

STATE OF COLORADO



DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

John Hickenlooper
Governor

Lt. Gov. Joseph A. Garcia
Executive Director

Sept. 19, 2013

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PRESS RELEASE: LT. GOV. GARCIA HONORED AS 2013 FRIEND OF HIGHER EDUCATION BY COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

DENVER – Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia, who also serves as executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, today received the 2013 Friend of Higher Education award from the Colorado conference of the American Association of University Professors.

“Joe has been a crucial voice in explaining the importance of effective universities to the future of Colorado,” said Jonathan Rees, a history professor at Colorado State University Pueblo and co-president of the Colorado AAUP.

“We are grateful for the priorities and experience that Joe brings to the table as the legislature and the Hickenlooper administration craft budgetary solutions for Colorado’s public colleges and universities.”

Garcia is the former president of CSU Pueblo and Pikes Peak Community College. He is the first non-legislator to receive the annual award, which has previously been given to state Senators Bob Bacon, Rollie Heath, Chris Romer and Ron Tupa as well as Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff.

“This is exceptional,” Garcia said in receiving the award, noting he will place the plaque in a “position of prominence” in his office at the Department of Higher Education.

“I am committed to making sure we have the best-funded, highest-quality higher education system in the country,” he said. “The good news is I think people are very aware of how important higher education is to Colorado’s economy.”

After the presentation, Garcia met with Rees and other Colorado AAUP leaders, including Don Eron, senior writing instructor at the University of Colorado Boulder and Colorado AAUP vice president; Suzanne Hudson, retired from CU Boulder and Colorado AAUP secretary-treasurer; and Caprice Lawless, Front Range Community College instructor in English and communications and Colorado AAUP chapter president for FRCC.

The Colorado AAUP leaders expressed concerns about higher education funding and, in particular, salaries for adjunct instructors. Lawless presented Garcia with a letter detailing concerns.

“I’m pleased you’re here raising a voice for faculty,” Garcia said.

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Rees referred to Garcia as “my college president” since Garcia led CSU Pueblo during Rees’ tenure.

“We always understand that Joe as president had many constituencies,” Rees said. “We always appreciated that he took our concerns seriously and he acted upon them.”

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Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia, left, receives the 2013 Friend of Higher Education award from Jonathan Rees, professor of history at Colorado State University Pueblo and co-president of the Colorado American Association of University Professors, on Sept. 19, 2013.

