



**THE  
COLORADO  
TRUST**

*A Health Equity Foundation*

# 2018

## YEAR IN REVIEW

April 2019

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of The Colorado Trust, we are proud to share this overview of grantmaking and other foundation activities from 2018.

*Dedicated to achieving  
health equity  
for all Coloradans*



The community of Lago Vista Mobile Home Park near Loveland, Colo.—shown here gathering for an outdoor film viewing—was among those that in 2018 implemented its health equity plan as part of the Community Partnerships strategy.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



**Community Partners** (l. to r.): Tera Wick, Krista Martinez, Arden Trewartha, Candace Johnson, Mia Ramirez, Jess Hankins and Monica Hernandez.

This innovative [strategy](#), which in 2018 marked its fourth year, supports communities across Colorado in building and recognizing their own power to achieve health equity where they live. The Trust's role in the partnership is to provide resources for capacity building, community organizing and collaboration at a local level; the lion's share of the work is done by residents in the communities themselves.

Diverse teams of Coloradans—centering the people most challenged by inequities—first identify their own community's existing assets, as well as barriers to justice and good health. They then propose and implement solutions with funding and input from The Trust, a milestone achieved by eight communities that entered the [Implementation Phase](#) of the work in 2018. This means these teams all completed robust, detailed health equity implementation plans; they identified issue areas impacting the health and well-being of their communities—common ones included economic

underdevelopment and social disenfranchisement—and began to act on solutions to address these issues.

These are expected to be five-year plans in most participating communities, with a simultaneous goal of helping communities build capacity to sustain this work many years beyond this time frame. We continue to partner with new people in new communities across Colorado, and we have a [map](#) on our website showing where efforts are now underway.

The Trust also began conducting a process evaluation among resident teams, to better understand successes and challenges of partnering with us on the Community Partnerships work. We have begun using this feedback to improve the strategy and share back information, stories and learnings among resident teams. Several other evaluations of the strategy also commenced, and you can [learn more](#) about them on our website.

We believe that when communities build their collective power, they can best address injustices that impact people disproportionately based on their race or ethnicity, their income or where they live.

## HEALTH EQUITY ADVOCACY



Colorado nonprofits continued their work together to advocate for health equity.

The fifth year of this unique approach to policy advocacy saw continued efforts to build a strong and diverse field of health equity advocates in Colorado. The 18 participating nonprofit organizations (known as the HEA “Cohort”) each have their own direct service, community organizing or policy advocacy expertise and goals—yet they are also working together to create greater collective sustainability and ability to respond to health equity policy issues in today’s political environment.

The HEA Cohort last year expanded its network of partner organizations even further, from 36 to 60. The network partners greatly increased the number of organizations in the field working with or representing those most impacted by health inequities, as well as helped expand the reach of the health equity advocacy work across Colorado.

This was one of several tactics deployed by the Cohort as the members entered the [third phase of their work](#) together. The Cohort selected housing and food security as policy issues, and developed tools and strategies to support advocacy on those efforts. The Cohort also brought in expertise to provide research on housing instability, to better understand potential policy solutions for those issues.

Cohort members participated in multi-day convenings together in Denver, Granby and Telluride—which included place-based activities and tours of the surrounding communities to understand their unique health equity issues—as well as an advocacy evaluation training in Denver. The Cohort also continued setting the course for other aspects of their work together, including centering racial equity at the heart of their effort, and developing collective messaging and communications strategies.

## HEALTH EQUITY LEARNING SERIES

Since 2013, The Trust has sponsored and hosted this educational program, which aims to increase knowledge and awareness of health equity through presentations from experts discussing factors that increase disparities and injustices, as well as potential solutions. We host a speaker every few months in Denver; capture the event on film; and then share the recording with grantee organizations across Colorado that host viewing parties and facilitated

discussions in their communities. In the last six years, 18 presentations have taken place in the Health Equity Learning Series, and full video and podcast recordings of all these events are [available for download](#) at our website.

In 2018, we were pleased to host two speakers. In May, science writer, editor and ethicist Harriet A. Washington discussed health inequities through the



lens of structural racism, including an examination of medical experimentation on people of color, gene patenting and more. And in September, Niki Okuk, founder of Compton, California-based RCO Tires, explored the way systemic class oppression operates to make and keep people living in poverty, and the toll this can take. Okuk's company provides stable jobs for people who struggle to find employment because of past criminal convictions or legal status.

New to this strategy in 2018 was our Community Leaders in Health Equity track. In addition to hosting the viewing events, participants from communities across Colorado, coordinated by six grantee organizations, began to take part in an intensive 18-month curriculum

focused on health equity education and issue awareness. Participants dedicated significant personal time and energy to this undertaking, including several multi-day convenings, and we applaud the effort they have put into this commitment.



Harriet A. Washington



Niki Okuk

## OTHER NEWS

Beyond our core grantmaking work, we believe we have a responsibility to educate and inform all Coloradans on health equity issues affecting them and their communities. To that end, we published 39 original stories on health equity topics in 2018, available to read any time at our online [newsroom](#). The most-read articles examined [debtors' prison practices](#) in Colorado; why pregnancy and childbirth [remain dangerous undertakings](#) for African-American women in America; the inexorable [rise of suburban poverty](#) in Colorado's Front Range; and the generations-old links between [segregation, gentrification and redlining](#). Some of our videos from 2018 provided additional exploration of health equity issues, such as how

[displacement](#) and [climate change](#) can impact health and well-being.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we always publish our [financial reports](#) on our website, including complete [audit statements](#) and [federal tax returns](#). We continue to maintain a robust listing of [reports and publications](#), and we share new [evaluation findings](#) as they become available. You can search our [grants database](#) to review past and current funding commitments beyond the core strategies described above. Our 2018 financial information will be available on our website by summer 2019.

On behalf of everyone at The Colorado Trust, thank you for your interest in our ongoing efforts to advance the health and well-being of the people of Colorado.

Alan Synn, MD  
Chair



Ned Calonge, MD, MPH  
President & CEO



### PHOTO CREDITS:

**Front cover**, photo by Joe Mahoney. **Page 2**, photo by Ellen Jaskol. **Page 3**, photo by Joe Mahoney. **Page 4**, top left to bottom right: Harriet A. Washington, photo by Rachel Mondragon; Niki Okuk, photo by Rachel Mondragon; Alan Synn, MD, photo by Ellen Jaskol; Ned Calonge, MD, MPH, photo by Ellen Jaskol.