



2025 - 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Greetings,

As I reflect on the 2025–2026 academic year, I am grateful for the work we have done together to position the UCCS College of Business for the future. This year was not defined by a single initiative, program, or accomplishment. Rather, it was marked by purposeful progress across the College as we continued to evolve our programs, expand access to learning, strengthen our partnerships, and prepare students, alumni, and community members for a rapidly changing world.

A central theme of this year has been building the foundation for future success. We further advanced our leadership in artificial intelligence, analytics, and technology-enabled learning.

Our 2026 AI Summit brought faculty, staff, and community members together to explore how these tools are changing teaching, research, operations, and the future of work. We continued to approach AI through a business lens—emphasizing ethical use, critical thinking, innovation, and the human judgment that remains essential in every profession.

This year also marked an important step forward in lifelong learning. The soon-to-launch College of Business (COB) Academy will provide a new non-credit platform for micro-credentials, executive education, and professional development. The Academy reflects our commitment to serving learners at every stage of their professional journey. Whether someone is preparing for a new career opportunity, seeking to upskill or reskill, or looking to remain current in a changing field, COB Academy will allow us to extend the reach and impact of the College beyond traditional degree programs.

We worked to make our programs more responsive to students and workforce needs. In Fall 2025, the faculty reviewed prerequisites across graduate and undergraduate courses to better serve our students and open more opportunities for students across campus to engage with business education and allow our College to serve as a stronger interdisciplinary partner. We also launched new MBA Accelerated Master's Pathways (AMP) program in 2026 and prepared for the new Flexible MBA option beginning Fall 2026, creating more accessible and adaptable pathways for learners.

Our commitment to community impact remained central to our work. The College pursued programs and partnerships that align with the needs of Southern Colorado and the evolving workforce, including emerging opportunities in innovation, artificial intelligence, entrepreneurship, space, cyber, project management, and public service. Through these efforts, we are strengthening the College's role as a hub for collaboration among students, faculty, alumni, industry partners, and community stakeholders.

None of this work happens without people. Our faculty continue to innovate in the classroom, contribute meaningful scholarship, and create learning experiences that challenge and support our students. Our staff continue to provide a foundation that allows our programs and students to thrive. Our students bring curiosity, ambition, and resilience to their work every day. Our alumni and community partners continue to open doors, provide guidance, and help us connect education to opportunity.

Looking ahead, I am confident in the direction of the UCCS College of Business. The work of this academic year has strengthened our foundation and expanded our possibilities. Thank you for your continued support of the UCCS College of Business. Together, we are building successful futures.



- Dean Thomas Aicher, Ph.D.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Aicher'.

UCCS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AWARDS & RANKINGS



WHO WE ARE



UCCS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

The UCCS College of Business was established in 1965 with a vision to build successful futures for students and the business community in the Pikes Peak Region and beyond. For over 60 years, the College of Business has offered innovative and industry-aligned curriculum to prepare professionals for a meaningful career in business. The College of Business is accredited by AACSB which ensures that our students receive a top quality business education.

Central to the College's mission is the UCCS Ethics Initiative, which works to instill a higher standard of ethics in students. College of Business students receive personalized guidance from dynamic faculty with real-world experience in their field. The College of Business offers experiential learning opportunities at each stage of students' academic journey, providing them with an immersive business education.

OUR MISSION

The UCCS College of Business delivers a future-oriented business education to support workforce and economic development for southern Colorado, the state, nation, and world. We prioritize and empower learners at every stage of their educational journey, develop innovative research that contributes to scientific discovery and effective business practice, and serve as a hub for our community in productive discourse, practical learning, and social responsibility.

OUR VALUES



LEARNERS FIRST



BUILD COMMUNITY



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

36

YEARS OF AACSB
ACCREDITATION



years
OF ONLINE
EDUCATION

MILITARY FRIENDLY

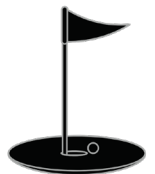
GOLD

SCHOOL

one of

8

PGA & AACSB
ACCREDITED
PGA GOLF MGMT.
PROGRAMS



16+

years
WITH THE UCCS ETHICS
INITIATIVE

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



College of Business Recognized for Achievements in AI

The College of Business is earning recognition for its leadership in artificial intelligence and its commitment to preparing learners for the future of work. By integrating emerging technologies into business education, the College emphasizes both innovation and ethical, real-world application.

That leadership is reflected in the achievements of its faculty. Assistant Professor of Human Resources & Management, Dayna Herbert Walker, recently received the CU System Artificial Intelligence (AI) Recognition Award for Teaching & Learning. The award honors faculty who use AI to improve student learning and create impact beyond their classrooms, highlighting the College's commitment to responsible AI integration.

Faculty research and cross-disciplinary initiatives continue to expand AI's role in business, from workforce analytics to cybersecurity and decision-making. Together, these efforts reinforce UCCS's position as a leader in innovation, workforce development, and responsible AI adoption.

Advancing Knowledge Through the COB AI Summit and Programming

The College of Business serves as a hub for thought leadership through the UCCS AI Summit and related programming. By bringing together faculty, industry professionals, and students, these events create space for meaningful collaboration and idea exchange.

At the AI Summit, sessions explore practical applications such as generative AI in marketing and predictive analytics in finance. Faculty pair research with real-world examples, helping participants understand how organizations use AI to improve decision-making and manage risk.

Programs like Cyber Focus Day and the Space & Cyber Symposium expand these discussions, addressing topics such as adversarial AI, cybersecurity, and national defense applications. These events illustrate AI's growing impact across critical industries.

Together, these efforts connect classroom learning with real-world challenges, positioning UCCS as a convener of forward-looking dialogue and innovation.

Preparing the Future Workforce: AI in Business Certificate

To meet rising employer demand, the College of Business is launching an Artificial Intelligence in Business Undergraduate Certificate for the Fall 2026 semester. The program equips students with applied AI skills in analytics, strategy, and decision-making.

Courses such as *The AI Advantage*, *AI Fundamentals and Applications*, and *AI-Powered Business Intelligence* emphasize practical application, enabling students to translate complex technologies into business value.

The certificate also prioritizes responsible AI use, reinforcing ethical leadership. With strong market demand for AI competencies, graduates are prepared to lead, adapt, and innovate.

This program reflects the College's mission to deliver future-oriented education while strengthening its role as a thought leader in business and technology.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Building meaningful connections across students, alumni, industry, and the broader region is central to the College of Business mission. Through partnerships, events, and shared experiences, the College continues to serve as a hub where collaboration drives opportunity and impact.

PIKES PEAK SPORTS ECONOMY REPORT



The UCCS College of Business strengthens its role as a regional connector through the Pikes Peak Sports Economy Report. Developed in partnership with the Colorado Springs Sports Corporation and local leaders, the report combines data, community insights, and contributions from UCCS panelists, College of Business Associate Dean, Brianna Newland; Associate Professor of Economics, Joe Craig; and College of Business Dean, Thomas Aicher to better understand the economic impact of sports in the Pikes Peak region.

Presented to more than 230 business and civic leaders, the report highlights how sports drive workforce development, tourism, and regional growth. More than a research project, it serves as a platform for collaboration, supporting the College's commitment to partnerships that strengthen regional prosperity.

Space & Cyber Symposium



Held on March 11, 2026, at the Ent Center for the Arts, the Space & Cyber Symposium brought together leaders from government, defense, industry, and academia to explore the intersection of AI, cybersecurity, space, and emerging technologies. The event featured keynote speaker Lt. Gen. Bradford "BJ" Shwedo, along with panel discussions, live demonstrations, and networking opportunities. By convening experts across sectors, the symposium reinforced the College's role in facilitating dialogue on issues critical to national and regional economic development.

Alumni and Student Tailgate



During Fall 2025 Homecoming, the College of Business (COB) took part in a highly attended alumni and student tailgate that brought together students, alumni, faculty, and staff. The event featured games, networking, and informal engagement opportunities, with the COB's tent drawing the highest attendance among participating colleges. Beyond celebration, the tailgate fostered meaningful connections and strengthened relationships across the COB's extended community, reinforcing a strong sense of belonging and shared identity.

Cyber Focus Day (ISSA Partnership)



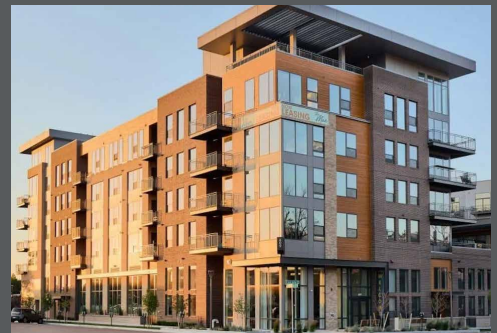
On April 2, 2026, Cyber Focus Day, hosted in partnership with the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA) Colorado Springs Chapter at the UCCS Innovation Hub, connected students, faculty, and industry professionals for a full day of discussion on cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. Sessions explored topics such as adversarial AI, cyber risk, and leadership development. College of Business faculty actively contributed to panels and discussions, strengthening the connection between academic expertise and industry needs while providing students with direct exposure to real-world challenges.

BUILDING COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

Real Estate and Property Management Program

The College of Business is strengthening industry-connected learning through its Real Estate and Property Management programming, led by Dan Stanforth, Assistant Teaching Professor of Property Management and Real Estate, and launched with foundational support from Weidner Apartment Homes and Norwood Development Group. These industry investments reflect strong regional demand for workforce-ready talent while underscoring the value of public-private partnership in advancing business education.

Designed to meet evolving market needs, the program emphasizes practical skills in property management, development, and real estate operations. Students engage with real-world challenges through applied coursework and direct industry connections, gaining insight into Colorado's rapidly changing housing and commercial markets. By aligning academic content with workforce demand, the program creates clear pathways into high-demand careers while strengthening relationships with key regional employers.



Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans



Held in October 2025, the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans brought together service members and veterans for a multi-day program focused on launching and growing businesses. Participants engaged with faculty, industry mentors, and fellow veterans through hands-on instruction and networking opportunities. The program equipped attendees with practical entrepreneurial skills while fostering a strong sense of community. By connecting veterans to university resources and regional business leaders, the bootcamp reflects the College's role in supporting inclusive economic development and purpose-driven entrepreneurship.

Hillside Connection Community Scholarship Impact

The Hillside Connection Community Scholarship, supported during the Carry the Light campaign (April 10, 2026), continues to expand access for students from Southeast Colorado Springs. With \$8,725 raised by 12 donors, the initiative helps reduce financial barriers and supports student success, reinforcing the College's commitment to equity and community impact.



LEARNERS FIRST

Placing students at the center of every experience, the College of Business strengthens hands-on learning, global opportunities, and direct industry engagement, ensuring graduates are prepared to lead in a rapidly changing business environment.

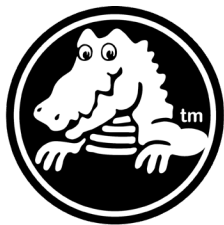
INTERNSHIP EXPO

On May 1, 2026, the College of Business hosted its inaugural Internship Expo in the University Center, showcasing the real-world internship experiences students completed throughout the semester. The event brought together students, faculty, and staff to highlight applied learning across a wide range of industries.

Nineteen students presented projects and outcomes from internships with local and regional organizations, demonstrating how classroom knowledge translates into professional impact. Approximately 40 attendees participated in the event, which also created opportunities for faculty to strengthen connections with industry partners and explore new internship pathways, reinforcing the College's commitment to experiential learning.



Conversation with Crocs EVP, Anne Mehlman



crocstm

In November 2025, Anne Mehlman (BS '02), Executive Vice President and Brand President of Crocs, returned to campus to speak with students. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience, including leadership roles at Crocs and Zappos, Mehlman shared insights on global operations, brand growth, and financial strategy.

The session included a Q&A where students engaged directly with the industry leader, with Mehlman noting the high quality of questions. Her visit also sparked discussions around potential internship opportunities with Crocs, strengthening ties between students and industry.

Study Abroad and Global Learning



The College is expanding global learning opportunities through a variety of study abroad options, including a January 6–15, 2027 program in Osaka, Kyoto, and Tokyo, Japan. Students will participate in company visits, cultural experiences, and academic coursework, gaining insight into international business practices and developing cultural competence and global awareness.

Flexible international learning opportunities, ranging from one week to a full semester and tailored to students' needs, enable learners at every level to build the global perspective and leadership skills essential for success in today's interconnected economy.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Through research, ethics, and public service, the College of Business demonstrates its commitment to making a meaningful impact, advancing knowledge while preparing principled leaders to serve their communities.

JOBPULSE WORKFORCE RESEARCH



The College of Business is driving impactful research through initiatives like JobPulse, led in part by faculty including Karen Markel, Professor of Management. The project examined workforce demand in the semiconductor industry, an area critical to regional and national economic development.

By analyzing labor market data, JobPulse helps identify workforce gaps and emerging skill needs, providing valuable insights to industry partners, policymakers, and educators. This research directly connects academic expertise to real-world challenges, reinforcing the College's role in supporting economic growth and workforce readiness.

Ethics Initiative

The COB's UCCS Ethics Initiative continues to emphasize principled leadership through programs such as the Ethics Bowl and Ethics Ambassadors. On November 8, 2025, UCCS hosted the 15th Annual Ethics Case Competition, where student teams tackled real-world issues, including the ethical use of AI in hiring. UCCS placed third in the undergraduate track.

In January 2026, eight students were selected as Ethics Ambassadors, working alongside faculty to promote ethical awareness across campus. Together, these efforts foster critical thinking, respectful dialogue, and responsible decision-making in future business leaders.



Nikki Simmons: Public Service Leadership



Alumna Nikki Simmons (BS '04, MBA '08), Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of El Paso County, exemplifies leadership in public service. Her career reflects a commitment to responsible financial management and community-focused decision-making.

By applying the skills and values developed at UCCS, Simmons plays a key role in overseeing public resources and advancing initiatives that benefit the broader community. Her work highlights how College of Business graduates make a difference beyond the private sector—serving with integrity and purpose.

LEARNING AND INNOVATION

The College of Business is advancing learning through innovation—integrating emerging technologies, expanding flexible pathways, and producing research that shapes modern business practice.

ACCELERATED MASTER'S PATHWAY (AMP) PROGRAM

The College of Business is expanding opportunities for advanced, future-focused learning through its new Accelerated Master's Pathway (AMP) programs, which allow high-achieving undergraduate students to begin MBA coursework while completing their bachelor's degree.

By enabling students to earn both degrees in a shorter timeframe, AMP programs reduce overall cost and accelerate entry into the workforce. Students gain access to graduate-level content earlier, deepening their expertise in areas such as business analytics, leadership, and emerging technologies.

These pathways reflect the College's commitment to flexibility and innovation, meeting learners where they are and supporting them at every stage of their academic journey. By aligning undergraduate and graduate education, AMP programs create a seamless transition into advanced study while strengthening workforce readiness.

Innovation in Business Research



College of Business faculty are producing impactful research that informs industry practice. In December 2025, Jin Peng, Assistant Professor of Finance, published work examining how repeated data breaches influence executive compensation, offering insights into accountability and risk management.

Complementing this work, Sameer Prasad, Associate Professor of Operations Management, focuses on how organizations adopt and use emerging technologies, particularly at the intersection of information systems, decision-making, and business strategy. His research explores how firms translate digital tools and AI-driven insights into operational value.

AI Curriculum Integration



The College is embedding AI across its curriculum, incorporating tools, data literacy, and ethical considerations into courses across disciplines. Supported by initiatives like the UCCS AI Resource Hub (launched December 2025), faculty are integrating AI concepts into areas such as marketing, finance, and management, ensuring broad exposure for students regardless of program.

Students engage with real-world tools and case-based learning, developing both technical proficiency and critical thinking around responsible AI use. This integrated approach prepares graduates to apply AI in practical business contexts while navigating the ethical and strategic implications of emerging technologies.

LEARNING AND INNOVATION (CONTINUED)

BACHELOR OF INNOVATION (BI)[™] MOVES TO COB

In February 2026, the Bachelor of Innovation (BI)[™] program officially transitioned into the UCCS College of Business, strengthening its alignment with industry and expanding opportunities for students. Serving nearly 1,000 students annually through more than 20 interdisciplinary majors across UCCS, the program blends technical expertise with business fundamentals, innovation strategy, and hands-on project work.



The transition integrates the BI program into the College of Business, giving it access to the college's faculty expertise, resources, and industry partnerships while strengthening collaboration in entrepreneurship, analytics, and emerging technologies. Students benefit from expanded access to business-focused coursework, career pathways, and employer networks, while continuing to engage in team-based, project-driven learning experiences that address real-world challenges.



evolving industries.

With courses shifting to the College beginning in Fall 2026, the move positions the program for future growth, including the exploration of a potential Master of Innovation. This strategic alignment reinforces the College's role in delivering innovation-driven education, preparing students to think across disciplines and lead in complex, rapidly

The BI program's interdisciplinary structure remains central to its impact. Students from a wide range of majors, including business, engineering, and the sciences, work together on applied projects that address real-world problems.

This approach emphasizes design thinking, collaboration, and innovation across disciplines. Through project-based learning and industry engagement, students develop the ability to translate ideas into actionable solutions, skills that are increasingly essential in today's dynamic workforce.

LEARNING AND INNOVATION (CONTINUED)

EPIIC: Entrepreneurship Scholar Program & Spark the Springs

The EPIIC/Center for Entrepreneurship (CfE) Entrepreneurship Scholar Program, launched in 2026, provides around \$5,000 per project to support interdisciplinary entrepreneurship research. Faculty across disciplines explore topics connecting innovation, business, and society. Early work includes Hayley Blackburn, Assistant Professor and Innovation & Design Librarian, whose research examines how generative AI creators build credibility, navigate ethics, and operate as entrepreneurs in the digital economy.

The program promotes collaboration across fields such as business, psychology, and the arts, expanding how entrepreneurship is studied and applied. Students benefit through participation in research projects, gaining exposure to emerging trends and applied scholarship.

Complementing this effort, Spark the Springs, held in January 2026 for its fourth year, connects students, entrepreneurs, and community leaders through workshops, competitions, and networking. Together, these initiatives strengthen the regional innovation ecosystem while positioning the College as a leader in interdisciplinary, research-driven entrepreneurship.

ENTP Students Visit Monument Fire District #1

As part of BUAD 6800: Entrepreneurship and New Ventures, MBA students led by Larry Plummer, Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship and El Pomar Chair of Business & Entrepreneurship, visited Monument Fire District #1 in December 2025 for a hands-on learning experience.

Students engaged with Division Chief Jonathan Bradley and personnel, including Lieutenant Mike Smith, Engineer Matt Edmunds, and Firefighter/Paramedic Hunter Ortuno, to explore how emergency services approach innovation, teamwork, and complex problem-solving.

Applying entrepreneurial frameworks, students examined operational challenges related to service delivery, efficiency, and community risk reduction. Direct interaction with practitioners provided insight into how innovation operates in high-stakes environments beyond traditional business settings.

This experience highlights the College's commitment to experiential learning, helping students build adaptable problem-solving skills applicable across industries.



The Garage: Entrepreneurship in Action

The Garage at UCCS serves as a central hub for student entrepreneurship and innovation. Designed as an open, collaborative environment, the Garage brings together students from across disciplines to develop ideas, test concepts, and build ventures in a hands-on setting.

Through mentorship, workshops, and peer collaboration, students move from concept to execution—gaining practical experience in product development, market validation, pitching, and business modeling. The space also supports collaboration between students, faculty, and community partners, creating opportunities to refine ideas with real-world feedback.

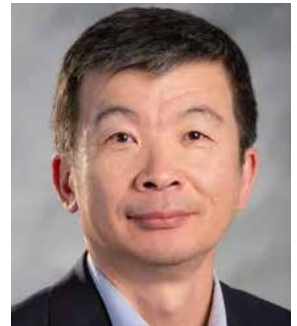
By fostering creativity, experimentation, and cross-disciplinary thinking, the Garage helps students build both entrepreneurial confidence and practical skills. It reflects the College's commitment to experiential learning—empowering students to become innovators who can translate ideas into meaningful impact.

FACULTY RESEARCH & AWARDS

Faculty Research and Scholarly Impact

College of Business faculty continued to strengthen the College's research reputation through publications in some of the most respected journals across business, technology, management, and marketing disciplines.

Dahui Li, J. Daniel Couger Endowed Chair of Information Systems, achieved an exceptional year of scholarly productivity with publications in three premier journals: *Tourism Management*, *Decision Support Systems*, and *Information & Management*. His research explored how digital games influence real-world tourism behavior, methods for detecting AI-generated fake online reviews, and the ways digital market entrants drive organizational transformation. Together, these studies address pressing questions at the intersection of artificial intelligence, digital innovation, and business strategy, further establishing Li as a leading contributor in information systems research.



Dustin Bluhm, Associate Professor of Management, produced impactful research examining leadership, organizational behavior, and strategic decision-making. His work published in the prestigious *Journal of Business Research* explored a timely question facing modern organizations: Are morally courageous leaders more effective? The study provides important evidence on how ethical leadership influences organizational outcomes. In addition, Bluhm co-authored research in the *Journal of Strategy and Management* examining the effects of CEO likeability on analyst recommendations and contributed to forthcoming work in *Current Psychology* on organization-based self-esteem and workplace performance.

Thomas (Bryant) Cassidey, Assistant Professor of Operations Management & Business Analytics, earned first-author recognition on a publication in the highly regarded *European Journal of Operational Research*, one of the leading journals in operations and supply chain management. His research investigated sourcing behavior and decision-making under capacity constraints, offering new insights into how organizations navigate complex operational challenges when resources are limited.



Martin Key, Professor of Digital Strategy & Marketing, contributed to advancing understanding of marketing education through a publication in the *Journal of Marketing Education*. His study examined the current state of marketing doctoral programs, highlighting important trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping the future of doctoral education and the preparation of the next generation of marketing scholars.

FACULTY RESEARCH & AWARDS (CONTINUED)

TEACHING EXCELLENCE



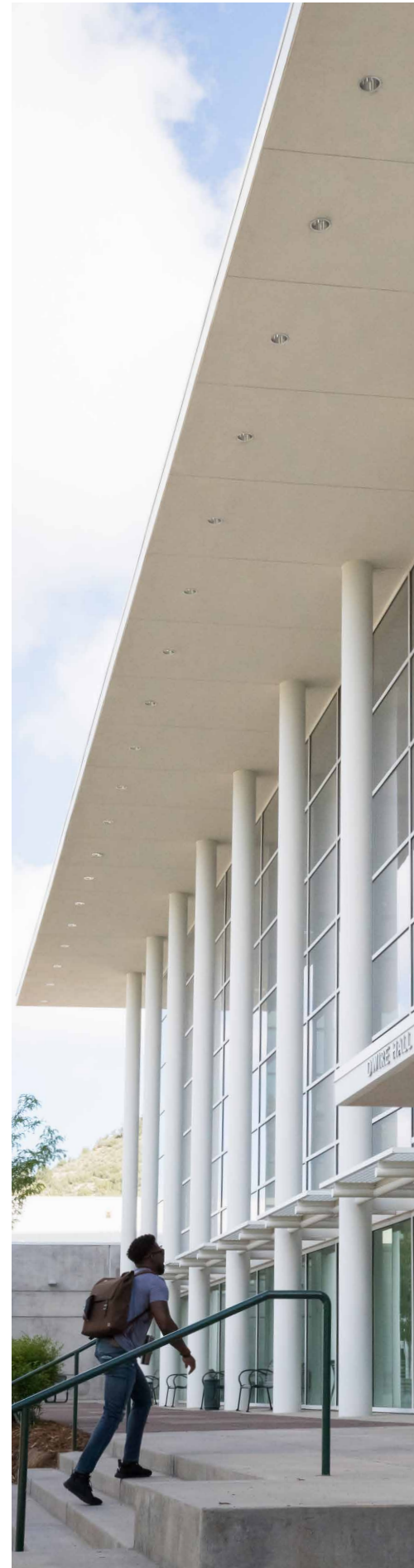
Madeline Kurcz, Assistant Teaching Professor of Accounting, has revised ACCT 2020, Introduction to Managerial Accounting, updating its content and enhancing the curriculum, including organizing a field trip that brought real-world experience directly to her students. Kurcz has prepared a new course in Auditing, demonstrating her commitment to curriculum development and academic excellence. She also led a successful Study Abroad trip to Berlin over Spring Break and presented at the 2026 UCCS Teaching &

Learning Conference (TLC) Sessions hosted by the Faculty Resource Center (FRC). Her creative use of technology, dedication to teaching, and genuine care for students' learning make her an outstanding educator. As stated by one of her students, "Professor Kurcz was my favorite instructor I've had in accounting! She was so clearly invested in our success as students and has a passion for this work. I wish we could have more professors like her!"



Lauren Nelsen, Assistant Teaching Professor of Quantitative Methods, won the new COB teaching award - Outstanding Online Course. She transitioned two of the COB's more challenging classes, QUAN 2010, Business Statistics, and BUAN 3500, Data Management and Descriptive Analytics in Business, online and produced amazing results, receiving extremely high student evaluations. Nelsen did this by making the transition seamless; assignments were interactive, with crystal clear instructions, and added

videos and teaching instructions. In addition, she was always available for student questions and help, via Teams or in person. As one student said "The course was well organized. The feedback on assignments was clear and followed the rubric nicely; when you missed points it was made clear as to why. Major project assignments require students to choose a subject they are interested in asking questions about and creating data visualizations for. This made it so I was more interested in the research I was doing since it was stuff I was personally interested in, helping me learn how to use the data visualization tools better."



SUCCESSFUL FUTURES

The College of Business prepares students for success long after graduation by combining academic excellence with experiential learning, leadership development, and career-focused opportunities. The result is a community of graduates who are making an impact across industries, public service, athletics, and entrepreneurship.

BUILDING PATHS TO SUCCESS



Class of 2026
B.S. in Business
Marketing Emphasis

Cana Adiso discovered that some of the most meaningful parts of her college experience happened outside the classroom. While earning her degree, she expanded her interests through the Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center, adding a minor in health and wellness promotion, earning a personal training certification, and completing a health coaching internship. A resident assistant, Chancellor's Leadership Class scholar, study abroad participant in Paris, and founding member of Black Christians at UCCS, Adiso immersed herself in campus life while developing a passion for leadership and community service. Named a Student Achievement Award recipient and commencement speaker, she graduated prepared to pursue a career that combines marketing, fitness, and wellness, with a long-term goal of owning a gym.



Class of 2026
B.S. in Business

Rose Sanders

demonstrates that the path to a degree is not always traditional. After initially attending UCCS in 2006, she stepped away from school in 2011 to focus on work and family responsibilities. During that time, she earned licenses in esthetics and nail technology, building skills that complemented her entrepreneurial ambitions. Determined to finish what she started, Sanders returned to complete her bachelor's degree while preparing for a new role as a Financial Management Specialist at Peterson Space Force Base. An accomplished artist whose work has been exhibited at the Cottonwood Center for the Arts, Sanders also earned certification as a firearms instructor and plans to one day open a spa that combines her business expertise with her professional licenses and creative passions.



Class of 2024
Master of Business Administration

Ashley Brown has built a career defined by entrepreneurship, resilience, and leadership. After spending a decade in Australia teaching dance, growing a dance studio from 42 to 500 students, and earning a business degree, a health condition prompted her return to Colorado and pursuit of an MBA at UCCS. During her final year, she and her husband assumed ownership of Texas T-Bone Steakhouse and Famous Dave's BBQ in Colorado Springs. Applying lessons from her MBA coursework directly to the business, Brown helped drive significant growth while strengthening community partnerships through programs supporting educators, first responders, military members, and local schools. Today, she is carrying forward a family business legacy while charting a new course for its future.

LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, & IMPACT

The success of College of Business alumni can be found across industries, professions, and communities. Whether serving the nation, leading a professional sports franchise, or guiding a Colorado mountain town, these graduates demonstrate the lasting value of a UCCS education.

Xavier Roman



Class of 2025
B.A. in Communications
Current MBA Student

For Staff Sergeant Xavier Roman, education is an extension of leadership. While serving in the U.S. Army and stationed at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, Roman has continued working toward an MBA with an emphasis in Business Analytics after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from UCCS in 2025. As a petroleum supply supervisor, he manages and mentors fellow soldiers, encouraging them to seek higher education and helping them navigate financial aid and military tuition assistance programs. A husband, father of three, and first-generation college graduate, Roman views education as a pathway to opportunity, not only for himself, but for those he leads. His commitment to service reflects the College's mission of developing leaders who create a positive impact in their organizations and communities.



B.S. in Business '89

Terri Fujinaga built a career that would eventually place her at the forefront of one of the fastest-growing leagues in professional sports. Today, she serves as Chief Financial Officer of the Seattle Storm, helping guide strategic investments and long-term growth during a period of unprecedented expansion for the WNBA. Before joining the Storm, Fujinaga spent more than two decades operating her own consulting firm and serving in executive finance roles. She credits many of the business fundamentals learned at UCCS, including strategic resource allocation and financial planning, as skills that have remained relevant throughout her career.



MBA '01 B.S. in Business '92

Few careers better demonstrate adaptability and public service than that of **Kellie Case**, a UCCS alumna who served as Mayor of Woodland Park after a distinguished career in public finance. After overcoming significant personal and academic setbacks, Case completed her business degree at UCCS before earning an MBA. She went on to serve as Woodland Park's Finance Director and Treasurer before moving into real estate and ultimately elected office. Throughout each chapter of her career, Case remained committed to responsible stewardship, fiscal accountability, and community service, qualities that continue to define her leadership legacy.

RETIREMENTS AND FAREWELLS



Dr. Don Warrick A Legacy of Leadership

In February 2026, the College celebrated the retirement of Don Warrick, Professor Emeritus of Management, after an exceptional 55-year career at UCCS. Throughout his tenure, Warrick taught thousands of students, mentored faculty, and helped build the College's reputation for leadership and management education.

Known for his expertise in organizational development, leadership, and change management, Warrick influenced generations of business professionals while also supporting curriculum development and faculty growth. During a retirement celebration on February 11, 2026, alumni, colleagues, and university leaders gathered to honor a career defined by teaching, mentorship, and service.

Though retiring from the classroom, Warrick's impact continues through the students, alumni, and faculty he helped shape over more than five decades.

Together, Don Warrick and Dean Weidner represent two distinct but equally important forms of leadership, one through a lifetime of education and mentorship, the other through philanthropy and industry partnership. Their contributions will continue to influence the College of Business for years to come.



Remembering Dean Weidner

The College paused to remember Dean Weidner, founder of Weidner Apartment Homes, whose generosity created lasting opportunities for students. A strong advocate for education and workforce development, Weidner believed in investing in future business leaders.

His support was instrumental in establishing the College's Real Estate and Property Management Program, launched through funding from Weidner Apartment Homes and Norwood Development Group. The program provides students with industry-focused learning experiences and pathways into careers in property management, real estate operations, and development.

Beyond his philanthropy, Weidner exemplified the entrepreneurial mindset and community leadership the College seeks to cultivate in its graduates. His legacy lives on through the students, programs, and opportunities made possible by his vision and generosity.

SPECIAL THANKS

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Controller, GE Johnson

Chelsy Rafferty
Talent Acquisition Manager, Enterprise
Mobility

Jasmine Rascon
Internship Director and Onboarding
Specialist, Northwestern Mutual

Asia Zabala
Campus Recruiter, Lockheed Martin

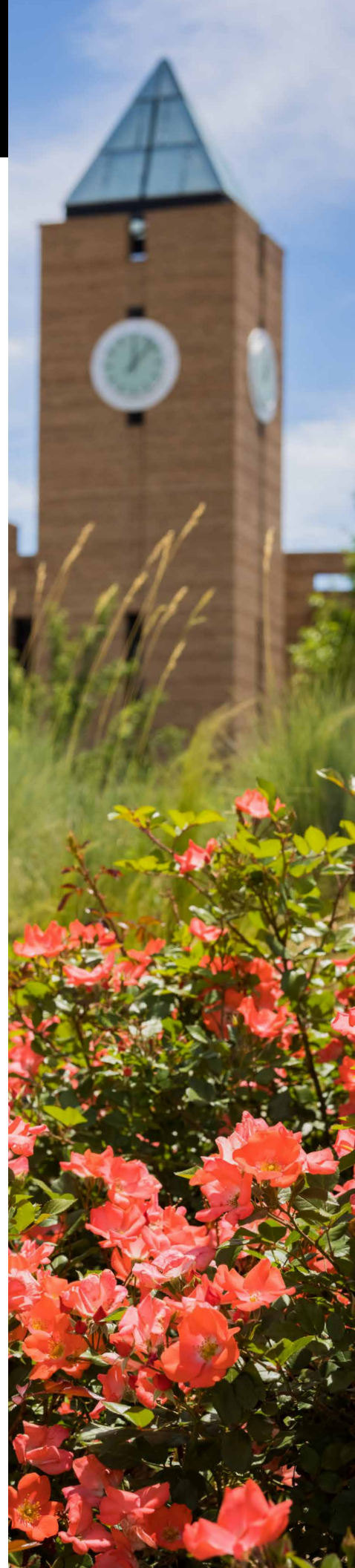
COB LEADERSHIP 2025-2026

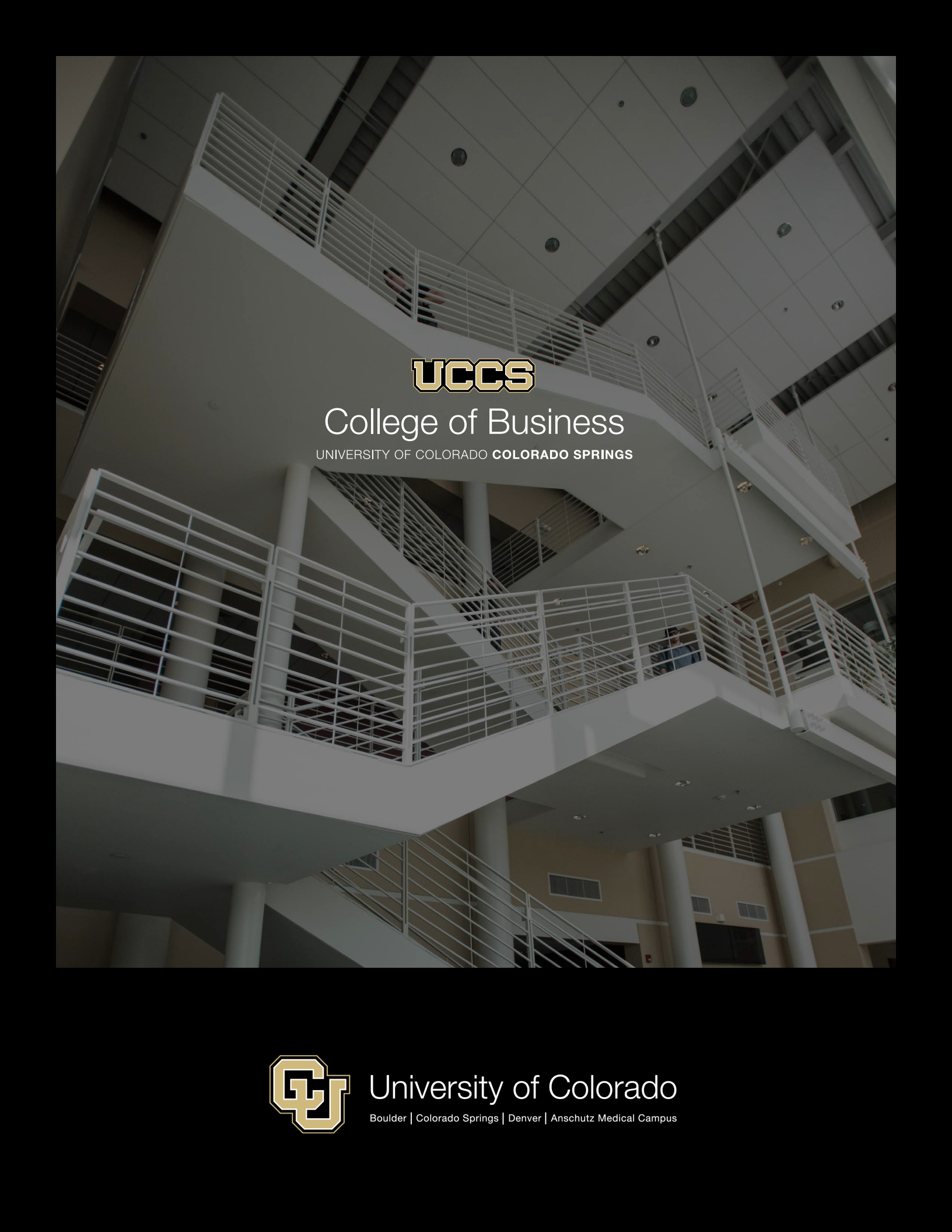
Thomas Aicher, Ph.D.
Dean

Bri Newland, Ed.D.
Associate Dean

Jill Bradley-Geist, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Faculty

Jeanette Dias, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Internal Operations





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