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COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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CommunityConnection is a quarterly e-newsletter from The Colorado Trust

STRENGTHENING IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

The concept is simple: facilitate conversations among community members who might otherwise never cross paths. The result is powerful: people helping people in unexpected ways.

“In Boulder County, there are several resources for immigrants, like ESL classes and immigrant rights services,” said Leslie Irwin, coordinator of a four-year [Dialogues on Immigrant Integration](#) project under The Colorado Trust’s [Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative](#) (SIRFI). “But we realized that there wasn’t much opportunity for meaningful communication among immigrants and members of their receiving communities. So we provide forums for people to interact, engage in conversation, create relationships, build understanding and hopefully collaborate over time.”



Participants in Dialogues for Immigrant Integration strive to build understanding, improve relationships and create collaboration among immigrant and non-immigrant community members in Boulder County.

Specifically, Dialogues – a coalition of county, city, school and nonprofit leaders and community members – promotes exchange among immigrant and non-immigrant community members.

“Dialogue Groups are based on Study Circle methodology where 8 to 14 people meet every week for two hours over a period of five to six weeks,” said Irwin. “This format encourages immigrants and receiving community members to build relationships in a group setting and really dive into such issues as how immigrant parents can get involved in their kids’ schools. It’s entirely participant-driven – people talk about whatever they think is important, from family issues to legal and human services topics.”

The project also comprises Dialogue Days that bring together 50 to 100 immigrants and receiving community members in facilitated one-day events to foster discussions from various viewpoints, as well as Action Forums that help participants from Dialogue Groups and Dialogue Days put into practice their ideas

for collaborative action. Dialogues also provides seed money and technical assistance for various efforts to reach out to immigrants, including support groups and “welcome wagons” that contain helpful pointers for new arrivals.

“Language learning, networking and friendships are corollaries to the Dialogues,” said Irwin. “Some immigrants and receiving community folks continue to build on the relationships with the people they meet – for example, to help immigrants improve their language skills or for a receiving community member to learn Spanish from an immigrant.”

Case in point are Leonard and Jorge who met in a Dialogue Group. Soon, they began meeting regularly with Leonard advising Jorge in his first steps as a small business owner, including how to negotiate the systems, processes and paperwork required to run a business.

“They’ve become good friends,” continued Irwin. “The non-immigrant, experienced White male is helping the younger Mexican male to become more knowledgeable and self-sufficient in his day-to-day life.

“We’ve observed that when people come together in conversation they learn something new about each other, themselves and other cultures. Our bottom line is to enable immigrants and their receiving community to come together and talk about things openly, respectfully and deeply.”

According to Irwin, Dialogues’ grass roots, reality-based approach has already helped meet the challenges of large-scale immigration in Boulder County by bringing together approximately 300 immigrants – primarily from Latin America, the Middle East, China and various European countries – with non-immigrant residents in the past six months.

Indeed, Colorado’s rapidly growing immigrant population and the initial successes of 10 community grantees currently funded under the SIRFI effort led The Trust to commit an additional \$4.5 million to support nine more Colorado communities in strengthening immigrant integration. This brings The Trust’s total commitment to SIRFI to \$18 million over a 10-year period (2000-2010).

Each of the nine new grantees has received initial grants of \$10,000 to bring together broad collaboratives to develop comprehensive immigrant integration plans tailored to the needs of their communities. Collaboratives will include such members as health care providers, educators, businesses, law enforcement, libraries, local government, faith-based organizations, immigrant-serving organizations and immigrants themselves. Following the six- to eight-month planning process, each of the nine communities will be eligible to receive grants of up to \$75,000 per year for four years to implement their plans.

The nine new grantee communities are:

1. City and County of Denver
2. Cities of Greeley and Evans
3. City of Commerce City
4. La Plata County
5. Montrose and Delta counties
6. Original Aurora
7. Routt and Moffat counties
8. San Luis Valley
9. Telluride Region.

An independent evaluation of this immigrant integration strategy is being conducted by the [Association for the Study and Development of Community](#) in Gaithersburg, Maryland, to assess how communities form collaboratives to support immigrant integration, what community outcomes are achieved and the changes in the sense of integration among immigrants and non-immigrants in the funded communities.

For more information about this initiative, contact Susan Downs-Karkos, Senior Program Officer, 303-837-1200, susan@coloradotrusted.org. For more information about the associated evaluation, contact Nancy Csuti, Director of Evaluation, 303-837-1200, nancy@coloradotrusted.org.



TRUST HOSTS SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION SUMMIT

As a follow-up to the recent White House School Safety Summit, The Colorado Trust convened law enforcement and education leaders to discuss what is already being done to make Colorado schools safer, and how to significantly improve school safety across the state.

In addressing participants, Governor Bill Ritter (then Governor-elect) noted that – during his campaign for governor – school shootings were clearly a major concern. This, coupled with his experience as Denver District Attorney, led him to make a commitment to address the matter. “I was on the Columbine task force,” he told participants, “and I’ve thought hard about this. If you think about all the things that we’ve done and the focus on the issue post-Columbine – and then to have these other things happening – there is a sense of frustration that we didn’t prevent it. I know we can’t prevent everything, but we have to focus on public policy that allows us to do our best and be able to say, ‘We’ve done all we can.’” Ritter also suggested that “No one is watching people coming in and going out of schools. I’m not talking about having armed guards, but about realistic strategies to address ingress and egress.”

Following Ritter’s remarks were a series of presentations by Del Elliot, Director, Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence; Susan Payne, Special Agent/Director, [Safe2Tell](#); Don Quick, District Attorney, Adams and Broomfield counties; and Larry Borland, Director of School Safety/Transportation, Douglas County. In turn, participants discussed the data, as well as the realities they’ve experienced. All agreed that serious incidences of school violence are unpredictable and random. They can, and do occur in places where one would least expect, yet schools rarely fully consider themselves to be vulnerable targets. This lack of awareness and acknowledgement underlies lack of foresight and preparedness and indicates a need for ongoing training and prevention strategies.

Several successes and challenges were noted, including efforts designed to improve the way critical information is shared among school personnel, law enforcement and other entities responsible for school safety. However, further discussion is needed regarding the effectiveness of strategies designed to limit school access and increase camera monitoring. Some participants saw this as critical to increasing school safety, yet research has shown that weapon detectors and such are not effective deterrents, particularly in instances when the attacker may be suicidal. Participants also pointed to the public’s desire to have open access to buildings they consider a part of their community.



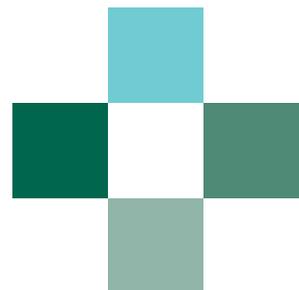
Governor Ritter speaks to participants at The Trust's School Violence Prevention Summit.

TRUSTNEWS, *continued*

A number of participants also support the possibility of creating a centralized School Safety Center to oversee and coordinate statewide efforts, while others questioned adding another potential level of bureaucracy that would be only remotely connected to schools and would likely siphon funding away from on-the-ground programs.

The Trust, which has led several efforts to address school violence issues, and participants agreed to continue as a working group with the proactive goal of strengthening school safety.

For additional information, contact Ed Lucero, Senior Program Officer, 303-837-1200, ed@coloradotrust.org.





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TRUST CO-HOSTS SCHOOL HEALTH SUMMIT

On November 13, [The Colorado Health Foundation](#) and The Colorado Trust co-sponsored the School Health Summit. This gathering brought together local and national leaders in government, business, nonprofit organizations and philanthropy to share best practices and to begin identifying ways to build on existing efforts to provide quality school-based health care.

Speakers – including Julia Lear of the [Center for Health and Healthcare in Schools](#) at George Washington University, Bill Potts-Datema of the [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](#), and Ann McCracken of [The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati](#) – provided national and historical perspectives on school health, as well as an overview of best practices in school-based health care, including prevention and wellness. Further discussion areas included policy, program, infrastructure and funding mechanisms for school health services.

Additionally, Bruce Guernsey, Director of the [Colorado School-Based Health Center Initiative](#), shared early findings of a school health study – also jointly sponsored by The Trust and The Colorado Health Foundation – that will be completed in early 2007. Preliminary exploration into issues related to school health, cross-cutting local and national trends, indicate that quality standards of school care are especially lacking for students with identified health needs and that school-based health centers must organize collectively to develop statewide changes.

When completed, the school health study will be posted to www.coloradotrust.org. For additional information, contact Laurel Petralia, Program Officer, 303-837-1200, laurel@coloradotrust.org.

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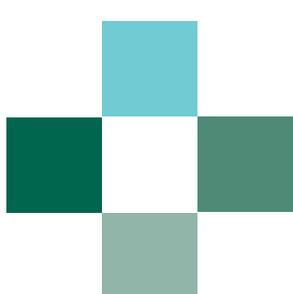
SPOTLIGHT ON SENIORS

In partnership with the [Rose Community Foundation](#), The Colorado Trust is conducting a statewide assessment of how Baby Boomers envision themselves regarding work, service and learning. The assessment is intended to identify how to better tap into and engage the tremendous pool of social and human capital that Boomers represent, especially in their collective motivation to serve a greater good.

This effort dovetails The Trust's four-year (2006-2010), \$6.5 million [Healthy Aging Initiative](#), supporting senior-serving organizations to strengthen and increase their ability to provide services to today's seniors.

Grantees of this new initiative will focus their efforts on the interests most critical to the state's growing aging population – from providing improved availability of information and referral services to strengthening caregiver support services, addressing residential needs and promoting healthy lifestyles and wellness.

For more information, contact Ginger Harrell, Program Officer, 303-837-1200, ginger@coloradotrust.org.



TRUSTNEWS

TRUSTEE PROFILE: JEAN JONES

Jean Jones, President and CEO of Girl Scouts – Mile Hi Council, served as a Trustee of The Colorado Trust from 1996 through 2006. As she approached the conclusion of her tenure as a board member, Jean shared her thoughts on Trust grantmaking efforts over the past decade, as well as opportunities for the future.

CommunityConnection: What did you know of The Colorado Trust 10 years ago when you were asked to serve as a Trustee?

Jean Jones: I had served on the Presbyterian/St. Luke's Hospital Foundation Board, so I had knowledge about the very formation of The Colorado Trust and was enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve on The Trust's Board. From the start I believed its initiative-based funding approach could really benefit the nonprofit community.

CC: From your perspective, what are some of the most important issues The Trust has addressed over the last decade?

JJ: Because it is so unique, I think the **Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Families Initiative** is one of the most significant. The initiative and evaluation of the **Nurse-Family Partnership Program** also has been so important. You really can see the scope and impact of that initiative. I appreciated too the evaluation conducted for our early **Colorado Healthy Communities Initiative**. It was objective and showed that individuals in participating communities who focused on the project and provided leadership had the ability to pull others into that passion. The lesson we learned is that leadership is key, and we've really taken that to heart in other initiatives. I also want to mention the **Colorado Health Institute**. It was an innovative undertaking with three foundations working together to form this objective organization.

CC: What are some of the toughest decisions you and the Board have grappled with?

JJ: Prioritizing funding areas has certainly been tough. There also have been challenges trying to understand the full scope of issues and problems, and in determining which slice to take on. And it's been hard to see many of the individual initiatives come to an end.

CC: What do you see in the future for The Trust?

JJ: Working with foundations and funders for so long, I believe there's been a real commitment at The Trust to actually partner with the groups we fund. There's a total lack of arrogance. I don't think



Jean Jones, Trustee of The Colorado Trust for the past decade.

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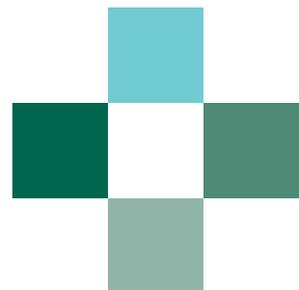
anybody thinks of it as “my” money; it’s in trust to serve the community. It’s important for The Trust to keep that humility and the focus on the people being served through the nonprofit community. John Moran has been a great role model in this regard, not only for The Colorado Trust but for the foundation community as well. I also hope the commitment continues for judicious partnering with other funders, and a willingness to take informed risks.

CC: What have you most enjoyed about your role as a Trustee?

JJ: Most enjoyable has been learning about many of the needs in our state. I’ve also certainly enjoyed working with my fellow Trustees and the staff – we’ve had a wonderful group of people. I also know our two new Trustees (R.J. Ross and Gail Schoettler) and know that they’ll serve The Trust well.

Trust Board members may serve up to two, five-year terms. Sister Lillian Murphy, RSM, President and CEO of Mercy Housing, Inc., also retired at the end of 2006 following 10 years of service to The Colorado Trust. Sister Murphy will be profiled in an upcoming edition of CommunityConnection.

Trustees and staff of The Colorado Trust are grateful to Jean for her steadfast leadership, as well as her skilled ability and willingness to ask hard questions, and she is much admired for her elegant manner.



BULLYING PREVENTION GRANTEE WINS AWARD

The Colorado Trust congratulates the **San Luis Valley Victim Offender Reconciliation Program** – a grantee of The Trust’s **Bullying Prevention Initiative** – for their much-deserved recognition at the **El Pomar Foundation’s 18th annual Awards for Excellence**.

Specifically, VORP received the Henry McAllister Award for Excellence in Special Projects as well as \$15,000 toward its programs focused on victim-offender mediation, restorative discipline as an alternative to school suspensions, parent-teen mediation and bullying prevention training.

VORP works with the criminal justice system as well as 14 school districts, including implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to provide activities for 180 youths at five after-school programs, and increasing outreach to adults and youth in neighboring schools and churches.



For more information, contact Ed Lucero, Senior Program Officer, 303-837-1200, ed@coloradotrust.org.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IMPACTS CLEAR CREEK COUNTY

There are many forms of technical assistance, ranging from operational to management support. Under its three-year (2005-2008), \$10.2 million **Health Professions Initiative**, The Colorado Trust provides technical assistance to strengthen the effectiveness of its grantees, including Red Rocks Community College (RRCC).

“The combined efforts of **Red Rocks Community College**, the Clear Creek County Health Advisory and The Colorado Trust have succeeded in launching the only family practice clinic in Clear Creek County that serves uninsured and new Medicaid clients,” said Joan W. Smith, Executive Director of Planning, Research and Strategic Initiatives at RRCC. “Support for technical assistance has helped the Clear Creek County Health Advisory to expand its network of resources and providers, including other Trust grantees. The Clear Creek County Health Advisory was also enabled to recruit and retain Dr. Elane Shirar to assume physician oversight of the Meadows Family Clinic in Idaho Springs.”

Technical assistance support further enabled a consultant to conduct a feasibility study of the clinic and to create a business plan for its sustainability.

“Besides providing an array of free to low-cost preventative and health care services, the Meadows Family Clinic also serves an important role as a clinical placement training site for the more than 150 students annually enrolled in RRCC’s Nurse’s Aide, Physician Assistant and Medical Assistant programs,” continued Smith. “Clear Creek County is working with Dr. Shirar to house the clinic in a larger space with full-time hours so that these students have a rural health care site in a medically underserved community less than 30 minutes from metro Denver in which to complete required internships and clinicals.”

“We are extremely enthusiastic about filling the affordable health care void in Clear Creek County,” said Jim Keller, Director of RRCC’s Physician Assistant Program.

For more information, contact Laurel Petralia, Program Officer, 303-837-1200, laurel@coloradotrust.org.

MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES POLICY BRIEF

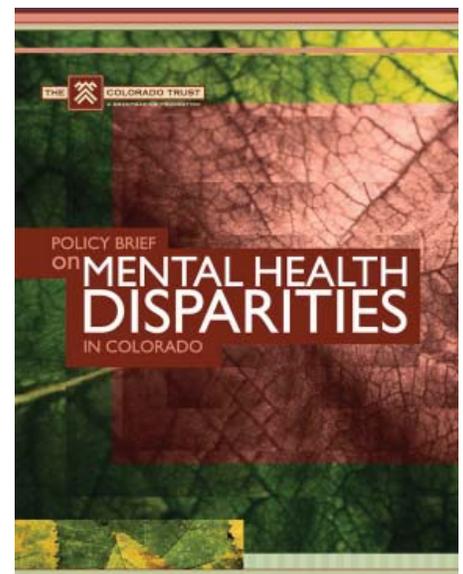
The newly published *Policy Brief on Mental Health Disparities in Colorado* was commissioned by The Colorado Trust to inform its grantmaking activities related to advancing quality mental health care. Based on an extensive literature review on mental health disparities, input from community members and an advisory group comprised of Colorado community mental health leaders, the *Brief* also includes input from participants in the November 2006 Colorado Mental Health Disparities Summit.

The *Brief* addresses the need for the provision of quality mental health care for individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, noting that the consequences of inadequate or inappropriate mental health services are serious, resulting in such things as an overrepresentation of communities of color in government systems like juvenile justice, criminal justice and child welfare; decreased productivity in the workplace; increased homelessness; and increased physical health care costs.

The policy issues identified as needing particular attention include:

- Allowing reimbursement of culturally-traditional, indigenous, faith-based or alternative services within the mainstream mental health system
- Removing financial and regulatory barriers, providing incentives, encouraging collaboration and rewarding communities that integrate and utilize culturally-traditional services and best practices
- Enhancing education and expanding the cultural competency of the current and future workforce at all levels of care
- Creating a more diverse workforce to enhance the mental health of communities of color
- And convening diverse stakeholders to develop culturally appropriate guidelines.

The *Brief* and the full report are available at www.coloradotrusted.org.

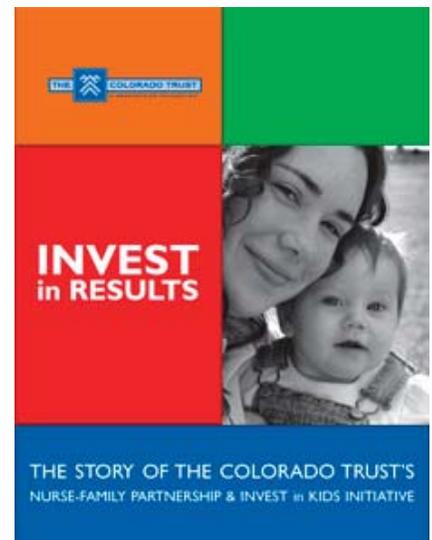


INVEST IN RESULTS – THE STORY OF NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

A new Trust publication – *Invest in Results. The Story of The Colorado Trust's Nurse-Family Partnership & Invest in Kids Initiative* – looks at the ingredients of a success story: the Nurse-Family Partnership. This program pairs nurses with at-risk, first-time mothers in their homes with the goals of improving their prenatal health and the outcomes of their pregnancies; improving their children's health and development by equipping parents with good parenting skills; and improving the mothers' life courses by helping them plan future pregnancies, stay in school and find employment. The **evaluation findings** show the results of this program in Colorado to be phenomenal: the children are healthier and have fewer injuries, as well as better language, behavior, thinking skills and readiness for school than their peers; fathers are more involved; and mothers experience significantly better health and employment. The program is now up and running in 80% of the state and has served nearly 7,000 women to date.

This publication illustrates the process that resulted in bringing this program to families across Colorado, including providing funding for research, program development, implementation, evaluation and sustainability.

Invest in Results is available at www.coloradotrust.org.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Efforts by The Colorado Trust and its grantees to advance the health and well-being of the people of Colorado included Trust support for the following recent events:

- **Colorado Nonprofit Association** – 20th Anniversary Gala
- **Center for African American Health** – Annual Dinner
- **Girl Scouts-Mile Hi Council** – 2006 Women of Distinction Dinner
- **Mental Health Association of Colorado** – 25th Annual Tribute Dinner and Fundraiser
- **National Philanthropy Day** in Colorado
- **Samaritan Institute** – National Awards Dinner
- **The Women's Foundation of Colorado** – 17th Annual Denver Gender Matters Luncheon

