

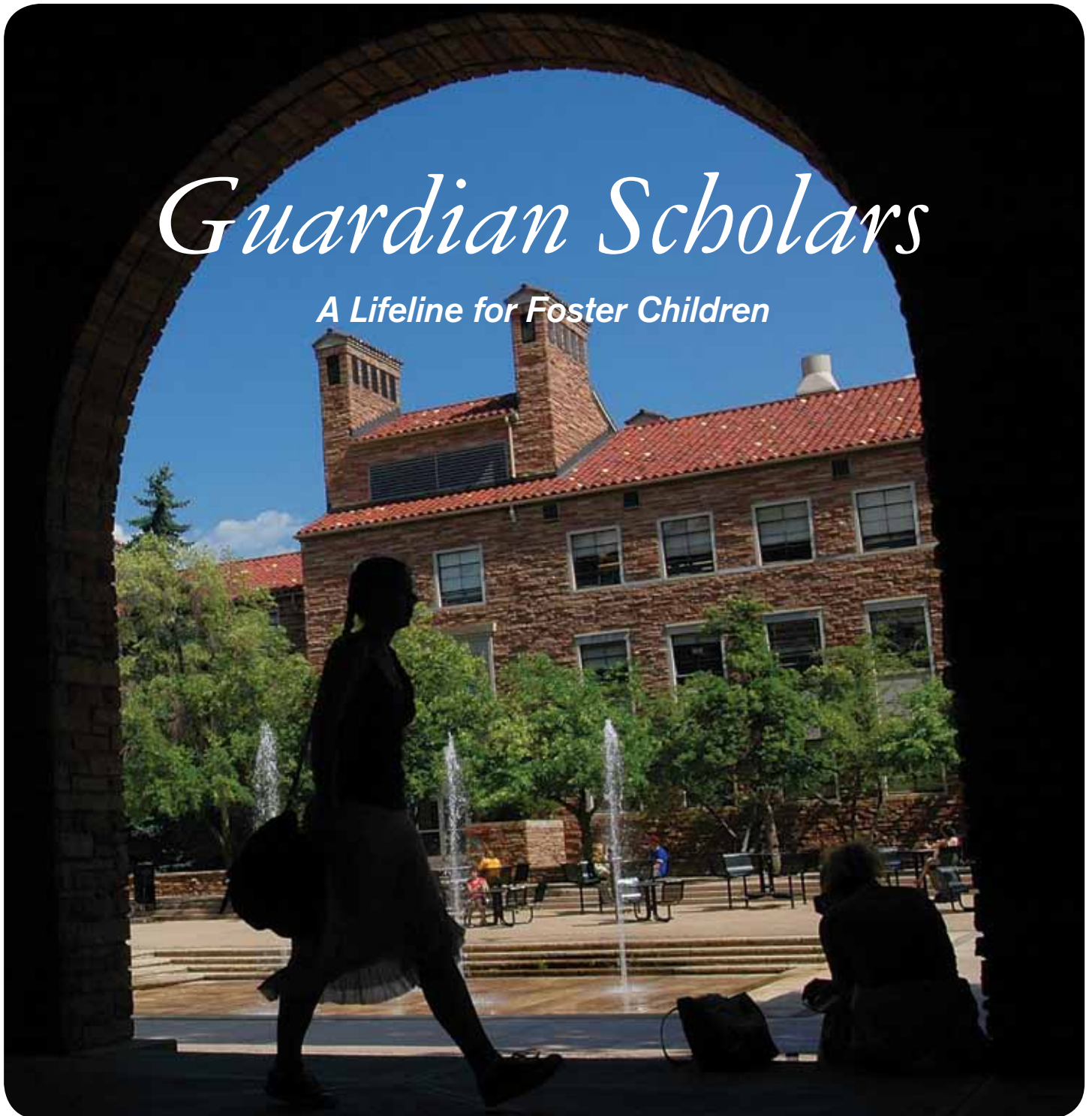
*Creating Futures*

University of Colorado *at Boulder*



# *Guardian Scholars*

*A Lifeline for Foster Children*



# More than a Scholarship—it's a Family



***“No child should have to settle for a future determined by the life choices of their parents; we have a human obligation to provide them opportunity and guidance toward their own paths.”***

—Valerie Embry, M.Ed,  
Program Director,  
Guardian Scholars Program

Getting through college is hard enough for those from ideal backgrounds. But consider the tremendous challenges faced by the 12,000 foster youth in Colorado and a half million more nationwide. All too often, they lack the financial resources and support network to even reach a university campus, much less obtain a degree. It's no wonder only one in 100 graduates from college.

The new Guardian Scholars program at the University of Colorado at Boulder—which provides full tuition, room, board, and personal guidance for CU-bound former foster youth—is a lifeline for those who need it most, opening up a limitless number of paths to achievement.

With your support, this CU-Boulder program can replicate the demonstrated success of Guardian Scholars programs on other campuses across the nation and help remarkable students overcome long odds and realize the dream of a college education.

## Building on a Track Record of Success

Ten years ago, Colorado resident Ron Davis had a vision to help former foster youth who lacked the means and the peer support to attend college. Since Davis founded the Guardian Scholars in 1998, the program has grown to encompass 20 colleges and universities and has already seen dozens of graduates. In fact, the 73 percent graduation rate at Cal State, Fullerton, the college with the first and largest Guardian Scholars presence, is not only miles ahead of overall foster-youth graduation rates, but also outpaces the all-student campus average. A Guardian Scholarship has become America's strongest bridge between former foster youth and a college degree.

The University of Colorado at Boulder is an exceptional environment for the expansion of the Guardian Scholars program. CU's extensive academic offerings and community services exceed that of many existing Guardian Scholars programs.

## Helping Students Feel at Home

While CU's breadth and scale permit students myriad opportunities, the campus and the city of Boulder provide a safe, student-focused setting that allows former foster youth—who often have no family unit to rely on and are overcoming difficult personal experiences—to feel at home. A designated on-campus advisor guides them through campus life, brings them together with other Guardian Scholars, and helps them establish a network of support.

Guardian Scholars receive full funding for their CU experience, plus:

- Year-round on-campus housing
- Assistance in locating student employment
- One-on-one counseling
- Peer and professional mentoring programs
- Financial aid application assistance
- Postgraduation career planning and advice

These services ensure that Guardian Scholars have an opportunity not only to learn, but to lead, thrive, and find their place.

# A Small Price to Pay for a Brighter Future

It costs over \$21,000 annually for a Colorado student to attend CU-Boulder, including tuition, room, board, and other expenses. With the help of key partners, the Guardian Scholars program provides selected students with a package that covers the full cost of their CU-Boulder experience. This package includes:

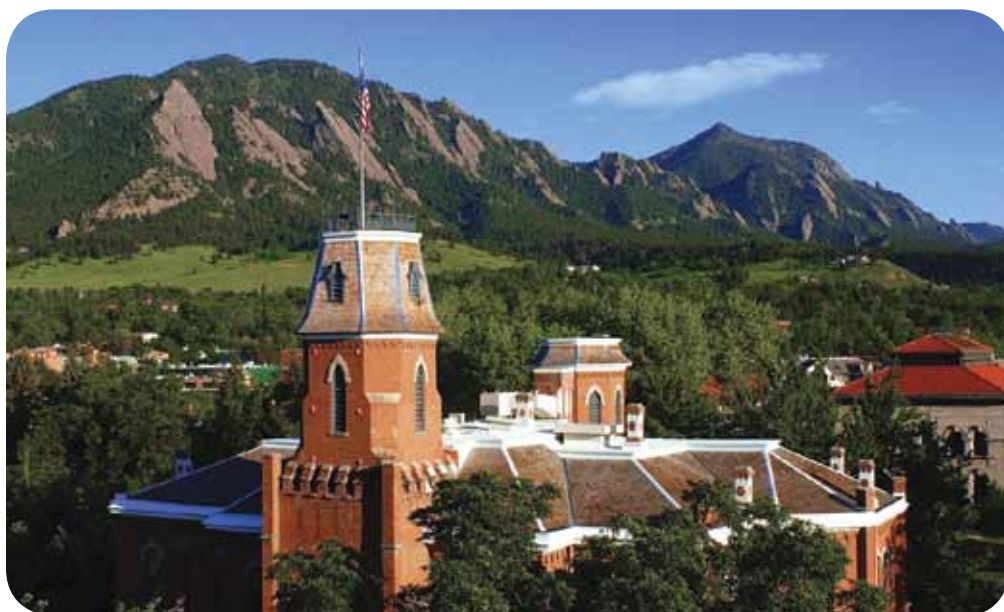
- Mentorship and guidance provided by CU-Boulder
- Federal and state aid (coordinated by CU-Boulder)
- Gifts from private foundations
- Private gifts from individual donors

Generous partnerships and significant public aid for former foster youth fund a little over half of the financial assistance needed for Guardian Scholars. Your help with the remaining costs—about \$10,000 annually, per student—is needed to fully pave the path to a college degree. A gift of any amount toward a Guardian Scholarship will provide opportunities for foster students. You may support up to a full four-year Guardian Scholarship with a current gift or pledge or help endow a scholarship in perpetuity. The number of Guardian Scholars CU-Boulder selects each year will depend on the number of available full financial packages.

## **Foster youth start with two important strikes against them.**

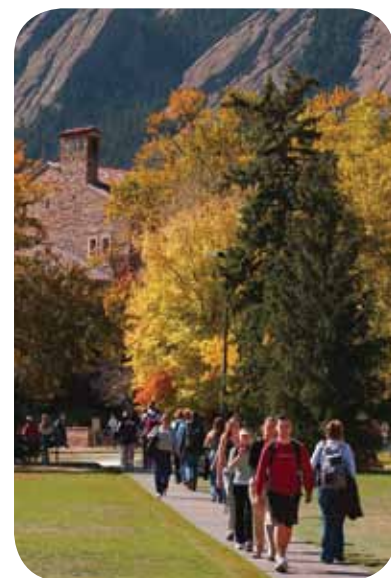
- *They fall behind in education early.* Though 70 percent of teens emancipating from foster care want to attend college, only 46 percent overcome a key qualifying hurdle—a high school diploma. Most have been held back in school by the time they reach third grade.
- *They lack financial resources.* One-third of former foster youth have an annual income below \$6,000, with more than 40 percent becoming homeless within 18 months of emancipation. We all bear the burden of these damaged lives, as former foster youth enmeshed in the welfare or correctional systems—outcomes far more common than a college degree—are supported by taxpayers.

Given that the average bachelor's degree can be worth nearly a million dollars over the course of a lifetime, a Guardian Scholarship can be the difference between a successful life and a tragic one—and pay dividends that society will reap for decades to come.



*“They need the TLC that goes along with the struggles of being a college student—it’s not just the money. I don’t see anywhere else in the country where the potential exists even close to how it does at Boulder.”*

—Ron Davis, Guardian Scholars program founder



*“I chose CU-Boulder because of the amazing opportunities it provides and the opportunity to study in an environment that is so diverse. I know I will feel comfortable here because of the incredible faculty and staff.”*

—Krista, 2008 Guardian Scholar



## The Time is Now

To learn about the many ways you can make a gift, please contact:

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Visit us online at  
[www.cufund.org](http://www.cufund.org) or  
[www.colorado.edu/  
GuardianScholars](http://www.colorado.edu/GuardianScholars)

For every moment we wait, another foster youth will be denied an opportunity for a college education. The more support the Guardian Scholars program receives, the sooner we can admit students whose potential outshines their resources and allow these emancipated youth to attain true freedom through education.

**Join us in this crusade to build a better future.**

**Colorado**  
University of Colorado at Boulder™