

Staff Pathways Task Force Recommendations: 2022-2026

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I. Executive Summary

“Invest in Our People” is a key initiative for the CU Anschutz Medical Campus. A major goal of that initiative is to expand and enhance opportunities for career advancement for staff so that they may have long and fulfilling careers at the university.

After conducting an extensive review of best practices both on our campus and nationally, the Staff Pathways Task Force compiled and evaluated an extensive list of strategies tied to professional development and career mobility. That list was then prioritized down to the following recommendations:

1. Training and communications initiatives
 - a. Develop trainings on creating career progression plans
 - b. More visibility for and communication about current professional development opportunities
 - c. Develop personalized professional development plans within existing opportunities
 - d. Develop guidelines on how staff may progress in a variety of functional areas
 - e. Develop trainings, resources, and communications for classified staff on creating career plans
 - f. Provide more transparency about staff salary ranges and salary setting processes
2. Coaching and mentoring initiatives
 - a. Coach employees on how to develop and implement career progression plans that are tailored to their individual development and growth
 - b. Coach supervisors and HR Business Partners on how to develop career pathways, then implement and evaluate them during the performance evaluation process
 - c. Provide employees and supervisors with guidance and coaching on how to effectively give and receive feedback
3. Technology initiatives
 - a. Implement an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) or recruitment technology that will allow for targeted internal recruitment
 - b. Implement a learning solution with better tracking and more robust capabilities
4. Rewards and recognition initiative
 - a. Create both monetary and non-monetary recognition and rewards programs

II. Introduction and Charge

CU Anschutz has established five strategic initiatives for 2021 – 2026:

- Leverage Data
- Build a Healthcare Innovation Institute
- Enhance the Student Experience
- Partner on Patient-Centered Care
- Invest in our People

The Invest in Our People strategic initiative is intended to identify ways to help CU Anschutz employees advance at the university in lasting, fulfilling careers. Through this initiative the campus will design career pathways to expand access to employment, inspire professional growth, promote mental health and wellness, and accelerate career advancement. The charge of this task force is to assess current staff career pathways, then make recommendations for how to add to them or make them more visible.

Beginning in February of 2022, the task force met twice monthly to inventory and assess current professional development program opportunities and review related university structures and processes. Meetings included presentations and learning sessions with subject matter experts, key concept refreshers, and strategy exercises.

Task Force Membership

The membership of the Staff Pathways Task Force is as follows:

Member	Representing
Olawunmi Ogunwo (Primary Lead)	School of Medicine
Andrew Rotz (Co-Lead)	Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Chimgeh Bataa	Facilities
Jocelyn Blake	Center for Advancing Professional Excellence (CAPE)
Maria Hernandez	Advancement
Dan Hussey	College of Nursing
Neil Krauss	Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement
Alison Lakin	Regulatory Compliance
Debbie Lammers	Human Resources
Florie Montoya	Human Resources
Susan Nagel	Graduate School
Erin Poole	Colorado School of Public Health
Regina Richards	Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement
Bryn Samuelson	Budget, Planning, and Analysis
Courtney Stelmack	CU Medicine
Kelly Tasky	Office of Information Technology
Aimee Woznick	Office of Strategic Initiatives

III. Inventory of Best and Current Practices and Resources

The task force had the opportunity to learn from each other about a variety of practices and processes in place at this campus and at other institutions. Some examples include:

- an overview of the job code and classifications structure for University Staff and Classified Staff roles (Florie Montoya, Human Resources)
- presentations from individual campus units that have developed career pathways
 - Maria Hernandez (Advancement) shared the administrative career development program and process that has been implemented in Advancement
 - Kelly Tasky (Office of Information Technology) shared the Service Desk professional development program that has been developed for Service Desk employees
 - Olawunmi Ogunwo (School of Medicine) shared the research personnel reclassification initiative that the School of Medicine implemented for their research personnel team members (formerly known as “Professional Research Assistants,” and now staff)
- an overview of Kansas State University’s career ladder program, which included an assessment of several other universities’ career pathway programs (Lindsey Fouquette, Human Resources)

As a result of this review, the task force gained a greater understanding of the campus infrastructure and existing resources. These insights aided in the development of the recommendations that follow.

One key insight concerned the system by which staff are classified. Current university staff classifications rely on job families that are tied to job functions (e.g., finance, IT, advancement, etc.). Within each function, there is a tiered title structure ranging from entry-level to director-level. This organizational schema does in part support career pathways; however, the task force acknowledges that the campus community (including supervisors) could aid from a better understanding of these structures. Employees could also benefit from greater coaching and additional resources about how to create individualized and/or unit-specific career pathways for themselves (and, if they supervise others, for their reports).

The task force also noted the vast amount of professional development and training resources presently available to the campus community. While a wide variety of valuable resources already exist, it was noted that the campus could benefit from more communication about these resources (both to employees themselves and to their supervisors). The task force also felt that campus constituents would benefit from improved guidance about how employees and supervisors can most effectively navigate, select, and create customized professional development plans tailored to specific career objectives.

Likewise, the task force acknowledged the significance of the Tuition Assistance Benefit and suggested that the campus community could benefit from greater awareness of this benefit.

This review of current practice demonstrated that tremendous work is already being done in select individual departments. Many of those practices could be scaled to other areas of the campus. The task force recommends greater sharing of examples, training, coaching, and guidance on how to successfully create career pathways within teams and units.

IV. Final Recommendations

The Staff Pathways Task Force assessed potential recommendations and categorized them into four themes:

- (1) Training and Communication
- (2) Coaching and Mentoring
- (3) Technology
- (4) Rewards and Recognition

Training and Communication Initiatives

The task force identified more than 20 potential strategies tied to training and communication. There were 6 strategies that emerged as the top priorities within this theme.

1. Develop trainings on creating career progression plans

The task force recommends that trainings and communications be created both for managers and for Human Resource Business Partners on best practices for developing tailored career progression plans for teams and employees. These trainings should also include information about how to implement “in-range adjustments” that involve increased duties and responsibilities (without a change to official job level).

2. More visibility for and communication about existing professional development opportunities

While inventorying current professional development opportunities, the task force learned about many valuable resources currently available, including instructor-led trainings, online training resources, and manager development resources. It is unclear how many staff employees are aware of the range and depth of these resources. The task force recommends more communication to staff to highlight what already exists.

3. Develop personalized professional development plans within existing opportunities

Given the large number of professional development resources across a range of platforms, developing tailored professional development plans can be a daunting task -- both for supervisors and for employees. The task force recommends developing ways to help individuals better navigate these resources. The campus could also benefit from trainings and/or templates for supervisors and their reports about how create personalized professional development plans that leverage existing resources to reach specific career goals.

4. Develop guidelines on how staff may progress in a variety of functional areas

The task force recommends developing communications and guidelines about how staff can progress in and across functional areas. It is recommended that the guidelines include a visual roadmap or infographic with best practices to progress or develop from one functional area to another functional area.

5. Develop trainings, resources, and communications for classified staff on creating career plans

Promotional and career progression opportunities for Classified Staff are determined by State of Colorado rules and regulations and often vary significantly from processes for University Staff. It is not always clear to supervisors and employees what options are available to Classified Staff in relation to career progression and/or compensation adjustments. The task force recommends developing a toolkit to include trainings and communications about tools and resources available to create career progression plans and make compensation adjustments for Classified Staff.

6. Provide more transparency about staff salary ranges and salary setting processes

The task force recommends publishing and making available to staff the staff salary ranges, as well as developing a public set of guidelines about how salaries are set.

Coaching and Mentoring Initiatives

The task force identified 7 potential strategies tied to coaching and mentoring. There were 3 strategies that emerged as the top priorities within this theme.

1. Coach employees on how to develop and implement career progression plans that are tailored to their individual development and growth

The task force recommends coaching and programming for employees on how to independently identify their professional aspirations, communicate their goals effectively to supervisors, negotiate raises, and partner on professional development plans. The campus may also want to consider identifying ways to give staff a certain percentage of “protected time” to devote to professional development.

2. Coach supervisors and HR Business Partners on how to develop career pathways, then implement and evaluate them during the performance evaluation process

The task force recommends that the campus provide coaching to supervisors and HR Business Partners on how to develop career pathways and how to incorporate those plans (and the evaluation of those plans) into the performance evaluation process.

3. Provide employees and supervisors with coaching on how to effectively receive feedback

The task force recommends coaching for employees and supervisors on how to successfully receive feedback and implement action plans for advancement.

Technology Initiatives

The task force identified 4 potential strategies tied to technology. There were 2 strategies that emerged as the top priorities within this theme.

1. Implement an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) or recruitment technology that will allow for targeted internal recruitment

It is recommended that the campus enable functionality in the existing ATS (or evaluate other systems) to allow for targeted recruitment efforts, such as ability to advertise available positions to internal employees first

2. Implement a learning solution with better tracking and more robust capabilities

The current solution, Skillsoft, is unable to compile and track employees' skills, credentials, and certifications -- nor is it able to track progress toward professional development plans. A system with greater tracking functionality should be implemented to more easily identify employees with skills that could transfer internally to another role (and/or functional area).

Rewards and Recognition Initiatives

The task force identified 3 potential strategies tied to rewards and recognition. There was 1 strategy that emerged as the top priority within this theme.

1. Create both monetary and non-monetary recognition and rewards programs

The task force recommends that monetary and non-monetary campus-level recognition and rewards programs be implemented.

V. Measures of Success

Upon the successful implementation of the Staff Pathways Task Force recommendations, campus staff should have increased opportunities for advancement and professional growth. Over time, the campus should see increases in the number of staff utilizing professional development resources, the creation of more career development pathways within units, and more staff advancing promptly through existing and new job classifications.

It is also anticipated that, with successful implementation of these recommendations, results for the Campus & Workplace Climate Survey would improve. In 2021, the overall belonging score for all staff employees was a 4.6 on 6-point scale (with 1 representing negative experiences and 6 representing positive experiences). We would anticipate seeing an increase in this overall score.

The following eight questions from the survey likely have a strong correlation to the objectives of the Invest in Our People strategic initiative:

1. *I am provided opportunities to advance in my career.*
2. *I feel that I am evaluated fairly.*
3. *I have been offered opportunities to learn and grow.*
4. *I have received adequate feedback to judge my work performance.*
5. *I receive adequate support/mentoring to advance my career/professional development.*
6. *Leaders in my department are invested in my success.*
7. *My office/department values my work.*
8. *The work that I do is important.*

The Staff Pathways recommendations would likely aid in increasing positive responses to the above questions. Ian Whitman (Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness) shared the association between positive agreement to the 8 questions above and disagreement with the survey question related to considering leaving the university. It follows, then, that with the improvements that will result from implementing these recommendations, the campus would benefit from decreased turnover.

VI. Conclusion and Next Steps

The Staff Pathways Task Force assessed and evaluated existing and new career progression and development pathways to make recommendations to advance the “Invest in Our People” initiative. The task force is recommending that the campus implement a multi-faceted plan that includes training and communication, coaching and mentoring, technology advancement, and rewards and recognition programs to continue to work towards the goal of investing in our people.

Appendix A: List of Cited Resources, References and Works

1. Office of Strategic Initiatives 2021-2026 Strategic Initiatives website: <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/offices/strategic-initiatives/strategic-initiatives>
2. University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus Strategic Initiatives 2021 -2026 Report: https://www.cuanschutz.edu/docs/librariesprovider305/default-document-library/strategic-initiatives-report-web-102621.pdf?sfvrsn=a836d3ba_2
3. Where Are the Career Paths for Staff on Campus Article by Lee Skallerup Bessette – The Chronicle of Higher Education
4. Tuition Assistance Benefit Presentation – Meredith Doherty, Tuition Assistance Coordinator, University of Colorado Employee Services
5. Staff Structures Presentation – Florie Montoya, Assistant Vice Chancellor, University of Colorado Human Resources Office
6. Professional Development Opportunities Presentation – Debbie Lammers, Assistant Vice Chancellor, University of Colorado Human Resources Office
7. Equal Pay for Equal Work Act Overview Presentation – Olawunmi Ogunwo, Human Resource Director, University of Colorado School of Medicine
8. Admin Career Development Relaunch Presentation – Maria Hernandez, Executive Assistant, University of Colorado Office of Advancement
9. Service Desk Professional Development Program Presentation, Kelly Tasky, Human Resource Program Manager, Office of Information Technology
10. Kansas State Career Ladders Presentation – Lindsey Fouquette, Talent Acquisition Manager, University of Colorado Human Resources Office
11. School of Medicine Research Personnel Re-Classification Initiative Presentation: Olawunmi Ogunwo, Human Resource Director, University of Colorado School of Medicine
12. Take the work out of finding your next job with automatic job posting alerts Blog - University of Colorado Employee Services: <https://www.cu.edu/blog/work-life/take-work-out-finding-your-next-job-automatic-job-posting-alerts>
13. LinkedIn Learning Course: How to Create a Career You Love
14. Campus & Workplace Culture Survey Presentation – Ian Whitman, Senior Data Analyst, University of Colorado Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness
15. Campus & Workplace Culture Survey Dashboard: <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/offices/diversity-equity-inclusion-community/cwcsurvey>

Appendix B: Full List of Potential Strategies Reviewed and Evaluated

- ❖ **Training and Communications Initiatives**
 - Succession planning trainings for leaders and HR Business Partners
 - Provide On-the-Job (OJT) training opportunities for employees
 - Salary negotiation training for leaders and employees
 - Develop guidelines, recommendations, and examples on how employees can cross train and build pathways
 - Create guides on how to develop in-range and new range career plans
 - Socialize and implement micro-certification opportunities
 - Provide more education and communication on the “tools currently in the toolbox”
 - Help employees understand the relationship between finances, funding, budget, and personnel
 - Provide greater transparency about salary ranges and pay
 - Develop personalized training plans within our existing training opportunities (Skillsoft, LinkedIn Learning, etc.)
 - Develop guidelines on how to progress in different functional areas (e.g., Finance, HR, IT, Research, Research Administration) with a visual roadmap or infographic
 - Make the current professional development opportunities more visible
 - Provide more information or clarity about the Tuition Reimbursement process and opportunities
 - Provide education and communication on how to develop career progression plans for classified employees and on the “tools that are in the toolbox” for classified employees
 - Develop more targeted recruitment efforts for internal employees, advertise the options to employees more, and train leaders on the benefits of using these opportunities
 - Create a centralized hub with information on professional development and career progression opportunities all in one place
 - Organizational assessment, structures, and designs trainings for leaders and HR Business Partners
 - Change management trainings for leaders and HR Business Partners
- ❖ **Coaching and Mentoring Initiatives**
 - Develop and implement campus level mentorship programs
 - Develop internship type opportunities in a variety of functional areas for internal and external employees
 - Help employees to progress their careers and develop progression plans in a manner consistent with their personal goals and desires
 - Coach leaders on developing career pathways for their employees during the performance evaluation process
 - Coach and empower leaders to have realistic conversations with employees about compensation, role capabilities, and role limits
 - Develop guidelines on how to progress in different functional areas (e.g. finance, HR, IT, Research, Research Administration) with a visual roadmap and infographic
 - Coach employees on how to receive feedback and implement actional plans for improvement and advancement based on this feedback
- ❖ **Technology Based Initiatives**
 - Create an internal resume repository or skills bank
 - Implement a system/process for more targeted internal employee recruitment efforts, with the ability to advertise opportunities to internal employees first
 - Implement a learning solution with better tracking and more robust capabilities
 - OIT utilizes Motivosity as reward/recognition program. Develop or implement a similar system or process at the campus level.
- ❖ **Rewards and Recognition Initiatives**
 - Create both monetary and non-monetary recognition and rewards programs
 - OIT utilizes Motivosity as reward/recognition program. Develop or implement similar system or process at the campus level.
 - Use micro-certifications as a tool to recognize and reward employees