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Innovate for Good winners announced

“**W**hat new and innovative idea would you bring to life to make the Greater Denver community a better place to live?” This was the question that framed a new venture for Rose Community Foundation, called Innovate for Good.

At our 20th Anniversary celebration on June 18, Jennifer Adler Fischer, former chair of the Board of Trustees and champion for Innovate for Good announced the project’s nine winners. Innovate for Good is a new project to find and fund new, innovative projects to make the greater Denver community a better place to live.

A multi-tiered review process that engaged 130 community members resulted in nine winning projects from nearly 400 entries. Altogether, those projects were awarded \$230,000. You can see the full list of winners on page 4.

The winning projects shared three primary characteristics, as explained by Adler Fischer as she announced the winners:

- 1. They are innovative.** These are new ventures. They represent creative approaches to addressing community issues and they are all early-stage – currently in the planning or pilot phase.
- 2. They stand to make a real difference over the next year.** Each one has a plan to address a need in the community and to deliver a measurable and positive outcome.
- 3. They are positioned for success.** The leadership who will carry out these projects have the skills, networks, resources and partners to deliver results.

Continued on page 4.

Cover photo: Representatives from the nine Innovate for Good winners with Jennifer Adler Fischer, Jerry Glick and Sheila Bugdanowitz.

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.



Values and innovation for a better Denver

As we celebrated our 20th Anniversary in June, we spoke with many of the community members and leaders who have been engaged with our work as a foundation. Two of the words that came up over and over again are *values* and *innovation*. Jewish – and ultimately, widely shared – values inform all of what we do at Rose Community Foundation. Values of philanthropy, justice and non-discrimination form the basis of our work, and people who are close to us feel those values.

Those same people experience innovation as an important driver of our work in the community. That innovation takes many forms – the Foundation's willingness to support innovative work to create systemic change, innovation in who we bring to the table to find solutions to complex problems, and innovation in the way we encourage nonprofits to think about their work in the community.

When you set out, as the Foundation has, to improve community systems, you have to be willing to look at those systems from different perspectives, to try approaches that are unproven, or that might not have immediate results and to bring new voices to the conversation. These are the ways we have sought to work with our community partners over the past 20 years to encourage and support innovation that will bring about real change.

As a community foundation, we can also encourage innovation by offering initial support and sponsorship for new foundations, nonprofits and initiatives that are approaching issues in our community in new ways, or reaching out to new populations. By providing organizations and initiatives like the Colorado Technology Foundation and Early Milestones time and resources to define and build their work in the community, we know we are extending our reach and our impact in the Greater Denver community.

And, this year through our Innovate for Good program, we challenged the whole community to find new and different approaches that will make Denver better. We also reached out to other community members to evaluate ideas and help us see them through different eyes. This project created a great deal of renewed energy and excitement, both within the Foundation and out in the community. You could feel that energy and excitement when we announced the winners in June.

Innovation will always be important to finding new ways to solve long-standing problems, and in creating different ways to be a vibrant and thriving community. But the innovation that will truly make our community a better place to live for all people is based on the values that guide our work every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Bugdanowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Sheila Bugdanowitz
President and CEO
Rose Community Foundation

Early Milestones Colorado seeks innovative collaboration

Early in the life of Colorado's Office of Early Childhood, which was formed in 2012, a need for a particular kind of partner organization emerged. "We realized pretty early on that we needed a partner who was more nimble, and who operated at a bit of a distance from the state government," says Elsa Holguín, Rose Community Foundation senior program officer for Child & Family Development, and member of the state's Early Childhood Leadership Commission.

Enter Early Milestones Colorado, a new nonprofit intermediary group, which exists as a resource and partner to foundations, state and local agencies, nonprofits and the business community for work that benefits young children and their families.

Holguín and many of her foundation partners have worked for months to establish the infrastructure for this new nonprofit. They hope it will become a trusted resource for all those interested in early childhood, as well as an engine for innovation. "Ultimately, Early Milestones will make Colorado a key state and leader in early childhood," Holguín says. She feels the organization will bring more resources here from national funders, businesses and even the federal government.

One of Early Milestones' initial projects – LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) Together – is a great example of how the organization can function to meet a clear need in the early childhood landscape. Many foundations and early childhood groups have identified early childhood mental health as a need in our community, and have talked together about how best to address that need. Project LAUNCH is a federally funded project that helps to integrate mental health care for young children into primary care environments. The group of funders who created LAUNCH Together selected Early Milestones to implement the project. This will bring federal resources into Colorado through Project

LAUNCH, and very high level experts in the field. Early Milestones is best positioned to make this project a reality in the way that makes the most sense here in Colorado.

Holguín says that Early Milestones is quite unique and while there are just a few models for an intermediary group like this on the national level, there is nothing directly comparable on a state level. As part of the planning for this new organization, she says the founding board members met with key early childhood organizations in Colorado. Not only did the leaders of these organizations support the concept, they immediately suggested several projects that Early Milestones should take on.

Currently, the organization is working on three major projects: updating the state's Early Childhood Framework; LAUNCH Together; and a collaborative communications strategy for parent awareness and engagement in Colorado.

Several foundations who support early childhood work are working together to fund this new organization. They include the Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund of the Walton Family Foundation, Chambers Family Fund, The Denver Foundation, the Cydney and Tom Marisco Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation and the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation. They have all invested some money in the start-up, but more importantly, they have all contributed leadership and expertise to its formation.



Early Milestones Colorado will be an intermediary for organizations and agencies finding innovative ways to improve the lives of young children and their families. (Photo from Rose Community Foundation archives.)

Learn more:
earlymilestones.org

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Innovate for Good winners announced



KMGH 7News Anchor Anne Trujillo served as emcee.

At the 20th Anniversary event, three of these winners made a live pitch about how they could expand the impact of their project with an additional \$20,000. Those in attendance voted by text message, and awarded the additional money to Be the Gift's Workshop on Wheels project, which helps single mothers with home improvement projects. It will use the additional money to expand its fleet of workshops on wheels to be able to serve more families.

"There was wonderful energy during the Innovate for Good awards, pitches and the text vote," said Foundation president and CEO Sheila Bugdanowitz. "Many of the friends who joined us that evening were impressed and moved by the winning projects."

While the initial proposals came from individuals, businesses and nonprofit organizations, all of the finalist proposals came from nonprofits. The submitting organizations are of all shapes and sizes, from the well-established and well-known



Trustee Jennifer Atler Fischer awards Amber Hayes of Be the Gift an additional \$20,000 after the audience voted for her project.

community organizations to grassroots, neighborhood-based organizations. The projects also all fall in areas that are outside of Rose Community Foundation's traditional grantmaking focus areas of Aging, Child and Family Development, Education, Health and Jewish Life.

Learn more, and see videos of winning projects: rcfdenver.org/innovateforgood

Innovate for Good Winners

Bright by Text

Submitted by: Bright by Three (formerly Bright Beginnings)

An educational text-messaging system that sends parents evidence-based tips to support the development of very young children and will expand to also provide parents with localized community resources and information.

Clean River Design Challenge

Submitted by: The Greenway Foundation

A design competition for students attending Metro State University of Denver to create a mechanism to remove trash from the South Platte River.

Creative Youth Take Flight - La Alma Connection

Submitted by: Arts Street

Underserved youth will learn about urban design, creative placemaking and economic development by producing a

master art plan and public art series to encourage pedestrian use of the light rail and 10th Avenue in the La Alma neighborhood.

Fresh Food Connect

Submitted by: Groundwork Denver

The Fresh Food Connect application (app) will feed families, reduce 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 will connect gardeners to youth who will be employed to pick up and deliver donated produce using bikes and trailers.

Race, Policing and Community Justice Advocates

Submitted by: Shorter Community AME Church

This program will forge a partnership with other

community stakeholders to engage high school kids in becoming peer presenters in the areas of racial equality, community awareness based policing and justice advocacy work.

Shakespeare in the Parking Lot

Submitted by: Denver Center for the Performing Arts

This "food truck for the arts" will provide affordable, high quality theatrical performances to high school students in school parking lots followed by actor-led workshops to support classroom teaching and learning.

The Stompin' Ground Games

Submitted by: Warm Cookies of the Revolution

The Stompin' Ground Games 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.

Veterans in Food Deserts

Submitted by: Denver Botanic Gardens

Military veterans will help grow and sell fresh produce and share knowledge about planting, harvesting and nutrition through farm stands in neighborhoods with limited access to healthy foods.

Workshop on Wheels

Submitted by: Be the Gift

A workshop on wheels truck will be outfitted with all of the tools and materials Be the Gift volunteers need to complete home repair projects for single mom families.

Celebrating 20 years and looking forward

On June 18 at the Seawell Ballroom in downtown Denver, Rose Community Foundation celebrated 20 years of serving the Greater Denver community. Joined by friends, donors and grantees, Foundation leaders looked back on the work the Foundation has done in Denver.

Those gathered to celebrate heard from Governor John Hickenlooper, who spoke at length about Rose Community Foundation's leadership on issues like Denver's Road Home while he served as mayor of Denver. Rose Community Foundation president and CEO Sheila Bugdanowitz spoke about the story of Rose Community Foundation, and its leadership role in the Jewish community, and in its other grantmaking focus areas. Chair



Jerrold L. Glick, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Sheila Bugdanowitz, President and CEO, and Richard Robinson, Founding Trustee and past Board Chair.

of the Board of Trustees Jerry Glick spoke about the Foundation's current impact in the community, and Jennifer Adler Fischer, immediate past Chair of the Board, announced the winners of Innovate for Good (see facing page).



Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper commends Rose Community Foundation's leadership and service.

We've included some quotes from the evening along with photos of the celebration and the Foundation's work over 20 years in the Greater Denver community.

"Much of the work we do is really long-term. We're looking at long-term, systemic change. How can we leverage our dollars to create positive change?" – **Sheila Bugdanowitz**, President and CEO

"When I come ... to the Rose Community Foundation, we start from a mindset of, not how am I going to solve that problem, but how are we going to solve that problem." – **Michele Lueck**, Colorado Health Institute (Grantee)

[Rose Community Foundation] does an incredible job of keeping up with the pulse of the community... of highlighting the areas where the community is facing issues and then convening different groups to figure out how to address them.

– **Luis Colon**, member of the Child and Family Development Committee, Founder and Advisory Board Member of the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado

"I think the values that [Rose Community Foundation] represents are obviously out of the Jewish tradition, but to me, they're just the best human values. They're about caring about other people and acting when you see someone in need."

– **Barbara O'Brien**, Former Lieutenant Governor, At-Large Member of Denver Public Schools School Board

Overall, the Foundation has continued its long-term commitment to help address the challenges facing our community. That community has grown and changed over the past two decades, and today we believe that growth and change will only accelerate in the next twenty years, and beyond. This is an exciting moment for Greater Denver, and for the Rose Community Foundation.

– **Jerry Glick**, Chair, Board of Trustees

Over the last 20 years, Rose Community Foundation:

Made nearly **16,000 grants** to more than 2,000 nonprofits

Made grants to organizations totaling more than **\$227 million**

Thanks to Rose Community Foundation, many nonprofits are ensuring their own sustainability and stability through endowments.

36 nonprofit organizations have endowment funds at Rose Community Foundation

Those endowment funds are valued at **\$39.7 million**, and have distributed more than **\$25 million** to support the mission and work of these organizations

Colorado Technology Foundation seeks systemic change in tech education

The Colorado Technology Association (CTA) and its membership has seen first-hand many of the skills gaps that Colorado high school and college graduates bring to the expanding high-tech workforce here. The association heard from its membership about the patchwork of programs designed to fill those gaps and the concern that no one was seeing the whole landscape. And, while the association had at different times worked to address these issues, it didn't have a way to both launch these efforts and sustain them.

So last year, with a push from members and donors, CTA decided to create the Colorado Technology Foundation (CTF), a new 501(c)3 organization. CTF will lead the effort to ensure that Colorado's supply of highly skilled workers for the new economy meets employer demands. Setting up the new nonprofit provides a sustainable way for the association to engage its membership and bring employers together around science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and workforce development programs. Rose Community Foundation is the fiscal sponsor of the new foundation during its startup phase, and will provide fiduciary oversight, financial management and other administrative support.

As a nonprofit entity, CTF can work in a way that its parent association could not. "Having the 501(c)3 allows us to engage with companies from a new perspective," says Alexandra West, director of the Colorado Technology Foundation.

Through its Talent Center, CTF is working on multiple fronts to bring high school, college students and entry-level workers into companies and connect them with leaders in technology. The Career Connections program brings groups of high school students interested in a career in technology to companies to learn about the company, the industry, participate in experiential activities with employee mentors and have a fun experience. CTF is currently partnered



Denver Public Schools students who visited technology companies as part of Colorado Technology Foundation's Career Connections program.

with Denver Public Schools on the Career Connections program and looking to expand geographically later in 2015. CTF is also launching a pilot internship program for college juniors and seniors as well as entry-level workers from nontraditional schools this summer. The program will pair interns and mentors through project-based work. Interns participate in professional development training through the program.

Through its initiatives, CTF is laying the groundwork for systemic change across the technology education ecosystem. Early this year CTF announced that it is partnering with The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) and Change the Equation (CTEq) to launch the Colorado STEMworks pilot to identify and promote effective STEM education programs. Colorado will be the third state to participate in this initiative. CTF is also partnering in the community on several other initiatives, and you can read more about each of them on their website.

Rose Community Foundation was a natural fit for CTF. "The reputation and vision of the staff is completely in parallel with where we want to be," says West.

Learn more:
coloradotechnology.org

In its 20th year, Foundation celebrates Legacy Circle members

Eighty-five individuals and families have chosen leave a bequest – a gift specified in their wills– or other type of planned gift to Rose Community Foundation as part of their future and estate planning. In its 20th anniversary year, the Foundation celebrates these generous donors, and their inclusion in the unique *Living Legacy Tapestry*.

Visitors to Rose Community Foundation are familiar with the *Tapestry* which is on display in our lobby. Composed by artists Leah Sobsey and Lynn Bregman Blass of **VisualHistoryCollaborative.com**, the *Tapestry* honors legacy donors with personal memories, images and other artifacts. “We have included so many rich stories and images from our legacy donors as part of the tapestry,” says Vicki Dansky, the Foundation’s senior gift planning officer. “It has become an artistic archive of these generous

individuals’ values and their wish to make a difference even beyond their lifetime. We have always planned to include the first 100 legacy donors in the *Tapestry* project and we would love to be able to complete it during our 20th anniversary year.”

Those who have made legacy gifts do so for many different reasons, and with clear intentions for their philanthropy. Some choose to make an unrestricted gift to Rose Community Foundation, which the Foundation will direct towards the community’s most pressing needs in the future. Others fund a donor-advised fund which their loved ones may direct after they are gone. Donors with very specific intentions can designate funds held at Rose Community Foundation to benefit a specific area of community need or nonprofit organization(s).



Artists Leah Sobsey and Lynn Bregman Blass with the *Living Legacy Tapestry* at the 20th Anniversary Celebration.

“A legacy gift to the Foundation can take many different forms. These individuals are entrusting us with this part of their philanthropic legacy. We take that responsibility seriously and recognize the importance of honoring their intent,” Dansky explains.

If you would like to make a legacy gift, please contact Vicki Dansky at vdansky@rcfdenver.org, or 303.398.7422.

More information is online at rcfdenver.org/livinglegacy.

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Imagine...

A foundation that has created and funded innovation for 20 years.
Happy Anniversary, Rose Community Foundation!

Photo: Jennifer Atler Fischer announces Innovate for Good winners.

