

2017 FALL/WINTER NEWSLETTER

# connections

living our values,  
raising our voice

**ROSE**  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



## A message from Anne Garcia, chief financial and operating officer

We are at the end of what has been a transitional and important year for us at Rose Community Foundation. We lost our longtime and beloved leader Sheila Bugdanowitz unexpectedly at the end of 2016. And, like so many working to make communities more welcoming and equitable, we have worked to find constructive ways to respond to troubling changes in public discourse and policy.

Over the last several months, we reflected a great deal on our values as we looked forward to new leadership and how we can best respond to emerging needs in the community. It has been a challenging but ultimately rewarding experience. As we continued our grantmaking and philanthropic services work, we strategized together about how to remain grounded in our values and how those values shape our actions. You will read more about how we are moving ahead in the pages that follow.

During this time, we have also been searching for our next leader. After an extensive national search, the Search Committee and Board of Trustees named Lindy Eichenbaum Lent as our next president and CEO. Lindy comes to us from the nonprofit Civic Center Conservancy, where she served as executive director since 2009. You can meet her on page 7.

We are excited to welcome Lindy and begin the next chapter of our work here at the Foundation. You will see much that is new in this newsletter – new staff, a new website, new avenues of work to be responsive to our community, new partnerships and, of course, our new leader. But, you will also see that we arrived at all of these new milestones by remaining grounded in our values and our mission. These changes do not depart from who we are; they deepen our identity.

We hope these stories inspire you to join us in our next chapter. There are many ways you can help us do more to make our community a better place. You can make a financial gift or open a new philanthropic fund at Rose Community Foundation. You can spend time learning about current issues and the impact they have on your neighbors, and you can share what you learn with your networks.

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More than ever, we feel strongly that philanthropy has an important role to play in making our community a place where all of its residents can be safe and thrive, and we are proud to recognize and do our part.

As I return to my role as chief financial and operating officer, I want to say that it has been a privilege serving as the interim president and CEO for the past year. I am excited to begin the next chapter of Rose Community Foundation with Lindy leading the way. I hope you will join us as we continue to respond to needs in our community, now and in the future.

### GIVING WITH ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

CONSIDER GIVING BY MAKING AN UNRESTRICTED GIFT, BY OPENING A DONOR-ADVISED FUND, OR BY MAKING A GIFT OF APPRECIATED STOCK. A STOCK GIFT IS QUICK AND EASY AND MAY HAVE TAX ADVANTAGES. CONTACT VICKI DANSKY ([vdansky@rcfdenver.org](mailto:vdansky@rcfdenver.org)) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

# Standing with our community and responding to emerging needs

Over the past year, the tone of many of our cultural and political discussions has shifted in dramatic and troubling ways. In Denver and nationally, this shift is disproportionately affecting immigrants, refugees and other populations subject to hate crimes. Hate crimes targeting Colorado's religious, LGBTQ and diverse communities have increased since 2015, with alarmingly visible examples in the months following the 2016 election. Changes in policy at the federal level are also making immigrant and refugee populations feel more vulnerable. These changes make their lives and lives of those connected to them unpredictable and put their livelihoods and relationships in the community at immediate risk.

At Rose Community Foundation, we have been reflecting on our role during these uncertain times. We feel that our history of working against discrimination and injustice calls us to respond and support those who are increasingly at risk.

So, at the beginning of the year, our Board of Trustees acted. They set aside a pool of grant funds to respond to needs growing out of these changes both in rhetoric and policy. We also looked at how we can best leverage our strengths as a grantmaker and leader in the Greater Denver community to help in this effort.

Drawing on our networks and relationships to understand where needs were emerging, we made rapid-response grants to coalitions including the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Mountain States Region. The additional funding we provided these organizations provided them critical support as they work to address rising discrimination and combat hate crimes in our community.

We also brought community members together to understand the law, policy and cultural issues in these areas. In May, we partnered with the Colorado Association of Funders, Colorado Nonprofit Association and Community Resource Center to host a forum for philanthropic and nonprofit organizations on "Informed Philanthropy: The Facts on Immigrants and Refugees." This fall, we hosted another forum and training, "Working with Organizations and Institutions to Keep Students and Families Safe" for local health, childcare and education service providers. Both gatherings offered attendees the opportunity to hear from subject matter experts about how changing immigration

and refugee policies are affecting the people who local nonprofit organizations, institutions and agencies serve.

Finally, because we believe that we have a shared responsibility to do what we can to make our community a better place, we made small, rapid-response grants to nonprofits that work with immigrants, refugees and those who are targets of hate crimes. Our "Help the Helpers" grants provided small sums to more than 70 front-line organizations to encourage self-care and mental wellness among staff members and volunteers who are experiencing constant stress as a result of growing and urgent demands.

We seek to remain informed of fast-moving developments, and we are working to be nimble in our ability to help. We know we cannot do this alone. We all have an active role to play in ensuring that Denver remains a welcoming place for all of us who call it home. We plan to continue the community action work we began this year into 2018. We will seek philanthropic partners and donors to help us continue to address these issues through grantmaking, convening and other means.

In the meantime, human history is replete with important turning points. As we stand at this one, we remain grounded in our values, and we will continue to work for a better and stronger community for all.



Joanne Kelly of the Colorado Association of Funders moderates a panel at the May forum, "Informed Philanthropy: The Facts on Immigrants and Refugees"



Candidates for the Aurora Public Schools Board of Education listen to concerns and questions from community residents.

## Advocacy: An important tool that takes many forms

On a Saturday evening in late October, and Aurora's Mountain View United Church is packed, but not for a church service. Rather, most of those present are parents from Aurora's African immigrant and refugee community, here to engage in conversation with a panel of eight candidates for Aurora Public Schools' Board of Education.


Though many of the parents cannot vote in the upcoming election due to their non-citizen status, this is one of the first opportunities they have ever had to share their experiences with these candidates for Aurora's school board, and they are eager to do so.

"Many of Aurora's refugees, immigrants and green card holders cannot vote," explains Papa Dia, founder and executive director of the African Leadership Group, and host of the event. "Yet our children go to Aurora Public Schools. We are impacted in a situation where we don't even have a way to express our voice."

The event tonight is part of the Aurora Educational Campaign, a coalition of small community organizations working to bridge the gaps of communication that families and students experience with their schools and teachers. The coalition is comprised of African Leadership Group, RISE Colorado, and Young Aspiring Americans for Social and Political Activism. Rose Community Foundation helped organize the coalition and provides funding support for the campaign.

This dialogue is hugely important for these families. Aurora Public Schools has a severe achievement gap for low-income students of color, especially among its large immigrant and refugee communities. Aurora is also one of the most diverse school districts in the state, serving almost 40,000 students from 131 countries and speaking 133 different languages.





Throughout the evening, community members ask questions and engage the candidates in discussion. They share concerns about the lack of school orientation, transportation challenges, and language barriers for families. One community member poses a critical question to the candidate panel, “What is your experience with communities that don’t speak English?”

“We have families who have no idea what’s happening at school because they don’t speak English. Everything sent home is in English,” explains Dia.

The candidates for school board hear them and promise to help.

“Advocacy is speaking up on behalf of yourself, on behalf of others, or on behalf of a cause,” says Janet Lopez, Rose Community Foundation senior program officer for Education. “While not as obvious as protesting on the Capitol steps, through this event and this campaign, we are helping families in the community become their own advocates.”

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This effort is just one among a wide range of work happening in Aurora to give voice to underrepresented families and make progress toward closing the achievement gap.

**Read about another initiative here**  
[rcfdenver.org/advocacy](https://rcfdenver.org/advocacy)

Aurora residents take part in a conversation with candidates for the Aurora Public Schools Board of Education, organized by the Aurora Educational Campaign.

## ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS MANY DIFFERENT FORMS OF ADVOCACY

At Rose Community Foundation, a large part of what we do is to work on behalf of — and advocate for — vulnerable populations, such as children, older adults, low-income families, and individuals with mental illness. Advocacy is not the only thing we do, but it is an important element and it can take many different forms. Advocacy can look like...

- **Endorsement of a ballot issue** – such as our support for 2016 bond issues for Aurora and Denver Public Schools
- **Media outreach** – such as our partnership with 9NEWS to support Senior Source, an ongoing media campaign that provides resources for older adults and their caregivers
- **Research that informs and strengthens work in our focus areas** – such as our work to create and disseminate standards of excellence for Jewish Early Childhood Education centers
- **Support for a nonprofit organization working to change public policy** – such as our support for Mental Health Colorado, which helped pass a bill into law that prevents individuals in mental health crisis from being placed in jail
- **Support for an advocacy organization to inform and move policies forward that support the goals of our grantmaking areas** – such as our support for the Colorado Children’s Campaign, an organization that works actively to promote issues and legislation central to early childhood education, child health and K–12 education



# Foundation builds on Live On program through partnership with Harold Grinspoon Foundation

The Harold Grinspoon Foundation selected Rose Community Foundation as one of only nine new community partners joining 43 others in its national Jewish legacy giving program, LIFE & LEGACY™. For the Foundation, it is an opportunity to continue its endowment building work in the Jewish community that began in 1999 with the launch of The Endowment Challenge followed by four phases of *Live On: Build Your Jewish Legacy*.

The LIFE & LEGACY program provides coaching, training and incentive grants to participating organizations to promote a community-wide legacy giving program. Rose Community Foundation is planning for approximately 20 nonprofit participants in two different groups. One group will be for Jewish organizations that are new to legacy giving or have all new staff and volunteer leadership. The other will be for previous Live On participants to focus on strong stewardship practices and securing new legacy gifts.

Upon meeting its community-wide goals and organizational benchmarks, Rose Community Foundation's investment of more than \$460,000 over the next two and half years in this effort will be matched up to \$100,000 every year by the Grinspoon Foundation to provide participating organizations with the opportunity to receive unrestricted incentive grants.

“Rose Community Foundation will invest more than \$460,000 over the next two and a half years.”



Founding board chair Ron Montoya accepts a Lifetime Achievement Award.

## Celebrating ten years of Latino philanthropy

In September, the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado (LCFC) had a festive celebration of 10 years building Latino philanthropy in Colorado. Community leaders joined the organization to mark the anniversary and honor those who have been instrumental in building the organization, including founding board chair Ronald Montoya.

The LCFC is an initiative of Rose Community Foundation that was launched in 2007 through a partnership that included Hispanics in Philanthropy, the Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Colorado and the Western Union Foundation along with Latino leaders. It seeks to develop strong and vibrant Latino communities in Colorado by influencing and engaging Latinos and others to be leaders and philanthropic investors. It works to cultivate a new generation of philanthropists who are committed to investing in social change through giving and volunteerism.

Montoya, a former Trustee of Rose Community Foundation, was honored for his leadership in founding the LCFC and engaging people in the community to support it. He was instrumental in both raising funds and recruiting founding board members for the organization.

The LCFC also recognized Elsa Holguín, Rose Community Foundation's senior program officer for Child and Family Development, for her ongoing work on behalf of the LCFC.



The band Making Movies entertains those celebrating LCFC's tenth anniversary.

# Meet Lindy Eichenbaum Lent, Rose Community Foundation's new president and CEO



On November 27, Rose Community Foundation welcomed our new president and CEO, Lindy Eichenbaum Lent. Lindy comes to us from the nonprofit Civic Center Conservancy, where she has served as executive director since 2009. Prior to her leadership at the Civic Center Conservancy, she served as communications director and senior advisor for then-Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper.

In both her previous roles, Lindy developed a deep and broad understanding of the Greater Denver community and the issues facing it. She has also worked to build partnerships between government, nonprofit and business entities to pursue shared goals.

She was happy to answer some questions about coming to Rose Community Foundation so we can all get to know her a little better.

## WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC THINGS YOU LOVE ABOUT DENVER?

Two months after we got married, my husband and I moved to Denver sight unseen. That was more than 15 years ago, but we are still amazed by how quickly we felt at home and rooted in the community. I have always loved that Denver is very open to new people and new ideas. It does not matter how old you are, how long you have lived here or what your last name is – if you are willing to work hard and engage with the community, this is a place of tremendous opportunity and warmth. We feel blessed to raise our two “first-generation Coloradans” here.

## HOW HAVE YOU CONNECTED WITH PHILANTHROPY IN YOUR WORK WITH THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER AND THE CIVIC CENTER CONSERVANCY?

Government and nonprofits have limited resources, but community needs and opportunities cannot just wait on the sidelines. From addressing chronic homelessness, to launching sustainability efforts, to improving educational outcomes and access, so many initiatives that were launched at the City would not have been possible without the generous support and partnership of the philanthropic sector. At the Conservancy, I experienced firsthand the make-or-break difference that investments from foundations can make when funders strategically invest resources, expertise and credibility into helping

organizations build capacity, leverage additional opportunities and develop sustainable approaches to systemic change.

## WHAT ABOUT LEADING ROSE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION MOST EXCITES YOU?

From the Rose Community Foundation staff, board members past and present, and committees to donors, philanthropic partners and grantees – I am excited about the people with whom the Foundation works, collaborates and serves. From the Foundation's longstanding efforts around Aging, Child and Family Development, Education, Health, and Jewish Life; its newer investments to respond to issues affecting immigrants, refugees and populations at risk of hate crimes, or what the future may hold after our forthcoming strategic planning process – I am excited to lead in a values-driven environment with issues and opportunities that feed both the soul and the mind and carry tremendous potential for positive change in the Greater Denver community.

Learn more about Lindy on the Foundation's blog at [rcfdenver.org/meet-lindy](https://rcfdenver.org/meet-lindy)

## FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW STAFF

This fall, several new team members joined the Rose Community Foundation staff.

**DIANA ALDAPA-FONSECA** is a program assistant for the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado.

**AMELIA FINK** is the new nonprofit endowments and legacy manager.

**FAITH MAINOR** is the new donor relations and data associate.

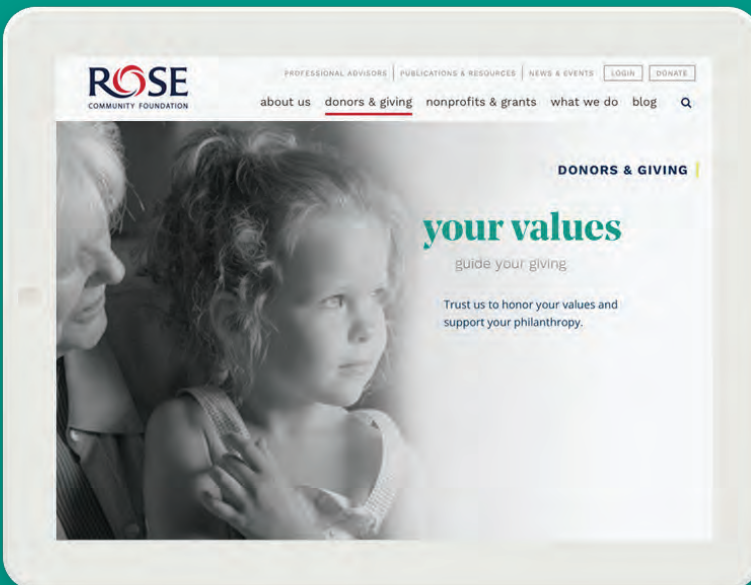
**MARIA TORRES** is the new program assistant for Aging and Education.





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