2025

PHILANTHROPY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

ILLUMINATING IMPACT









Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff, and friends, as well as invaluable support from foundations and corporations, DU surpassed $80 million in philanthropic support during fiscal year 2025, marking one of the top-three fundraising years in DU history.

Donor support reflects a strong vote of confidence in DU's vision to reimagine higher education. With investments spanning scholarships, the 4D Experience, faculty excellence, free expression and pluralism, interdisciplinary research, athletics, and state-of-the-art learning spaces, 2025 philanthropy continues to chart a new course for innovation, transformation, and excellence.

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A NOTE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Thanks to your generosity and engagement, the 2025 fiscal year was remarkable, marking one of the top three fundraising years in DU's history. Simply put, we could not have achieved this without you.

Your investments are more than financial contributions — they are resounding votes of confidence in our shared vision to reimagine higher education. At a moment when colleges and universities are facing unprecedented challenges ranging from financial pressures to shifting demographics, philanthropy has never been more important.

Through your support, you are fueling The Denver Difference, our historic one billion dollar campaign that celebrates and supports our strengths: the people, programs, and places that make DU unique. As you review this report, you will see your incredible influence brought to life. You will read about the brilliant people in our community, from first-generation scholars stepping into new opportunities to faculty pushing the boundaries of interdisciplinary research. This report captures the dynamic programs that enhance our signature 4D Experience, solidifying DU's preeminent campus life and ensuring all graduates are ready to lead careers and lives of purpose. You will see the transformative places we are building, like the Integrative Life Sciences Complex, which will foster groundbreaking discoveries for generations to come.

Every scholarship funded, program expanded, and space created is a testament to the strength of our community. You are helping us chart a bold new course for innovation, transformation, and excellence across our Denver campus, the Kennedy Mountain Campus, and beyond.

Thank you for your belief in our students, faculty, programs, and educational mission. Your generosity continues to brighten our path forward, proving that when we join forces, our potential is limitless.

With gratitude,

Jeremy Haefner
Chancellor

Champions of Change

Donor generosity is funding the next generation of difference-makers, expanding access for first-generation scholars, and supporting academic excellence across disciplines like art history, library science, and business. When it comes to philanthropy, DU alumni, parents, friends, faculty, and staff are the power behind The Denver Difference.

Empowering Entrepreneurial Innovation

Led by Carol (MBA '81, Hon. PhD '18) and Ramon Tomé, a generous gift from the Tomé Foundation is expanding opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship at DU and the Daniels College of Business, now under new leadership by John Sebesta, PhD, Koch Endowed Chair of Entrepreneurship. Supporting stipends for student entrepreneurs as well as mentorship initiatives, this gift to E@DU directly advances the 4D Experience by preparing students to build lives and careers of purpose, creativity, and impact.











Opening Doors
Scholarships for First-Generation Students

A lifelong advocate for educational access, DU Board of Trustees member and Chair Emerita (2018–2022) Denise O'Leary knows firsthand how timely scholarships can change lives. Together with her husband, Kent Thiry, she established the Thiry-O'Leary Family Scholarship Fund to empower high-achieving, first-generation undergraduate students with significant financial need. This immediate-use fund is already opening doors, enabling talented students to pursue their dreams without financial barriers. In the 2024–25 school year, the fund supported 17 undergraduate students across six different colleges, awarding just over $360,000. For O'Leary, these scholarships are more than financial aid — they are lifelines, catalysts for social mobility, and testaments to the power of education to transform lives.

Career and Professional Development

Empowering students to design lives of purpose and successful careers

At DU, students are not just being prepared for the future — they are actively shaping it. By setting the gold standard in career development, DU ensures that every student receives personalized support, real-world preparation, and the tools needed to thrive in a competitive world.



Ranked #24 Best Career Services *Princeton Review*

95%
of undergraduates actively engaged with Career Services

66%
of master's students actively engaged with Career Services

DU bachelor's degree holders earn **$17,428 more** on average than graduates from comparable four-year institutions



Students with internships are **2.5x more likely** to secure a job post-graduation



89%
of alums achieved successful outcomes
by being employed, in grad school, or in military service within six months of graduation

2,200+
alumni participated in Crimson Constellation
DU's mentoring platform

1,100+
mentoring connections
fostering invaluable career support relationships



78%
of undergraduates participated in internships

82%
of master's students participated in internships



A Brush with Impact

Investing in Art Education

Ruth Klein (MA ’57) and her late husband Roy (BFA ’52, MA ’55) dedicated their lives to education and the arts. Their estate gift established endowed scholarships for students in DU’s Morgridge College of Education and the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, ensuring financial support for generations of students to come.





Advancing Student Success

Empowering Future Media Leaders Through Internship Support

The late Lance Clem (BA ’72) understood the importance of internships for college students as opportunities to gain real-world experience. DU’s Media, Film, and Journalism Studies program has an internship requirement for all its students, which poses tremendous opportunities for growth but can also present financial challenges when internships are unpaid or require travel. As such, the Clem estate established an endowed fund to support students in pursuing these opportunities. Clem’s partner, Douglas Tippin, MD, PhD, contributed an additional $1 million to strengthen the endowment. Together, these generous gifts demonstrate their shared commitment to DU, experiential education, and equipping students to build meaningful careers.

Daniel Ritchie:

DU's 'Cowboy Chancellor'

Honoring the legacy of a leader who shaped the University of Denver's future with heart, humor, and generosity

Dan Ritchie — Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Denver; lifetime champion of DU's mission and values; and beloved friend, colleague, and mentor to many — was a legendary leader in the DU community.



At his memorial service in February of last year, Dan Ritchie was recognized at center ice in Magness Arena at the Ritchie Center, his namesake sports complex on DU's campus. Yellow roses were arranged in a pair of Ritchie's cowboy boots, and guests sported wide-brimmed hats — homages to the "cowboy ethics" he often credited as guiding his life and leadership.

Ritchie served as DU's chancellor after serving on the Board of Trustees. During his tenure, he spearheaded an impactful fundraising campaign for new facilities, infrastructure, and programs that promoted student success and advanced the university's mission. Remembered for his kind smile and sense of humor, he had a talent for making meaningful connections with people from all backgrounds and inspiring profound generosity among donors. Garnering support from the Denver community, he successfully secured transformational gifts from foundations and individuals who understood the value of having a great university in Denver.

When Ritchie became chancellor, DU was on the brink of financial crisis and facing an uncertain future. Dedicated to the university's survival and growth, he famously agreed to work for a salary of just one dollar a year, and he never asked for a raise. Through his selflessness, intuition, and business acumen, he not only stabilized DU's finances but also set the stage for its remarkable growth.

Ritchie, who was also a successful cattle rancher, built and operated the Grand River Ranch in Kremmling, Colorado, which he eventually donated to DU. This unprecedented gift led to the creation of the Daniel L. Ritchie Center for Sports & Wellness and boosted DU's regional prominence in the Rocky Mountain West.

Ritchie left an indelible mark on nearly every aspect of DU life. He expanded the university's red-brick footprint into a vibrant community hub, enhanced academic programs to meet evolving student needs, developed scholarships to make DU more accessible, and elevated both DU's athletic and arts programs.

> "Dan Ritchie transformed the University of Denver in ways that will be felt for generations through his leadership and incredible generosity. His visionary support strengthened academic excellence, elevated our athletic and community spaces, and deepened DU's commitment to leadership and service. His legacy is felt in every facet of DU, and we are grateful for the many ways in which he curated the future of our great institution."
>
> — Val Otten, Senior Vice Chancellor for Advancement









Building a Legacy of Growth and Excellence

Integrity, fairness, and respect were at the heart of Ritchie's chancellorship. Among his strategic priorities was expanding the teaching of ethics at the Daniels College of Business and co-founding the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System.

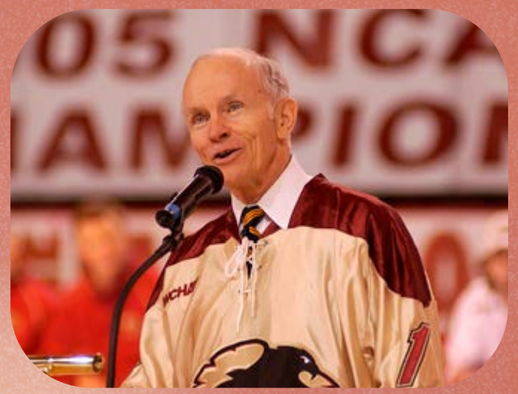
Motivated by the belief that higher education should teach young people to be responsible, curious, and empathic global citizens, he founded DU's Cherrington Global Scholars international education program, which financially supports students who study abroad.

A lover of performing arts, Ritchie honored his late mother, a singer, by establishing the Jessie Dee Ritchie Endowed Graduate Scholarship Fund for Music. In the same year, he donated his Santa Barbara ranch to support construction of a new facility for the Daniel Felix Ritchie School of Engineering and Computer Science, named in honor of his father.

Whether funding initiatives personally or inspiring others to give generously, Ritchie's philanthropy was driven by a desire to improve lives.

Despite his immense influence, Ritchie was known for his humility. He led with a warm smile and a sense of humor, always quick to credit others. A story fondly remembered by the DU community captures his spirit perfectly. When asked why he was often seen picking up litter on campus, Ritchie replied, "If you don't love a place enough to pick up its trash, you don't deserve to be its chancellor."

As DU students and faculty walk across a campus made beautiful by his efforts, they carry forward Ritchie's legacy of love, dedication, hard work, and empathy. The university was forever changed by his generous spirit and visionary leadership. We bid our "cowboy chancellor" a fond farewell — and tip our hats in his honor.







Elevating Impact

DU Volunteers Set New Record

At DU, every act of service highlights what it means to be a difference-maker. In fiscal year 2025, 1,771 dedicated volunteers — our highest annual total yet in The Denver Difference campaign — proved what's possible when passion meets purpose. From mentorship and board leadership to regional network coordination, guest lecturers, and more, over 5,500 volunteers to date have shaped a brighter future for DU and the world.



> "I've always found joy in supporting and serving our DU Indigenous/Native alumni and community because it allows me to connect with others and create a space for future generations of leaders and alumni."
>
> – Taylor Bennet-Begaye (MA '22)

Meet Two of DU's Star Volunteers



DU alum **Taylor Bennet-Begaye** (MA '22), Diné citizen and chair of DU's Indigenous Alumni Affinity Network, exemplifies the spirit of service by volunteering to support DU's Native Student Alliance. Guiding the Native Student Alliance's powwow and community events, Bennet-Begaye's dedication and leadership shine. Part of her work includes leading a Blanket Wrapping Ceremony, a tradition that honors Native graduates.



Another standout volunteer, alum **Corey T. Nyman** (BSBA '99), leads DU's Las Vegas Alumni Network, cultivating connections among alumni, prospective students, and friends in the Las Vegas area. In addition to his network leadership, Nyman served on the Fritz Knoebel School of Hospitality Management Executive Advisory Board, mentors students, and hosts events that strengthen the DU community. He also continues to support Men's Lacrosse as a proud alumnus of that program.

> "DU gave me so much during my undergraduate years, so I've made it my mission to support a place I truly love. It's all about sharing your time, effort, and energy."
>
> – Corey Nyman (BSBA '99)

The Denver Difference thrives on teamwork. Every hour and act of volunteerism contributes to making DU and the world a better place. From enhancing students' on-campus experiences through thoughtful outreach to organizing events that strengthen alumni networks, DU volunteers find creative ways to give back. As volunteerism expands, so does DU's capacity to make an impact.

Learn more about volunteer opportunities and how you can get involved!
Visit alumni.du.edu/ways-connect/volunteer



Ascent Program

A First-Gen Law Grad's Mission to Pay It Forward

Erik Estrada (JD '09), a first-generation law student and Chancellor's Scholar, credits education and philanthropy with transforming his life. His journey — from relying on charitable support himself to co-founding a boutique law firm — inspired his philanthropic investment in Sturm College of Law's Ascent Program. The program was developed to support students from communities historically underrepresented in the legal profession and those with less familiarity with the legal profession. Through Ascent, students gain access to academic advising, mentorship, exam preparation, career support, and stipends for professional attire.

Public Service and Purpose

Turning a Simple Gesture into a Legacy

A chance meeting between Jack Kleinheksel and DU faculty member Gordon von Stroh led to a life-changing decision for Kleinheksel to pursue a master's in public administration at DU. His DU education not only transformed his career but also inspired Jack and his wife, Georgia, to establish an endowed prize that supports future public servants and honors the legacy of von Stroh.



A Decade of Impact

Celebrating 10 Years of 1DAY4DU

May 2025 marked the 10th anniversary of 1DAY4DU, a dedicated 24 hours of fundraising that celebrates the generosity of the University of Denver community. Over the past decade, this tradition has made a powerful impact on DU, fueling transformational scholarships, exceptional athletics, groundbreaking research, and vital student support programs. Raising $1.2 million in just 24 hours, this total reflects a shared commitment to drive meaningful change and a belief in DU's mission to serve the public good.

Celebrating 10 Years of 1DAY4DU

$10 million and 26,000+
donors in the past decade



$1.2M
raised

502
first-time donors

2,014
donors



$100,000+
raised for scholarships

100%
Board of Trustee participation

$526,589
raised by Denver Athletics



Supporting 18
varsity programs

Spaces that Spark Innovation and Discovery

Central to the 4D educational journey, DU's places foster creativity and innovation, define the distinctive DU student experience, support new and unprecedented discoveries, and improve the well-being of people on our campus and beyond. Philanthropy is broadening these horizons even further, creating new spaces for research excellence, innovation, and distinction.

Kennedy Mountain Campus

WHERE GROWTH MEETS **ADVENTURE**

James C. Kennedy's (BA '71) extraordinary generosity has continued to provide DU students — as well as faculty and staff — with life-changing opportunities. Located in Red Feather Lakes, Colorado, the 750-acre Kennedy Mountain Campus (KMC) is more than just a retreat; it's a space for holistic growth, meaningful connections, and challenges that inspire resilience and purpose. For many students, their KMC experience is a turning point that equips them to thrive and lead in their communities and beyond.

Integral to the 4D Experience, KMC focuses on programming that supports students by deepening intellect, developing well-being, discovering character, and designing careers and lives of purpose. KMC is a classroom, a playground, and a home for exploration, growth, and discovery.



Welcomed **682 students** to the First Ascent Initiative, piloting a summer pre-orientation and via ferrata climbing routes, with **90%** reporting meaningful social and emotional growth



Completed **infrastructure upgrades** including new trails, a mountain bike network, an emergency services building, and a water rights plan





Rebranded **DU Outdoors**, uniting six student-led clubs and securing a **$90,000** grant to expand services

Engaged a total of **6,000 participants**, including **2,045** in KMC-specific programs, with the remainder in DU Outdoors activities including clubs, the ski bus, and more



Raised over $15,000 for the KMC Mile Makers Fund during 1DAY4DU



Hosted **205 students, faculty, and staff in immersive academic programs** across arts, business, leadership, and environmental conservation





Provided professional development for **47 faculty members** in partnership with the Provost's Office and Faculty Senate

KMC remains a hub for exploration, innovation, and interdisciplinary learning, providing both technical skills and leadership strategies that build the confidence to lead, compassion to care, and courage to contribute. Participants return to their communities more grounded, capable, and inspired to make a difference.

Building the Next Era of Barton Stadium

Generous donor support is fueling Barton 2027, an ambitious renovation of Peter Barton Lacrosse Stadium, designed to elevate the experience for both student-athletes and fans. This project, which will be fully donor-funded when fundraising is complete, strengthens DU's legacy of excellence while upgrading infrastructure for the Pioneer men's and women's lacrosse programs. Phase one of construction is already underway to dramatically enhance the iconic venue and prepare it for the next 20 years of competition.







Integrative Life Sciences Complex

Advancing Scientific Discovery and Innovation

At the heart of the University of Denver's mission to solve real-world problems is our commitment to groundbreaking scientific research. The Integrative Life Sciences Complex, opening in fall 2027, will be where DU researchers will advance discovery and foundational research on some of science's most urgent mysteries — from the molecular roots of diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, and diabetes to the mechanics that drive cellular health and breakdown.

Rooted in DU's culture of interdisciplinary collaboration, the Integrative Life Sciences Complex is designed to bring together principles from physics, computer science, and engineering with biology and chemistry. By enabling faculty and students to integrate diverse scientific principles, the building will foster the development of innovative discovery tools across the spectrum of life sciences.

Whether investigating how Tau proteins form fibrils — a process linked to neurodegenerative disorders — or pioneering methods for growing reliable blood vessel systems to better understand the fundamentals of cancer and vascular disease, DU researchers are expanding the boundaries of foundational science. The new Life Sciences Complex will empower them to accelerate these efforts, speeding the translation of discovery into future medical breakthroughs.

DU's reputation as Colorado's only private university with the prestigious Carnegie R1 classification — a distinction reserved for the nation's top research institutions — underscores our dedication to research excellence. Over the past decade, DU has tripled its research volume, and the Integrative Life Sciences Complex will further solidify the University's role as a leader in scientific innovation.

Located at the south end of campus, the 87,000-square-foot facility will include 23 advanced research labs and 5 undergraduate learning labs, significantly expanding DU's research capacity. With transparent glass walls and immersive educational spaces, the discovery process will be both visible and accessible. The facility will be a cornerstone of a DU education, offering every undergraduate the opportunity to engage with the scientific process.









Turning Vision into Action and Action into Impact

Philanthropy is driving meaningful change, supporting groundbreaking academic and athletic programs that build understanding, inspire leadership, enhance the 4D Experience, and create pathways toward a brighter future.

Redefining the Human–Animal Connection

At the Graduate School of Social Work, the Institute for Human–Animal Connection (IHAC) is leading scientific research that's illuminating how animal welfare and human well-being are connected. A legacy gift from Executive Director Kevin Morris, PhD, and his wife, Kristin Des Marais, will ensure IHAC's continued impact through education, innovation, and community-centered research.

Building Future Careers in Real Estate

A landmark gift from the TOLD Foundation is expanding the Franklin L. Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management's nationally recognized experiential learning model. The John B. "Jack" Gilbert Student Experience Fund will help ensure every student can access no-cost, hands-on, career-focused opportunities that position them for future success.

Making Waves in Pioneer Athletics

A transformational gift from the Watson family — the largest in the history of DU's Swimming and Diving program — has launched the effort to establish a head coaching endowment. This support strengthens the program's legacy of excellence while significantly enhancing the student-athlete experience. With the landscape of college athletics evolving, philanthropic backing for collegiate sports has never been more crucial. This endowment provides championship-caliber resources needed to elevate DU's standing on the national stage. Now in its 79th season, the program boasts a proud history, and this gift is a powerful example of how supporters can build on that foundation to usher in an exciting new era.

Advancing Justice, Legal Skills, and the Public Good

The Immigration Law and Policy Clinic (ILPC) at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law provides critical legal representation to detained immigrants, addressing a significant gap in access to justice. Founded with a catalyzing six-figure investment from an anonymous corporate donor, the clinic focuses on cases at the intersection of criminal and immigration law, with most clients detained at the Aurora ICE Processing Center. Students in the clinic gain hands-on experience in legal advocacy while tackling systemic issues like racial and economic bias in immigration enforcement. The ILPC not only transforms students' legal education but also profoundly impacts the lives of vulnerable individuals, embodying the law school's mission to advance justice and the public good.











Leading with Legacy

DU Hockey's Next Chapter

With a new multiyear contract and a landmark personal philanthropic pledge, Richard and Kitzia Goodman Hockey Head Coach David Carle strengthened his commitment to sustaining DU Hockey's national dominance. As the first coach to join DU's Gold Standard Society, Carle will secure lasting support for the most decorated program in college hockey history.

Athletics: DU Rules Division I

DU Athletics plays a pivotal role in the 4D Experience, fostering leadership, discipline, community, and personal development. Through donor support, DU's student-athletes are not only achieving excellence in competition but also in the classroom and beyond. With historic programs, championship-level teams, and bold investments in infrastructure and coaching, DU Athletics is building a future defined by excellence, opportunity, high performance, and innovation.

Athletics by the Numbers



Over $9M
raised in FY25

$526,589
raised on 1DAY4DU



18
varsity Division I sports

35
NCAA National Championships



96%
graduation success rate









The Denver Difference

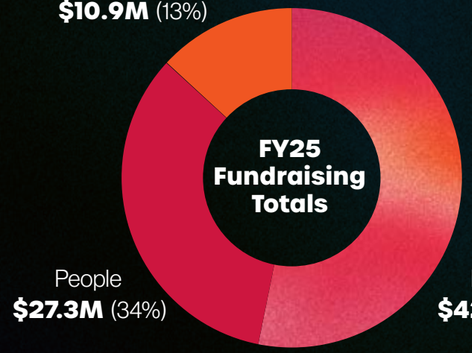
Fiscal Year 2025 Impact

Shaping the Future of DU

Through the remarkable generosity of the University of Denver community — along with vital contributions from foundations and corporations — DU surpassed over $80 million in philanthropic support during fiscal year 2025. This milestone represents one of the top three fundraising years in the University's history. Focused on DU's three campaign priorities — people, the programs that shape their work, and the places that bring it all to life — donor gifts drive meaningful change by transforming lives and redefining the promise of higher education.

$81.1M
contributed, and
101% of goal achieved





10,245
total gifts

13%
increase in giving
from FY24

2,500+
new donors

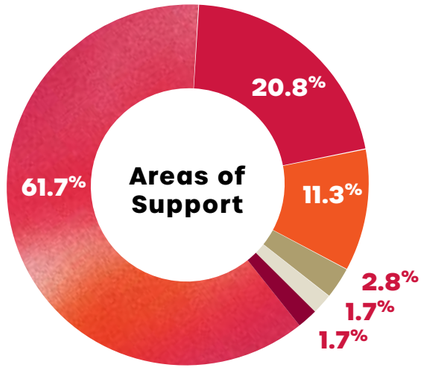


17,662
engaged alumni and friends
through time, treasure, and talent

By the Numbers
Fiscal Year 2025

DU Endowment Performance

In fiscal year 2025, the University of Denver's endowment generated a net return of 11.3% with a total market value of $1.2 billion. The endowment's value increased by approximately $65 million from the previous fiscal year, attributed to a combination of investment earnings, new gifts, and standard operational withdrawals that support the University's mission.



- **61.7%** Scholarships and fellowships
- **20.8%** Academic programs and research
- **11.3%** Faculty chairs and professorships
- **2.8%** Other
- **1.7%** Athletics
- **1.7%** Libraries

11.3%
net return

$1.2 Billion
total market value

$65 Million
FY25 increase in value

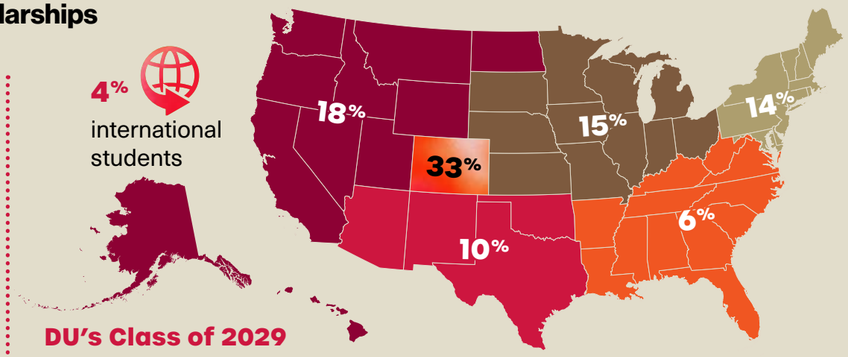
DU Students and Scholarships

5,700+
undergraduate students

6,100+
graduate students

90+
countries represented on campus

4%
international students



DU's Class of 2029

1,180
first-year students represent **47 states** and **28 countries**

~45%
of undergraduate students receive need-based financial aid

$6,500
average financial aid gap to cover full attendance cost











156,000
alumni worldwide

70%
of undergrad alums stay in Colorado

$2.3 Billion
DU's contribution to Colorado's economy in 2024

$1 Billion
average annual economic impact by Colorado-based DU alumni

PRINCETON REVIEW
Rankings 2025

#1
Most-Loved Colleges

#7
Best College Library

#13
College City Gets High Marks

#15
Best-Run Colleges

#18
Best Health Services

#21
LGBTQ-Friendly

#22
Town – Gown Relations Are Great
(based on student ratings of how well they get along with the local community)

#23
Happiest Students

#24
Most Beautiful Campus; Green Matters; Everyone Cares About Conservation

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER







THE DENVER DIFFERENCE
WHAT DU CAN DO

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