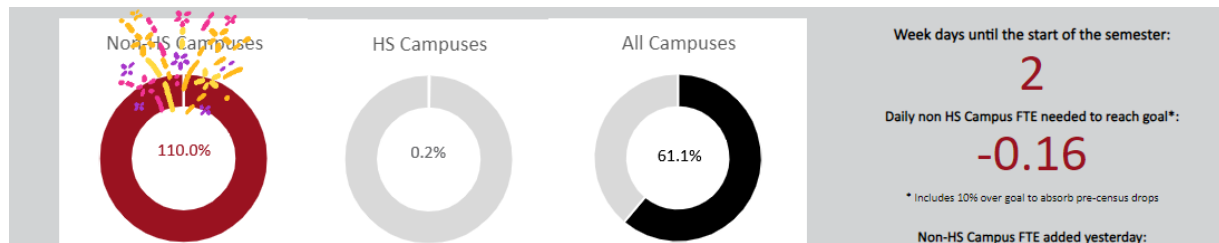
*The Community College of Aurora (CCA) provides high-quality instruction and student support services to Aurora and Denver, Colorado. With a vision to aspire to be a college where every student succeeds, CCA is the most diverse college in the State of Colorado. Focused on creating social and economic mobility for its students, the college offers courses on two (2) campuses, online, and through its high school concurrent enrollment programs. For more information, visit [www.ccaurora.edu](http://www.ccaurora.edu).*

## Transform the student experience

The CCA Enrollment Management Team is piloting a one-stop model for all EM services. Financial Aid, Registration & Records, and Advising all have a uniform check-in process. This model is being piloted in an effort to improve customer service with students and parents/guardians and to increase our own efficiency as a team. Results so far as of August 16:

- Students can now move from application to testing/course placement evaluation, advised, registered, and FAFSA completed in roughly 2hrs.
- Longest amount of time is spent in advising for new, first-time students.
- Better operational efficiency for staff and students.
- Wait times across the division are down from ~40 min per department to less than 15 min even during peak registration times.
- Fewer students returning for unmet needs after being helped.
- More direct engagement with students at every potential barrier.
- Greater ability to troubleshoot a student with tech or information issues as a team.
- Warm handoffs from each department so that students know who they will be speaking with next.

We have officially reached 110% of our non-campus enrollment goals for fall 2024 as of August 15. This goal is an important milestone as 10% is our cushion to help ensure that we can sustain any drops in FTE from processes like Drop for Non-Payment or Drop for No-Show. This also covers things like late drops from students.



CCA is reintroducing the “drop for non-payment” practice. We did away with this practice during Covid because we were able to pay for overdue balances with HEERF funding. Now that we no longer have these funds, we need to return to “drop for nonpayment” to mitigate sending students bills to collections. There’s a strong correlation between DFNP students and Drop for No-Show Students (DFNS). DFNS usually accounts for 6% of total student attrition.

### Waitlists

CCA will have waitlist movement this year. Where a student was dropped for not paying, we will often have a student ready to slide into that seat.

### Special Student Outreach:

CCA hosted a virtual re-registration session for all students who did get dropped but who still want to attend CCA in fall 2024. Students that are on waitlists are being invited in to work with Enrollment Management staff to claim their waitlist seat. This can be done fully online.

### First Date for DFNP for fall (8/15):

- 504 students were dropped for non-payment.
- 144 students moved off of waitlists and into classes.
- DFNP represented about 12% of our total FTE for fall 2024.
- Enrollment Management so far has reported only had one student reach out because they were dropped in error due to a coding issue.

### What Happens Next (8/16):

- EM opened at 7:30 this morning and we had several students waiting already to get help with re-registering and setting up a payment plan.
- EM has sent communication to all 504 students inviting them to a virtual registration help day on Saturday (8/17).
- Students continue to register.

CCA Enrollment Management partnered with Concurrent Enrollment to bring in 8 high school counselors over the summer to help students bridge to college from high school. The counselors worked in a part-time capacity all summer.

For academic year 2023-2024, the CCA Foundation provided over \$633,000 in scholarships to CCA students, with an average scholarship award of \$1,685 per student. 77% of scholarship recipients identified as students of color and 74% as first-generation college students. Scholarship recipients averaged a 3.25 Grade Point Average (GPA). Since Fall 2017, within two years of receiving their first scholarship, 84% of scholarship recipients graduated, transferred or were still enrolled at CCA.

The CCA COSI team received a 10-year impact award on June 12 at the annual COSI Symposium held in Pueblo, CO for being a part of the COSI community since its inception in 2014.

The Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions, Title V Asegurando Grant Program is nearing the end of its 5-year grant period on September 30, 2024. Due to Covid's impact on spending in 2020 & 2021, there remains funding to implement program activities. CCA will be applying for a No Cost Extension to continue to implement Grant Activity; 2) Develop and implement a range of institutionalized professional development opportunities to provide instructors and faculty with the knowledge, skills and resources to use culturally responsive pedagogy to improve learning outcomes for all student populations. If approved, we will continue to implement this activity through the new Teaching and Learning innovation Hub through September 30, 2025.

TRIO SSS and TRIO ESL grant program are also in their last year of grant funding. Both grants are scheduled to end on August 30, 2025. Therefore, on July 15, 2024 we completed new grant submissions for TRIO SSS and TRIO ESL to the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE): Federal Programs Student Support Services (SSS) Program. The new competitive preference priority activities are workforce -related requiring students to participate in internships, apprenticeships and career-readiness workshops. If funded, CCA will have five more years of funding for each program in the amount of 2.6 million total for both programs.

On August 8, TRIO kicked off the upcoming Fall semester with the annual TRIO Family Kick-Off, welcoming back our TRIO students. This year, 43 students, family members, and staff joined us as we showcased Career Support Services and engaged in a financial literacy simulation game. While much of our programming focuses on activities outlined in the grant proposal, their primary goal is to create a supportive environment where students feel welcomed and connected. Information was shared on the student support services available to students and the event concluded with a hearty meal and a chance for students to connect with their advisors.

Innovative Arts is excited to extend the invite to the CCA community to participate in the Fall 2024 Innovative Arts creative projects and productions. This year, the program will be launching collaborative offerings in Film, Theatre, Music, Art, and Graphic Design. Students and teams are encouraged to get involved and reach out with any questions or ideas for collaboration. These include:

- **Live and digital production align** for an Innovative Arts Production ***America's Dream: A Musical Revue*** featuring CCA student original writing, musical theatre song & dance, digital production elements & more in the style of a Broadway style revue themed around "The American Dream." Imagine live performance inside a green screen in our [new virtual volume channel](#), "Innovation Station!"
- CCA's Innovative Arts is teaming up with the ***Denver Center for the Performing Arts*** to prepare students to audition and interview to be a part of their **immersive entertainment** event coming this fall, [Monopoly Lifesized](#). Our students will have an opportunity to take a workshop with Charlie Miller, Executive Director of Off Center at DCPA to learn and develop their skills to interview for a job to be a part of this innovative event in our community.
- Open Auditions for CCA's Cinematic Arts productions at the end of August. This is open to all CCA faculty, staff, and students.

Student Leadership and Development Efforts include:

- Creating a resource wall that will directly focus on career readiness. This will be accessible to students without scheduled meeting and will have resources to assist with resume revamp, interview tips, cover letter guidance, and more.
- Expanding SLO training to develop and streamline processes. They will revisit and increase SOPs for event scheduling on campus.
- Involvement in the graduation survey in hopes to collect for data about what our alumni our doing after CCA.

Student Leadership and Development Accomplishments include:

- Welcoming 99 guests to Harkins Theatre to watch the premier of Inside Out 2 at our annual Summer Movie Night event on June 14. This event allowed students to bring their family and friends to enjoy a summer evening at the movies.
- Career Closet creation for students to access for professional clothing for interviews. They currently have two garment racks full and it's continuing to grow.
- Partnered with the City of Aurora this summer for the Kayaking with a Naturalist program, and continued to expand partnerships with external groups to increase civic engagement (Chamber of Commerce, COPA, A Little Help, and more). 380 folx participated in summer campus events/programming.
- Overhauled the Fox Times Newsletter by including a career readiness section and added a parent students resources page. We saw a dramatic increase in reader engagement with the newsletter (from 4-6% to 20-25%).
- Completed their annual report and served 268 students this grant term (155 total credentials, 131 obtained a credential, 107 students had appointments with Career Readiness this summer).

Student Advocacy Efforts include:

- In the process of creating Foxy's Resource Room. This room will hold basic needs materials for both students and staff including: Snack Station: allows visitors access to 2-3 snacks for free so they can be fueled for learning; Care Cabinet: allows visitors access to hygiene products, de-stress items, safety supplies (Narcan), and safe sex supplies; Period Pantry: allows visitors access to care items (chocolate, tea, heating pads, etc.) and monthly menstruation packs with 20 tampons and/or pads; Community Refrigerator: This is a food recovery space for students to receive free meals that are recovered from CCA events and our Cafeteria.
- Currently re-working Emergency Funds Process to ensure consistency and equity across campus locations, while minimizing barriers to student success.

Student Advocacy Accomplishments include:

- OSA Team expanded to 5 full-time members.
- The team strengthened partnerships with CTE Faculty & Staff and Innovative Arts Faculty & Staff.
- Fostered new partnerships in the CCA Community that increased access to students: Benefits in Action, Habitual Roots, Canine Partners of the Rockies, Ambassador Foundation, Justice Necessary, RTD.

- Created data analytics of Maxient and BetterMynd data for CCA leadership to access.
- OSA supported a total of 346 referred student cases in AY 23-24.
- Gained 81 new CCA student users on BetterMynd.
- We received a grant award from Food Recovery Network to support our community refrigerator and Farms to Families Markets to distribute locally grown produce to students for free.
- We have received a grant award from RTD to support public transportation of students, and we have 800 RTD booklets with 10 tickets each to award students.

Academic Success and Instructional Effectiveness have partnered together have partnered together to host Tech Talks at the CentreTech Hub, which will take place every weekday from August 19th – August 30th at noon. In September, the talks will go to weekly on Tuesdays at 2pm. Each talk will feature a quick info session on a different topic and hands-on coaching from experts. The sessions are designed for audiences such as students, faculty and instructors, and staff. Topics include AI discussions, developing tech skills, and coaching on various Faculty and Instructor programs, such as Yuja, Hypothesis and Panorama.

In early June, CCA IT invited the Academy and students to a general classroom technology preview. The technology, to be implemented, is for most of our classrooms - all the general use classrooms where 90% of our classes are taught. There were interactive demonstrations and Q & A's where attendees were asked to provide feedback to IT. Students were very excited about the new technology as well as many Academy members. The technology preview included the following upgrades, just to name a few:

- A trackable/panning camera system for Hyflex teaching.
- Large interactive (meaning you can write on them) teaching monitors that could replace the need for the overhead projector facilitating a brighter screen and allowing you complete use of the whiteboards and monitor at the same time.
- A confidence monitor in the back of the room that will allow faculty and instructors to walk around and still see their PowerPoint but not have to look back at the whiteboard. This also provides students with different visual points across the classroom to follow along, so they aren't always having to turn around.
- New, large whiteboards that will allow for a MUCH broader expansion of writing and collaboration space.
- A wireless projection system so the instructor or students can wirelessly project or connect to the monitors for presentations without plugs if they bring your own devices.



---

## Transform our own work experience

The Division of Strategic Communications and Alumni Engagement has had a change in leadership and a reorganization. Courtney Butler has been promoted in to the position of Director of Strategic Communications & Special Initiatives. This new role was created to continue improvement in streamlining processes, to conduct project management and improve overall effectiveness in both the Division of Strategic Communications and President Office Special projects as assigned. Also, with in the Strategic Communications Division the position of Strategic Communications of Lead Creative manager and filled by Zach Mills. This role reports to the Director and will provide supervision over the personnel and creative assets to continue brand management and market saturation. This division now reports to the President's Chief of Staff and VP of DEI, Dr. Angela Marquez.

Student Leadership and Development is currently hiring a CTE Career Coach (Perkins funded). They're hoping to have this role filled by the end of August if all goes well.

Student advocacy is currently hiring a new coach position. The title of this position is Student Advocacy Coach of Special Academic Needs. They're hoping to have this role filled by the end of August if all goes well.

Enrollment Management has hired our first CRM Manager (Emily Funk) in late May/early June, allowing us to better utilize EAB Navigate and other crucial communication platforms.

CCA will be transitioning to two start-dates per month for full-time employees as the college continues to standardize the onboarding experience for new team members. This will take effect in September with start dates being the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, unless the day falls on a weekend in which the next business day will be the start date.

---

## Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships

As of 6/30/2024, CCA and the CCA Foundation have secured \$16.4 million toward its \$18 million goal (92%) for the Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies.

[Faris Machinery](#) has pledged an additional \$25,000 for the new Center for STEM, Power Mechanics and Applied Technologies building with the initial \$12,500 paid in June.

The CCA Foundation partners with the Aurora Fitzsimons Rotary Club to create two new scholarships. The Aurora Fitzsimons Rotary Paralegal scholarship will support multiple paralegal students each year. The Karl Van Etten Legacy Scholarship, named in memory of a CCA faculty member, will support multiple business students each year.

On August 16, CCA and the City of Aurora's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs hosted the Partnerships for Success: The Future of Work event at the CentreTech campus. Dr. Brownlee joined a group of esteemed panelists in a spirited discussion of helping underserved communities access high-quality education through resources such as the General Education Development (GED). The group focused on communities such as non-English speaking people who may not have equitable access to not only education, but also food resources, transportation, financial assistance, technology and more. Panelists work in a variety of industries, including education, non-profit, and consultation. Click [HERE](#) to view the photos from the event.

Governor Polis officially signed HB 23-1246 into law. This means CCA now has \$2,500,000 to launch our associate degree in nursing (ADN). This new degree will be a major win for our students and community as the eastern metro area will now have an accessible 2-year nursing program. Moreover, this will join alongside our new Behavioral Health department which will focus on a stackable-credential pathway allowing students to focus on professions such as: patient navigator, peer support specialist, behavioral health assistant, and addiction recovery assistant.

CCA and Colorado School of Mines are partnering for a new program that puts engineering students on a direct pathway to a bachelor's degree from Mines after completing a two-year degree at CCA. Participating students will begin the program by pursuing an Associate of Engineering Science (AES) degree at CCA, and those credits will directly transfer toward a

bachelor's degree at Mines. Students accepted into the Mines Academy at CCA will receive additional academic support to ensure their success at CCA and Mines. This partnership is just one-way CCA is taking steps to ensure it continues to be a leader in STEM education. Construction on the new Center for STEM, Power Mechanics and Applied Technologies is expected to be completed in the fall of 2025.



The Rocky Mountain Industrial Assessment Center (RMIAC) Summer Internship program for Community College of Aurora (CCA) students resulted from collaboration between CCA and the Colorado School of Mines, where the RMIAC is housed. The 10-week program, which was supported with SPARC (Strengthening Photovoltaic and Renewable Careers) Workforce Development funds, involved 9 CCA students who were trained on topics related to improving energy efficiency in commercial and industrial buildings. The internship students learned to identify areas where businesses could implement green energy technologies, reduce energy waste, and decrease energy costs. Students received hands-on experience in data collection and client communications by performing on-site assessments at industrial buildings located along the Front Range and Western Slope of Colorado, including an industrial manufacturing plant, a multi-tenant commercial building, and a wastewater treatment facility. The group also received a tour of the construction site for the new CCA Center for STEM, Power Mechanics, and Applied Technologies. The internship concluded on August 2 with student presentations (attended by Dr. Brownlee, CCA staff, and Colorado School of Mines faculty, staff and students) where they described the internship experience, the specific energy efficiency area studied, and their energy recommendations for the industrial or commercial client.



The Engineering Summer Bridge program concluded on August 8, and this is part of the Department of Defense-funded Engineering Momentum program. This is a 4-week program designed to give CCA students a boost in college math and engineering skills, and this summer 21 students participated in the program at the Lowry Campus at CCA. The program included



presentations and workshops on career exploration and skill building, a math class designed to improve college-level math preparation, and an engineering class. Successful outcomes from the program include all participating students seeing improvement in math assessment exam results and high-quality student presentations on the group engineering projects. The poster presentation event was attended by representatives from the Department of Defense along with CU Boulder and CU Denver. Student teams worked on projects to enhance electric mobility, prolong strawberry shelf life, and decrease household water usage with an under-counter treatment and recycling system.



---

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

CCA received a received a clean bill of health and accreditation reaffirmation. After a rigorous assessment and evaluation process, Community College of Aurora (CCA) received a letter from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) formally notifying the College of accreditation reaffirmation by the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) of the HLC at its meeting on June 4, 2024. The IAC continued the accreditation of CCA with the next reaffirmation of accreditation in 2033-2034.

Over the next academic year, Community College of Aurora's (CCA) 2019-2024 Strategic Plan will expire. The College will spend this next academic year building its new 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. For this process of designing and implementing a new 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, the College is seeking a third-party consultant to assist the College in gathering internal and external community input, planning, and implementation. The College received 24 proposals from consultants through the Colorado Vendor Self Services system. The proposals have been reviewed and four proposals were selected to move forward to meet with leadership members. The College will select the consultant by mid-August.

Strategic Communications won several [Telly Awards](#): 1 gold, 1 silver, and 2 bronze. Review links below for more details on individual awards.

- [Gold](#)
- [Silver](#)
- [Bronze 1](#)
- [Bronze 2](#)

The Access and Accessibility Project at the CentreTech campus is still in progress. Work began the first week of May and this project will ensure that CCA is ADA compliant and that our facilities are accessible for everyone. All exterior ramps and rails are complete. Restroom modifications will be completed by Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. Two of the three sections of handicap accessible parking lot areas will be complete by Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. The third section will be started Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. Project should be complete by the end of September.

CCA continues to work with JLL on finalizing the lease agreement for a third campus location, the new Center for Nursing, Health Sciences and Public Service. The center will feature nursing, emergency medical technician, paramedic, behavioral health, respiratory therapy, phlebotomy, and other health sciences credentials, and is slated to open by Fall 2025. Once finalized, CCA plans to coordinate a viewing for the community to see the space.

The construction of the Center for STEM, Power Mechanics and Applied Technologies is progressing well. CCA held a beam signing ceremony on August 12. The actual beam is scheduled to be installed the week of August 19. Click [HERE](#) to view photos from the beam signing ceremony, and click [HERE](#) to view our Foxy Focus feature.

The Division of Operations submitted their annual request in July for controlled maintenance funding to the state. Key projects in this request include the Fine Arts Roof Replacement and Safety and Security Upgrades. These projects are critical to ensuring the safety and functionality of our campus infrastructure. This is in addition to the capital construction requests that were submitted to CCCS and CDHE earlier, with the main request focused on remodeling the 3rd floor of the classroom building. For both capital construction and controlled maintenance requests, we will not know if we receive funding until this time next year.