



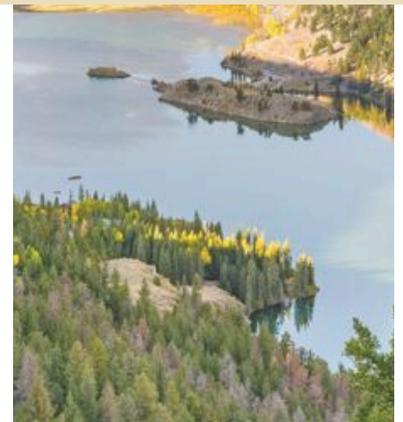
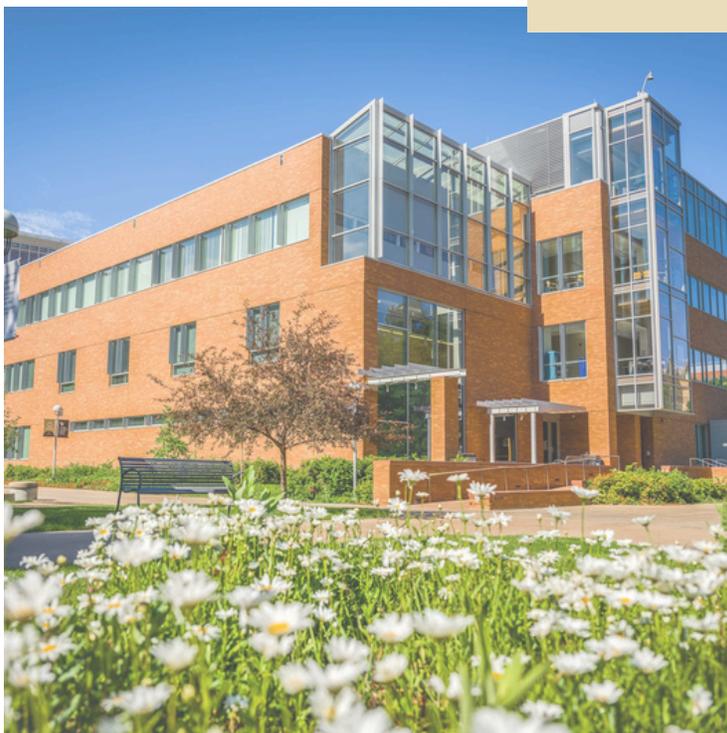
# SUMMER ISSUE



Department of Pathology  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

JULY 2025

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## A WORD FROM THE PD/APD

Please enjoy our Summer 2025 newsletter highlighting people, events, and activities that showcase the culture of our department. I am truly excited about this new academic year, welcoming new faculty members, fellows, residents, as well as returning trainees.

After five years, I have had the profound privilege of leading and guiding the flagship training program in the department of pathology. This journey has been most positively impacted for me by working alongside enthusiastic Program Coordinators, passionate Associate Program Directors, spirited Chief Residents, talented Residents, and dedicated faculty members. Together, we made numerous changes in the program to not only ameliorate the experiences for both trainees and faculty members but to continue to bring high-quality care to our patients. With exciting anticipation, the next chapter of the program has begun, as Dr. Lindsey Westbrook will be our new Program Director.

Appropriately, this issue puts the spotlight on Dr. Westbrook, Associate Professor of Pathology. She is the right leader to advance the program. I am eager to see her fingerprint on the residency because she is an unwavering champion for trainees throughout the continuum of medical education, from medical students to residents and fellows. Her contributions as an Associate Program Director are numerous, and one of her key accomplishments is revamping our recruitment process and strategies. So, take the time to read her profile. We also want to congratulate our recent graduates and welcome our incoming residents and fellows.

With the temperatures reaching their highest of the year, it is an excellent opportunity to enjoy everything Colorado has to offer in the Summer. Bring family members and friends to a hike, a street fair, a concert, a sporting event, a fishing lake, or white water rafting, to name a few! May you all have a wonderful and relaxing Summer.

**Drs. Von Samedi, Mary Berg, John Fowler,  
and Lindsey Westbrook**

WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME THE NEW PATHOLOGY  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

# Dr. Lindsey Westbrook



Photo by Tanja Doty, PA

## **What drew you to pathology, and what continues to inspire you in the field?**

Pathology offers a unique kind of diagnostic clarity that few other medical specialties can match. As cliché as it may sound, what first drew me to pathology was the “puzzle” of piecing together clinical history, imaging and laboratory findings, and histologic appearance to arrive at a diagnosis. After completing several pathology electives and connecting with a few key mentors, I knew this was the specialty for me. I remain continually inspired by the complexity of my cases, the meaningful impact we have on patient care, the endless opportunities for lifelong learning, and the incredible community of colleagues and trainees I’m fortunate to work alongside.

## **Can you tell us a bit about your career path leading up to this role?**

Becoming a residency program director has been a long-standing goal of mine since I joined the faculty in 2019. My path to this role began with a strong passion for residency recruitment, which is a crucial annual responsibility for any program director. I became deeply involved in that area as co-chair of the Residency Recruitment Committee starting in 2020. That experience led me to pursue broader leadership opportunities within the program, and in early 2023, I stepped into the role of Associate Program Director. I am honored and very excited to have been appointed Program Director.

**What do you see as the biggest opportunities or challenges in pathology education right now?**

One of the biggest challenges in pathology education today is the limited exposure to the specialty in undergraduate medical education, particularly with the elimination of dedicated histology courses and labs in many medical school curricula. As a result, incoming trainees often arrive with widely variable backgrounds in both normal histology and basic pathology. At the same time, this challenge has created a valuable opportunity for us to bring all residents to a shared foundation from day one. To address this, Dr. Samedi developed the Immersion Block—an introductory rotation designed to familiarize our new PGY-1 residents with core pathology concepts and practices. This year, Dr. Fowler and I collaborated to revamp and enhance the curriculum. Our current class of first-year residents is now completing their final week of Immersion Block (be sure to congratulate them if you see them!). It's been a major undertaking—not just for them, but also for the many faculty and residents who contributed their time and expertise. We feel this month is a crucial component in ensuring our trainees enter residency with a solid foundation.

**What is your vision for the program?**

My vision for the program is to maintain the University of Colorado's status as the top Pathology Residency Program in the country—of course! I am proud of the excellent program that my predecessors have built, and I am committed to continuing to foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment, enhance our curriculum, and train outstanding pathologists who excel in whatever career path they choose.

**What do you hope residents will gain most from their time here?**

First and foremost, I want our residents to become confident, well-rounded pathologists—fully prepared for the next stage of their careers. Beyond building clinical competence, I hope they experience meaningful professional and personal growth, form strong mentorship relationships, cultivate a passion for lifelong learning, and create lasting friendships within their residency cohort.

**What do you enjoy doing outside of work?**

I enjoy spending time with family and friends, going to concerts, and trying new coffee shops and restaurants.

**Favorite local spots in Denver or Colorado?**

Like many Denverites, my favorite spots are the ones close to home. We love spending time at Cheesman Park and the Denver Botanic Gardens—especially with a coffee from Copper Door right outside the gardens. Liki's Ice Cream is our go-to ice cream shop, and in the summer months, we always look forward to the City Park Farmers Market and City Park Jazz.

# Scholarly Spotlights

## Celebrating Dr. BK DeMasters' Retirement

Dr. DeMasters has been a major contributor to the Department of Pathology and the evolving field of neuropathology, furthering the practices of neurosurgeons, neurologists, and others caring for patients with neurologic diseases for the past 45 years at CU. She is nationally and internationally known for her remarkable clinical, teaching, and research effort.



### Resident Feature



**Ashley Denney MD, PhD**  
PGY 3

Dr. Denney presented a talk and poster at the Association of American Neuropathologists meeting in Minneapolis, Jun 19 - 22, 2025.

**Talk title:** "Neuropathologic findings in cases of Stiff Person Syndrome and Progressive Encephalomyelitis with Rigidity and Myoclonus"

**Poster title:** "Neuropathologic findings in a case of GAD65+ Autoimmune Epilepsy with mechanistic insights from HD Visium Spatial Transcriptomics"

### Faculty Feature



**Zenggang Pan MD, PhD**  
Professor - Director Hematopathology

We would like to recognize that Dr. Pan has had multiple recent publications that you can find in the links to below.

**Erythroblastic Sarcoma in Adults and Children**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

**Aberrant expression in lymphoma, a diagnostic pitfall**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

**Mast cell sarcoma with KIT p.D816V mutation**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

**Erythroblastic Sarcoma in Adults and Children**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

**Systemic ALK-negative anaplastic large cell lymphoma**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

**Single-Cell RNA Sequencing before and after Light Chain Escape**

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

# Making Headlines

## Research Grant Awards: Spring 2025

- Christian Young, Gates Grubstake Award
- Christian Young, NIH RO3
- Mike Alberti, ACS IRG Award
- Reema Wahdan-Alaswad/Jennifer Richer, Cancer League Grant
- Joe Sottnik/Maria-Jose Contreras-Zarate, Cancer League Grant
- Jessica Finlay-Schultz/Heather Brechbuhl (MedOnc), Cancer League Grant
- Kirsten Cosper, graduate student Sartorius lab, CCTSI T32 fellowship
- Morgan Fox, graduate student Cittelly lab, NIH NCI F31 fellowship (delayed since January, award in prep per NIH)

### Faculty Feature



**Miriam Post, MD**  
Pathology Professor



**Rebecca Wolsky, MD**  
Director of the Gynecologic Pathology & Subspecialty Service

The evolving role of HER2 in gynecologic oncology and clinical trial design: A gynecologic pathologist's perspective

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

### Faculty Feature



**Francisco La Rosa, MD**  
Associate Professor - Renal, Heart and Genitourinary Pathology - Pathology Informatics

Using Multicore, Transperineal Prostate Mapping Biopsy to Detect, Localize, and Treat the mpMRI Invisible Lesion

\*Chapter 20

See Full Publication Here: [Link](#)

# Meet Our New Residents!

## Margaret Berry, MD



I'm Margaret/Marg/Meg! I'm from Texas (howdy!) and so excited about being here with my cat, Quen! She's 3 years old - very fluffy, very orange, & very talkative. Outside of path, I love playing electric bass, crocheting, sewing, baking, and making beaded flowers.

I also love being outdoors hiking/biking/running/etc. For a fun fact, ask me about my path art, my time as a barista, or my experience taking four 11 year olds to Germany for a month.

## Carlos Cisneros, MD

I was born and raised in the southernmost Texas border town of Brownsville. I am excited to begin the next chapter of my life and training here in Colorado! Outside of my passion for Pathology, I got into baking a lot during the pandemic, and barbecuing has been a family tradition.



I would love to share with everyone in my new home. One of my favorite things to do in a new place is to explore the food and brewing scene, and it is awesome to have an abundance of that in the Denver area. I also love surf fishing, college football (Horns Up!), professional basketball, karaoke, board games, video games, and a good thriller movie. My partner of nearly 6 years is from Thornton, just north of Denver, so I thank her for my attachments to the Nuggets and hockey with the Avalanche. It is an absolute pleasure to finally be here, and I look forward to meeting the department!

## Karen Castaneda, MD

I've always found joy in arts and crafts—painting is a favorite, and lately, I've been learning how to make earrings out of polymer clay. My husband and I enjoy taking our dogs hiking (and occasionally our cat)



I'm excited to explore Colorado's art markets and outdoor spaces. I was drawn to medicine because it allows me to make a meaningful impact while constantly growing and learning. I'm looking forward to starting this new chapter, meeting everyone, exploring potential fellowship paths, and diving into the work ahead.

## Laura Duzett, DO

Philosophy undergrad-->  
~10 yrs tech (Netflix, eBay)  
--> 2 yrs SE Asia travel --  
> TBI --> Medical School -  
-> Pathology! My greatest joy in life is learning, exploring ideas, making connections between ideas, or finding a more elegant solution.



My dream would be to live forever, or at least long enough so I could gain all the skills, experiences, perspectives, and knowledge I wanted. I love interesting conversations, tender meats, well-balanced cocktails, being outdoors, and a lazy Sunday filled with football. Recent interests include rollerblading like I'm 15 again, jazz, longevity medicine, and training for cross-country skiing this winter. My fiancé Paul lives in Boulder and works for Eldora ski resort, so if you need a hook up this winter, let me know!

# Meet Our New Residents!

## Charlie Sawyer, MD



I'm from Seattle, Washington. Outside of medicine I like to go thrift shopping, play basketball and soccer, and spend time outdoors. I'm excited to be here in Colorado and will hopefully be able to explore some of Colorado's nature during residency. I welcome any fun backpacking/hiking recommendations!

## Hadir Shakshouk, M.B.,B.S.



I enjoy outdoor activities. I love travelling and exploring new places.

Fun fact: I took skiing lesson in Minnesota and I can't wait to hit the slopes in Colorado

## Hira Unar, MD

I'm excited to join the team as a new pathology intern. I was born and raised in Massachusetts and decided to pursue medicine because it gives me a strong sense of purpose and I've always been fascinated by the science behind it, especially the world of pathology.



Though my beloved orange cat couldn't make the move with me, I now live in Colorado with my sweet gray tabby, Rumi, who keeps me company. Outside of work, I enjoy staying active at the gym, spending time outdoors, exploring new cities, and finding cute local cafes for the perfect iced latte or cup of matcha. I also love playing board games and am always up for a game night. I'm excited to experience everything Colorado has to offer and hoping to pick up a winter sport along the way!



### David Coates, MD - Surgical Pathology

I am married to my wife Ashley and we have two kids, Oliver (3) and Lorelai (7). I played the Pokémon trading card competitively as a kid/teenager earning state champion of Tennessee four times and two paid trips to the world championships and now enjoy playing the card game with my daughter. I love to play board/card games of all types with my family and friends, including Here to Slay, Happy Little Dinosaurs, and Unstable Unicorns. I am looking forward to sharpening my microscopy skills over the next year and learning how to be a better pathology educator!



### Brooke Liang, MD - GI/Liver Pathology

I grew up in Ottawa, Canada, before moving to the US to complete a BS in Bioengineering from UC Berkeley. I then completed a combined MD/MA program at WashU in St. Louis. I did my first year of residency at the University of Chicago before transferring to Stanford for the remainder of my AP/CP residency, followed by a Gyn Path fellowship in 2024-2025. I will be the GI and Liver Pathology fellow for 2025-2026 and the MGP fellow for 2026-2027 at CU Anschutz. The attached photo shows me and my husband, Angus Toland (Neuro and Peds Path), at the start of a hike that we were not able to finish, in an area that was subsequently damaged by California wildfires. In Colorado, I'm looking forward to more interesting cases and challenging hikes!



### Kristen Liu, MD - Pediatrics Fellowship

#### Facts About Me!

- I have a flame point Himalayan cat named Binx
- I also competed in synchronized figure skating in high school



### Brian Nguyen, MD - MGP Fellowship

#### Facts About Me!

- I am a returning fellow (since I did residency here)
- I am from the pediatric pathology fellowship at Seattle Children's Hospital



### Chike Nwabuo, MD - Surgical Pathology

Outside of work, I enjoy hiking and landscape photography—being out in nature helps me recharge and relax. I'm fortunate to have a wonderful wife and a spirited 5-year-old son who currently dreams of becoming either a medical doctor or a garbage truck driver (we're fully supportive of both career paths!).

I'm genuinely looking forward to meeting and learning from everyone!



### Thi Le Na Pham, MD - Hematopathology Fellowship

I once spent two weeks at Pa-Auk Forest Monastery in Burma, where I didn't speak a single word the entire time. It was a unique and introspective experience that surprises most people.

I'm excited to start my hematopathology fellowship, meet my new colleagues, and dive into the unique opportunities the program offers. I'm also looking forward to exploring the beautiful outdoors in Colorado with my family. I love gardening, cooking, and swimming—they're my favorite ways to unwind and recharge. I also love spending time with my husband and our two kids, exploring new places and making memories together.



### Logan Ritter, MD - Forensic Pathology

I'm from the Cajun country of south Louisiana. I enjoy spending time with my partner and getting out in nature to go hiking, camping, and snowboarding. Music is a big passion of mine, whether it be attending live music events or producing music at home. I also enjoy playing video games and hanging out with our 2 cats.



### Mirliam Saldoriga-Merced, MD - BBTM

My husband and I are originally from San Juan, Puerto Rico, and we share our home with our Bernese Mountain Dog, Kelowna. In my free time, I enjoy playing with Kelowna, listening to audiobooks on Audible or Spotify, watching documentaries and true-story films or series. As a family we love to drive to the mountains, there are so many beautiful places in Colorado. I also have a growing collection of coffee mugs from the cities I've visited. I am very excited to get more knowledge and experiences in transfusion medicine specially in areas as apheresis, massive transfusion protocols, donor centers, tissue banks, and pediatric transfusion protocols.



### Jessie Xiong, MD- Cytology

I'm excited to be back in Denver after a stint in Albuquerque completing my hematopathology fellowship. My partner and our four(!) dogs are happy we're all together as well. I'm looking forward to delving into the world of cytopathology (bigger, scarier looking cells than in hematopathology), getting back into some good hiking, having snow again, and catching up with old (and new) friends!



# Pathology Department Graduation

2024/2025





# 2024/2025 Academic Year Award Recipients

Jennifer Black, MD



**Pathologist of the  
Year Award**

Melkon DomBourian, MD



**William S. Hammond MD  
Excellence in Teaching Award for  
Exceptional Commitment to the  
Education of Pathologists**

Nicole Draper, MD



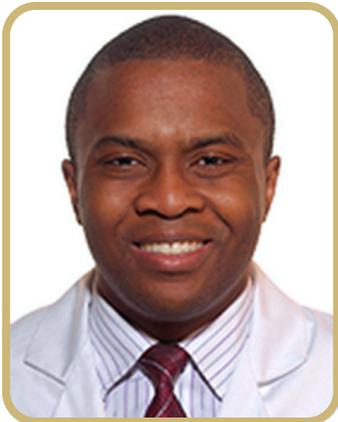
**Robert L. Low, MD, PhD, Educational  
Excellence in the Foundations of  
Pathology Award**

# 2024/2025 Academic Year Award Recipients



**Askia Dunnon, MD**

**Robert H. Fennell, Jr., MD Award for Excellence of  
Performance as a Pathology Resident**



**Chike Nwabuo, MD**

**Professionalism Award**

*Awarded by our AP histo techs to the resident finishing the program who would be the one they would most like to work with and is most professional.*



**Nakul Shankar, MD**

**Gary J. Miller, MD, PhD Award for Outstanding  
Research**

# 2024/2025 Academic Achievements Recognition

## HIGHEST RISE SCORES

First year class: Zachary Corey, MD  
 Second year class: Rebecca Wyma, MD  
 Third year class: Nakul Shankar, MD  
 Fourth year class: Chike Nwabuo, MD

## SUMMIT AWARDS

Dr. Michael Arnold  
 Dr. Margaret Black  
 Dr. Pavel Jedlicka  
 Dr. Tuan Le  
 Dr. Mary O'Keefe  
 Dr. Amy Storfa  
 Dr. Angus Toland  
 Dr. Nicholas Willard  
 Dr. Mark Lovell  
 Dr. Amanda Hersh  
 Dr. Kaleigh Lindholm  
 Dr. Casey Bitting  
 Dr. Melkon DomBourian  
 Dr. Michael Clay  
 Dr. Chunlai Zuo

Dr. Sterling McLaren  
 Dr. Loes Nardi-Korver  
 Dr. Bradford Siegele  
 Dr. Rebecca Waller  
 Dr. Lauren McLemore  
 Dr. Daniel Merrick  
 Dr. Carlyne Cool  
 Dr. Deepshikha Datta  
 Dr. Meredith Frank  
 Dr. Mary Berg  
 Dr. Geza Bodor  
 Dr. Sanjana Mehrotra  
 Dr. Dara Aisner  
 Dr. Stephanie Bates  
 Dr. Chitr Rajagopalan



# 2024/2025 Academic Year Teaching Excellence Recognition

## RESEARCH BASIC SCIENCE COURSE DIRECTORS

Dr. David Orlicky  
Dr. Andrea Bonetto  
Dr. Matt Sikora

## BASIC SCIENCE COURSE DIRECTORS

Dr. Carrie Marshall  
Dr. Lindsey Westbrook  
Dr. Louise Helander  
Dr. Nicole Draper  
Dr. Edward Ashwood  
Dr. Harry Porterfield

## RESEARCH IN PATHOLOGY MENTORS

Dr. Shyam Raghavan  
Dr. Dara Aisner  
Dr. Amy Frey  
Dr. Dan Merrick  
Dr. Jennifer Richer

## PATHOLOGY GRAND ROUNDS

Dr. Ann Thor  
Dr. Andrea Bonetto  
Dr. Kyle Annen  
Dr. Von Samedi

## FACULTY - EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE ON EVALUATION TEACHING SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Dr. Kyle Annen  
Dr. Mary Berg  
Dr. Jenna Bodmer  
Dr. Carrie Marshall  
Dr. Harry Porterfield  
Dr. Louise Helander  
Dr. Virginia Knez  
Dr. Nicole Draper  
Dr. Rebecca Wolsky  
Dr. Lindsey Westbrook  
Dr. Amber Berning  
Dr. Mark Lovell  
Dr. Patrick Henn  
Dr. Cassie Xu  
Dr. Jeff Kaplan

## FELLOW / RESIDENT - EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE ON EVALUATION TEACHING SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Dr. Purbesh Adhikari  
Dr. Grant Collins  
Dr. Joseph Ferrante  
Dr. Vic Rea-Wilson  
Dr. Nakul Shankar  
Dr. Mckinzie Johnson  
Dr. Joshua Klonoski  
Dr. Allison Martin

Celebrating our 2024/2025 Academic Year  
**Graduates**

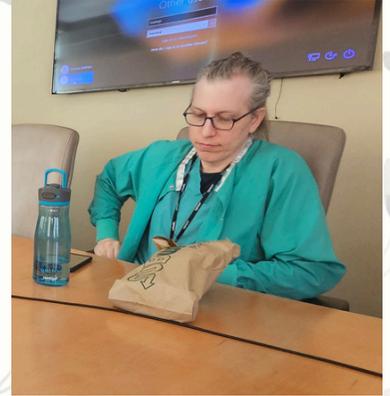
**GRADUATING RESIDENTS**

David Coates, MD  
Askia Dunnon, MD  
Allison Martin, MD  
Chike Nwabuo, MD  
Vic Rea-Wilson, MD, MPH

**GRADUATING FELLOWS**

Alyssa Byrd, MD Forensic Pathology	Erik Polsdofer, MD GI/Liver Pathology
Grant Collins, DO Surgical Pathology	Susan Potterveld, DO BST Pathology
Mirliam Saldoriga-Merced, MD Pediatric Pathology	Ashlyn Fong, MBBS Gyn/Breast Pathology
Joshua Klonoski, MD, PhD Molecular Genetic Pathology	

# Catching up!



# Did you KNOW?

## Summer Highlights

### **Disability Pride Month:**

Disability Pride Month is observed in July each year. It commemorates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990. This month celebrates the achievements, experiences, and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. It also raises awareness about disability rights and promotes inclusion and accessibility for all.

- **Learn More [here](#)**

### **Nelson Mandela International Day:**

Also known as Mandela Day, is an annual international day celebrated on July 18th, the birthday of Nelson Mandela. It's a day dedicated to honoring his legacy and encouraging people to take action and inspire change in their communities. The day recognizes Mandela's dedication to the service of humanity, particularly in conflict resolution, race relations, human rights, reconciliation, and social justice.

- **Learn More [here](#)**

### **National Immunization Awareness Month:**

August is National Immunization Awareness Month, an annual observance aimed at highlighting the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. It's a time to encourage individuals to talk to their healthcare providers and ensure they are up-to-date on their recommended vaccinations.

- **Resources and History [here](#)**



DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY  
**WELCOME EVENT**

Denver Botanic  
Gardens

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup>  
10:30AM - 1:00PM



**Welcome to residents, fellows and graduate students!**

*Family members and significant  
others welcome!*



**PLEASE RSVP BY 7/16**

# UPCOMING Events



## Lavender Festival

July 19, 2025 - July 20, 2025  
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

**Location:** 8500 Deer Creek Canyon Rd. Littleton, CO

July  
19  
2025



## Welcome Event

Sunday, August 3, 2025  
Starting at 10:30 am

**Location:** Denver Botanic Gardens -  
Annuals Garden and Pavilion

Aug  
03  
2025



## CU Medical Campus Block Party

Wednesday, September 10, 2025  
11am to 2pm

**Location:** CU Anschutz Campus

Sept  
10  
2025



# A Note from the Editor

Summer Issue

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Hello all,

I want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to this quarter's newsletter! Your submissions and support are what make it possible!

If you have something you'd like to share in the next issue, please feel free to reach out to me at [cassie.thomson@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:cassie.thomson@cuanschutz.edu) or to Fran Jeelani at [francina.jeelani@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:francina.jeelani@cuanschutz.edu).

Warm regards,

*Cassie Thomson*