

President's SBCCOE Report

Dr. Lance Bolton | Pikes Peak State College | November 2024

Section One | Transform the Student Experience

PPSC Unveils Land Acknowledgment



Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) concluded its Inaugural Celebration of Native American Heritage Month by unveiling its Land Acknowledgment statement during a ceremony that celebrated Native American and Indigenous traditions, stories, music, dance, crafts and cuisine.

When asked about creating a PPSC Land Acknowledgment, President Lance Bolton wanted to ensure the PPSC acknowledgement was rooted in awareness and action.

A college committee was created to work on the statement. Nearly a year later the statement was shared, one that honors the ancestral relationship between Native Americans and the lands PPSC occupies. It also serves as an important reminder of the injustices faced by Native Americans, and a declaration of the PPSC commitment to promote respect and reparative actions.

“In creating our land acknowledgment, we have become more educated and connected to the history and current realities of our Native American and Indigenous neighbors,” Bolton said. “In doing so, we launched our First Nations Promise Scholarship Program, and we continue to develop outreach and supports.”



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Canvas Credit Union Funds PPSC Food Pantry



Canvas Credit Union has partnered with Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) and will fully fund the college's food pantry operations to help eradicate one of the largest barriers students face, food insecurity. Canvas Credit Union generously committed to fund the food pantries, located at the Centennial Campus, Rampart Range Campus and Downtown Campus, for the next five years.

More than 50 community members participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Canvas Community Food Pantry, which was featured on KOAA: [Pikes Peak State College partners with credit union to fund the school's campus food pantries](#), and KRDO: [Canvas Credit Union opens food bank at Pikes Peak State College](#).



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Section Two | Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

PPSC Employees Honored by Mayor



Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) employees Hitcel Hernandez and Kandy Ruiz were recently honored by Colorado Springs Mayor Yemi Mobalade, during the 2024 Mayor's Young Leader Awards.

Hitcel was honored for her leadership of the college's Hispanic Heritage Festival and Kandy was recognized for her innovation in growing the PPSC Food Pantry, recently renamed the Canvas Community Food Pantry. Hitcel and Kandy were two of five local young leaders recognized for their outstanding work in the education sector. The annual awards program recognizes professionals ages 40 and under who step up to current challenges and serve as leaders in Colorado Springs through their work and volunteerism.

Employee Appreciation Week Promotes Self-Care



PPSC celebrated employees during the Second Annual Employee Appreciation Week, which focused on self-care. Employees participated in Employee Appreciation Breakfasts presented by Canvas Credit Union, chair massages, cookie breaks, and Mental Health and Mindfulness Workshops.

The week concluded recognizing the Annual Awardees: Faculty of the Year, Amy Reed, Dental Assistant; Instructor of the Year, Anita Marve, Early Childhood Education; APT of the Year, Maria delaCruz, Associate Dean, BTPS; Classified of the Year, Laura Genschorck, HRS Benefits Coordinator.

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PPSC Selected to Participate in AI Readiness Consortium



Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) was selected to participate in the [Complete College America AI Readiness Consortium](#), in Indianapolis, on Nov. 18 – 20.

The program worked to create collaboration that broadens equitable access to experiential learning opportunities, while working to embed artificial intelligence education competencies into academic programs, providing needed skills for the most at-risk workers in industries/roles that will be disrupted by AI technology.

PPSC President Dr. Lance Bolton was joined by PPSC employees: Cyrille Parent, Chief Technology Officer; Cynthia Krutsinger, Dean of Online Learning; and Lisa Macedo, English Faculty. Together they worked toward developing AI experiential learning competencies with employers and AI expert consultants. They also learned about integrating AI-focused work-based learning projects into five courses.

Only four other colleges were invited to participate in this event: Atlanta Metropolitan State College, City Colleges of Chicago, City University of New York, and Cuyahoga Community College.

Kudos to PPSC Faculty

Congratulations to Dr. Kimberly Whitten-Chung, Director of Operations at the Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) Center for Healthcare Education and Simulation (CHES) and her colleagues on the publication of their article, *Caring for Transgender and Gender Diverse Prehospital Patients: A NAEMSP Position Statement and Resource Document*.

This important work advances understanding and best practices in prehospital care for transgender and gender-diverse patients.

Kudos are also in order for PPSC Computer Science Faculty member, Monica Novack. Her instruction, leadership and mentorship helped two teams of students' secure awards at the 2024 Ethics Case Competition, which is part of the UCCS Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Collegiate Program. These two teams earned second and third place finishes at the competition.

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Section Three | Create Education Without Barriers Through Transformational Partnerships

D2 & PPSC Create First Publicly Funded Scholarship



Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) and Harrison School District 2 (D2) are blazing a trail forward.

This month D2 passed a Mill Levy Override (MLO) which will not only sustain the D2 Dakota Promise Program, but transforms the program into America's first publicly funded, first-dollar, promise scholarship program, the Harrison Promise.

The D2 Dakota Promise Program, started in 2020, was privately funded and a last-dollar scholarship program. It filled any gap between a student's cost of

attendance and their Pell Grant. Ultimately the program helped increase D2 students' attendance at PPSC by 76%.

The new Harrison Program is a first-dollar program, meaning D2 students – who are mostly low income – can keep their Pell dollars to cover housing, food, transportation, etc. Leadership at D2 and PPSC expect college going rates to PPSC from D2 will double or triple because of the expansion of this program.

The passage of D2's ballot measure will also support competitive pay for D2 teachers and enhance educational resources across all D2 schools. The school district had not passed a MLO in 20 years, however, this measure passed 55% to 45%.



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PPSC & UCCS Launch into Space



In a remarkable achievement for student-led research, a collaborative experiment from the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) and Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) has successfully launched to the International Space Station (ISS). The ISS launch is the first time UCCS has launched a satellite into orbit in more than 20 years and a first for PPSC.

The student team—UCCS Aerospace Engineering student Luke Davis, UCCS Mechanical Engineering student Noah Grebe, and PPSC Engineering alumni Blake MacDonald— along with UCCS's Dr. Lynnane George and PPSC's Dr. McKenna Lovejoy flew to Florida to be present for the launch.

The experiment, titled *Calcium Sulfate Crystal Growth in Microgravity*, explores innovative applications for crystal development in space, with implications for sustainability in long-term missions and beyond.

The project is part of the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP), an initiative of the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESS). The experiment was aboard SpaceX's Commercial Resupply Service (CRS-31) mission, launched on a Falcon 9 rocket on Nov. 4, 2024, from the historic Launch Complex 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. The spacecraft docked with the ISS the following morning, Nov. 5, 2024, at 9:52 a.m., over Southeast Russia, where the experiment will remain in orbit for four to six weeks.

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Section Four | Redefine Our Value Proposition Through Accessibility, Affordability, Quality, Accountability, Resource Development, and Operational Excellence

PPSC Students, Faculty & Staff Participate in Interdisciplinary Simulation



On Nov. 15, Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) nursing, EMS, dental assisting, communication, and American Sign Language students and faculty held a full-scale interdisciplinary simulation exercise to bring the classroom to life. PPSC employees and community members volunteered to play the roles of injured individuals.

“I was so very impressed with the professionalism of both PPSC faculty and students during today’s Interdisciplinary Simulation,” said PPSC President Lance Bolton. “Congratulations to everyone on your planning and execution of today’s event. Even more so, congratulations on the education and training you’ve provided to our students. They are clearly going to be outstanding professionals when they finish!”

Best for Vets

Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) has once again made the Military Times Best for Vets college rankings for 2024. PPSC is the only community college in Colorado to make the rankings. This designation is a testament to the work across the college in support of Military and Veteran Affiliated students.

First Generation Serving Campus Designation

The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) has awarded Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) a 2024 First Generation Serving Campus. This designation is given annually based on enrollment and reflects PPSC’s commitment to ensuring retention, success and career paths for first generation students.

In its letter to the college, CDHE stated, “The designation acknowledges the great work PPSC has accomplished in the area of access and also recognizes PPSC continued work to expand high-impact practices that support first-generation students and create further opportunities for them to thrive, both academically and personally.”