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Given the clear link between excellent educators and student achievement, it's easy to agree that great teachers should be compensated for their classroom successes.

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Cover photo: Fifteen years ago, Rose Community Foundation helped launch ProComp, Denver Public Schools' innovative performance-based teacher compensation system. Today, we remain committed to the program and are helping it continue to evolve.

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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Systemic change doesn't happen easily

Since our inception, Rose Community Foundation has focused on helping systems change to make our community better for everyone. During that time we've learned that successful change takes a lot. It means taking the long-view on issues and recognizing that change takes time. It also means working together with others – bringing research, minds, dollars and actions together to chip away at an issue. And, it means being willing to take risks and learn from mistakes along the way.

All of these are core competencies of Rose Community Foundation, and why we are often asked to be a key partner in helping making big change happen. In this newsletter, we share a few exciting ways we are doing just that, including:

- Helping Denver Public Schools pursue creative methods for closing the achievement gap, such as the innovative **performance-based teacher compensation system**, ProComp.
- Assisting Greater Denver's Jewish community in finding new ways to tackle growing challenges with **disengagement, especially among teens**.
- Enabling nonprofit organizations like Project PAVE to find **new sources of revenue** through endowment funds.

We hope each of these stories help you see some of the incredible change that is underway in our community, none of which would be possible without partnerships, patience, much persistence and you!

As always we welcome your involvement, your stories and your questions. Please reach out to any of our staff anytime, or visit our website at rcfdenver.org to learn more.

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

Sheila Bugdanowitz
President and CEO
Rose Community Foundation

continued from front page

Guiding Denver Public Schools' pay-for-performance system into its second decade

But historically, consensus has been challenging when it comes to exactly how to reward teachers for their performance.

Rose Community Foundation played an early and central role in Denver Public Schools' (DPS) innovative performance-based teacher compensation system, ProComp.

Today, as DPS and the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) prepare for negotiating a new contract in the 2014-2015 school year, we remain committed to helping teachers and the district reach consensus on ways to reward teacher excellence.

Earlier this year, we helped facilitate a design team to develop a vision for the next iteration of ProComp. This team is comprised of practicing teachers and DCTA members who are leading and shaping the work of this group in partnership with school district administrators.

ProComp's history dates back to 1999, when DPS and DCTA came together to build a pay-for-performance pilot. With our help, both organizations agreed to continue to work together to provide teacher incentives based on student achievement, continued professional development and for meeting the needs of the district or particular students.

The result was ProComp, designed by a joint task force, and in 2004, voted into place by DCTA members and the DPS Board of Education. In 2005, Denver voters approved a tax increase, which raises \$25 million annually to fund ProComp. ProComp was expanded in 2008 to increase incentives for student achievement and teachers serving in schools with high needs or hard-to-staff assignments.

"ProComp is a unique and ground-breaking system, designed and approved by teachers in the district," says Janet Lopez, Rose Community Foundation senior program officer in Education. "School districts and funders across the country look to the collaborative work done here in Denver as an exemplar, both for implementing a program created in partnership with the union and the district, and for receiving taxpayer support."



A 2011 study conducted by University of Colorado Denver and the University of Washington found that ProComp had a positive impact on DPS as a whole, showing that since 2006, DPS retained an average of 160 more teachers per year.

We have remained committed to ProComp over the last 15 years and maintain a continued partnership with both DPS and DCTA.

"We appreciate tremendously the level of support we have always received from Rose Community Foundation," says Henry Roman, DCTA president. "We are especially thankful for their current funding to facilitate conversations about rethinking ProComp. Though there's still a great deal of work to be done, we're taking steps in the right direction."

"Great teachers have a profound impact on the learning and life outcomes for students, and ProComp represents a citywide commitment to recognizing and rewarding great teaching," says Shayne Spalten, DPS chief human resources officer. "We are so grateful for the role Rose Community Foundation has played in bringing stakeholders together to consider how ProComp will continue to evolve to support our goal of a great teacher in every classroom."

We are eager to continue supporting this pioneering program that's an excellent example of our commitment to systemic change.

What are the ProComp incentives?

The average ProComp incentive earned in the 2012 - 2013 school year was \$6,000 - \$7,000.

Teachers have the opportunity to earn more than \$17,000 in additional compensation in a given year.

Teachers and student services professionals can earn incentives through ProComp in many ways. Here are a few examples:

- Meeting student growth objectives
- Teaching in a high needs school
- Teaching in a high growth school

Learn more:
denverprocomp.dpsk12.org
rcfdenver.org/education

New teen initiative draws support from teens and national funders alike

Dash Sperling may be only 17, but he already knows a good investment when he sees one. He is co-chair of Rose Youth Foundation (RYF), a youth-led philanthropy group for Jewish teens and a program of Rose Community Foundation. Sperling and RYF recently awarded a grant to our new Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative, making them the first teen investors.

“The Jewish community is such a warm and welcoming place, but by age 13 there’s a drastic drop off in involvement. We want to do something about that.”

Their investment builds on more than \$5 million in support for a four-year initiative designed to dramatically increase the number of teens involved in Jewish life and learning in Greater Denver. The effort is being driven by a new partnership between Rose Community Foundation and the Jim Joseph Foundation, one of the largest Jewish education foundations in the world, and is drawing numerous organizations, funders and partners together.

“The Jim Joseph Foundation sought out local funding partners who share our desire to invest in new experiments to reach substantially more Jewish teens. With its experience investing in community-wide programming, strong partnerships – locally and nationally – with Jewish teen education organizations, and interest in the teen audience, Rose Community Foundation is a natural partner for this endeavor,” says Chip Edelsberg, Jim Joseph Foundation executive director.

Like Jim Joseph Foundation and others involved, Sperling is concerned with a growing trend of disengagement in Jewish community life, especially by teens. “The Jewish community is such a warm and welcoming place, but by age 13 there’s a drastic drop off in involvement. We want to do something about that,” he says.

Those involved also recognize that teenage years are one of the most critical times for addressing the issue. “Teens are at a key developmental age, and if we can help them when they’re developing their identities, we can build the Jewish community in the future,” explains Lisa Farber Miller, Rose Community Foundation senior program officer in Jewish Life.

The new initiative is drawing excitement from teens and national funders alike because it takes an innovative look at how to successfully engage Jewish teens. Findings from a 2010 study and Teen Summit we hosted with JEWISHcolorado helped inform and shape the initiative.

“We learned that relationships are critical and we need to design experiences that help teens build meaningful relationships with one another, mentors and adults,” says Farber Miller. “And, we’ve learned from the youth-led RYF model that we’re most successful when we empower teens to design their own Jewish journeys.”

These learnings and more are being incorporated throughout the initiative. For example, we’ll be launching the Jewish Teens Make It Happen Fellows leadership program to provide micro grants and mentoring for teen-initiated projects that engage their peers in meaningful Jewish experiences.

“This could be the breakthrough that really gets Jewish teens engaged again,” says Sperling.

If you’d like to help support this exciting initiative, the projects on the opposite page need additional investors. Contact Lisa Farber Miller at lfmiller@rcfdenver.org or 303.398.7420 to learn more.

Learn more:
jimjosephfoundation.org
rcfdenver.org/jewishteeninvolvement



Moving Traditions and its successful program, Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing!, are among the innovators receiving support through the new Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative, which is managed and partially funded by Rose Community Foundation.

Funds through the Jewish Teen Education and Engagement Initiative will be used to:

- Expand Moving Traditions' gender-based monthly discussion groups for Jewish teens.
- Expand Jewish Student Connection's network of Jewish clubs in local high schools and middle schools.
- Launch a new Boulder Jewish Teen Initiative to facilitate collaboration and new programs for teens at all Boulder synagogues and organizations.
- Train and support the Jewish Youth Professionals Council, a network of all Jewish youth professionals in Greater Denver as they collaborate to increase teen participation and mentor teens.
- Launch the Jewish Teens Make It Happen Fellows program.

Endowment helps Project PAVE along the road to sustainability

DonorCentral: Helping Donors Connect with Funding Opportunities

In addition to endowment funds, we also host donor-advised funds, which enable individuals, families, businesses and groups to make a charitable contribution, receive an immediate tax benefit and then recommend grants from the fund over time.

Our donor-advised fund holders have a unique tool at their fingertips called DonorCentral. The online portal allows fund holders to explore, review and recommend grants, as well as check fund balances. They can search for grantees and recommend grants all online from the site. Learn more about becoming a donor-advised fund holder by contacting Gaye Leonard at 303.398.7418 or gleonard@rcfdenver.org or by visiting rcfdenver.org/giveandplan.

With more than 15,000 reported victims of domestic violence in Colorado in 2013, Project PAVE's programs play a vital role in our community. The Denver nonprofit organization is an expert at helping children deal with and talk about violence. Nearly 3,500 children, teens, parents, teachers and other professionals depend on the organization's therapy and violence prevention programming each year. Much of Project PAVE's culturally relevant intervention is done in partnership with elementary, middle and high schools in our community.

"One of the best testimonials comes from Whittier Middle School principal, Jai Palmer, who said, 'If we didn't have Project PAVE here, a lot of kids wouldn't get educated,'" shares Mike Johnson, Project PAVE CEO.

Community needs like those at Whittier are driving Project PAVE to undergo its own series of changes in order to better serve the community over the long-term. Under a new sustainability plan, the organization is making several strategic moves, including establishing an endowment fund.

Rose Community Foundation helps nonprofits like Project PAVE plan for sustainability by building long-term endowments that provide a reliable source of income on an annual basis.

"Our board saw the potential of what an endowment can do, not only as it relates to sustainability but even general operating fundraising," says Johnson. "When certain donors see you have an endowment, they know you're in it for the long haul. People know they're investing in an organization that's investing in the future."

Project PAVE had long talked about starting an endowment, but it wasn't until the right pieces fell into place that it became a reality. Some of the new strategic changes led to selling a building which provided seed money to start the endowment.



An endowment fund at Rose Community Foundation is helping Project PAVE ensure that its domestic violence prevention programs in our schools continue long into the future.

Project PAVE chose Rose Community Foundation to administer and steward both an endowment and a more flexible designated fund. "There are lots of good organizations out there to invest with. Rose Community Foundation had what we considered to be the best options for us," says Johnson.

The organization is taking advantage of many of those options, including receiving guidance and training from experienced staff and participating in our Nonprofit Endowment Incentive Grant Program. "Rose Community Foundation is helping us determine how to grow our endowment through current and future gifts like bequests and other types of planned gifts," says Johnson.

We're honored to welcome Project PAVE into our family of more than 100 philanthropic and nonprofit funds under management at Rose Community Foundation, and look forward to helping the organization with its long-term plans.

Learn more:
projectpave.org
rcfdenver.org/giveandplan

Rose Community Foundation News

A warm welcome to many!

New Rose Community Foundation staff

- Josh Gold, MazerTot.org Initiative Manager
- Alicia Jirón, Communications Associate
- Jennifer Moe, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
- Elizabeth Moser, Program Assistant
- Beckett Stokes, Director of Communications
- Alex Talavera, Development Associate

Learn more about each and find contact information at rcfdenver.org/staff.

New board members of the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado (LCFC), a program of Rose Community Foundation

- Mitchell Gonzales, president of MGC Services
- Dr. Debora Ortega, associate professor at the University of Denver

Learn more about each and the LCFC at rcfdenver.org/latinocfc.

New members of Roots & Branches Foundation, a program of Rose Community Foundation

Roots & Branches Foundation recently welcomed 18 new members to its collaborative philanthropy program for Jewish people ages 25 to 40. Learn more at rcfdenver.org/rootsandbranches.



New Rose Community Foundation staff

Back (l-r): Alex Talavera, Elizabeth Moser, Beckett Stokes, Jennifer Moe
Front (l-r): Alicia Jirón, Josh Gold

Who We Are

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Whitney Gustin Connor, Senior Program Officer - Health
Therese Ellery, Senior Program Officer - Aging

Elsa I. Holguín, Senior Program Officer - Child & Family Development
Janet Lopez, Senior Program Officer - Education
Cheryl McDonald, Grants Manager
Lisa Farber Miller, Senior Program Officer - Jewish Life
Elizabeth Moser, Program Assistant

Special Programs & Initiatives

Josh Gold, MazerTot.org Initiative Manager
Carlos Martinez, Executive Director, Latino Community Foundation of Colorado
Kendra Shore, Executive Director, Jewish Women's Fund of Colorado

Our Commitment to Systemic Change

A focus on changing systems has always been part of our work and we believe this is where we can be most effective at moving community issues forward. Inside, read about several ways we're helping the community make positive change.

Photo: Jewish Student Connection is among several innovative nonprofit programs we're supporting through a new four-year initiative designed to dramatically increase the number of teens involved in Jewish life and learning in Greater Denver.

