



**THE
COLORADO
TRUST**

A Health Equity Foundation

2017 *Year in* REVIEW

DEDICATED TO ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY FOR ALL COLORADANS

March 2018

A Summary of Grantmaking and Other Activity from 2017

HEALTH EQUITY ADVOCACY

Our Health Equity Advocacy (HEA) strategy, which marked its fourth year in 2017, is about empowering decision-making beyond foundation walls. It has resulted in collaboration among a group of 18 nonprofit organizations (known as the HEA “cohort”), each with its own direct service, community organizing or policy advocacy expertise and goals. Working together, the HEA cohort selected and awarded 36 “network strengthening” grants last year, helping to expand and support a field of health equity advocates beyond the original grantees. This larger field of advocates built capacity through 13 trainings across the state on various policy and advocacy skills.

The cohort also worked to understand and promote racial equity, and how it impacts health equity at the individual and organizational levels. Their activities included race-based caucusing—a tool for fighting racism that involves facilitated discussions within racial groups—and reviewing organizational policies and practices. In addition, recognizing that many Coloradans are seeking to bridge differences of opinion about important issues, 15 gatherings were held in Colorado communities to facilitate conversations about racial equity.

The HEA cohort also laid the foundation for developing health equity messaging and communication strategies. And at meetings in Leadville and Aurora, they learned from local residents about how issues like a lack of affordable housing are affecting both urban and rural communities. These types of activities help create new partnerships to continue addressing issues that affect all Coloradans.

Three new reports on the HEA cohort’s progress were published in 2017: one is a [summary of findings from a scan](#) of the larger health equity advocacy field in Colorado, and two others are evaluations of the [first](#) and [second](#) phase of this multi-year strategy.



Members of the HEA cohort at a meeting in Leadville in 2017

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Much was accomplished during the third year of our pioneering [Community Partnerships](#) effort. We



Community members of Avondale, one of eight communities moving into the “implementation phase.”

believe that determining solutions for improving the health of communities across Colorado should be done by and with those most impacted—namely, the residents of these communities, especially those who have been historically disadvantaged or excluded from such conversations.

By the end of 2017, eight Colorado communities were on the verge of moving into the “implementation phase” of this important effort. In other words, resident teams in these communities have decided on the core health-equity issues they want to address;

(Community Partnerships, cont'd.)

they will spend the early part of 2018 crafting detailed plans on the strategies, tactics and necessary funding.

Our staff and Board are eagerly anticipating the culmination of what has been an extraordinary process since early 2015. While we are proud of how far we have come in partnership with these communities, it has not been a simple, straightforward path. Creating

a brand-new approach to philanthropy was never going to be easy, and we have experienced our share of missteps and false starts—all resulting in valuable learnings, humility and growth. We are immensely grateful to the hundreds of individuals in these communities for their support, advice, patience and trust on this journey together.

HEALTH EQUITY LEARNING SERIES

We concluded our latest iteration of the popular [Health Equity Learning Series](#) with two compelling speakers, [Lydia X. Z. Brown](#) and [Ian Haney López](#).

The series continues to attract more interest every year; nearly every event, we set a new attendance record.



Lydia X. Z. Brown



Ian Haney López

At the end of 2017, we announced another innovation in this strategy: starting in 2018, seven grantee organizations from across the state will begin in-depth health equity training as part of a comprehensive curriculum. We call this the Community Leaders in Health Equity track. As in past iterations of the Health Equity Learning Series, we will continue to work with other grantees across the state in conducting facilitated viewings and conversations for each speaker presentation.

ON OUR WEBSITE

We work diligently to provide information and resources to Coloradans that go beyond funding. To that end, we published 48 original stories on health equity topics last year, and we encourage you to peruse them in our online [newsroom](#). The most-read articles from 2017 examined [child care deserts in Colorado](#), the [health implications of biased policing](#) and [access to transportation as a determinant of health](#). We also continue to maintain a robust database of [reports and publications](#), and share new [evaluation findings](#) as they become available.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we always publish our [financial reports](#) on our website, including detailed [audit statements](#) and [federal tax returns](#). You can also search our [grants database](#) to review past and current funding commitments beyond the core strategies described above. Our 2017

financial information will be available on our website in the spring of 2018.

On behalf of everyone on our staff and Board, thank you for your continued interest in our work to assure all Coloradans have opportunities to live healthy, productive lives. We look forward to sharing updates with you throughout 2018 and beyond.

William Wright, MD
Chair

Ned Calonge, MD, MPH
President & CEO



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