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Cover photo: A teacher and a student at the Robert E. Loup Jewish Community Center's early childhood center explore light and images.

A strong community requires sustained investment

Rose Community Foundation works to make Denver a better place. Often, this improvement takes time and sustained resources. To truly commit to solving long-term problems, nonprofit organizations and agencies need a secure and stable funding base.

Here at Rose Community Foundation, we know there are very few “quick fixes” to create lasting change in areas like Aging, Child and Family Development, K-12 Education, Health and Jewish Life. When we first looked at a multi-layered problem – like how to connect young Jewish families to their community, heritage and faith – we realized we needed first to understand the institutions that touched those families and seek out opportunities to build up those groups. *BUILDing Jewish ECE* is an ambitious program that grew out of many years of research and careful design to improve the quality of Jewish early childhood education and its connection to the Jewish community (pages 4 – 5). Similarly, when we walked alongside new agencies providing

services to help seniors live independently, we saw that transportation was a key piece of the puzzle. *Via Mobility Services* was one of our earliest grantees, and one we continue to support as they provide comprehensive and innovative solutions to those who have limited mobility (page 3).

We also know a community is strong because of the nonprofits that work in a variety of areas, from arts and education to advocacy and community development. Over our 20 year history, we have helped many Jewish organizations build endowments and implement legacy giving campaigns. This year, we are sharing our philanthropic expertise with a new group of organizations. We are excited that many of these nonprofits work largely outside our usual grantmaking portfolio (page 6).

As we celebrate 20 years of work in our community, we will continue to make long-term investments in the organizations that serve our community so well.

Our Mission

Rose Community Foundation works to enhance the quality of life of the Greater Denver community through its leadership, resources, traditions and values.

Our Vision

The Foundation uses leadership, grantmaking and donor engagement to invest in strategic and innovative solutions to enduring problems and emerging issues.

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An investment in our community's future

"We have always known we can count on Rose Community Foundation, and that has made all the difference."

We were humbled by hearing versions of this statement from people and organizations we have funded and served as we spoke to them during this, our 20th anniversary year. Leaders in our core grantmaking areas know our commitment to what they do – and to the difficult systemic changes that will make a lasting difference – is steadfast. That commitment helps them serve the community and undertake innovation that might not be possible if they were not confident of our support.

Making ongoing investments in organizations, partnerships and new approaches to existing problems has been a key element of the way we work in the community. In this issue, you will read about our early and ongoing investments in an infrastructure supporting senior transportation in the greater Denver area. You will also see how our long-standing commitment to supporting quality early childhood education has grown into a groundbreaking program helping Jewish early childcare centers become beacons for their communities.

Finally, you will learn about a group of Denver nonprofit organizations investing in their own futures by establishing and building endowment and planned giving programs. The education and awareness we are building with this group of organizations grows out of work we have done for years with the Jewish nonprofits in our community. We are excited to extend that model to a diverse group of organizations whose missions range from promoting film as an art form and a civic forum, to providing space where art, education and community converge, to suicide prevention, to putting an end to sexual assault through prevention and care, and many more.

There is a lot of buzz these days around innovation, and rightfully so. Our communities and lives are evolving rapidly, and the organizations around us should evolve, too. However, some needs in our community grow as the community grows, and sometimes, in order to think of new solutions, you have to be confident that someone is supporting your existing models. We have always believed that our long-term investments will enable lasting change for the better. It continues to be our privilege to work with so many organizations and agencies that share our vision of making the greater Denver community a better place.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sheila Bugdanowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Sheila Bugdanowitz
President and CEO
Rose Community Foundation

Providing mobility and independence

Via Mobility Services (formerly Special Transit) was founded in 1979 to provide transportation for older adults and others with limited mobility. Today, it is a multi-county, multi-program organization that provides transportation and mobility options in 19 communities in five counties in Colorado. Rose Community Foundation's first grant to Via Mobility was in 1997 when it was still Special Transit. Its collaboration with Rose Community Foundation over many years helped establish a model and infrastructure for transportation services that are as vital today as they were fifteen years ago.

According to Lenna Kottke, Via's executive director, Rose Community Foundation's longstanding partnership with the organization has been critical to both its essential backbone services of door-through-door transportation, and its capacity to innovate and think ahead about how its offerings need to evolve. Kottke says the Foundation was "one of the first organizations to recognize the importance of mobility for older adults" as a way to preserve their independence and keep them connected to their community.

In 2000, the Foundation funded and convened a Transportation Summit to bring people and agencies together to discuss ways to support those in need of transportation assistance. "So many good things came out of that summit," exclaims Kottke. The summit was the nexus of important regional partnerships like the Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council and the Getting There Collaborative. These regional collaboration groups serve transportation needs by increasing, enhancing, sharing and coordinating regional transportation services and resources.

"Rose Community Foundation was really ahead of the curve," Kottke remarks.

One of the other important services Via provides in an ever-changing transportation landscape is "travel training." This training teaches individuals and groups how to use

public transit, including planning routes and anticipating obstacles. Rose Community Foundation saw the benefit of encouraging older adults to use public transit before any such program existed in the Denver metro area, and provided funding to Via for a pilot travel training program. Since then, the program has grown significantly and now trains more than 180 individuals each year. Via's travel training program has been nationally recognized as a best practice for communities around the country. Other communities and organizations have replicated the model that Via developed.

The Foundation's continuing support is a vital piece of Via's overall funding puzzle. Initial funding for the organization came from federal and local government sources. The organization still receives some federal funding as well as funding from local city and county governments, but that funding does not keep pace with the growing need. "Private funding from foundations, companies and individuals really closes the gap between what is needed and what government sources provide," says Kottke. "Private funding also functions to help us expand services."

Kottke says Via works hard to serve current needs, while actively anticipating how people will want and need to travel in the future. In recent years, the organization has converted their fleet of vehicles from larger vans to smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles. Via also works to stay abreast of new options and services like Uber and Lyft and is developing a volunteer driver program, once again with seed money from Rose Community Foundation.



Rose Community Foundation has made several grants to the organization that is now called Via Mobility Services. (Photo from Rose Community Foundation archives.)

Learn more:
viacolorado.org

Jewish early childhood education is a community cornerstone

“...we are always thinking together about the larger goal of Jewish engagement.”

– Cantor Elizabeth Sacks

BUILDing Jewish ECE is a ground-breaking initiative that seeks to guide nine Denver and Boulder synagogues and Jewish community centers – and their early childhood education (ECE) centers – towards increasing enrollment, Jewish family engagement and connections to the Jewish community.

BUILDing Jewish ECE is a result of eight years of research and work conducted by the Colorado Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative Steering Committee, comprising four entities, including Rose Community Foundation. The committee supported a new Early Childhood Director at the Colorado Agency for Jewish Education, intensive professional development for teachers and directors, scholarships and financial support to ECE centers (including www.MazelTot.org), and a 2012 economic study that found that if Jewish ECE centers in the Denver/Boulder Area were operating at best practice standards, their congregations and JCCs’ revenues could increase \$720,000 annually, an average of 11 percent.



Connecting generations
Strengthening community
Building the future

Among numerous recommendations, the study explained that synagogues and ECE centers need programs, campaigns and marketing that create inclusive relationships with members *and* aggressively communicate what synagogues or JCCs offer to families. Rose Community Foundation designed BUILDing Jewish ECE as a response to the study and reached out to the Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado, Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), JCC Association and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) to assist in this work as partners.

This is the first time these national organizations have worked together. For the ECE centers, BUILDing Jewish ECE is a two-year

process that provides ongoing coaching, training and guidance from the URJ, JCC Association, USCJ, and other experts, along with a toolbox of resources to expedite long-term growth. Participants attend seminars together with a group – or cohort – of colleagues and work with mentor coaches. All told, the resources and consulting to each institution are valued at over \$90,000.

TIMELINE

2005

Allied Jewish Federation, (now JEWISHColorado) Colorado Agency for Jewish Education, Rose Community Foundation and the Jewish Early Childhood Education Director’s Council begin meeting to assess the state of Jewish early childhood education.

2006

Jewish Early Childhood Education in Denver and Boulder: Mapping the Field study is published.

2007

Jewish ECE Summit engages 125 stakeholders to create a strategic plan to enhance quality and access.

Colorado Jewish ECE Initiative Steering Committee is created to oversee a strategic plan.

(cont.)

A group of funders invests \$1.1 million over four years to implement a national professional development model at nine Denver/ Boulder Jewish ECE centers.

2009

Five Jewish ECE centers become Qualistar rated and qualify for the Denver Preschool Program.



Children at Temple Emanuel's early childhood center make music.

Rachel Hagar, director of the Robert E. Loup Jewish Community Center (JCC) Early Childhood Center started with the first group of BUILDing Jewish ECE just as she started working as the center's director. She says the marketing training she received was "amazing," and as a new director, was "such a great tool" for working with prospective families. "It really helped us sell the school to parents in a way that was totally organic," she says. Moreover, because of the way the program taught her to personalize her presentation to new families, she feels she already knows the child and the family well by the time their child enters the center.

A year later, the center is full, with a waiting list. Prior to the program, the center was not full, and Hagar credits the training with being able to fill openings and build the waiting list. Hagar also says the training has helped her to think clearly about how she can connect prospective families to the JCC as a whole. "Even if they don't end up coming to school here," she says, "we try to point them to a program they might like – swimming or camps or other things the family might be interested in."

Cantor Elizabeth Sacks, the senior director for education at Temple Emanuel in Denver, says her team participated in the first group with a goal of integrating their ECE center more fully into the life of the Temple. "BUILDing Jewish ECE gave us some space to talk about how that would happen," she says. She goes on to say the program has helped them professionalize the marketing work of the center and think more strategically about how they present the center and their vision to families.

Sacks says what she has appreciated most about BUILDing Jewish ECE, particularly as someone new to Denver, is the commitment to community it fosters among the four synagogues and

JCCs of the cohort. "It would be natural for the members of this group to be competitors," she says, "But instead, we are always thinking together about the larger goal of Jewish engagement."

BUILDing Jewish ECE is in its second year of implementation, so the first group is entering its second year, and a new cohort group has begun the program. All nine Jewish ECE centers are participating. Centers in the first cohort are seeing improved enrollment, and more integration within their synagogue or JCC. "Our overall goal," says Senior Program Officer Lisa Farber Miller, "has been to elevate the field of early childhood education in our community – to make clear to all those in leadership how important teachers are and how critical these center are. Our Jewish Life program area supports ECE and new parenthood, recognizing these are formative times when Jewish identity and new family norms are created. The JCC Association URJ and USCJ also understand the importance of early learning and family engagement and that is why – for the first time – they are working so closely together with us."

Learn more:
rcfdenver.org/buildingjewishece

2010

Rose Community Foundation grants the Allied Jewish Federation (now JEWISHColorado) \$484,000 to create a scholarship fund to augment tuition assistance at ECE centers.

2011

A study of the economics of Jewish ECE centers in Denver and Boulder begins.

2012

The Colorado Jewish ECE Initiative publishes *Toward a Lifetime of Jewish Engagement* study.

2014

The first cohort group of BUILDing Jewish ECE begins a two-year program.

2015

As the first cohort completes its first year and reports progress, the second cohort group begins the program.

Helping nonprofits be ready for the future

While few leaders of nonprofit organizations would dispute the value of having an endowment, it can be difficult to start one.

Raising money for an endowment can feel like diverting operational dollars into a savings account. Once an organization makes the shift it can experience many dividends – long-term stability, increased operating income, and additional ways for donors to support the organization, including legacy gifts.

Endowment:

A restricted fund made up of gifts and bequests to a nonprofit organization. The principal of this fund remains intact, and generates interest that can add to the organization's operating revenue.

For many years, Rose Community Foundation has invested in the stability and longevity of Jewish nonprofits in the greater Denver community through programs like the Endowment Challenge and LiveOn! that provided both training and incentives for building an endowment fund. This year, the Philanthropic Services department is extending those models to a broader range of local nonprofit organizations, including arts and advocacy organizations. The group or cohort of twelve organizations also includes Rose Youth Foundation and the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado, both initiatives of the Foundation.

"Helping nonprofits build endowments has been part of the work of Rose Community Foundation for over twelve years," says Gaye Leonard, director of philanthropic services for the Foundation. "This particular cohort is a great way to reach out and support important nonprofits in our community that may not be part of our regular grantmaking portfolio."

Each organization sends both a staff member and a board member to a series of trainings that span 12 months. The training sessions address how to raise money for an endowment fund and how to incorporate estate gifts along with endowment giving into an ongoing development plan. "There is a popular myth that legacy and endowment campaigns cannibalize operational fundraising," Leonard remarks. "In fact, the opposite is true. We work with organizations to help them understand how to successfully integrate these elements into their ongoing development strategy."



Members of the endowment cohort share challenges. (Photo by Alex Talavera, Rose Community Foundation.)

Heather McCallin, the assistant director of development at the Colorado Ballet, said that in terms of timing and incentives, the Endowment Cohort provided "a wonderful convergence" for undertaking an endowment campaign. The Colorado Ballet recently purchased and has nearly paid off a new building, and is doing well financially. An endowment is, says McCallin, "the next step that makes sense," and will help the organization "provide stability in funding in perpetuity."

She says participating in this cohort is attractive because of the expertise of the Rose Community Foundation staff. "It is so nice to be coached by someone who has set up a lot of these [endowments]," comments McCallin. "This will help us get things set up right the first time." She goes on to say that participating in the cohort offers many helpful dimensions. "Someone will ask a question that I didn't even know I should be asking."

Mike Guthrie, the chief operating officer for the Carson J. Spencer Foundation echoed the feeling that participating in the cohort prompted his organization to implement an endowment fund, which the organization would not have pursued otherwise. "We are a small nonprofit with big goals," he says. "But establishing an endowment wasn't something we thought we were capable of, given the size and capacity of our organization." The Carson J. Spencer Foundation works to prevent suicide

Continued on back cover.

Foundation News

It Is That Time – Fund Your DAF, Make a Gift

In the final quarter of the year, many people start to consider the philanthropic actions they want to take. If you have a Donor-Advised Fund, or have been considering one, the end of the year is a great time to look at your financial portfolio and determine what tax advantages you might gain from contributing cash, appreciated stock or other assets. It is also a good time to speak with your family about shared philanthropic goals. If you would like to discuss your own Donor-Advised Fund, please contact Gaye Leonard, director of philanthropic services, at gleonard@rcfdenver.org or 303.398.7418.



We also hope you will consider a year-end unrestricted gift to Rose Community Foundation. Your gift will help us extend and expand our grantmaking and other work to make the greater Denver community a better place.

By making an unrestricted gift to the Foundation, you are personally investing in our collective work. Please consider making a contribution using either the reply envelope enclosed with this newsletter, or the “Donate” button in the upper and lower right corner of our website at rcfdenver.org.

Sign Up For Our New eNewsletter

Please take a moment to visit rcfdenver.org and sign up for our new eNewsletter using the “Sign up for News” button in the upper right hand corner of the home page. We will send our first eNewsletter before the end of the year. It will include Foundation news along with a link to our new blog. We want to share more information about our work in a timelier manner via email. Please join us!

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Since its founding in 1995, Rose Community Foundation has invested in organizations and solutions that make the greater Denver community a better place. Watch for more news about our leadership, grantmaking and donor engagement on our Facebook page, and through our new email newsletter.



Continued from page 6.

and assist those coping with pain and grief resulting from a loss by suicide.

Guthrie says he now understands how having an endowment positions his organization differently for donors. "It provides a sense of permanence and makes clear that we have a long-term future," he says. The organization's development director, Monica Colbert adds that being able to make an estate gift will be particularly meaningful for many of the organization's founding donors.

For Maya Brook, the executive director of Mending Faces, a nonprofit that provides surgical care to impoverished children in the Philippines with cleft lip and cleft palate, a valuable part of her participation in the cohort is working on an integrated development plan. "It has been a really good education for me and for the board," she says. "We are so lucky to get this training." Brook goes on to say she appreciates the accountability the cohort program provides, which has pushed her to devote time to her development plan and present it to her board. "We are already seeing results," she says.

Participating organizations will receive a matching grant for putting what they learn into practice. In total, each organization is eligible for \$10,000 in a matching grant. If they raise the amounts required for the match, they will begin their endowments with at least \$25,000.

Learn more:
rcfdenver.org/endowments