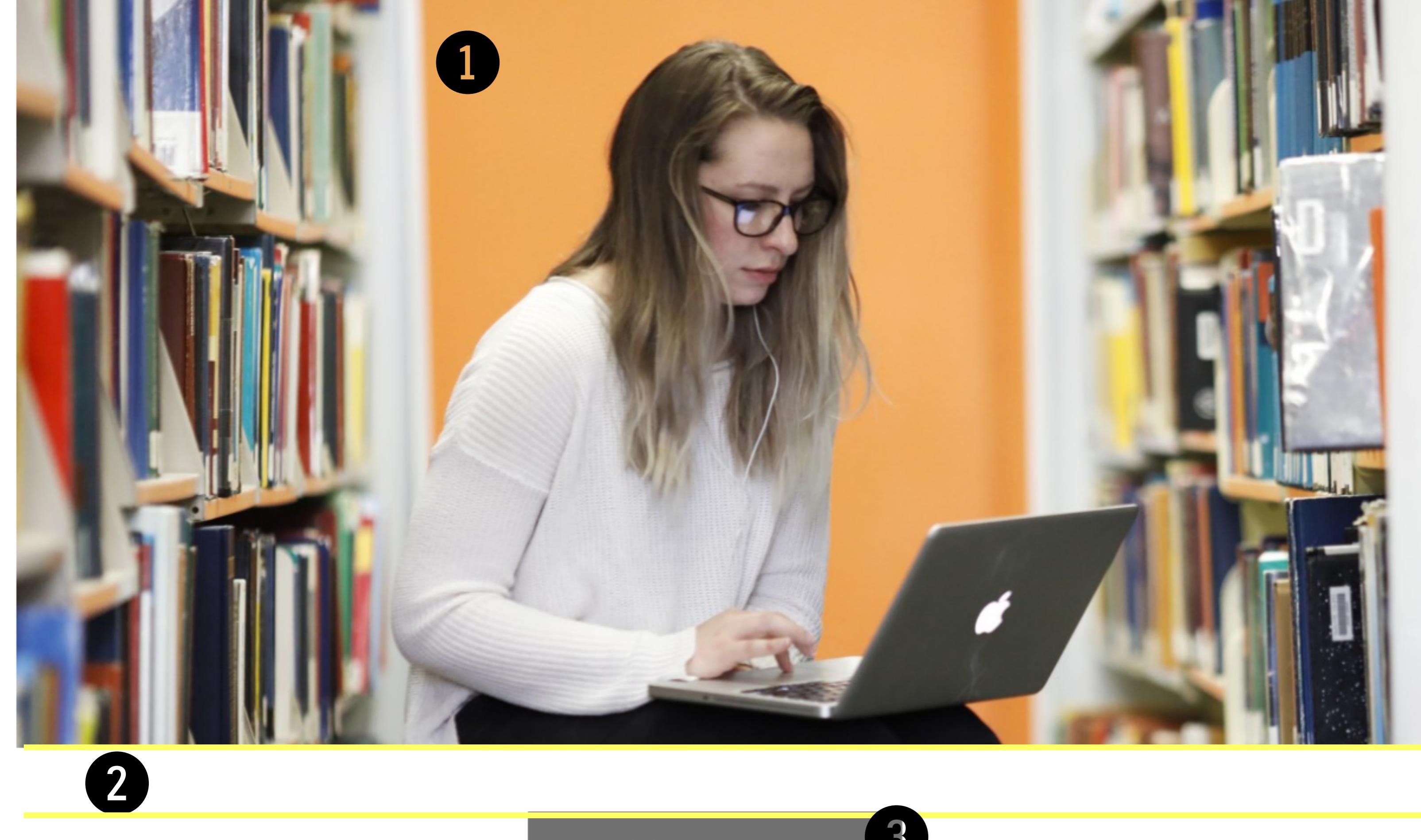


RECENT STORIES ALL STORIES TRENDING TOPICS

SEARCH INSIDER NEWS...



1

COMMUNITY

3

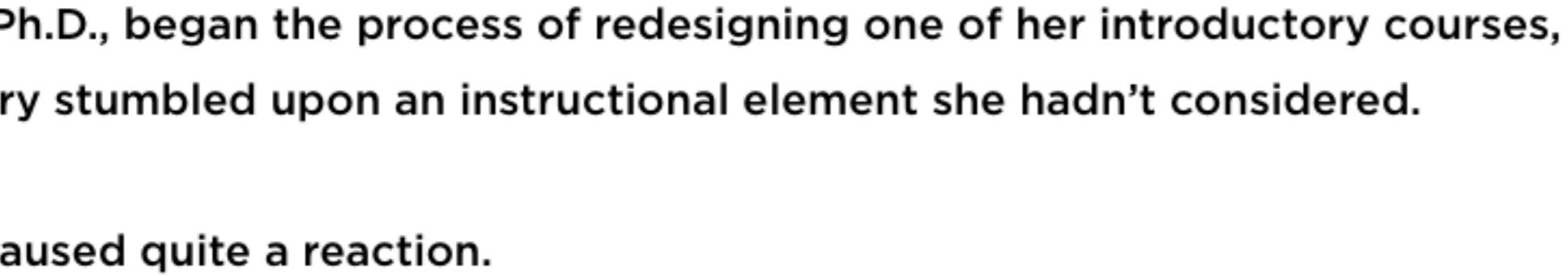
4 A catalyzing force for open access

Chemistry faculty member finds periodic use of these resources increases teaching quality - and seats at the table.

MARCH 6, 2018

STORY BY: CORY PHAM | PHOTOS BY: JULIE STRASHEIM

Share this story:



When Emily Ragan, Ph.D., began the process of redesigning one of her introductory courses, the assistant professor of chemistry stumbled upon an instructional element she hadn't considered.

And the result of it caused quite a reaction.

"My sessions with MSU Denver's instructional designers really opened my eyes to the possibilities of using open educational resources (OERs)," she said.

Now an advocate, Ragan recently chaired the OER Council for the Colorado Department of Higher Education with the passage of state Senate Bill 258.

The council's work paved the way for a newly proposed legislative effort which, if approved by all members of the Joint Budget Committee, will introduce a measure in the 2018 session's long bill continuing to raise awareness of OERs and fund their implementation with the establishment of a grant program.

"For me, it was an energizing and exciting way to both improve my teaching and provide access for our students," she said.

9

"The way we interact with educational content is continually changing - so our approach to delivering that should, too."

So, what are OERs? Broadly speaking, they're high-quality curated resources that are open and freely licensed, said Taylor Kendal, senior instructional designer at MSU Denver.

"A big piece is the open access to information and integration into meaningful learning experiences," he added.

Their modern history traces back to 2002, when the Massachusetts Institute of Technology put educational materials online, for free, as part of the MIT OpenCourseWare initiative.

Since then, the growth of openly licensed text, media and other digital materials - along with the instructional potential they've entailed - has mirrored the expansion of the internet itself.

"In a way, sites like YouTube and Khan Academy provide specialized or niche educational content," said Kendal. "Many faculty are implementing OERs like these into their courses already - just not by that name."

As Ragan noted, the topic has been touted for years in academic circles, but recent developments over the past few years have increased efficacy.

In the midst of conversations on college affordability - and the average of \$579 that students spent on course materials during the 2016-17 academic year - the "open" part has direct implications on student success.

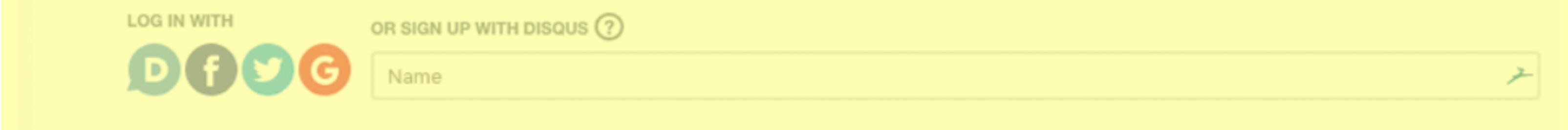
"Faculty are sensitive to how cost impacts students, but it's easy to overlook how supplemental materials can often add up quickly," she said.

"As the people who make the decisions of what texts we use when we teach, we share that responsibility of its effect."

When individuals can stretch budgets further for course materials, they're able to parlay funds into areas like cost of living expenses - and investing back into their education.

And with MSU Denver's ongoing commitment to providing the best value in the state of Colorado, approaches like Ragan's incorporation of an OpenStax textbook into the online section of her General Chemistry I course serve as a natural extension of that mission.

She further highlighted how the OER Council's findings - available in a report exploring how they could



1 Comment MSU Denver

Login

Recommend Share

Sort by Newest

Join the discussion...

Sort by Newest

LOG IN WITH OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS

D f t G

Name

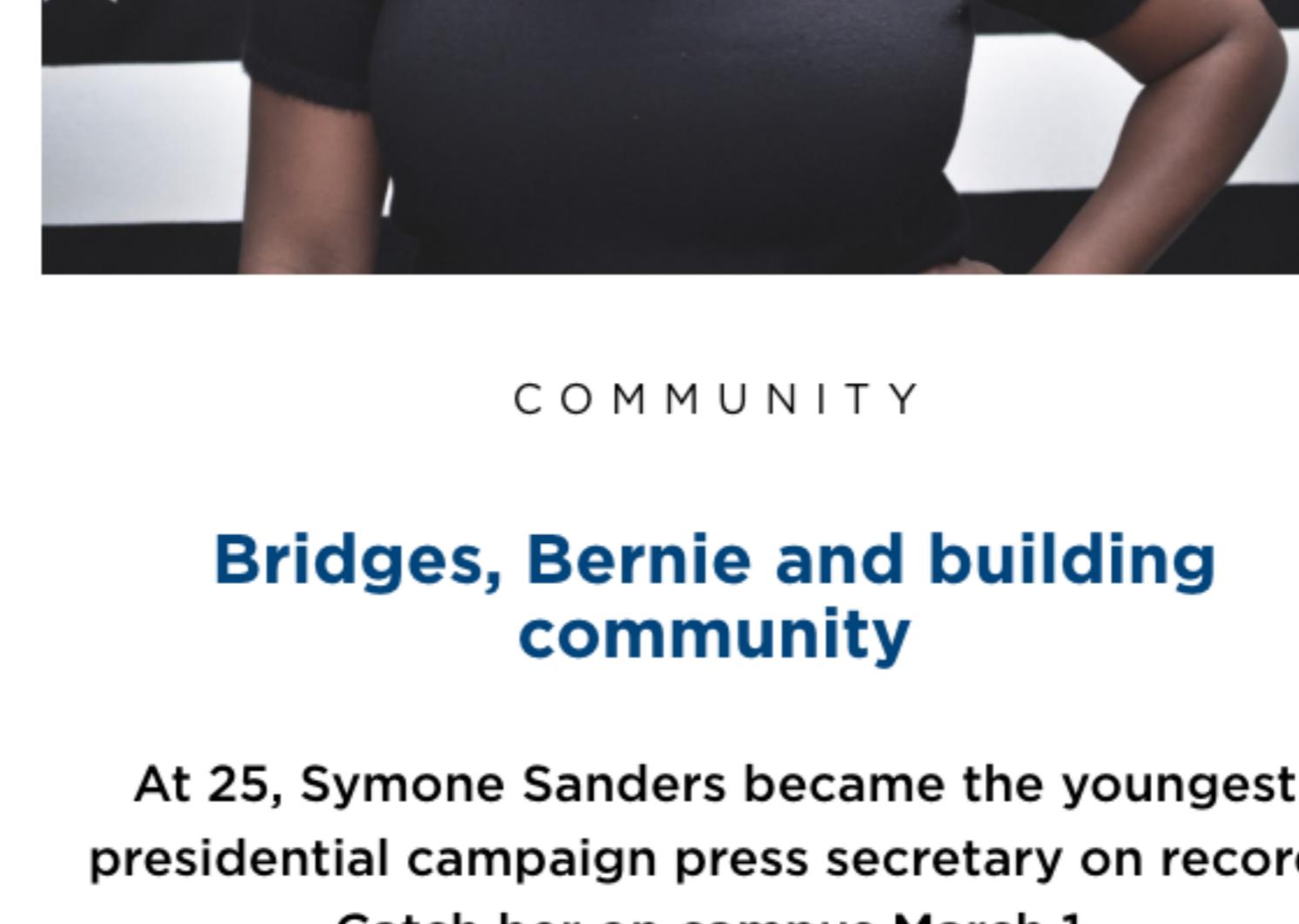
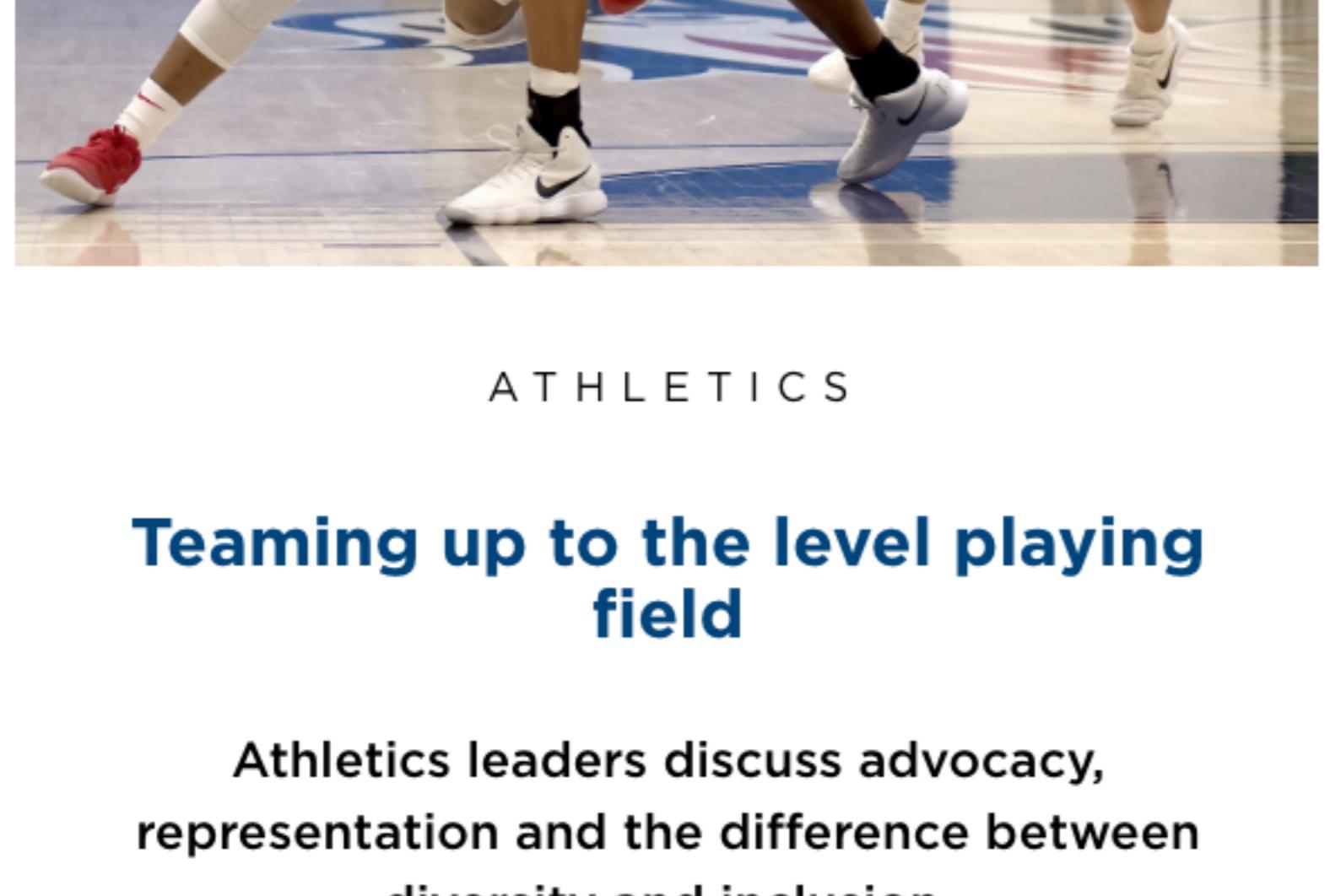
Rhiannon Burnham · a year ago

Shout out to the other Metro students and Alumni who worked the United flight at the gate and the ramp! Great job everyone!

Reply Share

Subscribe Add Disqus to your site Privacy

DISQUS

1 Check out our other related stories

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

ATHLETICS

COMMUNITY

Double-check your paycheck with the new tax law

Tax Day for 2017 is still a few months away, but you can make sure you're prepared to do your taxes for 2018 right now.

Teaming up to the level playing field

Athletics leaders discuss advocacy, representation and the difference between diversity and inclusion.

Bridges, Bernie and building community

At 25, Symone Sanders became the youngest presidential campaign press secretary on record. Catch her on campus March 1.

NEWS RESOURCES

THE INSIDER

MEDIA CONTACTS

SUBSCRIBE TO THE INSIDER

EXPERTS GUIDE

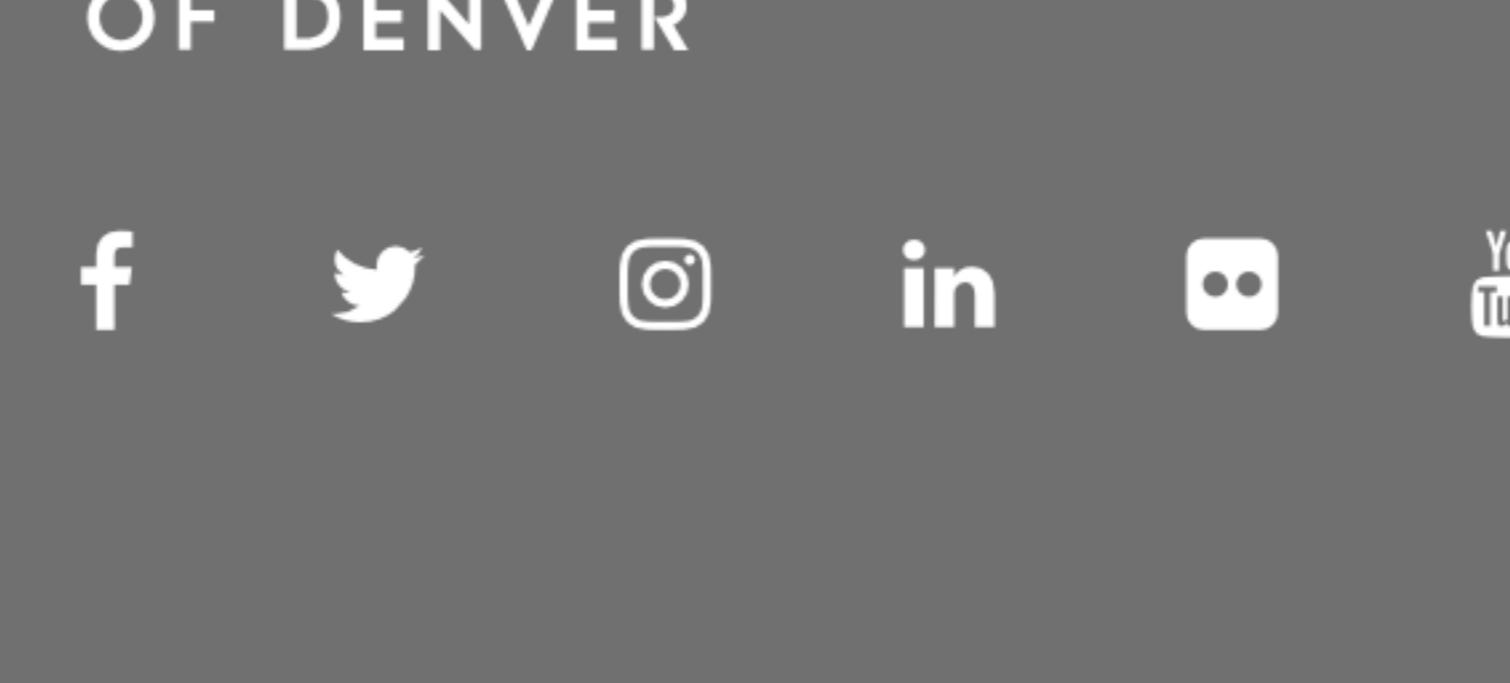
SUBMIT A STORY

FOR JOURNALISTS

SEND US FEEDBACK

MSU DENVER MEDIA LIBRARY

CONTACT US

**Right column**

- This right column will scroll (stick) with the page

1. **Our experts:** Gotham, Uppercase, Bold 700, 28px/1.556rem , #D11242, letter spacing: 0.15em

Hairline: #00447C, 5px

2. **Experts photo:** 130x130 px3. **Expert name:** Gotham, Medium 500, 24px/1.333rem, #00447C, no letter spacing4. **Expert title:** Gotham, Medium 500, 18px/1rem, #707070, no letter spacing5. **Expert Email:** Gotham, Medium 500, 18px/1rem, #0072BC, no letter spacing6. **Hairline:** 1px, #FFFFFF7. **Email address field:** Fill: #E5E5E5, Border: #707070, 1px solid

Font: gotham, medium italics, 20px/1.111rem, #9B9B9B, letter spacing: .075em

8. **Button:** Fill: #D11242 Font: Gotham, black 800, uppercase, 20px/1.111rem, letter spacing: .15em**Story**1. **Story image:** 1775x650 px, this image will span out the entire column width2. **Padding between image and story (and right column):** 50px3. **Story category:** Font: Gotham, uppercase, bold 700, 18px/1rem #FFFFFF, letter spacing: .25em

Background: #707070 I think you can treat this style like a button, but in gray

4. **Story title:** Gotham, bold 700, 35px/1.944rem, #00447C, no letter spacing

Padding top and bottom: 40px

5. **Story caption:** Gotham, medium 500, 24px/1.333rem, #000000, no letter spacing6. **Date:** Gotham, bold 700, uppercase, 22px/1.222rem, #D11242, letter spacing: .10em

Byline: Gotham, medium italics, uppercase, 18px/1rem, #707070, letter spacing: .075em

7. **Hairline:** #D11242, 5px centered 300px wide

*The share this story functionality will be from AddThis

8. **Body copy:** Gotham, medium 500, 20px/1.111rem, #000000, no letter spacing.9. **Blockquote:** Gotham, medium italics 500, 20px/1.111rem, #000000, letter spacing: .10em

Padding: 50px top and bottom, 100px left and right

Background: #E5E5E5

**Comments from Disqus

More Stories1. **Check out other stories:** Gotham, Bold 700, 35px/1.944rem, #707070, no letter spacing

Related stories remain the same style (as homepage)