What is the Colorado Springs Branch (CSB)?

The CSB is the first regional medical campus for the University of Colorado School of Medicine (CUSOM). The CSB offers core clinical training experiences during Phase III (3rd year) to twenty-four (24) medical students in the Colorado Springs community. All CSB students complete Phases I and II (1st and 2nd years) on the Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) in Aurora. During Phase IV (4th year), CSB students are required to complete a sub-internship in the Denver area and have the option of completing clinical electives in Colorado Springs.

Why should students consider the CSB?

Most students are interested in the CSB for the following reasons:

1. **Small class size.** Students in the CSB will get to work closely together and know each other well. During Phases I and II, the 24 students are divided into 3 Problem-Based Learning (PBL) groups (3 groups of 8 students). These groups also join 3 different Advisory Colleges which are comprised of students in all phases, I-IV, including earlier cohorts of CSB students and students from the Anschutz Medical Campus.

2. **Colorado Springs Mentored Integrated Curriculum (COSMIC).** COSMIC is our version of a Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) model. In this curriculum, students will learn all of the core specialties together throughout the year by following a panel of patients across different types and episodes of care and by working with preceptors from various specialties for 2-4 half-days per week. Students also complete several 1-2 week immersion experiences and participate in weekly didactics and special projects throughout the year.

3. **Direct faculty-to-student interaction, teaching, feedback, and mentoring.** Students in COSMIC will predominantly work one-on-one with the same practicing attendings across the different specialties for the year. This structure allows for students to receive direct teaching and mentoring from preceptors as they work closely with them throughout the entire year.

4. **Connections to Colorado Springs/El Paso County/Southern Colorado.** So far, half of the students selected to the CSB have had personal or professional connections to the community. The other half of each class comes from other parts of Colorado or from out of state. Previous connections to the community are desired but not a requirement for selection to the CSB.

5. **Community engagement.** CSB students will receive additional training in leadership and community engagement to become 21st Century physician leaders. Leaders who can deliver high-quality, cost conscious, and patient-centered care to the communities in which they will practice. Students will have opportunities to learn more about the community demographics (i.e. military population) and participate in the Poverty Immersion in Colorado Springs (PICOS) prior to the start of Phase II.
Why is the CSB interested in the LIC model?

The LIC model is designed to give the medical students a “patient-centered” experience. This model has grown in popularity in response to the decline in empathy of students toward patients in the traditional block model. Not only has the LIC resulted in higher levels of patient empathy as students follow their patients over the course of their clinical training, but the LIC students perform as well or better in numerous performance measures. LIC models have also produced higher levels of satisfaction among students, preceptors, and patients.

Where will students receive their clinical experiences?

Since we are partnering with all of the major hospitals in Colorado Springs and most of the outpatient physician groups, students will receive their clinical experiences across a variety of health care systems and have a chance to coordinate care for their patients across those systems. Some students will rotate through Evans Army Community Hospital which serves a population of approximately 75,000 active duty and retired military and their families. The city of Colorado Springs has nearly 450,000 people so students will see diversity in types of patients and clinical pathology.

Can a CSB student participate in a Track offered by CUSOM?

Yes. CSB students can participate in any of the Tracks (Rural, Global Health, Research, LEADS, CU-UNITE, Women’s Care).

How will a CSB student’s experience compare with other students at CUSOM?

The experience for a CSB student will be “comparable” to that of other students at CUSOM. CSB students will be assessed and evaluated using the same objectives, competencies, and tools that apply to all other students. The COSMIC model will be similar to the Denver Health LIC.

Are the CSB students required to select a primary care residency?

No. We will strive to prepare all CSB students to become health care leaders and highly competitive applicants in whichever specialties they choose.

How are students selected for the CSB?

All potential CSB students must first be accepted to the CUSOM through a very rigorous and holistic admissions process. Erik Wallace, Associate Dean for Colorado Springs Branch, will call all accepted applicants who have expressed an interest in the CSB. A separate committee, comprised of CUSOM Admissions Committee members who are based in Colorado Springs, review each student’s application (including his/her Colorado Springs essay) and then selects the cohort of students who are the best “fit” for the CSB. Students selected for the CSB will be notified in May or June prior to matriculating at CUSOM.
I am interested in applying for the CSB. What are the next steps?

1. Indicate that you have an interest in the CSB on your secondary application. This interest is non-binding and just serves to let us know that you are potentially interested.
2. Write and submit a CSB essay with your secondary application.
3. If you are selected for an interview, you will hear a presentation about the CSB during the interview and can ask more questions at that time.
4. At the end of interview day, you will submit your level of preference for the Anschutz Medical Campus or the CSB.
5. If admitted to CUSOM and you expressed an interest in the CSB, you will receive a phone call and email from Erik Wallace to further discuss your interest and to answer your questions.
6. You will be invited to attend CSB Preview Day in the Spring, which will take place the day before CUSOM’s Second Look Day.

I am interested in learning more about. Who should I contact?

Thank you for your interest in the CUSOM Colorado Springs Branch. Please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.

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