

RE:VISION

In 2014, The Colorado Trust launched the **Health Equity Advocacy (HEA) Strategy**, a multi-phased investment in building a strong and diverse field of health equity advocates to ensure equitable health outcomes for Colorado's most vulnerable. A centerpiece of the second phase of this strategy (2015-2016) included providing financial and capacity-building support to a cohort of direct service, community organizing, and policy advocacy organizations across the state. This support was designed to strengthen individual and collective capacity to "seed" an emerging health equity advocacy field in Colorado.

The following is part of a "**Seeds of the Field**" series of profiles of each of the 17 cohort members funded in the second phase of the HEA Strategy.

Seeding a Health Equity Advocacy Field: The Story of Re:Vision

Dedicated to having community members lead efforts on addressing health inequities, [Re:Vision](#) is a key partner in building a health equity advocacy field in Colorado. Its resident-led approach of developing community leaders, cultivating community food systems, and creating an economy owned by the community, provides a valuable perspective to health equity advocacy efforts. Re:Vision's programs address root causes of health disparities and are based on the principles of asset-based community development and network organizing. This approach requires strengthening cohesion among community members, which Re:Vision does by helping families grow gardens and share healthy foods together.

Re:Vision empowers community members living in low-income southwest Denver neighborhoods to become leaders that educate, inspire, and mobilize their neighbors to address issues impacting their overall health and well-being. Re:Vision employs local residents as promotoras who are trained in all aspects of urban agriculture and healthy living, providing them with technical skills and knowledge that they share with their community. Each promotora is paired with a number of families that they visit on a weekly basis and, through these visits, relationships are cultivated as they weave together a community of support and security.

Re:Vision's Phase 2 Work

In Phase 2, Re:Vision began to focus their organizing and advocacy efforts on the affordable housing shortage and involuntary displacement happening in their community, recognizing that they could not build community health and wealth if their families continued to be uprooted. This led them to apply for an HEA strategic advisory fund grant, which provides rapid response funding to address critical needs, and in Re:Vision's case, allowed them to launch Our Home, Our Right, a fair housing campaign in southwest Denver.



Re:Vision's promotoras

The campaign's goals were to identify the most pressing issues families were facing, find quick solutions to meet immediate needs, and provide them with long-term sustainable solutions. To accomplish this, they focused on leveraging current advocacy and legal partners, including HEA cohort members, Padres & Jóvenes Unidos and FRESC: Good Jobs, Strong Communities, to provide trainings to their promotoras on how to: vet resources that offer emergency assistance to families, understand leases and tenant rights, report housing discrimination, and build a faith-based coalition with churches in southwest Denver. The campaign was also able to establish an emergency assistance database to streamline requests and identify common needs. This campaign built the capacity of Re:Vision's promotoras to utilize a network organizing framework that engaged residents, created various entry points for participation, and established a common vision to motivate residents to take action.

To further their commitment to being a community-led organization, in Phase 2 Re:Vision began the process of filling *every position* within the organization with a community member, and not just the promotora positions. This required Re:Vision to develop the capacity and infrastructure to enable shadowing by promotoras for every position, as well as to provide the capacity building needed for community members to succeed.

Laying the Groundwork for an Emerging Field

Re:Vision applies an economic lens to health equity and believes that closing the gap in health, wealth, and other socio-economic disparities requires a thorough analysis of the economic system from which these inequities originate. Their place-based model aims to create inclusive, broad-based ownership and democratic decision making while building local economies. By working in multiple structures and systems that impact people on a daily basis, such as food and housing, Re:Vision has begun to move the levers within these systems by building community power, which has begun to plant the seeds of a health advocacy field.

Re:Vision's Executive Director Eric Kornacki reflects,

One of our biggest contributions to the field has been showing that a community, if it doesn't have access to healthy food because of all these different socio-economic structures and systems, can organize and come up with a solution that really fits their need and is based upon the different assets in their neighborhood or within a family and really leverage change from a bottom up perspective.

Re:Vision has been an active member of the HEA Engaging Affected Populations Team and has been instrumental in keeping the HEA cohort accountable to truly engaging affected populations by serving as a model in this regard. Re:Vision was also key in helping to develop a HEA convening that focused on articulating shared values and an articulated vision for the cohort:



One of our biggest contributions to the field has been showing that a community, if it doesn't have access to healthy food because of all these different socio-economic structures and systems, can organize and come up with a solution that really fits their need and is based upon the different assets in their neighborhood or within a family and really leverage change from a bottom up perspective.”

– Eric Kornacki, Executive Director



Diverse Colorado leaders, united by common values and empowered communities, dismantle structural and racial inequities and build equitable systems so that all Coloradans can achieve their highest possible level of health.

Looking Forward

Beginning in 2017, the 17 HEA cohort members, including Re:Vision, are launching a new phase of work focused on further cultivating the seeds collectively planted across the state in Phase 2. Ultimately, guided by common values and empowered communities, cohort members will be aligning their change efforts to dismantle structural and racial inequities and build equitable health systems so that all Coloradans can thrive. Re:Vision is poised to serve as a leader in this collective endeavor.

Highlights: Re:Vision's Seeds of the Field

- Greater advocacy capacity around renter's rights and housing issues
- Voices of affected populations brought to policy and advocacy tables
- Deeper focus on being a resident-led organization
- More strategic connections between organizing work and policy and systems-change work

