

Dr. Rhonda M. Epper was named the sole finalist for the CSU Pueblo president role on Dec. 4, 2025.

Rhonda M. Epper, Ph.D., has served as President of Trinidad State College since June 2019. Trinidad State is based in Southern Colorado with campuses in Trinidad and Alamosa. Dr. Epper has spent her career serving all levels of the higher education sector – at the college level (rural and urban), system level, state level, as well as regional and national policy levels.

During her tenure at Trinidad State, Dr. Epper oversaw a \$45 million capital funding campaign and led the coalition to change the college's name from Trinidad State Junior College. She built strong partnerships to advance economic development in the region, launched the college's first bachelor's degrees in nursing and business, and created new programs in cybersecurity, robotics, and advanced manufacturing, along with new investment in the visual and performing arts.

She guided the campus through the pandemic and to stable enrollment post-pandemic; increased budget reserves; and saw graduation rate increases that are the highest in the state's community college system. Under Epper's leadership, Trinidad State was named a semi-finalist for the 2025 Aspen Prize – the nation's premier recognition of community college excellence, based on strong student outcomes and post-graduation success, including for those historically underserved in higher education.

Trinidad State is a federally designated Hispanic Serving Institution and has consistently maintained the state's smallest equity gaps on most measures.

Prior to taking the helm at Trinidad State, Dr. Epper was provost and vice president for academic affairs at Community College of Denver, one of several leadership roles she's held over many years with the Colorado Community College System. She also served as chief academic and student affairs officer at the Colorado Department of Higher Education, and as a regional director for the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

She is recipient of the WCET (WICHE) award for lifetime achievement; was a Fellow with the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research, and a Presidential Fellow with the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. Dr. Epper served on the board of NCHEMS (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems) for nine years and currently is a trustee for Mt. San Rafael Hospital and the A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art, both in Trinidad, Colorado. She is also a member of the El Pomar Foundation's Southeast Regional Council.

She earned her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Denver, along with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Texas at Austin.