

## My Degree Matters Speakers Bureau

**Name:** Jon M. Bellum

**Organization:** Colorado State University-Global Campus

**Role:** Provost and Senior Vice President

**Contact Information:**

[jon.bellum@csuglobal.edu](mailto:jon.bellum@csuglobal.edu)

**Topics interested in speaking on:**

Adult education

Degree Completion

Online Education

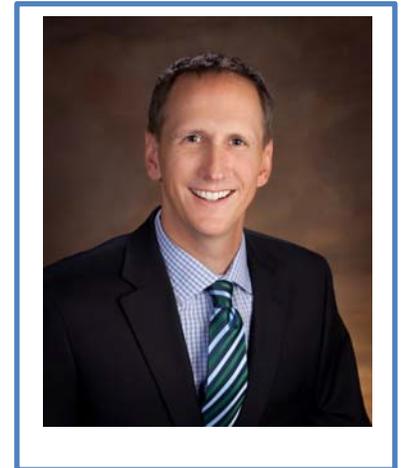
Innovative Academic Models

Educational Assessment and Evaluation

**Short biography:**

Dr. Jon Bellum has been involved in online and technology-enhanced education for over ten years at institutions that include the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Vermont, and currently, the Colorado State University-Global Campus. Dr. Bellum is currently employed as the Provost and Senior Vice President at CSU-Global. In the past three years at the university, Dr. Bellum has worked in many roles and has provided leadership in the development of this fully online, public university through his work with course and program development, academic assessment, information technology, and strategic planning. He was instrumental in facilitating the university's achievement of initial accreditation status from the Higher Learning Commission, which was granted on June 30, 2011. Dr. Bellum continues to lead the evolution of CSU-Global's data-driven academic team, which provides high quality, career relevant educational programs. He is committed to ensuring that CSU-Global achieves its mission to provide innovative, higher learning opportunities to adult, non-traditional students.

Dr. Bellum holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Higher Education and an M.Ed. in Educational Administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a B.S.Ed. from the University of South Dakota.





For more information,  
please email [info@MyDegreeMattersColorado.org](mailto:info@MyDegreeMattersColorado.org)  
or contact each speaker individually.

**Name:** Marie Friedemann

**Organization:** Regis University

**Role:** Associate Dean, College for Professional Studies

**Contact Information:** MFriedem@regis.edu

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Adult education in general

Use of testing and portfolio to advance and support degree completion for adults

Post-secondary education for refugee populations and others at the margins

Leadership communication

Interpersonal communication skills for physicians

Public speaking skills.

**Short biography:**

Marie Friedemann is the Associate Dean for Academics and a Professor in the College for Professional Studies at Regis University. Marie began her work at Regis twenty two years ago, and has held three previous positions at Regis – all of them in the College for Professional Studies. She served as the Assistant Director of the University Without Walls, as the Director of Faculty and Curriculum for Graduate Programs and as the Associate Academic Dean in the Undergraduate Program prior to assuming her current role.

Prior to her service at Regis, Marie was an adjunct faculty member in the University College at the University of Denver as well as both the Associate and Assistant Dean of Admissions at the University of Denver. She also was the Vice President of Antonoff Associates, Inc., an independent educational consulting firm in Denver, Colorado.

At Regis, Marie is the General Editor of *Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal* and the Coordinator and Regis Academic Liaison of the Interuniversity Curriculum Committee for the Jesuit Commons-Higher Education at the Margins.

Marie holds a Ph.D., M.A., and B. A. (summa cum laude) from the University of Denver and an MBA from Regis University. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

**Name:** Alison Griffin

**Organization:** Miles Above Strategies ([www.milesabovestrategies.com](http://www.milesabovestrategies.com))

**Role:** Founder/Principal

**Contact Information:** [alison@milesabovestrategies.com](mailto:alison@milesabovestrategies.com)

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Federal higher education policy issues

Financial Aid

College Access Programs

Accreditation/Accountability

National college completion agenda



**Short biography:**

Ms. Griffin is the Founder and Principal for Miles Above Strategies, a higher education policy and government relations practice in Denver, Colorado. Miles Above Strategies provides strategic and legislative guidance to non-profit and for-profit education clients, organizations and associations. Through her volunteer service and philanthropic work, Ms. Griffin has direct experience working with students to cultivate qualities of leadership and personal responsibility during their college years.

Before founding Miles Above Strategies, Ms. Griffin served as the higher education policy advisor to the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce, Rep. John Boehner; authored policy papers for The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; and served as the federal policy liaison for Lumina Foundation for Education, the nation's largest higher education foundation. Ms. Griffin was most recently a Senior Associate with HCM Strategists, a boutique education and health policy firm based in Washington, DC.

Ms. Griffin holds a Masters degree in College Student Affairs Administration from the University of Georgia, a BA in Psychology and a BBA in Organizational Behavior and Business Policy from Southern Methodist University. She currently serves on the Board of Advisors for the SMU Annette D. Caldwell Simmons School of Education, the Board of Trustees for Rocky Vista University, the Executive Board of Delta Delta Delta International Fraternity, the Board of Advisors for the Colorado Scholarship Coalition, and as a member of the Leadership Denver Class of 2013. She is the co-founder of Radio Higher Ed, a podcast series that provides credible, current, and relevant higher education policy discussions and analysis to policy makers and the public.

**Name:** Dr. Roxanne Gonzales

**Organization:** Regis University, College for Professional Studies

**Role:** Academic Dean

**Contact Information:** [rmgonzales@regis.edu](mailto:rmgonzales@regis.edu)

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Adult/post-traditional education

Prior learning assessment

Accelerated degree programs

Military and veteran populations in higher education

Online education & programming

Alternative models of higher education for adults/post-traditional learners

**Short biography:**

Roxanne Gonzales has worked in the field of adult education and training for over twenty-eight years serving as an administrator and faculty, in the U.S., England, and Germany, in continuing higher education programs focused on adult learners, military education and training, and federally funded programs that serve first generation and low income learners.

Roxanne is the Academic Dean of the College for Professional Studies at Regis University in Denver, CO which serves over 9,000 adult learners at campus locations across Colorado, to include a Dual Language location, and online. Previous to Regis she was the Dean of Distance Learning (served 23,000 students on ground and online) and a tenured Associate Professor of Adult Education at Park University, Assistant Professor of Adult Education at Colorado State University, Director of Education and Training at Hanscom AFB, MA, Program Coordinator of Prior Learning Assessment at Granite State College in NH, Guidance Counselor and Assistant Education Services Officer at Bitburg AB in Germany, and other administrative positions in continuing higher education and TRIO programs.

Roxanne is published and presents nationally on topics such as adult learning, military and veteran education environments, online learning environments, assessment of learning, and alternative programming for adult learners. She received her doctorate from the University of Massachusetts - Boston in Higher Education Administration, an MS in Counseling from Creighton University, and a BS in Psychology Cum Laude from the University of Maryland University College. Currently she serves on the Board of the Denver Hispanic Educating Foundation, Board member of the University Professional and Continuing Education Association, and is Treasurer of the Colorado Advisory Council on Military Education. She was on the New Hampshire Governor's Commission for Latino Affairs and is past president of the Association for Continuing Higher Education. She was also on the board of the Kansas City Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, the Philharmonia of Greater Kansas City and a Board of Trustee member of Wentworth Military Academy and Junior College in Lexington Missouri. She was co-founder of the Park Warrior Center at Park University which serves wounded veterans.



**Name:** Paul Hamel

**Organization:** University of Phoenix

**Role:** Community Relations Manager

**Contact information:** Paul.Hamel@phoenix.edu

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Adult Education

Communication

Motivation

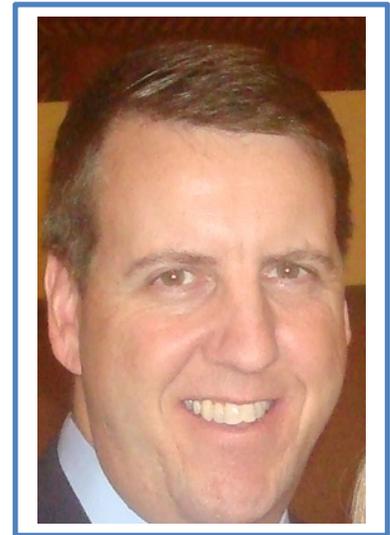
Leadership

**Short biography:**

Paul Hamel was born in Lewiston, Maine and enlisted in the United States Air Force under the Delayed Enlistment Program and began his active duty commitment in 1980. He spent 14 years as an enlisted member and 10 years as an officer. His career fields consisted of Accounting and Finance, Education, and Communication.

After 24 years of serving this great nation, Paul retired from the Air Force. Upon his retirement from the Air Force, he was hired by USAA as a Member Service Representative. He then accepted a position as an Academic Counselor at the West Valley Campus for the University of Phoenix, Phoenix, Arizona. Paul then worked two years as an Education and Training Advisor for VistaCare which is a hospice company. He was in charge of employee training for 15 different states - so flying was his life for two years. He was selected as the Phoenix Campus College Chair for the College of Arts and Science for the University of Phoenix in March, 2008. He then was selected as the Director of Academic Affairs for the Southern Colorado Campus, University of Phoenix in June 2010.

His current position is the Community Relations Manager for the Colorado Campus, University of Phoenix. He has a master's degree in Education from Wilmington College, a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies from Regents College, and two associates' degrees from the Community College of the Air Force.



**Name:** Dr. Shelley Howell

**Organization:** University of Phoenix

**Role:** Director of Academic Affairs

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Student success

Higher education topics

Importance of higher education

Her own higher education experiences



**Short biography:**

Dr. Howell is passionate about helping students learn the value of a college degree and the difference it can make in their lives. She is a first generation college graduate and was a nontraditional student throughout her college career, raising a family and piecing together a bachelor's degree while moving around the country with the military. She has worked in the field of higher education for almost 23 years.

Dr. Shelley Howell has been with University of Phoenix for almost 7 years and is currently the director of academic affairs at the Colorado Campus in Denver. Previously, she held the same position at the Oklahoma City campus of University of Phoenix, was the director of academic policy at the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, worked as a program development specialist at the University of Oklahoma and was the executive director of a non-profit arts education organization for business leaders in Oklahoma.

Dr. Howell earned an associate of arts degree in English from State Fair Community College in Missouri; a bachelor of science degree in vocational education studies from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois; a master of education degree in adult education from the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma; and a doctor of education degree in higher education administration from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.



For more information,  
please email [info@MyDegreeMattersColorado.org](mailto:info@MyDegreeMattersColorado.org)  
or contact each speaker individually.

**Name:** Khara O'Connell

**Organization:** Educational Opportunity Center

**Role:** Director

**Contact Information:** [Khara.O'Connell@ccd.edu](mailto:Khara.O'Connell@ccd.edu)

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Financing College  
Career Assessments  
College 101



**Short biography:**

Khara has worked in higher education for over 10 years all over the United States, with most of her time being spent in TRIO programs, including Educational Talent Search, Upward Bound, Student Support Services, and the Educational Opportunity Center. In her current position as Director of the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) at the Community College of Denver, she coordinates the services of the EOC to provide training and assistance to students who are first-generation, low income or disabled and who have the potential or desire to pursue a college degree.

She has also worked in financial aid, student activities, and recruitment and retention programs. While originally from Arkansas, she lived in Vermont, Florida, and Arizona before finally making Colorado her home. She loves working in higher education, having never wanted to leave college herself, and watching people transform their lives through education. She possesses a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication from the University of Arkansas and a Master of Education degree in Higher and Postsecondary Education from Arizona State University.

**Name:** Becky Takeda-Tinker, Ph.D.

**Organization:** Colorado State University-Global Campus

**Role:** President

**Contact information:** [becky.takeda-tinker@csuglobal.edu](mailto:becky.takeda-tinker@csuglobal.edu)

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

Adult education

Industry education

Degree completion

Outsource services provision

Leadership



**Short biography:**

Dr. Becky Takeda-Tinker blends her passion for education and her experience with nonprofit governance with the best practices of her business management and organizational leadership work in technology, consumer goods, and B2B industries as the president for Colorado State University-Global Campus. In her role as president, Becky champions data-driven and technology-based solutions in a nontraditional university framework, to ensuring student educational success, graduate workplace employment, and a sustainable model for the university (which does not receive state funds). Becky is also a member of the District Accountability Committee to the Douglas County School Board for PK-12, the Leadership Vice Chairman and Board Member of the South Metro Denver Chamber, and a Board and Finance Committee member of the global IWF Leadership Foundation Board.

Becky is a published scholar while continuing to actively serving on dissertation committees for finance, leadership and business management research studies. Becky holds a Ph.D. in Organization and Management with a specialization in Leadership, an M.B.A. in Finance with a post-graduate certificate in Marketing Management, and a B.A. in Economics.

**Name:** Rana Tarkenton, Ed.M.

**Organization:** Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF)

**Role:** Deputy Director for Programs

**Contact Information:** [rtarkenton@denverscholarship.org](mailto:rtarkenton@denverscholarship.org)

**Topics you're interested in speaking on:**

College Access

College Success

Financial Aid



**Short biography**

Ms. Tarkenton has been with the Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF) since 2007 and currently serves as the Deputy Director for Programs. The mission of DSF is to inspire and empower Denver Public Schools' (DPS) students to enroll in and graduate from postsecondary institutions of higher education, by providing the tools, knowledge, and financial resources essential for success. Since 2007, DSF has awarded more than \$17 million to over 3,300 students. In her role, Ms. Tarkenton is responsible for overseeing the three key areas of DSF's program: college access, scholarships, and college success.

Ms. Tarkenton has been instrumental in the growth of the DSF college access program and the establishment of Future Centers (i.e. College Resource Centers) in 16 high schools throughout DPS. Under Ms. Tarkenton's leadership, DSF established a college success program to focus on college completion for DSF Scholars. DSF recognizes that there is a high attrition rate for college students, particularly for low-income first generation students. Under her leadership, DSF has established memorandums of understanding (MOU) with 20 partner institutions of higher learning in Colorado to leverage the financial aid dollars DSF Scholars acquire and to ensure that students receive support services at their chosen college to increase their likelihood of success. Eighty percent of all DSF Scholars are either still enrolled in college or have completed a degree or certificate. Currently, she is leading an initiative to re-engage the 20 percent of DSF Scholars who left college before earning a degree.

Prior to her work at DSF, Ms. Tarkenton earned her Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from Harvard University in 2004, and gained valuable experience at the Colorado Department of Higher Education, where she worked for three years doing outreach across the state related to college access and financial aid. Ms. Tarkenton is also an active member and past chair of the Colorado ACT State Council and serves as a Delegate on the RMACAC Executive Board (i.e. Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling). She is also a member of the state's advisory council for the Colorado Statewide Counselor Corps Grant program and the Admission and Transfer Policy Task Force.