

State Representative
LESLIE HEROD
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Denver, CO 80203
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Chair:
Appropriations Committee
Legal Services Committee
Member:
Joint Budget Committee

COLORADO
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
State Capitol
Denver
80203

April 13th, 2021

The Honorable Jason Crow
3300 S Parker Rd #100
Aurora, CO 80014

Dear Congressman Crow,

I am pleased to offer strong support for the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus' Community Project Funding request to improve access for underrepresented students to health and STEM-fields. Minority students in Denver and Aurora face enormous structural barriers to accessing careers in health and medicine. Improving their access will require a concerted effort on the part of many institutions within our communities. The university is taking an important step by seeking to grow its programs to support and nurture the interest of underrepresented K-12 and undergraduate students early in their educational careers.

The CU Anschutz Medical Campus produces a large percentage of the state's new healthcare workforce each year – graduating nearly 1,500 students as physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, physician's assistants, and other allied health professionals. Their student population must represent the communities they serve if Colorado is going to have a healthcare workforce capable of providing culturally competent care and addressing the needs of our diverse communities. I am pleased to hear about their strong interest in supporting students with mentoring, tutoring, test-prep, life-skills and other resources throughout their education prior to enrollment in the health professional programs. These are the resources our students need to arrive at the application process for health professional schools on level footing with more privileged students.

The CU Anschutz Medical Campus is proposing focuses on providing students in Denver and Aurora public schools with early exposure to health and science profession, and provides increasing levels of support for high school and undergraduate students. I am also pleased to see the initiative is partnered with 2040 Partners in Health, which has been active in schools in Park Hill neighborhoods as well as the Denver-based Health Interest Program (HIP). These community partners will help ensure the campuses' engagement in our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie".

Leslie Herod
State Representative
House District 8



9801 E. Colfax Ave Suite 250
Aurora, CO 80010
Main: 720.216.0075
Fax: 720.523.0103

The Honorable Jason Crow
3300 S Parker Rd #100
Aurora, CO 80014
April, 2021

Dear Congressman Crow,

I am extremely please to offer this letter of support for the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus' Community Project Funding request to create a pipeline for underrepresented and first generation students in our communities into the health professions.

In my work in the community of Aurora and with medical students on the Anschutz campus, I have seen how crucial a strong and committed pipeline support program is to underrepresented students to have an opportunity to become the healthcare providers that their communities need.

That support is exponentially more important given the impact of the COVID crisis, which has threatened the educational and career opportunities for Black, Latino, and Native American students, whose communities have been hardest hit by the pandemic. The pandemic's impact further undermines the support structures for these students, while also showing how crucial it is to have providers who represent those communities, both now and in future, in order to achieve greater health equity.

The biggest challenge for the majority of the students is having ongoing support as they manage the challenges that their daily lives entail, from initial exposure to STEM and healthcare careers, through their high school and college programs. The campus has a strong start with the excellent programs that already exist, and yet they are not funded optimally or fully linked together, and the pipeline and support is loose and leaky, so there is considerably more potential. To pull these programs and efforts together it is important to have additional human capital and operational resources.

The pipeline support program that the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is proposing will be an enormous boost to providing the support underrepresented students need now, including mentoring and tutoring, STEM support opportunities, and the access to and awareness of the other resources currently available or proposed.

East Montclair, Northwest Aurora, Stapleton, Park Hill Neighborhoods,
Community Organizations and The University of Colorado Denver

"Building Connections to Improve Local Neighborhood Health through the Year 2040"



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There are incredible, talented, and interested underrepresented youth in our communities. This pipeline program will give them opportunities at a time when they are more vulnerable than ever because of the impact of the pandemic on their families and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Meredith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Janet Meredith

Director of "Committed to Community" Student/Community Program,
2040 Partners for Health

East Montclair, Northwest Aurora, Stapleton, Park Hill Neighborhoods,
Community Organizations and The University of Colorado Denver

"Building Connections to Improve Local Neighborhood Health through the Year 2040"



Colorado Area Health Education Center
13120 E 19th Ave F-433
Aurora CO, 80045
cuanschutz.edu/centers/coahec

The Honorable Jason Crow
3300 S Parker Rd #100
Aurora, CO 80014

April 16, 2021

Dear Congressman Crow,

On behalf of the Colorado Area Health Education Center (COAHEC), I strongly support the University of Colorado (CU) Anschutz Medical Campus' (AMC) request for Community Project Funding to engage and involve more underrepresented students in the education pathway towards health professions careers. Health outcomes for marginalized communities improve when providers to these cultures hail from these backgrounds. Underrepresented Minority (URM) students in Denver, Aurora, and into the vast rural and frontier regions of Colorado, however, face enormous structural barriers to accessing careers in health and medicine. Improving URM students' access will require a concerted effort on the part of many institutions within our communities. CU Anschutz is taking an important step by seeking to grow its programs to support and nurture the interest of URM students in grades K-12 and in undergraduate institutions early in and throughout their educational careers.

For Colorado to be best served by its health professional workforce, our higher education institutions must train students from the communities in which health professionals serve. The health professions' graduates from CU Anschutz account for nearly 1/3rd of the annual hiring of Colorado's future doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists and public health experts. Some of these graduates have been fortunate enough to work their way through the existing pipeline programs within the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement at CU Anschutz. We all must make much more effort, however, to accomplish this goal.

Through this proposal, CU AMC will connect with young people living in some of our community's most challenging circumstances. This program will knit together organizations that work closely with youth from the black, refugee, Hispanic, LatinX, and immigrant communities of North Aurora and North Denver, and eventually in rural and frontier Colorado. Together, the organizations will train our young people in a wide spectrum ranging from basic professional life skills to general clinical and research knowledge. The students in these pathway programs will receive exposure to health and health science professionals and learn about the array of career opportunities available to them. Programs like the Think Like a Scientist, 2040 Partners in Health, and the Colorado Pre-Health Scholars focus on neighborhoods that need assistance with the social determinants of health.

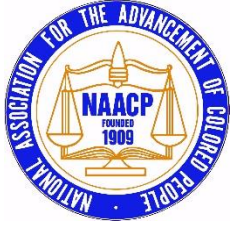
My own background, as well as that of Teresa O'Connell, M. Ed, in leading and growing a grassroots pipeline for URM students from UC Denver, Regis University, and Metro State University out of Denver Health and Hospital Authority shows excellent outcomes for matriculating URM students into various healthcare careers and graduate schools. We are happy to provide our expertise and support for this initiative. As well, COAHEC, with its vast network of preceptors, its partners in education and with Colorado's community leaders, and its close relationship and work with the AMC, is uniquely poised to provide the outreach and programming to reach URM students all over the state. As a URM practicing physician with Denver Health, a Latina woman, a faculty professor at the AMC School of Medicine, and the director of the state COAHEC program, I cannot be more invested in my support of this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josina Romero O'Connell, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Josina Romero O'Connell, MD

Director, Colorado Area Health Education Center (COAHEC)
Office of the Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs



AURORA, COLORADO BRANCH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

Chartered July 9, 1991

Omar Montgomery, President
Aurora Unit 4107

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NAACP Aurora Branch
PO Box 31671
Aurora, CO 80041-0671

April 16, 2021

To: Congressman Jason Crow

The Aurora Branch of the NAACP supports the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus request for Community Project Funding request to develop a pipeline for underrepresented students with the desire to become a health care professional. Today we need health care professionals that come from underrepresented communities to address the disparities within the health care system.

The youth in the City of Aurora has dreams of becoming health care professionals although some are facing different types of adversity that impact both academic and career aspirations. The Aurora Branch of the NAACP believes all youth should have equal access to resources that can assist in them reaching their full potential. COVID-19 has highlighted many inequities within our society schools so opportunities like "Community Project Funding" can provide resources for students in low-income communities who have the burning desire to become a health care professional.

We constantly hear about the school to prison pipeline, but the NAACP looks forward to the day when the dominant narrative will be pipelines to becoming a doctor, dentist, nurse, or any other health care-related field. The University of Colorado Anschutz Campus's goal for this program is to "expand collaborations with community partners to increase the pipeline of underrepresented, first-generation, economically disadvantaged, and disabled students entering the health professions from Aurora and Denver".

The Aurora Branch of the NAACP would like to partner with the University of Colorado Denver medical campus to make this goal a reality. The Aurora Branch of the NAACP

believes that partnerships like this will assist in eradicating disparities for future generations.

Thank You

Please feel free to contact us if you have any additional questions

Omar Montgomery

Omar Montgomery

President of the Aurora Branch of the NAACP



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April 13, 2021

The Honorable Jason Crow
3300 S Parker Rd #100
Aurora, CO 80014

Dear Congressman Crow,

I am pleased to offer strong support for the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus' Community Project Funding request to create a pipeline for underrepresented and first-generation students in our communities into the health professions.

The CU Anschutz Medical Campus is currently home to more than 30 programs that include opportunities for K-12 and undergraduate students to gain exposure to STEM and health career fields. However, the scale of these programs is far outstripped by the needs in our communities. Students in Aurora Public Schools (APS) come from over 130 countries and speak more than 160 languages. More than 80% of APS students are minorities underrepresented in the health professions. I value the campuses' efforts to provide outreach, mentoring, education activities, and support services that help these students find their way into the health professions. Dramatically increasing the cohort-driven, peer-based mentoring programs available for local high school and college students from our communities will improve their likelihood of arriving at health professional education ready to compete with their peers in Colorado and nationally for the limited spots available in these programs.

Helping more Aurora students into healthcare and STEM will provide them with life-long careers in good paying, high-need fields. It will also ensure that the Aurora has home-grown healthcare talent. Doctors, dentists, nurses, and other health professionals from here and trained here are most likely to choose to practice here. The CU Anschutz Medical Campus produces a large percentage of the state's new healthcare workers each year. I am glad to see that making the student population representative of Colorado is an important goal for the campus. I also appreciate their desire to partner with local community groups to ensure that the programs they create have the desired impact directly in Aurora communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Coffman".

Mike Coffman
Mayor