



Josef Korbel School of
Global and Public Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Scrivner Institute of Public Policy Report of Impact



Celebrating Five Years
Fall 2025



Highlighted Scholar

Receiving a scholarship from the Scrivner Institute has profoundly impacted my academic journey. I was able to delve deeper into my interests and refine my skills. It eased financial burdens, allowing me to fully dedicate myself to my studies and pursue enriching opportunities—such as internships—that ultimately led to securing a job shortly after graduation. I am deeply grateful for this investment in my future!

Madison Nereski, MPP '24

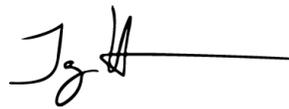


Dear Friends,

The Scrivner Institute of Public Policy at the Josef Korbel School of Global and Public Affairs has set the stage for groundbreaking interdisciplinary work that addresses some of the most pressing policy challenges of our time. The Institute has become a hub where academic excellence meets real-world application, fostering innovative solutions that resonate on both a local and global scale.

I'm pleased to share the Scrivner Institute of Public Policy Five-Year Impact Report. Within these pages, you'll find achievements, and milestones that reflect the Institute's vision to deliver on a commitment to the public good through inclusive, engaged, innovative and ethical public policy programming. I hope you will find the updates and stories in this report as affirming and powerful as I do.

With gratitude,



Jeremy Haefner
Chancellor



The Scrivner Institute of Public Policy exemplifies what it means to be a hub for actionable, collaborative, and innovative public policy research. In just five short years and in an era of increasing polarization and global complexity, the Scrivner Institute has established itself as a leader in fostering informed, solution-driven research and dialogue on public policy.

Thanks to the vision and generosity of Doug and Mary Scrivner and the leadership of Scrivner Professor and founding Director Naazneen Barma, the Scrivner Institute has experienced remarkable growth during its first five years. It has expanded its faculty, increased research funding, and launched transformative initiatives such as the Colorado Project, the Denver Dialogues, and the Scrivner Policy Roundtables. Through these efforts, the Institute has not only advanced interdisciplinary scholarship but also shaped policy conversations at local, national, and global levels.

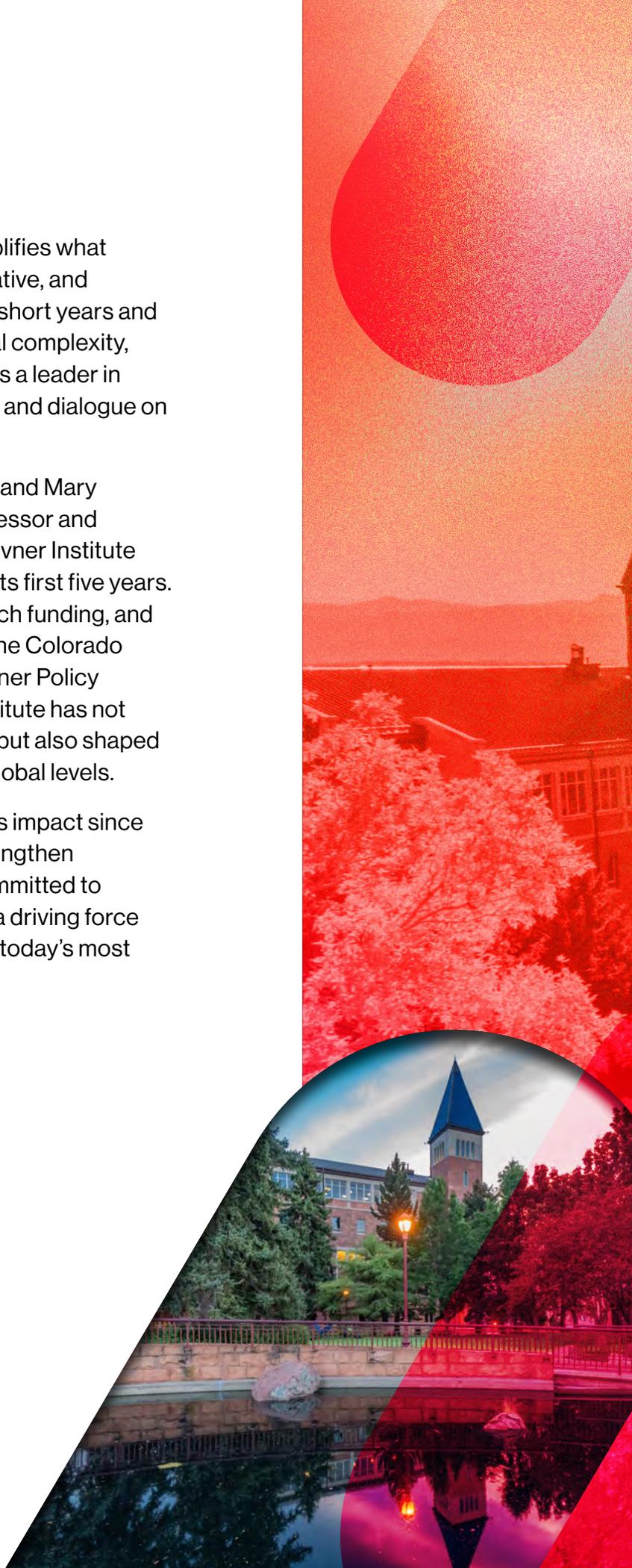
This report reflects on the Scrivner Institute's impact since its founding and the ways it continues to strengthen its mission. As we look ahead, we remain committed to ensuring that the Scrivner Institute remains a driving force for meaningful, research-based solutions to today's most pressing policy challenges.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fritz Mayer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line above the first name.

Fritz Mayer
Dean of the Josef Korbel School
of Global and Public Affairs



The Scrivner Institute of Public Policy has fast become a vibrant hub for innovative, evidence-based learning and discourse about public policy at the Josef Korbel School of Global and Public Affairs, across the University of Denver, and in our wider communities.

At a time when political rhetoric is overheated, we have explored hard questions with curiosity and respectful dialogue. In so doing, we have built a reputation for the Scrivner Institute as a convenor of wide-ranging conversations. Our two signature series — the Scrivner Policy Roundtable and the Denver Dialogues — reflect the local to global span of our programming.

With outstanding additions to our core faculty at the Korbel School and via strong cross-campus ties, the Scrivner Institute houses public policy curricula for the 21st century. Our degrees ensure that students build solid policy analysis skills, then immerse them in experiential learning and enable them to choose a contemporary policy specialization. Alumni of our programs are thriving in city, state, national, and international policy-related careers.

The Scrivner Institute is home to interdisciplinary research on strengthening democratic governance, reducing inequality and enhancing inclusion, and catalyzing urban policy innovation. We are dedicated to promoting scholarly contributions to public debate and policymaking, manifested in our Colorado Project and Bridging the Gap initiatives.

It is an immense honor for me to hold the Scrivner Professor of Public Policy endowed chair and to serve as the founding Director of the Scrivner Institute. I am deeply grateful for the support of Doug and Mary Scrivner and the partnership of so many at the Korbel School and across DU. And I am excited about the possibilities ahead as we reinforce our identity as a premier public policy institute, recognized for our robust engagement with the foremost policy issues of the day and our commitment to the collective good.

With gratitude,



Naazneen Barma
Director of the Scrivner
Institute of Public Policy



Scrivner Policy Roundtable

The Scrivner Policy Roundtable is an event series that fosters a collaborative research and learning network among Denver metro policy actors and the campus community on local policy issues. Each roundtable features a presentation by a roundtable member on a specific element of their policy work, followed by a facilitated discussion on the policy issue at hand. To date, the Institute has organized 8 roundtables, engaging 20 community partner organizations and connecting them to campus.

Highlights

Addressing Homelessness and the Housing Crisis Through Guaranteed Income, November 2023

Presented by the Denver Basic Income Project

Following an evidence-based presentation on the impact that guaranteed income can have for people with limited financial resources, this roundtable included active group discussion and idea generation around the potential continuation and expansion of such initiatives.

The State of Aging in Colorado, March 2022

Presented by Bell Policy Center

The Bell Policy Center discussed their State of Aging report, which assesses how state policies and systems can better support older Coloradans.

Housing Affordability, November 2021

Presented by Common Sense Institute

This roundtable featured a practical consensus-based approach on housing affordability and how to maintain Colorado's quality of life and economic competitiveness.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Scrivner Institute's signature programs are aimed at foregrounding the most pressing policy challenges and opportunities of our day and designed to contribute to the renewal of our society's ability to engage in informed and productive dialogue on these issues. Our three flagship programs span local to global policy issues.



Scrivner Policy Roundtable presentation on The Farm Bill

Denver Dialogues

In tandem with the Korbel School, the Scrivner Institute convenes the Denver Dialogues, a series in partnership with four premier think tanks that convenes experts for substantive conversation on pressing policy issues at the national and global level, with an emphasis on presenting diverse perspectives on policy solutions.



Korbel Students, Scrivner Institute Director Naazneen Barma, and Korbel Dean Fritz Mayer at Aspen Security Forum

Denver Dialogue Partners:



Highlights

The Democracy–Climate Nexus, January 2025

This special edition dialogue was convened as part of the Denver Democracy Summit, and interrogated how climate change and democracy are inextricably linked.

U.S. Congressional Reform – Evolution or Revolution? March 2024

Panelists discussed the state of the U.S. Congress and whether its legislative dysfunction and lack of effectiveness can be addressed by institutional reforms or requires a more dramatic overhaul.

The Global Democracy Agenda, July 2023

This special edition dialogue was convened in partnership with the Aspen Security Forum, and provided unique perspectives on the state of democracy around the world and underlying forces driving democratic erosion.

Denver Dialogues Kick-Off Event, October 2022

The leaders of our four partner organizations – Condoleezza Rice (Hoover), Anne-Marie Slaughter (New America), Dan Porterfield (Aspen) and Robert Doar (AEI) – discussed the importance of civil discourse for a healthy democracy.

Aspen Security Forum Partnership

Over the past three years, the Scrivner Institute of Public Policy and Korbel School have proudly partnered with the Aspen Institute to offer a Denver Dialogues panel at the Aspen Strategy Group's annual Aspen Security Forum (ASF), the premier national security and foreign policy conference in the United States.

In July 2024, the Aspen Institute generously extended four complementary passes to Korbel students to join Korbel Dean Fritz Mayer and Scrivner Institute Director Naazneen Barma at the Forum. The students made the most of the opportunity to engage with experts in international security and diplomacy, learn about the most pressing global issues from domestic and global leaders, and to network with policymakers, diplomats, and scholars. Four new students attended the Forum in summer of 2025 on behalf of Korbel to continue this exciting partnership.



Highlighted Scholar

The scholarship I received from the Scrivner Institute played a pivotal role in shaping both my academic and professional journey. It allowed me to concentrate fully on my studies and strive for excellence throughout my degree program, without the constant worry of financial stress that so often accompanies higher education. This support eased that burden and gave me the freedom to explore new opportunities within my field of public policy. It enabled me to pursue an internship with the City and County of Denver—an experience that has since evolved into a full-time position. I'm incredibly grateful, as this support allowed me to broaden my horizons and step into a meaningful career in public service that I might not have otherwise considered. Above all, it gave me the confidence and financial flexibility to take bold steps toward building a career dedicated to serving others.

Summer Sargent, MPP '24



The Colorado Project

The Colorado Project serves as a platform for statewide deliberation on the challenging issues affecting Colorado. Each year, the Scrivner Institute and the Josef Korbel School of Global and Public Affairs convene a politically and geographically diverse group of civic, political, and private sector leaders to focus intensively on a core series of locally salient public policy challenges. Each group will put civil discourse into action, working together to produce a set of comprehensive, collaborative policy recommendations to address the challenge. The goal is to establish common ground geared toward practical solutions for the public good.

In 2023-2024, the Colorado Project convened a group of 32 community and policy leaders from throughout Colorado to design a pragmatic strategy to catalyze sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the state. The group took a comprehensive high-level

approach, working together to show how different policy dimensions – from sustainable water and energy use to addressing our workforce and housing challenges – are connected and how we can use those linkages to build a more sustainable and more prosperous future for all. The report and recommendations were presented to various state officials, including Senator Michael Bennet, Governor Jared Polis' office, and CO Attorney General Phil Weiser.

The next phase of the Colorado Project will uncover and scale the most promising economic, workforce, and sustainability solutions emerging from Colorado's rural communities. Colorado Project 2.0 will be a community effort to showcase how the future of Colorado is being shaped in its rural communities, which exemplify their fortitude through innovation, collaboration, and impact-driven action.



Colorado Project participants with Senator Michael Bennet after presenting the report and recommendations



Events

The Scrivner Institute has hosted a wide range of discussions and dialogues over the past 5 years, spanning policy dialogues, legislative recaps, and high-profile guest speakers. Our timely events respond to the ever-evolving policy landscape in Colorado, the U.S., and the world.

Recent Events of Note:

Trump Administration 2.0: From Policy Intent to Consequence:

A panel of faculty experts examined the stated and implicit intentions of the Trump Administration in various policy areas and analyzed the potential consequences in the national and global policy landscape.

Mayoral Debate: The Scrivner Institute, the Center on American Politics, the Denver Gazette, and Colorado Politics co-hosted a mayoral debate at the University of Denver, inviting the DU and broader Denver communities to hear from the final mayoral candidates, Kelly Brough and Mike Johnston.

Veterans & Democracy Panel: The Scrivner Institute, in partnership with the Hoover Institution's Veteran Fellowship Program, hosted a panel discussion on the important role of veterans in American democracy and their contributions to civil society after their military service.

Webinar on Colorado Prop 123: A panel of experts discussed CO Proposition 123, an affordable housing ballot measure that ultimately passed in the November 2022 election.



Highlighted Events With Colorado Elected Officials

2024 Colorado Post-Legislative Session Review, May 2024

The Colorado Sun moderated conversations with Governor Jared Polis and state legislators about the challenges and successes of the 2024 Legislative Session.

Discussing Denver with Mayor Mike Johnston, May 2024

DU faculty and students posed questions to Mayor Johnston on some of the major issues facing Denver including public safety and housing.

Finding Common Ground Through Dialogue, February 2023

Following a screening of "The Unity Challenge" documentary, Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser and DU faculty examined the practice of civil discourse.

Local Level Collaboration: From Crisis to Opportunity, November 2021

A panel of mayors from across the Denver metro region discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cross-city collaboration and new opportunities that emerged for increased collaboration.



Scrivner Institute team with Senator Michael Bennet

EVENT PARTNERS:

Center on American Politics

Center for Immigration Policy &
Research

City and County of Denver

Climate Conscious Corps

Colorado Attorney General's Office

Colorado Governor's Office

Colorado Politics

Colorado Sun

Conflict Engagement & Resolution
Initiative

Denver Gazette

Hoover Institution's Veteran
Fellowship Program

Institute for Comparative and
Regional Studies

Korbel Policy Society

Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute

Sié Chéou-Kang Center for
International Security and
Diplomacy

Unify America

University of Denver College of Arts,
Humanities, and Social Sciences

University of Denver Josef Korbel
School of Global and Public Affairs

University of Denver Veterans
Services

Faculty Affiliates and Research

The number of faculty from across the University of Denver affiliated with the Scrivner Institute has grown to 23 since Fall 2020. These faculty affiliates specialize in a wide range of policy-relevant topics including public health, inequality, urban innovation, transportation, environmental justice, immigration, and education, among many others. As a group, these faculty have contributed valuable research in their respective areas of expertise, publishing close to 150 articles in academic journals and being featured nearly 60 times by various media outlets since the fall of 2021.

The Scrivner Institute has carved out a research identity over the past five years that leverages the expertise of our faculty affiliates and serves our mandate of interdisciplinary work and a local to global focus. Our research approach emphasizes rigorous scholarship engaged in the public and policy spheres and centers inclusive and ethical principles. In 2025, the Scrivner Institute officially became a designated University Research Institute in recognition of its growing research portfolio and breadth of partnerships.

The Institute supports innovative research that falls into three main pillars:

Strengthening Democratic Governance

A crisis of legitimacy besets government and civic institutions in the United States and around the world. The deterioration of civil discourse layers on top of recent decades of rising political radicalization and social polarization. The Scrivner Institute explores efforts to renew society's ability to engage in productive dialogue — and thereby improve policy outcomes as well as how people experience the processes of democratic governance.

Example projects:

- **Bureaucratic Resistance in an Age of Autocratization:** Led by Professor Rachel Sigman, this research project investigates

when, how, and why state bureaucracies act as constraints on aspiring autocrats seeking to entrench their power and undermine democratic institutions.

- **Bridging the Gap:** A project funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and housed at the Korbel School in partnership with the Scrivner Institute, Bridging the Gap promotes scholarly contributions to public debate and decision making on global challenges and U.S. foreign policy.





Reducing Inequality & Enhancing Inclusion

Systemic injustices — economic, racial, geographic, and more — abound from the local to global levels. Scholars affiliated with the Scrivner Institute research how specific policy interventions contribute to reducing inequality and enhancing inclusion.

Example Projects:

- Assistant Professor Kaitlyn Sims is evaluating the Wisconsin Domestic Violence Housing First program, which serves domestic violence (DV) survivors' needs by removing barriers to housing stability via flexible financial assistance, mobile advocacy, trauma-informed practice, and partnerships with community housing providers.
- Assistant Professor Ajenai Clemmons, together with researchers at University of Pennsylvania and Duke University, is leading an impact evaluation of the Denver Police Department's (DPD) program for investigating non-fatal shootings.
- An interdisciplinary group of Scrivner-affiliated faculty — Dr. Jennifer Greenfield (Social Work), Dr. Chiara Piovani (Economics), Dr. Lapo Salucci (Public Policy), and Dr. Hinckley Jones-Sanpei (Public Policy) — are exploring the stratified impacts of COVID-19 on economic inequality and wellbeing and will deliver policy suggestions designed to enhance social and economic justice.

Catalyzing Urban Policy Innovation

Cities often lead the charge on bold new policy approaches to issues that are also salient on a national and global level, such as climate change, public health, housing, and labor policy. Our home of Denver, CO offers prime examples of urban policy innovation. The Scrivner Institute is developing a research program on the role of the city as a global policy actor, through a comparative lens, to further understand the unique and imperative role of urban policy.

Example projects:

- Teaching Professor Lapo Salucci researches the relationship between public policy, public satisfaction with services, and cross-city migration. One of his recent pieces of research, in cooperation with Prof. Kenneth N. Bickers of the University of Colorado at Boulder, explores the partisan dimensions of local policy choices, with particular attention to sustainability policies versus traditional redistributive policies in US municipalities.
- Teaching Assistant Professor Stefan Chavez-Norgaard, in collaboration with colleagues including Susan Daggett at the Sturm College of Law, Daniel Brisson, Director of the Center on Housing and Homelessness at the Graduate School of Social Work, and Vivek Sah, Director of the Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management in the Daniels College of Business, is working on a project that seeks to provide housing educational programs, develop and analyze data and research to support sound housing policy at the state level, and provide thought leadership around housing and land use in the Intermountain West.

Public Policy Program Updates

Over the past five years, the Korbel School has recruited three new faculty members to teach in the Public Policy program — Assistant Professor Ajenai Clemmons, Assistant Professor Kaitlyn Sims, and Teaching Assistant Professor Stefan Chavez-Norgaard. Scrivner Associate Professor of the Practice Matt Kazan was on the faculty for three years as well. Together, these core faculty members in Public Policy, along with additional offerings from other Korbel professors have greatly expanded the program's graduate and undergraduate offerings and scope.

Over the same period, the Master of Public Policy (MPP) curriculum has been modernized and revamped. Students can now specialize in specific issue areas and take courses in other departments and schools that complement their public policy degree. The enhanced

curriculum offers new courses focusing on timely topics including climate policy, health policy, and housing policy as well as expanded skills offerings and experiential learning opportunities through policy labs and internships.

A new dual track structure also offers students a choice between a U.S. or global policy focus, further allowing them to customize and focus their learning. In fall of 2024, a stand-alone certificate in Public Policy was introduced to allow students from other degree programs and non-degree seeking students to take courses in the program.

The undergraduate curriculum has similarly been modernized to emphasize the core analytical, practical, and professional elements and benefits of a public policy degree.



Highlighted Scholar

I am an active-duty officer in the United States Army selected to teach at the United States Military Academy at West Point after completing my graduate degree. Generous donations have allowed me to pursue my graduate education at the school of my choice. I am incredibly excited to be at Korbel and optimistic that my education will serve me well in preparing the Nation's next generation of Army officers to operate morally and ethically in an increasingly complex world.

**Micah Gahagen
U.S. Army
Master of Public Policy Candidate 2026**



Student Numbers

Since 2020

73

Students graduated from the MPP program

61

Undergraduate Students graduated from the public policy program

32

Students are registered in the MPP program

60

Students are registered in the public policy program



Graduating MPP students with Scrivner Director Naazneen Barma

Master of Public Policy Capstone Projects and Presentations

The MPP capstone project has also been revitalized in recent years, allowing students more flexibility to choose a topic and mode of analysis that best aligns with their post-graduation trajectories and interests. The capstone projects of recent graduates have focused on policy issues as diverse as housing affordability in Denver, broadband access in rural areas, school-based mental health services, migrant labor rights in Qatar, and more.

We celebrate the end of each academic year with student capstone presentations to faculty,

staff, community partners, and fellow students. This community highlight enables us to recognize the rigorous and inspiring culmination of each student's journey in the MPP program.

This year, we introduced a new tradition to our hallmark event by presenting awards for outstanding capstone projects, as nominated by capstone advisors and selected by a faculty committee.



Looking Ahead

After an initial five years of tremendous growth, during which we've focused on carving out a distinctive identity and building strong relationships across campus and in the broader community, the Scrivner Institute is poised for an exciting next phase.

Our programming and public engagement position us as a hub to aid our community in better understanding the current policy landscape. We will continue to provide a platform for policy dialogue encompassing the local to the global. We aim to increase our engagement with policy actors, including elected officials, to ensure our work serves as an evidence-based resource for policy-shapers and policy-makers.

On the curriculum side, we will continue to grow and adapt our offerings in the graduate and undergraduate public policy programs, emphasizing Korbel's and DU's competitive advantages. Expanded international partnerships will provide a "Global MPP" experience, with more opportunities for student exchanges and faculty collaboration,

further highlighting the uniqueness of a public policy program situated within a school of international affairs.

We will also deepen our connection to local and state governments to provide students with beneficial learning opportunities and career outcomes.

Over the coming years we plan to build out our research agenda, navigating a volatile policy environment by supporting and amplifying the innovative work of our interdisciplinary faculty. We will continue to organize convenings to highlight the expertise of our faculty, while seeking out new projects, partnerships, and resources to support them. We will nurture more collaborative opportunities for faculty to engage in research with students, researchers across DU, and community partners, ensuring that the work of the Scrivner Institute contributes to the public good.



To learn more about how you can support the Scrivner Institute's mission to promote public policy solutions to our most pressing collective problems, please visit korbel.du.edu/scrivner.

THE
DENVER DIFFERENCE
WHAT DU CAN DO

For more information visit: denverdifference.org