

*The Colorado College State of the Rockies Project*

# Research, Report, Engage!

An Introduction from the President

THE 2010 COLORADO COLLEGE STATE OF THE ROCKIES REPORT CARD

**Welcome** to Colorado College's seventh *State of the Rockies Report Card*. Building upon a strong start in 2004 and continuing each year since, the Rockies Project this year provides a fresh look, through thoughtful analysis, at a fundamental challenge to this beautiful but fragile region: maintaining the Rockies' key roles in the nation's food supply and vibrant agriculture. This *Report Card* and the companion series of 2009-10 monthly State of the Rockies Food and Agriculture campus speakers are significant outreach activities of Colorado College: Vision 2010, an agenda to strengthen our college and our engagement in the region.

In prior years, annual *Report Cards* have examined how specific issues challenge the Rockies region and its natural, cultural, and historic importance. These have included regional energy issues, the condition of our national parks and health of our forests, expected impacts of climate change, success stories among our Native American peoples, toxic waste, creative occupations, a host of wildlife topics, and civic engagement. Media coverage has supplemented our annual conference and speakers series efforts, bringing regional, national and international attention to the issues studied and the results found by our undergraduate researchers. We are proud to continue the decades' long tradition of Colorado College contributing to and

strengthening our surrounding region's social, economic, and environmental qualities.

Our college has both prospered in and contributed back in unique ways to our Rockies "backyard." Since our founding in 1874, we have responded to the constant changes as America moved westward into our Rockies region, which currently consists of 281 counties with a population that in recent decades has grown at three times the national average.

Colorado College is a private, four-year liberal arts and sciences college enrolling 1,900 students, located on a 90-acre campus in downtown Colorado Springs near the base of Pikes Peak. The institution has been defined and continually redefined by the Rockies region since its founding by General William Jackson Palmer, whose goal was to educate and "civilize" the regional population in the New England liberal arts tradition. Evolving programs and majors have been relevant to the region's needs, from early day mining, forestry and engineering to our current regionally focused programs in environmental and southwest studies. Generations of students and professors have benefited from this magnificent region, using field trips and research to better understand disciplines such as geology, biology, economics, sociology, and the environment.

Our mission statement speaks to what we are all about:

*At Colorado College our goal is to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country. Drawing upon the adventurous spirit of the Rocky Mountain West, we challenge students, one course at a time, to develop those habits of intellect and imagination that will prepare them for learning and leadership throughout their lives.*

To achieve these goals, Colorado College offers first and foremost an excellent education in the liberal arts and sciences. The college encourages a spirit of intellectual adventure: critical thinking, hands-on learning, and personal responsibility within an environment of small learning communities where education and life intertwine. Strong student involvement in endeavors such as the Rockies Project is one way we seek to connect with the challenging issues around us!

I invite you to explore the Rockies through the material in this *Report Card* and am confident that it will inform, challenge, and stimulate your knowledge and thinking. We welcome you to a growing number of people who care to learn more about and contribute to



protecting the unique features and character that make the Rockies region everyone's special "backyard."

*Richard F. Celeste*

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President of Colorado College

