

MOUNTAIN FUTURES IMPACT

2023-2024



COLORADO
MOUNTAIN COLLEGE
FOUNDATION



LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

This past year at Colorado Mountain College has been nothing short of extraordinary. Together, we've celebrated milestones, transformed lives, and strengthened the mountain communities we call home.

As you explore this year's IMPACT magazine, you'll see how CMC's Mountain Futures Strategic Plan—anchored by Equity, Care, Innovation, and Integrity—continues to guide everything we do. These values are the heart of our mission, inspiring us to deliver exceptional education while addressing the unique needs of our mountain region.

But none of this happens without you. Your generosity fuels our ability to dream bigger, reach higher, and make a lasting difference. Here's just a glimpse of what your support has helped us achieve this year:

- **Our largest graduating class ever:** 1,554 students earned their degrees in May 2024.
- **Oral Health Clinic opens:** Welcoming our first Dental Hygiene students to serve the health needs of our communities.
- **Expanded housing opportunities:** A third apartment building was approved at CMC Vail Valley at Edwards, along with new initiatives to support employee housing.
- **A decade of impact in education:** Celebrating 10 years of our Bachelor of Arts in Education program, with 95 graduates as of Spring 2024.

Each story in this report reflects the profound impact of your belief in our mission. You are transforming lives, opening doors of opportunity, and shaping a brighter future for Colorado's mountain region.

While it's our names on this letter to you this year, we'd like to pay tribute to former CMC President (and current President Emerita) Carrie Besnette Hauser, former CMC Board of Trustees President Peg Portscheller, and former CMC Foundation Board Chair Norm Bacheldor. We were honored to work alongside their leadership this past fiscal year to help achieve these amazing accomplishments.

Thank you for being an essential part of this incredible journey. Together, we are building stronger communities, one student, one family, one dream at a time.

In Partnership,



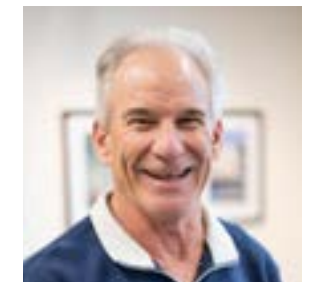
Matt Gianneschi
CMC President



Kristin Heath Colon
CMC Vice President for
Advancement & Foundation CEO



Chris Romer
CMC Board of Trustees
Board President



Rob LeVine
CMC Foundation
Board Chair

Because of donors like you, the Colorado Mountain College Foundation was able to provide CMC with over \$5.2 million in total revenue in the 2023-24 fiscal year. This includes awarding 912 scholarships, providing \$1.54 million in student support.

Talk about IMPACT for students... THANK YOU!



Scan Here to Donate to the
 Carrie Besnette Hauser Outdoors
 Is for Everyone Endowment
colomtn.me/outdoors4all



A PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION CELEBRATION

On August 12, 2024, the Colorado Mountain College community gathered at the Vail Valley at Edwards campus to honor outgoing President Dr. Carrie Besnette Hauser and welcome incoming President Dr. Matt Gianneschi.

Dr. Hauser concluded her nearly 11-year tenure as CMC’s longest-serving president, leaving behind a legacy of transformational achievements. Under her leadership, the college earned designations as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and Colorado’s only Dual Mission institution. This spring, CMC celebrated its largest-ever graduating class.

Carrie implemented three strategic plans, driving growth in academic programs and student completion rates. She secured record levels of external funding and facilitated the annexation of Salida and Poncha Springs into the CMC taxing district. Her efforts resulted in CMC investing over \$130 million in capital projects, including affordable housing in high-cost communities. Additionally, she played a pivotal role in passing state tax initiatives that benefited rural communities and strengthened the college’s financial standing.

In recognition of Carrie’s profound contributions, CMC’s Board of Trustees named her the college’s first-ever President Emerita. To honor her legacy, colleagues, donors, and friends established the Carrie Besnette Hauser Outdoors Is for Everyone Endowment through the CMC Foundation.

The Board of Trustees conducted a comprehensive search for CMC’s next president, ultimately selecting Dr. Gianneschi, who had served as CMC’s Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff for a decade. As CMC’s 10th president, he brings a deep understanding of the college and an unwavering commitment to its mission.

Matt’s passion for CMC was clear in his remarks that evening:

“From the optimism and unwavering belief in the mission of institutions like CMC I inherited from my grandfather; to the deep, personal appreciation for the transformational power of education, especially its ability to empower lives, achieve justice, and lift families out of the cycles of poverty that was instilled in me by my parents; I continue to be inspired by Colorado Mountain College, its students, its people, and the communities it serves. CMC’s greatness comes from the energy of its people who are willing to do whatever it takes to create opportunities for students. It is truly my passion to serve this college, and it is the privilege of my lifetime to have earned your confidence.” – Dr. Matt Gianneschi, CMC’s 10th President



ABOUT CMC’S 10TH PRESIDENT: MATT GIANNESCHI

For more than a decade, Matt has played a pivotal role in shaping Colorado Mountain College into the financially stable, diverse, and innovative institution it is today. Under his leadership, the college has achieved increased graduation rates, received Hispanic-Serving Institution designation, became the largest concurrent enrollment provider on the Western Slope, established a credit rating that was upgraded three times, benefitted from numerous legislative and ballot initiatives, and achieved record-breaking external funding.

Before joining CMC, Matt served in state education policy roles in the administrations of three different Colorado governors and held leadership positions at the Education Commission of the States, Community College of Aurora, and the Daniels Fund.

A proud Coloradan, he is a graduate of Denver Public Schools’ Manual High School and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Denver, followed by a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. Having personally benefited from merit- and need-based grants and scholarships, Matt has been a steadfast donor to the CMC Foundation, supporting today’s students just as philanthropy supported him.

Matt’s roots run deep in Colorado’s mountain communities. His grandfather served as a ski trooper in the famed 10th Mountain Division during World War II, training at Camp Hale—part of the very region CMC now serves. The son of educators, he continues to teach economics and history at CMC, staying connected to the classroom and the students who inspire him daily.

Scan to Watch:



Dr. Hauser’s Speech



Dr. Gianneschi’s Speech

FROM STUDENT TO DEAN: KRISTY BROOKS-OLK INSPIRES THE NEXT GENERATION

Kristina (Kristy) Brooks-Olk’s journey from Colorado Mountain College student to the Dean of the School of Business exemplifies the college’s goal to grow community members into CMC’s highly valued workforce. A first-generation Latina graduate of CMC, Kristy earned multiple degrees, including an MBA from Regis University, before joining CMC as an adjunct faculty member in 2017. Rising through the ranks, she became a full-time professor and program chair and was named dean in 2023.

Reflecting on her path, Kristy emphasizes humility. “As educators, it is easy to believe we know what’s best,” she says, “but as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, it’s crucial to listen to our students’ unique voices.” Her dedication to serving the community and remaining open to diverse perspectives has been central to her success. Inspired by her own educators, Brooks-Olk embodies the values of CMC.



REDISCOVERING COMMON GROUND: COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE’S YEAR-LONG JOURNEY TO FOSTER CIVIC UNITY

Colorado Mountain College, in collaboration with Aspen Public Radio, launched the *Rediscovering Common Ground* series on January 29, 2024, with a virtual conversation featuring esteemed statesman Dr. Richard Haass, author of *The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens*, and Walter Isaacson, former CNN CEO, *TIME* magazine editor, Aspen Institute CEO, and the namesake of CMC’s Isaacson School for Communication, Arts and Media. Mary Louise Kelly, co-host of NPR’s *All Things Considered*, moderated the event, while CMC President and CEO Dr. Carrie Besnette Hauser delivered opening remarks, announcing the *Common Reader* series.

This year-long initiative aimed to foster productive dialogue across differing viewpoints during an intense election year. In the spring, CMC hosted free seminars featuring local thought leaders, encouraging community engagement in discussions about democracy and civic behavior. During the fall, Richard toured six CMC campuses from October 14–17, presenting nonpartisan talks about his book, *The Bill of Obligations*. The series concluded with these live events at Aspen, Spring Valley, Vail Valley at Edwards, Leadville, Breckenridge, and Steamboat Springs.

Richard emphasized the urgency of addressing America’s divisions and redefining citizenship through shared obligations. “What’s good for others is also good for us,” he shared, urging attendees to prioritize community over individualism. CMC distributed more than 6,000 complimentary copies of Richard’s book, further enriching these impactful discussions. The talks were free and open to the public, leaving participants inspired to heal divides and rediscover common ground in their communities.

To watch the Common Reader Kick-Off Event moderated by Mary Louise Kelly of NPR’s *All Things Considered* with Richard Haass and Walter Isaacson please scan this QR code.



FUND SUEÑOS: EMPOWERING DREAMS, BUILDING FUTURES AT CMC

Funded by philanthropic gifts to the Colorado Mountain Foundation, the college’s innovative Fund Sueños (translated as “Dream Fund”) program provides comprehensive support to undocumented and DACA-enrolled students in achieving academic success, helping them earn certificates and degrees to secure meaningful jobs in the college’s mountain region. “Undocumented students face unique challenges as they navigate the college and employment landscape,” says Yesenia Silva Estrada, CMC’s Vice President of Planning and Chief of Staff.

Fund Sueños offers financial guidance, scholarships, and assistance with DACA renewal fees, while also focusing on community building and career guidance. “By providing a nurturing environment that recognizes what these students face, we not only expand access to knowledge and opportunity, but also cultivate a more diverse, inclusive, and enriching educational experience for all,” Yesenia says.



FROM CLASSROOM TO CAREER SUCCESS: CMC STUDENT LANDS DREAM JOB BEFORE GRADUATION



Juliana Garcia, a student at CMC's Isaacson School for Communication, Arts and Media, never imagined she'd land a job at a top marketing agency before graduating from Colorado Mountain College, but that's exactly what happened. Thanks to a partnership with Backbone Media, a Carbondale-based marketing agency, Juliana was the first recipient of the Backbone Scholarship for Integrated Media, a scholarship and internship. This opportunity propelled Juliana into a social media coordinator job, where she now manages platforms like Instagram and works with major outdoor brands.

"I'm so grateful to Backbone for this opportunity and to my professors at CMC who believed in me," Juliana says. "CMC gave me the skills I needed to succeed."

Greg Williams, Backbone's president, praises the collaboration. "This partnership aligns perfectly with our work," he says. "Juliana dove in headfirst, learning from our team while adding valuable insights."

Internships with local organizations provide students with invaluable real-world experience, giving them the chance to build careers before they graduate. A first-generation student, Juliana will earn her Bachelor of Applied Science in Integrated Media in 2025—and do so without any student debt. "I couldn't be more excited and thankful to CMC and Backbone," she says.

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS WHO GENEROUSLY OFFERED INTERNSHIPS TO OUR STUDENTS:

5th Judicial District

ABA services of Colorado

All Points North Lodge

Alpine Bank

ANB Bank

Aspen Glen Club

Basalt Regional Library District

Breckenridge Grand Vacation

Bright Future Foundation

Central Colorado
Conservancy

Columbia Sportswear

Drop Mobility

Glenwood Springs Healthcare

Glenwood Springs
Middle School

Grand County Rural
Health Network

H&R Block

Habitat for Humanity

Integral Tax Services

Iron Mountain Hot Springs

Jaywalker Lodge

Jonas, Inc.

Lift Up Routt County

McMahan & Associates, LLC

Monterey County Office
of Education

Mountain Family Health
Centers

Mountain Valley
Developmental Services

Office of Parent
Respondent Counsel

Reconnected

SANA/Safe and Abundant
Nutrition Alliance

Southfork Electric, LLC

Summit Advocates now ARISE

The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor
Gulch

The Trash Man

Thor's Lightning Adventure
Gear

Two Rivers Community School

Vail Health Behavior Health

Vail Integrative Medical Group

Valley View Hospital

Valley View Hospital

Women's Recovery Center

YouthPower365

OVER 90% OF THESE INTERNSHIPS WERE PAID OPPORTUNITIES.

Contact schoolofbusiness@coloradomtn.edu to join as a partnering organization!



POSADAS AT CMC: A FESTIVE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY AND TRADITION

CMC's Salida and Steamboat Springs campuses, along with the Glenwood Center, all came alive in December 2023 with vibrant Posadas hosted by Colorado Mountain College, creating unforgettable evenings of festive cheer. Once rooted in religious tradition, Posadas have blossomed into joyful gatherings where friends, family, and colleagues come together to celebrate the spirit of the season. The events were filled with all the beloved elements of traditional Posadas: colorful piñatas, the lively Posada song, and delicious treats like steaming cups of ponche, crispy buñuelos drizzled in syrup or coated in cinnamon-sugar, and savory tamales. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement, and smiles and laughter filled the air, making these celebrations a night to remember for everyone who joined in the fun.





**LITTLE STEPS, BIG IMPACT:
HOW CMC'S ASPEN CAMPUS SUPPORTS
FAMILIES AND FUTURE EDUCATORS**

Little Steps College is a shining example of Colorado Mountain College's commitment to innovative community partnerships. Located on the Aspen campus, this new infant care center offers space for children ages 3 weeks to 18 months and provides a vital service to working families.

The program came to life through a collaboration with Kids First, a City of Aspen resource center that supports quality, affordable childcare choices in Aspen. Infant care is not a money-making endeavor due to the intensive work caring for babies entails, according to Megan Monaghan and Nancy Nichols, Kids First co-managers.

The donated space at CMC Aspen allows for considerable savings in rent and allows Little Steps College to provide a low staff-to-infant ratio ensuring high-quality care. The center also benefits CMC staff through priority enrollment and serves as a potential "learning lab" for early childhood education students, fostering real, hands-on learning experiences.



**COOKING UP CONNECTIONS:
CMC CELEBRATES NEW MORGRIDGE TEACHING KITCHEN
AND MORGRIDGE COMMONS BASALT**

The generous, ongoing support by the Morgridge Family Foundation to Colorado Mountain College was celebrated on Valentine's Day with two ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Aspen campus's new Morgridge Teaching Kitchen and the new Morgridge Commons Basalt.

The CMC Aspen Morgridge Teaching Kitchen is a 1,173 square foot state-of-the-art, commercial-grade kitchen to serve both aspiring professional chefs and cooking enthusiasts within the community. This new kitchen also played a pivotal role in CMC's partnership with the prestigious Food & Wine Classic in Aspen, where CMC culinary students were selected to be featured as the sous chefs for the 2024 Food & Wine Best New Chefs, further cementing the college's place as a cornerstone of culinary excellence in the region.

Morgridge Commons Basalt builds on CMC's highly successful Morgridge Commons in Glenwood Springs, with both locations open to serve the community with a fully equipped meeting space for businesses and nonprofit organizations.



OBERMEYER WOOD SUPPORTS CMC ASPEN GALLERY

Thanks to a year-round sponsorship from Aspen-based Obermeyer Wood, the CMC Aspen Gallery hosted an opening reception for *Terrene*, an exhibit featuring local artists Leah Aegerter and Mila Rossi. The exhibit showcased a blend of collage and sculpture, exploring the intersection between nature and human creativity. The reception, a collaborative effort between Colorado Mountain College, CMC ArtShare, and the CMC Foundation, provided a platform for the community to celebrate and support local artistry. Attendees had the chance to engage directly with Leah and Mila during a gallery talk, deepening their appreciation for the artists' perspectives and techniques.



ENCORE! MET OPERA LIVE IN HD RETURNS TO CMC BRECKENRIDGE WITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT

With support from longtime Summit donor, Paul Finkel, the CMC Breckenridge campus proudly hosted five *Met Opera Live in HD* events this past year, featuring performances such as *Dead Man Walking*, *The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, and *Carmen*. These screenings were made possible by the Breckenridge campus's partnership with Met Opera Live in HD. In 2023-24, Colorado Mountain College Foundation's ArtShare program played a vital role in providing intermission meals for audiences and increasing community awareness through impactful community art opportunities. After a hiatus due to COVID and the nursing simulation and outdoor skills lab construction, the satellite dishes are reinstalled and dialed in for a return of the Met Opera Live in HD performances, drawing enthusiastic audiences eager to reconnect with the arts.



Photo: Marty Sohl / Met Opera



SYLVAKING ADDO EARNS TWO DEGREES WITH THE SUPPORT OF FRIENDS AND CMC

Sylvaking Addo's educational journey is a testament to perseverance and passion. Originally from Accra, Ghana, he and his family moved to the United States when Sylvaking was 12. His interest in culinary arts was sparked during high school in Aurora, Colorado, when he discovered Colorado Mountain College's ProStart program—a stepping stone that led him to CMC Breckenridge, where he earned an Associate of Applied Science in Culinary Arts in 2020.

Determined to expand his career options during the pandemic, Sylvaking returned to CMC Breckenridge for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Leadership and Management. Alongside his studies, he received crucial support from the Back-to-Work Scholarship and Mountain Scholars program, which provided financial aid and mentorship. Sylvaking inspired others as the student speaker at CMC's Summit County commencement ceremony in May. Equally inspirational was that Rootstalk, the popular Breckenridge restaurant owned and operated by Matt Vawter, an award-winning chef and a CMC Culinary Arts alumnus, closed on a busy Friday night so that the entire staff could celebrate Sylvaking's successes at the ceremony.



ALUM, MATT VAWTER, WINS PRESTIGIOUS JAMES BEARD AWARD

Matt Vawter's journey from a young cook in Keystone to a 2024 James Beard Award-winning chef reflects dedication and a deep connection to his roots. He began cooking at 14 to help his parents pay rent and soon discovered a passion for the culinary arts. After graduating from Summit High School, he pursued a culinary apprenticeship at Colorado Mountain College in Breckenridge, setting the foundation for his career. Matt spent nearly 15 years in Denver, honing his skills under James Beard Award-winning chef Alex Seidel at Fruition and Mercantile Dining & Provision. In 2020, he returned to Summit County to open Rootstalk in Breckenridge, emphasizing elevated, everyday dining with locally sourced ingredients.

In 2024, he also earned the James Beard Best Chef in the Mountain Region award and now employs nine CMC Culinary students across his two restaurants, fostering local talent and giving back to the community that shaped his career. Says Matt of his experience at CMC, "Not only was I introduced to all of the elements of classic cuisine, but I also was able to apply my classroom education in kitchens around the resort on a daily basis. When I graduated, I was ready to step into any kitchen I wanted to."





THREE DEGREES, ONE FAMILY: HOW CMC TRANSFORMED THEIR EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

For Michelle Cox and her two adult children, CMC played a pivotal role in their educational success. All three graduated from the college last May—a milestone that happened naturally as each pursued their own path. Michelle, a fourth-grade teacher in Leadville, received her Bachelor of Arts in Education, a dream realized through CMC's flexible online classes during the pandemic. Her son, Damon, 18, found his passion in welding through CMC's concurrent enrollment program, earning a welding certificate alongside his high school diploma. Kylie, 19, received her Associate of Arts degree, also benefiting from CMC's concurrent enrollment. CMC's accessible programs and supportive pathways have been instrumental in this family's achievements, enabling them to pursue their goals and inspire others.



CMC AND ALTERRA TRAIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SKI LIFT MECHANICS

Anticipating an unprecedented wave of retirements among ski lift technicians in the ski industry, Colorado Mountain College and Alterra Mountain Company partnered to develop an intensive four-week training program for lift mechanics from across the nation. The collaboration between these two organizations was crucial, as the successful operation of lift-served ski areas across the country depends on qualified ropeway mechanics.

According to the National Ski Areas Association, Colorado's ski industry generates \$4.8 billion annually and supports more than 46,000 year-round equivalent jobs. CMC is proud to partner with ski industry partners and offer innovative experiential learning opportunities to train the next generation of qualified ropeway mechanics and myriad other Ski Area Operations skilled workers.



AT 70, GEORGE CROWLEY FULFILLS A LIFELONG DREAM WITH CMC'S ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Turning 70 is always a milestone. For Leadville resident George Crowley, this milestone was coupled with the achievement of a lifelong dream: earning his high school diploma. Growing up in the segregated South, George spent his childhood working in the cotton fields to support his family, watching bright yellow school buses pass by, filled with students. Although he longed to be among those kids attending school, circumstances kept him from that path. Despite the challenges of his youth, George never lost sight of his goal to finish high school.

Decades later, through Colorado Mountain College's Adult High School Diploma program, George realized his dream at the Leadville campus in May, just before his 70th birthday.

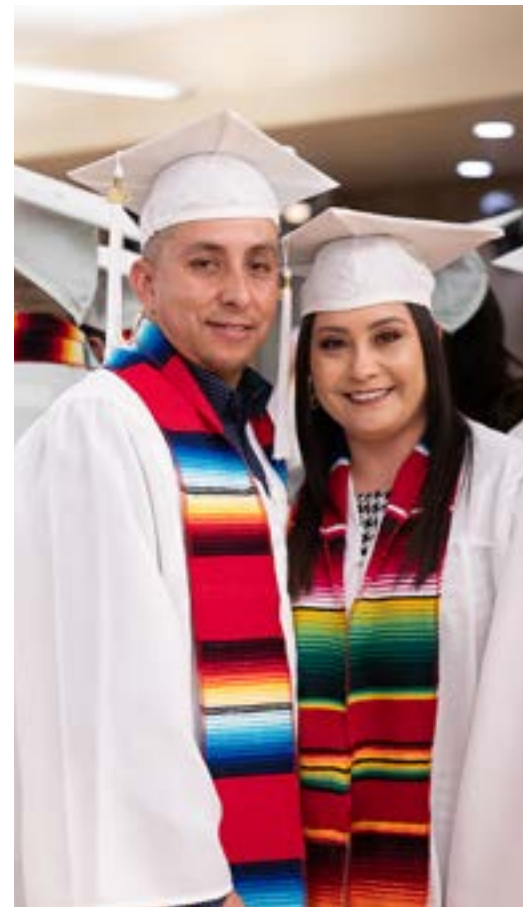


SARAH MATTHEWS SPARKS CAREER WITH WELDING SKILLS FROM CMC

Sarah Matthews embodies the value of hard work, a positive mindset, and the power of inspiration. A lifelong resident of New Castle, Sarah discovered her passion for welding at 15, earning all of the available welding certificates the CMC Rifle Campus had to offer. Coming from a family of woodworkers, she naturally gravitated toward the trades, choosing ironwork as her career path.

She shares her journey with a growing audience, with nearly 150,000 followers across Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. "Inspiring and showing others that this is a job and something they could potentially do is the only reason I do social media," she explains.

From installing handrails to hanging iron, Sarah loves the variety and challenges of her work. "What I get to do every day is thrilling and scary. There's always the chance to get better," she says. Challenges like perfectionism have only fueled her growth. Her advice for aspiring tradespeople is simple yet impactful: "Work hard, be teachable, and become a sponge."



VENZOR FAMILY ACHIEVES DREAMS TOGETHER WITH CMC'S ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Cristina and Felipe Venzor, longtime Rifle residents, always dreamed of earning their high school diplomas but struggled to find time between work and family commitments. When they learned about Colorado Mountain College's new Adult High School Diploma program, they saw their chance. Enrolling together, they took online evening classes, fitting their education into their busy lives. Within a month and a half, they had proudly earned their diplomas.

"It was an amazing feeling to accomplish something we thought was never possible," Cristina says, adding how meaningful it was for their children to watch them graduate.

Launched statewide in 2023, CMC's Adult High School Diploma program provides flexible, accessible education for rural communities. "This program meets students where they are," says Cathy Slaymaker, CMC's lead GED instructor, "offering flexible class times and language support."

For Cristina and Felipe, the diploma opens new doors. "Now I can pursue opportunities I couldn't before," says Cristina.

CLOUGH FELLOWS REUNION CELEBRATES NEW OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE CLOUGH ADVANTAGE

In June, Clough Fellows alumni gathered together with community members at the Rifle campus for a reunion and to celebrate the unveiling of the new Clough Advantage program. Established 17 years ago, the original Clough Fellows program, which will continue, has long been the envy of other communities, as it allows all graduating high school seniors from west Garfield County to attend college through the Clough Scholarship. To date over \$7 million in scholarship support has been awarded to graduating seniors from west Garfield County.

Now, the opportunity offers an even greater advantage to Rifle community members and the surrounding area, through the newly established Clough Advantage. This second program, available through the Clough Endowment at the CMC Foundation, is available to recent local high school alumni who are one or more years post-high school graduation. Awards are available for up to the full cost of attendance and renewable for four years or until degree completion. Through the late Genevieve Clough's remarkable generosity, the Clough Endowment continues, made possible by gifts during her lifetime to the CMC Foundation, and through her estate planning.





NIESLANIK LIVING ROOM DEDICATION

On November 2, 1965, voters approved the formation of Colorado Mountain College by a 2:1 margin. The two original campuses were the East Campus in Leadville and the West Campus at Spring Valley, which both opened to students on October 2, 1967.

Something magical happened to make the West Campus a reality in those founding years. Ranching families from the Spring Valley area came together to ultimately donate 811 acres to help make CMC Spring Valley possible. The first acreage to officially be deeded to the college came from Jim and Sharon Nieslanik, who gave 75 acres of their Spring Valley ranch to Colorado Mountain College in June 1966—the very first gift the college ever received!

How that came to be is a legendary tale. Jim was in the milk barn one evening when his neighbor, Jim Quigley, rode up on his gray horse. “What do you think if we all donate some of our land and we’ll have a college up here?” Jim Quigley asked him. “I thought he had a screw loose,” Jim Nieslanik later recalled, with his trademark sparkling eyes and contagious laugh.

In 1966, Jim and Sharon had only been married for three years and had just started a family. As newlyweds, they decided to give away some of their ranching livelihood to help start CMC. “We looked at each other,” Jim recalled, “and without hesitating, Sharon said to me, ‘It seems like the right thing to do.’” All these years later the Nieslaniks still believe they made the right choice. “It’s turned out pretty good, don’t you think?” Jim recently told CMC Foundation CEO Kristin Heath Colon.

Colorado Mountain College is deeply grateful to Jim and Sharon and the entire Nieslanik family for their gift of land that helped establish the CMC Spring Valley campus. In appreciation, CMC dedicated the Nieslanik Living Room at the Spring Valley campus on November 14, 2023—coincidentally, the couple’s 59th wedding anniversary.



STUDENT ONYX DEGATAGA BRINGS TEDx TO CMC SPRING VALLEY WITH SENSE OF PLACE THEME

CMC Spring Valley student Onyx Degataga knew that CMC’s campus at Spring Valley, and its unparalleled views of Mount Sopris and the Roaring Fork Valley, would make the perfect hosting site when she applied for the campus’s first **TEDx** event, themed *Sense of Place*. The event featured eight dynamic speakers, including then-CMC President Dr. Carrie Besnette Hauser, offering diverse perspectives on how our surroundings shape our identities and experiences. This all-volunteer, milestone event brought together thought leaders, students, and community members to engage in meaningful dialogue and share innovative ideas. TEDx Colorado Mountain College exemplified CMC’s commitment to fostering intellectual curiosity and community engagement, creating a platform for voices that inspire and challenge the way we think about our place in the world.

EL TESORO DE LA EDUCACIÓN: CELEBRATING THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF EDUCATION AT CMC



In June, Colorado Mountain College hosted *El Tesoro de la Educación*, a Spanish-language event at the Glenwood Center. Friends, family, and local leaders gathered to celebrate the theme “Elevate Your Future / Eleva Tu Futuro” and hear the inspiring journeys of three Latino residents, highlighting the transformative power of education.

Brisa Morales shared how she overcame an abusive relationship and, as a single mother, earned her GED at CMC, which launched her career and strengthened her role in the community. Alan Muñoz reflected on his path to academic excellence, finding his passion for advocacy and building a career supporting immigrant rights. Iliana Rentería recounted her transition from a traditional Mexican upbringing to becoming an educator and literacy advocate, connecting Latino families to critical resources.

The event embodied the importance of education in empowering individuals and uplifting the community.

FINN BLACKBURN EXCELS IN KAYAKING AND COLLEGE THROUGH CMC'S CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

Finn Blackburn, a sophomore at Salida High School and an elite kayaker, made waves both in and out of the classroom during 2024's spring semester. While training for and competing in the Junior World Championships for kayaking in Slovakia, he took advantage of CMC's concurrent enrollment program. Through this program, Finn takes college-level courses while still in high school, allowing him to stay on top of his academics while pursuing his athletic goals.

"Thanks to concurrent enrollment, I will graduate with an associate degree from CMC at the same time I graduate from high school, which will save me two years of college tuition," says Finn. "And CMC's flexible schedule has allowed me to schedule my classes around my kayak training."

Finn encourages other students to jump in. "Take as many concurrent enrollment classes as you can," he says. "They're not much harder than AP classes, and you'll save a ton of money."



ERIC PETERSON PROVES THAT EDUCATION HAS NO DEADLINE

Since moving to Salida nearly three years ago, Eric Peterson has worked at a local nonprofit dedicated to providing food, clothing, and essential support to those in need. For over two years, the 65-year old student has devoted himself to helping others while pursuing his own educational goals.

Eric is currently in his fourth semester at CMC's Salida campus, enrolled in the Addiction Studies Bachelor of Arts program. His immediate focus is completing the coursework and supervised hours required to earn his Certified Addiction Technician certification. He plans to serve the local community by working at Chaffee County's primary substance abuse care provider. Looking ahead, he aims to achieve additional certifications, an undergraduate degree, and potentially a master's degree in addiction studies.

Through his dedication and with the support of scholarships, Eric is building a brighter future for himself and his community.



TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES AWAIT WITH CMC'S STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

This past spring, Lisa Isom, Regional Development Officer at the CMC Foundation, joined six other students on CMC Salida's *Natural History and Sea Kayaking Leadership* course in the Baja Peninsula. Her first international trip as a college sophomore—many years ago—was to the Yucatán Peninsula and planted a lifelong love of exploration, leading her to study and teach around the globe. Still, Lisa found the Baja experience completely transformative.

CMC's Study Abroad programs offer students and community members life-changing opportunities. With faculty-led trips to destinations like Bhutan, Argentina, Japan, and Nepal the programs provide short-term, immersive experiences where students earn credits while discovering new cultures and perspectives. These journeys create opportunities to see the world differently and dream bigger.

Through scholarships provided by the CMC Foundation, these experiential opportunities are accessible to anyone willing to step out of their comfort zone and expand their horizons.



CMC STEAMBOAT SPRINGS AND BECKY EDMISTON HONORED FOR LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION



The Yampa Valley Sustainability Council recognized CMC Steamboat Springs for its dedication to reducing environmental impacts and promoting sustainability across campus and collegewide operations. Becky Edmiston, Professor of Biology, and Ecosystem Science & Stewardship, was also honored as the sustainability council's choice for 2023 Educator of the Year. This award highlighted her course-based collaborations with the US Forest Service, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and nonprofit partners. Under Edmiston's leadership, Colorado Mountain College is training the next generation of climate leaders and ecosystem stewards, driving community climate-action initiatives throughout the Yampa Valley. CMC's programs, including bachelor's degrees in Sustainability Studies and Ecosystem Science & Stewardship, the Rocky Mountain Land Management Internship program in partnership with the forest service, along with certificates in Sustainability Leadership, Geographic Information Science, EPA Watershed Technician, and Permaculture Design, ensure that students are well prepared to contribute to the region's workforce needs and environmental priorities.



BUILDING FUTURES: CMC STEAMBOAT SPRINGS PARTNERS TO EMPOWER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CARPENTRY

During the 2023-24 academic year, CMC Steamboat Springs, Steamboat Springs High School and Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp worked together to create a hands-on carpentry program that gives high school students the chance to earn certification from the National Center for Construction Education and Research. This career and technical education carpentry class allows students to gain valuable skills, earn college credits through concurrent enrollment, and explore potential career paths in the trades, all while meeting high school graduation requirements. The intent is to expand into advanced carpentry courses and potentially a welding class, offering even more pathways for students to explore. The program, supported by partners like Milwaukee Tools and Alpine Lumber, reflects a broader effort by CMC to revive skilled crafts and trade programs across the state. With the curriculum based on national standards, students not only learn practical skills but also work towards earning nationally recognized credentials.



THE TRIUMPHANT SPIRIT: HONORING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS THROUGH PORTRAITS AND STORIES

The Triumphant Spirit exhibit, first displayed at Colorado Mountain College Steamboat Springs, and more recently, at the Breckenridge campus, is a profound exploration of Holocaust survivors' resilience, captured through powerful black-and-white portraits by Colorado photojournalist Nick Del Calzo. The collection features 50 evocative photographs, with narratives written by Renee Rockford, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor herself. These narratives offer intimate glimpses into the survivors' lives, preserving their stories for future generations.

Stirred by a 1991 visit to Dachau, Nick sought to document the enduring spirit of those who survived the Holocaust. His work, which began with a 1997 book *The Triumphant Spirit: Portraits & Stories of Holocaust Survivors – Their Messages of Hope & Compassion* has been displayed in prestigious venues like the National Holocaust Museum and the US Capitol Rotunda. The exhibit allows visitors to connect deeply with the personal histories of survivors through both images and stories. The exhibit was made possible by the support of the Feiner Family Foundation.



STEPPING INTO COLLEGE LIFE: 'STUDENT FOR A DAY' RETURNS TO CMC VAIL VALLEY

The Vail Valley campus brought back the ever-popular *Student for a Day* event, with over 80 community members experiencing life as a Colorado Mountain College student in the spring. The morning was comprised of three 25-minute sessions where faculty members taught "flash classes" on diverse topics including *Suffragists & Anti-Suffragists in American History*, *Allen Ginsberg & the Japanese Haiku*, *Anatome & the Human Organ System*, *A Tale of Two Mindsets*, *Contradiction & Expansion in the Breath*, and *Brain & Life*. The classes were a sampling of actual curriculum offered, with a twist for the non-traditional "students" who attended. The learning was followed by a catered luncheon, and an in-depth keynote presentation from faculty and students.



CMC VAIL VALLEY WINS BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AND DEI EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Colorado Mountain College Vail Valley at Edwards was honored with the 2024 Business of the Year award and the Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion award from the Vail Valley Partnership (VVP).

The VVP is committed to regional economic vitality, uniting over 800 organizations representing 80% of the local workforce. This collaborative approach supports local business success, encourages economic development, and attracts destination guests. As a regional development leader, the VVP recognizes businesses that contribute to the community's social and economic fabric.

CMC's award reflects its leadership and partnership with VVP in building a stronger, more inclusive future for the region.



STRINGS OF PASSION: PABLO SÁINZ VILLEGAS ENCHANTS CMC EDWARDS WITH AN INTIMATE PERFORMANCE

CMC Vail Valley at Edwards has long been known for hosting arts and culture events for the local community, so it was no surprise when the campus hosted world-renowned Spanish guitarist Pablo Sáinz Villegas. This intimate performance, presented by Bravo! Vail Music Festival in collaboration with Colorado Mountain College and My Future Pathways, was a truly unforgettable experience. Accompanied by the Sinfónica de Minería brass quintet and special guest Carlos Miguel Prieto, Pablo captivated the CMC audience with a preview of his upcoming performance at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater.





JOIN YOUR FELLOW CMC ALUMNI

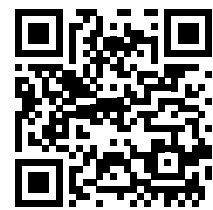
The CMC Foundation Alumni Association is a way to connect with CMC graduates and students, receive invitations to events, and stay informed about college activities.

Those who join the free CMC Alumni Association at coloradomtn.edu/alumni receive an alumni welcome packet. Contact Alumni Association Coordinator Leslie Gamez at lgamez@coloradomtn.edu for additional information about alumni opportunities, resources, and upcoming events.

The association hosts a CMC Day at the Colorado Rockies and Alumni Ski Day each year, sponsored by Alpine Bank, bringing together CMC alumni, students, employees, friends, and family. Stay in touch and take part next year!



Scan Here to Register
For The Free CMC
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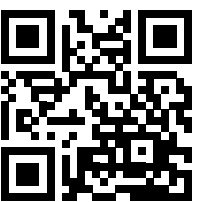
The Davenport Legacy Society – named in honor of Dr. Joe Davenport, Colorado Mountain College’s first president – recognizes those alumni and friends who have made future provisions for the CMC Foundation in their estate plans, in any form or amount.

If you would like to make a lasting impact on CMC, its students, and communities, there are several gift arrangements to choose from. Whether you would like to put your donation to work today or benefit Colorado Mountain College after your lifetime, you can find a charitable plan that lets you provide for your family and support the causes you care about.

THANKS TO OUR DAVENPORT LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS FOR THE HONOR OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP (THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024) († ESTATE GIFT REALIZED)

- | | | | |
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The 14'er Society

The 14'er Society, a moniker given in honor of the twenty-two 14,000-foot-peaks located in CMC's service area, celebrates the generosity of CMC's alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends at varying levels of support. The CMC Foundation places the utmost importance on the accuracy of this listing. We sincerely regret any omissions or errors and welcome your feedback.

Donor Roll

This 2023-2024 report represents gifts made between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

* Represents five or more consecutive years of giving

ON BEHALF OF CMC'S NEARLY 15,000 STUDENTS, THE CMC FOUNDATION SENDS ITS DEEPEST THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS.

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BROOKE LARSON, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT LIFE & HOUSING, LEADVILLE CAMPUS:

"I give to the CMC Foundation because the scholarships I received as a student helped me along my educational journey. Now that I work for CMC, giving back is a no-brainer! I'm proud to help create opportunities for students, just like the ones I benefited from during my time here."



LAURIE AND TOM MULLEN: BUILDING FUTURES THROUGH EDUCATION

Laurie and Tom Mullen, longtime supporters of CMC, are champions of education in Eagle County. After selling their business, they sought a meaningful way to give back to their community and found it by funding scholarships at CMC. Their journey began with the Chip Bartsch Scholarship, created to honor a dear friend and lifelong learner. Inspired by the transformative power of education, they've continued their commitment through the Mullen Scholarship.

The Mullens understand the challenges many CMC students face—balancing work, family, and the rising cost of living while pursuing an education. Their scholarships help remove financial barriers, opening doors for motivated individuals to build brighter futures.

As Davenport Society members, the Mullens have even included the CMC Foundation in their estate planning, ensuring their impact endures. "Setting up a scholarship is a powerful way to uplift your community," they say.

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HONORING MATTHEW: A LASTING LEGACY OF LOVE AND OPPORTUNITY AT CMC

Joan and Pete Martinez established an annual named scholarship in memory of their son, Matthew, who attended Colorado Mountain College from 2014-2017, until his passing. To honor Matthew's legacy and his love for his CMC experience and the outdoors unique to Colorado, the Martinez family, along with friends and supporters, have been contributing to this fund to ensure the scholarship continues to support students each year. Recognizing the impact of their generosity and wanting to support students like their son at CMC, Joan and Pete have taken an additional step by making the decision to endow the scholarship, through their estate planning, which will allow the scholarship to be awarded in perpetuity.

The Martinez family's commitment reflects their desire to turn their loss into a lasting legacy of support and opportunity for others, embodying the values Matthew held dear and keeping his memory alive within the CMC community.



FRIENDS OF ASPEN ANIMAL SHELTER SCHOLARSHIP HELPS LACEY SEAGO THRIVE AS A VET TECH

Town of Eagle native Lacey Seago was one of the first graduates supported by the new Friends of the Aspen Animal Shelter Scholarship for Veterinary Technicians. Thanks to this generous scholarship, Lacey was able to pursue her passion for animal care, and after graduating in May, she passed her Veterinary Technician National Exam and earned her certification in August. She is now thriving at On-Site Veterinary in Eagle, a mixed animal clinic, where she works with a variety of animals every day.

The Friends of the Aspen Animal Shelter are delighted with the success of their first scholarship recipient and, in gratitude for this positive impact, are increasing their annual gift by 20% next year, ensuring even more aspiring vet techs can follow in Lacey’s footsteps.

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: CARMEN DOWLEY

At Colorado Mountain College, over 1,000 dedicated adjunct faculty make it possible to deliver exceptional education across 11 campuses. These educators bring expertise, passion, and heart to a vast array of subjects, ensuring students are equipped for success.

When thinking about a great educator, words like dedicated, difference-maker, supportive, and motivator come to mind—and Carmen Dowley embodies them all. Carmen, an inspiration at the Rifle campus, cares deeply about her students and goes the extra mile to build lasting relationships. Through her commitment, she ensures students leave CMC prepared to excel in their fields.

From shaping careers through Phlebotomy to Emergency Medical Services programs, Carmen’s passion shines through. Students call her “incredibly motivating,” “patient,” and “always supportive.” Carmen is a vital part of the CMC family - her grit, care, and dedication are an inspiration to all.

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF HJALMAR "HAL" SUNDIN



Both in life, and now in passing at nearly 100 years of age, Hal Sundin has been one of the CMC Foundation's most loyal supporters. A donor for more than two decades, Hal supported Spring Valley's Sopris Theatre Company, supported multiple annual scholarships, created the Norma Sundin Endowed Scholarship benefitting CMC Breckenridge and Dillon students in memory of his daughter, and provided for his support to continue through estate gifts designated to the CMC Foundation's Davenport Society. An avid climber of Colorado's highest peaks, Hal, whose eyes matched Colorado's brilliant blue skies, helped countless CMC students reach new heights and brighter futures through his lifetime of support.

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 In Memory of Bonnie
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HONORING BONNIE CULPEPPER: A LEGACY OF COMPASSION, ADVENTURE, AND SONG

Bonnie Culpepper's vibrant spirit and boundless zest for life touched everyone she met. After earning her Emergency Medical Technician certificate at CMC Breckenridge in 2022, she dedicated herself to serving communities in Eagle and Teller counties. Bonnie's passion for helping others extended beyond her profession—she expressed herself through music, poetry, and adventure, climbing many of Colorado's 14ers and captivating audiences with her musical performances. In her memory, her friends and family created The Bonnie Culpepper Memorial Scholarship to celebrate her dedication, compassion, and creativity, and to ensure her legacy lives on by supporting future EMTs who share her passion for service and making a difference in the world.

TRIBUTES

In honor of Bobbi Cox
 Maryellen R Thoren
In honor of Diane Edge and Chris Kirk
 Sharon Koblinsky
In honor of Evan Weatherbie and Mary Peplin
 Sandi and Jimmy Rickert
In honor of Evelyn and Richard Boggs
 John McDonough
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In honor of Walter Isaacson

Amy Margerum Berg and
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In memory of Adam Palmer, Seth Bossung and Andy Jessen

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In memory of Anna and David Rozenberg

Alexandra Yajko

In memory of Arlene Montag/ Robert Hickey/Sid Spain

Western Eagle Valley Rotary Club

In memory of Barbara Newman Fazande

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In memory of Bonnie Culpepper

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In memory of Doris Dewton and Richard Gretz

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Sophia Rodriguez

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In memory of Freda Roof

Wells Fargo Bank

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Virginia Nicolai

In memory of Jason Pennington

Sharon and Robert Pennington

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Heidi Kunzek

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Ed Carlson

In memory of Lorraine Mall Haslee and Fred Haslee

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Robert Jankovsky

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In memory of Tyler Moore

Leslie Nissen

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Janet Darden

In memory of Virginia Cleaver

Kelly and James Cleaver

In memory of Zeke Pierce

Michael D Trujillo

Lena and Nikken Cullman



WARM THANKS FROM THE COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE FOUNDATION TEAM

Your generosity made a lasting impact on our students and their families during the 2023-2024 academic year. Together, we're building brighter futures in our mountain communities.

FISCAL YEAR 23-24 FINANCIALS (JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024)

REVENUES		EXPENSES
\$1,903,995	Student Support	\$1,998,783 ¹
\$1,438,969	Academic Programs, Faculty Support and Cultural & Community Enrichment	\$2,511,498
\$1,104,682	Capital Expansion & Improvements	\$2,107,019
\$1,337,365	Operations	\$1,525,731
\$2,694,426	Investment Return on Endowments	N/A
\$8,479,437	TOTAL	\$8,143,030²

¹ Of the \$1,903,995 disbursed for student support/scholarships, a total of \$363,872 was disbursed from endowed scholarships. Per our Cash & Investment Policy, funds invested long-term as endowment corpus or possibly net investment earnings thereon, the maximum allowable spending amount is 4.50% of the average fair market value for such funds calculated over a twelve-quarter period ended the December 31st immediately preceding the fiscal year end of June 30th.

² \$2,694,426 investment returns in current year; all investment earnings are reinvested in Foundation endowments and reserved for future endowment distributions. Capital campaign funds distributed \$2,107,019. This amount is comprised of current and previous fiscal year funds held for distribution in 2024.

TEAM FUND EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN

Colorado Mountain College attracts the nation's finest faculty and staff and is one of the region's largest employers. Dedicated to doing everything possible to help students succeed, it's no surprise to find that CMC's employees are also some of the college's most loyal donors. Team Fund, CMC's employee giving campaign with matching gift support from Alpine Bank, consistently finds that half of CMC employees choose to be annual donors to the CMC Foundation. The 2023 Team Fund campaign raised more than \$100,000 from CMC employees!





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COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE'S VISION STATEMENT

Colorado Mountain College aspires to serve and elevate the economic, social, cultural, and environmental vitality of its beautiful Rocky Mountain region by welcoming all learners through its doors, delivering highly relevant education and training, and serving as a trusted partner for strategic collaboration and innovation.

COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE FOUNDATION'S MISSION STATEMENT

The Colorado Mountain College Foundation builds sustainable community support for the needs and strategic priorities of Colorado Mountain College and its students.

TO DONATE OR LEARN MORE PLEASE CONTACT:

Kristin Heath Colon

Vice President for Advancement & Foundation CEO

khcolon@coloradomtn.edu / 970.947.8378

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