Dear Fellow Mavericks,

2011 was a year of transformation at our institution. With so much happening, we knew the time was right to fire up the presses and re-launch our magazine — The Maverick.

As we engaged our campus community about the prospect of changing the name of Mesa State College to Colorado Mesa University, we reconnected with so many of you who helped us weigh the issue and its impact on our future. To everyone who took time to participate in a tele-townhall meeting, an online survey or even one of our campus forums, I’d like to thank you. Our name change has been overwhelmingly positive, and it will position the institution for continued success.

In this edition of The Maverick, you’ll find updates about what’s making CMU the fastest-growing institution of higher learning in Colorado. With nearly 9,000 students enrolled, we’re excited to tell our story and keep you engaged with your alma mater.

It’s no secret in Colorado that funding for colleges and universities will continue being squeezed by other budget priorities well into the future. Rather than sitting back and hoping someone else will solve our problems, we will continue embracing our identity as Mavericks. Our institution will continue proposing bold reform ideas that help families and our economy. Stay engaged. Swing by campus and see what’s happening with your own eyes. For our success to continue, we need your help and support.

Enjoy this edition of The Maverick and come by my office any Monday at 2 pm to share your thoughts on how we’re doing.

Tim Foster, President
Colorado Mesa University
The Evolution of an Institution

The Maverick spirit has been the catalyst for change over the course of this institution’s 87 year history. This spirit carries on as Colorado Mesa University continues to grow.

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**NEW PROGRAMS OF STUDY**

New era, new name, new programs of study – from mechanical engineering to healthcare leadership, new programs at CMU are raising the bar.

You may have heard that CMU recently added an AAS and a BAS in hospitality management, and an AAS and a BS in mechanical engineering technology. Did you know that CMU is now one of the few universities in the nation that provides such a complete program in the field of nursing education?

The Master of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice are integral to Mesa County’s healthcare system being recognized at the national level. The programs will enable a nurse to progress through all levels of nursing education, from a practical nursing certificate all the way to a doctorate in nursing.

“These programs will help us prepare advanced practice nurses for all of western Colorado,” said Kristy Reuss, RN, PhD, and head of the Department of Health Sciences. “With healthcare reform and increased access to care, we’re going to need more trained professionals in the region.”

**CHANGES ON CAMPUS**

Throughout the evolution of the campus, the focus on the students remains at the heart of every move Colorado Mesa University makes. The new Maverick Pavilion (or Mav Pav) is a prime example. The building is complementary to the Maverick Center. This new general recreation pavilion features a state-of-the-art rubberized surface, which allows the flooring to be configured into a multitude of athletic surfaces.

With reconfiguring the flooring, this facility can house two full-size basketball courts, three volleyball courts or two tennis courts. By adjusting partitions, spaces for an indoor soccer field, lacrosse field, or batting cages can also be created.

Michael Wells, director of campus recreation and facilities said, “If we were going to host events to service athletics, intramural sports, various student groups, and the community, we had to have a place for them to check in, an office so someone can monitor the facility, bathrooms, and even some bleachers.”

Although the Mav Pav can be configured to create two tennis courts, that’s not the only tennis option on the campus of Colorado Mesa University.

Over the past two summers, the former Elliott Tennis Center, originally constructed in 1993, was demolished and replaced in its entirety. The newly rebuilt Elliott Tennis Center consists of nine courts, new fixed seating, lighting, shade structures, a small building for team and club storage and meeting space, and a new parking facility. The upgrade was funded in part by grants from the United States Tennis Association and the Parks Improvement Association Board.
In addition to being used for the University’s tennis programs, the Center is used by the Grand Junction Tennis Club, local school districts, USTA leagues, and individual players. It’s the host site for the Taco Bell Tennis Tournament, state and intermountain USTA sectional tournaments, various local tournaments, and high school regional tournaments.

**WCCC Green**

More than 450 high school students and some 800 college students, many of them skilled professionals who are in career transition, are gaining new skills and exploring new subjects at Western Colorado Community College.

Last September, the college began an ambitious project to submit an all-inclusive proposal to Vail Resorts, Inc. for a greenhouse — not just any ordinary greenhouse, rather it’s a sustainable, eco-friendly addition that means restaurant goers can enjoy fresh vegetables at 11,000 feet. If all goes as planned, the greenhouse will provide a significant amount of produce for the restaurants in the Eagle’s Nest restaurant complex at the top of the Eagle Bahn Gondola. This project will also involve CMU students who are in the engineering, business and environmental sciences programs as well as the WCCC students in the process technology program.

WCCC’s continuing mission to teach students the applied side of business and technology made it “a suitable candidate for a sustainability project like the greenhouse,” said John Sluder, WCCC Department Head of Business, Applied Science, and Information Services.

The college continues to move to a curriculum of integrated learning systems, as exemplified by the greenhouse project.

**Montrose Renovation**

The building on the Montrose campus was originally an elementary school, built in 1935 and designed by architect Temple Buell. Montrose enrollment has grown consistently for the last few years and jumped by 10 percent this year. The campus is being updated to better serve the needs of its students.

About 350 students attend the Montrose branch of CMU. “There was a sense in the community that we were bursting at the seams and ought to build a new, stand-alone campus,” said Joey Montoya Boese, director of the Montrose Campus. That may happen further down the road, but when the renovation is complete, the building will be able to serve up to 700 students.

The most significant upgrades include state-of-the-art science and nursing labs, and a second computer lab will be added. Administration spaces are being combined and reconfigured to allow for two new faculty offices, lighting and acoustics are being upgraded while maintaining its historical significance.

“The dual mission of CMU is to serve both the baccalaureate track and the community college track,” Boese explained. “We are really fortunate to have a branch here in Montrose.”

Funding has been secured. The renovation is expected to commence next summer and is to be finished before the fall semester begins. •
John Redifer
THE GOSPEL OF CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

John Redifer has been teaching — and living — political science and public administration at Colorado Mesa University since 1994. Credit the U.S. Army for bringing him here. A Baltimore native, he enlisted after earning an undergraduate degree in philosophy in 1977 at the University of Maryland. Several years later, he was assigned to serve as an infantry officer at Fort Carson near Colorado Springs.

After six years of active duty, Redifer returned to civilian life and joined the Army Reserves for another eight years before health reasons forced him to resign. He worked in private sector middle-management positions before earning a PhD in political science at Colorado State University in 1993.

Since then, Redifer has preached the importance of citizen involvement in representative democracy and his students have listened. Many of them have successful careers in the public sector — and they’ve served in leadership roles at the state legislature and as key advisors in several Colorado agencies. One student worked with President George W. Bush as Special Assistant for Communications. At one point, his students were referred to as the “Mesa Mafia” by those working in the Colorado State House.

Redifer leads by example. It is not enough to tell students to be involved. He gets his hands dirty as well. Over the years, he has served on the Grand Junction Planning Commission, Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Colorado Foundation for Water Education Board. Currently he serves as a director on the Ute Water Board and, at the request of Senator Mark Udall, on an ad hoc citizens’ committee to examine whether the Colorado National Monument should be converted into a national park. As executive director of the Redifer Research Institute at CMU, he and his colleagues have involved students in social, economic, political, and public lands management studies for federal agencies, local governments, and the private sector.

“Colorado Mesa University has given me the opportunity to study the things that I love and share with students and help them pursue career goals and make research contributions to their communities,” said Redifer.

Tim Pollard, senior vice president with EIS Solutions, was president of CMU’s student government when Redifer was advisor. “He taught me the value of deeply analyzing all sides of an issue, to look for potential elements of compromise in controversial situations, and to strengthen my own arguments when pushing forward the right decision.” Pollard said. “He was consistently the voice of reason and experience. I always appreciated the way he gave advice. He never tried to force a decision. He might debate the merits of an issue, but he let us be adults and make our own decisions — whether wise or foolish.”

Redifer and his wife Lisa are parents of two grown children, Justin and Erin, and 13-year-old Rhiannon. When asked if he plans to retire, he said, “Retirement? I haven’t thought about it.”

By Glenna Kyker Brayton
Assistant Professor of Nursing Jennifer Zadrozny and 16 of her senior students are still processing their experiences in Ecuador last July. During the 10-day trip, some visited a clinic in the small town of Otavalo, where they learned about indigenous healthcare practices and observed traditional healers perform diagnostic and cleansing rituals. Other students watched as a pediatrician administered well-child checkups at Villa Ticca, a low-income child-care project. They all heard a local university professor speak on public healthcare and the cultural beliefs and practices that influence care.

Hanna Lundholm was impressed with what she learned. “What was most rewarding,” she said, “was that even though there was a language barrier, we were still able to communicate and laugh with the nurses and the people. There is still that element of communication that’s not language.”

Nicole Silvano and Joanna Djos-Tobin were touched by their experience with 18-month-old baby Joel at Hospital Pediatrico Baca Ortiz. The students were able to give the abandoned infant, suffering from malnutrition and AIDS, some love and attention while local nurses were tending to other patients. “It gave me a different perspective on how lucky we are here and how advanced we are in healthcare. It definitely changes you as a person,” Djos-Tobin said.

Zadrozny, a second-generation alumna, was changed by the journey as well — and by all the hard work that went into the trip. Gathering research, embarking on a new endeavor that the Health Sciences Department had never undertaken, and seeking guidance from various CMU resources was only part of the process. Due to the outpouring of support, Zadrozny called the trip “a vision that became a reality.”

To go on the trip, the students worked to raise their own funds and collaborated with Project C.U.R.E. (Commission on Urgent Relief and Equipment), their families and the community to gather medical supplies and other items to take to Ecuador. Local organizations, individuals and businesses were generous. A western-themed fundraiser with a silent auction and spaghetti dinner aided the endeavor. An international nonprofit organization, United Planet, was instrumental in the planning phase.

“The best part was seeing all the community support for our cause and the people willing to donate. Another big impact was the cultural immersion… interacting with people and kids at Villa Ticca. We were able to go with them for the day, see how they live and realize how much need is really there,” said student Carrie Meis.

Zadrozny hopes that such expeditions can become a permanent addition to the nursing curriculum at CMU. The students received course credit and, more importantly, rare insight into the challenges of improving the lives of others. They gained appreciation of transcultural medicine and found a new perspective on treating the whole patient. Zadrozny summed it up: “Service is truly the way to make the world a better place. We learned from them, they learned from us.”

By Erin Leigh Cook
OF COURSE WE ALL RESPECT WATER. WE DO LIVE IN THE HIGH DESERT. GIGI RICHARD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY AT COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY, HAS DEDICATED HER LIFE AND WORK TO IT. “I LOVE BEING ON THE RIVER. I LOVE BEING ON WATER,” SHE SAID. RICHARD STUDIES WATER, SPECIFICALLY HOW HUMANS AFFECT RIVERS AND THEIR ECOSYSTEMS. SHE’S A BUSY PERSON, TEACHING CLASSES IN HYDROLOGY AND RIVER DYNAMICS, GIVING TALKS AT THE COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT, AND EXPLAINING GEOMORPHIC PROCESSES ON THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL’S SHOW HOW STUFF WORKS.

IN ARID WESTERN COLORADO, RIVERS ARE TRULY THE ARTERIES OF LIFE. WITHOUT THE COLORADO AND GUNNISON RIVERS, FILLED EACH SPRING WITH ROCKY MOUNTAIN SNOWMELT, THE GRAND VALLEY WOULD BE A FAR DIFFERENT PLACE. WITHOUT WATER PROJECTS, GRAND JUNCTION, FRUITA, PALISADE AND COUNTLESS OTHER COMMUNITIES Couldn’T EXIST.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF DITCHES, AQUEDUCTS, LEVEES, AND DAMS FASCINATES RICHARD. HER BIG QUESTIONS, SIMPLIFIED OF COURSE, INCLUDE HOW HUMANS AFFECT A RIVER’S ENVIRONMENT, AND WHAT SORT OF INTENDED AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES DOES HUMAN ACTIVITY HAVE ON THE ECOSYSTEMS AND THE GEOLOGIC FEATURES OF A RIVER.

RICHARD GREW UP IN A VERY DIFFERENT CLIMATE — NEW ORLEANS. HER FIRST SKI TRIP TO COLORADO AT AGE 10 MADE A BIG IMPRESSION, AND AFTER COMPLETING HER UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE AT MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SHE MOVED TO THE MOUNTAINS, WORKING SEVERAL JOBS TO MAINTAIN HER LIFESTYLE AT ALTITUDE. SHE STILL HAD QUESTIONS ABOUT WATER AND RETURNED TO ACADEMIA TO EARN A PhD FROM COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY.


CURRENTLY, THE CENTER IS DEVELOPING A DATABASE OF PUBLICATIONS AND DATA THROUGHOUT THE UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN. AS RICHARD SAID, “BY BRINGING ALL THIS INFORMATION TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE, WE HOPE TO CREATE A ONE-STOP SHOP WHERE OTHERS CAN CONNECT WITH INFORMATION AND PROFESSIONALS. “Toward this end, she works closely with the Center’s coordinator, Hannah Holm, who was recently named Emerging Water Leader by the Colorado Foundation for Water Education.

CMU IS THE SPONSORING ORGANIZATION FOR THE WATER CENTER WHILE CHEVRON, THE UTE WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT, THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION AND OTHERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED. THE CENTER IS ALSO FUNDED THROUGH GRANTS, INCLUDING ONE FROM THE WALTON FAMILY FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION. XCEL ENERGY AND WILLIAMS HAVE PROVIDED FUNDING FOR THE CENTER’S K-12 EDUCATION INITIATIVES.

“There are a number of challenges coming at us,” said Richard. “We have a growing population, which means growing pressures on our limited supply of water. With climate change, we see a future in which evaporation and water loss from reservoirs will increase, making it a challenge to address increased demand. There is competition between agricultural and municipal uses of water. There will be increasing water quality issues. Water needs to be kept in the rivers for instream flows as well. How do you balance all of this? These are global issues on a local scale.”

Richard’s energy, intelligence, and perseverance make us thankful that this Louisiana native found her way to western Colorado and the Water Center.

**By Kristen Lummis**

To learn more about the Water Center, go to coloradomesa.edu/watercenter
Thriving cities and communities don’t appear like magic. They’re a result of vision and hard work.

The year was 1903, and Walter Walker, a second-generation newspaperman, had just arrived in Grand Junction to begin work as a reporter at The Daily Sentinel. It didn’t take long before he was owner, publisher, and editor. The journalist became fascinated by aviation and spent his entire life promoting and improving aviation in the Grand Valley. Theater and other arts were also consuming interests. Walker was instrumental in building the Avalon Theatre in 1923 — now an historical landmark.

In later years, Walker would be acknowledged for his contribution to aviation when the local airport was named Walker Field.

Walker advocated for and supported the Veterans Administration Hospital, the Grand Junction Regional Center, Mesa College (now Colorado Mesa University), the Grand Junction Rotary Club, and the Colorado National Monument. He lobbied for reclamation projects in the Grand Valley, helped establish the oil shale demonstration plant at Rifle, and fought for water rights. He supported relief for the needy during the Great Depression, worked selflessly to create parks and playgrounds and helped with the expansion and development of local hospitals. He created jobs through his promotion of the fruit industry, farming, ranching, mining, oil and gas development.

Walker was a loyal Democrat and became a U.S. senator in 1932. He helped write Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal platform and served as a delegate to every Democratic National Convention from 1924 to 1952. He helmed the newspaper until his death in 1956.

In recent years, CMU has expanded greatly and that expansion included construction of a new soccer stadium. Mesa College alumnus Ken Johnson and his family made the first million-dollar donation to CMU and saw an opportunity to help keep the Walker name alive. The new stadium became the new Walker Field. It has become a premier place for CMU athletics and is available to sports teams throughout the community.

In honor of the Walkers, two bronze plaques were recently unveiled at Walker Field stadium. Designed by sculptor Mike Wilson and cast in bronze at the CMU Foundry, they are a reminder of just what can be accomplished.

By Priscilla Mangnall

To learn more about the Walkers, visit the Tomlinson Library where the Walker Archives are open for research.
A
ffectionately known as
“the OP,” Colorado Mesa’s
Outdoor Program excels in
many arenas. It gets students out into
nature and there they learn
valuable leadership skills.

During the past ten years, the OP
has grown into a driving force. Every
day I hear students say, “I came to
CMU because of the OP.” Prospective
students and their parents enter the
OP (just across from Admissions), and
see the action photos. It takes most
people a few minutes to realize that
the people in the pictures are in fact
CMU students tackling their greatest
fears, scaling new heights, and
backpacking across the globe.

The OP embodies the idea of “no
limits.” We coordinate more than
200 activities a year, from weekly slide
shows to two-month-long international
expeditions. The OP excels at
expeditions. In only ten years, our
groups have backpacked across 37
countries on five continents and
completed 19 extended expeditions,
ranging from trekking across the
Tibetan Plateau to climbing to the
summits of Kilimanjaro and Aconcagua.

Last May nine students, alumni and
staff from CMU flew to Alaska, each
with 150 pounds of climbing gear.
The goal was to stand on top of
20,320-foot-tall Denali, the highest
peak in North America. Only a few
hundred miles from the Arctic Circle,
Denali’s temperatures drop below
negative 20 degrees almost every day
of the year, winds often reach beyond
40 miles an hour, white-out snow
conditions occur weekly and the hours
of relentless sun can challenge even
the most hardened alpinist.

The team consisted of Stoney Molina,
Joe Talley, Sam Morrison, Morgan
Moore, Zack Fitzner, Evan Clapper,
Will Tarantino and Chris Baldwin.
Everyone played a vital role. From
the beginning, sacrifices routinely
confronted our group, from buying
expensive gear and finding training
time to leaving our families behind.
But our group had been together
on other outings and we knew each
other’s strengths. We spent hours
reviewing crevasse rescue techniques,
researching the route, watching slide
shows, filling out permits, training in
the snow, skiing with loaded packs and
sleds and simply bonding as a team.

After weeks of training, we found
ourselves on a tiny airstrip in
Talkeetna, Alaska, described by
bumper stickers as “A quaint little
drinking village with a climbing
problem.” From here our bush planes
flew right into the heart of the Alaska
Range, landing on the Kahiltna glacier
at 7,200 feet. From there we would
negotiate 13,000 vertical feet of
climbing while dealing with Denali’s
notorious glaciers, high altitude and
infamous weather.

We hauled gear on sleds and skis
to 11,000 feet for a week, getting
acclimated to the altitude. Snow
fell almost every day. No doubt,
acclimatization plays a key role
in successfully climbing Denali. A
balancing act ensued: Climb too fast
and fall ill from cerebral or pulmonary
edema or climb too slow and sacrifice
a good weather opportunity. In the
end, all the training in the world
does not guarantee a summit. The mountain is always in control, while you put one foot in front of the other. At the 14,200-foot base camp, we looked straight up a wall of ice, snow, and rock. The summit loomed high above. We mingled with climbers from Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia. We met Alaskan native Vern Tejas, who has climbed the highest peak on all seven continents nine times and holds the seven-summit speed record. Over the next few days, we climbed to the 16,200-foot head wall, one of the world’s most spectacular ridges, with 2,000-foot sheer walls on either side. High camp was established at 17,200 feet, the summit only a day away.

We landed seven out of nine on the summit and returned to base camp safely. Our combination of teamwork, skill, training, a great weather window and luck allowed us an accomplishment to mark the transition for the OP as we close our chapter on Mesa State College and start to write the future of Colorado Mesa University.

Photos and text by Chad Thatcher
Chad Thatcher, PhD, is an adventurer and director of CMU’s Outdoor Program.
The phoenix is said to rise from a pile of ashes. Can Mavericks rise from a puddle of water? That was the question facing the CMU men’s hockey team in June 2010. After a successful debut in 2006, Mavs Hockey was packing the stands with enthusiastic fans at the local Glacier Ice Arena and racking up wins on the road. The team advanced to the regional playoffs in 2009 and 2010 and were on their way to becoming a force in Division III of the American Collegiate Hockey Association. Then the dream melted — literally.

Citing mechanical issues, the owners shut down the ice arena in Grand Junction in June 2010, and its future remains in limbo. Last season, the Mavs hockey team played their entire schedule on the road, arriving early for each match and buying ice time so they could get in some practice. With no home rink, little on-campus hype, and minimal support from their many fans, the team faltered. Students who were set to attend CMU because of the thriving hockey program changed their plans.

After a difficult season of non-stop travel, the hockey era at CMU appeared to be over. First-year co-coach Ben Guska summarized the 2010-2011 season. “It was like the team was trying to swim competitively without a pool,” he said.

The CMU team members weren’t alone in their disappointment. The Junior Mavs were also struggling without home ice. Still, in March 2011, the Junior Mavs Squirt team won the Class C Colorado Championship. Their success spurred a local nonprofit, Ice Skating, Inc., to redouble its efforts to keep hockey in the Grand Valley. In August, ISI announced plans to open an outdoor
sheet of ice just off North Avenue, near the CMU campus. CMU is a major supporter of this effort and has contributed $50,000 to ISI to ensure availability of ice time for the CMU hockey team for the upcoming season.

Scrambling to rebuild a team, former CMU players and first-year co-coaches Cody Cooper and Ben Guska, along with goalie Coach Kyle Roffe, called a meeting to gauge interest among current students. Twenty-seven hockey players showed up, and 16 of them were freshmen and sophomores. “We were pretty surprised,” said Guska. “The demand for hockey at CMU has always been huge, but this year the University seems to have pulled more students from the Front Range. We have a group of really good players from Wyoming returning to play and two players from Alaska. We’ve got good size and a lot of talent. I think this team will be comparable to or better than any team CMU has had.”

According to Cooper, the upcoming season is all about rebuilding. “We got really lucky with Ice Skating, Inc. building the rink this year. CMU also backs us 100 percent,” he said.

However, by the time CMU found out that local ice would be available, the ACHA schedule had been set. So for the 2011-2012 season, the Mavs will play seven scrimmage games against their former ACHA opponents. Because the ISI ice sheet is not regulation-sized, all these games will again be away, but at least the team can practice at home.

Coach Guska is upbeat. “When you focus on what you don’t have, you don’t have anything. We have to focus on what we have. Practice-wise, our situation this year is perfect — for games and fund-raising efforts, not so much, but the program is thriving. It’s transformed,” he said.

By Kristen Lummis
There is a depth in his warm brown eyes you don’t usually see in one so young, a hesitancy in his engaging sideways grin that at first seems a little perplexing. Austin Detra is not your typical 21-year-old college student.

Originally from Wisconsin, Detra grew up in Florida. During his senior year at Sarasota Christian High School, he and fellow swimmers on the Sarasota Sharks team went to Omaha, Nebraska, for the U.S. Olympic time trials. He didn’t do quite as well as he had hoped. Nevertheless, Detra still was awarded a swimming scholarship to the University of Florida, but he continued to struggle and left the team his sophomore year.

“I didn’t swim as well as I would have liked,” Detra recalled. “I don’t know if it was the cancer starting.”

He went home for spring break that year and mentioned to his mom that he had a lump on his testicle. “My mom made me go get it checked out,” he said. “I went to the family doctor, and he said it was not so normal — so the worry started.”

The lump was removed and chemotherapy began. For three months Detra went to chemotherapy six to nine hours every day for a week, then once a week for two weeks, then back to every day. “I didn’t throw up at all,” he said, “but I always felt like I wanted to. I don’t know which was worse. It all went by pretty fast. I didn’t have time to feel sorry for myself.”

That was Austin Detra’s summer in 2010.

Today, Detra is majoring in exercise science at Colorado Mesa University after coming here to visit a friend. He is on the swim team, on a scholarship and loves to mountain bike. He is pleased with his academic program and really likes head swimming coach Brian Pearson.

“He is persistent. He stays the course,” Pearson said. “Ultimately he knows he’s not going to be a Division I swimmer anymore, but he has found a niche in a great Division II school.”

Detra is working to improve his times despite the recent removal of his tonsils, and Pearson is optimistic. “We’ll compete at nationals,” Pearson said. “If he gets 100 percent back healthwise, he could be a national champ.”

Going through the experience of living with cancer can’t help but change a person. It did that for Detra. He ponders the lingering question of what might have caused it, but he spends far more time focusing on the present moment. Overcoming cancer, he said, “gave me back my passion for swimming — to swim for myself. I have a new lease on life, and I am thankful for that. If it weren’t for my mom, I might not have found out about it in time, so don’t be afraid to talk about it.”

By Dana Nunn
A good indication of success is when an intern at a company or agency is hired full time. That’s what happened to Maran Parry. In fact, the Mesa County Health Department offered her a job teaching cooking before her internship was finished.

Parry, 34, was a stay-at-home mom for eight years until her children started school. She returned to higher education in 2008 when her husband, Brian Parry, PhD, was hired as an assistant professor of psychology at CMU. She grabbed the opportunity to finish the degree she had begun at Utah Valley University in Provo, where she and her husband met.

She’s on an academic scholarship and consistently makes the President’s List. She is particularly pleased with the senior seminar that helped her update and strengthen her resume. “CMU helped me find an internship with the Mesa County Health Department last spring,” she said. “I’ve been there ever since.”

Parry said she is doing some things to help families in the community learn to plan, purchase and prepare healthy affordable meals at home. “Cooking Matters seemed to be a perfect fit with my kinesiology background,” she explained.

Cooking Matters courses teach family members skills that will last a lifetime. When families practice what they’ve learned in these courses, they are working against childhood hunger and protecting themselves from the destructive consequences of poor early nutrition. Parry said there are classes for all age ranges — and classes for diabetics. All this fits with her enthusiasm for helping people learn ways to improve their overall health.

After she completes her degree at CMU, Parry said she will take two years off from education to spend more time with her family. The Parrys have two children. Nya is 10 and Corbin is 7. “My children need a break,” she said. “I’ll most likely go for my master’s of public health online. There’s a possibility I might go on for a master’s or doctorate in occupational therapy.”

Parry finds little time for extracurricular activities. “Being a wife and mother on top of working and going to school full time,” she explained, “hasn’t really left me the opportunity to take part in many clubs or societies. I’ve been an assistant coach for Girls on the Run of Western Colorado and have recently taken a position on their board of directors. I also teach hypnobirthing classes in my spare time.”

Parry’s long-range plans include continuing with a career in public health. “Educating others is a passion of mine,” she said.

By Glenna Kyker Brayton
Back in 1982, the only time the marching band could rehearse was 7 a.m. Band member Dave Guerrie wanted something to wake up the group and get them going. What he invented was so much fun that it immediately caught the attention of everyone at the college and is still remembered fondly nearly 30 years later.

The Grobnicks were a six-man group of drummers that revolutionized half-time entertainment at Mesa football games — and much more. Sporting Groucho Marx glasses, noses, and mustaches and wearing baggy silver-sparkle tunics they found in a box of old band uniforms, the Grobnicks paraded up and down the field banging their drums in a calculatedly sloppy, haphazard fashion. They marched in circles and got the crowd roaring with steps lifted from rock and roll dances. They played old drums they’d repaired themselves.

A set piece of the Grobnick’s show was to pick out a coach, referee or even a security guard to surround and overwhelm with the noise of their drumming. Or they’d march up to the concession stand and hold it hostage with their antics. When a game wasn’t going on, they’d surprise professors by taking over their classes (just for a minute) with their noise and choreography. They were known to crash the homecoming parade and disrupt the event to everyone’s delight.

Not all the Grobnicks were drummers, though all were musicians. Members included Dave Guerrie; his brother Dan, a guitarist; Bruce Kassebaum; Blake Brueggeman; Mark Akens, a vocalist; and Kevin Hoskin, a trombone player.

The group took its name from a piece of music they had played in the Mesa band. “The Incredible Slats Grobnick” was based on a character created by Mike Royko of the Chicago Tribune, who used the Chicagoan as a comic mouthpiece to discuss current politics in a Polish bar.

During the two years they were active, everyone in Grand Junction wondered where they would show up next. Guerrie recalled their most unexpected appearance at a National Mayors’ Conference held at Two Rivers Convention Center. “It was like a vaudeville version of a marching band,” Brueggeman said.

Some wonder what the Grobnicks went on to do. Brueggeman owns an unexpected appearance at a National Mayors’ Conference held at Two Rivers Convention Center. “It was like a vaudeville version of a marching band,” Brueggeman said.

“Every Saturday I still have the urge to be a Grobnick. Why not? I still have my nose!”

By Paul Ludwig
W hen vocalists, bass guitar, keyboard and drums blend with cellos, violins, clarinets and horns, prepare to be blown away. When you hear “Carry On, My Wayward Son” or the opening chords of “I Love Rock ‘n’ Roll” or the hook to “Hit Me with Your Best Shot” with the powerful twist of orchestra, you’ll feel like you are on the Kingda Ka roller coaster at Six Flags about to take the ride of your life!

Calvin Hofer, head of the Colorado Mesa University Music Department, will lead the second season of Rockestra which began January 21. Rockestra, a full orchestra that performs rock classics, was inspired by the Sioux City Rockestra. The concept was adapted to suit Hofer’s own creative genius and was realized through collaboration between the Grand Junction Symphony and the music department.

Hofer describes Rockestra as an opportunity to engage people in the community who might not typically come to performances of the symphony or who might not even listen to classical music or jazz.

“It engages people of all ages, reaching out to a broader audience. Who doesn’t like rock and roll?” Hofer laughed. Perhaps addressing rockers who don’t think classical music is cool enough for their sensibilities, he noted that “Mozart broke away from tradition in his own time and played to the public. He was the rock star of his time. Women fainted when Mozart played.” The same can be said of Franz Liszt. Women threw their clothes onto the stage and tried to grab locks of his hair — almost 200 years ago.

Rockestra, however, accomplishes more than just entertaining audiences, as powerful as that endeavor might be. “With symphony programs struggling financially around the country, this provides a way for classical music programs to re-invent themselves and reach more people,” Hofer said, adding that Rockestra performances have been a great opportunity for both CMU theater and music majors to gain real-time experience in learning how a show comes together.

If you’re a rocker willing to take a chance on something different, a classical purist brave enough to leave your comfort zone or just a person craving some good music, come out and experience the phenomenon of Rockestra for yourself. All revenues are shared between the CMU Music Department and the Grand Junction Symphony.

By Barbara Mahoney

2012 Rockestra’s CMU Tour

Robinson Theater
May 19

Outdoor on the CMU Campus
August 18

University Center Ballroom
October 20
The Evolution of an Institution

The hallmark of the journey from a fledgling junior college with 39 students and classes in a condemned school house to a thriving University with 9,000 students and an 86-acre main campus with 11 residence halls has been spirit – the Maverick spirit.

Then as now, an independent nature and willingness to stand apart from the herd—among both community and institutional leaders—has helped propel Colorado Mesa University forward.

In 1900, Grand Junction was booming. The town had shed its shanty beginnings in less than 20 years. Fostered by the Denver and Rio Grand Railroad, Grand Junction boasted everything from brick homes with electricity to an opera house and 181 commercial enterprises. Feeling proud and prosperous, Grand Junction wanted a junior college. So did a number of Western Slope communities.

The state legislature could only approve one junior college for the Western Slope, so the battle lines were drawn. It took twenty-five years of legislative wrangling by tenacious community leaders like Grand Junction Schools Superintendent Richard Tope; Walter Walker, publisher of The Daily Sentinel; furniture store owner Ollie Bannister and then Lt. Governor Sterling Lacy, who hailed from Mesa County, before the junior college was approved.
On April 20, 1925, Governor Clarence Morley and Lt. Governor Lacy signed Senate Bill 262 and cleared the way for Grand Junction Junior College to become a reality.

But the work had just begun. The legislation required that the fledgling school secure 35 acres. A committee formed by the Chamber of Commerce selected a 37-acre parcel known as Capital Hill, now the home of St. Mary's Hospital. It was purchased for $3,300.

The governor appointed the first board of trustees—Tope, C.E. Cherrington and D.B. White—three men who weren’t interested in waiting for bricks and mortar even though there was no money available to build. The property on Capital Hill was leveled by the county’s public works department but sat idle.

For the first 12 years, classes took place in an old, rundown school building, in rooms in the courthouse, and at the YMCA. Tuition for each course was eight dollars. Seven basic courses were offered, and most of the five faculty members also were full-time teachers at Grand Junction High School. All financial support came from tuition, fees and various fundraising efforts by the community.

Despite all the obstacles and financial challenges, the infant college survived with the help of community members who were determined that their junior college would succeed.

No time was wasted in forming a football team. The first game was played in 1925 against Fruita Union High School. The school colors of maroon and white, signifying loyalty and purity, were chosen in 1925, but it took a few years to settle on a nickname. After the being the Pioneers, the College became the Collegians but the debate continued. Suggestions included Slopers, Terrors Jucos, Westerners and even the Peaches.

Finally in October 1929, the debate came to an end. They would be the Mavericks. The Daily Sentinel reported that the name would likely stick around.

"In the first place, a maverick is, in the range parlance of the old west, 'an unbranded animal.' The junior college grid men, if they live up to their appearance in practice, will be just about as hard to handle as those tough little calves on the range which were allowed to grow up on their own resources,” the Sentinel reported.

The junior college continued to grow but finances were tight. The only revenue came from tuition, fees and fundraisers hosted by the community. Then in 1937, the Colorado Legislature passed a bill allowing the establishment of a local taxing district for junior colleges if local voters approved.
On June 13, 1937 Mesa County voters approved a three-quarter mill levy in a landslide vote of 2,164 for and 102 against, creating the Mesa County Junior College District. The school became Mesa County Junior College.

Much of the credit for both the state law and subsequent approval by Mesa County voters went to college President Clifford Houston and Rep. Wayne Aspinall.

Meanwhile, the old Lowell School building was rapidly deteriorating. Enrollment had grown to 277 in 1936-37. The trustees decided the Capital Hill property was not ideal and purchased 10 acres at Twelfth Street and North Avenue. Ground was broken in November 1938 and in April 1940 the doors were opened to the new college building now known as Houston Hall.

With the opening of Houston Hall, the school became Mesa College. The college continued to grow, with the addition of new academic programs and buildings to support them.

The institution continued to grow in stature as a junior college through the 1960s. The next truly significant time of change for the institution began in 1970 with the hiring of Ted Albers as the sixth president of Mesa College. Albers began laying the groundwork that would enable the junior college to become a baccalaureate-granting college.

“Ted was hired to lead that charge. He did the research. He did the personal relationship work. He did the writing. He worked with the legislators,” said Carl Wahlberg, who was Albers’ right-hand man at the time. “Tillie (Bishop) was in the legislature and he helped a lot. Herb Bacon was chairman of the trustees. They had a bold vision for Mesa [as a four-year institution].”

Not everyone was in favor of the move from a two-year to a four-year school. Some faculty members complained that they hadn’t been kept in the loop. Some students worried that high quality two-year programs would be sacrificed and that the small classes and close working relationships between students and faculty would be lost.

“I don’t know, but I think the majority of the faculty would have voted to stay a two-year school,” Wahlberg said.

Albers, Bacon and other community leaders continued to fight for Mesa College and, finally, in 1972 Governor John Love signed the bill making Mesa College a baccalaureate degree granting institution, effective in the fall of 1974, assuming approval by Mesa County voters. “It passed overwhelmingly,” Wahlberg said.
With a count of 3,287 to 1,582 to approve, Mesa County voters dissolved the Mesa Junior College District and transferred all assets to the State.

The battle may have taken its toll on Albers, Wahlberg said. On June 30, 1974, Albers resigned for health reasons. Wahlberg took the helm for a year until John Tomlinson was hired to lead the transition from a junior college to a baccalaureate institution.

“Ted Albers really had the vision to get it done,” Wahlberg said. “John Tomlinson had the vision to make it work. As time went along, we became a traditional liberal arts college.”

The school continued to grow in academic programs, enrollment and buildings. In 1988, Mesa College’s name was changed to Mesa State College to better align its moniker with other state colleges governed by the State Colleges in Colorado Board of Trustees.

In 1992, the Tilman M. Bishop Technical Education Campus opened. Now known as Western Colorado Community College, this division of CMU is charged with fulfilling the University’s community college role and mission, including providing technical education. WCCC also serves the technical education needs of area high school students.

In 1997, the first graduate program was added, the Master of Business Administration. Mesa State College became the only institution in Colorado to offer technical certificates, associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees.

The next stage in the institution’s evolution was in 2003 when the legislature gave state colleges the authority to again be governed by local boards appointed by the governor. Mesa State’s first local governing board in many years hired Tim Foster in 2004 to be the College’s president.

Over the next seven years, the campus, its programs, faculty, funding and its student enrollment have expanded explosively, making Colorado Mesa University the envy of the state.

“When I started, the school was in the red,” Foster said. “I had a vision of what I wanted to accomplish, and presented my ideas throughout the community. No one really believed me.”

After selecting an advisory board made up of people who would challenge him, they set to work streamlining the organization.

“Eighty-five percent of our actions were targeted to areas of inefficiency. We are the only institution in Colorado that has eliminated deans, and at the time this caused an outrage. We turned their duties over to department heads, compensated them with a higher salary and we’ve saved more than $500,000 a year as a result,” he said.
Legacy Campaign Sustains Forward Momentum at CMU

Supporting critical investments in faculty, state-of-the-art facilities, technology and more, CMU's Legacy Campaign will ensure the University’s long-term financial sustainability by funding endowments in 12 key areas. To date, we have raised 80 percent of our $5.7 million goal.

To learn more about the Legacy Campaign and how you can be a partner, visit coloradomesa.edu/legacy or call 970.248.1902.

“We also attract the best people now because we raised our salary scale. The faculty is our heart and soul and I personally interview each candidate. Not only must they be outstanding scholastically, they must love people. It’s important that our students interact with their teachers. Our classes are small and each faculty member grades their own papers, and then offers feedback. We are the top school in the state for student satisfaction,” he said.

Dr. Jerry Moorman, who has served the college for 21 years said, “We’ve had some good presidents over the years, but none compare to Tim. He has the magic touch. He knows how the state works, and he presents his ideas in a respectful manner, always encouraging debate. He was the right man, in the right place, at the right time.”

In August 2011, the institution officially opened its doors under a new moniker—Colorado Mesa University. Student enrollment reached 9,000. The student to faculty ratio is 22:1 and there are more than 60 academic majors to choose from including a doctoral program. CMU is a member of the NCAA Division II and the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference and holds more than 68 conference and regional titles.

It takes real Mavericks to successfully grow a dynamic university in a community prone to boom-and-bust cycles from borrowed and make-shift junior college classroom space in the 1920’s to today's state-art-of-the-art facilities on three campuses. The institution is poised to be a leader in higher education in Colorado and across the West.

By Kate Ruland-Throne & Dana Nunn
Michael Burke is a third-generation alumnus of Colorado Mesa University. His grandfather attended Mesa Junior College, and his parents graduated from Mesa College.

A Colorado native, Burke was born in Rocky Ford in 1967. His family soon moved to Delta, where both parents taught school, making it hard to get away with anything.

Burke earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1990. His honors included Mesa State College’s Exceptional Male Student 1988, Outstanding Young Men of America 1989-90, and Outstanding Young Alum 1997.

He added law to his business degree program after a Mesa professor suggested he consider that field. He scored well on the law school admission test — and soon found himself at the University of Denver working on a Juris Doctorate and MBA, earning both degrees in 1993.

Burke and his wife applied for work in Grand Junction as well as in Denver. “Dee and I traveled to Grand Junction one Saturday and were both offered jobs,” he recalled. “We felt divine intervention in that Grand Junction is where we belong. There may be nothing more beautiful than the glory of the morning sunshine or low clouds on the Colorado National Monument.”

Burke has practiced law in western Colorado since 1994. His practice covers a variety of areas, but he prefers the focus of business and estate planning. He is the managing shareholder of Kain & Burke, PC.

“Dee has had a big part in everything I have accomplished,” Burke said. “She grew up near Boulder and transferred to Mesa as a junior. We were both trying to get elected as state officers in Phi Beta Lambda. We’re competitive, and Dee didn’t like me much. Her dad said, ‘I bet you end marrying that guy.’ We didn’t have a real honeymoon because I was a first-year law student when we married. We celebrated our 20th anniversary this summer in Venice, Italy.” Dee is Director of Human Resources at Rocky Mountain Health Plans.

Burke is involved in the community and has served as president of the former Mesa State College Alumni Association and of Mesa State College Foundation, president of the Rotary Club, and on the boards of directors for Grand Junction Musical Arts Association and Chamber of Commerce. He is also active in his church and enjoys coaching Little League baseball. “Kids,” he said, “not only learn the sport, but they learn life lessons about leadership, teamwork and sportsmanship.”

When it comes to his own children, “With all due respect to other parents,” Burke said, “Alison and Nicholas are the finest children in all of Colorado. Alison is a high school freshman and loves music and the arts and teaches Sunday school. Nicholas, a fourth-grader, is an all-star baseball player and a leader in all he does.”

Burke reflected upon his college experience, “Mesa offered small classes, personal attention, and an opportunity for genuine relationships with the professors. I graduated more than 20 years ago and still keep up with a number of my professors.”

Someday, when his schedule permits, Burke would love to teach college classes. “It would be fitting to come full circle,” he said, “and teach courses in business or law at my alma mater.”

By Glenna Kyker Brayton
Greg Walcher is a respected national leader in natural resources policy. Most noted for being the founder and president of Natural Resources Group, a nationwide coalition of consultants, he is also a partner at The Stillwell Group, a global public affairs firm; a senior advisor to Dawson and Associates, an environmental permitting firm; and a fellow at both the American Tradition Institute and the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Walcher’s political career began with his election as student body president at Mesa in 1978 and culminated with service in the governor’s cabinet, leading the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. His colleagues elected him president of the National Organization of Natural Resources Cabinet Secretaries. Leveraging a decade of Capitol Hill experience with Senator Bill Armstrong, Walcher spent ten years as President and CEO of Club 20, a lobbying organization promoting western Colorado. He also served on the national policy committee for the American Society of Association Executives and on the board of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation.

In 2004, Walcher was the Republican candidate for Congress in Colorado’s Third District, a race that attracted national media attention as the top targeted House race in America. He won the hotly contested five-way primary and shattered previous Colorado records for congressional fundraising. He came within two points of victory.

Walcher is passionate about his service with Club 20. “Although 80 percent of the state’s population live on the other side, 80 percent of the state’s resources are on the Western Slope; the federal government owns 75 percent of the land; and 100 million people depend on water that originates here.”

Walcher and his wife Diana maintain a home in Palisade, along with a 4,000-tree peach orchard that they planted themselves. His grandparents were Palisade peach growers, and his parents still are. He currently lives in Washington, D.C., but plans to retire here when his work in the nation’s capital is done.

A Grand Valley native, he earned a BA in American history and political science from Mesa. Natural resource issues are personal to Walcher. His orchard and fresh fruit shipping business, with customers in more than 40 states, was featured in Gourmet magazine as a cutting-edge example of quality niche marketing and high-altitude fruit production.

Walcher has been a member of Grand Junction Rotary for more than 20 years and maintains membership in the University’s alumni association. He supports the history and culture of Mesa County. He is a lifetime member of the Grand Junction Methodist church.

The Walchers have one daughter, who is a graduate of Colorado State University and a resident of Longmont.

His blog, “Resources and Reality,” attracts hundreds of readers, and he has written a book slated for publication in 2012. He attributes his interest in politics and natural resources to his education at Mesa.

“The professors, staff, and fellow students at Colorado Mesa University have always been world-class, and they instilled in me and thousands of others a lifelong interest in learning,” he said. •

By Glenna Kyker Brayton
Stephen Kirkham was inducted into the Hall of Honor at Colorado Mesa University in a ceremony on Sept. 30, 2011. He had served as head women’s basketball coach from 1988 to 2004, retiring after 16 years with the most wins in the school’s history — and the history of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. Far from calling it quits and basking in his triumphs, he’s now gone on to be athletic director at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS).

Coach Kirkham led the Mavericks to four RMAC championships, seven consecutive RMAC West Division championships, and one RMAC tournament title. His team also recorded 15 winning seasons, advancing to ten consecutive RMAC Shootout Tournaments. During his tenure, Kirkham’s teams also set the league records for ten consecutive winning seasons, and his 2002 team was the first RMAC team to host an NCAA regional tournament. This 2002 team led the nation in field goal percentage defense (at 33 percent!), and his 1999 team led in rebound margin at +13.5. Twenty-eight institutional records are held by teams that Kirkham coached.

He said his experience at CMU had a significant influence on his life. “It is about the journey. I have been contacted by many of my former players during this process, and although we were highly successful, their memories are of the good times and good friends. I also became a better coach and person because of the contact with great ladies who were driven and exceptional,” Kirkham said.

Jill Derrieux, one of those “great ladies,” was a player on Kirkham’s very first team at what then was Mesa College. Derrieux, who still lives in Grand Junction, recalled, “Coach Kirkham was a passionate coach who hated to lose. He worked us hard, but we had fun in the process.” She said that if they lost a game that he thought they should have won, the team could end up with double practices the next day. “Coach Kirkham had a knack for coming up with just the right play to win the game when the score was close,” she said. “Coach taught us teamwork and how to outwork the competition. He has many former players who are community leaders, business owners or individuals who have climbed the corporate ladder. He recruited quality players, but the lessons he instilled remain with us in our adult lives.”

Kirkham’s advice for future athletes is, “The lessons learned in athletics are unique,” he said. “Certain traits can be learned in other venues, but nowhere else are they learned with the intensity and clarity found in athletics. Being a teammate, a leader, a good loser and winner and a competitor are all attributes that will carry you through life. You have to be goal-oriented in athletics, as it is probably the last true meritocracy left. It is up to you how far you go and how good you can be.”

Kirkham, who lives now in Colorado Springs with his wife Coleen, showed us all how far he could go and how good he could be. •

By Paul Harshman
Making It Big
The 1982 Mesa Mavs

The 1982 Mesa Maverick Football Team was the first team from Mesa to advance in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics post-season competition. That team went 11-1-1 and they were the national runner-up in the 1982 NAIA title game, the first in the school’s history to win an RMAC championship, the first to qualify for the NAIA playoffs, the first to win a playoff game, and the first in Mesa and RMAC history to play for a national championship.

In September 2011 the team was inducted into the Colorado Mesa University Hall of Honor. The leader of that team, Bob Cortese, coached the Mavs from 1980 to 1997. According to the RMAC, “Cortese is one of the winningest coaches in the history of RMAC football.”

Tim Donahue was a Maverick in 1982. “I had a lot of respect for Coach Cortese,” he said. “If we listened, we learned. I started out B string and came out an All-American!”

After Donahue left college, he went to work for the F. W. Woolworth Corporation — which shut down two years later. Donahue’s team experience served him well. “It gave me something to fall back on. You just pick yourself up and get back in the game,” he said.

Another great player was Kevin Maloney, who recalled, “We gave our blood, toil, tears, and sweat for each other. We knew the depth of each other’s souls and the depthness of our hearts and that we could count on each other. We just knew!” What did he learn from being a Maverick? Maloney said, “Wow! That’s easy: I have seen the view from the top of the highest financial mountain and the lowest of financial lows. Had it not been for the mentality to fight and fight and fight, I would have never made it to see that view from the mountain top.”

In 1982, Mesa hosted two playoff games at Stocker Stadium for the national championship. The Mavericks defeated Moorhead State of Minnesota 43-20, drawing more than 5,500 fans in the quarterfinal victory. The semifinal game was a standing-room-only matchup with Hillsdale (Michigan) at Stocker Stadium in which the Mavericks prevailed 18-9.

The team of 80 incredible players demonstrated a commitment to success and perseverance and put Mesa on the football map forever. Maloney explained the power of the organization. “The Mavs gave me the courage to fight with conviction, to live life as an exclamation — not an explanation. They helped me grow as a man, to gain what I wanted and the decency to understand the man I am. I am one of 80, from a special time and special place. Thank you, my brothers!”

By Paul Harshman
Dear Alumni,

During various events, I've had the pleasure of meeting alumni from just about every decade of our school's existence. One common theme in the conversations has been the quality of education our students received from faculty who were (and are) passionate about teaching. These graduates tell stories about professors going above and beyond to help their students be successful learners and to show them how to apply those principles in the “real world.” Even though Mesa has gone through a name change and dramatic campus changes, one thing has not changed — our core values.

Your Alumni Association Board of Directors is hardworking and passionate. A consistent topic of discussion is the value of an education and a degree from Colorado Mesa University. Without a doubt, the value of the education has always been high, but now we see the value of the degree increasing to new levels. Just as the institution is becoming more popular with students because of its excellent faculty and campus, this increased awareness elevates the value of our degrees even further. Employers locally, statewide, and nationally are becoming more cognizant that alumni from CMU are good recruits and employees.

We want to preserve our history and the expectation that when alumni enter the workforce or graduate school, they are prepared for success. I know the education I received prepared me well to achieve my ambitions in life, and I'm confident that CMU will continue with this long history of excellence and prestige.

I encourage you to support Colorado Mesa University. A strong alma mater translates into more valuable degrees for us alumni! Go Mavs!

Sincerely,

Stacey (Wakefield) Mascarenas ‘91
President

Tell us about your life and accomplishments since college.
Submit your class notes entry at coloradomesa.edu/alum or scan this QR code to submit via mobile device.
1930s

Dr. Rex Ingraham, ‘34, received the 2010 University of Southern California Half Century Trojans Hall of Fame award in recognition of his contributions to the school and to dentistry. Ingraham is recognized throughout the world for his expertise in restorative dentistry, occlusion and dental education.

1940s

Marry Burris, ‘41, attended Mesa when enrollment was about 250. She remembers classes being held in an abandoned building near downtown. The students had to heat the building with a coal stove in each room; male students had to stoke the fire. But the next year a brand-new building for classrooms opened on the corner of Twelfth and North Avenue. Today Burris lives in Naperville, Illinois.

1950s

Fred Hering, ’55, went into Navy pilot training after attending Mesa. He served 22 years in the Navy, including one year in Vietnam. He was married in 1970 and has three sons and one granddaughter. Before his wife passed away in 1987, they enjoyed hiking and camping with their family in the Cascades. After leaving the Navy, Hering worked in the real estate business for 25 years. Today he serves as a volunteer in his community of Bothell, Washington.

1960s

Hank Daviero, ’67, and his wife Judy celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary at their beachside home in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Their children are Julie, Spanky, Tony, and Jeffy. They recently visited Disney World with their grandchildren, Reilly, Jack, Jaden and Jacob. Daviero is currently an administrative dean with Orange County Schools in Orlando.

John Duffy, ’68, played football at Adams State College after making second team All-American at Mesa in 1968. He graduated in 1971 and joined the Air Force, where he spent seven years flying C-141 and F-111 aircraft. After his military service, Duffy worked for Exxon, managing offshore drilling rigs. During that time, he traveled the world and worked primarily in West Africa. He retired after 25 years and spent the next five years riding a Harley around the country with his wife. Duffy has one daughter and two grandchildren. He is the coordinator for the junior high golf program and is the interim coach for the varsity girls’ golf team at Odessa High School in Odessa, Texas.

Stanley Miller, ’68, moved to California after attending Mesa. There he received both his BA and MA. He returned to Grand Junction in 1997 and works as a licensed professional counselor in a private practice. He and his wife Linda enjoy outdoor activities like camping, hiking, skiing, and fly-fishing as well as spending time with their kids, grandchildren, and two schnoodles. After many trips to Europe, Miller is now learning Italian.

1970s

Carl James,’71, graduated from Mesa and worked ten years as a civil engineer in a private consulting firm, then spent 28 years with five different federal agencies in four states. He retired in 2008 and is writing full time. Recently he published the Sands of Time Trilogy, a saga of the most powerful queens and pharaohs of ancient Egypt. He lives in Helena, Montana, and has been married to Judy Pfifer of Delta, Colorado, for 43 years. They have two children and two grandchildren.

Douglass Ellis, ’76, lives in Nashua, New Hampshire. He is married and has two children.

Jacquelyn L. (Gergat) Reese, ‘77, lives in Coulee Dam, Washington. Her youngest child graduated from Brigham Young University in 2009. She has three grandsons.
1980s
Robby and Diane (Dodd) Baker, ’80, were married in the fall following graduation. Rocky received a bachelor’s in accounting, and Diane earned an associate’s degree in early childhood education. During their time at Mesa, Diane played on the college’s first softball team. The couple still lives in Grand Junction, where Rocky works as a business manager at the Colorado Department of Transportation and Diane teaches at the Kids of the Kingdom Preschool, which she helped found in 1983. They have three boys: BJ, born in 1984; Joey, born in 1986; and Lanny, born in 1991. Their family enjoys playing sports and traveling together. Rocky is also an elder at Northeast Christian Church where Diane sings and plays keyboard on the praise team.

Eric Bradell, ’81, lives in West Melbourne, Florida, where he is the assistant lodging manager at Patrick Air Force Base. He retired in 1997 from the Air Force after serving for more than 24 years.

Michael R. Maguire, ’82, played basketball at Mesa in 1981 under head coach Doug Schakel and current head coach Jim Heaps. Maguire said that Mesa holds a special place in his heart. After graduating, he moved to Portales, New Mexico, where he has lived and worked for Eastern New Mexico University for more than 20 years. While teaching at ENMU, he coached the women’s volleyball team for 20 years and served as the athletic director for eight years.

Gina Smith Armstrong, ’85, lives in Golden and is married with three kids.

Barbara Bowman, ’86, is director of marketing and communications for Mission Aviation Fellowship, a faith-based, nonprofit ministry based in Nampa, Idaho, that serves missions and isolated people around the world. Previously she worked for nine years at the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, where she was senior manager of the small business division, director of the center for workforce leadership and vice president of member services. Bowman has also served as business education manager for School-to-Work, a federal education reform initiative, and managed the local Lee Hecht Harrison, an international career management firm. She also serves as board chairwoman for the Idaho Nonprofit Center, which advocates for nonprofits throughout the state. She mentors through Boise Young Professionals and works with adolescents as a Young Life leader. In 2007, the Idaho Business Review recognized Bowman as the Idaho Business Woman of the Year.

David Frick, ’89, is general manager for the Morgan County Rural Electric Cooperative. Previously he served as chief operating officer for MCREA. During his 22 years with MCREA, Frick has held positions as line superintendent, lead lineman, journeyman lineman, and apprentice lineman. He graduated from Mesa’s lineman program, has been certified by the National Rural Electric Association’s Management Internship Program and served as a charter board member at Western Nebraska Community College Lineman’s Program. Frick and his wife Tracy live near Fort Morgan with their two children, Brianna and Dawson.

Kellie LeMay, ’95, lives in Hendersonville, North Carolina. She is divorced and has two boys, Brennan and Keegan, and a miniature dachshund named Holly.

Susan Haldeman, ’95, currently lives in Hudson, Florida, with her fiancée Brandi and their five furry children: Ninja, a Great Dane; Skully and Stitch, Boston terriers; and Fionna and Panini, who are cats.

Cathi Collings, ’95, lives in Aurora and has been happily married to Ron Collings for three years. They have three grown children. After working for many years in the NICU at St. Mary’s Hospital, Collings earned her MSN/EdD in 2008 and is now teaching at the Denver School of Nursing.

Major Jeffrey Goodell, ’90, stands before a Mesa flag sent to him by Coach Joe Ramunno. Goodell is serving in Afghanistan, and it is a tradition among the Marine officers to display their alma mater’s flag at headquarters.

Dan Marries, ’96, works as a news anchor in for KOLD-TV (CBS) in Tucson, Arizona. In 2005, he received an Emmy Award from the Southwest Chapter for a segment on cultural diversity and a Communicator’s Award for a story on retired bronco horses. Marries’ parents and siblings remain in Grand Junction. He has traveled three times to Vietnam to tape documentaries on American veterans.
and enjoys spending time with his son, camping, target shooting, hiking, biking and exploring the desert.

Gregor Teusch, ’96, graduated with a BS in economics and went on to receive his MS in industrial relations from Cornell University in 1998. He lives in New York City with his wife and three children and is the director of executive compensation at Hess Corporation.

Laura Brooks, ’97, lives in Glenwood Springs and is the general manager for the Courtyard by Marriott.

Sooner Halverson, ’97, and her family moved from Grand Junction to Cat Island in the Bahamas to restore and remodel their own resort.

David and Mandy (DeCino) Vindiola, ’97 and ’04, first graduated with degrees in human performance and wellness and then earned their MBAs in 2004. They own and operate several businesses in Grand Junction, including Western Slope Real Estate Investors, GJ Property, Wealth Balance and MVM Mortgage Group.

Kasia Iwaniczko, ’97, lives in Denver and is employed with Verizon, where she works in product marketing, managing the IP development and enablement of various product lines. Iwaniczko also sits on the board of directors for New Genesis and the Denver Art Museum. In 1997, she was on a U.S. State Advisory Committee and also received a congressional appointment to the United States Commission on Civil Rights.

Bill Kappel, ’98, worked as an on-air meteorologist for ten years at various television stations across the country. Currently, he is the vice president and senior meteorologist of Applied Weather Associates in Monument. The focus of activity at AWA has been site-specific probable maximum precipitation and extreme storm analysis. He has been married to Mesa alumnus Veronica Kappel since 1995. They have two children, Isabella was born in 2007 and Jacob was born in 2010.

Misty (West) Griffith, ’98, was an RA for Monument Hall her senior year at Mesa, then attended the University of Central Arkansas, where she earned an M.S. in psychology and counseling. She and her husband Chad have one son Austin who was born in December 2006. She enjoys softball, volleyball, collecting sports memorabilia, scrapbooking and stamping. Griffith currently works as a room assignment coordinator for Eastern Washington University. She has received multiple awards and recognitions, including Regional Board of Directors for Southwest Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls in 1999-2000, Residential Life Coordinator of the Year for EWU (2003-2003), Advisor/Coach for Club Softball at EWU (2001-2002), Advisor for Residence Hall Association and Co-Advisor for National Residence Hall Honorary (2001-2003) and Graduate Assistant Coach for Softball (Division II) at UCA (1998-1999).

Sandi (Stone) Lampshire, ’98, is married to fellow alumnus Jon (’97). They have a daughter Morgan and a son Camden. Lampshire is marketing director at Horrocks Engineers and is responsible for all writing, presentations, graphic design and market strategy. During her time at Mesa, Lampshire was catcher for the Mavs softball team and still enjoys softball, volleyball and golf. She loves playing outside with her children and teaching them sports. Her hobbies include reading, writing and interior design.

William Gaynor, ’98, lives in Bristol, Connecticut, where he works as a network analyst for the Hudson Valley Hospital Center.

Bill Craig, ’98, lives in Mount Vernon, Washington, and is an injury prevention coordinator for Skagit County Medic One. He and his wife Glory have two daughters and two sons. He enjoys traveling to Saskatchewan, Wyoming and Colorado. Near Seattle, Craig enjoys visiting the Cascades and the San Juan Islands. In his community he has been involved with Safe Kids Worldwide, Safe Kids Washington, the Mount Vernon City Library Board and the Kiwanis Club.

Karrie (Mitchell) Fletcher, ’99, received a degree in finance at Mesa. She went on to receive her master’s from the University of Colorado Graduate School of Banking in Boulder. Once she completed the Alpine Management Training program and before moving to the Rifle bank location, she worked with Alpine Trust and Asset Management. She currently sits on the board for YouthZone and the Rifle Community Foundation. She is also a Rifle Chamber ambassador. She and her husband Jason have two children.

Walter Gray, ’99, is currently a sales division manager for Allstate Insurance in Denver. While at Mesa, Gray was vice president of the Black Student Alliance.

2000s

Natalie Odette, ’00, lives in Parker with her family. She has been married for ten years and has two children, 2 and 4.

Kacey Giammanco, ’00, lives in Pacific Grove, California. She is married and has four children, Jordan, Anthony, Jack and Alexandra.

Meighen Stebbins, ’00, lives in Parker and enjoys life with her husband Brian and her daughters, Grace and Gavin.

Jennifer (Thompson) Mathews, ’00, lives in Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

Michella (Erikson) Atchley, ’01, is one of three members of American Mensa living in Paonia. American Mensa is a high-IQ society that accepts the top two percent of the general population on an accepted standardized intelligence test. A native of Paonia, Atchley works at Oxbow Mining, LLC, and is also self-employed as a CPA. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in public accounting from Mesa and became one of the roughly ten percent of students sitting for the CPA exam who passed all four segments on her first attempt. In April, Atchley completed her requirements for licensure in secondary education/business from Regis University with a cumulative GPA of 3.974. She spent her student-teaching time at Fruita Monument High School.
Kelly Reece, '01, played softball for two years at Grand Rapids Community College, where she earned All-American honors before transferring to Mesa in 2000. She led the nation with 21 home runs that season. In 2009, she was named the best player in the 100-year history of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. After competing collegiately, Adams was part of a US national team that played in the Czech Republic. She stayed in Prague and played one season in a Czech Republic league while competing in countries such as Germany and Italy.

Matthew Marvin, '01, works for the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. He started with CBI as an intern while he was still attending Mesa.

Melanie (Van Alstyne) Eaton, '03, lives in Littleton with her husband and son.

Geana Gaasch, '03, lives in Grand Junction.

Laura (Huffman) Howell, '03, lives in Watertown, New York, where she is the administrative manager for Youth Advocate programs. She received her Master of Arts in secondary education from the University of Phoenix. In 2002, she married fellow CMU alumnus and Maverick football player Stephen Howell. They have a dog named Sully. As a military family, they have lived in four different states in six years. Laura enjoys running, playing hockey and surfing.

Jason Arthur, '03, was married in 2006 to Erin Redmond, his longtime sweetheart. He coached football and track while teaching high school math in Parachute for two years. He and Erin then moved to Denver where she attended medical school. He is now teaching at Highland Tech High School in Anchorage, Alaska. He and his class were selected as one of nine finalists to represent the United States at the Microsoft Partners in Learning 2011 Innovative Education Global Forum in Washington, D.C.

Matt Tyler, '05, is head tennis coach for both men and women at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. He was previously an assistant coach at Colgate University of New York and the tennis professional at the Ken Caryl Ranch in Littleton. After graduating from Mesa, he played professional tennis on the International Tennis Federation at the Futures level for three years and was ranked in the top ten at the men's open division in Colorado. He was ranked No. 444 in the United States Tennis Association Pro Circuit in 2007.

Charles E. Dukes, '05, lives in Denver.

Heather Lynn (Hatzenbeller) Penner, '05, is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive-care unit at Benefis, one of the largest health systems in Great Falls, Montana. She is married to Justin Robert Penner.

Amanda (Fout) Campbell, '05, graduated from medical school in May 2010 and is in a residency program in Michigan.

Darren Kellerby, '05, visited Grand Junction in 2009 when he brought a group of high school students that he taught at a remote school in Alaska for a visit. The four students he brought were about half the enrollment of the Napakiak, Alaska, high school, and most had never traveled outside of the state. Some hadn’t even been to Anchorage, about 400 miles east of the village. The purpose was to show the students the differences between the culture in Alaska and the culture in other parts of the United States. Kellerby said the trip was important for students because it would show them that other places are accessible, which can open doors of going to college and finding careers. The trip was Kellerby’s last year teaching in the village. He moved to Anchorage the following year.

Tasheka R. (Gaines) Norman, '06, is still married to Reginald Norman Jr., whom she met during her sophomore year at Mesa. They live in Colorado Springs with their two pets, a chow-chow named Kimba and a cat named Kanani.

Shauna (Backes) Harris, '06, works as a Realtor/real estate broker at Keller Williams Grand Junction Realty, LLC. She and her husband Joshua have one son.

Katrina Lankova, '06, lived in Aspen for a few years before moving to New York, hoping to become a well-known designer. As she built her business, she began sewing costumes to make some extra money. She received five different awards for outstanding costumes and some were used at the Joyce Theater in New York. She also competed with other designers from around the world in various fashion challenges. Lankova does miss the financial security she had in Aspen but is much happier in New York. Some of her designs can be found at a store in Aspen. A short story she wrote was published in a book about Eastern European women living abroad.

Lindsay Nash, '06, earned her BS in accounting information systems at Mesa and went on to earn her master’s in accounting and financial management as well as a master’s in information systems management from Keller Graduate School. Nash is a licensed CPA and currently works for Alpine Bank. She is very active in the community, helping with local elections and assisting with Operation Vacation fund-raisers. She enjoys softball, puzzles, spending time with her boyfriend and dog, and playing with her new 2-year-old adopted sister.

Matthew Soper, '07, was awarded a Master of Law degree from the University of Edinburgh in the United Kingdom. While there, he was invited to the installation ceremony of political author and journalist Iain Macwhirter as rector of the University of Edinburgh. The ceremony took place in the historic Playfair Library Hall of Old College, which also houses the School of Law. The installation was in the presence of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh.

Patrick Bahr, '07, was a sports reporter for the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel. He also worked for the Salt Lake Tribune. His hobbies include cooking and watching the Green Bay Packers.

Christina Moon, '08, recently was accepted into the DNP program at University of Arizona. She is planning to move to the historic Del Norte
Sarah E. Tait Dodd
Big Dreams for Small Towns

Sarah E. Tait Dodd, ’08, walked through the doors of Colorado Mesa University intending to pursue a degree in nursing. Her goals changed during the first year of her college journey. She graduated in 2008 with a degree in biology and entered medical school to study anesthesia. She will graduate from the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine in the spring of 2012.

Dodd is the oldest of three children. She was homeschooled by her parents who own a pizzeria in Grand Junction where she worked as a teen. Dodd has always been grateful that she was accepted into CMU and was awarded a scholarship. That gave her the opportunity to achieve her dreams and live at home while she studied.

CMU’s excellent science and advanced Spanish courses prepared Dodd for the rigors of medical school and she was able to take classes in Costa Rica as a CMU student. She is proud that she can communicate with her Spanish-speaking patients without an interpreter.

Dodd credits the guidance of her advisor at CMU and the experience she gained working as an endoscopy technician during college for influencing her decision to cultivate her interest in medicine.

While Dodd was preparing for medical school, she realized that CMU students were under-represented in professional medical, dental and pharmaceutical schools. “There is a very big applicant pool for professional school,” she said. In response, she pioneered Western Colorado Rural Health Scholars, a program that supports students through the process of admission to professional school and encourages them to address the healthcare provider shortage in rural communities. Applicants are advised by other students in areas such as writing personal statements and participating in mock interviews. They are also given opportunities to observe professionals in the community.

Dodd forged the relationship between the university and the hospital to develop a shadowing program. As founder and director, she created the curriculum and procured grants to pilot a summer intensive in 2011. She hopes the program can expand to support more students and to help meet the healthcare needs in rural communities.

“I would encourage students to work hard to maximize the resources at CMU and in Grand Junction,” Dodd said. “There are so many worthwhile things there. CMU alumni should continue to give back to the school and be great mentors to those behind them.” She will pass the leadership of Western Colorado Rural Health Scholars on to one of her fellow medical students upon her graduation to encourage sustainability and forward movement of the program.

Even though Dodd stays busy with her patients and medical school, she thinks it’s important to maintain balance. She loves to cook, do yoga, and run. She and her husband enjoy the amenities that Denver has to offer, but in keeping with her commitment to improving rural health care, she would like to live in a small town with a Western feel once she goes into private practice. Dodd has a heart for community and believes strongly in education and mentoring. She plans to serve people as a dedicated physician and as a motivated leader in outreach programs.

By Holli Dawn Means

2010s
Jacob Richmeier, ’11, lives in Littleton and is starting his career at Primerica as an assistant manager. He and his wife, Sabrina, who was also a student at Mesa, enjoy trips back to Grand Junction to visit the Colorado National Monument and other outdoor areas.

To learn more about upcoming alumni events, go to coloradomesa.edu/alum
Jeremy Smith, Andrea Wilkins, and Melanie Butler had a daunting task. Draft, edit, present and refine concepts for Colorado Mesa University's new logo, seal and athletic marks – and do it in 60 days. This formidable assignment—one that might make teams in the most experienced advertising agencies shudder—was one that these Mavericks tackled with professionalism and first-rate skills.

That's right. Each member of the design team is, or will soon be, CMU alumni.

“We know the honor and tradition of what it means to be a Maverick,” said Smith, the team leader. Smith, CMU’s senior graphic artist, graduated in 2005. Wilkins started just days after graduation last May and Butler will complete her graphic design degree this May. Their intimate knowledge of the brand would prove to be a valuable asset as the team embarked on the painstaking and swift journey of developing a new visual identity for the school formerly known as Mesa State College.

The trio developed more than 50 concepts for the University’s new, primary insignia alone. Lively discussion ensued as concepts were pitched to CMU’s marketing leaders, eventually being whittled down to 16 finalists. These options were presented to focus groups of alumni, students, coaches, faculty and administrators. Six final options were selected and refined before presentation to the University’s senior leadership team. Ultimately, three designs would make the final cut for presentation to the Board of Trustees that ultimately selected the final, new logo (pictured above).

With that in place, work immediately started on companion logos for CMU athletics, the official University seal, and Western Colorado Community College.

In total, more than 100 concepts were crafted and meticulously refined to build the foundation of the University’s new visual identity.

“It was an amazing process. As students, we hone our craft and gain real-world experience but nothing can compare to this. It was intense in the best sense of the word,” said Wilkins.

The stylized mesas and rivers combine with a refined type treatment to convey the active, optimistic and aspirational nature of the University. It reflects the individualistic and independent attitude of the school with a non-conforming “R.” All told, it’s a sophisticated visual representation of an institution that is both steeped in great tradition while being modern and forward-thinking.

The team — each of whom embodies the Maverick spirit of school — agrees that they’re proud of their work. As Smith summed it up, “The new visual identity provides our wonderful alma mater a solid foundation for a bright future of endless possibilities.”

By Kristi Pollard & Michael Mansheim
HELP BUILD CHAMPIONS!

Joining the Maverick Club is one way in which alumni and friends of Colorado Mesa University can build champions. By joining the Maverick Club you become a part of a team of fans and alumni who are passionate and dedicated in their support of Maverick Athletics and our student athletes.

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To learn more and join, visit coloradomesa.edu/mavclub or call 970.248.1871 today!

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