



University of Colorado

Boulder • Colorado Springs • Denver • Anschutz Medical Campus

April 21, 2010

Dear Members of the University of Colorado Community,

As we address the funding challenges affecting the university, it is clear that we must enhance our efforts to engage those who have a stake in the university's success and are willing to help us. They include alumni, donors, elected officials, business and community leaders, civic groups, media, and our faculty, staff and students.

We have several related initiatives in progress that will work to step up our efforts. One will improve the accuracy and quality of information about key stakeholders in our master database. Another will create a network of CU advocates around the state. We will also increase our efforts to use electronic resources to create online communities with our alumni. Perhaps the most visible will be our branding initiative.

CU has grown and matured to the point where we need to renew and more clearly define our brand. We have to promote the collective strength of CU while also recognizing the distinctness of our campuses and affiliates. Our brand is more than logos. It is more than taglines. It is more than marketing. Our brand is the unique, positive and sustainable emotional reaction we want to elicit from our key stakeholders. Many factors contribute to that.

We can help ourselves manage our brand by being efficient and effective in how we present the university in our messages and visual images. We project hundreds of different and sometimes competing messages and visual images that muddy and dilute our efforts to connect with our key audiences. In a world where people are bombarded with images and messages, we cannot afford to foster confusion.

To address the situation, our executive team, including the chancellors, the CU Foundation and communications professionals from across the university have been working with Landor Associates, a strategic branding and design firm, to renew our brand. We have made an investment in our future that will pay off in more efficient use of resources (human and monetary), effectiveness in how we present ourselves to our key audiences, and coordination among our campuses and units. The development phase of the project is nearing completion.

On Thursday, I intend to present our progress to the Board of Regents and ask for their support. I will share with the board the brand architecture, the visual representation of the university that will provide guidelines for moving forward. The project is not complete; what remains is refining key messages and finishing the graphic identity standards that will provide the roadmap for how we present ourselves visually.

Branding will be an important part of the foundation for our efforts to engage our key audiences. Outcomes of the project will include greater efficiency, effectiveness, consistency and coordination.

I will communicate with you again after the meeting to discuss next steps and implementation. It is imperative that we are focused and strategic in all our efforts, and branding is a key facet of our strategy to garner continuing support for CU.

For feedback, please e-mail officeofthepresident@cu.edu

Sincerely,

Bruce D. Benson
President