

JENNIFER SOBANET, EdD

STRATEGIC, HUMAN-CENTERED LEADER

Future Focused ◆ **Student-Centered** ◆ **Communicator**
Partnership Builder ◆ **Strategic Planner** ◆ **Financial Strategist**

Strategic and engaged leader, with a focus on measurable outcomes who thrives in complex environments. Caring, thoughtful, and collaborative colleague who puts people at the center of culture development and decision-making. Student-centric decision maker for whom student access and success is the heart of all work. Sharp business skills applied to complicated university problems utilizing deep experience in financial strategy, strategic enrollment management, and data-informed decision-making. Inspiring and engaging champion of university vision. Confident relationship builder with community and corporate partners, donors, elected officials, board members, and the entire university community. Known for creating safe spaces for innovative, creative ideas from campus and other major stakeholders to solve long-standing, difficult issues. Well-versed in higher education's changing landscape, willing to make tough decisions and be bold to take advantage of opportunities.

Communicator and Demonstrated Financial Strategist

Crafted financial and government relations strategy to fund \$117 million in state capital renewal and sustainability funding for Auraria Campus facilities and \$3 million in CU Denver controlled maintenance funding.

Developed innovative tools such as an incentive-based budget model, decision-support toolkit, and strategic enrollment management plan to support campus leaders with data to reallocate resources to mission-critical programs and strategic priorities.

Uncovered CU Denver structural budget deficit and then led financial strategy to create long-term fiscal sustainability. Received \$50 million, ten-year investment to create financial stability.

Student-Centered, Future Focused and Partnership Development Leader

Designed and funded financial aid strategies to improve student access and funded high-impact student success strategies to improve student engagement through experiential learning in undergraduate research, internships, apprenticeships, and service learning.

Led CU Denver's development of the Open Innovation District strategy to crystalize the vision for research, academic, entrepreneurial, and physical space-making partnership strategies.

Developed robust student-focused corporate and community partnerships connected to academic programs and faculty research while crafting and launching CU Denver's infrastructure to successfully compete for and deliver on long-term partnerships.

Recognized Strategic Planner Creating Authentic Change

Led CU Denver's Strategic Plan implementation in tandem with university-wide realignment of resources to better connect the financial and people resources to accomplish the Plan. Led foundational strategic plan goal to be a people-centered, equity-minded university by reimagining the culture, policies, and practices and worked toward creating a culture of belonging. Oversaw the Comprehensive Compensation Collaborative to rectify salary inequities and develop clear career pathways for staff and faculty who are not on the tenure track.

SAMPLING OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Strategic Visionary | Organizational Development and Change | Mission-Centered | Shared Governance Champion | Committed to Inclusive Diversity and Belonging | Empowering Leader | Transparent Communicator | Financial Strategist with Business Acumen | Commitment to Academic and Operational Excellence | Research Seed Grants and Infrastructure | Navigate Complex Partnerships | Relationship Developer | Public Private Partnerships | Corporate, Community, Foundation and Donor Relations | Data-informed Decision Making | Technology Strategy and Innovation | Institutional Planning, Design and Construction | Crisis Management | Covid-19 Leadership

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS)

UCCS is a regional comprehensive university located in Colorado Springs and part of the University of Colorado system. We serve approximately 11,000 students and employ over 1,150 faculty, 800 staff, and 1,800 student employees. With an annual budget of \$325 million, we are an R2 doctoral university with high research activity and offer Division II sports. We house over 1,500 students on campus and serve as an economic development and workforce development partner across Southern Colorado. (Colorado Springs)

Interim Chancellor

July 1, 2023 - present

During this interim period, I am focused on growing enrollment, enhancing shared governance relationships, and creating more financial transparency within the campus community. To do this effectively, I work regularly with cabinet, deans, and shared governance leaders to lead an active and thriving campus. I am visiting each college and division on campus to learn the campus culture, history, and previous decision-making context. As part of my leadership ethos, I work to create an open, collaborative, inclusive environment with a focus on supporting diversity across our learning community. Concurrently, I am developing relationships with community leaders including donors, elected officials, and military, business, industry, foundation, non-profit, member-organization and civic leaders to further understand UCCS's historical role and explore together future opportunities to grow UCCS's workforce and economic development impact in the city, county, and region. CU President Saliman requested that I focus my interim role on the following areas; thus, I list my accomplishments and efforts around those below:

- **Enhance Enrollment Growth**

- Launched Active-Duty Military Tuition Assistance program to close the gap between military tuition assistance and the cost of attending UCCS. Actively promoting this benefit to impact Spring 2024 enrollment and launching a grass-roots community campaign to raise current funds and create an endowment to sustain these grants/scholarships.
- Commenced inclusive Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan development effort led by our leaders of Enrollment Management, Student Affairs and Letters, Arts and Sciences. The focus is to increase new and continuing students while connecting our academic programs to the region's workforce and economic development needs. Completion of plan: Spring 2024
- Reinstating efforts to offer concurrent enrollment classes to local school districts at the state-mandated community college tuition rate. Anticipated start date: Fall 2024.
- Developing a stronger partnership with Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) to reinvigorate transfer pathways to include PPSC student access to UCCS amenities in order to enhance their sense of belonging on our campus that leads to their success at UCCS.
- Partnering with CU System Office to amplify outreach efforts in Southern Colorado and rural counties across the state.
- Working with deans, chairs, and academic program leaders to elevate innovative, unique programs, research, and activities to differentiate UCCS in a crowded higher education market.

- **Embrace and Amplify Shared Governance**

- Immediately engaged with shared governance leaders to actively listen and understand university issues and concerns to create strong relationships, solve problems together, and establish an enhanced environment of trust.
- Within the first two weeks, implemented cascading communications to provide shared governance leaders with advance notice and explanatory information of urgent and/or important issues impacting the university. Answered questions and addressed concerns to help them prepare for their stakeholder questions.
- Implementing evidence-based change management tools to provide shared governance leaders with role clarity in advance of campus-wide project implementation.

- **Improve Financial Transparency**

- Actively learning UCCS's financial situation to prepare for transparent, open conversations and communications on current financial health including fall enrollment outcomes, ongoing commitments, current reserves, and timeline of one-time spending.
- Partnering with University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) Chair and campus financial teams to launch Financial Transparency Sessions across campus to demystify campus finances and related decision-making.
- Working closely with cabinet, deans, shared governance leaders, and UBAC to determine budget allocation model for Fiscal Year 2024-25 university budget.

University of Colorado Denver

CU Denver is Colorado's public urban research university and part of the University of Colorado system. CU Denver serves 15,000 students and employs over 1,800 faculty and staff with an annual budget of \$350 million. As a consolidated institution with an academic health campus, CU Anschutz Medical Campus, it is a Research 1 enterprise. When accounted for as a stand-alone campus, CU Denver is an R2 doctoral university with high research activity. (Denver, Aurora)

Executive Vice Chancellor, Administration and Strategy (CU Denver)

May 2021 – May 2023

Sr. Vice Chancellor, Administration and Finance, CFO (CU Denver)

Aug 2018 - May 2021

Vice Chancellor, Administration and Finance, CFO (CU Denver)

Sept 2016 - Aug 2018

Vice Chancellor, Budget and Finance, CFO (CU Denver | Anschutz)

June 2016 – Sept 2016

As part of a three-person executive team with the chancellor and provost, I aligned the vision, resources and implementation of the university's strategic plan while directly leading the operations of the university. I oversaw the university administration, strategic planning, strategic initiatives, and partnerships, outreach, and innovation efforts. I led the development of a \$93 million anchor building of the Innovation District and served on the Campaign Steering Committee. (*Note: Project paused due to cost and funding constraints.*) Simultaneously, I led an inclusive, growth-minded budget reduction and realignment process focused on reorganizing the campus's resources toward our strategic plan goals with intentional redirection of our budget to bolster faculty and staff compensation. Along with shared governance leaders, developed new collaborative, consultative process for budget reductions that became a prototype for future university-wide projects.

In prior positions as Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice Chancellor, I was responsible and accountable for the following campus functions: budget, financial services (includes grants and contracts), real estate strategy, facilities, institutional planning, construction, information technology, human resources, campus police, emergency management, government relations, strategic enrollment management and liaison to the Auraria Higher Education Center, CU Anschutz Medical Campus, and CU System Office.

- Led operational and financial response to the global pandemic with clear focus on faculty, staff and student health and safety, student learning, faculty research, and the financial sustainability of the university.
- Alongside the provost, strategically funded and holistically incented redirection of academic programs toward online and hybrid delivery and creation of academic programs that meet market and student demand. Co-creator and champion of research incentive grants and new research infrastructure.
- Co-created with the provost, deans, and faculty assembly leaders an incentive-based budget model aligning planning and budgeting processes. Led development of the Decision Support Toolkit and Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to support our student-centered mission while optimizing financial resources.
- Coalesced the university around the development and actualization of the first CU Denver-specific Facilities Development Plan (completed in 2017) including opportunities for public-private partnerships. In Fall 2021, opened first on-campus student housing and co-curricular support facility as the university emerged from the global pandemic.

Colorado Department of Higher Education/Lt. Governor's Office

Oct 2013 - June 2016

State agency charged with leading strategic direction and financial investments in Colorado's public institutions of higher education (Denver)

Chief Operating Officer and Acting Executive Director

Senior executive responsible for strategy development and daily operations of the Department including academic and student affairs, institutional research, finance, administration, policy development, external partnerships, grant development, communications and outreach to the Governor's Office, legislators and other elected and appointed officials including governing board leadership and university and college leaders.

- Drove internal and external stakeholder efforts to bring more adults back to higher education and close the opportunity gap through Credit for Prior Learning, transfer initiatives and student success initiatives. Raised local and national foundation funding to implement local collective impact strategies to close gaps. Utilized 4DX and Lean management principles throughout.
- Oversaw state efforts to implement the Colorado Commission on Higher Education Master Plan focused on a completion agenda. Coalesced stakeholders in efforts to enhance the public sentiment about the greater good of higher education.

- Led implementation of hallmark legislation re-envisioning the state's funding for higher education by creating the state's first performance-based funding model and developed an innovative tuition policy tied to Colorado's stated goals of completion and affordability. Received national recognition for the inclusive, collaborative approach resulting in unanimous support by all presidents, governing boards, the legislature's Joint Budget Committee and Governor.
- Negotiated annual, statewide higher education budget with the Governor and Joint Budget Committee. Oversaw Department legislative strategy and public relations efforts.

Front Range Community College

July 2009 - Sept 2013

Largest community college in Colorado serving over 30,000 credit students and 8,000 non-credit students annually. (Westminster, Longmont, Ft. Collins)

Vice President-Finance and Administration and CFO

Senior executive responsible for leading college operations and developing and implementing the financial strategy for the college's \$135 million budget.

- Partnered with the college president to develop and implement the strategic plan. Along with the chief academic officer, developed academic planning tools to infuse financial and business analyses into academic program review, new academic program development and innovation.
- Championed college-wide continuous process improvement efforts focused on stakeholder participation. Led implementation of Banner, the new enterprise resource management system.
- Created enterprise risk management programs and internal controls processes to help the organization recognize and mitigate strategic, reputational, and operational risks.
- Led college-wide facilities development planning and space planning efforts. Oversaw \$65 million in construction, renovation, and controlled maintenance projects, energy performance enhancements, strategic leasing, and financing options.
- Oversaw fiscal services, purchasing, contracts, grant management, budgets, auxiliary businesses, information technology services, institutional research, financial aid, campus security and preparedness, and real estate portfolio including construction, renovation, and controlled maintenance of owned and leased facilities.

Colorado State University – Global Campus

Colorado's only online university. (Aurora)

July 2008 - June 2009

Director of Outreach and Business Development

Management team member responsible for new product development and new business development in the community college market. In partnership with the provost, developed an innovative reverse bachelor's degree for community college students with a Career and Technical Education (CTE) certificate. Grew revenue by creating pipelines of community colleges students for degree-completion programs.

Colorado Community College System

October 2004 - June 2008

CCCS comprises the state's largest system of higher education. (Denver)

- **Associate Vice President, Compliance, Budgets and Technical Support (2006 – 2008)** Senior Staff team member responsible for developing the state's ten-year Career and Technical Education (CTE) strategic plan and \$48 million budget. Oversaw all business aspects of CTE including strategic planning, budgeting, grant management, information technology, data collection, reporting and dashboard development and tracking. Implemented all state audit recommendations and testified before the Legislative Audit Committee. Led statewide collaborative process to change state statute to allow CTE innovation. Received national recognition for new compliance and monitoring processes.
- **Budget Director (2004-2006) and Legislative Director (2005-2006)** Senior Staff team member responsible for budget and legislative leadership for CCCS. Efforts led to over \$50 million increases in general fund and cash fund support for the community colleges. Led budget development, reporting, and cash-flow analyses for system-wide \$450 million budget for 13 community colleges. Developed and monitored \$65 million system office budget, redesigning all reporting systems. Coordinated legislative work and worked closely with system president college presidents to strategically develop and deliver legislative priorities and messaging strategy.

Copernicus Business Systems (Atlanta-based start-up software development company) Oct 2001 - Oct 2004

Vice President, Business Services and Business Development

Along with a technical partner, created and managed the premier provider of e-commerce and content management software to the Miva Merchant community. Contributed to all aspects of company strategy and management including finance, budget, legal, human resources, new business development, marketing and sales, and new product development. Sold company to venture fund-backed private enterprise. Consultant to United Capital Markets.

Convergent Communications (Denver publicly-traded, broadband company) Sept 2000 - April 2001

Sr. Financial Analyst

Responsible for internal financial reporting and analysis for senior management and Board of Directors. Developed Board presentations, key performance metrics reports, served as team member in developing budgeting and forecasting models for internal and analyst use.

ZS Associates (Evanston, IL international management consulting firm) June 1997 - April 2000

Consultant, Latin America Practice

Managed project teams and client relationships for multi-national clients while conducting work fluently in Spanish or English. Presented project results with an emphasis on data-driven decisions. Managed various technical and strategic project teams of analysts, programmers and consultants.

Colorado Governor's Office-State Planning and Budgeting (Governor Roy Romer, Denver)

Economist and Budget Analyst

Oct 1993 - May 1996

Developed short-and long-term economic forecasts and projections of Colorado's revenue. Wrote and coordinated publication of quarterly "Colorado Economic Perspective."

EDUCATION

University of Colorado Denver, 2022

- EdD, Leadership in Educational Equity, Higher Education

The Wharton School and the Joseph H. Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania, 1998

- MBA, International Financial Management
- MA, International Studies with concentration in Latin America and Spanish (Graduated on Director's List)

Marshall University, The Society of Yeager Scholars, 1993

- BA, Economics (Graduated Summa Cum Laude)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Current Board and Alliance Affiliations:

- Denver Scholarship Foundation: Development Committee (April 2022 – present)

Earlier Board Affiliations:

- University Innovation Alliance, CU Denver liaison (May 2022 – May 2023)
- Goodwill Industries of Denver: Board of Directors, Finance and Audit Committee member (2013 – 2019), Vice-Chair (2016 - 2017), Treasurer (2017 – 2019)
- College Track Advisory Board (2017 – 2019)
- Business Experiential Learning Commission, Commissioner (2015 – 2016)
- Hope Online Learning Academy: Board President (2011 – 2013) and Board of Directors (2008 – 2013)
- Denver Business Series: Board of Directors (2002 - 2008)
- Wharton Alumni Association: Board of Directors (2002-2008)
- Cancer League of Colorado: Board of Directors (2001-2003)

Leadership Development:

- Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Senior Executives in State and Local Government executive education program, Gates Fellow (Summer 2014)
- Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation, Leadership Denver (Class of 2014)
- Colorado Governor's Performance Academy (Class of 2014)
- Roadmap to the Future, Lead Cabinet Member, Front Range Community College (2011)

Languages: Spanish (Proficient), French (Tourist-level)