

NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 | JANUARY 2024

POLICE RIDE ALONG



For my Community Exploration, I had the privilege of joining Officer Karren from the Aurora Police Department for a full day ride along. My day was filled with eye-opening experiences and invaluable insights into the challenges our brave men and women of the APD face daily.

Officer Karren and I were on the front lines, responding to numerous calls and auto accidents.

One auto accident involved an intoxicated driver who, in addition to being under the influence, also appeared to have significant mental health concerns. As someone who works within mental health, it was a stark reminder of the interrelatedness of issues that our law enforcement professionals navigate daily. The ability to distinguish between someone who is intoxicated and someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis is often referred to as “mental health awareness.” This involves recognizing and understanding the signs and behaviors associated with both alcohol intoxication and mental health concerns. Although our officers undergo extensive training to hone these skills and understand the indicators, they are not infallible, and errors we know occur. Acknowledging this reality, it prompts us to ask: Are we approaching our officers with a sense of reasonableness and providing support for their discretionary judgment while responding?

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As our day continued to unfold, we found ourselves at the Southland Mall responding to a unique situation. A man in only his underwear, visibly intoxicated, was causing a disturbance in the Walmart parking lot. Once again, this incident underscores the diverse range of issues our officers respond to. This incident really does raise a question that we as a community need to answer.

In this case, should our officer have deployed force as the disturbance neared the Walmart entrance, or should she have refrain from doing so, potentially jeopardizing the safety of unsuspecting patrons who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time? Now, consider answering that question in a mere two seconds, mirroring the quick decisions our officers are expected to make with unwavering confidence.

The experience of my police ride along really did serve as a powerful reminder of the dedication and resiliency demonstrated by our law enforcement in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community. This experience really helped ground me in the expectations that I place on our law enforcement officers. Equally important, this experience allowed me to see firsthand the collaborative practices between our law enforcement and mental health professionals to address these complex issues effectively.

-Ryan Seely, BCE Class of 2024



MEDIA DAY at CCA December



Media Day was incredibly informative and just plain fun! We started the day learning a bit more about each of our roles at our companies and organizations. It was quite insightful to share what we do and to learn how we could better connect and work with each other outside of the class!

Our first stop of the day for Media Day was with the...media! We were given a tour by Denver7 News Anchor Nicole Brady and Station Operations Manager Rory Schmalzried guided us through a tour of the Denver7 offices where we were able to ask different team members a variety of questions. We learned everything from fun facts (did you know that there are more than 100 miles of cable underneath their building to help ensure the news station runs properly?!) to how production works, how the weather is reported, to how traffic reporting can change within moments. Many of us were surprised to hear that some anchors were one-person crews, filming and scripting it all on their own!



Denver7 News Anchor Nicole Brady

We wrapped up the day filming a skit at Community College of Aurora with the school's film students where each Leadership Aurora member got to play a filmmaker role for an afternoon—from script writing (via a fun game of Mad Libs!) to casting directors to camera crew to actors to directors—we all agreed that we learned quite a bit about what it takes to make a short video and enjoyed a lot of collaboration and fun along the way. The filmmaker students were incredibly knowledgeable and helpful in their craft and each of us stepped into our roles very seriously...with some of us enjoying yelling "ACTION!", perhaps a bit too much (that someone was me). Overall, this day was filled with fun, lots of learning and trying new things! I think we can all agree that not only is this the best class ever, we are also really grateful for this opportunity to learn more about the community where we live and work.

Ashley Muramoto,
Leadership Aurora Class of 2024



LA BCE '24 Cast and Crew



Green Screen Fun

Later that day we sat for a PR panel where we learned about crisis communications management from Patricia Billinger, Internal Communications Director, Intermountain Health, who shared, "the best PR is good service delivery." We then heard from Diane Simard, motivational speaker, strategy advisor and award-winning author, who talked about communications strategy including how to purposefully put yourself out there to build your legacy today to ensure a meaningful life. The panel was wrapped up with Kathleen Deal, Senior Director of Ground Floor Media who shared how social media can be a powerful tool for community building and increasing awareness. She said, "social media, if done correctly, can feel like one-on-one communication."



PR Panel



Above: Denver7 Newsroom

Movie Stars



CCA Film Students and Faculty



Happy Hour at Lowry Beer Garden

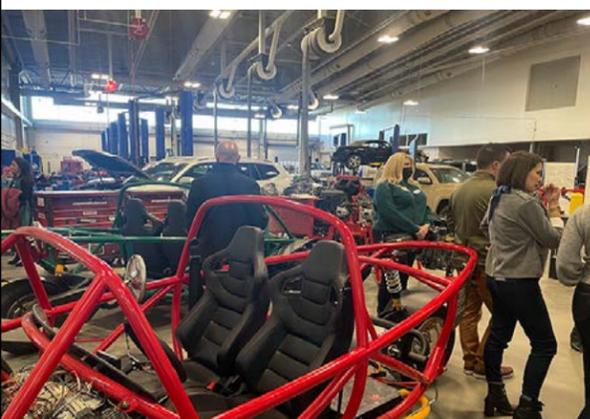


EDUCATION DAY

January

Leadership Aurora's Education Day, "Pathways of Purpose and Work-based Learning," was edifying and inspiring. The initiatives taking place, and the leadership behind them, are a strong statement that the future of Aurora's youth is promising.

Class started with an exciting visit to Cherry Creek Innovation Campus (CCIC); we heard from Cherry Creek Schools' superintendent, Chris Smith, and about the unique approach this school district took to face the mental health crisis with its own dedicated facility, Traverse Academy. The Innovation Campus is an impressive, first in Colorado life changing option for Cherry Creek students. Those lucky enough to have Ryan Seely leading a group tour experienced firsthand his passion for every single component on the innovation campus approach. CCIC is fully enrolled in all seven pathways (Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Health & Wellness, Hospitality & Tourism, Infrastructure Engineering, IT & STEAM, and Transportation).



Above: Cherry Creek Innovation Campus Tour

Aurora Public Schools' superintendent, Michael Giles, welcomed the class at Pickens Technical College. Giles shared his vision for APS, to be a "destination district," and that he is conducting a listening tour. He intends to utilize the input to amend the district's current strategic plan. Picken's Executive Director, Teina Mconnell, provided an overview of the school serving both high school and adult students with more than 25 programs. The class was spoiled with a delicious and nutritious lunch prepared by Picken's culinary arts students, while listening to a diverse panel of students sharing their experiences. Each student's unique experience, as either concurrent high school students (veterinary and teaching) or adults (HVAC and horticulture), clearly demonstrated the diverse reach of this gem of a program.



Right: APS Superintendent Michael Giles; Lunch at Pickens Technical College

At our last stop, Community College of Aurora's Lowry Campus, president and Leadership Aurora classmate, doctor Mordecai Brownlee, welcomed the group by sharing the fascinating history and current state of the college. Brownlee shared that after the current agreement with the state expires the college will consolidate into one large campus at the CentreTech main campus location. Representatives from Aurora's EMT programs let us all experience how truly exhausting it is to do life saving compressions for a full two minutes! Finally, we were treated to an opportunity to direct our questions about the entire education life cycle (PK - Post Secondary) to a panel of experts representing each area. Panelists included representatives from Aurora Public Schools and Cherry Creek Schools who shared opinions, challenges and opportunities for students and families..

Thank you to the busy leaders of Aurora Public Schools, Cherry Creek Schools, and Community College of Aurora for sharing your facilities, expertise, and time with us. Final thanks to John Wolff with Community College of Aurora and Ryan Seeley from Cherry Creek for putting in the extra effort on this successful LA day!

Abraham Morales,
Leadership Aurora Class of 2024

CPR at CCA



Above: Touring Pickens Technical College



Education Panel Discussion



Letter from the VP

Greeting BCE 24!

Happy New Year and Happy Halfway Point!!

I can't believe we are already halfway through the 40th class. It seems like it was just last week we started this journey together in Breckenridge. The last several months have been filled with fun, passion, amazing experiences, and best of all, connection. As time marches on, my hope and challenge to each of us is to ensure that we keep up the incredible momentum we've created as a class! Let's stay engaged in all areas of Leadership Aurora so we can make an impact together. Finish strong - foster relationships in and out of our group, attend your meetings, get involved. Let's leave a lasting legacy and challenge future classes to TRY and beat us, the true Best Class Ever!

It's been such an incredible experience with you all so far and I can't wait for the rest of our time together and the memories we will continue to make!

See you in a few weeks-
Joe

Exciting things coming!

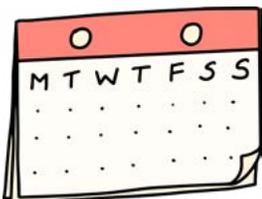
The Pay-it-Forward Committee will host three main events:

The 40 for 40 project will launch in February
It's pretty clever: \$40 for the 40th and Best Class Ever!

The committee is working with **Launch Pad Brewery** to create a **Leadership Aurora Beer** that will launch in March

Puppies and Prosecco event in late April/early May.

[more details to come!](#)



**Click HERE
for UPCOMING
Chamber Events**



MINI CLASS PROJECT

**FEBRUARY 15:
BRING SOCKS (ALL SIZES)**



NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD INDEED, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.

-MARGARET MEAD

Thank you to the Newsletter Committee for their contributions

Amanda Duraes
Susan Harman
Polica Houston
Abraham Morales
Ashley Muramoto

Wendy Reneé
Ethan Ruterbories
Ryan Seely
Mitch Stillman
Ashley Verville

**HEALTHCARE
DAY**



**SEE YOU ON
FEBRUARY 15**

SUBMISSIONS

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

email: wendy@montessoridelmundo.org
or susan@bluefishartdesign.com