

# Business Update

FINANCE • REAL ESTATE • TECHNOLOGY

## RCF's 'Innovate for Good' brings re

### Nine community projects were awarded \$250,000

**N**ine local organizations promoting education, sustainability, health, culture, food and justice in the community have reported their results since June, 2015, when they were named winners of Rose Community Foundation's inaugural Innovate for Good.

RCF created Innovate for Good in 2015 as a venture to find and fund innovative projects "to make the greater Denver community a better place to live."

The foundation received nearly 400 submissions in response to the question, "What new and innovative idea would you bring to life to make the greater Denver community a better place to live?"

In June 2015, a team of 130 community members helped select the following nine organizations as winners: Arts Street, Be the Gift, Bright by Three, Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, The Greenway Foundation, Groundwork Denver, Shorter Community AME Church and Warm Cookies of the Revolution.

A total of \$250,000 was awarded to fund their projects.

"These nine organizations embody the heart of why this initiative was originally created, to find people with ideas for innovative and inspiring work, then encourage them to implement their vision," said Sheila Bugdanowitz, president and CEO of RCF.

"We are inspired to see them helping guide Denver's health, environment, education and community leaders on real solutions to real problems."

**"Workshop on Wheels"** (by Be the Gift) is a workshop truck, outfitted with all of the tools and materials volunteers need to complete home repair projects for single mom families.

Since receiving the grant, Be the

Gift has built three workshops to serve more single mom families in the Denver area.

On May 14, the day before Mother's Day, the organization will complete three different home repair projects for three single mom families.

This will be the first time all three Workshops on Wheels are at projects at the same time.

**"The Stompin' Ground Games"** (by Warm Cookies of the Revolution) is a monthly, year-long Olympics-style competition between Denver neighborhoods, where arts, culture and history are combined in the name of civic pride and engagement.

Since receiving the grant, the entire project has accelerated its participation and attendance, using comedy to discuss homelessness, immigration and other issues.

On April 30, in a carnival-meets-mercado (market) setting, a neighborhood event will culminate the project.

**"Fresh Food Connect"** (by Groundwork Denver) is an app to help feed families, reduce food waste and provide income to low-income youth by allowing home gardeners to donate extra produce for distribution at food banks and through affordable sale.

The app has connected gardeners to youth who will be employed to pick up and deliver donated produce, using bikes and trailers.

In May, it will complete a second version of the app for backyard gardeners.

**"Clean River Design Challenge"** (by The Greenway Foundation) is a design competition for students attending Metro State University of Denver to create a mechanism to remove trash from the South Platte River.



The South Platte River as envisioned by the Clean River Design Challenge for Good' 2015 projects.

The Greenway Foundation has been able to launch the competition with 10 competitors.

On April 30, the final designs will be tested on Cherry Creek, with the goal of raising awareness about trash in Denver's urban waterways.

**"Race, Policing and Community Justice Advocates"** (by Shorter Community AME Church) engages high school students to become peer presenters in racial equality, community-based policing and justice-advocacy work.

The student advocates have presented to community leaders, law enforcement officers and community organization.

Also, students have participated in "Bridging the Gap: Cops and Kids," a training program for students to interact directly with police officers.

On April 16, students will host a workshop with an attorney to help the community members better understand their legal rights.

**"Shakespeare in the Parking Lot"** (by Denver Center for the Performing Arts), a "food truck for the arts," provides theatrical performances to high school students in school parking lots, followed by actor-led workshops to support classroom teaching and learning.

Twelve schools have enjoyed this programming. More than 5,000 students attended in the fall, and another 5,000 students are attending this spring from April 4-May 6.

**"Veterans in Food Deserts"** (by Denver Botanic Gardens) helps military veterans grow and sell fresh produce and share knowledge about planting, harvesting and nutrition through farm stands in neighborhoods with limited access to healthy foods.

Additional programs created by Veterans Farm Program included vocational opportunities in farming, community engagement, relationships with other service members and financial compensation for participation.