PAFC Volunteer Receives CSU's Scholarly Excellence Award



PAFC is honored to recognize longtime volunteer Dr. Ally Brothers as the 2026 recipient of CSU's College of Health and Human Science Non-Tenure-Track Faculty/AP Scholarly Excellence Award. This award recognizes her outstanding research, creative works, and/or scholarly endeavors highlighting significant contributions that she has made to the academic community.

Her career in Psychology started with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology (summa cum Laude) from Roanoke College, and a Master's in Applied Psychological Research from Penn State. From 2007-2011, she worked as a Research Associate in the Penn State College of Medicine's Department of Neurology, supporting clinical research for patients living with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) on the topics of neuropsychological assessment, caregiver support, advance-care planning, fall prevention and more. Realizing the power of research to transform lives, she then decided to pursue her doctorate in Applied Developmental Science at CSU, under the mentorship of Dr. Manfred Diehl. In this role, she found a passion for studying how psychological processes can shape physical health throughout the lifespan, and conducted research on views of aging and their impact on health and longevity.

Since obtaining her PhD in 2016, she has been on the teaching faculty in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS). In this role, she combines her passion for disseminating research about healthy aging through teaching and community-engaged scholarship. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses related to adult development and aging; risk and resilience across the lifespan; introduction to gerontology; death, dying and grief; and senior capstone. Central to her teaching is a focus on community-engaged learning, in which students have opportunities to learn from local and national guest speakers, to complete projects in the community, and to take field trips outside of the classroom – these experiences help students to understand current challenges as well as creative solutions to promoting and expanding opportunities for healthy aging for individuals of all backgrounds and experiences.

Dr. Brothers has taught 121 courses with over 3,100 enrollments equivalent to approximately 9,400 credit hours. Students remark about Dr. Brothers' engaged and supportive teaching style, and her focus on listening carefully to her students and caring about them as individuals.

Dr. Brothers continues a small but active role in research, along with her teaching and community engaged scholarship projects. She has published 30 articles in peer-reviewed journals and handbooks, and more than 50 conference presentations and symposia. She has given several community presentations and webinars, a podcast, and has been interviewed for The Guardian and WebMD.

For over ten years, Dr. Brothers has been a passionate supporter of PAFC, serving on the Health and Wellness Priority Group since graduate school, and more recently representing CSU on PAFC's Information and Referral Committee. Dr. Brothers was a key collaborator in the grassroots development of Senior Access Points. She also partners with the Larimer County CSU Extension's Market Days program, which provides fresh produce to older adults at Larimer County Farmers' Market (see photo). With Market Days, Dr. Brothers supports program evaluation efforts as well as hands-on student learning opportunities.

Dr. Brothers is the faculty advisor to the student-run CSU Healthy Aging Club (formerly CSU Gerontology Club). Club officers organize events each month to connect about careers in aging and to support community activities including the Walk to End Alzheimer's (see photo). The Healthy Aging Club frequently co-sponsors and participates in PAFC's Intergenerational Conversations events.

Dr. Brothers resides in Fort Collins with her husband and two boys ages 8 and 5 (see photo). You are likely to find them in the mountains, on the soccer field, or on a bike ride around town supporting the local, live music scene.

PAFC is honored to recognize this standout Colorado State Associate Professor for her valued work and leadership in the community.

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Photos:



Family photo



Market Days for Older Adults



Walk to End Alzheimer’s