

Consultants in Philanthropic Management



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

**Case for Support DRAFT
September 2022**

The University of Northern Colorado was founded nearly 125 years ago, with a historic mission to train qualified teachers to serve our state. Through the generations, UNC has grown and adapted as the needs of our community and our state have changed and evolved.

Today, UNC is a renowned doctoral research university committed to the success of its students, with more than 100 undergraduate programs and 120 graduate programs. Our expert faculty uphold a tradition of research and hands-on learning that gives students a personalized education and a world of opportunities.

UNC is the defining institution in the city of Greeley. UNC's offerings are expansive, providing a world-class education that can transform the future prospects of thousands of students and their families. But UNC's environment is intimate, ensuring that the faculty know their students, their interests, and their aspirations. At UNC, we reflect, engage, and serve our region and our state, while nurturing students to become capable, productive, and accomplished individuals who are the bedrocks of their communities.

As our state grows and as our communities change, we know that UNC must adapt. A different time requires a different understanding. A different economy requires a different workforce. New teaching and new learning need to spark new careers. Different students must be welcomed, included, and supported in different ways. And we must confront new challenges in our society with new strategies and new solutions. In many ways, our university is ideally positioned to do so.

At the University of Northern Colorado, we have defined our vision for the future in our ten-year strategic plan, *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030*. Our work is underway to meet the needs of our state and our community, to create solutions for challenges in our society, our culture, and our institution.

As part of that plan, we are preparing to launch a major fundraising campaign to fulfill the new vision for UNC. Our campaign seeks to invest in three core categories of important initiatives that align with the best attributes of our institution -- what we have always been, and what we must continue to be.

- **Student-Centered**
- **Market-Smart**
- **Community-Engaged**

We invite you to learn more about this important campaign and its potential impact on the students of today -- as well as on Greeley, Weld County, Colorado, and the world.

Student-Centered

A central element of our vision for the future of UNC is that this will be the university where students come to *complete* their degrees. Our track record lends credence to that aspiration.

Students First | Empowering Inclusivity

Our Strategic Plan calls on us to take a students-first approach to our mission, to meet students where they are, and to nurture a spirit of inclusivity within our university.

UNC is #1 in Colorado for social mobility.

That's according to the Social Mobility Index, which measures the extent to which a college or university educates more economically disadvantaged students at lower tuition and graduates them into good paying jobs. It's about delivering value. But social mobility can only be attained by the student who stays at the university and earns her degree. For today's students, that is increasingly difficult.

From 2010 to 2020, Colorado's population grew at nearly twice the rate of the rest of the nation. This growth is even more pronounced in Greeley and Weld County. According to 2020 census data, the Greeley metropolitan statistical area was the fastest growing in Colorado and fourth fastest growing in the United States. With that growth comes a rise in the cost of living that presents a challenge to everyone in our university community, especially students.

A survey of students in one of our colleges found that:

- More than 90% of students work off campus
- 75% hold two jobs
- 25% have faced housing insecurity or food insecurity

Our students are everyone. They are young adults, parents, and grandparents. They are people of color. They are veterans. They are people who come from low- and middle-income backgrounds. One attribute they share: Their chances of completing their degree would increase if they had greater financial, academic, cultural, and family support.

With your support for the campaign, we will provide comprehensive support to our students:

- New Scholarships
- Emergency Grants
- Childcare Grants
- Augmented Mental Health Services
- Food Insecurity Grants
- Stipends for Traditionally Unpaid Work
- Enhanced Student Success initiatives
- Enhanced Bridge Programs
- Open Educational Resources
- Cultural Center Improvements

Market-Smart

A key element of our vision for the future of UNC is that this will be the university where students launch successful careers. Fulfilling this element of our vision is imperative – not only for our students, but for the people of our state.

Enhance & Invest | Innovate & Create
Our Strategic Plan calls on us to invest in the faculty, programs, and technology necessary for our university and our graduates to serve the world today.

Right now, Colorado faces a critical challenge. Our rapidly growing population is up against a significant shortage of key professions — those who serve, treat, heal, and educate. It is a social and economic perfect storm. It is not a storm that is gathering on the horizon. It is a storm that is upon us.

Our state and our nation are facing a critical shortage of physicians and nurses -- shortages that will worsen over the next decade as our population increases and our healthcare workforce declines.

- Nationally, nearly 300,000 physicians will retire in the next few years. By 2033 the U.S. will face a shortage of as many as 139,000 physicians. Physician shortages hit rural communities first and hardest. In Colorado, less than 35% of our need for physicians is currently being met. By 2030, Colorado will need an additional 1,773 primary care physicians.
- Colorado is top five among states with the biggest need for registered nurses. Nursing is the largest single occupation in the healthcare delivery system, and Colorado hospitals have averaged 19,000 unfilled nursing positions per month over the past year. By 2026, our state will face a deficit of more than 10,000 registered nurses.

Our state and nation are facing a massive deficit of educators and a burgeoning unmet need for school psychologists – shortages that render vulnerable our schools, our children, and the future of our communities:

- At this time, Colorado faces a deficit of 5,000 people coming into the teaching profession. Following on from COVID, we have suffered massive losses due to exhaustion and early retirement.
- There is a critical shortage in school psychology, in terms of current practitioners, in the availability of graduate education programs, and in the faculty needed to train the workforce necessary to keep up with the growing student population.

UNC is uniquely positioned to confront these challenges for the good of our institution, our students, our state, and every person in our community. Market-smart programs can span the full range of our colleges and academic offerings, augmenting the translation of degrees into careers.

College of Osteopathic Medicine

To meet the critical and growing demand for doctors in our community, UNC is establishing a College of Osteopathic Medicine, planned to open as early as fall 2025 with its first cohort of students.

This is the boldest, most exciting, and most important element in our vision for the future. UNC attracts students who seek to make a difference in the world around them, and our university strives to meet community needs with a caring and inclusive culture. We have a long tradition of creating programs that solve our community's greatest challenges, from graduating outstanding teachers to educating skilled and compassionate nurses. The College of Osteopathic Medicine is how we will continue this tradition in the 21st century.

Through the new College of Osteopathic Medicine, UNC plans to enroll 150 graduate-level medical students in a four-year medical degree program each year. These graduate students will go on to complete residency programs and fill critical healthcare needs as fully licensed physicians.

To achieve this, we have already taken a number of important preliminary steps, including the completion of a feasibility study, submission for applicant status with the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, receiving statutory authorization from the State of Colorado to proceed with the project, and a national search for a founding dean. The feasibility study, which was conducted by a leading medical education consulting firm, validated the demand for new physicians and expanded capacity for medical education. It also assessed economic impact and the capacity and commitment of healthcare providers to support clinical placements. Our efforts to create an osteopathic medical college are supported by our university community, our trustees, the local healthcare community, and a number of local and state organizations.

Teacher Preparation

UNC was founded as a teachers college, and today we retain that identity proudly. We are the leading preparer of teachers in the state of Colorado. Right now, UNC graduates are teaching in every school district in the state. And our focus on preparing teachers doesn't only reside in our College of Education & Behavioral Sciences. In fact, four of our five undergraduate colleges have offerings that train teachers in various fields. As we work to fulfill the needs of our community and our state, we aspire to make important investments in how we prepare teachers.

Diverse Recruitment: As our state's population evolves and changes, we aim to train more diverse workforce of teachers. But the people who look most like our state's children are often those who can least afford to work for free while also paying tuition. Through this campaign, we seek to build a program to place and keep more candidates on the path to becoming teachers.

Student Support: The Colorado state legislature recently passed a bill that will provide stipends for some student teachers who qualify, we aspire to do more for our students. Through this campaign, we hope to increase scholarship and stipend support for students on their journey to becoming teachers.

Faculty & Facilities: To build the teacher workforce of tomorrow, we need capacity — we need the right-sized faculty and facilities to attract the optimal number of degree candidates and to maximize and update the space in which they learn, collaborate, train, and conduct research.

A Center for Innovation in Education: UNC must be a leader for changing times in the field of education. When we integrate our efforts, we can take an interdisciplinary approach to advancing new pedagogies, new research, and new approaches for what's most needed in education today. From virtual learning methods to understanding student mental health, UNC can be a leader on the issues that matter to society.

Other key steps to ensuring that we are offering market-smart programs and a career-oriented environment will be to invest in faculty, staff, and programs.

With your support, we will:

- Expand our Nursing program to meet community needs
- Expand key programs within Education Behavioral Sciences to address societal challenges
- Create interdisciplinary academic programs to promote career-readiness
- Provide grants for undergraduate research
- Create new opportunities for experiential learning across all majors
- Expand our Career Services offerings
- Adapt our Arts curriculum to prepare artists to thrive in the Creative Economy

Community-Engaged

It is essential for the future of UNC that our whole university be engaged with the world — in terms of service, research, culture, and thought leadership. We believe that being engaged in the world begins with our home community — and we also believe that it has the potential for far-reaching impact.

Connect & Celebrate

Our Strategic Plan calls on us to be an engaged university that strives to enrich the lives of people in our community, our state, and beyond.

Through this campaign, we seek to engage our community with new and expanded initiatives, with a view toward achieving key goals:

- To enhance the student learning experience and career preparation
- To support faculty in their scholarly work and their personal endeavors
- To serve the people of Greeley, Weld County, and Northern Colorado more deeply
- To elevate the impact of UNC as an innovative institution that is solving regional challenges

Hispanic Serving Institution

To truly engage the world in all its diversity, we must engage all of our own community.

That's why — for the good of our growing and increasingly diverse state, its people, and its economy — UNC must invest in becoming a true Hispanic Serving Institution.

Greeley itself has a large and growing Latinx population, and our commitment to our own community demands that we strive to ensure that people from underrepresented communities have a real chance at the social mobility that is made possible with a UNC degree.

The time is now. The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the progress made by Hispanic students' postsecondary enrollment over the last decade. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, Hispanic undergraduate enrollment fell 7% from 2019 to 2021.

HSI initiatives and programs will include dedicated Hispanic student recruitment and bridge programming; dedicated undergraduate research experiences; support services such as advising and mentoring for students; focused faculty recruitment efforts; dedicated efforts to support student retention and degree completion; and social and emotional supports needed for student success.

Mental Health

Our university is ideally positioned to confront one of the biggest crises in our state and nation today. We are a university that knows and cares deeply about our students. We are a leader in nurturing and training educators, teachers, counselors, and psychologists. We are a vast source of research, expertise, and leadership on behavioral health.

Right now, mental illness and the demand for psychological services are at all-time highs, and there is an accompanying shortage of mental health resources. This is especially true for children and students. Prior to COVID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found 1 in 5 children had a mental disorder, but only about 20% of those children received care from a mental health provider. In more recent surveys, 70% of parents said the pandemic had taken a toll on their child's mental health. A national survey found close to a third of high school students felt unhappy and depressed much more than usual. Up to 44% of college students report having symptoms of depression and anxiety.

For our own students and for the children of Colorado, we must invest in expanding mental health services on campus and lead our state in tackling this issue comprehensively.

Community Arts

UNC is a powerhouse in the arts, with programs and offerings that are nationally prominent. Our vision for the future is to be more comprehensive in the opportunities that we provide to our students, faculty, and community. By creating community arts programs, we can provide lessons in art, music, dance, and drama to community members and new teaching opportunities for students and faculty. With seed funding from donors, the program could eventually be self-sustaining. Its impact could be significant:

- Provide high-quality lessons in the arts to children and adults in our community, improving their quality of life and engaging them more deeply in the life of the university.
- Give students and faculty with the opportunity to grow artistically and to earn income by giving lessons to community members.
- Use art as a way to teach students, faculty, staff, and community members about the beauty and richness of diverse cultures.

Community-Engaged Learning

Community-engaged learning is just what it sounds like: learning that takes place in and with communities. Teams of faculty, staff, students, and community members combine their wide-ranging skills and expertise to address local and global issues and to help build a better future. Community-engaged learning is a win for everyone involved. Communities see positive change on issues that matter most to them. Faculty infuse their teaching and research with diverse perspectives. Students learn in new and exciting ways and build a greater sense of belonging. With support from donors, we can create more community-engaged programs that can:

- Further community partners' missions and goals by complementing their strengths and enhancing their resources.
- Advance faculty's disciplinary research and teaching in ways that are rigorous, creative, and invested in the common good.
- Prepare students to become leaders with a public purpose.

Our Goal & the Power of Philanthropy

We have historic aspirations for UNC. We seek to create programs, provide resources, and develop opportunities to ensure that our students can thrive in our environment, earn their degrees, and transition into successful careers and meaningful lives as the bedrocks of their communities.

To achieve this, we need to invest.

We will invest in supporting students, supporting faculty, adapting curricula, and creating and growing programs. We will face one of the greatest needs in our society by creating a new College of Osteopathic Medicine, and we will enrich the lives of everyone in our community by fostering a dynamic university culture of exploration, inspiration, and connection.

To fulfill our vision, we are in the planning stages of a campaign with a working goal of \$150 million.

\$50 million	Endowment for scholarships, faculty positions, and leadership positions
\$50 million	Current use funds to adapt programs, renovate facilities, and provide grants
\$50 million	Start-up funding for the College of Osteopathic Medicine, to be joined with funding from the state and healthcare industry partners

This is a pivotal time for the University of Northern Colorado.

Our ten-year strategic plan, *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030*, is revelatory. It defines our enduring values. It presents an inspiring vision. But it is only the power of *giving* that will propel us forward -- to create solutions that we are ideally positioned to create, and to meet the needs of our students, our community, and our state.

Our campaign seeks to invest in three core attributes of who we are and what we must continue to be. With your support, we will be Student-Centered. With your support, we will be Market-Smart. With your support, we will be Community-Engaged.

We invite all those who care about our students, our university, our community, and our state to join us in fulfilling this bold and important vision for the future.