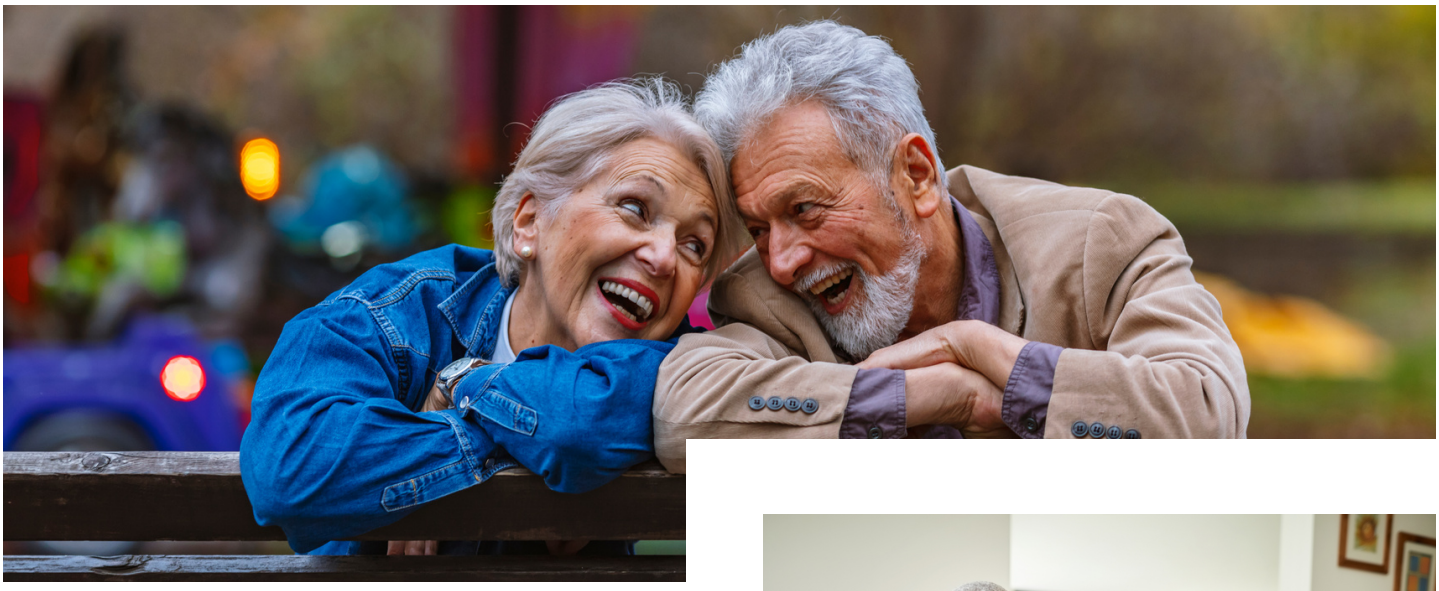
CSPERA
WORKING FOR RETIREMENT SECURITY

Colorado School & Public Employee Retirement Association

Quarter 1 2023

NEWSLETTER

CSPERA's purpose is to promote and protect the economic well-being and quality of life for both active employed and those already retired PERA participants.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Our upcoming events are specifically crafted to provide valuable information and foster connections between members. Additionally, we have a series of wellness webinars scheduled throughout the New Year. Don't miss out on these opportunities to learn and grow!

www.cspera.org

PENSION NEWS & LEGISLATION IN ACTION

Get the latest updates from PERA, stay informed with our Breaking News Coverage and more as you read on!

Scroll Down

11351 E Montview Blvd, Aurora, Colorado

CSPERA
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President's Message Quarter 1: 2023-2024

Greetings CSPERA members and Friends!

It's great to have the newsletter back, after a lengthy break!

Your officers have worked tirelessly to "put CSPERA back together" following the pandemic, after several staff changes, adoption of new database software, a change of accountants, and moving again to a new office. Whew!

The best part of all this- hiring our new Executive Director, Debi Hunter Holen! She is a long-time Aurora resident, who worked many years for Aurora Public Schools. She tackled numerous tasks and projects, mostly "on the job" and "learn as you go" training. Debi is an amazing gal, an incredible addition to CSPERA! We are so glad she is with us!
Also, we are pleased to have David Biddle, new administrative assistant. He worked in IT for both APS and Denver Public Schools, and is a Denver resident. He, too, has experienced "on the job" training! We are so glad he is with us, too!

The enormous amount of work completed by Debi, David and officers has been "internal", to repair, reorganize and reconnect. Now, the focus is shifting to "outreach" with current board members and local unit leaders; to connect, communicate, support and increase knowledge with information about CSPERA. This is all "rebuilding" of CSPERA.

Our Executive Director is focused on communication with our partners; PERA, AMBA, AARP, NRTA, Colorado Nonprofits Association, Growth Zone and; Secure PERA Coalition.
All this while working tirelessly to strengthen communication and "connectedness" with local leaders.

The AMBA webinar series debuted in late May offering an overview of member benefits. Webinars continue in September, and monthly through January. Watch for details to register!

Debi works with our social media manager, Danelle Ridnour, to inform members of activities and opportunities through News You Can Use and the Facebook page.
Breaking News continues with current information about PERA and activity in the legislature.
Important updates from the Secure PERA Coalition also help to keep us informed.

We have welcomed Gwen Giddens (Colorado Springs) as President-elect and Angel Stobaugh (Broomfield) as Communications Chair. Both bring experience, knowledge and expertise to the leadership team!

Our resources are plentiful, yet we need volunteers to make things happen! If each of us brings just one to join our volunteer efforts, a lot can happen for locals and CSPERA.
Our purpose- working for retirement security.

Mary Lynn Jones
CSPERA Board President

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A Message from the Executive Director

Greetings!

It's hard to believe that four seasons have turned since my first day with you, as the Executive Director for CSPREA. With the change of seasons, have come changes in the office, including a new space! Settling into our new office space has provided opportunities for exploring new relationships, deepening existing relationships and furthering our mission. We've added an administrative assistant, David Biddle, who comes to us via Denver Public Schools, with a wealth of knowledge in technology, office support, and fun! We are in "full speed ahead!" mode.

Through our coalition partners, we are increasing CSPERA's exposure. Meetings scheduled through Secure PERA have provided opportunities for our membership to meet, in-person, with Colorado State members of the Colorado Legislature's Pension Review Subcommittee. I have also met with members of the PERA Board of Directors. Secure PERA also provided opportunities for us to provide the PERA search team ideas as to what characteristics the next Executive Director of PERA should have. Monthly meetings with the Colorado Alliance of Retired Americans have also increased our visibility, resulting in new members and new partnerships, not to mention increasing our involvement in legislative bills affecting quality of life issues for mature adults.

What is evident is that CSPERA is a sleeping giant, waiting to be shaken into full awakeness for the betterment of our members, providing communities with golden opportunities to prosper from our efforts. Thank you for all your work to help further our goals.

Be on the lookout for an opportunity to connect with fellow members during our 2024 Walk and Roll with Me program. According to Money Talks News, number six of eleven "Things You Should Not Do in Retirement" is BECOME SEDENTARY. Being active improves energy, physical strength, balance and sleep. It can also help you maintain a healthy weight, reduce stress, improve cognitive function, and manage or even prevent certain diseases. Throughout the year, we will walk and roll together through zoom and on set dates so we can explore our world, our towns, streets and homes, sharing along the way. Zoom walks will occur on the day of each official season change. Special in-person walks will be scheduled during the year as possible. Those reaching personally set goals will be acknowledged and honored. So, be on the lookout and SIGN UP! We're looking forward to connecting with you! Walking in gratitude, sanctity returns.

This message wouldn't be complete without a huge THANK YOU to each of you. Our phone conversations and one-on-ones, along with our email correspondences have contributed to a more robust office. Without you, there would be no CSPERA. Thank you!

Debi Hunter Holen
Executive Director, CSPERA

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Celebrating Our Members

Congratulations to the following for their dedication to their local unit and CSPERA!

Arapahoe Mary Kelley
Aurora Sharon Ward
Chaffee Karen Dils
Delta Nancy Carlson
Denver Sara Moore
Fort Morgan Judy and Wayne Bruch
Jefferson Bob Zachman
Mesa County Jim Haptonstall
Montelores Sue Hensler
Northwest Bill Grimes
Pikes Peak Gwen Giddens, Karen Hart, John Kerr, Janice King, Lu Ann Long, Sandy Patton, Elaine Naleski, Joyce Schmaltz, Nola Thompson
Poudre Laurie Cullor and Pam Kilness
Pueblo Bernice Trujillo
Weld Linda Underwood

Important & Helpful Member Links Can Be Found On Our Website: CSPERA.org

2023 Issues Forum Review Article

The Fall Issues Forum was held on August 30th and 31st. Members enjoyed learning together over the two days. Highlights were hearing from Dan Cohen from the Anti Defamation League who shared understandings about the history of bias. Dr. John Nicolletti discussed personal safety information for self care. We appreciated him sharing his experiences as he worked with communities in crises. Several elected officials including State Treasurer Dave Young, Congressman Jason Crow, Representative Eliza Hamrick and Senator Cris Kokler spoke on PERA Issues. We heard from PERA representatives Jeff Sprole and Michael Steppat, and Secure PERA representative Karen Wick, who shared insights on PERA funding. We enjoyed socializing and listening to the Karen Odburn Band during the Mix and Mingle. We ended on a celebratory note by honoring individuals from each local unit.

We are happy to announce that next year's Issues Forum has been scheduled for August 21-22 and by popular request, we will be hosting at the same location, DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton Denver, 13696 E Iliff Pl, Aurora . - Mark your calendars for the CSPERA Issues Forum 2024!

OFFFICERS:

President, Mary Lynn Jones
President Elect, Gwen Giddens
Secretary, John Kerr
Treasurer, Sandy Patton
Intermediate Past President, Randy Ross
Executive Director, Debi Hunter Holen

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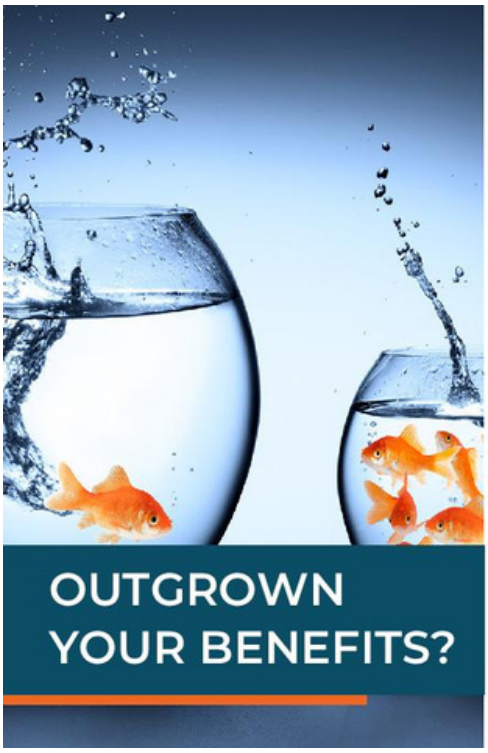
- ✓ Complete Restoration back to Pre-Theft Status

For complete overview of benefits go to: Https://shieldbenefits.com/cspera

Andrea Wacker
719.243.3174
ajwackerlegalshield@gmail.com



TIME TO EXPAND YOUR COVERAGE.

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- Hearing Benefits
- Hospital Stay Coverage
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myambabenefits.info/cspera

Colorado School and Public Employees Retirement Association

AMBA CSPERA

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Birnadine Mack Scholarship

The Birnadine Mack Scholarship Foundation is pleased to announce the $1000 award winners for 2023!

Western Division- Maggie Sigle (Grand Junction)
Southern Division- Kimberly Briding (Monument)
Northeast Division- Ashley Beaudoin (Johnstown)
Metro Division- Emily Blomberg (Commerce City)

This year there were 50 applicants from around the state.

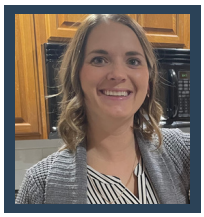
Thanks to Foundation board members Marie Antalek, Leonard Nelson, Mike Clem, LuAnn Long and Mary Lynn Jones for all their time and effort. Also, a big thank you to Paul Van Camp, who managed the on-line application process.

The Foundation welcomes donation to the scholarship fund and encourages locals to consider a donation. Thanks!

Northeast Division

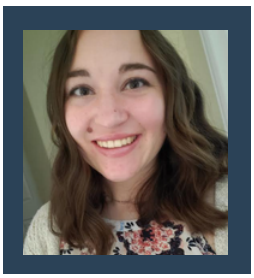
I am so grateful to receive the Birnadine Mack Scholarship. I am going into my tenth year of teaching and currently teach at Longmont High School where I teach Freshman Seminar and Health. I absolutely love teaching and feel as though my love and passion for this career continues to grow each year. I love learning and exploring new ways that I can be better for my students. I am currently enrolled in the Learning Design and Technology program at CU-Denver. I have already applied so many new strategies and ideas to my classroom this past year. This program has been extremely beneficial to me and my students. I truly believe in order for my students to work towards their best selves, that I need to do the same. This program has pushed me to think outside the box and evaluate my philosophy. Being selected as the recipient of this scholarship helps to alleviate some of the financial stress that a graduate program entails, and I am honored to have been chosen.
Thank you so much!

Ashley Beaudoin
Longmont HS Health Teacher/Freshmen Seminar
9th Grade Team Leader



Metro Division

My name is Emily Blomberg and I am beginning my fourth year of teaching in first grade at Weld Re3J. I am currently studying at the University of Colorado Boulder in partnership with the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education to obtain my Masters in Educational Equity and Diversity. Through this program I am gaining skills to better serve students from diverse backgrounds and those who are bilingual. My career goals are to enhance my teaching skills, particularly when it comes to teaching emergent bilingual students. With a large population of bilingual students in my district, my degree will aid me in better serving their linguistic needs as they become biliterate and skilled in all of their linguistic abilities. It is important to me that I create a learning environment where all of my students can be successful and feel that their culture and linguistic backgrounds are honored, valued, and strengthened. This scholarship is a privilege to receive as it will assist me in completing my courses to become a better educator for my multicultural and multilingual students. I am extremely grateful to the Birnadine Mack Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors for selecting me as a recipient of their scholarship this year.



Thank you,
Emily Blomberg
1st Grade
Hudson Elementary

Southern Division

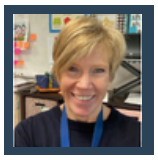
Oh my goodness, thank you! What a wonderful email to open during summer break. I am deeply grateful for your scholarship! It is with such enthusiasm that I strap on my backpack to return to school, especially with this scholarship to give me a boost financially.

My bio
Kimberly Briding
Bachelors in Business Administration and Accounting
Masters in Elementary Education
Will attend UNC in the fall for Education Specialist with Principal Licensure

Stay-at-home mom of four children for 15 years (classroom mom over and over again)
First Grade Teacher, Bear Creek Elementary School, Lewis Palmer School District (7 years)
First Grade Teacher, Palmer Lake Elementary School, Lewis Palmer School District (1 year)
Second Grade Teacher, Palmer Lake Elementary School, Upcoming School Year

Avid fan of biking and weight lifting so that I can keep up with my students on the playground!

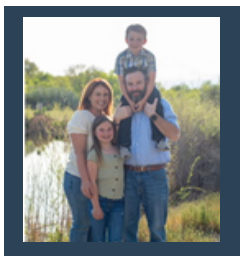
With Gratitude and Cheer Hands,
Kim Briding
1st Grade Teacher
Palmer Lake Elementary School



Western Division

Thank you so much, I am truly honored! A few notes about me: I am currently a second grade teacher at Orchard Avenue Elementary school in Grand Junction CO. I have a beautiful family- my husband Jake, and two kids Jillian (9) and Lachlan (6). I have been an educator for the last 12 years. In this time, I have seen a growing need for social emotional education in my classroom. In order to better support this need, I have decided to pursue my master's degree in school counseling.

Thanks so much!
Maggie Sigle



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UPCOMING EVENTS

FULL EVENT INFO CLICK HERE

The True Cost of a Cancer Diagnosis Webinar
November 9, 2023
See Facebook Page for RSVP Link

Executive Board Meeting
November 13, 2023
11351 E Montview Blvd, Aurora

Board Meeting
November 14, 2023
11351 Montview Blvd, Aurora, CO, 80010

SAVE THE DATE

2024 Board Meetings,
Location TBD
March 1st
June 21st
November 15th

Holiday discounts For CSPERA Members Webinar
December 14, 2023
See Facebook Page for RSVP Link

Walk & Roll
Jan 1- Dec 31, 2024
Call 303-344-2981 to RSVP

Financial Wellness In The New Year Webinar
January 11 , 2024
See Facebook Page for RSVP Link

2024 Issues Forum & General Membership Meeting
August 21-22, 2024
DoubleTree by Hilton Denver 13696 E Iliff Pl, Aurora

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WALK AND ROLL

Select your miles to commit to walking or rolling outdoors over the 2024 year. Miles Marker Suggestions:

- 2.024 miles per week (105.2 miles for year 2024)
- 20.24 miles per month (242.88 miles for year 2024)
- 202.4 miles per 6 months (404.8 miles for year 2024)
- 2,024 miles for the entire 2024 year (Debi's GOAL!)

Complete once a month check-ins.

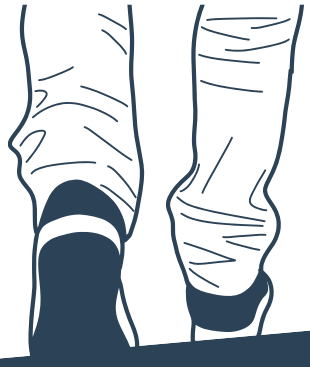
- Log into a brief meeting to talk about your walks
- Complete a digital or printed log

Share your discoveries in our CSPERA newsletter. We want to experience your surprises and aha moments. (optional)

- Submit a photo, an article, a poem, or a thought or two

Win PRIZES for reaching your goal.

- T-shirt for completing your six (6) month goal
- Completion medallion at the end of the year
- Receive the added benefits of a more healthy you



All members are encouraged to participate.
Call the Office to RSVP
303-344-2981

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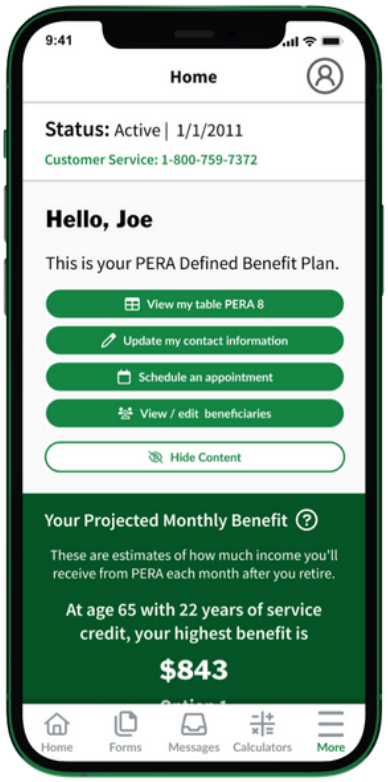
PERA ON THE GO!



You can now download PERA's mobile app from your app store on your mobile device! The free app makes it easy to manage your PERA account on the go.

With the app, you can see at-a-glance account information, such as:

Your projected monthly benefit
Account balance
Salary and service credit history

You can also update your account information such as tax withholding and beneficiary details.

In addition, the app allows you to submit forms electronically, including your retirement application and service credit purchase application, as well as upload documents with the device's camera.

LET'S CONNECT!

Social Media Button Links Follow Below