



**THE
COLORADO
TRUST**

A Health Equity Foundation

2022

← →

YEAR IN REVIEW

March 2023



Colorado Trust President & CEO Don Mares

FORGING A NEW DIRECTION

This was a year of remarkable transition for The Colorado Trust. The board of trustees [appointed Don Mares](#) as our new president & chief executive officer over the summer, citing his experience as an organizational leader, policy maker and Colorado Trust board member to help lead the foundation into the future.

We also spent considerable time as a board and staff revisiting how we approach the concept of health equity, and affirming who we aim to support through our grantmaking. Through a series of discussions, we collectively renewed The Colorado Trust's commitment as a health equity-focused foundation:

Our Definition of Health Equity

Health equity is achieved when every person living in Colorado has the opportunity to attain their full health potential, and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of any socially determined circumstances. (Adapted from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#))

Who We Serve

The Colorado Trust serves under-resourced people living in Colorado who are historically and/or systemically disadvantaged.

As this look back at 2022 is published, we are already looking forward by commencing a robust strategic planning process, with the goal of a new, multiyear strategic plan for The Colorado Trust in place starting Jan. 1, 2024. We look forward to sharing opportunities for input and providing updates on the progress of this planning effort along the way.

On behalf of The Colorado Trust's staff and board of trustees, we are pleased and proud to share this overview of our activities and accomplishments from 2022.



Louise Westfall

Rev. Louise Westfall
Chair, Board of Trustees

Donald J. Mares

Donald J. Mares, Esq.
President & CEO



Our Grantmaking

2022 by the Numbers

- Over 500 grants and event sponsorships
- More than \$15 million in charitable contributions
- Average grant amount: \$26,000



Our staff visited indieDwell, a Colorado Trust grantee based in Pueblo creating high-quality, affordable modular housing

COLORADO EQUITY COMPASS RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The [Colorado Equity Compass](#), which The Colorado Trust has supported since its inception a few years ago, is a [web-based data platform](#) that helps communities and organizations better understand the social determinants of health and advocate for change using data and stories. In October, we were thrilled to host a ceremony for the Colorado Equity Compass to receive the Redefining American Healthcare Award from the Healthcare Leadership Council—the first time this honor has been given to an entity in Colorado.



Colorado Equity Compass managers, consultants and site users joined Colorado Trust staff and Board Chair Rev. Louise Westfall (back row, second from left) at the award presentation

ARTS, CULTURE AND YOUTH ATHLETICS GRANTS

As part of our response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we made \$1.2 million in one-time grants to [more than 50 organizations](#) across Colorado that provide services in the fields of arts, culture or youth athletics. These organizations all have leaders who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latino/a or other people of color; and/or serve a majority of participants who identify as such.

RURAL PHILANTHROPY DAYS SUPPORT

2022 marked our 14th year supporting [Rural Philanthropy Days](#), which has helped strengthen nonprofit-funder relations and address critical needs in rural communities across Colorado. In addition to our ongoing support of the Community Resource Center in managing and implementing the RPD program, we also made grants to 13 organizations (up from our usual 10). [Click here to learn more](#) about each of these grant recipients.

BLACK RESILIENCE IN COLORADO FUND

At its 2022 fundraising event, we were pleased to announce a \$1.3 million grant to the Black Resilience in Colorado Fund in support of the Executive Directors of Color Institute. The purpose of the institute is to build the individual and organizational capacity of executive directors of color and their organizations.

BUILDING AND BRIDGING POWER STRATEGY

The third full year of our [Building and Bridging Power](#) strategy included a variety of accomplishments and highlights. Many of the strategy's grassroots and grassroots grantees were busy at the state legislature, supporting passage of legislation and ballot measures to:

- [Enhance protections for mobile home park residents](#)
- [Improve and increase air quality monitoring](#)
- [Expand access to free school meals](#)

- [Increase health care coverage and benefits to children and pregnant people](#)
- [Extend unemployment benefits to undocumented workers.](#)

The Colorado Trust staff supporting the Building and Bridging Power strategy:

- Worked with two facilitators and a convening artist to create an informative, productive annual convening in June that supported relationship building, provided capacity-building opportunities and allowed for conversations on the topic of power with grantee staff from across Colorado. Attendees represented 22 community organizing and policy advocacy organizations, as well as four media outlets.



Attendees at the June 2022 convening

- Partnered with the Colorado Media Project to host the first Advancing Equity in Local News conference. Building and Bridging Power grantees came from across Colorado to discuss representation and health equity-focused coverage in community-based news, share learnings and brainstorm ideas.
- Supported bringing Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Maria Hinojosa to Colorado for a speaking event as a part of the [Health Equity Learning Series](#) and the Advancing Equity in Local News conference.



Maria Hinojosa

Grantmaking In Action

[Click here to watch](#) this 2022 video about the work of Alianza NORCO, one of the Building and Bridging Power grantees.

CULMINATING THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS STRATEGY

We made the difficult decision to sunset the [Community Partnerships](#) strategy in the summer of 2022. From [Saguache](#) to [Fort Morgan](#) to the [Grand Valley](#) and beyond, since 2014 we witnessed incredible efforts by community members to build power at the local level and address issues that impact health and well-being. To honor the energy and dedication of those involved with the strategy and help communities create a lasting legacy of service, the board of trustees committed a minimum of \$5 million to culminate the Community Partnerships strategy. The first six grants in the Culminating Phase were approved at the end of 2022:

- **Town of San Luis**, for the Envision San Luis Entrepreneurial Bootcamp
- **Regents of the University of Colorado**, for the CU Bueno Center's College Assistance Migrant Program in Fort Lupton
- **Morgan County Family Center, Inc.**, to establish a housing resource center in Fort Morgan
- **Food to Power**, in support of the Hillside Community Hub in Colorado Springs
- **El Paso County Public Health**, for the Fountain Valley Communities That Care coalition and its Connect Fountain project
- **Alpine Achievers Initiative**, for health equity-focused youth, educator and recreation initiatives in Saguache County.

You can [learn more details about these grants](#) on our website, and we look forward to sharing more updates on Culminating Phase grantmaking in 2023.

Grantmaking In Action

[Click here to read](#) about the promising universal income and direct cash pilot programs in Colorado, several of which The Colorado Trust funded in 2022.

COMMUNITY LEADERS IN HEALTH EQUITY CONCLUDES

2022 was also the final year of our [Community Leaders in Health Equity](#) strategy, a four-year initiative that featured a health equity leadership program helping participants build their capacity and power to improve their communities. Dozens of people across Colorado completed the 18-month education and leadership training curriculum, with backing from dedicated grantee organizations in their region; many of the participants then joined the program's "Continuing Track," a second iteration of the program focused on building organizing skills and more. We published [interim evaluation reports for this strategy](#) that summarize its varied accomplishments, and we are thankful to everyone involved for its success.

Evaluating Our Impact

We use evaluation to better understand how our grantmaking works, make adjustments and improvements, and strengthen our current and future efforts. We published numerous evaluation findings and learning papers in 2022, including:

- A [multiyear cross-site learning report](#) for the Community Partnerships strategy that synthesizes evaluation findings among an in-depth sample of community efforts and lessons learned.
- A [progress report for the Building and Bridging Power strategy](#) that draws from interviews with organization



Community Leaders in Health Equity program participants at a ceremony celebrating their work

staff and community leaders, as well as findings from a capacity assessment, to provide an initial summary of grantee accomplishments.

- An [overview and interim evaluation](#) of the Continuing Track of the Community Leaders in Health Equity strategy (plus several [learning briefs](#)).
- A suite of [digital organizing resources](#) that introduces the social media, communication and work delivery apps often used by community organizers in their digital organizing efforts, along with strategies for using them to build power and enhance organizational capacity.

Sharing and Educating

We strive to serve as a reliable source for news and information on topics related to [health equity](#). To that end, our [Collective Colorado](#) website continues to feature original stories on health equity issues faced by the people in our state. We publish several dozen stories each year on the website, featuring words and photos from some of the top journalists and photographers in Colorado and nationwide. Many of the stories have in turn been republished by The Colorado Sun, El Semanario, Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, Durango Herald and other Colorado media outlets, which speaks to the reliability and trust in these articles. We also continue to publish [stories and grantee profiles](#) that are directly related to Colorado Trust grantmaking and other programs.

Transparency remains an important value to our foundation. To that end, we proactively maintain an interactive online [grants database](#), where you can learn more about our recent grants and search and sort listings by grantee name, funding strategy, grant amount and more. We also continue to publish all of our [financial information](#) on our website, including annual tax returns and audit reports.

Thank you for your continued interest in our work to advance the health and well-being of the people of Colorado.



A few of the many people featured in our Collective Colorado stories

PHOTO CREDITS: Cover: Joe Mahoney; headshots by Ellen Jaskol. **Page 2:** (l) Joe Mahoney; (r) Mike Sweeney. **Page 3:** (l) José Chalit; (r) Rachel Mondragon. **Page 4:** (top) Joe Mahoney; (bottom) composite by Teal Media, photos (clockwise from top l) by Joe Mahoney, Eli Imadali, Joe Mahoney, Luna Anna Archey (4), Joe Mahoney.

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