



Mural at the Village Exchange Center

Vision coming together for class project at Village Exchange Center

By: Jennifer Buckley

Our class project is officially underway! We will begin the hands-on portion of our class project in March.

The initial work will include painting the walls, ceiling, and some of the doors in the basement of the Village Exchange Center.

We are working on quotes for flooring and plan to work on installation of the flooring in April.

We are still identifying options for furniture in the youth corner but have found a potential solution for the cubbies and credenza for the coffee station. We also have a few potential options for a coffee maker. We will work on coordinating furniture install once all items have been identified.

How can you help?

- Help with raising additional funds – If your company or another local business is interested in contributing funds to our class

project, please let Jennifer and Mathew know. We still would like to continue raising money to cover the full cost of the project.

- Donations – We are still seeking donations for furniture in the Youth Corner. We need approximately two sofas, four chairs, a coffee table, and side tables. Bean bags and other flexible furniture will be accepted as well. The furniture needs to be new or gently used, durable but easy to move.

- Volunteer – Assist us with the hands-on portion of our project. Be available to help with painting, installing flooring, and more!

Funds raised:

- Visit Aurora - \$5,000
- Wagner Equipment - \$5,000 (Thanks to Susan Siegman!)
- Aurora Police Department - \$250 (Thanks to Dave Cernich!)
- Walmart - \$1000 (Thanks to Dave Cernich!)

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Leadership of Aurora Class of 2020

Mission: To guide participants to conduct as per our identified agreements for the success of the group and to achieve the goals of Leadership of Aurora.

Agreement: Be present, Be engaged, Be on time, Be all-inclusive, Be participative, Be respectful, Be Responsible, Be an ambassador of the program, and Have fun!

Meet the Class *Mathew Wasserburger*

What has been the most eye-opening experience in your Leadership Aurora class?

I have enjoyed getting to know everyone and learning how inter-connected we are in experiences, challenges and accomplishments.



community, developing innovations that reduce costs or increase revenue.

What do you like best about living or working in Aurora?

We have challenges that most large metroplexes face, but it doesn't seem overwhelming. Our leaders, community groups, government and institutions seem accessible and engaged.

What are some challenges you feel the industry you work in will face in the future?

Municipal governments will continue to experience structural deficits where the cost of providing services outpaces revenue growth. Government will need to think strategically and engage the

What is one characteristic that you believe every leader should possess?

A true leader should lead by example, backed with the values of honesty, integrity and professionalism.

How do you engage in or give back to the community?

I see working for local government as a way to give back. While I don't provide direct service to the community, I support the men and women of Aurora Fire who help people in their hour of greatest need.

Vice President's Corner

I am so thrilled and honored to be a part of the 2020 Leadership Aurora class, #bestclassever! It is such a delight and privilege to serve alongside such an incredibly sharp, talented, motivated, and diverse group of leaders from our community. I have thoroughly enjoyed every part of this program and the education we have received thus far. I look forward to working with everyone in our class to take this program to new heights and make a lasting impact on the Aurora community. Stay classy and be excellent!



Best,
Jordan Clark

Upcoming Events



March 19 - Leadership Aurora Police Day

7:45 a.m.-5 p.m.
Information and agenda will be sent separately

April 16 - Leadership Aurora Military Day

7:45 a.m.-5 p.m.
Information and agenda will be sent separately (see article on Page 6 for advance tips)

May 21 - Leadership Aurora Fire Day

7:45 a.m.-5 p.m.
Information and agenda will be sent separately

June 4 - Leadership Aurora Graduation

5-8:30 p.m.
Summit Conference Center
Cost: Class member free, individual tickets \$35

Register at <https://business.aurorachamber.org/events/details/leadership-aurora-graduation-2020-101310>

Meet the Class *Mandy Ashley*

What has been the most eye-opening experience in your Leadership Aurora class?

It has been amazing to get to know and befriend people from other sectors. It's inspiring to see all of us come together to work toward a common goal. The "blue" in me has the feels. :)



What do you like best about living or working in Aurora?

Our family utilizes the easy access to open space as much as we can! Cherry Creek State Park is only a bike ride away, either on the weekend or a lunch break!

What are some challenges you feel the industry you work in will face in the future?

Health reform and the public option (for health insurance) are coming. One challenge will be in translating changes and options for people who seek care.

What is one characteristic that you believe every leader should possess?

Empathy.

How do you engage in or give back to the community?

I live, work, and play in Aurora. By getting to know and support local organizations and businesses, I feel like an invested member of this community. My work is intentionally centered on giving back — Aurora Health Alliance strives every day to improve access to care for the most vulnerable and underserved in Aurora.

Leadership Aurora witnesses how innovations drive our students

By: Angelina Costin

Education day for Leadership Aurora was filled with information. We experienced passionate staff and excited, professional, intelligent students. The experiences throughout the day made some of the class want to return to college or enroll in some programs.

Cherry Creek Innovation Campus (CCIC)

CCIC is a unique campus designed with a modern look to engage students and make them feel as comfortable as possible by focusing on the physical aspects of an environment. It's not a comprehensive high school. Students attend classes part time and still stay at their "home" high school. CCIC's goal is to prepare students for the future by teaching them critical thinking and communication skills. They achieve this through project-based learning and focusing on experiences.

There are three types of students who attend CCIC: 1) kids wanting to go to college and earn dual credits, 2) kids who do not want to go to college but seek to prepare for a career immediately after high school, and 3) kids who don't know what they want to do.

The Leadership Aurora class experienced tours of the facility led by passionate students. They offer many different

demographics in each community. They found that over the years, they were trying to do too many things instead of focusing on key areas for success. APS became hyperfocused in its mission to bring education to communities and began to see a shift in connecting with students.

They believe that "every child shapes a successful future" and that it's every staff member's job to do their best to assist in the building up of each child. Through grants and awards, APS continues to invest in the growth of students by providing new building additions, technology such as interactive white boards, and so much more.

Pickens Technical College

Pickens Technical College is a great alternative to a more traditional college. Students can earn a certificate from their program of choice or an Associate's Degree. The demand has never been higher for skilled workers. Acquiring skilled employees will allow companies to save



programs such as Aviation, Automotive, Business, Mechanical, Health + Wellness, Infrastructure Engineering, and Culinary.

Aurora Public Schools

Aurora Public Schools works extremely hard to have the staff reflect the

time and money through efficiency.

Pickens offers a wide range of programs including Arts, Media, Communication, Business, Marketing, Construction & Development, Health, Transportation and many more. After experiencing a tour of the campus, Leadership Aurora had the privilege



of indulging in a meal prepared by Pickens' Culinary Art Program, which was hosted by the Hospitality and Tourism Program.

Pickens Student Ambassadors shared some personal stories with the class. It was interesting to hear the staff's passion and vision for the students, but equally as inspiring to hear how individuals' lives were touched or changed as a result of these programs.

Community College of Aurora (CCA)

CCA has two campuses in Aurora and Denver. They offer affordable online classes. With tuition costing almost half of a traditional college, students are given an option where they can grow and transfer their credits to a university.

The class was given an opportunity to experience the CCA Innovation Lab and the Robotics and Space Grant. It was incredible to see the 3D printers provided by the school for students to utilize and the wonderful creations and designs they came up with. The class took part in a mock model United Nations Activity where they debated some questions that may pop up in a normal U.N. meeting. CCA will actually send students to a weeklong event where they take an acting role representing a country and discuss and present topics the real United Nations may encounter.

The Colorado Film School Tour & Screening offers programs such as Film Core, Screenwriting, Producing, Directing, Acting, Cinematography and Post-Production. Leadership Aurora was shown a film produced and directed by students. What was most incredible was learning of the time and effort put into producing a short film. Every angel, color, item needs to be thought of and planned out before a shoot can begin. It's truly an art form.



Colorado Air National Guard Capt. Shaunna Reed

By: Steve Ruger

Capt. Shaunna Reed has been leading the maintenance of the aircraft of the 140th Wing of the Colorado Air National Guard for the past several years, including those super cool F-16 fighter jets. She has a tremendously important role in helping to keep our country safe, and as impressive as that sounds, she is in her own words, “so much more than the uniform.” Indeed, her role in the National Guard is an example of how vital it is to have Buckley Air Force Base as a community partner, and she fully embodies how the military makes a difference not only in national security but also in our daily lives as Americans.



Born in Arkansas, Capt. Reed faced a childhood that was not ideal. She was passed around to multiple family members, had to deal with parents battling drug addictions, and was never given a stable environment in which to thrive. That all changed when she enrolled in the military at the age of 18. Finding strength and courage in the military, she has overcome the adversity of her childhood and now flourishes in both her professional and personal roles. Going from Airman First Class to her current job as Captain and Wing Commander Executive Officer, she has a thriving military career and managed to pick up a bachelor’s degree in psychology and sociology and a master’s in psychology. Her career has taken her from Arkansas to Louisiana and finally to Colorado, where she also enjoys a loving relationship with her life partner.

I recently sat down with Capt. Reed over coffee and she shared some of her story with me. As a true leader in the Aurora community, it was inspiring to listen to her and witness firsthand just how much more she is than a uniform. Here are some of the questions I asked Capt. Reed about her approach to leadership and her responses:

Q: Describe your biggest accomplishment during your career in the military.

A: Being able to come out of her rough childhood and build a good life was quickly what Capt. Reed expressed as the most important accomplishment for her. Just having the courage to enlist in the military at the young age of 18 and there with seeking out a better life helped pave the way for all of her successes that came after.

Q: What is the greatest leadership lesson you’ve learned during your career?

A: Capt. Reed, without hesitation, stated that she had to “lose the ego” and recognize that she “can’t do it alone.” She stated that she never pretends to be the smartest person in the room and encourages others to share ideas and suggestions. She believes that most people join the military out of passion and humbly stated that when thanked for her service, she responds by saying, “You’re worth it.”

Q: Describe your approach to leadership.

A: Capt. Reed embraces the golden rule of leading by example. She highlighted empathy as a key tenet in leading others and the need to seek to understand someone’s point of view.

Q: How do you motivate people?

A: Capt. Reed motivates people by trying to

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“understand who they are as a human being.” It’s important for her to get to know someone beyond their role as a colleague and she accomplishes this by scheduling one-on-one meetings, building trust, and understanding people from a more rounded perspective. When it comes to those she oversees, she stated it’s important to “make sure you’re taking care of them.”

Q: What are your goals when/if you ever retire?

A: Capt. Reed has a very clear goal to retire at the age of 50, comprising 30-plus years of military service. Thereafter, she intends to run for state office to fight for a better education system. We are very fortunate to have Capt. Reed in her current role and indeed will again be fortunate to have her continue her public service later down the road in a different context..

I enjoyed my conversation with Capt. Reed and couldn’t help but talk to her a bit on issues not related to this article. Even during those portions of our conversation, Capt. Reed’s passion for leading and loving others came across loud and clear. She has a busy life and spends her free time playing sports, motivating students through presentations, traveling, and enjoying her time here in Colorado. She is indeed far more than a uniform and we are lucky to have her around.

From Stop the Bleed to surgery skills, Leadership Aurora goes hands-on

By: Alexandra Hoffman

We are so proud that Aurora, Colorado, is home to some of the best healthcare in the region. For Healthcare Day on Feb. 20, the Leadership Aurora team enjoyed connecting with clinical experts on eye-opening healthcare topics and learning about our two major acute care hospitals — The Medical Center of Aurora and the University of Colorado Hospital. Ryan Simpson, President and CEO of The Medical Center of Aurora (TMCA) Spalding Rehabilitation Hospital, kicked off the morning with an overview of the HealthONE system and the services offered in our community, including highlights of the Behavioral Health and Wellness Center 40-bed expansion. Following, Reverend David Reeves, Director of Chaplaincy at The Medical Center of Aurora, led the group in a thoughtful discussion about navigating clinical ethics in healthcare and our personal lives. David empowered us to have conversations about our end-of-life wishes and taught us strategies to have these conversations with our family members. For hands-on experience,



the Leadership Aurora team had the opportunity to go behind-the-scenes to several hospital departments. In the Hybrid Operating Room, we learned about complex cardiac procedures and the life-saving technology we have right here in Aurora. During our rotation through the Spine Operating Room, we tried our hands at being surgeons and played with laparoscopic instruments and magnifying technology used in surgery. We learned about the highly specialized AirLife services coordinated through the HealthONE Access Center and sat inside the helicopter that transports patients across the state to higher levels of care. We thank The Medical Center of Aurora employees for welcoming Leadership Aurora into the hospital and providing an interactive and engaging morning.

In the afternoon, we traveled five miles north to the Anschutz Medical Campus where UHealth hosted us at the Sue Anschutz Rogers Eye Center. Neil Krauss, Director of Initiatives and Outreach, provided an introductory overview of UHealth, informing us of the history, financial impact, research, teaching, and partnerships that make the campus unique. We learned about the national Stop the Bleed campaign from UHealth trauma services and completed bystander training so we are confident and capable to help in a bleeding emergency.



Robyn Wolverton, Trauma Outreach and Injury Prevention Manager, can lead Stop the Bleed training free of cost to Aurora organizations. Following our training, Dr. Scott Oliver, Medical Director of the Eye Cancer Program, shared his expertise in Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) and the innovative technology his team uses to increase visibility for patients suffering from RP. Our time at UHealth concluded with a presentation on our nation's opioid crisis from Dr. Robert Valuck, Professor of Clinical Pharmacy. Dr. Valuck shared staggering information on the prevalence of the opioid epidemic, the treatment gap associated, the misunderstanding of addiction, and the economic impact of the crisis. We thank the UHealth employees for hosting Leadership Aurora and sharing your expertise with us. Kudos to the Healthcare Day planning team: Susan Davis, JoAnne Dodson, Denise Denton, Jennifer Evans, Bob Fryberger, Allen Golden, Keith Peterson, Suzanne Pitrusu, Chanell Reed, Tayl Por age 5 Roberts, Colin Spence, and Mike Tapp for organizing an impactful day for us!

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SUBMISSIONS

Have any ideas on what you'd like to see in future Leadership Aurora newsletters?

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Leadership Aurora is a 10-month community engagement program organized by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce and designed to develop an awareness of the Aurora community, create a network of informed leaders, and encourage greater involvement in the community.

AuroraChamber.org/leadership-aurora
303.344.1500

What to know before Military Day

By: Joe Simms

April 16 is Leadership Aurora's Military Day, where you will get an up-close and personal look at the different organizations and missions of Buckley Air Force Base, soon to be Buckley Space Force Base. During the tour, you will see an F-16 fighter jet, and I've provided a [fact sheet with details of the aircraft](#) so you can familiarize yourself with the jet and think of some questions to ask on the tour.

Two of the most common questions I get are "What do the stripes mean?" and "How do you get the ribbons on your uniform?" Here is a [link to a PowerPoint briefing](#) I've given to civilian groups explaining the rank structure for officers and enlisted personnel. A good rule of thumb is if the rank is on the sleeve, then they are enlisted; if the rank is on their collar, they are an officer.



With the introduction of the new OCP uniforms, all Air Force members have their ranks displayed in the middle of their chest, which makes it a little more difficult to recognize.

I've also included a [link to my ribbon rack](#) with the name associated with each medal. This is a basic description of the medals we are awarded, so feel free to ask me or anyone else who works at Buckley if you'd like us to go into more detail.

I look forward to welcoming you to Buckley in April!

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"Starting something can be easy, it is finishing it that is the highest hurdle."

— Isabella Poretsis
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Thin Blue Line drive draws 72 donations

By: Dave Cernich

The fifth annual Thin Blue Line Blood Drive was held in the Aurora Municipal Center on Thursday, Jan. 23. It was another exceptional year with great



results as well as a busy day for the staff, who did an excellent job. When everything was said and done, 72 people donated blood. It was an outstanding event.

The drive's goal is to fill all the appointments and have numerous walk-ins; however, Vitalant has reasonable established goals for each of the drives they foster. For this event their stated goal was 57 units of blood. We collected 72 and more importantly, of those collected we had 18 first-time donors. The sum of the 72 units of blood will be used to help sustain the lives of up to 216 individuals. Wow!

Because of your support, we plan on scheduling the sixth annual Thin Blue Line Blood Drive event next January. With the feedback received from Michelle at Vitalant, we believe we can ensure we get all 10 beds set up and include two Alyx machines for the double red donations next year.

The members of the best Leadership Aurora Class (2020) and all others who donated their time and blood are thanked for their participation and support.