



Leeds School of Business
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

DEAN'S QUARTERLY IMPACT REPORT

— Summer 2025 —



Strengthening Talent Pipelines

At Leeds, building and sustaining a strong pipeline of students, faculty, and staff is essential for academic quality, institutional resilience, and long-term success. High retention and graduation rates reflect our commitment to student achievement and financial accessibility. Select impact stories for this quarter:



[Spring Graduation Highlights](#)

This year's graduation ceremonies offered moving speeches and heartfelt advice. Alumnae Shannon Sisler (Fin'95) and Carol Callan (MS'77, MBA'87) addressed a record number of Leeds graduates—1,686 in total—who are ready to make their mark on the world.

[Mastering Milestones](#)

Celebrating a decade of innovation and growth in supply chain and business analytics, Leeds kicked off a series of anniversary events for the school's graduate programs. This year, the MS in Finance and MS in Real Estate also commemorate a decade of distinction, while its MBA programs celebrate 60 years of excellence.

[New Programs, New Pipelines](#)

After backing Leeds' new MS programs in analytics last fall, University of Colorado's regents recently approved the school's new Master of Science in Sustainable Business, designed to equip students with skills essential for sustainable business practices. The program offers a highly immersive, 10-month course that integrates interdisciplinary knowledge from various colleges, including Leeds, the College of Engineering and Applied Science, and the College of Arts & Sciences.

[Welcome, New Business Buffs](#)

Leeds undergraduates have even more to love: The business school now offers 10 areas of study, including the newest options in management information systems and strategy and entrepreneurship. The more, the merrier: Leeds anticipates enrolling another record class of students this fall.

Advancing Business Acumen and Career Outcomes



Preparing students with real-world business knowledge and professional readiness is fundamental to their career success in Leeds. Through experiential learning, career services, and employer engagement, we equip students to become effective leaders and professionals. Select impact stories for this quarter:

[Boulder Climate Ventures](#)

Led by the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility (CESR) and the Deming Center for Entrepreneurship—and supported by Breakthrough Energy—this exciting new graduate program promotes startups focused on climate solutions.

[Experiential Learning, Elevated](#)

Thanks to a transformational gift, Leeds is launching the Nicholas Dante Badami Office for Experiential Learning. The new office will expand experiential learning, enhance student success and mental health, and support faculty excellence—all in service of Leeds' mission to elevate business as a force for good.

[Leeds Business Insights](#)

Listen as Jeremiah Contreras, assistant teaching professor and Kala and Shivi Khatri Endowed Faculty Scholar, discusses embracing AI in business education during a season four episode of Leeds Business Insights podcast.

[QS Ranking Elevates Leeds' Executive MBA](#)

Now in its fourth academic year, the Leeds Executive MBA was named to the QS global rankings for the first time ever—a testament to the program's expanding value to working professionals and aspiring business leaders.

[Students Stand Out at National Case Competitions](#)

Leeds students showcased their business acumen last spring in case competitions around the country. Highlights include a first-place finish in Colorado State's Sherman Miller Case Competition and second place in the Daniels Fund National Ethics Case Competition.

Fostering Community Well-Being

At Leeds, we prioritize individual well-being, strong community connections, and meaningful engagement—cultivating a vibrant environment where learning and professional growth flourish. Select impact stories for this quarter:

Shine Bright: Teaching and Staff Awards

From outstanding work in the classroom to the embodiment of Leeds' values during each workday, this year's faculty and staff award recipients shine not only for their excellence, but also their meaningful contributions to Leeds' culture of care. Several faculty were also recently honored with prestigious scholarly titles and lifetime achievement awards in recognition of their sustained contributions to their fields, including Tandean Rustandy Esteemed Professor Jason Thatcher, who was honored with the AIS Senior Scholar designation and a Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and society.

Fostering Student Success

Nicole Lazzeri, assistant teaching professor of accounting, received the 2025 Marinus Smith Award for her positive impact on students. Her nominator shared, "... It is so clear that she genuinely cares about her students and possesses an innate ability to connect personally with each of them, ensuring they have all the tools they need to learn well and to be successful."



ODA Summer Programs Provide Cool Opportunities

Engagement continues throughout the summer for The Opening Doors to Achievement (ODA) Office, which hosted multiple events for future students, including the Summer Bridge Program for EXCEL Scholars, Women in Business Case Competition, and Business Leadership Program. Each offers an opportunity for attendees to preview life at Leeds and to connect with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and industry partners, including Deloitte, Elevations Credit Union, EY, InClover Research, KeyBank, KPMG, Plante Moran, FirstBank, Colorado Health & Tech Center, Environmental Consulting Services, Saluzo Business Solutions, Zoptic, RubinBrown and many others.

Summer Brown Bag Seminars

Several faculty shared their research with the Leeds community during a lunch-hour break, providing timely insights (along with tasty sandwiches!). It's a great way to learn about how Leeds faculty are making an impact not just in the classroom and in the academic community, but also in industry, public policy and beyond.

Elevating Leeds' Ecosystem

An engaged, interconnected community of alumni, faculty, students, and corporate partners at Leeds fuels innovation, opportunity, and career mobility. Select impact stories for this quarter:

Developing Future Business Leaders

Every semester, the Leeds School of Business welcomes alumni and industry thought leaders to share their real-world business insights with students in the classroom, at case competitions, events and more. Last spring, hundreds of experts came to Leeds, hailing from such companies as Expeditors, Crocs, Bain & Company, Affix, Danone, LinkedIn, Microsoft and JLL.

Mentees Guided by Google

Google has created a dedicated program with 40 mentors available for Leeds students—one of the many milestones in Leeds mentorship programs, which hit a record high last academic year.

Boosting Pure Fishing's R&D

Building on the success of its first externship cohort, Pure Fishing is launching Phase 2 with Leeds this fall, doubling student participation and deepening its focus on innovation in R&D and marketing. The program will support AI-driven projects aligned with company needs, kicking off with site visits and culminating in a showcase at Pure Fishing's headquarters.

Expanding Worldviews (and Wonder) Through FGX

Experiential learning is baked into the academic journey at Leeds.

This spring that included learning how international issues and cultural differences impact the business world—at 10 different locations across the globe. Watch all of the exciting ways FGX students gained a global mindset last spring in Athens.



Driving Research Excellence and Academic Distinction

Research excellence underpins academic prestige and attracts top talent and partnerships. High-impact research, interdisciplinary scholarship, and business relevance are key to Leeds' global reputation. Select impact stories for this quarter:



■ Recently Tenured and Promoted Faculty Members

Congratulations to five Leeds faculty who were recently awarded tenure by the University of Colorado Board of Regents: Emily Gallagher, Ashton Hawk, Ryan Lewis, Nikki Skinner (right) and Brian Waters. Faculty members Stefanie K. Johnson and Dejun "Tony" Kong were also recently promoted to full professors in Leeds' Division of Organizational Leadership and Information Analytics.

■ Leeds Faculty in the News

Leeds' faculty expertise and research is regularly cited in media outlets. Recent examples include:

- 🔗 **Tony Cookson's** paper "Market Signals from Social Media," featured in MarketWatch, Morningstar, and on UCLA Anderson's Forecast Direct podcast
- 🔗 **Alix Barasch's** research on the feel-good vibes that come from sharing vacation photos on social media featured on Denver 9News, among several other outlets.
- 🔗 **Phil Fernbach** was a guest on the Hidden Brain Podcast, during which he explained the "illusion of knowledge"—the fact that we think we understand the world in much greater detail than we actually do.

🔗 Insights at the Summer Boulder Conference on Consumer Financial Decision Making

In addition to hosting several research conferences this summer, including the International Whistleblowing Research Network, Pedagogical Workshop on Business and Economics Education and the Colorado Accounting Research Symposium, the CFDM's annual conference which attracted experts from around the world to share their research from dozens of fields, ranging from finance to public health. This successful interdisciplinary model will be the springboard for Leeds' new Initiative for Global Business Impact and Citizen Well-Being, launching this fall and led by Distinguished Professor John Lynch, who launched the CFDM in 2010.



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Learn more about Leeds' Strategic Plan
and the progress we continue to make at leeds.ly/2035.