



COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE OF  
DENVER



## DR. MARIELENA DESANCTIS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

January 2025

### Community College of Denver Recognized Nationally for Advancing Student Civic Engagement

Community College of Denver (CCD) has been named a 2024 **ALL IN Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting**, a prestigious honor placing CCD among 471 colleges and universities nationwide recognized for their outstanding commitment to fostering student participation in democracy.

This national recognition reflects CCD's participation in the **ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge**, a nonpartisan initiative aimed at increasing student voter engagement. Working in collaboration with **Auraria Votes**, CCD implemented a comprehensive engagement plan, complemented by insights from the **National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE)**.

"Colleges and universities that make intentional efforts to increase nonpartisan democratic engagement have higher campus voter registration and voter turnout rates," said **Jennifer Domagal-Goldman**, Executive Director of the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

As part of its efforts, CCD encouraged students to make their voices heard during the historic 2024 election season. Through dynamic communications campaigns, the college motivated students to register, vote, and engage in civic life. Additionally, CCD provided vital post-election support by hosting **Post-Election Peace Spaces** on November 6 and 7.

These spaces offered a safe environment for the **CityHawk** community to process their emotions—whether joy, disappointment, or reflection—through calming activities like coloring and light refreshments. "We wanted to create a welcoming space where students could pause, process, and recharge after the election," explained **Associate Professor Tammi Spicer-Dormuth**.

CCD's ongoing dedication to civic engagement underscores its belief that every voice matters. By equipping students with the knowledge, resources, and emotional support needed for respectful democratic participation, CCD continues to shape informed and active citizens.

# Transform the Student Experience

## CityHawks Recharge and Reset at SPARC's End-of-Semester Event

On Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2024, the Student Programming, Activities, and Resource Center (SPARC) hosted **"Final(ly): End of Semester Recharge & Reset,"** a creative and refreshing way for students to take a breather during finals week and celebrate the semester's conclusion.

The event welcomed over 75 students, who enjoyed complimentary treats from beloved local vendors **Lazo Empanadas** and **Little Man Ice Cream**. Activities like stress ball making, diamond art, coloring, and plate smashing offered unique ways to relax, reflect, and move forward with renewed energy for the new year.

Students also had the chance to connect with vital campus resources, including counseling services, accessibility support, and the **Swooper Market Food Pantry**. These offerings, presented in an inviting and approachable setting, demonstrated SPARC's commitment to supporting students beyond the classroom.

With a combination of meaningful activities, great food, and community connection, "Final(ly): End of Semester Recharge & Reset" was a memorable way for students to wrap up the semester. The SPARC team is excited to continue creating experiences that bring CityHawks together and foster a sense of belonging and care.



Students help host the SPARC event outside Confluence Assembly Rooms.



Employees and students gather around for relaxing activities.

## Victor Torres-Corona and Missy Singer Step into SGA Leadership Roles

The Student Government Association (SGA) at CCD has welcomed new leadership for the Spring 2025 semester. Following mid-year vacancies, SGA board members had the opportunity to nominate peers for the roles of President and Vice President.

After delivering speeches, engaging in Q&A sessions, and participating in discussions, Victor Torres-Corona and Missy Singer were elected on Dec. 6, 2024, by a majority vote to serve as President and Vice President, respectively.

**President Victor Torres-Corona** is a second-year student pursuing an Associate of Applied Science in Cybersecurity. In addition to representing CCD at the State Student Advisory Council (SSAC), he is an active member of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) and TRIO SSS, while also working as a Financial Aid work-study. His dedication to leadership and service is evident in his involvement both on and off campus.

**Vice President Missy Singer** is also a second-year student, earning her Associate of Applied Science in Surgical Technology. As a nontraditional student, she balances her studies with community volunteer work and will begin a surgical tech clinical internship this spring. Her commitment to giving back reflects the values that drive her leadership.

Congratulations to Victor Torres-Corona and Missy Singer on their new roles. CCD is proud to have such exceptional and inspiring CityHawks guiding the Student Government Association.



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# Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

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## Provost Day Spring 2025: Advancing Collaboration and Academic Excellence



CCD hosted its Spring **Provost Day** on Jan. 9, 2025, bringing together Academic Affairs leaders for a day of strategy, collaboration, and dialogue. This biannual event provides department chairs, deans, and other key stakeholders the opportunity to engage with **Provost Peter Lindstrom** and

align their efforts with the college's strategic goals.

The day's discussions spanned critical topics, including **student success, leadership and management, mental health resources**, and findings from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Special guests, including **President Marielena DeSanctis, Shana Stoval, Katrina Wert, Whitney Wise, and Sydney Pedregon**, offered additional insights that enriched the conversations.

Provost Day has become an essential space for CCD's Academic Affairs leadership to address challenges and create solutions. During the development of the college's new chair model, this gathering was instrumental in fostering collaboration and laying the groundwork for the initiative. Now, as the model approaches full implementation, the event continues to be a productive forum for tackling complex institutional priorities and strengthening collective efforts.

Through meaningful dialogue and shared planning, Provost Day reflects CCD's focus on progress and innovation in higher education, ensuring leaders are equipped to guide the institution and its students toward a thriving future.

## AI Governance Committee Convenes to Shape the Future of AI in Education

CCD held its inaugural **AI Governance Committee meeting** on Dec. 10, 2024. The meeting, co-led by **Peter Lindstrom**, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, and **Leisa Schievelbein**, Director of Information Technology, was open to all CCD faculty and staff, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity in this critical conversation.

The current committee members include **Michelle Garcia, Kelley Schweissing, Jessica Lanfranco, Annie Muntean, Sterling Clark, and Bia Mendes**.

During the meeting, participants reviewed the committee's **Scope Statement** and explored the evolving role of AI in education. The session also provided an opportunity to address questions and encourage broader involvement from faculty and staff as AI becomes increasingly integrated into academic and operational processes.

Looking ahead, the committee will focus on developing specific guidelines for faculty to reference throughout the spring semester, ensuring AI's application aligns with CCD's goals and values. Regular bi-monthly meetings have been scheduled to continue these discussions and provide a platform for ongoing collaboration and governance.

This first meeting marks an important step in CCD's efforts to thoughtfully integrate AI into its educational framework while fostering innovation and maintaining academic integrity.



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# Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

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## CCD Kicks Off 2025 with College-Wide Town Hall

CCD hosted its first **Town Hall** of 2025 on January 17, bringing together over 100 employees to discuss pivotal updates and initiatives shaping the institution's future. Key topics included budget and compensation, enrollment trends, accreditation preparation, and the rollout of new programs aimed at enhancing the college experience.

A major focus of the Town Hall was CCD's preparation for its upcoming **10-year self-study and review** by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). This comprehensive evaluation will examine teaching and learning, student support services, financial stability, infrastructure, and more. Evidence from all areas of the college will contribute to this in-depth review, offering leadership valuable insights into the institution's strengths and opportunities for growth.

Students remain at the heart of CCD's mission, and one highlight of the discussion centered on the ongoing evaluation of transcripts for transitioning students. This effort ensures compliance with evolving legislation while supporting students with academic planning. Departments like Academic Advising are committed to providing high-quality, personalized guidance to meet student needs.

The Town Hall also celebrated the launch of CCD's **new non-credit enrollment and registration system**, now live and accessible to community members and

staff. This initiative expands learning opportunities beyond traditional degree programs and reflects CCD's dedication to addressing the needs of the Denver workforce.

The collaborative spirit and forward-looking focus of the Town Hall exemplify CCD's commitment to fostering innovation and supporting both its students and employees in 2025 and beyond.



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# Create Education Without Barriers Through Transformational Partners

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## **CCD Foundation Wraps Up 2024 with Generous Support from Donors**

The CCD Foundation concluded 2024 on a high note, engaging with both new and longtime donors during its end-of-year giving campaign throughout November and December. Through heartfelt mailed appeals, personalized emails, phone calls, and participation in the Colorado Gives Day campaign, the Foundation raised an impressive \$17,000 from 50 individuals and two organizations.

These generous contributions were directed toward impactful funds, including the Francie Anhut Fund, the Katerina Caballero Lanfranco Fund, the General Scholarship Fund, and the Foundation's Operating Fund. Every dollar raised will directly benefit students and programs at CCD, providing essential resources to support student success in 2025 and beyond.

The CCD Foundation extends its deepest gratitude to the donors who make a meaningful difference in the lives of CityHawks. Their generosity fuels opportunities for education, growth, and transformation within the CCD community.

## **Psi Beta Brings Holiday Cheer to Children's Hospital Colorado**

This past December, CCD's Psi Beta chapter embraced the holiday spirit through two impactful community service initiatives for Children's Hospital Colorado.

The chapter organized a toy drive, collecting new, packaged toys for children ranging from infants to adolescents. Despite a setback when one donation box went missing, Psi Beta's members remained undeterred, continuing their efforts with enthusiasm and determination. By the end of the drive, the chapter had successfully gathered three boxes of toys, ready to spread joy to young patients during the holiday season.

On Dec. 20, 2024, Psi Beta members also participated in the hospital's craft presentation program, spending time with children engaged in creative activities. The event was filled with smiles, laughter, and moments of connection, bringing happiness to both the children and the CityHawks who volunteered.

Psi Beta's commitment to service reflects the heart of CCD's community, demonstrating the power of compassion and the impact of giving back.

## **New Arts Degrees at CCD: Art Education and Industrial Design**

This spring, CCD introduced two exciting new Arts degree programs: Art Education and Industrial Design. Developed in collaboration with Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU), these programs feature special articulation agreements that create seamless transfer pathways to MSU. This partnership offers students inter-institutional opportunities and direct access to Colorado's only bachelor's program in Industrial Design, located on the Auraria Campus.

The launch of these degrees stems from a comprehensive program health assessment conducted by CCD in 2021. This in-depth review evaluated the vitality and relevance of existing programs, revealing that some Arts degrees did not align with high-wage, high-demand career opportunities. With extensive industry research and dedicated effort, CCD identified Industrial Design and Art Education as fields that meet both student and workforce needs. These programs equip students with the skills to pursue thriving careers in the Denver area's growing creative and industrial sectors.

By introducing these degrees, CCD continues to expand opportunities for students to achieve their academic and career goals while contributing to the economic and cultural vibrancy of the region.



Psi Beta members Jensen Nederhoff (President), Devyn Dewey-Hutchings (Vice President), and Ryan Bon (Psi Beta Honors member) at Children's Hospital Colorado.



# Redefine Our Value Proposition

## CCD Foundation Joins Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce at ATHENA Awards

On Dec. 10, 2024, the CCD Foundation proudly participated in the ATHENA Leadership Award Luncheon, hosted by the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce. This year's honoree was The Honorable Wilma J. Webb, a trailblazing politician and civil rights activist celebrated for her enduring contributions to equality and leadership.

As the keynote sponsor for the event, the CCD Foundation played a prominent role, with Executive Director **Jim Chavez** introducing the featured speaker, happiness expert Elle Benson. The luncheon drew over 300 business leaders and community supporters who gathered to honor Wilma J. Webb's remarkable legacy.

The Foundation hosted key women students, donors, and board members at their table, fostering connections and celebrating the achievements of women leaders. Since joining the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce in Fall 2024, the Foundation has actively participated in mentorship programs, sponsorships, and networking initiatives, deepening its engagement with the Denver community and building partnerships to benefit CCD students and programs.

The ATHENA Leadership Award Luncheon exemplifies the Foundation's commitment to empowering women and strengthening relationships with leaders across the region, furthering its mission to support education and opportunity at CCD.



Members of the CCD Foundation at the ATHENA Awards luncheon.



Jim Chavez, Executive Director of CCD Foundation & Government Affairs, speaking on CCD's behalf at the ATHENA Awards.

