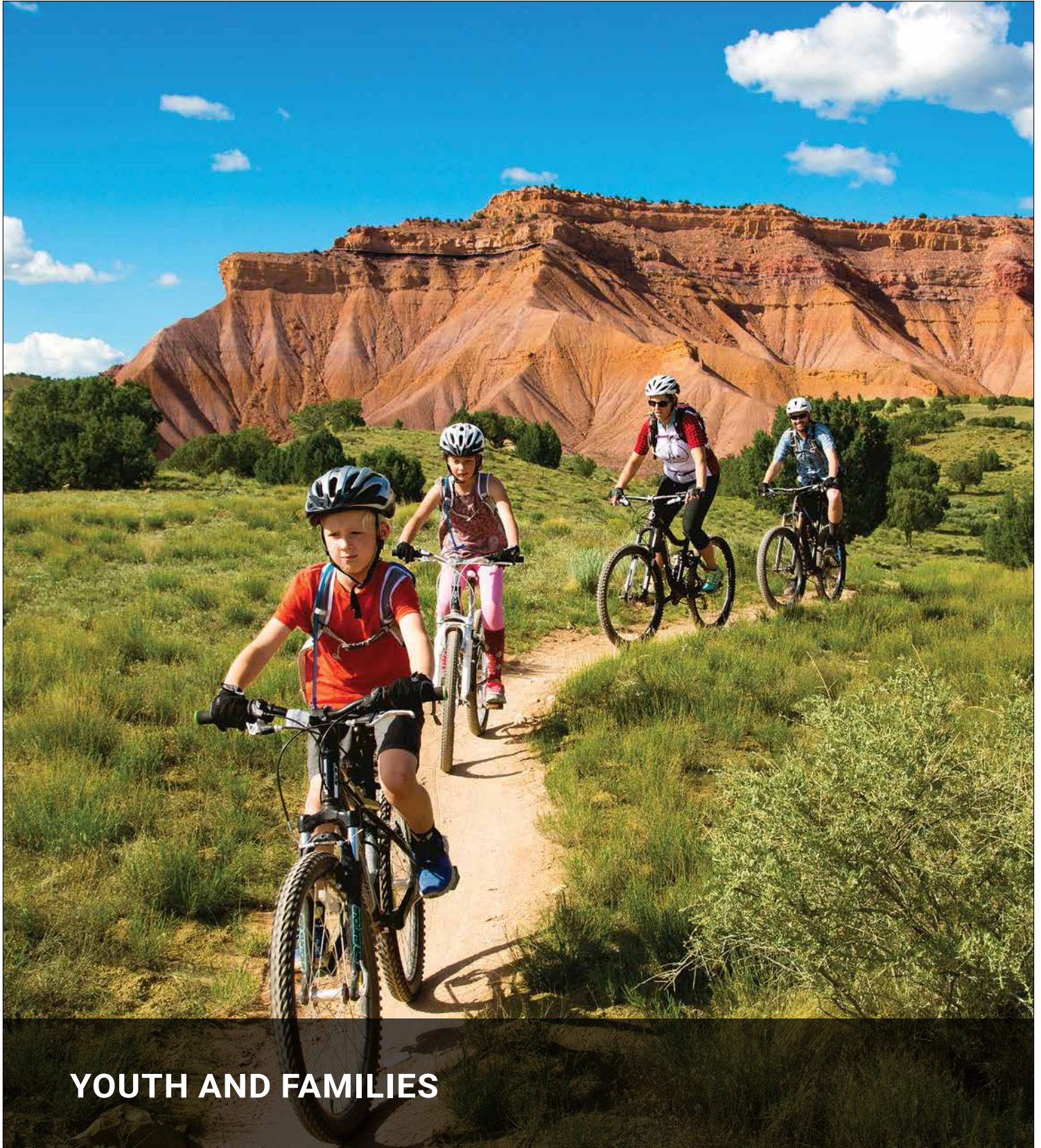


Colorado Municipalities

Vol. 95, No. 4, August 2019



YOUTH AND FAMILIES



Wrangling Risk in Colorado Communities.

As leaders of Colorado's municipalities, you are tasked with wrangling risk in your communities while maintaining and enhancing your constituents' quality of life. CIRSA is here to help you.

CIRSA has deep knowledge and expertise rooted in decades of serving Colorado municipalities exclusively. We provide you the tools you need to identify and manage your risks. If a claim does occur, we partner with you every step of the way to craft a satisfactory resolution.

It's our mission to empower you with the information, guidance, and resources you need to effectively wrangle risk and serve your communities. We work for our members, and through our members, we serve Colorado and its citizens.

Contact us today to find out how we can be **Safer Together.**



SAFERTOGETHER

www.cirsa.org 800-228-7136



Since 1931, Colorado PERA has served our state's public employees in ways that meet their retirement needs—investing for the future of our members.



Leading Change, Lasting Security

For Colorado's Public Employees

www.copera.org

We engineered a system to cool a campus, reduce water usage, and save energy.

NOW THAT'S CHILL.

Kansas State Chilled Water / Manhattan, Kansas



We're Olsson, engineers who understand that where there's a project, there's a purpose. Discover why students at Kansas State University are happier than ever at olsson.com.



COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

1144 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-2207
(p) 303 831 6411 / 866 578 0936
(f) 303 860 8175
www.cml.org
cml@cml.org

Copyright © 2019
Colorado Municipal League
Volume 95 • Number 4

Mission

Colorado Municipalities is published to inform, educate, and advise appointed and elected municipal officials about new programs, services, trends, and information to help them perform their jobs and better serve their citizens and communities.

Articles in *Colorado Municipalities* (ISSN 0010-1664) may not be reproduced unless permission is received from the editor and the reprinted article includes credit to the author, *Colorado Municipalities*, and the Colorado Municipal League. Opinions expressed by authors and in advertisements are not necessarily those of the officers, members, or staff of the Colorado Municipal League.

Advertisements contained in the magazine do not reflect League endorsement of any product or service. Advertising rates provided on request.

Manuscripts: Original articles on subjects of interest to Colorado municipal officials accepted. Contact the editor for guidelines.

Subscription rate: \$25 an issue, \$150 a year. (Colorado residents, add sales tax: in Denver, 7.72 percent; all others in Regional Transportation District, 4.1 percent; all others in Colorado, 2.9 percent.)

Periodical postage paid at Denver, Colorado. Postal Information: *Colorado Municipalities* (USPS 123-140) is published bimonthly (February, April, June, August, October, and December) by the Colorado Municipal League, 1144 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-2207, 303-831-6411 / 866-578-0936.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Mark Vanderbrook, Colorado Municipal League, 1144 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-2207; email: cml@cml.org.

CML EXECUTIVE BOARD

President Liz Hensley, Alamosa mayor pro tem
Vice President Robert "Bob" Widner, Centennial city attorney
Secretary/Treasurer Kathi Meyer, Steamboat Springs council president pro tem
Immediate Past President Wade Troxell, Fort Collins mayor
Larry Atencio, Pueblo councilmember
Kendra Black, Denver councilmember
Cathie Brunnick, Lone Tree mayor pro tem
Barbara Bynum, Montrose mayor pro tem
Greg Caton, Grand Junction city manager
A.J. Euckert, Dacono city manager
Dale Hall, Greeley councilmember
Kathy Hodgson, Lakewood city manager
John Kettling, Deer Trail trustee
Frank Lancaster, Estes Park town administrator
Carlos López, Trinidad councilmember
Ashley McMurray, Hayden mayor pro tem
Kristie Melendez, Windsor mayor
Christian Morgan, Kersey town manager
Robert Roth, Aurora mayor pro tem
Jessica Sandgren, Thornton councilmember
Russell Stewart, Cherry Hills Village mayor

CML STAFF

Kevin Bommer, executive director
David Broadwell, general counsel
Morgan Cullen, legislative and policy advocate
Brandy DeLange, legislative and policy advocate
Meghan Dollar, legislative and policy advocate
Monique Grant, receptionist/administrative assistant
Kathleen Harrison, meetings and events coordinator
Melissa Mata, municipal research analyst
Heather Stauffer, legislative and policy advocate
Christine Taniguchi, communications coordinator
Mark Vanderbrook, database coordinator
Sarah Werner, engagement and communications manager
Laurel Witt, staff attorney
Allison Wright, finance and administration manager

COLORADO MUNICIPALITIES

Christine Taniguchi, designer and editor
Mark Vanderbrook, circulation

COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OBJECTIVES

The Colorado Municipal League is a nonprofit association organized and operated by Colorado municipalities to provide support services to member cities and towns. The League has two main objectives: 1) To represent cities and towns collectively in matters before the state and federal government; and 2) To provide a wide range of information services to help municipal officials manage their governments.

CML SECTION CHAIRS / LIAISONS

Attorneys — Robert Sheesley, Commerce City city attorney
Building Officials — Greg Wheeler, Thornton chief building official
Communications Policy — Randy Simpson, AuroraTV production supervisor
Court Administrators — Angela VanSchoick, Breckenridge court administrator
Finance Directors — Lore Nusser, Westminster accountant
Fire Chiefs — Doug Hall, Westminster fire chief
Human Resources Directors — Lauren Mueller, Frederick director of human resources
Information Technology — Chris J. Neves, Louisville director of information technology
Librarians — Diane Lapierre, Loveland library director
Managers — Mark Deven, Arvada city manager
Mayors and Councilmembers — Colleen Whitlow, Mead mayor
Municipal Clerks — Lisa DelPiccolo, Montrose city clerk
Municipal Energy Utilities Officials — Dan Hodges, Colorado Association of Municipal Utilities executive director
Municipal Judges — Kristan Wheeler, Louisville municipal court presiding judge
Parks & Recreation — Karen Palus, Colorado Springs director of parks, recreation, and cultural services
Planning Officials — Joni Marsh, Longmont planning and development services director
Police Chiefs — Rick Brandt, Evans chief of police
Public Information Officers — Kelli Narde, Littleton director of communications
Public Works Directors — Keith Reester, Littleton public works director
Purchasing Agents — Elizabeth Dunaway, Centennial purchasing manager

DISTRICT CHAIRS

District 1 — Sue Einspahr, Fleming mayor
District 2 — Paul Rennemeyer, Windsor town board member
District 3 — N/A
District 4 — Neil Levy, Woodland Park mayor
District 5 — Monte Baker, Cheyenne Wells mayor
District 6 — J.R. Thompson, Rocky Ford mayor
Districts 7/14 — Laurie Erwin, La Veta clerk
District 8 — Tiffany Gallegos, San Luis mayor
District 9 — John Dougherty, Cortez city manager
District 10 — Ann Morgenthaler, Montrose assistant city manager
District 11 — Roy McClung, Parachute mayor
District 12 — Markey Butler, Snowmass Village mayor
District 13 — Kathy Reis, Westcliffe town clerk, and Ileen Squire, Silver Cliff town clerk/treasurer

Colorado Municipalities

- 08** My View: Mountain Mentorship and Marina
- 10** Improving Outcomes for Our Children and Families: What City Leaders Can Do
- 12** Investing in Education: Full-Day Kindergarten
- 14** All About Lessons on Local Government
- 19** Planning Family-Friendly Communities
- 22** Growing Up Boulder: Boulder's Child-Friendly City Initiative
- 26** Conservation Corps: Transforming Lives and Landscapes
- 29** Undomesticating Colorado's Kids
- 32** Recognizing the Importance of Parks and Recreation in Communities
- 36** Power of Festivals
- 38** Managing Special Events in Steamboat Springs
- 39** Reframing the Role of Youth to Transform Your Community
- 43** Research Corner: A Record Number of Americans Live in Multigenerational Households
- 44** Get to Know: Dencia Raish, Akron Town Clerk/Administrator

SPOTLIGHTS



**Let's show the world what
we can do together.**

Day by day. Project by project.
Together we're bridging what's possible
and moving the world forward.



Engineers | Architects | Planners | Scientists

Building a Better World for All of Us®

sehinc.com/**subscribe** • **800.325.2055**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Have some thoughts about
an article that you read in
Colorado Municipalities?

Want to share those thoughts with
your colleagues across the state?

CML welcomes thought-provoking
letters to the editor!

Send your comments to CML
Communications Coordinator
Christine Taniguchi at
ctaniguchi@cml.org.

ADVERTISE.

Each issue of *Colorado
Municipalities* reaches 5,000
municipal officials and
decision makers. Reach those
who lead Colorado cities and
towns for as little as \$175
per insertion. Contact
Christine Taniguchi, CML
communications coordinator,
at 303-831-6411 or
ctaniguchi@cml.org.



COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

We're not just another pea in the pod.

Cooperative purchasing that is uniquely U.S. Communities.



Founded by public agencies to represent your specific business interests, U.S. Communities has remained steadfast in its commitment to safeguard your ethical, legal and financial welfare at all times. It is the U.S. Communities difference that delivers savings, efficiency and value through:

- **Supplier commitments** to pricing, economy, sales and corporate support
- Solicitation, evaluation and award process led by an **independent lead public agency**
- Dedicated field **Program Managers** focused exclusively on public agency support

Experience the unmatched value of U.S. Communities.
Register today!

Visit us at www.uscommunities.org



U.S. COMMUNITIES™
GOVERNMENT PURCHASING ALLIANCE



Colorado Municipalities

About Some of Our Contributors



Rosemary Dempsey joined Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) in 2016 after a decade of working at advertising and marketing agencies

in the Denver-Boulder area. Today she happily manages the Generation Wild marketing campaign and shares stories of GOCO and its partners' inspiring work so that even more Coloradans realize the impacts of conservation and recreation.



Bill Fulton founded The Civic Canopy in 2003 to create a comprehensive community change platform to help communities collaborate

more efficiently and effectively. Fulton began his career as a teacher at the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning, then helped establish the Denver office of Facing History and Ourselves. Prior to the founding the Canopy, he was a principal and founder of Civil Conversations, LLC, a consulting firm that provides facilitation and training for business and organizations. He completed his Bachelor of Arts at Brown University, his Master of Arts in education at the University of Colorado at Denver, and his PhD at the University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology as a way to lay the foundation for The Civic Canopy, focusing on public dialogue, civic engagement, and collaborative movement building.



Cathy Hill, Growing Up Boulder (GUB) education coordinator, works closely with partners to design and facilitate community

engagements that are personally relevant and meaningful. With teachers, she uses curriculum integration and community connections as especially powerful tools. She enjoys collaborating with and mentoring children, youth, and GUB interns, and she is constantly inspired by their ideas and ambitions. In 2015, Hill retired from teaching after 32 years of service, 22 of which were at Whittier International School in Boulder. Hill is a board member of PassageWorks Institute. She received her Bachelor of Science in human development and family studies at Colorado State University and her Master of Arts in Education in elementary education at Lesley College.



Sarah Huntley is the engagement manager for the City of Boulder. In this role, Huntley oversees citywide efforts to make

engagement on city-related issues more meaningful and inclusive. She provides strategic counsel, capacity-building and implementation support at varying levels to departments across the organization. Huntley also supervises an engagement specialist and the city's neighborhood liaison. She has worked for the city since 2008. Prior to leading the city's engagement program, Huntley was

deputy director of communications and before that, public information officer for police and fire. Huntley also serves as president of the Colorado Chapter of the International Association of Public Participation. She has a bachelor's degree in government from Connecticut College and a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University's School of Journalism.



Rachel Lundy is the special events coordinator with the City of Steamboat Springs. After spending eight years in federal and local

governments, she took on the newly created special events coordinator role in Steamboat Springs last year. She helped develop policies and procedures for the new system and currently manages and coordinates the special events process. She holds a degree from Texas A&M University.



Mara Mintzer is the director and a co-founder of Growing Up Boulder (GUB), Boulder's child- and youth-friendly city

initiative, based out of the Community Engagement Design and Research (CEDaR) Center at the University of Colorado Boulder. She presents and writes internationally on the topic of engaging young people in city planning, such as in her talk featured on TED.com entitled "How Kids Can Help Design Cities" and in her co-authored book *Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable*

Communities. Prior to GUB, Mintzer designed and ran child and family support services for underresourced families on a school campus. She has designed and implemented a wide variety of programs for underrepresented children, families, and neighborhoods in New York and California. Mintzer received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Brown University and her Master of Arts in organizational psychology from Columbia University Teachers College.



Gov. Jared Polis is an entrepreneur, education leader, and public servant. He started his first business, American Information Systems,

while in college out of his dorm room. By the time he was 30, he had launched three successful companies, including ProFlowers, one of the world's leading online flower retailers.

Gov. Polis's adult life has been focused on improving public education. He served six years on the State Board of Education, where he worked to raise pay for teachers and reduce class size for students. He also founded several public charter schools for at-risk youth and served as superintendent of one of them, the New America School, which helps immigrants earn their high school diploma.

Most recently, Gov. Polis served as the U.S. representative for Colorado's Second Congressional District. During his time in Congress, the Center for Effective Lawmaking ranked him as the most effective member of Colorado's House delegation due to his success working across the aisle to improve Colorado's schools, protect public lands, and support startups and small businesses.



Scott Segerstrom has served as the executive director of the Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) since 2014. Prior to joining CYCA,

Segerstrom was the director of the Conservation Corps at Rocky Mountain Youth Corps in Steamboat Springs, where he directed their conservation program. In addition to his corps experience, he was a wilderness ranger and wildland firefighter in the U.S. Forest Service.



Carolyn Skowrya has lived in Dillon since 2009. She is currently serving a four-year term as mayor. In her free time, she enjoys

backpacking, welding, and fiber art. Skowrya and her husband are expecting their first child in October.



Steven Stokes is the special events supervisor for the City of Northglenn, where the event team runs four festivals and three other

events annually. He has been an event planner for 22 years, producing more than 850 events for more than two million people.



Kent Willmann spent 31 years teaching high school social studies in three St. Vrain high schools. Currently, he works at the University

of Colorado School of Education training the next generation of social studies teachers. He co-directs the Boulder County Latino History Project Teacher Workshops and is the curriculum writer and trainer for Lessons on Local Government. Willmann organizes Doing Democracy Day, a one-day local government experience for St. Vrain high school students and local leaders.



Todd Allen Wilson is the senior writer for the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families.

As a reporter, he has covered state government and public policy for the *Chicago Tribune* and *The Daily Press* in Virginia, as well as health care policy for *Inside Washington Publishers*.



CML's Vision:

Empowered cities and towns, united for a strong Colorado.

CML's Mission:

Founded in 1923, the Colorado Municipal League is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization providing services and resources to assist municipal officials in managing their governments and serving the cities and towns of Colorado.



COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

My View: Mountain Mentorship and Marina

By Carolyn Skowyra, Dillon mayor

Before my predecessor as mayor of Dillon announced that he was moving out of town, I had never considered that my position as an appointee to the Dillon Town Council would become anything other than just that. However, my experience working with a young girl through a mentoring program inspired me to take a risk and throw in my hat as a mayoral candidate when the time came. In order to share a more complete history of my experience as a Mountain Mentor, I must first revisit a time of complete uncertainty that became a turning point in my career.

I began coaching swimming in the spring of 2013. My older sister Meg was the head coach of the Silverthorne Tsunami, and I was hired as her assistant coach. Meg and I had grown up swimming together, and we ended our competitive careers in the same college athletic conference. Meg had been involved with the Tsunami for a few years before convincing me to make time to coach with her. We had one glorious summer coaching together (our coaches relay finished first at the championship meet) before Meg's career took her away from Colorado, leaving the Tsunami under my watch. My mission was to grow the Tsunami into a real team – a team of 100 swimmers that sends competitors to regional and state championships and that produces athletes who will leave high school and enter into collegiate swim programs. For four years, I juggled coaching in the afternoons with full-time employment (which was an ongoing shift between seasonal and part-time jobs based on ability to be flexible for my coaching schedule).

During this time, I joined the Dillon Town Council, managed a medical office, led a 4-H Club, worked for a real estate broker, watered plants at a local nursery, worked in human resources, and signed up for Mountain Mentors. This was, in a sense, a time of "throw it against the wall and see what sticks." Some jobs did not stick, each falling short of touching my heart and soul in the way swim coaching did.

In the spring of 2017, the Tsunami was gifted an opportunity to expand into a space that had previously been occupied by another swim program in Summit County. Expanding the Tsunami meant adding another 20 or so swimmers to our then-roster of about 50, it meant getting the kids into a bigger and better pool facility, and it allowed us to offer a program that a kid could join at age six and stay with through high school. Expanding the team also meant increased practice and administrative hours and forced me to ask myself, do I value coaching this team over all other prospective careers? The answer was clear; the fulfillment, joy, excitement, and love I find in coaching are worth it, and the position gives me the flexibility to continue pursuing other service-oriented opportunities.

Around that same time, I found out that I had been matched with Marina through Mountain Mentors, a program I signed up for on a whim after hearing an ad on the radio. Spending a few hours a week with a kid from the community appealed to me for a few reasons. I knew the program's one-year commitment would fit into my schedule, as my obligations to town council, coaching, and 4-H would leave extra hours in the week. Having grown

up with three younger siblings, I knew I would enjoy the company of a little buddy. But most importantly, I knew from coaching how great the reward can be to know you have made a difference in a kid's life. With these things in mind, I agreed to meet with the eight-year-old girl that the Mountain Mentor experts believed would be a good match.

A week or so later, I drove into a neighborhood I had never been to and sat with a Mountain Mentor mediator, Marina, and her mother, playing an icebreaker game to get to know each other. I learned a lot about Marina and her family that evening, and one of her responses has stuck with me ever since: when asked, "What would make the world a better place?" Marina replied, "More rainbows and unicorns." That answer had me sold on Marina, and we excitedly signed our one-year contract and began making plans for our first outing.

We have done just about every activity a pair can find in Summit County: We have been ice skating, Nordic skiing, alpine skiing, disc golfing, paddle boarding, hiking, and more. We became trained volunteers at the animal shelter, expert ice sculpture judges, and talented pottery artists. Every time I picked Marina up that first year, we would play little games in the car: I am going ice-skating and I am bringing ..., Name Something Blue, and Twenty Questions. We played every car game you can think of. These games and outings helped us get to know each other, how we thought about things, what we liked, and what was important to us. Marina is willing to try anything, always once and usually a few times before she has



made up her mind about it. She jumps into every new experience with a positive outlook. Given the option, Marina will always choose Chinese food (even lousy, small-town Chinese food) when we go out for lunch.

When I mentioned to Marina that I was considering running for mayor, she asked me Twenty Questions about what it would mean to be mayor. I would not be the youngest mayor to serve the Town of Dillon, nor would I be the first female. No, it would not pay well, but it would be an opportunity to serve my community and influence the future of a community that I love. Yes, I would get to bang the gavel. She considered the information and gave me her

resounding support. I ended up running unopposed.

After that first year together, we sat down with our Mountain Mentor mediator and talked about our experiences. Was I meeting Marina's expectations? Was she meeting mine? Did we each feel that the other was fulfilling the commitment we agreed to in the contract? The answers were all affirmations that we were a good match, and from that time on, being matched became a decision we make every day rather than an obligation under a contract. We have been matched now for two and a half years. Her contagious enthusiasm has taught me a lot about being open to anything and reminds me to appreciate every opportunity I have to

try something different. We talk about what it means to be mayor and to serve on a town council; she tells me about the injustices she sees in her world, and we discuss actions that we can take to make our community a better place. She brought flowers to the council meeting when I was sworn in as mayor, and I recently did the same for her fifth-grade promotion ceremony. This summer, her family is moving out of Summit County, which means they would not qualify to participate in Mountain Mentors. I believe the relationship we have built is long-lasting; we may live farther apart, but our mutual respect and appreciation for each other will remain, and I hope our friendship is lifelong.

Improving Outcomes for Our Children and Families: What City Leaders Can Do

By Todd Allen Wilson, National League of Cities senior staff writer

Something is changing in cities, towns, and villages all across America. Maybe it is the frustration with a federal government that all too often seems tied in knots. Or maybe it is the realization that the stakes for their communities are too high to do nothing.

But for whatever reason, over the past two decades, a growing number of municipal leaders have been stepping forward and taking action to improve outcomes for children and families. The list of what mayors and city councilmembers are doing is long and varied: launching early childhood initiatives, combating childhood hunger and the opioid epidemic, promoting healthier housing, connecting children to nature, starting afters-school and summer learning programs, creating career pathways for young people, re-engaging youth who have dropped out of school, and working to keep teenagers and young adults out of the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

In these and a host of other areas, the guidance of municipal leaders makes an enormous difference. And for nearly 20 years, the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) at the National League of Cities (NLC) has worked to support their efforts, inspired by a deeply held belief that when children and families thrive, cities thrive.

Conceived and founded under the leadership of the late Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino in 2000, NLC's YEF Institute has become the go-to place for city officials seeking to help children and families reach their full potential. The YEF Institute is perhaps best known for its focus on practical help for and advice to municipal



leaders. Through Mayors' Institutes, Leadership Academies, technical assistance projects, and peer learning networks, the YEF Institute reaches cities and towns of all sizes — from small, rural towns like Hopewell, Virginia, to suburban cities such as Garden City, Michigan, and urban hubs like Denver — bringing together local leaders to develop multisector partnerships that produce innovative, long-term solutions.

One of the many lessons emerging from NLC's work is that individual programs to meet the specific needs of children and families are essential but not sufficient to drive sustainable and scalable progress. To drive lasting change, municipal leaders must join with community partners to build effective and equitable systems.

For example, in the same town or urban neighborhood, an after-school and summer meals program may reduce childhood hunger and a separate initiative on healthy eating and active living may combat childhood obesity. Both offer beneficial ways to mitigate real problems faced by children and their families in that community. But childhood hunger and obesity are

symptoms of deeper, systemic problems, such as food deserts or lack of transportation, that make it more difficult for residents to access healthy, affordable food and maintain healthy lifestyles. To use a medical metaphor, programmatic solutions can often staunch the bleeding, but it takes strong systems to heal the wound or prevent the illness in the first place.

Strong municipalities already use effective systems to deliver many types of services their residents and businesses need and expect. Investment in these systems is widely accepted as necessary to help local economies — and people — thrive. Such systems typically augment public services with private and community-based resources to maximize the impact of public dollars and the effectiveness of municipal services. People understand that investments in these systems is necessary for the community and its people to thrive.

An effective city transportation system utilizes streets and highways, public and privately owned parking facilities, buses, subways, and taxis — even Uber and Lyft in urban

communities – to move people from one place to another. When any one part of the system breaks down, people notice and demand improvement. Similarly, public safety systems braid together police and fire services, state-level emergency response teams, federal disaster response resources, and public education and communications to ensure that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. All are needed to help keep local residents and businesses safe.

In both of these examples, the larger system is itself made up of systems – public transit, bike lanes/paths, sidewalks, streets, etc. Municipal leaders must pay attention both to the macro system and to those more targeted systems to provide the kind of cities and towns our constituents demand and expect.

The challenge is that cities and towns typically have not built comparable systems to meet the needs of children and families. Instead, they often rely on a patchwork of disparate programs and services, a mix of public and private or nonprofit efforts without coordination or direction.

Municipal leaders increasingly are realizing the need to knit together their disparate programs or services into a more comprehensive system that responds to the needs of children and their families. In too many communities, it is only through a "systems lens" that municipal officials can see the service gaps and duplications, barriers to access, inequitable delivery, and inconsistent quality that leave some children and families without the supports they need to thrive. Too often, those inconsistencies reflect historic disparities based on race, income, and neighborhood.

Whether it is early childhood education or juvenile justice or family financial inclusion, effective and equitable systems for children and families can bring together various

providers and programs in ways that yield better, longer-lasting results. As in a system like transportation, strong linkages and coordination make all of the component parts more effective. If buses run perfectly but are not linked to the subway system and sidewalks, riders may not have a safe way to transfer and may miss their train. If an early childhood system has successfully raised the readiness of children in the community entering kindergarten but there is no after-school or summer programming once they begin school, some of their early gains may be lost.

Our youngest children – infants and toddlers – are particularly vulnerable when local programs and services are fragmented because their unmet needs may go unnoticed until they enter school, after crucial years of growth and early brain development have passed. For this reason, the YEF Institute is a key partner in the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers, a collaborative effort funded by the Pritzker Children's Initiative that brings together policymakers, practitioners, and early childhood leaders from inside and outside state and local government. With support from national organizations like NLC, communities and states are creating and strengthening effective policies and programs and sharing what works to support the healthy development of infants and toddlers. As but one example, Denver's Road to Reading Partnership is providing information on citywide resources available for infants, toddlers, and their caregivers that are responsive to families, while also promoting high-quality learning experiences.

By making changes to both policies and systems that focus on children and families with the greatest needs, including in communities of color, municipal leaders can create a stronger foundation for economic vitality and improve outcomes for all residents, while also using scarce

resources more effectively.

In a recent five-city pilot project led by the YEF Institute, residents who were chronically delinquent in paying their city-owned water utility bills were connected to financial literacy and empowerment programs. This effort illustrated a potential win-win for municipal leaders. A subsequent study by the University of Wisconsin-Madison of NLC's Local Interventions for Financial Empowerment through Utility Payments (LIFT-UP) pilot showed that participating cities were better able to collect overdue water utility payments with less reliance on costly debt collection agencies or resorting to shutting off service to customers. At the same time, program participants were able to catch up on overdue bills, make more on-time payments, and save money on late fees.

Innovative initiatives like LIFT-UP are why local elected officials who have worked with NLC continue to sing the YEF Institute's praises. "The success of the YEF Institute reaffirms why NLC is a crucial organization for thinking and learning," said former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. "It provides unique opportunities for us and folks we work with to have serious, focused discussions in a safe space."

As the YEF Institute looks ahead to its 20th anniversary next year, it is assessing the impact of its past initiatives and working to identify ways of enhancing its support for municipal leaders in communities of all sizes in the years ahead. One obvious challenge is to reach cities, towns, and villages that have not yet engaged with its staff or participated in its diverse offerings. If your community falls into that category, the YEF Institute is eager to hear from you! You will find more information about its programs and work at www.nlc.org/iyef.

Investing in Education: Full-Day Kindergarten

By Jared Polis, Colorado governor



Colorado has a lot to be proud of. Our economy is growing, unemployment is low, and we have an amazing quality of life. Our cities and towns are stronger than ever. We pride ourselves on being the best state in the country to live. Our challenge remains, how do we ensure that our economic growth is working for everyone? And how do we ensure that we are setting our state up for long-term success?

One of the ways we can help our cities and towns, help our economy, and prepare for the future is by investing in education; specifically, in full-day kindergarten for every Coloradan.

I was proud to work with local municipal, business, and educational leaders, as well as Sens. Jeff Bridges and Rhonda Fields, Reps. Jim Wilson and Barbara McLaughlin, and the rest of the members of the General Assembly to pass HB 19-1262 this session. This bill provides more than \$170 million to provide free, full-day kindergarten across the state.

This means that this fall, families in Colorado will no longer have to pay up to \$500 per month to send their child to full-day kindergarten. This has benefits for our children and families, for municipalities, and for our economy at large.

Children who are enrolled in full-day kindergarten learn more over the course of the year, develop stronger social skills, and are more likely to graduate from high school. But it is not just an investment in the workforce of tomorrow. Full-day

kindergarten will benefit our economy starting this year. By allowing parents to work a longer day and keep more of their hard-earned money, we can continue to stimulate and grow our economy, which helps everyone.

Full-day kindergarten will also have a dramatic effect on school budgets. Because the state had not picked up its fair share of the tab for full-day kindergarten for years, school districts have had to pull money from elsewhere in order to fund these programs. This means cutting teacher salaries, increasing class sizes, eliminating extracurricular activities, and taking other steps in order to provide our kids with the basics. Fully funding full-day kindergarten frees up about \$100 million across the state for districts to spend on other educational priorities. It also frees up about 5,100 slots for school districts to use for high-quality preschool.

Take Jefferson County (JeffCo) Public Schools, for example, which previously charged \$300 per month for families to send their child to full-day kindergarten. This fall, because of the state's investment and the district's leadership, JeffCo will provide free, full-day kindergarten at all of its elementary schools. Parents may still enroll their child in half-day kindergarten if they wish, but the full-day option is now available for everyone.

We hear a lot about unfunded mandates coming down from the state or federal level. This is the exact opposite. It is a fully funded NON-mandate!

In addition, school districts that already offered full-day kindergarten are using this opportunity to allocate this funding for other priorities. In Durango and Greeley, for instance, the school district has said they will use the additional funds to pay for an increase in teacher salaries. These investments will help make progress in ensuring that teachers are paid like the professionals they are.

As municipal leaders, it is important to take advantage of this opportunity and build on this commitment to our parents, our kids, our educators, our schools, our economy, and our future. Our administration stands ready and willing to work with you to expand access to high-quality preschool so that every child has a strong start. I encourage our municipalities to work with school districts and other community-based programs on early childhood education to prepare students for success in school and beyond, including by helping providers to secure much-needed classroom space. For example, Fort Collins, Loveland, and Estes Park are participating in a countywide task force, along with local chambers of commerce, focused on comprehensive early childhood solutions, such as physical space for universal preschool, engaging employers on quality early care and an educated workforce, and broadening diverse funding streams. By continuing to work together, we can ensure that every Colorado child has an opportunity to succeed from the earliest possible age.

One of the ways we can help our cities and towns, help our economy, and prepare for the future is by investing in education; specifically, in full-day kindergarten for every Coloradan.

All About Lessons on Local Government

By Kent Willman, Lessons on Local Government consultant

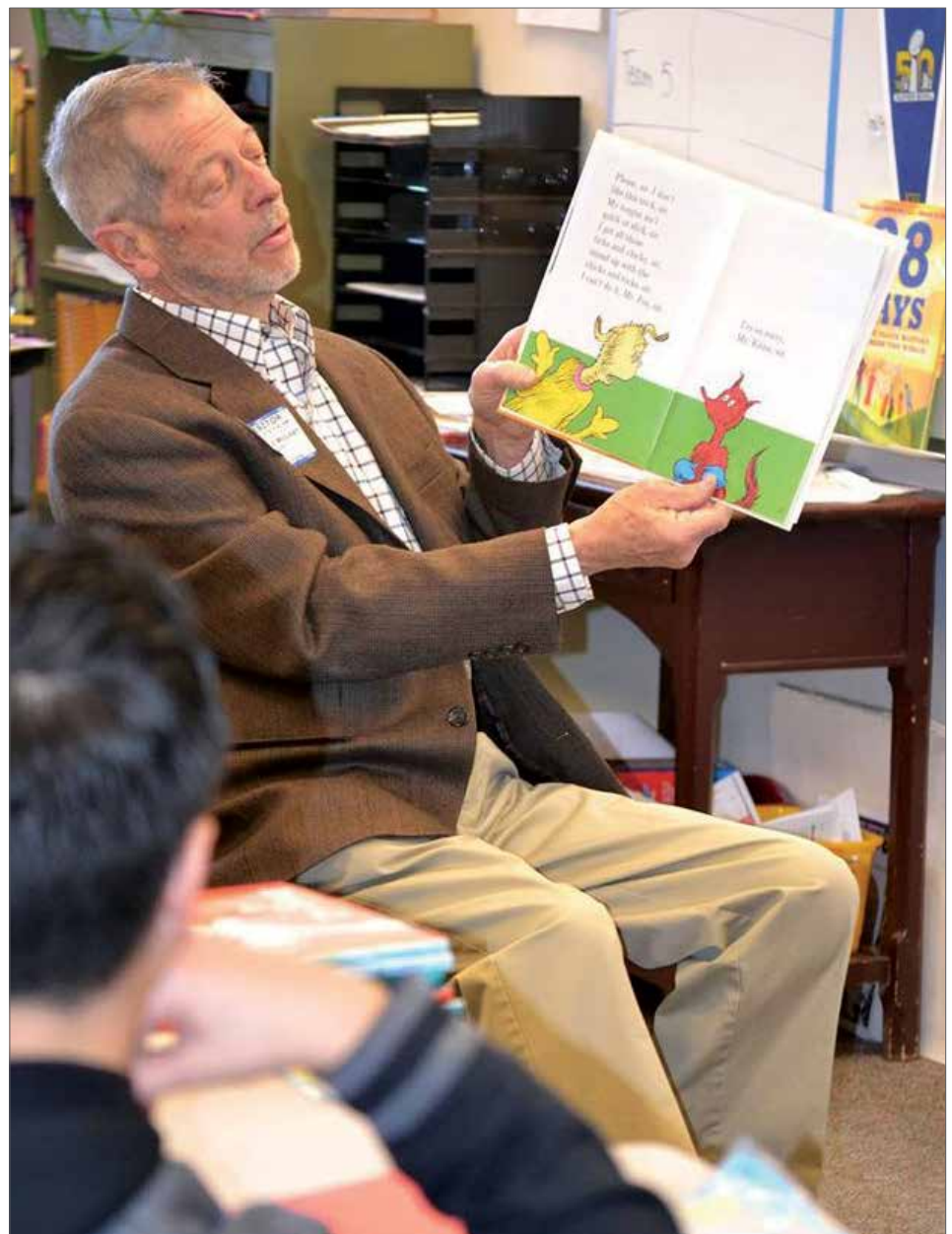
"Mom, I just got an email back from the mayor about my idea for an animal shelter!" What an empowering moment in a kid's life. Clearly this kid is on the way to being an effective citizen. Those are the ultimate goals of Lessons on Local Government (LOLG) — creating empowered and effective citizens. Want to build better citizens? Want to get past the great divisions in America? Want to see government getting the job done? Look no further than the local government right outside your back door. LOLG works to help K-12 teachers do just that with their students. Visit LOLG's website at www.lessonsonlocalgovernment.org.

LOLG is a collection of lessons and other resources written by Colorado teachers for teachers to help connect kids and the family of local government (cities and towns, counties, school districts, and special districts). LOLG is sponsored by both the Colorado Municipal League and the Colorado Special District Association.

Designed to meet K-12 state social studies standards, the LOLG website contains elementary, middle school, and high school lessons, as well as lessons designed for multiple levels. Also included on the website are simulations, contests, newsletters, and links to other resources nationwide.

Sample lessons include:

1. Asking Quality Questions — Teaches students how to ask good questions of civic leaders.
2. Local Government on Parade — Students learn about the family of local government by viewing a typical local parade.
3. Local Government Around the World — Students compare issues in their community with those in other parts of the world.



4. Peakville Needs a Recreation Center — A role-playing simulation of a town meeting where various groups of citizens and officials weigh in on the benefits and drawbacks of building a new recreation center.
5. Larry the Lion Is Loose — a simulation for elementary students who use local government to keep people safe and get Larry back to the circus.
6. Federalism and Types of Local Government — Features University of Colorado (CU) Boulder Political Science Professor Ken Bickers on video.
7. Local Government in 35 Objects — This lesson uses objects to explore a whole range of local government programs, policies, people, and issues that students run into on a daily basis.

One key part of the website is the Local Leader in the Classroom Kit. The kit is a guide to making classroom interaction between leaders and students a success. It is primarily designed for teachers and includes how to contact a leader, how to prepare students, and what typical issues to discuss. It has a "do and don't do" advice section for teachers and for leaders. At the top of that list is: Please do not recount in detail all the steps for creating a city ordinance. Instead, it suggests turning the tables on the students. Pick a topic like selecting what equipment to place in a park. Ask the students to assume the role of civic leaders, with the real leader serving as an informational resource and a conduit of diverse citizens' views. When students interact with leaders, they learn that local leaders are real people who live down the street or are their best friend's aunt. Students also discover how challenging it is to be a local leader, and they develop respect for the opinions of others.

As you may know, Americans' trust in local government is quite high. According to a Gallup survey, 71 percent of Americans trust local government to solve problems, a higher level of trust than in state government at 63 percent and an astronomical number compared to trust in the feds at 19 percent. Interestingly enough, that trust crosses typical political boundaries, with Republicans expressing higher levels of trust in local government than other political groups. When asked why, people respond that local government is closer to the people. Lessons on Local Government aims to build that attitude by using local government to explore typical government practices like elections.

LOLG has a new election-related lesson in beta form, available to be tried out by classroom teachers. It uses local campaign ads to help students explore leadership characteristics, local issues, and media literacy techniques. Local

elections usually offer a more civil example to analyze democracy at its best than recent national elections. Since most local elections are nonpartisan, students see local elections as centered on policies, not politics, and focused on leadership, not personalities. That helps to build trust. LOLG also encourages teachers and schools to host local election forums and town halls. Students are challenged to learn about local issues and formulate questions to be asked of candidates. The best question writers are given the opportunity to ask their question live.

My local newspaper, the *Longmont Times-Call*, has a motto: To build a better world, start in your own community. Local issues offer kids a chance to wrestle with public policy that impacts their daily lives. The list is long: playground equipment, recycling practices, opioid abuse, homelessness, curfew laws, bike paths, water quality, water conservation, red-light cameras, emergency response, marijuana, recreation opportunities — there seems to be something for everyone.

Recounted later in this magazine is the story of a third-grade student who successfully challenged a local ordinance on snowballs (p. 18). LOLG encourages teachers to ask students to explore these issues by looking at the issue itself and how their and other communities deal with the issue, and to then propose ideas of their own.

Some teachers do so using one of two national programs/contests. One is called Civic Action Projects, the other Project Citizen. Both challenge kids to build a better world. A few examples: asking cities to create a dark skies program, working to expand mental health services for the homeless, advocating for more bike lanes, and creating a restorative-justice-focused teen court system.

Want to restore your faith in democracy? Turn a group of kids loose on a problem that matters to them. You cannot measure learning

like that on a standardized test. It can only be measured by the health of our communities.

LOLG also encourages kids to learn about local government through a poster contest for elementary students. The contest asks students to create a poster portraying local government programs and/or public servants. We ask students to connect their poster to one of these themes: Local government Is Safe, Clean, Fun, Smart, and/or Helpful. The winners are used to make a calendar that is shared with all Colorado municipalities.

Several years ago, a local leader was handing out awards to the winners in a local school. The connection led to a school and city project to redesign a neighborhood park.

In addition, LOLG runs several types of teacher trainings. One-day workshops include Lunch with Local Leaders, where teachers get to interact with local leaders. Those interactions typically result in the teachers and leaders saying the same thing about each other: "Those people are really hardworking, smart, and they really care."

Trainings for teacher candidates at CU, University of Northern Colorado, and Metropolitan State University, among other higher education programs, introduce the materials and techniques to beginning teachers. LOLG is a major sponsor of and presenter at two annual teacher conferences: The Colorado State Social Studies Conference and Teacher Librarian Day at History Colorado. We have also conducted targeted workshops for Durango, Boulder Valley, St. Vrain, Grand Junction, and other school districts.

Contact Kent Willmann at kent.willmann@colorado.edu to learn more about LOLG.

LOLG has a Facebook presence where we post announcements, updates on contests, and news stories involving local governments. Like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/lessonsonlocalgovernment).

When Third Graders Take Over the Board Chambers

By Megan Williams, former Frederick community relations manager



Building a skate park, a swimming pool, and underground tunnels for safe wild animal travel in Frederick. These are some of the burning issues the third-grade students at our local elementary schools have come to debate in their mock board meetings during a spring field trip called Community School Tours. The tours include stops at the police station, town hall, miners museum, fire station, and a community park to check out public art and public works trucks.

At the police station, you will find third graders and their parents learning about the municipal court system, getting "locked" in the holding cell and turning on the lights and sirens in a police car. They also get to check out the squad room and the fingerprinting machine, and see where lost dogs are kept.

At the fire station, third graders try on firefighting gear to feel how heavy it is and get to see where the firefighters enjoy meals and naps. Students take turns getting inside of the back of an ambulance before learning what all of the tools in the many storage compartments on a firetruck are used for.

In the miners museum, students are exposed to the dangers of coal mining, where even the lunch pails needed to be sturdy enough to protect the miner's lunch from falling rock. Third graders can see an example of the dynamite and hand drills that were used to break the coal apart before going outside to see the Daddy's Home sculpture. This three-piece bronze sculpture depicts a woman and daughter waiting at the front steps of their home while a little boy and dog trail after a father who has just gotten home from a day of coal mining, peeking into the metal lunch pail to see if a snack might have been saved. Here the kids are asked to think about a time where cell phones did not exist, which meant there was no way to know if your parent had made it safely through a dangerous day of work.

It is easier to learn about all of the ways the public works department keeps the community maintained while watching the blade of a road grader move back and forth or touching the massive tire of a front-end loader. To see how big a snowplow is helps the third graders understand

why they should tell their parents to slow down if they ever find themselves driving behind or next to one during a snowstorm.

The town hall stop is where the students who have been elected as mayor and trustees hold a mock board meeting and hear from the concerned residents in their class about an issue they have all agreed is important to them. Sitting in the big black leather chairs their grownup counterparts inhabit every second and fourth Tuesday night,

they hear from classmates on both sides of the issue before voting to take action.

By having students see the places and people that make up their local government at this young age, we believe we are sparking a lifelong understanding, and hopefully appreciation, of how essential municipalities are to the everyday lives of their residents.



Snowballs Banned in Severance!

By Nicholas Wharton, Severance town administrator

Every year, the Town of Severance hosts the entire third-grade class of Range View Elementary. During this event, the town board and staff have several stations throughout the town hall to educate the third-grade students about the roles of local government officials and employees. Each year, the Severance Town Board provides examples of old ordinances that can still be found in the town code, such as an ordinance stating that it was illegal to throw a snowball in the Town of Severance. The point of this exercise is to try to educate the youth of our community that no matter how young they are, anyone can become engaged and make changes in the town they live in. Typically, the third-grade students all are amazed and frustrated with these old ordinances, but move on with their day-to-day lives. However, in 2018, this all changed when a young man by the name of Dane Best decided he wanted to change the ordinance that banned throwing snowballs in Severance.

About a month after Dane's visit, our front desk received a phone call from his mother, which was transferred to the town manager. Mrs. Best was calling to inquire about the process that Dane would have to go through to change the snowball ordinance and if the town would be willing to help assist with this process. Over the next few weeks, town staff visited on several occasions with Dane and his classmates to help coach them on the process of changing an ordinance in Severance, with the next step being addressing the town board.

In early November, Dane attended our first board meeting of the month. During the public comment section of the meeting, he addressed the town board, asking if they would consider changing the ordinance. The board agreed to schedule an agenda item at the next board meeting to consider rewriting an ordinance. Shortly after this board meeting, several local, state, national, and world news agencies, along with other media outlets, found out about the boy trying to change the snowball law and it snowballed out of proportion.

Over the next several weeks, news agencies from all over the world, from BBC to *TIME Magazine* and CBS4 Denver to the Good Morning Show, called the town and the Best family wanting to interview



the boy willing to step up and change his local law. In early December, with half the boardroom full of media and the other half full of the friends and family of the Best family, Dane gave a PowerPoint presentation, and the town board unanimously approved an ordinance to allow snowballs to be thrown within the Town of Severance. For several weeks after the approval, news agencies continued to contact the town and interview Dane, and there is now even a book published about the event, *Snowballs For Severance: The Terrifically True Story of Dane Best and the Snowball Ban*.

Looking back on the events that took place during these few weeks, although it was sometimes overwhelming and often exhausting, it was a humbling experience in local government. Having a front row seat to witness one of the youngest citizens in my community step up to change a local ordinance because he did not believe it was fair is exactly why I and many of those reading this article decided to pursue careers in local government. As the famous Leslie Knope from the Parks and Recreation sitcom said, "We have to remember what is important in life: friends, waffles, and work. Or waffles, friends, and work. But work has to come third."

Planning Family-Friendly Communities

By Wade Broadhead, Florence planning director and American Planning Association Colorado Youth in Planning Committee chair; and Hadley Peterson, AICP-C, Design Workshop planner and American Planning Association Colorado Youth in Planning Committee member



What is city planning, and how does it impact me? How does it impact my family? These aren't the questions most people regularly ask themselves. In fact, many citizens do not think about the role planners play in creating family-friendly places, sustainable cities, or exciting destinations. However, on a day-to-day basis, the chance that a planner in your community is actively thinking about those topics is high.

Planners can do many things. Some things they do are think about how much park space is available, examine whether people can safely walk to get to a grocery store, consider how many

lanes a road should have, engage with communities, and study housing and demographic data. It is not a job most kids think about doing when they grow up, but city planning is a crucial profession for empowering and uniting individuals and places, as it is planning that is the connective tissue that binds all the elements of a city together. Ultimately, the goal of planning is to create places that maximize the safety, welfare, and well-being of all residents in a community.

In order to do this, planners tend to think of cities and towns like puzzles. Planners examine how to fit parks, roads, factories, and houses together

in a way that makes sense and includes all the individuals and families in the community. Part of the puzzle is thinking about people while also managing wildly changing contextual landscapes. Colorado is facing many changes in development and growth, especially in its metro areas, and other isolated rural areas are also being impacted by a rapidly changing future. No matter which type of community you live in, the planners in your region possess a unique skill set to help elected officials create and sustain great places.

In light of a rapidly changing future, planners must be problem solvers.



Planners are not trained do just solving the problems you may have today with a specific building permit, but problems they foresee happening in the future. Planners work together with officials to solve the giant puzzle that is city and town planning so that someone is always thinking of how to prepare the city for the residents of the future. Planners also think about sudden events that could impact a community, like wildfires, and what the community can start doing now to minimize the damage in the future and to be more resilient.

If this was not enough to think about on a daily basis, planners also have a responsibility to the communities they work in to engage the whole community in order to create these great places. This means engaging underserved populations like rural communities, youth, minorities, people of color, and other often underrepresented groups. The American Planning Association Colorado (APA CO) Chapter, which is an association of more than 1,500 planners who tackle similar challenges every day, has taken

a very active role in providing education and support on a variety of topics, including community engagement. In 2016, a Youth in Planning Committee was formed by APA CO to focus on engaging young people in conversations around the importance of creating successful communities for all.

Three years later, this committee, composed of members from all over the state of Colorado, is still focused on ways to communicate the importance of effectively engaging youth to help solve complex

community issues and help others understand how young people's voices can be incorporated to create family-friendly places.

The committee is currently developing a curriculum that meets the state's educational standards that can be taken into classrooms (K–12) by planners to educate young people about planning and the impact it has on their cities, towns, and state. By meaningfully engaging and educating youth, the committee is preparing them to be empowered citizens who care about city planning. The Youth in Planning Committee is also launching a Youth Planning Summit program that will be available to communities around Colorado. These summits will focus on connecting youth with the planning challenges in their community and challenging them to identify solutions.

This is just the start, though. In fact, many family-friendly communities that value youth engagement can be found all over Colorado. These communities are organizing events that include everything from one-day educational events like Voices on Canvas' Annual Lego Challenge, "Building Community Block by Block," where youth and their families work in teams to construct a community vision of an ideal place to live, work, and play, to a more complete program like Box City that covers the nexus of urban design, historic preservation, and city planning by combining art and planning through a hands-on activity of building a city out of cardboard.

Other communities, including the City of Pueblo, are encouraging youth to be involved in the actual planning process of creating family-friendly communities. In 2018, "Inspiring Pueblo's Youth as Future Stewards of

the Great Outdoors" won the APA Colorado Community Engagement Merit Award. The City of Pueblo was selected to participate in the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Inspire Initiative, which is aimed at inspiring youth in Colorado to appreciate, enjoy, and steward the great outdoors. The goal of this project was twofold: to have youth proactively participate in it and to encourage youth to experience the outdoors, starting with their own backyard, in a progressive steps program.

Another project that enabled youth to be involved in the often-convoluted planning process was the City of Lakewood's Sustainability Plan, which offered a class at a local middle school to help bring the ideas, perspectives, and passions of students and teachers to the table. This class offered a realistic, applicable project that helped transform students' ideas into reality and truly made the idea of sustainability accessible for kids of all ages. The class participated in field trips, helped to write chapters of the plan, illustrated portions of the plan, and provided action steps for what kids could do to help further the goals of the plan. The end result was a plan written by kids, for kids.

Colorado is not alone. Youth engagement is in full force in many communities. For example, Y-PLAN, sponsored by the Center for Cities + Schools at the University of California Berkeley, is a program that encourages youth to become change agents in their community by integrating city planning into classes as diverse as government and physics. Another, Future Leaders in Planning, is a leadership development program based out of the Chicago Metropolitan

Agency for Planning. The program started as an avenue for youth to give input at the regional planning level while the agency was working on a long-range plan for the greater Chicago region. The goal of the program is to expose students to a range of issues, including transportation, land use, housing, and economic development. Even international organizations like Youthful Cities, UNESCO, and UN-Habitat are designing programs and toolkits in partnership with planners to help understand what youth want to see in their cities and how youth can be change agents in their community.

Youth engagement is a crucial part of creating family-friendly communities that are future thinking and inclusive. Planners have recognized this and are always trying innovative ways to engage youth, because the youth of today are the future of tomorrow.

Young people are a large part of the population, and they have a substantial stake in contributing to the building of strong communities. Although they may not have a planner's lexicon or experience, they recognize the impacts of planning on their lives. Beyond that, youth are passionate and can provide a previously unheard perspective while advocating for deeper community engagement.

City planners are tasked with working with young people in order to create family-friendly communities that reflect the hopes and goals for the places youth want to live, work, and socialize in 20 years from now. And, by tapping in and listening to this voice, communities can successfully plan for families, including inclusive all-ages spaces that are accessible, safe, and fun.

Young people are a large part of the population, and they have a substantial stake in contributing to the building of strong communities. Although they may not have a planner's lexicon or experience, they recognize the impacts of planning on their lives.

Growing Up Boulder: Boulder's Child-Friendly City Initiative

By Cathy Hill, Growing Up Boulder education coordinator; Sarah Huntley, Boulder community engagement manager; and Mara Mintzer, Growing Up Boulder director and co-founder



Photo by Ethan Herrold

In many council, commission, and board rooms across America, this is what child participation looks like:

A courageous youngster, usually age seven to 12, walks up to the podium. Occasionally, the speaker is flanked by a few supportive peers. Sometimes, the child cannot reach the microphone, and a quick-thinking staff member runs to get a chair for him or her to use as a stool.

The child speaks his or her truth about an issue or an experience.

Elected officials try as hard as they can to be friendly. They smile. Sometimes they clap. Often, if a teacher or parent is present, they tell the adult to give the child an "A."

And then?

Nothing.

While many elected officials love to hear from future voters, it is not always clear what to do with that feedback. How do you reconcile a child's thoughts with other, perhaps more sophisticated, input? What if the child's feedback simply is not feasible financially or politically?

Too often, the child receives little or no information about whether – or how – the substance of what he or she has said will be considered.

One Front Range community is working to change this, leaning into a creative and evolving collaboration between municipal government, the school district, and a best practices program housed at the University of Colorado Boulder's Community Engagement Design and Research (CEDaR) Center.

The program is called Growing Up Boulder (GUB), and it is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Headed by Mara Mintzer, co-founder and program director, the program strives to make Boulder a child- and youth-friendly city in a variety of ways, including partnering with city departments to create meaningful youth engagement. To date, the program has facilitated 85 projects and worked with more than 4,000 young people.

"The City of Boulder's partnership with Growing Up Boulder has allowed us to think creatively about how we reach children early in planning processes, and in a way that allows us to truly incorporate their feedback," said Boulder City Manager Jane Brautigam. "It is important to remember that

Continued on page 25

Case Study 1

Parks and Recreation: Civic Area



Photo by Cathy Hill

In 2012, the City of Boulder began a visioning process to improve the city's downtown Civic Area, a 26-acre space next to Boulder Creek downtown. The ongoing Civic Area Project seeks to develop an urban design vision for public and private spaces, to guide decisions for building in a high-hazard flood zone, and to explore potential recreational and cultural uses.

GUB worked with the city to create meaningful youth engagement to inform the remodel of the first section of the Civic Area: Central Park West.

How many kids participated?

225 children and youth, ages four to 16, between 2012 and 2018

What forms of engagement were used, and what were the key tactics?

GUB and the city worked together on this project for more than six years. GUB co-developed a curriculum with teachers of elementary, middle, and high school students; engaged with after-school programs for underrepresented youth, such as I Have a Dream; and partnered with the Boulder Journey School, a preschool that integrates city requests into early childhood learning. Methods ranged from youth interviewing relatives to 3-D model building to young people testifying before City Council.

What did young people say?

Participating children told the city they wanted more opportunities for play, safety enhancements, experiences with nature, art, places to "hang out," and water features. Most of these themes have been realized, and several others will be considered in future phases.

"The signature spaces in Boulder's Civic Area were originally envisioned by Growing Up Boulder participants," said Yvette Bowden, Parks and Recreation and Community Vitality director. "From the bridge's kid-friendly see-through spaces and the naturalized access points along Boulder Creek to pollinator-friendly plantings along our winding pedestrian and bike paths to the park's water education play features and the awesome rope-versus-rock climb to the top of the playground slide, the area inspires fun, learning, and connectivity for all."

Case Study 2

Community Vitality: Revitalization of University Hill



Photo by Erika Chavarria

In early 2014, the Boulder City Council identified improving the quality of life in University Hill as a priority. The city decided to specifically focus on 11th Street, which connects the downtown Pearl Street Mall with the Hill neighborhood, which includes a retail district near the university.

Throughout fall 2017, GUB staff, undergraduate interns, and senior mentors from a retirement community worked with a fourth-grade class to gather youth perspective on improving 11th Street.

How many kids participated?

24 students

What forms of engagement were used, and what were the key tactics?

GUB team and mentors worked in the classroom once a week for 10 weeks. Lessons included creative placemaking and deliberative democracy. Engagement techniques included a site analysis, studying revitalized corridors in other cities, developing group recommendations, and a class replica of the 11th Street corridor. Three tactics were key: the intergenerational quality of the project (ages 9–82), hosting city experts midway through the engagement to listen to students' ideas and stretch their thinking, and including elementary students with university students to present their recommendations in a community meeting.

"My favorite part of working with GUB was when I got to share my ideas with some super important people," said a Flatirons Elementary fourth-grade student.

What did young people say?

The children saw great potential for improvement on 11th Street. Student proposals emphasized beautification of space, interactive activities, safety, environmental consciousness, and pedestrian-friendly attributes. Specific suggestions included artistically themed trash cans, interactive murals and navigation signs, artistic benches made from recyclable materials, improved bus stops, and more opportunities to be in nature.

The city drew upon many of these ideas as it enhanced the 11th Street Corridor experience.

Case Study 3

Open Space and Mountain Parks: Master Plan



Photo by Will Oberlander

The City of Boulder's Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) department is nearing completion of a multiyear master planning process. In 2016 and 2017, GUB and OSMP partnered to research how young people wished to be engaged in the process. Building upon findings from this work, the two organizations partnered again in 2018 to support youth outreach to shape the plan itself.

How many kids participated?

163 children, youth, and/or parents

What forms of engagement were used, and what were the key tactics?

GUB conducted a focus group with high school students in the Junior Rangers program and developed curriculum for an elementary school classroom about how and where children wish for their voices to be heard. GUB then helped city staff simplify outreach materials for use with young people and conducted a focus group with parents of children with disabilities. Finally, GUB trained the city's teen youth advisory board to reach out to a wider group of teens regarding their vision for OSMP's future. Through this train-the-trainer method, GUB and the city were able to hear from more young people while empowering teens to be leaders in their own community.

What did young people say?

Students in the Junior Rangers focus group were overwhelmingly enthusiastic about contributing a year-round youth voice to OSMP, such as through a teen advisory board.

Elementary students suggested locations for engagement, such as the YMCA, libraries, schools, trails, coffee shops, and parks. They told the city they would participate in activities like youth councils, games, speaking to people in the community, drawing, and writing letters.

As for materials, GUB generated a "kid-friendly snapshot" booklet with images and words that described OSMP's initial nine topic areas. The document was used by GUB staff in one-on-one interactions with children to guide conversations and facilitate the completion of a questionnaire.

"Over the years, Growing Up Boulder (GUB) has been instrumental in helping the Open Space and Mountain Parks department engage directly with youth on issues of importance to the city's open space system," said Dan Burke, OSMP director. "OSMP always enjoys the opportunity to collaborate with GUB in bringing to life the voices and perspectives of our youth."

Case Study 4

Transportation: Whittier HOP Transit Study



The 2016–2017 HOP Transit Study sought to gather input to revitalize the HOP bus user experience and address changes that had occurred in land use and transportation options since the HOP's inception 22 years earlier. During fall 2016, GUB staff, undergraduate interns and volunteers worked with Whittier International Elementary School's second-grade emerging bilingual students and their teachers.

How many kids participated?

Twelve bilingual students, ages seven and eight

What forms of engagement were used, and what were the key tactics?

Engagement highlights included mapping the HOP route to learn about the HOP bus, photo-framing during a field trip to identify likes and dislikes about the HOP and bus stops, and classifying photographs taken into four categories: safe, fun, comfortable, and easy/convenient. Key tactics included research, a collaborative decision-making process among the students, and a persuasive letter-writing campaign to a city planner.

What did young people say?

The students had three main recommendations. First, children valued being able to ride the bus independently, which meant needing to read bus signage that is currently at an adult level. They suggested lowering the signs at bus stops to the level where most children can read them. Second, students wanted a place to sit while waiting for a bus. To this end, students recommended the city install a bench at the stop closest to their school. Last, students wanted riding a HOP bus to be a fun and interesting experience. They recommended placing entertaining student artwork on each HOP bus.

The result? Students created artwork with the caption, "How many bunnies do you see?" The city printed the artwork for every HOP bus and installed a bench with a plaque dedicated to the Whittier students.

"The city's partnership with Growing Up Boulder on this and a variety of other mobility-related projects has been fantastic," said Kathleen Bracke, interim co-director of the city's Transportation Division. "The creative, unbridled, fun, and heartwarming input from the children and their families has created legacy impacts for several of Boulder's streets, underpasses, and local HOP service for people of all ages to enjoy for generations to come."

Continued from page 22

decisions local governments make have long-lasting implications, and the children in our community are highly likely to experience the effects. We have a responsibility to grow young people's capacity for civic engagement and consider these valuable perspectives."

The most recent result of this collaboration was the creation of a child-friendly map of Boulder, informed by robust feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including parents and children. The colorful, bilingual, two-sided map highlights free and low-cost features and locations of interest to children and provides navigation assistance that helps children get there. Thanks to support from several partners, maps were made available to every schoolchild in Boulder. Online versions, including one for teens, are in the works.

"The child-friendly city map was created by children and families for

children and families," Mintzer said. "Children are delighted to see themselves and their ideas reflected in the map; and they are using the map to navigate the city in new ways. One 10-year-old asked her family to take her to a nature center her family had never visited because she discovered it on the map. The map builds children and parents' capacity to engage in the physical and civic space of their city and provides equitable access for all residents."

The City of Boulder supports GUB through financial assistance, approximately \$62,000 yearly, open access to city staff, strategic thinking about the projects that should be prioritized, and shared learning. The program employs two part-time staff members, Mintzer and Education Coordinator Catherine Hill, as well as university student interns. GUB is also supported through donations from other partners and supporters. CEDaR administers the program on behalf of CU Boulder, provides additional financial support, and organizes

initiatives across campus to promote the effort, including internships, classes, and specialized research projects.

Connections to the school district help provide meaningful access to students, as well as synergistic opportunities for teachers to make classroom learning relevant.

"The best learning happens in places where teachers and students are engaged in meaningful and integrated areas of study, where students have a voice and opportunities to step into leadership," Hill said. "A culture of child and youth participation has many benefits, not the least of which is that we all benefit from their energy and desire for a better future. When we empower our young people, our communities become more vibrant, inclusive, and democratic, and children grow up knowing their voices matter."

Resources

In 2019–2020, GUB will partner with the city for more than 500 hours on the following efforts:

- An 18- to 24-month subcommunity planning effort, the first of 10 such efforts that will occur in Boulder over the next decade;
- Building Bridges, an ongoing effort to increase community understanding of what supports/prevents constructive civic dialogue; and
- Planning for a new neighborhood library.

The program also will continue to support the Transportation Master Plan, which has already been informed by children, including some as young as three years old, as it comes to council for consideration later this year. Finally, the GUB team will develop and deliver training to share its wisdom about youth-centered participation with 25 city employees who have an active role in planning engagement.

Wrestling with how to involve young people in a project or decision? **Below are five youth engagement best practices to keep in mind:**

1. Go where young people are instead of asking them to come to you.

2. Use fun, creative, and varied engagement methods.
3. Build upon children and youth's assets instead of deficits.
4. Be transparent about the process and outcomes.
5. Reflect, evaluate, improve, and be tenacious.

Additional Resources:

- GUB website: www.growingupboulder.org
- TEDx talk featured on TED: How Kids Can Help Design Cities
- Book: *Placemaking with Children and Youth: Participatory Practices for Planning Sustainable Communities*, by Victoria Derr, Louise Chawla, and Mara Mintzer
- Boulder's Child-Friendly Map: www.growingupboulder.org/gubmap

Full reports from each of the case studies are available on GUB's website.

Conservation Corps: Transforming Lives and Landscapes

By Scott Segerstrom, Colorado Youth Corps Association executive director



The legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s and 1940s – whose volunteers planted nearly three billion trees to help reforest America, constructed more than 800 parks nationwide, and built a network of service buildings and public roadways in remote areas – proudly lives on today in the form of conservation service corps. No state has a more vibrant corps community than Colorado.

Each year in Colorado, eight accredited conservation corps engage more than 1,600 youth, young adults, and veterans, stewarding our state's precious land, water, and energy resources. Beyond the immeasurable benefits to Colorado, conservation corps support our younger generation by creating career

pathways, offering education awards, and helping to quicken the path to economic independence.

Municipalities and their leaders played an important role in the humble beginnings of the conservation service corps movement in Colorado. The City of Steamboat Springs and the City of Grand Junction both helped found the two corps serving their regions. Former Denver Mayor Wellington Webb gave the keynote for the first Mile High Youth Corps graduation ceremony in 1992. And several corps are programs of local county governments. The corps sector has grown into a \$25 million force for good, but our relationships with local community leaders – from the eastern plains and mountain towns to urban areas – remain a cornerstone of our success.

Growing an Ethic of Community

Conservation service corps are an impactful force for growing young people's investment in their local community. When cities and corps partner together, youth and young adults are able to use their heart and muscle to improve and conserve the parks and open space they have grown up enjoying. Through service, they grow a greater sense of ownership and belonging and take pride in leaving behind a positive legacy. As a former youth corps member, I can personally attest to this. I can still recall every foot of trail I built in the summer of 2002. Those trails and the Towns of Walden and Empire remain special.

Our commitment to Colorado's young people is underscored through corps' partnerships with AmeriCorps. Eligible

corps members enroll in this community service program through their local corps and receive an AmeriCorps Education Award voucher, which they may apply toward future tuition or existing student debt, offering the next generation a path to college or other educational opportunities. The program takes shape on the ground when corps partner with municipalities – for example, Mile High Youth Corps' partnership with the City of Lakewood to conserve energy and water, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps' partnership with the Town of Breckenridge to restore habitat, or Western Colorado Conservation Corps' partnership with the City of Fruita to mitigate wildland fire threats.

Serving in conservation corps also improves members' quality of life. Studies have demonstrated that participation in a corps program grows self-esteem, social confidence, and civic engagement. Our members are more likely to be interested in obtaining additional education and have renewed confidence in their ability to secure long-term employment. They learn lifelong skills such as planning a healthy diet, creating a budget, and resolving conflict, and are significantly more likely to continue to hike, camp, and recreate outdoors.

Meeting Challenges to Conserve Colorado's Natural Resources

Colorado's cities and towns are being asked by communities to do more with less. The task list gets longer while the resources shrink. Over the past two decades, these challenges have driven conservation service corps to diversify our project portfolio and forge a broad spectrum of partnerships with municipalities to serve iconic natural resources across the state.

Our original keystone mission of trail building and maintenance



remains relevant and critical. Trail systems are an economic driver for local communities, but ongoing maintenance requirements can be an annual burden given limited financial and human resources. Conservation service corps are an established solution to this challenge. For example, Boulder County Youth Corps employs local high school-age residents and deploys crews to Boulder, Erie, Longmont, Louisville, and Superior to ensure that their trails remain open and maintained annually.

Corps members leave a long-lasting mark on local communities across all their work, but that mark is perhaps most poignant during disaster relief

efforts. When a natural disaster such as a wildland fire or flooding occurs, conservation service corps engage in long-term restoration projects. After the Hayman and Waldo Canyon fires, Mile High Youth Corps served to reduce the risk of flooding from a badly damaged ecosystem. And this year, Larimer County Conservation Corps will continue to restore stream banks and recreation infrastructure devastated by floods in 2013.

Corps also serve proactively to mitigate the threats of these disasters, particularly wildland fire. In 2018, our chainsaw crews removed more than 57,000 hazard trees while clearing

more than 1,000 acres at urgent risk of fire. Before deploying, our corps members are trained and field-certified in the industry-standard S-212 curriculum, and many receive additional professional development to become wildland firefighters. Southwest Conservation Corps utilizes this model to engage returning military veterans to launch their next career in service.

One of the most prevalent – and time-consuming – needs of municipalities is the eradication and ongoing monitoring of invasive species. Several corps crews hold all of the required certifications from the Colorado Department of Agriculture to apply herbicide to return a community's ecosystem to balance. Western Colorado Conservation Corps has dedicated strike teams to supplement the City of Grand Junction's capacity – with outstanding results.

While fire, trail, and invasive species are corps' most common mission areas, corps execute numerous other missions. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps is a national leader in historic preservation of structures; Mile High Youth Corps installs extensive energy and water conservation measures, such as high-efficiency toilets, shower aerators, and thermostats, in low-income households; and all corps have the ability to maintain local parks, construct and repair fencing, and much more. If a community can dream it, we do our very best to make it happen.

Developing Resources – Together

Corps understand that municipal partners need many resources to meet a community's natural resource needs. To that end, we regularly work to secure funding and leverage available dollars to maximize our collective impact. The best example of this is an annual \$500,000 allocation of Great Outdoors Colorado funds, made available to local governments



and open space organizations to engage conservation service corps on projects across the state.

We have established, trusted relationships with large-scale funders, but our community-level focus well positions us to also partner with family foundations and other local and regional stakeholders that support nonprofits. When larger-scale initiatives present themselves, corps partner with local municipalities for life-changing investments. For example, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps utilized an existing federal agreement with the U.S. Forest Service

to secure project funding for the Town of Meeker.

Continuing a Legacy

In the spirit of the original Civilian Conservation Corps, today's conservation corps transforms landscapes and lives, with an eye toward carving a path for the next generation of natural resources stewards. We are proud that our partnerships with municipalities play a central role in making this happen every day, and we look forward to continuing the mission for many generations to come.

Undomesticating Colorado's Kids

By Rosemary Dempsey, Great Outdoors Colorado communications director

For many adults, looking back on childhood brings fond memories of riding bikes, shooting hoops, and spending every possible minute outside, at least until the streetlights came on. But for today's kids, things are different. On average, American kids now spend as few as four to seven minutes outside each day in unstructured play – a consequence, perhaps, of busy lives and a changed culture.¹

Here in Colorado, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and a wide network of statewide partners, including many municipal organizations, saw an opportunity. Research shows that kids who spend more time outdoors are more creative, less stressed, and less aggressive. They also have stronger immune systems and improved cognitive abilities. The science is clear: Kids grow better outside.

In 2015, to help support a state of healthy and happy kids, and to cultivate a generation of kids who would continue to take care of our outdoors into the future, GOCO launched the Inspire Initiative. The goal of the program, now called Generation Wild, is to encourage youth and their families to connect to the outdoors by establishing places for kids and families to play, providing culturally relevant outdoor programs, and creating pathways to outdoor stewardship jobs and leadership roles.

Across the state in 15 communities (www.generationwild.com/communities), hardworking local coalitions are bringing projects to life using a community-led, youth-driven, and collaborative approach to creating equitable access to the outdoors. The innovative framework is being looked



at as a national model, and each coalition's approach will serve as an example to other rural, urban, suburban, or mountain communities across the country.

While each coalition is uniquely structured, many coalitions include local governments, school districts, youth-serving nonprofits, and health-based organizations. These groups are elevating community members into leadership positions in order to provide resources to youth and families without equal access to the outdoors due to a variety of barriers, including costs, the right information and skills, safety, and in some cases, a feeling of being unwelcome in the outdoors.

Since the launch of the program, GOCO has invested \$29 million in these communities, with \$4.125 million of the awarded dollars contributed by collaborative funders: the Colorado Health Foundation, the Boettcher Foundation, and DaVita.

These communities are proving the value of the investments, building diverse coalitions, and elevating the youth voice. Many of the coalitions are now in development on their place projects and have embarked on their second full summer seasons of outdoor programs and leadership opportunities. Momentum is building.

¹ Scott Sampson. CPR Interview. April 28, 2015. 'Wild Child' Author: 7 Minutes Outside A Day Isn't Enough For Kids. <https://www.cpr.org/show-segment/wild-child-author-7-minutes-outside-a-day-isnt-enough-for-kids/>

Community Snapshot: Generation Wild of the Pikes Peak Region



Generation Wild of the Pikes Peak Region was awarded \$1.39 million in GOCO funding through a grant to the City of Colorado Springs in December 2017. The coalition aims to create community equity and inclusiveness while engaging youth and families from the Hillside neighborhood and the southeastern area of Colorado Springs in the outdoors.

Their first completed place project was Fountain Park, where an unused area was converted into a bike park with a bike demonstration area and paved skills course, slope-style mountain bike trails, and a tot track.

Tilah Larson, senior analyst for the City of Colorado Springs and coalition leader, is pleased: "The Fountain Park Bike Park is completely up and running. It is the most heartwarming project. It made our community feel welcome and the park accessible."

A midwinter opening did not slow the bike park or its fan base down. "People were out there, so happy to use it, consistently using it. It is really just active and engaging" stated Larson. The bike park has also become a programming hub for coalition partner Kids on Bikes, which has activated the park with camps, training clinics, meet-ups, and special events, including a bike carnival to celebrate cycling.

Parents have gone from teaching their kids to ride on limited sidewalk space and a small trail to utilizing a safe, dedicated space to get their kids up and running on two (or three) wheels.

Larson and her colleagues are equally as enthusiastic about the potential of another place project. The city's centrally located Prospect Lake Beach House will be renovated in the coming months. It will serve as a launching area for outdoor activities. Special events and family programs will encourage families to spend time together outside, and the coalition will also offer skill-building and job opportunities for youth to spark interest in future outdoor careers.

"The beach house is well-known to our older residents. They had memories of learning to swim there with their families," added Larson. "Many folks are excited about an investment in its revitalization and bringing families back to this place and using it the way it was originally intended, while also providing new opportunities for outdoor engagement."

Catamount Institute, a coalition partner organization, has already started offering popular summer camps at Prospect Lake. The institute has also successfully integrated outdoor education into local elementary schools as part of Generation Wild.

"It has been tremendous simply because we all know meeting kids where they are, at their places of education, can be transformational. The camps even require parents to take initiative. In the school day, you expose all of the youth to learning regardless of parent involvement. It was not the easiest thing to do, but it has worked," said Larson. She added, "How amazing that when you go to school in Colorado, this can be part of your experience."



To support the work of community-based coalitions and inspire kids and their families to get outside more often, GOCO launched the Generation Wild (www.generationwild.com) marketing and communications campaign in May 2017.

It all started with the 100 Things to Do Before You're 12 list (www.generationwild.com/the-list), which offers inspiration for family-friendly outdoor activities, ranging from easy-to-do, close-to-home tasks like making a mud pie and flying a kite to more adventure-oriented suggestions, like visiting a glacier or climbing a 14er.

An integrated, statewide media campaign has pushed Generation Wild's uplifting messages into homes by way of TV advertising, digital advertising, and social media, as well as other creative advertising channels. The campaign's 22-foot Generation

Wild fort has traveled the state, making stops everywhere from downtown Denver and the Denver Zoo to Grand Junction and Cortez.

As GOCO wrapped up the second phase of the campaign in late 2018, we ran the numbers on the campaign with the help of OMNI Institute, a Colorado-based, nonprofit social science agency that supports organizations working in the public interest. They found that 73 percent of Colorado moms surveyed had heard of Generation Wild, and best of all, 66 percent said that the campaign encouraged them to get their kids outside more often. We built on the momentum to launch phase three on July 15 of this year.

Join the Generation Wild Movement

Times change, and kids may have different experiences than we had

growing up, but we can help Coloradans strike a balance between screen time and outdoor time. We need to remember that getting outside is worth it, and we need to give kids today the chance to feel free in nature. We can help shape the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts — the kids we will know as Generation Wild.

Contact Rosemary Dempsey at rdempsey@goco.org for more information. Be sure to follow Generation Wild on Instagram (www.instagram.com/generationwildcolorado) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/generationwildcolorado), and join the amazing Facebook group Raising Generation Wild (www.facebook.com/groups/230065320969156). If the Generation Wild program offers additional grant opportunities in the future, information will be available at www.goco.org/inspire.

Recognizing the Importance of Parks and Recreation in Communities

By Brian Kates, CPRP, Colorado Springs Meadows Park Community Center director



Bring it in, team, and huddle up. I know that you are frustrated. After all, you have worked your tail off to get to this point, showing up to the field early and staying late, checking and double checking until you were sure that you had your assignments down cold, and sacrificing time with family and friends to hone and master your craft. And when it got heated and people questioned your abilities, your commitment, and even your competence, you hung in there and took the high road.

As parks and recreation professionals, you are subjected to many stereotypes that you face and I see almost every day. And while I know that you have fun and play games but are not "fun and games" people, and that you often crack jokes, wear ball caps and shorts, and can be seen goofing around with kiddos in the summer camp program,

others have not seen, as I have, the myriad less flattering mission-critical duties that you perform that chiefly go unheralded, just as you prefer. And while your humility is admirable, allow me to shed some light on your contributions while I have your attention.

First, I have lost count of how many cops, firefighters, and medics have told me how important a role you parks people play in keeping people healthy and out of harm's way. Every bit the first responder, many of you are working with the homeless population and dealing firsthand with the opioid epidemic through your interactions with users in the parks and public facilities. How many syringe needles have you picked up and placed in a sharps container this year alone? And by having that patch of emerald bliss every half mile or less throughout the

city, you have provided a refuge for the stressed, a workout space for those wanting to improve their bodies, and a living room for each neighborhood to meet up and stay connected.

The other day, I heard the darnedest thing, which is that the average American child in 2019 only spends between four and seven minutes each day in unstructured play outdoors, but over seven hours daily looking into a screen. Richard Louv was right, we do have a nature deficit disorder! But thanks to our community and recreation centers, youth sports programs, special events, and your efforts to maintain and activate our parks, our kiddos are much healthier here than elsewhere. In addition to giving them safety and, through a strategic built design plan, an infrastructure in which they can thrive, something much less tangible but

ever so essential is also gifted — hope. I suppose that we also have our elected officials and the citizens to thank, as without their support, these very amenities would be cut and eliminated from our daily existence. What is that line from The Godfather: "Leave the smartphone, take the swim lessons"?

Similar to that, it seems that I cannot go a day without reading a public health article that talks about the burgeoning loneliness and self-harm trend among our Colorado teenagers, many of whom, ironically, feel most isolated due to their near constant involvement in social media platforms, which is anything but social from their perspective. And yet as dire as that is, the good news is that those who have that home away from home, what Ray Oldenburg dubbed the third place after home and work or school, are for the most part exempt from these trends. And who more than parks and recreation departments provide these havens for all residents, regardless of affiliation, income, zip code, status, etc.?

If I am being honest with you, for most of my life, I have failed to realize just how much you take on to address the core needs of an entire community. While your medium may be kickballs, sidewalk chalk, Zumba classes, stand-up paddleboards, slides, and sandboxes, what you do is anything but child's play.

And while I am on that topic, can I just say that as not just your coach but also as a taxpayer, you guys are the biggest bargain out there? For what it costs me each year to receive the services that you provide, it would cost me 10 times that or more if I were to independently buy playground equipment, join a gym, attend a concert at a private facility, and have my son play travel instead of P&R ball. And those running and biking trails that connect everywhere allow me to leave the car in the garage on many days and laugh under the azure blue



skies at the motorists moving at slower speeds on congested roads than I am on my Schwinn, which is absolutely priceless. But in real dollars and cents, we know that each mile of multiuse, unpaved trail cost pennies on the dollar compared to an equivalent paved road mile. ROI, anyone?

Now I have been around you long enough to know that, in addition to being humble, you can be an awfully quirky lot. After all, who else refers to DNR as the Department of Natural Resources? And whose top iconic figurehead among today's populace is not Hank Schrader from Breaking Bad but Ron Swanson, who once famously said, "Fishing relaxes me. It's like yoga, except I still get to kill something"?

I once saw your department director present to the parks board at 7:30 a.m. dressed to the nines in the heels, jewelry, and all other accoutrements, only to see her five hours later in jeans, a hard hat, and steel-toe shoes, working with Forestry employees to determine the best solution to the mountain pine beetle infestation. And later that night, there she was in regular folks' clothing at a most inspiring performance of dancers with physical and developmental disabilities who were enrolled in the Therapeutic Recreation Program.

Well, it is getting late, and it is time for you to head back to your families, but

allow me just a few parting words. Know that you are valued, even if it is not made clear that you are by some customer response or struggle each budget season. Also know that you indisputably make a significantly positive impact within your community, bringing happiness, healthfulness, and hopefulness to all.

And while many take for granted that the grass is green, trees are healthy, children have a place to go when they are out of school, elderly have a place to exercise, eat, and socialize, public meeting spaces exist in which to stay connected, flowers and vegetables are nurtured from seed to beautify and provide sustenance, museums are curated to educate and inspire, and miles and miles of trails are strategically placed alongside everything else to either get you where you are going or allow you to meander without care, remember that the satisfaction comes not necessarily from being recognized for your contributions, but rather from the legacy that you leave to the community about which you obviously care deeply.

Back here tomorrow at 7 a.m.
One-two-three, TEAM!

Starburst Award Park in Cripple Creek

By Connie Dodrill, Cripple Creek parks and recreation director



Cripple Creek, a gold mining town that has played a major role in shaping the history of the Pikes Peak region, has a new adventure park just west of the city.

The Mountain View Adventure Park (MVAP) began with a vision of a park for play, health, relaxation, and recreation that was free for all residents and visitors. The Cripple Creek Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment in 2010 showed that preschool/toddler-age children, teens, active senior citizens, and families just above and below the poverty line of our area lacked the recreation options they deserved. We expanded on our existing BMX track, created a parking lot, a 2.5K hiking/walking trail, an 18-hole disc golf course, a playground, the first official dog park in Teller County, a picnic shelter, a Port-A-John enclosure, and a sledding hill built upon the natural slope of the park terrain. Initially, our request was for \$217,241 in Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funds plus a match of \$75,590 from the City of Cripple Creek and a \$20,000 partner match from Terry Putman and Associates, which totaled \$312,831 for the entire project. The final total cost of the project was \$382,496.56, including Colorado Lottery GOCO funds of \$209,175.35.

This park would not have been possible without the amazing assistance we have had from the community. Our hiking trail was designed with the help of the Pikes Peak Area Trails Coalition, the Southern Teller County Focus Group, and the Medicine Wheel Trail Advocate Group, working with the natural beauty and design complications of the location. The Cripple Creek Public Works Department was instrumental in creating it, as well as other features of the park. The Pikes Peak Flying Disc Club volunteered their expertise to plan

the disc golf course, which includes an alternate tee box for the first hole for those not ready to throw over a pond. Terry Putnam and Associates, Inc. donated enormous amounts of design time on the playground, dog park, and overall park vision. Dirt Sculpt, LLC designed and built the expanded BMX course, doubling its size and following industry standards. The Colorado Springs Parks Department helped us with getting our many signs made in a cost-efficient way. Aside from our employees, we also had many volunteers and community service workers who made the park happen.

The park has already seen tremendous use by the community. The summer months tend to attract many more participants per month than the winter months. Our playground and picnic shelter have hosted many birthday parties and even a wedding reception.

The 2018 BMX Races had a record attendance and was a great first race for our expanded course. A benefit walk for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation was done on our trail – an event started by a local eight-year-old girl diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in 2015. The first walk in 2018 had 58 participants, and we will be holding another this year. We will be hosting our first 5K @ 10K Poker Run/Walk on the trail on July 12, with cash prizes for best and worst poker hand – runners will collect cards at stops along the trail.

The Youth Environmental Service Club at Cresson Elementary School came up with the idea to install bat houses next to one of our ponds as one of their service projects. They built the homes themselves and installed them.

Thank you, Colorado Lottery, for honoring Cripple Creek MVAP with a Starburst Award.

Hayden's Parks and Recreation Department

By Josh Jones, Hayden parks and recreation director



Photo by David Kennedy

The Town of Hayden's Parks and Recreation (HPR) Department is a nine-member board of all volunteers. The mayor sits in on our board meetings as the liaison for Town Council. The HPR board is actively involved in over 25 youth programs and community events. Board members also serve as volunteer coaches for many of our youth sports, such as wrestling, football, soccer, volleyball, baseball, and basketball.

Wrestling is a big part of this community. Toddler Tumbling and Tiger Cub Camp are two programs for children ages two to five years old where basic fundamentals and terminology are introduced. Hayden hosts a pee-wee wrestling tournament every year that requires roughly 50 volunteers from the community and is an all-day commitment.

HPR hosts several community events annually. Hayden Daze is the main attraction, which celebrates the town and is free to attend. It includes live music, food vendors, disc golf tournament, cornhole tournament, home run derby, large inflatable play area, and community parade. Dry Creek Park, the location for Hayden Daze, saw a huge multigenerational playground installed in June of this year.

Speaking of multiple generations, board members also celebrate senior citizens in the community: The Autumn Tea Party is held at the local retirement center, with a three-piece band, dancing, and food.

During the winter, when the town is buried under several feet of snow, residents warm up at the It is Summer Somewhere Cornhole Tournament in the exhibit hall at the fairgrounds in town. In the fall, there is the Harvest Festival, with a straw maze, pumpkins for sale, face painting, and local vendors. In May, the town held the 41st annual Cog Run, which is the oldest consecutively run race in Colorado. The course is an 8.4-mile route that climbs 900 feet before turning around at the top of the Cog and racing to the finish line.

Huck Finn Day occurs the first Saturday in June and coincides with the free fishing weekend throughout the state. HPR teams up with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to hold fishing and archery clinics, with prizes for first fish, biggest fish, and most fish caught. This year, we held the grand opening of the playground during this weekend and added a community potluck, which will become an annual tradition.

We are a small town of approximately 2,000 residents and rely heavily on volunteer work. It is not uncommon for board members to commit 100 to 150 hours each year to this community. A big thank you goes out to each and every person who has dedicated their time so Hayden can have all these amazing youth programs and community events.

Power of Festivals

By Steven Stokes, Northglenn special events supervisor



As a festival planner for more than two decades, I have walked hundreds of outdoor events and they all had several things in common – vendors, food, music, sponsors, and activities – but that does not mean that they are all the same.

Event planners have the unique opportunity to wield a wand and make their community come alive with a fun program or festival that is truly their own. Whether your event is brand new or 75 years old, it is important to change things up and create new opportunities for attendees. People expect change – new ideas, new vendors, and new programming. When we as planners do not adopt new experiences quickly enough, festival fatigue eventually sets in and attendance begin to dwindle.

In order to prevent this from happening, here are a few things to consider every year of your event:

- Know your target
- Collaborate
- Develop a theme
- Love your event
- Build a brand
- Market your event

Know Your Target

Knowing your target market is important – I once did an event where the client said their market was young kids, and so we had a dancing pig performance plus face painters and caricature artists for every child. The actual attendee base was a number of retired members of their group who neither enjoyed the pigs nor wanted their face painted.

Events whose target market is five- to eight-year-old children will look different than programs for 12- to 16-year-old adolescents, so be as specific as possible. Consider both demographics (age, sex, location) and psychographics (likes, dislikes, values)

so you are building the best program for the audience who is most likely to attend. As your program changes through the years, be sure it continues to match your target market so that your marketing stays effective.

Collaborate

I feel like I am telling on myself, but when we started the Magic Festival here in Northglenn, I only really knew two magicians in the Denver market. Before I pitched the idea for funding, I met with one of the two and we hashed out who we should reach out to. It involved several magic societies and the owners of a local theater. At our inaugural event, we had more than 30 magicians, including a duo from America's Got Talent and over 3,500 people attended.

If you are thinking you need to do all of the planning and fulfillment on your own, you may not be properly leveraging the resources at your

disposal and may ultimately be limiting your organization's ability to be successful. It is important to work with local collaborators to make your event work. That can be brewers, entertainers, nonprofits, libraries, commissions, schools, etc. Generally speaking, people *love* to help, but only do so when asked. And while they can help, you are still ultimately responsible for making sure the program and all of the elements work together.

Develop a Theme

Why does it seem that every time you sit down to create a new event (or a new program at your event), your page is blank? Even with new concepts around us all the time, it is sometimes difficult to come up with that one new idea. It might be because doubt creeps in too quickly, or perhaps because we go from one idea to the next without fully developing each one.

To develop a new theme, or new idea, it is best to be in a creative space, sometimes with a group of people. Toss out as many ideas as you can for that new theme. If there are parameters (or market demographics) you know you need to cover, write them down first and then go crazy coming up with 50 concepts or more. When you come from the space of "anything is possible" and "big-picture thinking" there is a higher likelihood of being able to come up with those out-of-the-box ideas. After that, start to hone in on what you consider to be best themes and concepts and begin to flesh them out in greater detail.

If you need a few starter questions, start with these:

- What is your town/organization known for?
- What makes your community unique?
- What interesting cultural or historical trends make your community special?

- What did you see as a kid that you want to re-enact?
- What fun events have you attended or seen?
- What personally lights you up?
- What are popular movies, and how can I incorporate a piece of them into my event?

Love Your Event

This might seem so simple, but I have talked to plenty of planners who are just checking off the proverbial boxes of what needs to get done but are not emotionally invested. While you might not be able to change a reoccurring event that has been in your community for the past 75 years, what little touches can you add to make it new and exciting? From a guy who has been planning events for the past 25 years, I can tell you that when I get lit up about the idea, the new program element, or the overall program, my motivation to work on the event increases as well. Remember, events are supposed to be fun! How can you personally have more fun among the checklists and to-dos required for the event to be successful?

Build a Brand

In our crowded festival market, it is vitally important to build a brand around your event. I would assert that every event needs a logo. If possible, larger events should have their own website and Facebook page (or appropriate social media site based on demographics) to communicate their message. If an event, specific website is not possible, a page or two on your city or town site will work fine. The brand should then be included in all areas of your event – not just marketing, but also in the programming – to be successful.

Market Your Event

Obviously, this seems like a "duh" point, but I cannot tell you how many communities I have consulted with in the past that were disappointed in their attendee numbers and when



asked how they marketed, revealed that their marketing plan was lacking or limited. You might have read that a message needs to be seen eight times to be remembered, but I would assert that this number should be much higher, in the 20 to 30 times range. People are being bombarded with a litany of messages every day, and if you rely on only one form of communication to get your message out there, it will not be enough. If you rely on just a few weeks to promote your event, you are already too late.

For our events, we use a six-week marketing window and stage some marketing efforts earlier, if possible. Newsletters, online calendars, and Facebook event pages can all be done months in advance and then reintroduced closer to your program. Posters, fliers, billboards, handbills, emails, and social media posts can all be done closer to your event. Depending on your budget, you can diversify across a broad spectrum, with the largest push in the last 10 days leading up to your event.

We are lucky as planners in Colorado, as there are four distinct seasons here, and people want to come to our events. With festival fatigue on the rise, it is also important to plan well, create great products, market our message, and create relationships that will help us put on our events better. I look forward to seeing you at your events, and if you stop by any in Northglenn, be sure to ask for me. I will be happy to show you around.

Managing Special Events in Steamboat Springs

By Rachel Lundy, Steamboat Springs special events coordinator

Nestled in northwest Colorado among a lush valley and numerous wilderness areas at 6,700 feet up in the Rocky Mountains, Steamboat Springs is an outdoor enthusiasts' dream. Combine backcountry access with a vibrant historic town, a free-flowing river, an authentic family-friendly vibe, and you have all the elements that attract special events to this town and the Yampa Valley.

The city has partnered with the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association to bring special events to the community for over 33 years – with great success. In 2017, the city supported 67 different events, some of which occurred over multiple days, over the course of the entire summer.

Even though the City of Steamboat Springs is a resort destination community, it does not have a property tax and is primarily supported by sales tax. The city traditionally has provided substantial free services for each special event. This level of activity created several issues for the community, including public safety concerns, untenable cost impacts, and overwhelmed residents.

To address these issues, a steering committee consisting of city and chamber staff was formed to discuss goals, carry out stakeholder interviews, conduct a community forum, and identify strategies and improvements to the special events system. The goals of the steering committee were to focus on supporting high-quality event planning and the economics of the community, facilitate and support fun event experiences, minimize community impacts from special events, ensure public safety of residents and visitors, and focus on 80 to 100 percent cost recovery.



The committee recommended the city move away from a system that looks solely at the event producer to a system that focuses on the event activity and venue, because the overall impact on the community is based on the actual event and not the producer. Through two work sessions, City Council directed the committee to develop new policies and procedures for the administration and permitting of special events.

The end result of the two-year process included establishing a special event coordinator position as the primary point of contact between event producers and city staff. The city also consolidated the Parks and Recreation Land Use Permit and City Clerk's Special Activity Permit into a single application and permit. New application fees were established, as well as new policies for street closures, events in parks, and total event capacity.

A future goal is to identify and implement a special events permit software system that will allow the entire process to be conducted online and create standardized venue maps that show allowable uses and required services (trash, recycling, waste management plan, portable toilets, police/community service officers, transit, etc.) based on the event size.

While the process will continue to evolve, we have learned that special events should not be viewed as a detriment, but as a benefit for the entire community (visitors and residents alike) when managed correctly. After all, ensuring the continued vitality of our community that brought so many of us here in the first place, whether for a weekend or a lifetime, is essential to our collective future.

Reframing the Role of Youth to Transform Your Community

By Bill Fulton, Civic Canopy founder and co-executive director; and Jodi Hardin, Civic Canopy co-executive director



The situation is a familiar one. A youth sits at a table, surrounded by well-intentioned adults, eyes lowered, shoulders slumped, mumbling inaudible answers to questions about why the patterns of low attendance, or failing grades, or poor work habits have not improved since their last meeting. Awkward silences follow. The meeting ends with one more exasperated attempt to make it clear that these patterns need to change and that everyone is here to help. The implied message: The youth is the problem, and the adults are there to fix it.

From "What Is Your Problem?" to "What Is the Story?"

While this opening scene might frequently begin with an implied question of "What is your problem?" posed to the youth in the center of the circle, in truth, the kinds of problems that today's youth are wrestling with are not just personal problems; they are what is now commonly referred to as wicked problems. Unlike simple problems, where the problem is

agreed upon and the solutions are known, wicked problems have no clear-cut definition, no agreed-upon solution, and even more troublesome, each attempt at a solution can often generate a reaction from others that only makes the problem more complex. The only way to address wicked problems is to acknowledge their complexity and the need for everyone who has a stake in them to be part of the team designing solutions. If the players around the table in our opening scene understood that they were up against a wicked problem, instead of the youth being at the center of the circle with the adults gathered around trying to "solve" him or her, the youth and adults would be circled up together, inquiring into the nature of and potential solutions for the vexing problems that youth face on a daily basis that are not of their own making.

From Top-Down Transactions to Community-Driven Transformation

But this type of shared problem solving is all too rare. Most current

systems — schools, hospitals, police, corporations, social services — were designed in an age when problems were thought to best solved from the top down. Technical experts pooled their collective knowledge and disseminated it through chains of command to recipients of services and solutions below. This transactional and hierarchical model of exchange was at one time seen as a scientific breakthrough, opening up all sorts of scalable possibilities in any number of sectors.

A growing body of evidence suggests that the complex problems youth and families face today are best approached from the bottom up through what Steffensmeier and Chrislip call *community driven change*.¹ Those closest to challenges often have the greatest insights into the potential solutions, when their voices are supported and when other partners work closely together to explore solutions. Too often, however, these conditions are not present, and those closest to the problems are

¹ Steffensmeier, Timothy and David Chrislip, "Changing the Game: Developing a New Lexicon for Leadership," *The Journal of Leadership Studies*, Volume 13, Issue 1, Spring 2019, pp. 62–66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/jls.21634>

mistaken for the problem, as the opening scene suggests. Fortunately, creating these conditions is not only possible, it is predictable when the right steps are taken.

Why This Approach Works

Our research and work over the past 20 years at The Civic Canopy builds on decades of effective practice from around the globe about how communities can effectively include diverse voices at the same table, create shared visions for their futures, and take action together that, over time, makes dramatic differences in their collective well-being. Our research led us to summarize the common elements of effective collaboration into the Community Learning Model (CLM) based on the following elements:



Results – Clear articulation of the intended results is at the center of the model, and their continual reassessment drives the community learning process. Community initiatives should start with the end in mind, developing a clear shared vision while allowing space for learning and adaptation.

Include – Ensure that the right people, perspectives and systems involved in the work are engaged in the process. Ensure that community initiatives intentionally engage everyone who has a stake in the issue being addressed, especially youth and their families.

Dialogue – Create a high-quality conversation that clarifies values, surfaces tensions, and taps into creativity, leading to concrete plans that achieve results. Meetings and convenings should have clear objectives, time for relationship and trust building, and decision making and action. Communication strategies should be developed and used throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring of community initiatives to keep all apprised and engaged.

Act – Make sure the planning leads to action, both within planning processes and at each stage of implementation. We support community initiatives to think through, develop, and implement strategies that mobilize action, identifying opportunities for "quick wins" as well as longer systemic changes needed.

Learn – Set benchmarks and use indicators to assess the impact and quality of actions; learn from experiences and translate that information into more effective actions. We encourage the use of both quantitative measures of progress and qualitative measures that allow for personal and community stories to put context around research and data.

Culture of Collaboration – Strengthen the capacities that support collaborative work, such as facilitative leadership, communication, information sharing, and shared accountability. We find it crucial to create an atmosphere of trust and commitment that is infectious throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Youth and Family Leadership in Action

This approach to bringing diverse partners to the table as equals is growing more common across Colorado. The Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) is developing skills and equipping youth and family members across Colorado with the

tools needed to be leaders in community change. FLTI alumni are launching community projects, serving on community boards and commissions, and advocating for state policy change. The Colorado Department of Human Services Family Advisory Council is composed of family members who have interacted with human service programs. The council uses their real-life experience to review and advise on strategies to improve or change policies and practices to be more responsive to individual and community needs. The Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) was created to bring youth from every state senate district in the state together to advise the legislature on policy solutions from a youth perspective, and to propose solutions that might be missing from the policy-making process.

What Is Needed

Changing the perception that youth are the problem to a view that youth are surrounded by wicked problems and must therefore be co-inventors of solutions will require a shift in mindset and a willingness to challenge most of the assumptions our current systems are rooted in. While not easy, the benefit of making this shift is enormous. As processes consistent with the Community Learning Model become normalized as how we solve problems together, and programs like FLTI, Family Advisory Councils, and COYAC help build a broader base of leadership across our state, our collective capacity to address our most pressing problems will continue to grow over time. As that happens, Colorado will become known as the place that tames its wicked problems.

Longmont's Children, Youth, and Families

By Christina Pacheco Sims, Longmont division manager



“ Instead of punishing me, I was given the opportunity to learn from my mistakes. It was a great program that helped me get back on track. ”

— REWiND graduate

The City of Longmont is a suburban community in Boulder County located 37 miles directly north of the Denver metropolitan area and 16 miles northeast of Boulder, with a population of 92,858. The Division of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) just recently celebrated 35 years of service to the community. CYF (bit.ly/cyflongmont) offers a variety of programs to help Longmont's children, youth, and families reach their greatest potential. It offers services in five different focus areas; early childhood education, youth development, family engagement and counseling, and community problem solving.

Early Childhood Education

The Mayor's Book Club is designed to foster a love of reading among the city's three- and four-year-old children. This bilingual (English/Spanish) program helps increase literacy in the home and prepares children to enter kindergarten at similar reading levels.

There also is the Reading League, a volunteer program focused on increasing literacy among K-3 students so that these children remain at or above similar reading levels as their peers.

Youth Development

The Zone is an after-school and summer program aimed at youth in grades six through 12. The Zone offers meals and a variety of activities, including community service opportunities, homework help, dance and recreation, music production, art classes, and more.

The ASPIRE program helps high school students plan for and apply to college. In 2018, ASPIRE assisted 40 first-generation college students, with 100 percent being admitted to a college or university. Ten of those students received a combined total of \$29,250 in scholarships.

Family Engagement and Counseling

Nurturing parenting programs and short-term counseling services are available to foster healthy parent/child relationships. Counseling services help families address issues, improve communication, mediate conflicts, and set goals for the future.

Community Problem Solving

REWiND is a voluntary program that redirects individuals ages 10-17 out of the municipal court system and into a positive lifestyle. REWiND provides a full-scale needs assessment and matches youth with interventions to meet their needs. Completing REWiND dismisses youths' cases from municipal court and seals their permanent record.

GRIP provides gang intervention and education courses, one-on-one youth intervention, and school assembly presentations. The GRIP program helps youth strengthen their social skills so they can more easily handle issues like bullying and peer pressure. GRIP is primarily aimed at third- and fifth-grade students and includes lessons on self-esteem, fostering friendships, assertiveness, resiliency, empathy, and problem solving.

Teen Court Provides a Second Chance

By Deborah Westwood, Castle Rock Teen Court coordinator

"Last year when I went through Teen Court [...] I had problems with confidence and hung out with the wrong people. Teen Court has helped me learn to be confident in myself and what I do. [...] It has also taught me that I don't need to be someone else to be accepted."

This testimony from a former Castle Rock Teen Court respondent exemplifies how youth not only respond to positive leadership, but how they too become leaders in their community when given the opportunity. This youth experienced a life change and then went on to change the lives of other teens as a youth volunteer with the Castle Rock Teen Court program.

When a juvenile receives their first criminal charge in Castle Rock, they are given the option to go through Teen Court as an alternative to the Municipal Court. Teen Court is founded on the principles of restorative justice and allows respondents to share their story, express remorse, and receive constructive feedback from their peers. Restorative-justice-based practices give peer jurors a helpful framework as they deliberate on sentences. These sentences will include community service, apology letters, classes, or any number of unique sanctions. If the respondent is successful and completes their sentencing requirements without another criminal charge for six months, their charge is dismissed and their case is expunged. Teen Court is a true second chance in a world where a teenage misjudgment often follows you well into adulthood.

Teen Court youth volunteers are required to complete a 15-hour General Legal Training (GLT). During GLT, volunteers learn about the criminal justice system, restorative justice, public speaking, and active listening. In order to gain real-world experience, volunteers can attend an additional attorney and judge training that allows them to serve in more leadership positions. This experience has even inspired several former Teen Court volunteers to successfully pursue a law degree after high school.

The goal of each Teen Court sentence is to restore broken relationships, repair harm done to victims,



ensure accountability, and empower respondents to make informed decisions. At the end of the program, parents and respondents often reflect on their experience and describe it as a wake-up call, a second chance, or even a gift, since the youth are given the opportunity to overcome adversity in a positive way.

Through service, volunteers and respondents alike learn life skills that benefit their schoolwork, interpersonal relationships, and future careers. One volunteer's parent recently wrote, "Teen Court has been a great experience [...] Our son has learned how negative peer pressure can lead to making poor choices while [also] learning to show compassion. He has become more mature, responsible, and thoughtful about making good friends [...] Teen Court is an experiential tool for teens to learn responsibility while contributing to their community." If you were to ask any one of the thousands of Teen Court program members around the world about their experiences, they too would share similar stories of change in respondents and volunteers.

It is easy for youth to believe that they do not have a voice or an impact on the events happening around them. Teen Court reminds youth and the adults who support them that if you are willing to step up, speak up, and serve, you really can start to change your world.

Research Corner: A Record Number of Americans Live in Multigenerational Households

By Melissa Mata, CML municipal research analyst

A recent trend in American households demonstrates an evolution of the word "family" away from a strict definition assuming one or more parents or guardians and one or more children. According to the Pew Research Center, the American family of the 21st century is much more expansive: One in five Americans now live in a multigenerational household, defined as one that includes at least two adult generations or grandparents with grandchildren

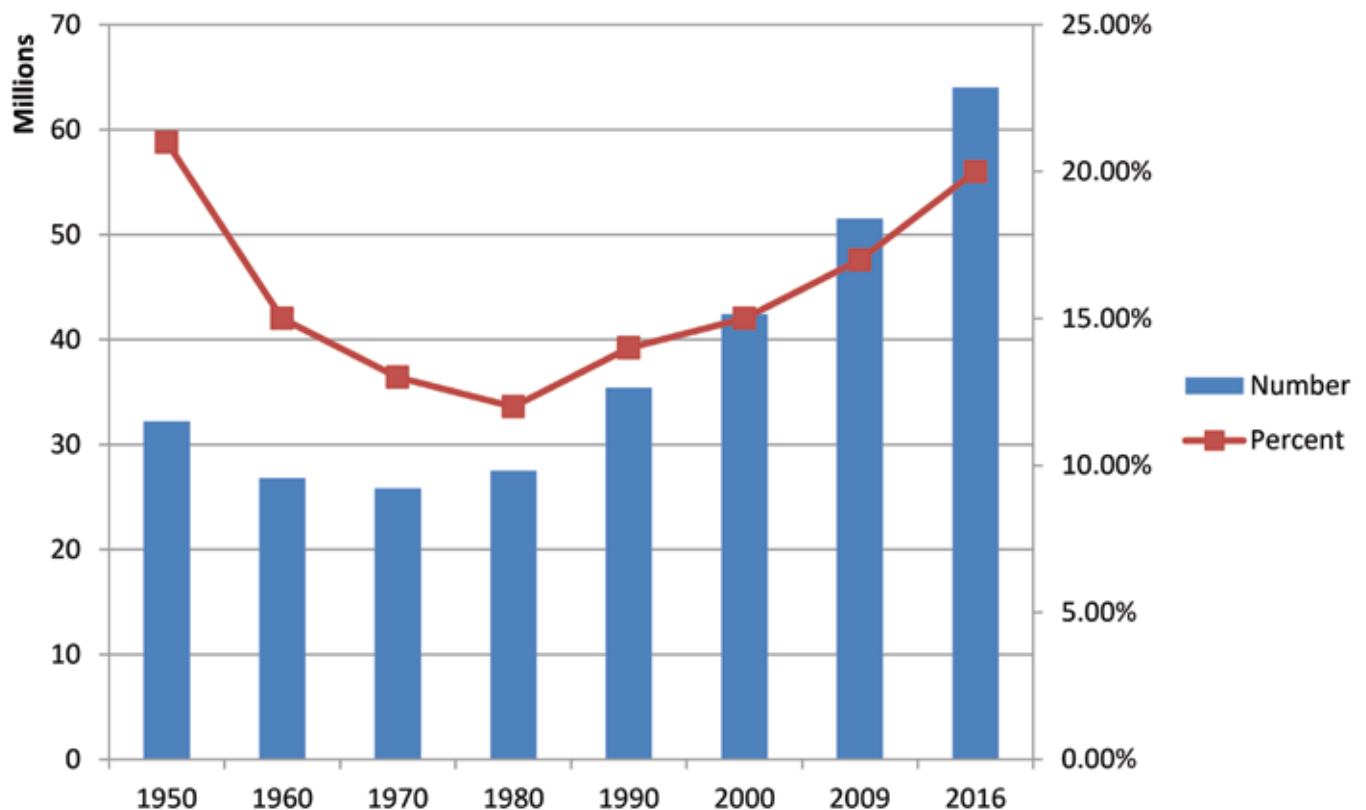
younger than 25. While the current share (20 percent) is one percentage point below the previous high of 21 percent in 1950, the absolute number of Americans – 64 million – living with these arrangements shatters any previous records, given the growth in the American population.

Pew Research Center credits some of the rise in multigenerational living to America's growing racial and ethnic diversity, as the Asian and Hispanic populations are more likely than

whites to live in multigenerational households. Another reason behind the growth is the increase in young adults between ages 18 and 34 who are living with parents, especially young adults without a college degree.

The most common type of multigenerational household consists of two adult generations – though adult children are defined as being 25 years old or older, so this group does not include most college students who live at home.

Americans Living in Multigenerational Households



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 1950–2000 decennial censuses and 2006–2016 American Community Survey (April 5, 2018) <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/05/a-record-64-million-americans-live-in-multigenerational-households>.

Pew Research Center bears no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations of the data presented here. The opinions expressed herein, including any implications for policy, are those of the author and not of Pew Research Center.

Get to Know: Dencia Raish, Akron Town Clerk/Administrator



How did you end up in public service?

I ended up in public service by chance. I had grown up in the auto industry and never considered doing anything else. But as many people experience, life does not always go the direction you thought it would. I found myself looking for a new job, and the deputy town clerk position opened in Akron. I had no idea what it would entail, but I was blessed by receiving the position. I spent five years as deputy clerk and became the clerk/administrator in 2016. In my previous job, I had grown up working with the people in Akron. I quickly found out that working for the Town, I was still able to work with many of the same people. Once I started, I never looked back, and today, I could not imagine working anywhere else!

What do you enjoy most about your position?

The greatest part of my job is working with people and constantly learning. Situations and questions are rarely repetitive in this job. I also am grateful to have the opportunity to try to make things just a little better than I had found them!

What is the most challenging part of your position?

The most challenging part of my job is remembering this is the Town of Akron

and not the Town of Dencia. I have been the boss in private industry, and now I am a leader in the public sector, but they are not the same thing. There are times when I want to answer the questions based on what I think vs. what is correct in policy or code. I jokingly tell people that after three years, I know just enough to hurt myself! I have made a couple of mistakes, but that's how we learn, right?

What are some exciting things going on in Akron?

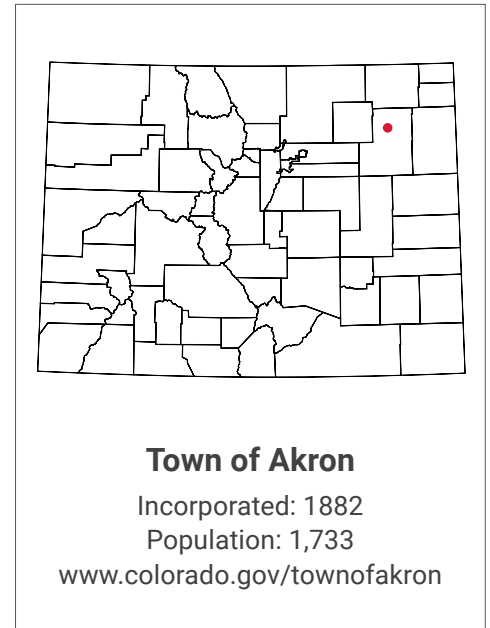
Like most of Colorado, we are growing – slower than most areas, but there is growth. That is exciting, because our school is growing, young couples are moving in, securing opportunity and optimism out on the Eastern Plains.

What project or undertaking are you most proud of and why?

I have been a part of securing three grants to revitalize the Akron Pond. In rural life on the plains of Colorado, recreational opportunities can be sparse. We are working toward rebuilding our pond area to provide family fun and opportunity for decades to come. When you have never written a grant, it is a very perplexing venture. I swore I had no business doing it, but I did the best I could, and IT WORKED! I am pretty proud of that!

What website(s) and/or publication(s) do you refer to when seeking information?

When I need information, my first stop is the search bar of my email tied to



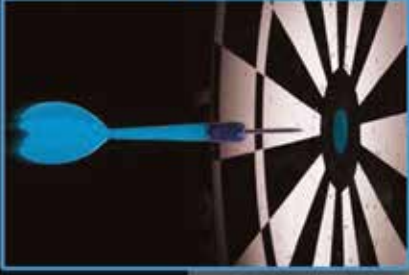
the CML Clerks Listserv. There are MANY amazing clerks out there, and they handle it all, or so it seems. I am not able to read every email that comes through, but I never delete one in fear of losing the reference. My second stop would be CML publications. They are lifesavers when you are looking for the layperson's explanations of CRS.

What book are you currently reading? Are you enjoying it?

I am meandering through three different books right now, one on faith, one on management, and a witty self-help [book] filled with sarcasm. When I take the time to read, I am enjoying all three; I feel like they are covering the bases for this stage in my life.

ADVERTISER INDEX

CEBT	45
Employee benefits solutions • cebt.org	
CIRSA	Inside Front Cover
Insurance risk pool • cirsa.org	
Colorado Municipal League . . . 4, Back Cover	
Association • cml.org	
Colorado PERA	1
Retirement services • copera.org	
KRW Associates	45
Consulting • krw-associates.com	
Olsson Associates	1
Engineering and design • olsson.com	
Sam Mamet	45
Local government consulting •	
smamet@comcast.net	
SEH	4
Project services • sehinc.com	
U.S. Communities	5
Purchasing • uscommunities.org	



KRW
associates^{LLC}

providing services to the public sector with a commitment to efficiency and fiscal responsibility

Something Missing?
Public Sector Executive Search and Organizational Consulting

KRW Associates, LLC
P.O. Box 62550
Colorado Springs, CO 80962

Phone: (719) 310-8960
Email: ChiefCOS@aol.com

www.krw-associates.com

KRAMER - WILLIAMS



CEBT | Partnering with CML

Employee Benefit Solutions
Medical-Dental-Vision-Life

CEBT has been providing employee benefits through a nonprofit trust to public entities for over 30 years

Jim Hermann • Willis of Colorado • 303-803-9105 • 800-332-1168
Jim.Hermann@willistowerswatson.com



Sam Mamet

local government matters

303 503 2938
smamet@comcast.net



COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

1144 Sherman St., Denver, CO 80203

Thanks to our 2019 Colorado Municipal League Annual Conference Sponsors!

DIAMOND



PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER

AARP
ACM LLP
AM Signal Inc.
American Fidelity
AXA
BNSF Railway
Bohannon Huston Inc.
Carrothers Construction Co. LLC
CGI Communications Inc.
Charles Abbott Associates Inc.
Colorado Barricade
Colorado Chapter of the International Code Council
Colorado Code Consulting LLC

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority
Colorado Oil and Gas Association
Colorado Water Conservation Board
Colorado Water Resources & Power Development Authority
Columbia Southern University
CPS HR Consulting
Design Concepts
Ehlers
Geo.works International Inc.
GovHR USA
HdL Companies
Honeywell

HR Green Inc.
ICMA-RC
JVA Inc.
KLJ
KRW Associates LLC
Linebarger Gogan Blair & Sampson LLP
Magellan Strategies
Mountain States Lighting municode
National Research Center
NMPP Energy
Ramey Environmental
Republic Services

RubinBrown LLP
SAFEbuilt
SGM
Souder, Miller & Associates
State of Colorado Address Confidentiality Program
The Playwell Group Inc.
Ulteig
United Power
University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs
ViewPoint Cloud
Vortex Aquatic Structures
Waste Management

BRONZE

(CLA) CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
Anderson Hallas Architects PC
BKD CPAs & Advisors
Black Hills Energy
Butler Snow LLP
Charter Communications
Employers Council
Garfield & Hecht PC

Hilltop Securities
Hoffmann Parker Wilson & Carberry PC
Jacobs
Kissinger & Fellman PC
Krob Law Office LLC
McKinstry
Michow Cox & McAskin LLP

Midstate Energy
Motorola Solutions
Murray Dahl Beery & Renaud LLP
Olsson
Piper Jaffray & Co.
Plante Moran
RDG Planning & Design
RG and Associates LLC

Stifel
The Neenan Company
Vanir Construction Management Inc.
Wember Inc.
Widner Juran LLP
Williamson & Hayashi LLC