

COLLEGE AVENUE

A woman wearing a straw cowboy hat and a purple long-sleeved shirt is riding a brown horse with a white blaze on its face. She is holding a yellow lasso aloft in her right hand. The horse is galloping towards the camera, kicking up a cloud of dust. The background shows a rodeo arena with wooden fences and buildings under a sunset sky.

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A Rocky Mountain Student Media Publication

Rams vs. Buffs

The History of the Legendary
Rivalry

The Aggie Era

CSU's Beginning History

The CSU Rodeo Legacy

The Roots and Way of Life
for the CSU Rodeo Team



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From Your Editors

In 1870, Colorado State University was established as a Colorado land-grant university. In the 152 years since, the university has undergone growth and changes as it grew from an agriculture focused school to a mechanical school to a university with a variety of colleges. Through these changes, the school has held a sense of community in different ways. Whether it be the excitement of being an "Aggie" in the early 1900s, the decades-long rivalry against the University of Colorado Boulder, the emergence of the Ramskeller Pub & Grub in 1969, the construction of the University Center for the Arts building, or the camaraderie of the Rodeo Club, the school's rich history lives on in today's generation.

As this edition celebrates the roots of CSU, we not only hope to honor the legacies of CSU students before us, but we strive to recognize the future generations that uphold these traditions that have been running through CSU for years. As these stories pull readers into the past, we hope that each story resonates with our audience in ways that only the historical roots of Colorado State University can.

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September 2022

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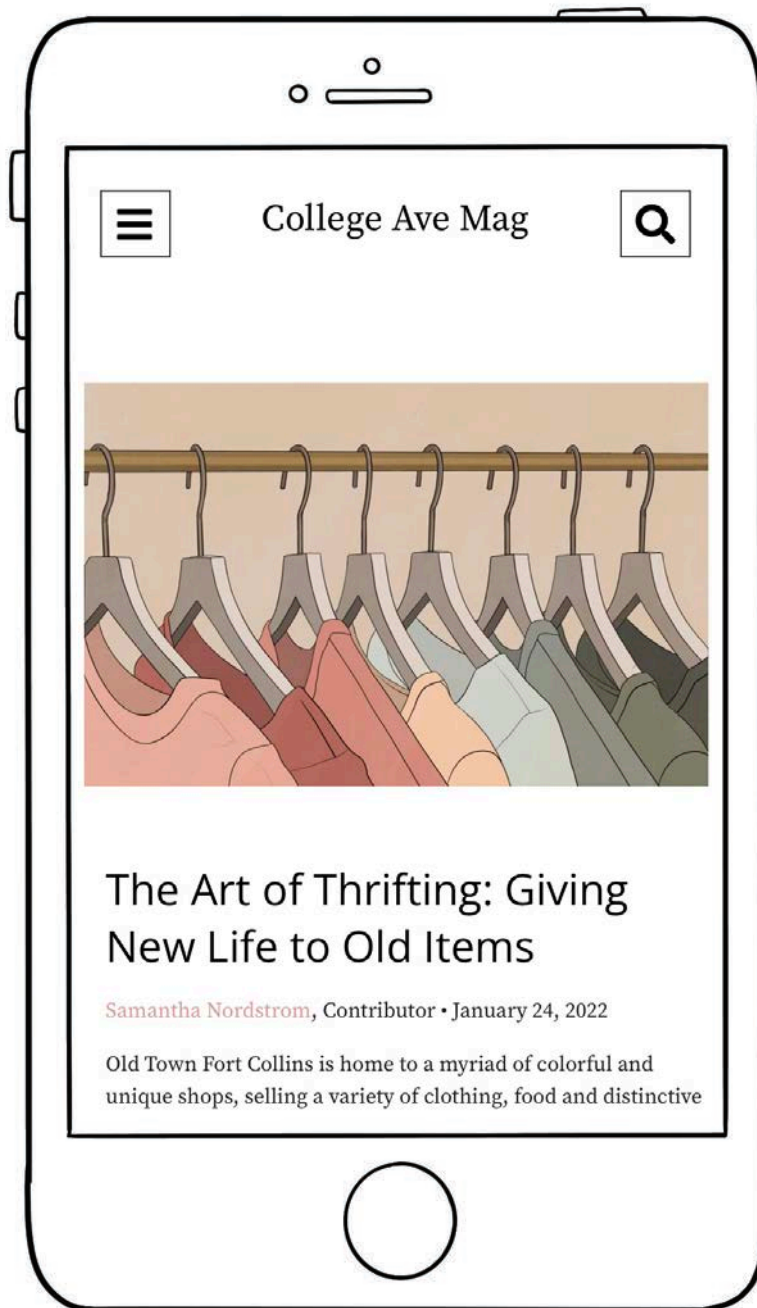
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The Aggie Era:

CSU's Beginning History as an Agricultural and Mechanical College

By Samantha Nordstrom

As one strolls through Colorado State University, they see "Ram pride" everywhere: green and gold banners are posted on the walls, murals of CSU glory painted near the Lory Student Center, and CSU alumni portraits hanging in the Andrew G. Clark Building. Cam the Ram, CSU's beloved mascot, can be found at football games, surrounded by handlers. The stands are a wave of green and gold, accompanied by excited shouts of students screaming, "Proud to be a CSU Ram!"

And yet, instead of a giant "R" marking the mountains in the distance, symbolizing our beloved mascot, there's an "A."

Before we were the Rams, we were the Aggies. CSU's "Aggie Era," one of its most prominent historical eras, laid the foundation for the esteemed university that CSU is today.

According to documentary film, "The Great Experiment: CSU at 150", CSU's story began with the Morrill Act, signed by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The act granted 30,000 acres of federal land to each state, on which each state had to build an agricultural and mechanical college.

Fort Collins, Boulder, and Greeley all raced to host the new college. In 1870, CSU was established. But in 1874, citizens of Fort Collins donated 240 acres of land and built the Claim Building, a 16 by 24 feet red brick structure and the first building at the college, according to CSU Source. It symbolized a promise to establish the college, since there was still speculation that the college would relocate. Before Colorado became a state on August 1, 1876, what would eventually become CSU was established, then called the State Agricultural College.

On September 1, 1879, under the direction of the State Board of Agriculture and the guidance of first President Elijah Edwards, CSU opened its first classes to roughly 15 students, including Edwards' two daughters. Most of these students were 15-16 years old. Frank Boring, the executive producer of "The Great Experiment: CSU at 150," said that many of the first students didn't have a lot of prior education because the majority worked on farms.

“At the very beginning of the college, some of [the students] didn’t know how to read or write properly,” Boring says. “They didn’t have the kind of skills that you take for granted to get into college.”

According to Gordan “Hap” Hazard, a historian and CSU alumni, early classes were tailored towards both men and women, making Stage Agricultural College among the first land-grant colleges to accept women. Men often took agricultural classes and fieldwork, and women often took home economics and domestic arts. However, women also took agricultural classes.

“The land grant, part of [its] mission was to educate males and females and have curriculum that appealed to both of them,” Hazard says.

By 1880, the State Agricultural College became the Colorado Agricultural College. Soon, the Hatch Act of 1887 granted federal funding to the Colorado Agricultural College for an Agricultural Experiment Station, which structured agricultural courses, according to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. From then on, Colorado Agricultural College became a pioneer in crop experimentation.

“One of the mandates that the State Board of Agriculture told the college president, and basically all the people that work for him, was, ‘We don’t want you to just go out and grow the stuff we know you can grow. We want you to go out and find out what else you can grow in Fort Collins,’” Hazard says.

According to Hazard, The college established experimental crop fields where the present-day Oval is located and found success in crops such as sugar beet, oats, barley, and alfalfa. Students also expanded their work to other areas of Colorado such as Grand Junction and the Eastern Plains. James Pritchett, Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, emphasized the success and global impact of CSU’s early crop breeding.

“We’re out in the field and we’re sharing knowledge throughout history,” Pritchett says. “Science evolved, technology evolved, and we started to use the science of technology to help solve agricultural problems that folks had.”

Courses involving mechanics were another big piece of the Colorado Agricultural College. It was such a big piece that in 1935, Colorado Agricultural College changed its name to Colorado State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, or Colorado A&M. Hazard says that to be a successful farmer, one also has to be a good mechanic. Today, mechanics translates to engineering, but in the past, was focused solely on farming equipment and techniques, such as hydrology. Boring says that irrigation technology that originated from Colorado A&M had a tremendous impact on the world regarding water engineering.

“We have taught folks how to make the best use of water resources all over the world,



especially in arid and semi-arid environments,” Pritchett says. “Sometimes that’s been large-scale irrigation projects, and other times that’s been around breeding plants for drought tolerance.”

A prominent part of student life on campus was not only attending classes but also maintaining the college itself, according to Boring. Students didn’t pay monetary tuition, but instead worked on campus, whether through completing chores, tending to the farms, or serving as housekeepers.

“You didn’t have to have money in your pocket, but that was part of the deal to be here,” Hazard says. “You had to help take care of the place. Everybody earned their keep here. But the common person could go to college, get an education if they’re willing to do all the work that went into it.”

On January 7, 1893, student-athletes attended their first football game. To rally some school spirit, they needed team colors. On the way to the game, some students stopped at a drugstore and grabbed green and orange ribbons to tie onto their uniforms, thus establishing CSU’s signature orange and green colors. According to the American Football database, they officially started calling themselves Aggies in 1899, which Hazard explains is another term for farmers.

However, the Aggie mascot soon changed. On May 1, 1957, Colorado A&M became Colorado State University. As stated in the documentary, former President William E. Morgan held a contest to name CSU’s new mascot, a ram. However, many students were

initially unhappy with the transition from Aggies; as a protest, they voted to name the ram Meathead. But President Morgan overruled the name, and introduced Cam the Ram to the student body. The name “Cam” is an acronym to honor Colorado A&M. Pritchett said that a piece of CSU’s identity lies in its agricultural history and motivation to serve people.

“Part of our identity is as a student service university,” Pritchett says. “When you think about welcoming people to the table, people breaking bread together, making sure everybody has something to eat, that resonates with us. That’s part of our identity that we can be proud of.”

CSU has come a long way from the small agricultural college it began as, and thanks to another former president, Charles Lory, CSU expanded beyond agriculture and mechanics to embrace liberal arts and other areas of study, according to Hazard. Boring says that understanding CSU’s rich history allows one to appreciate the college more.

“We have a very solid history of being open to everybody,” Boring says. “Our evidence of our history needs to be understood so that people coming here for the first time...realize it took a lot to get here. We have evolved not only in our ability to educate, but also in terms of how we deal with each other.”

Illustrations by
Sasha Beran-Hughes



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THE RAMS- KELLER

Spreading Joy While
Educating the Future

By Jackson Patrick





In the basement of the Lory Student Center, on the Colorado State University campus, visitors will see a dimly lit bar full of neon signs and TVs. Here in the Ramskeller Pub & Grub, more often than not, nearly every table will be filled with CSU students by 1 p.m.

Sure, it may be 5 o'clock somewhere, but these students aren't worrying about finding reasons to enjoy a cold beverage early in the day: rather, they are taking the time to catch up with friends between classes or, better yet, working on school work.

According to Jeff Callaway, associate director of the Fermentation Science and Technology Program at CSU, this sense of gathering is what is at the heart of the Ramskeller. "The community aspect is huge," Callaway says, and thanks to it, this pub has been a place where anyone can come not only to grow their relationship with beer but advance their education in the fermentation and food science industry.

According to a *Rocky Mountain Collegian* article, in 1968 students of CSU held a peaceful protest in which they demanded the sale of alcoholic beverages in the then Ramskeller coffee shop. Their dreams soon became a reality, and the Ramskeller coffee shop became the Ramskeller Pub & Grub, which began selling beer in 1969.

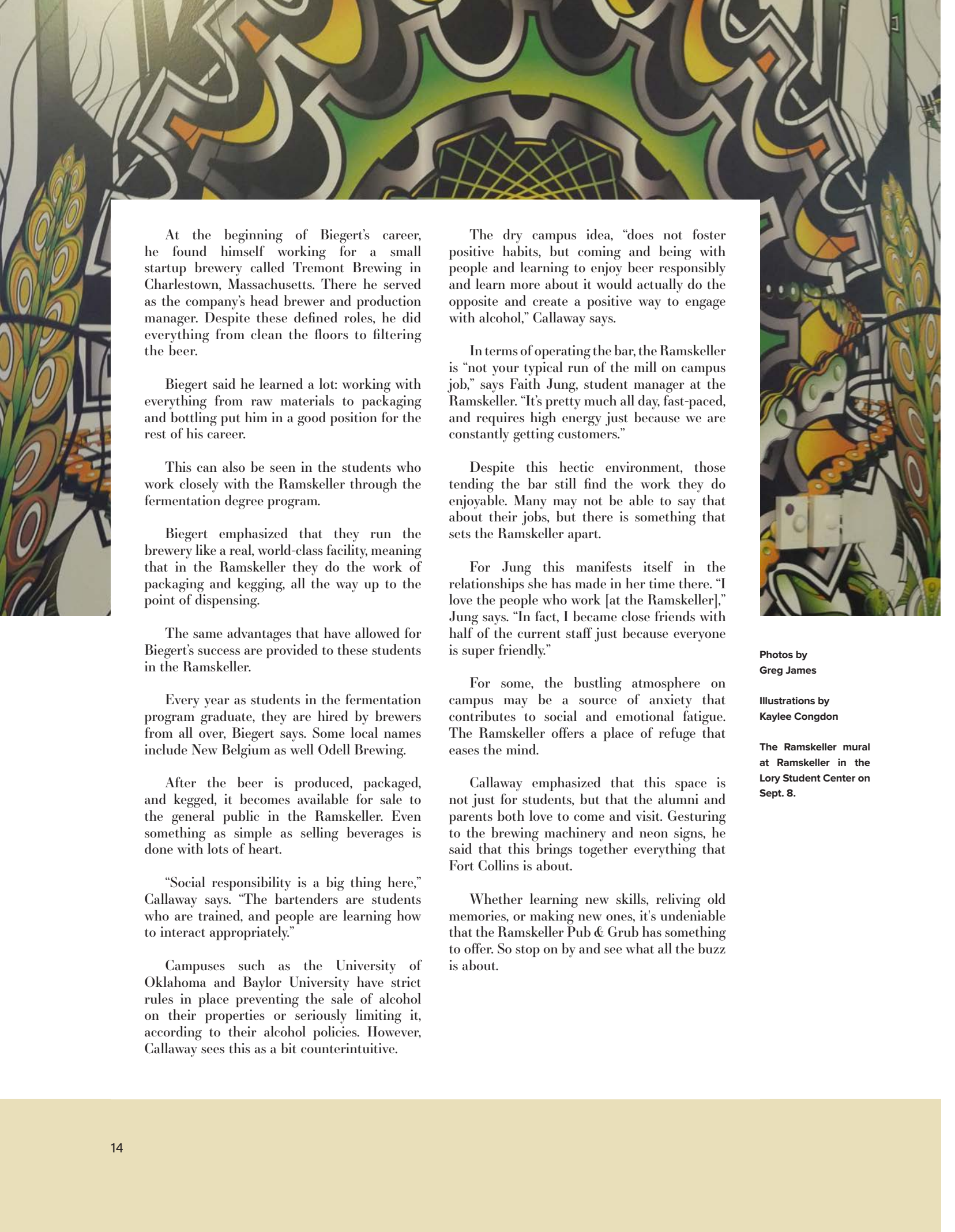
Fast forward to 2018, not only does CSU have a program dedicated to teaching and preparing the brewers of the future, but there is also a world class brewing facility that students are trained to operate.

"Having the Ramskeller Brewery here is only because the pub has been here since 1968," Callaway says. Prior to the brewery's presence, students learning the trade would go to local breweries where they would craft their own beers. The Ramskeller would then sell these beverages at their taps.

These relationships grew to be so strong that when the Ramskeller Brewery was first coming to fruition, big players in the industry made large donations to provide students with the high-class machinery that they have now.

For students in the Fermentation Science and Technology program, this was career defining.

"It takes a long time to train on this, to run the automation," says Jeff Biegert, Fermentation Science and Technology instructor and brewmaster. "But to have that exposure, and for them to do the work in the brewery and all the stuff around it, it's a huge advantage for them."



At the beginning of Biegert's career, he found himself working for a small startup brewery called Tremont Brewing in Charlestown, Massachusetts. There he served as the company's head brewer and production manager. Despite these defined roles, he did everything from clean the floors to filtering the beer.

Biegert said he learned a lot: working with everything from raw materials to packaging and bottling put him in a good position for the rest of his career.

This can also be seen in the students who work closely with the Ramskeller through the fermentation degree program.

Biegert emphasized that they run the brewery like a real, world-class facility, meaning that in the Ramskeller they do the work of packaging and kegging, all the way up to the point of dispensing.

The same advantages that have allowed for Biegert's success are provided to these students in the Ramskeller.

Every year as students in the fermentation program graduate, they are hired by brewers from all over, Biegert says. Some local names include New Belgium as well Odell Brewing.

After the beer is produced, packaged, and kegged, it becomes available for sale to the general public in the Ramskeller. Even something as simple as selling beverages is done with lots of heart.

"Social responsibility is a big thing here," Callaway says. "The bartenders are students who are trained, and people are learning how to interact appropriately."

Campuses such as the University of Oklahoma and Baylor University have strict rules in place preventing the sale of alcohol on their properties or seriously limiting it, according to their alcohol policies. However, Callaway sees this as a bit counterintuitive.

The dry campus idea, "does not foster positive habits, but coming and being with people and learning to enjoy beer responsibly and learn more about it would actually do the opposite and create a positive way to engage with alcohol," Callaway says.

In terms of operating the bar, the Ramskeller is "not your typical run of the mill on campus job," says Faith Jung, student manager at the Ramskeller. "It's pretty much all day, fast-paced, and requires high energy just because we are constantly getting customers."

Despite this hectic environment, those tending the bar still find the work they do enjoyable. Many may not be able to say that about their jobs, but there is something that sets the Ramskeller apart.

For Jung this manifests itself in the relationships she has made in her time there. "I love the people who work [at the Ramskeller]," Jung says. "In fact, I became close friends with half of the current staff just because everyone is super friendly."

For some, the bustling atmosphere on campus may be a source of anxiety that contributes to social and emotional fatigue. The Ramskeller offers a place of refuge that eases the mind.

Callaway emphasized that this space is not just for students, but that the alumni and parents both love to come and visit. Gesturing to the brewing machinery and neon signs, he said that this brings together everything that Fort Collins is about.

Whether learning new skills, reliving old memories, or making new ones, it's undeniable that the Ramskeller Pub & Grub has something to offer. So stop on by and see what all the buzz is about.

Photos by
Greg James

Illustrations by
Kaylee Congdon

The Ramskeller mural
at Ramskeller in the
Lory Student Center on
Sept. 8.



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RAMS

THE HISTORY OF THE LEGENDARY RIVALRY

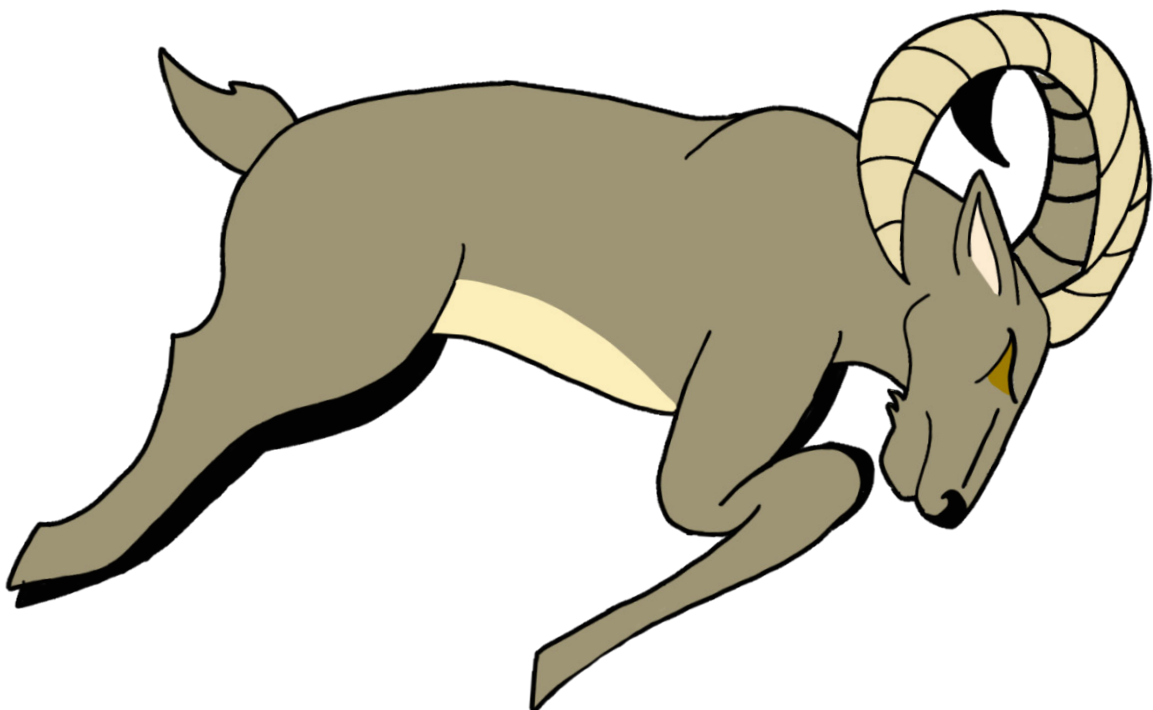
By Annie Weiler

For as long as Colorado State University has existed, there has been a mutual rivalry with the University of Colorado Boulder. Promoted at academic conferences, on social media, and in athletic events for over a century, the rivalry is almost as old as Colorado itself. Although its origins have been largely forgotten, the early stories of the biggest Colorado athletic rivalry in history are remembered.

In 1870, the Colorado territorial legislature allocated money to create the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Colorado, and the Colorado Agricultural College, which would

later become Colorado State University. CAC was the agrarian college in Fort Collins: horticulture and farm economy comprised two of the first six courses offered. More than 40 miles south, CU was built in Boulder, a prosperous, industrial mining town.

“Almost all of the folks that moved to [Fort Collins] were either farmers or ranchers,” says Meg Dunn, a member of the Fort Collins Historical Society board. “Boulder [was] benefitting from the mining that was going on around the state.”



BUFFS

In 1893, the Colorado Agricultural football team was formed with no head coach and a mere 18 players, according to CSU Athletics. The University of Colorado, whose football team was nicknamed the Colorado Silver and Gold, had formed a team in 1890 under similar circumstances: they had no head coach and few ready to play. Born of geographic proximity, athletic enthusiasm, and reputational differences that demanded a superior school, CAC initiated a football game against CU, which became the first display of rivalry between the schools.

Colorado Agricultural College fumbled. According to the American Football Database, CAC faced a miserable loss of 70-6 on February 10th, 1893.

Yet, Colorado Agricultural College continued to play the University of Colorado each year in what would later be called the Rocky Mountain Showdown. According to the American Football Database, in 1899,

Colorado Agricultural College adopted the “Aggie” as their mascot, which was a colloquial term for “farmer.” Later, in 1909, both teams, joined by the Colorado School of Mines and Colorado College, were chartered into the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. Still, Colorado Agricultural College had not garnered a football win against the University of Colorado — until 1912.

That year, a member of the Alpha Pi Lambda fraternity introduced an English bulldog to CAC. As found in the Colorado State University archives, Peanuts the bulldog rose to fame after interrupting an early morning music performance on campus. Fascinated students accepted him as their unofficial mascot. Peanuts watched the Aggies win the Rocky Mountain Showdown in 1912, 1915, and 1916, and win the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference football championship in 1915. He was the spirited cheerleader and good-luck charm for the Aggies against CU.



Rather, he was until 1918.

On the brisk morning of April 28th, 1918, Aggies found Peanuts dead on campus. A column in *The Rocky Mountain Collegian* reported that the beloved Peanuts had been poisoned. Rumors spread that a CU student had murdered Peanuts, riling up the Aggies for vengeance. In 1919, CAC swept the Rocky Mountain Showdown in a 49-7 victory. Peanuts' death changed the rivalry's tone — it was no longer just a football rivalry, but also a social rivalry.

The vicious social rivalry continued into the 1920s, culminating in 1923. CAC and CU prepared for the Rocky Mountain Showdown on Thanksgiving. *The Collegian* documented the Wednesday prior, in which a crowd of Aggies met at a chapel, brooms in hand, for an explosive pep rally led by the football team. They marched through Fort Collins, screaming from campus to the Northern Hotel, rallying for a win.

The writer for the story wrote for any disloyal Aggies: "May the turkey that he hopes to relish have the flavor of garlic and hay and stick in his throat like poison!"

Soon, however, the Rocky Mountain Showdown slowed down. In 1934, the University of Colorado adopted the Buffaloes as their mascot. Then, in 1935, Colorado Agricultural College became Colorado State College of Agricultural and Mechanical Arts, according to the Colorado State University's Office of the President. Later, in 1957, Colorado A&M became Colorado State University. The period of continuous changes eventually led to a Rocky Mountain Showdown hiatus from 1959 to 1983, as both schools grappled with civil unrest.

"One big change during that time is that Fort Collins allowed alcohol in 1969 for the first time since 1896," Dunn says.

The Fort Collins History Connection notes that lifting prohibition, combined with rapid population growth and continuous anti-war protests, culminated in tumultuous years in Fort Collins. In Boulder, residents faced similar unrest.

Without football games to rally behind, students sought an alternative: basketball. Between 1959 and 1983, the Aggies and Buffaloes met six times for basketball. While the Rocky Mountain Showdown continued sporadically between 1983 and 1995, then regularly again in 1996, the basketball teams met every year from 1991 to 2019.





Illustration by
Olive Mielke

(Left) Rocky Mountain
Showdown. Collegian File
Photo

(Above) CSU plays CU
in the Rocky Mountain
Showdown at Sports Au-
thority Field in Denver.
Sept. 1, 2013

Via Flickr at
ColoradoStateUniversity

In a 2011 interview for *The Collegian*, then-head coach of Colorado State University's men's basketball, Tim Miles, was asked about the previous year's loss to CU. Miles said, "It's CU. Anytime you lose to Colorado, you're sick to your stomach."

In 2015, CU and CSU leadership met to renew the Rocky Mountain Showdown past 2020. However, the negotiations failed. Rick George, the University of Colorado athletic director, would later tell *The Denver Post* that scheduling concerns and student reluctance to travel to Denver for the game contributed to his withdrawal from the football series.

The origins of the Colorado State vs. Colorado rivalry were, in George's words, "dead." But with a rich history of intense, encouraging competition behind the schools, the rivalry persisted. Quickly, the women's volleyball teams began a new tradition: since

2019, they have competed annually for the Golden Spike Trophy. Students continued the rivalry, with each school perpetuating the most passionate in-state collegiate rivalry in Colorado's history.

The University of Colorado and Colorado State University rivalry transcended casual football camaraderie and evolved into a multi-athletic and social rivalry of over 100 years. When it became apparent that the rivalry was not dead, the Rocky Mountain Showdown's termination was quickly reversed. According to KRDO, The two football teams will meet again on Sept. 16, 2023, four years after their last game. With new head coaches, new players, and new fans, the Rocky Mountain Showdown has been revived — and the CSU vs. CU rivalry endures.

THE CSU



RODEO LEGACY

By Kailey Pickering

Horses race around the arena, sending whirls of dust spinning around their legs as riders swing lassos above their heads, focusing on their target, swinging one...two...three times before they release the rope and it lands over the calf.

As the sun sets over green fields and arena lights flood across the bronze dirt, it may seem like just another practice in Eaton, Colorado, for the CSU Rodeo Club, but everyone at the arena — students, coaches, and volunteers, — are putting every ounce of effort and passion into perfecting their craft in the hours after school and between full-time jobs. Driven by their passion for rodeo, the coaches volunteer their time for athletes.

The roots of rodeo run deep at Colorado State University. For years, CSU's Livestock Team not only competed in livestock judging competitions, but also organized rodeos that showcased the traditions of ranching through events such as barrel racing, steer wrestling, and bull riding during CSU's College Day Celebration that originated in 1910. By the 1940s, the Aggies began to pave the way as one of the first intercollegiate teams in the nation. On April 14-15, 1949, CSU students joined 12 other schools at the first National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association Convention in Denver, where the final approval was given for the association, according to the NIRA website. Since 1950, the team has been roping, riding, and collecting buckles, from winning the National Championship in 1954 to hosting the 2022 Skyline Stampede in April.

Similar to the original team members, the group shares a passion and determination for the tradition that showcases ranching skills. Rodeo at CSU not only celebrates the school's agricultural heritage, but it opens up a space of learning.

"It doesn't matter the background or the experience or the knowledge or any of those things, what matters more than anything is the heart and the desire that comes with it if you really, truly want to do this," head coach Branden Ferguson says.

The team extends their passion past those who are familiar with rodeo and welcomes anyone harboring an interest and a desire for competition. Murphy Bohlmann, president of the team, joined in January with no rodeo experience but a motivation to learn and work on the team.

Bohlmann jumped into the sport with an ambition to absorb rodeo knowledge, and the team welcomed him into the rodeo family.

"That is truly the best way to learn," Whitney Simmons, assistant and women's coach, says. "To just jump in and learn as you go and watch the people you're working with."

And that's exactly what Bohlmann and others have done as they have immersed themselves into the sport.

"Whatever level you're on, even if you're pro rodeo or never rodeoed before they [the coaches] really try to value what you're doing and help you with the sport in any way they can," Bohlmann says.

The learning atmosphere on the team not only molds new athletes, but creates teaching moments between athletes as well. Bohlmann now instructs new members on rodeo techniques in steer wrestling.

"I was taught pretty young that the best way to learn something is to teach it," Ferguson says. "I feel like trying to instill that in the students that are on the team that have grown up in the





rodeo world and are part of that heritage and that legacy... you're not going to learn it any better until you get to the point where you start trying to teach it to someone else."

The team grows stronger as new athletes absorb rodeo knowledge and those with rodeo experience share their skills.

The team also has a community of support for one another. Ryley Hasenack, the team's treasurer, is a junior who competes in barrel racing and breakaway roping. She explains how her teammates are constantly offering advice and support. "They're so willing to give an arm and a leg for you when you need it," Hasenack says.

Whether it's tips on technique or helping her when her horse was injured last spring, Hasenack says that the team never fails to show up for each other. The group is one that can always be relied on and cultivates participants who stand by one another.

"It helps you just understand how to be a good friend, how to be there for the people and how to rely on others to help you get better both in the arena and out," says Sadie Johnson, a junior who currently competes in breakaway roping and goat-tying.

Ferguson describes how many in the area are also willing to volunteer their time to help the team grow. As the team practices in nearby Eaton two days a week, many in the small ranching community, which sits about 20 miles from Fort Collins, come out to offer advice and aid to the team. Ferguson explains that he isn't an expert in everything, so having others work with the athletes strengthens the team.

As the team learns from local experts and shows up for one another, coach Simmons explains that athletes often grow in maturity, responsibility, and work ethic through this process. They learn that "the effort you put in is the result you're going to get out," Simmons says.

The team impacts students as it teaches the values of rodeo and ultimately helps athletes grow as people.

"It's not something that you're trying for," Ferguson says, describing the growth on the team. "You kind of step back one day and... that is not the same student that came here as a freshman."

Not only does the organization focus on the growth of the upcoming students but also celebrates the legacy that has come before them. At the 2022 annual Skyline Stampede Rodeo in Fort Collins, the team put together an Alumni Banquet, in which they honored past members of the team.

"I saw so many different types of people from all different walks of life, all different age ranges, it was just cool to see all those people come together," Bohlmann says. "And you're just like wow, this has a rich history behind it. And it was really cool for them because they got to kind of relive what it was like when they were in the rodeo."

Rodeo is a tradition that brings people together through passion and hard work, sustaining relationships for years after. Don Chadwick was a bareback and bull rider as well as a member of the Livestock Club in 1947 before the NIRA was formed. He remembers meeting with his teammates annually at what was known as "the 50's club."

"It started out in Denver at the Stock Show," Chadwick remembers. "So the Livestock Club would meet in one room and the Rodeo Club would meet in another room."

Chadwick remained at CSU after graduation. The Monday after graduating he went to work for the CSU Extension, where he started the first 4H rodeo in Colorado in 1950.

Another reunion was organized for team members from the 1970s in 2022 at the Skyline Stampede by alumni Dave Hill and Frank Grant. Reunions like these have allowed former teammates to reconnect and reminisce about their days in rodeo.

The team carries a legacy of passion and determination that has united the Rodeo Club for decades. For many, the relationships made during their time at CSU last for years beyond intercollegiate competitions. The passion they harbored lives on in today's generation as they work toward being the best they can be.

Today the Rodeo Club upholds the legacy that was born decades ago. With the same heart, the same dedication, and the same tradition, the CSU Rodeo Club keeps the rodeo spirit coursing through their veins.

"I think it shows that even back then, rodeo people just had that drive and that passion for it [rodeo]," Hasenack says. "It's cool to see that that far back there was still a passion that we have today."



Photos by
Milo Gladstein

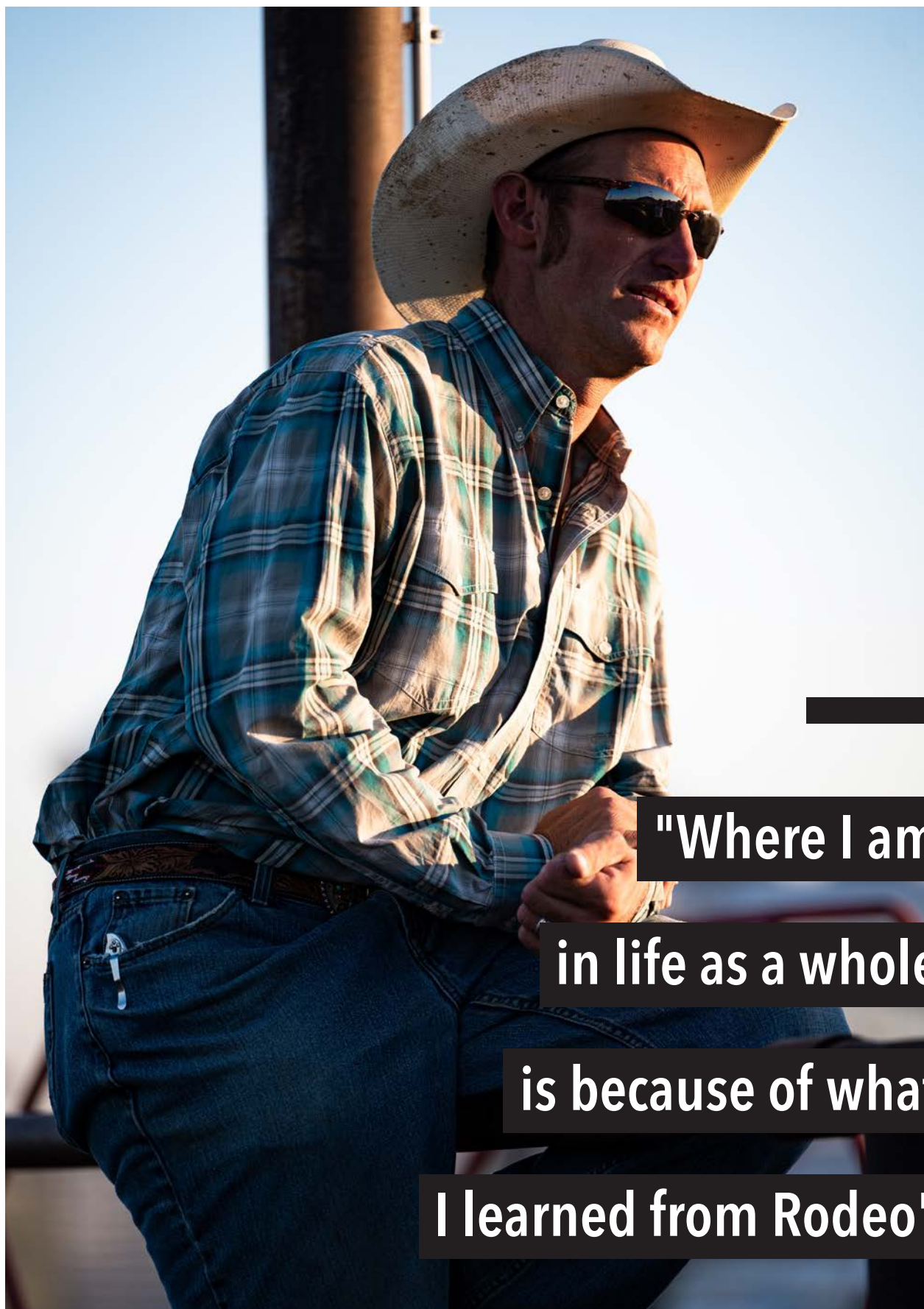
(Pg 20) Murphy Bohlmann, CSU Rodeo Club president, practices steer wrestling techniques during practice in Eaton on Aug. 29.

(Left) Teaching moments during practice with Branden Ferguson, Kevin Smith, Murphy Bohlmann, and Ryley Hasenack in Eaton on Aug. 29.

(Left) Member of the CSU Rodeo Club sports a Boys Ranch championship buckle during practice in Eaton on Aug. 29.

(Above) Issac Florentiono warms up before practice in Eaton on Aug. 29

(Pg 24) Branden Ferguson, CSU Rodeo head coach, sits on the railing during practice in Eaton on Aug. 29.



"Where I am
in life as a whole
is because of what
I learned from Rodeo"

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From High School to the University Center for the Arts:

The Evolution of a Building

By Lindsay Barker

The University Center for the Arts is the result of 40 years of efforts to create a vibrant space that encompasses all performing arts at Colorado State University. However, the building wasn't always dedicated to this purpose.

Etched in stone at the top of grand, Greek-inspired columns reads "Fort Collins High School." At the base of the steps at the entrance to the building, there is a circular copper-oxidized plaque placed by the class of 1985. The phrase "Home of the Champions" accompanies their mascot of a lambkin (a baby lamb) and the image of a bell tower.

The building that now houses the University Center for the Arts, 1400 Remington St, was built in 1924 as the only high school in Fort Collins, according to *Fort Collins History Connection*.

The building served as Fort Collins High School from its inception in 1924 until 1995, when the school outgrew the space. When it was the only high school in town, students had a lengthy walk from the heart of Fort Collins. Because of the distance, the trolley was routed there and served as the school's first "school bus."

The building is steeped in tradition, with a stately white bell tower sitting on top. According to Peter Muller, a former Fort Collins High School student and current director of events for the UCA, finding a way up to the bell tower was a rite of passage.

Muller and his friends attempted to reach the bell tower with a huge ladder they hauled across town, planning to lean it up against the three-story building and climb up. Their plan was foiled when they pulled up and the school was entirely lit up with an event taking place.

Although Muller's attempt was unsuccessful, many students did triumphantly make it into the bell tower. The mysterious space is rumored to be covered in graffiti with names and graduation years, according to Muller.

The building remained a high school until 1995, when the Lambkins moved into their new building at the corner of Horsetooth and Timberline.

However, the idea for a university arts center was first put into CSU plans in 1965 without certainty of a location, according to a *Rocky Mountain Collegian* article from June 19, 1978. Community members in the 1970s were unsure the idea would come to fruition.

Another *Collegian* article from March 6, 1969, talks about the distant idea of a university arts center. Dr. Perry Ragouzis, chairman of the Fine Arts Complex Committee at the time, stressed the importance of planning an all-encompassing arts facility to ensure it would become a reality. Ragouzis planned for instructional facilities to be integrated with performing facilities involving visual arts, music, theater, and possibly dance.

While Ragouzis pushed for this idea, by 1978 the city was concerned the proposed center would cause unnecessary competition with the future Lincoln Center, a performing arts center in Fort Collins. Robert Burnham, the director of CSU's facility planning at the time, told *The Collegian* "it makes no sense for us to duplicate facilities," and added that a concert hall would be the "last priority, if at all."

Fort Collins High School was growing out of its current space by the '90s, and there was a new building planned for opening in 1995, according to a 1992 *Collegian* article.



When the building was vacated in 1995, the space was used as an elementary school. John Lindsey, a voice professor in the music department, attended school in the building from 1995-1998.

"I attended what is now Traut Core Knowledge, and when they first formed it was sort of like an early charter school here in town and they didn't have a building to house them," Lindsey says. "So somehow the board of my elementary school put together a deal with the old high school and we had classes there."

The old Fort Collins High School was now housing smaller students adjusting to the size of their new school.

"It was very functional because it had just recently been vacated, but it was funny as a fourth grader to be walking up and down these hallways with huge lockers," Lindsey says.

The building has a lasting impact on people like John Lindsey, who now works in the same space he attended for elementary school and college. His first musical performances as a kid and his senior recital in college were on the stage that is now the Organ Recital Hall.

CSU purchased the building in 1997 according to an article in *Comment* from August 2000. The planning stages for the UCA were in full swing throughout the late '90s and early 2000s. According to a *Collegian* article from January 2000, a school of arts was contingent on development of the old Fort Collins High School. In August of 2000, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education officially approved the high school to be transformed into a new arts center, according to *The Collegian*.

In Fall 2001, CSU officially selected SlaterPaull Architects to lead the redesign of the old Fort Collins High School, according to CSU's alumni magazine. In September of 2002, CSU's governing board voted unanimously to endorse the architectural plans for remodeling the high school into the new University Center for the Arts, according to the *Comment*.

It was the beginning of a drawn-out and often dormant construction project, according to David Thermos, the project architect. There were numerous funding issues and internal conflicts that stalled the project.

Thermos worked for SlaterPaull from the late '90s until 2003, when the firm was tasked with designing a space that would satisfy all CSU stakeholders while staying within budget. After running into funding issues, SlaterPaull and CSU agreed to bring in another firm out of New Orleans, specializing in university architecture and design, to work with SlaterPaull on the project.

"We figured out a way to divide up the work between companies and that's how we crossed the finish line," Thermos says.

In 2005, the new center was ready for a grand opening, although construction wouldn't be complete until 2010. The university theater opened with a performance of "Waiting for Godot," according to a *Collegian* article from 2005.

As director of events for the UCA, Muller now coordinates more than 300 performances per year, from dance recitals to musicals and more. On top of that, he organizes community events including lectures and conferences.

"There's an atmosphere here because of all that goes on here, it is amazing when you walk through the hallways and get to hear music students in the practice rooms," Muller said.

The University Center for the Arts currently houses the music, theater, and dance departments along with two museums and five performance venues. Musicians, dancers, and performers at CSU have a place to gather and learn while collaborating with each other in a space designed for them.

Photo by
Greg James

(Previous) Fort Collins
High School. Courtesy of
the Fort Collins Museum
of Discovery.

(Right) The University
Center for the Arts





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Tuesday, November 29, 4:30 – 6pm

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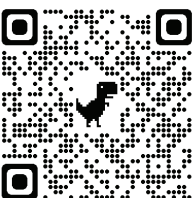
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