

**TRANSCRIPTION OF CMC 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY HISTORY BOOKLET**

(ORIGINAL PRINTED VERSIONS AVAILABLE)

It began as an idea in the minds of a few visionaries in the early 1960s. And since October 1967, Colorado Mountain College has been sharing our world. Thousands of students have learned new skills and earned degrees where once there was no opportunity for higher education. Many have transferred to other universities and colleges, completing doctoral research in subjects ranging from astrophysics to economics. In a variety of occupations Colorado Mountain College students have built a solid reputation which stretches from western Colorado across the world.

1960s

CAPTIONS:

In 1969, Cathy Jensen received the first diploma awarded by Colorado Mountain College. Today she co-owns a graphic design studio in North Hollywood, California, serving clients such as the Disney company and Universal Studios.

1970s

Bill Paddock, class of '71, was appointed first assistant attorney general for the state of Colorado, a position which twice led him to appear before the U.S. Supreme Court.

1960s

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This is the story of how an idea became a college, the people who shaped it and those who have been shaped by it... By signing a petition, 1494 people from Garfield, Eagle, Pitkin, Summit and Lake Counties requested an election to create a junior college district. On November 2, 1965, voters approved the new college district by a two-to-one margin, and the College was on its way. Governing Committee member Harold Koonce proposed that the new school be called "Colorado Mountain College." The name was adopted immediately and unanimously. Early In 1966, the Governing Committee hired the first president – Dr. Joe Davenport from Oakland County Community College in Michigan. Several generous people – the Quigley, Nieslanik, Campbell and Hopkins families – donated 460 acres of land on which to build West Campus (Spring Valley). Lake County donated a portion of the land for East Campus (Timberline). Rod Anderson opened the first Office of Student Services in the Lake County Courthouse, across from the jail, and traveled the state recruiting the first students. Neva Daniel was the first faculty member hired. She was assigned to teach writing and English at East Campus (Timberline). Construction began on West Campus in April, 1967. East Campus was begun a month later, only 3 ½ months before classes were scheduled to start. Bill Bowden supervised the simultaneous projects. Modular buildings, manufactured in Denver, rolled down the main streets of Leadville and Glenwood Springs on their way up to the campuses sites. In September, the scheduled opening, carpenters filling the classrooms with sawdust. Just before midnight,

1960s

October 1, trucks arrived in Leadville with vital classroom equipment. Campus Dean Art Schmitt called faculty and staff together to unload and assemble equipment through the night. Classes started at eight the next morning. Dr. Davenport flew himself between the campuses. A month after the school opened, he was killed while trying to land his single engine plane at Glenwood Springs. Dr. Ted Pohrte was named acting president. The Governing Board hired a new president, Dr. Elbie Gann, Executive secretary of the Colorado Education Association and former superintendent of Schools in Aspen. Colorado Mountain College was catching on. Now other people wanted access to education in their communities. In 1968, College staff scheduled continuing education classes from the Aspen Police Department, sharing a desk with the night sergeant. Summer art classes were offered by the College at the old Anderson Ranch in Snowmass Village, a program so successful that it later became the privately operated Anderson Ranch Art Center. The first classes were offered in Eagle County during 1968. Only

one class was offered during the summer quarter of 1969. Steve Mills opened the first off-campus office in the basement of Aspen's Wheeler Opera House. Continuing education was catching on. An off-campus continuing education office was opened in Leadville. Richard Brewer taught Western Civilization, the first course in Minturn. The second road to West Campus was paved in 1969, replacing the original road from Cattle Creek. Enrollments at the two campuses were lagging. To publicize the school, Dr. Grann skied with several students from East Campus in Leadville, across the Continental Divide, to the Frying Pan River on the West Campus side. He arrived in a late spring blizzard, surrounded by television crews and reporters. From the beginning, courses at the two campuses were based on the "Audio Tutorial" system,

#### Late 1960s - Early 1970s

with students learning at their own pace from taped lectures. Not one student received a failing grade during the first three years of the College. The grading system included A, B, C and "not complete." During the 1969-70 school year, a West Campus student had his baby grand piano shipped from Chicago, then snuck the instrument into his dorm room. In July 1971, students from across the country gathered for "Summervail" at the Anholz Ranch near Vail to study pottery, glassblowing, painting, photography and blacksmithing. Bill Bowden often flew staff members to other campuses and meetings in Denver in planes leased by the college. The Rodeo Club flew to competitions in Utah, Wyoming and Colorado. John Wubben gathered faculty and staff for parties to assemble catalogs and course schedules. In the spring of 1971, faculty met in Minturn and voted to reduce their contract time by two weeks to help the College survive fiscal difficulties due to unsure enrollments. The Salida Center opened in 1971, expanding the College's services into Chaffee County. Classes in Glenwood Springs were offered in the basement of the Hotel Colorado, which had been the brig (jail) during WWII when the hotel was used as a Naval Hospital. The classroom still had bars on the windows, a prison door and cartoons drawn on the walls by at least one inmate.

#### 1970s

[CAPTION]

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Veterinary technical Gail Hedberg, class of '78, received a certificate of honor from the city and county of San Francisco board of supervisors for her work to hand raise baby animals at the San Francisco Zoo.

#### 1970s

Summit County offered courses in 1972 through the Continuing Education Office in Eagle County. Twelve students enrolled that first quarter. Next quarter, Susan Hayes staffed the continuing education office in the Summit County school district administration building, scheduling classes in the Breckenridge Bookstore, a home and the basement of Empire Savings in Dillon. Robert Wamsley, personnel manager for the Union Carbide mill, scheduled the first classes for Rifle in 1972. Students met in homes, churches, City Park and basements of businesses. The West Garfield Community Education Center started in Rifle with two rooms, a filing cabinet, a card table and a folding chair. Petitioned by local business people, the College opened a center in the Eagle Community Building. In 1973, the federal government awarded the college a \$31,000 grant to start a Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Garfield, Pitkin and Eagle Counties. During this time, Yampa Valley College had grown in Steamboat. The campus would later be part of Colorado Mountain College. An impromptu group of students left West Campus on Friday, entered an inter-collegiate race calling themselves the "Colorado Mountain College Ski Team," and returned on Monday with the coveted Regis Cup. The North Central Association of Schools and Colleges gave full accreditation in 1974. Enrollments grew dramatically through the 1970s. In 1976, Aspen Campus students took classes in a new facility, constructed on property owned by the Aspen School District. That year, the Jim Quigley Memorial Library also was built at West Campus. A longtime dream of Librarian Ron Kupper, the passive solar structure designed by Jim Gustafson was cited by the American Institute of Architects for "establishing future directions" in college architecture. The West Garfield Center (later Rifle Campus) was inundated with requests to provide training for workers in the region's booming oil shale industry, which held promise as the nation's energy source of the future.

## 1970s - Early 1980s

Elbie Gann resigned as president in 1977 to take a position in Alaska. He was killed in a light plane crash in Alaska two years later. Dr. F. Dean Lillie became the College's third president, leaving his position of the Colorado Board of Community College and occupational Education. In 1977, the college purchased Breckenridge Town Hall and renovated it to become the new continuing education center for Summit County. Adapting to the growing need for classes in Rifle, the College renovated the old school building on Railroad Avenue. The West Garfield Center moved to its new home in the summer of 1978. Student centers were built at East and West Campuses in 1978-79. A three-year old Kellogg Foundation grant awarded funds to Colorado Mountain College, the University of Colorado and Colorado State University to develop community leadership in western Colorado. Yampa Valley College in Steamboat Springs was sold to United States International University, then closed. The dorms were used for low-cost employee housing. When USIU moved to sell the property to developers, the community fought to keep their college. Led by Bill Hill, a local group negotiated to buy the campus. While cooking breakfast for the leaders one Sunday morning, Bob Adama, owner of Energy Fuels Corporation, offered to provide the initial payment of \$60,000. May 1981, Routt County citizens in School District RE-2 voted two-to-one for joining the Colorado Mountain College District. In July, Alpine Campus became the newest member of the Colorado Mountain College. Olympic medalist Billy Kidd helped develop the Marketing: Ski Business program, the first of its kind in the nation. The Glenwood continuing education faculty was originally planned as a metal building. Center Director Martha Herzog proposed a passive solar structure which became the largest of its kind ever funded by the Department of Energy. It received several national awards and was featured on the cover of *Solar Age* magazine. To serve the people of Vail, a new facility was opened in Cascade Village, next to the Westin Hotel. "Black Sunday," May 1982. Exxon shut down its massive oil shale operation, sending the region's economy into a tailspin. Initially hit hard by the Exxon pull-out, Rifle Campus adapted to the situation, re-training unemployed workers for new careers. Though they lost 290 individual students during this time, Rifle Campus staff created a strategy that eventually increased the full-time student equivalent total by five percent.

1980s

[CAPTION]

Mimi Witcher, class of '86, used her Resort Management Training to open the Clermont Inn, Steamboat's first bed and breakfast lodge.

1980s

Vice President Gordon Snowbarger became the College's fourth president in 1984 during financial difficulties caused by the Exxon pull-out. The College converted from the quarter calendar to the semester system in 1984. After 14 years as a trustee, Carbondale teacher Richard C. Martin was honored by fellow board members. They established a grant in his name to provide tuition assistance for local high school graduates who transferred to earn their four-year degrees. Ski Area Operations Professor Curt Bender was invited to help the Chinese develop their ski areas. The GED and Adult Basic Education program became the largest in Colorado. Veterinary Technology received the 1986 Quality Incentive Award from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, a \$20,000 grant for the program's outstanding training and job placement record. In 1986, Dr. Armen Sarafian was appointed interim president of Colorado Mountain College. Rifle Campus continued growing with their earlier strategy, scheduling classes during the day to accommodate parents of school-aged children and unemployed workers. Inmates of the Rifle Honor Camp also received education through Rifle Campus. Staff and faculty arranged the first comprehensive transfer agreement between a two year college and the University of Colorado at Boulder. CU President Dr. Gordon Gee rode the train to Glenwood Springs to sign the agreement with Dr. Sarafian. Waste water treatment plants operated by Environmental Technology graduates Cheryl Johnson and John Lindstrom were named the nation's best by the Environmental Protection Agency.

[CAPTIONS]

Keystone ski patroller Tom Resignolo (with avalanche rescue dog, Donner) earned his EMT basic and intermediate certifications. Most Summit County patrollers receive emergency training from Colorado Mountain College.

Injured on the job, Eleno Velez left construction to study toward a new career in microcomputer management.

1980s

March, 1987 Rolling Stone profiled Colorado Mountain College in a story titled “The Cool Schools,” along with Cornell, Syracuse, Dartmouth, Penn and MIT. After an extensive national search, Dr. Dennis Mayer became the College’s fifth president, leaving the presidency of Mt. San Jacinto College in California. Alpine Campus student, Susan Fendel won a 1987 New Bedford Prize for student writing. Other winning entries were from Harvard and Princeton. In December 1987 *Ski* magazine featured the college as “one of the few schools that has classes in resort management designed to prepare students to work in the ski business. Colorado Mountain College received the 1988 Paragon Award for best catalog produced by a two-year college in America. The award was repeated three more years. On sabbatical, Professor George Tolles retraced the Old Silk Road from eastern China to Turkey. Ski team members Maegan Carney and Erik Peterson captured the 1988 national championships in slalom. Maegan was also National Collegiate Ski Association combined champion and Smith-Corona Academic All-American. Maegan repeated as national alpine combined champion in 1989, leading the women’s ski team to its first national title. Erik was men’s combined champion. Both were named Smith-Corona Academic All-Americans. The Environmental Technology program received the 1989 award from the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board for “outstanding reclamation education and research.” Professor Pete Moller received the award from Governor Romer. Graduate Sheri Griffith was named “1989 Conservationist of the Year” by the U.S. Department of the Interior, and later appointed to the National Park Lands

1990s

Advisory Council by the Secretary of the Interior Donald Hodel. The work of Professional Photography graduate Paul Chesley was chosen to be included in the prestigious “100 Years of National Geographic” exhibition. On his sabbatical, solar energy instructor Steve McCarney was a consultant to the Pan American Health Organization, installing solar-powered refrigeration units in remote South American Villages. Instructors Johnny Weiss and Ken Olsen followed later. Associate Professor Peter Jeschofnig assisted nuclear physicists from Rockwell International, conducting high altitude cold-fusion experiments at Timberline Campus. *US News & World Report* included Colorado Mountain College in the “1990 Guide to America’s Best Colleges.” The article focused on transfer programs and included only 15 other two-year colleges. Statistics from Colorado’s three largest universities confirmed that Colorado Mountain College transfer students performed better, on average, than students who began as freshmen at those institutions. They also out-performed transfer students from all other community colleges in Colorado. During the summer of 1990, Environmental Technology Professor Pete Moller toured land reclamation projects in China. Moscow’ Bolshoi Ballet Academy held its North American summer school at the Vail Center, giving Colorado Mountain College students and teachers an opportunity to learn from the masters.

1990s

Alumna Dr. Denise Dimon, professor of economics at the University of San Diego, was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to lecture in South America. In 1991, Resort Management Professor Nelsie Baskin became the first two-year college educator to receive the prestigious “Lamp of Knowledge” award from the American Hotel and Motel Association’s Educational Institute. Former President Gerald R. Ford served as honorary co-chairman of the Colorado Mountain College Foundation’s first annual fund campaign with his wife, Betty, and Fitzhugh and Eileen Scott. A \$13,000 grant from the Colorado Department of Health, EMS Division, provided scholarships for 75 students to become trained Emergency Medical Technicians. It was repeated the following year. The Veterinary Technology Teaching Hospital was built at the Spring Valley farm, including large and small animal surgery suites and the latest equipment for animal health care. In 1992, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools gave its highest rating, ten year accreditation, to Colorado Mountain College. The television game show *Jeopardy* featured Timberline Campus as one of its answers. The correct question was, “What is the highest college campus in the US?”. The College received a \$376,437 federal Family English Literacy Program grant to help non-English speaking families learn basic skills. In August 1992, Bristol Hall was dedicated, adding 43,000 square feet of classroom, lab and office space to Alpine Campus. The building was named for Ev Bristol, one of the founders of the original Yampa Valley College campus 30 years earlier. University in the Mountains, a partnership between Colorado Mountain College and Regis

1990s

{CAPTION}

Paula Mondragon, class of '92, stayed in her hometown of Leadville to study for her first two years of a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.

1990s

University, brought four-year degrees to Glenwood. Regis also began master's programs and expanded to Brackenridge and Steamboat Springs. As the College began its second quarter century, Spring Valley student Terrence Wood was named by USA Today to the 1993 All-USA Academic Team, one of the only 20 students nation-wide. He was honored at the national convention of the American Association of Community Colleges in Portland. For over 25 years, Colorado Mountain College has touched the lives of thousands more in western Colorado and around the world.