



WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS



SUPPLY DRIVE FOR OUR SCHOOLS

BUILDING BLOCKS

for
STEM

Science.Technology.Engineering.Math

October 20 – October 29

Let Go of Your LEGO!
Supply drive runs
October 20-29

Got LEGO? Or K'NEX? We are organizing a community collection of these favorite building toys! We invite you to clean out your closets, look under your beds and bring used LEGO and K'NEX to one of our collection sites. Feel free to purchase new items to donate for this purpose.

Building Blocks for STEM runs from **October 20th through October 29th** at any of the following locations: Alpine Bank - downtown bank lobby, Central Library, Fruita Library, Math and Science Center at New Emerson School, CMU University Center's MAVcard office, and each of the four main district



A \$20,000 impact grant check is presented to leaders involved in the Delta ENGAGE Innovation Center, a one-stop shop for career training and economic development being created in the old City Market in downtown Delta.

Celebrating our 20th Anniversary! Six new impact grants announced

Our regional Community Foundation is pleased to announce six new recipients of high impact grants. Since May, we have raised \$66,000 in honor of our 20th anniversary and secured a \$50,000 matching grant from the Boettcher Foundation, totaling \$116,000 in additional funding for our special anniversary initiative. (We announced our first two 20th anniversary impact grants in May; see sidebar story for an update on those projects.) A total of \$160,000 for eight projects has now been awarded this 20th anniversary year.

Criteria for high impact grants were three-fold: projects needed to address a **clear and documented community need**, introduce an **innovative solution** to address the need, and involve other

high schools. More info at wc-cf.org/community/stem.

Want to help us increase STEM resources in our schools? Make a donation payable to WCCF (STEM in memo line) to P.O. Box 4334, Grand Junction, CO 81502. These donations will be used to purchase materials to expand coding classes in the middle schools. We are collecting cash donations through the end of the calendar year.



Watch our KREX announcement!

Did you know that Colorado is the #1 state in the country for entry level STEM jobs? Help our students prepare for a career in STEM!

STEM in the News!

Read the *Daily Sentinel* editorial, "**How Can We STEM the Tide of Brain Drain,**" [here](#).

[Updates on 20th Anniversary Impact Grants:](#)
Summer Projects

Our Community Foundation

nonprofits and/or government entities in **collaboration**.

We received 53 requests for funding and narrowed those requests to 12 finalist projects. Six projects were selected for funding. These six new projects, in alphabetical order by organization, are:

Bright Futures for training child care providers in Delta and Ouray counties to better develop **social-emotional skills in young children**.

Counseling and Education Center for **caregiver fatigue support services** in Mesa County.

Delta ENGAGE Innovation Center for a new **center for job skills training and economic development**.

Mountain Family Health Centers for a new **tele-psychiatry program** at its Rifle clinic (see story below).

RAFT-on-Wheels, a mobile program bringing **STEM training and materials to 200 teachers** in Delta, Eagle and Montrose school districts.

School District 51 for resources to enable teens to manage more effectively in a world of social media communications and cyber relationships as a strategy to address **high suicide rates for teens** in Mesa County (see story below).

A big THANK YOU to our Impact Grants Committee for reviewing the finalist projects and making the difficult decisions on which projects to fund. And to our donors who provided the funding to make these innovative projects a go!

Cyber Strong!

awarded two impact grants in May 2017 for summer projects. Both projects exemplify innovation and collaborative partnerships to address unmet needs in our community.



Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief (CAEHR) grows fresh fruit and produce at the CSU Extension Research Center on Orchard Mesa. They work with K-12 and college students to teach about the growing process and importance of healthy foods. In its first summer season, CAEHR involved 28 school and youth groups to help grow and harvest nearly 80,000 pounds of produce to donate to local food banks. District 51 Food and Nutrition Services is now able to purchase fresh, local produce as part of their commitment to healthy school lunches. "The same food that the students are harvesting, they're actually going to be eating in their school cafeterias," explained Dan Sharp, Director of D51 Food and Nutrition Services. And people visiting local food pantries were able to get fresh produce from this program, distributed through Food Bank of the Rockies.

New skills and esteem-building program to build resiliency, reduce teen suicide in Mesa County

Parents and community leaders have been watching the growing incidence of teen suicide in Mesa County and across western Colorado with alarm and concern. While officials do not know for sure why teen suicide is on the rise, many teachers and counseling professionals worry about the lack of social connection and healthy relationships in our modern world of texting, social media and "cyber relationships."

A 20th anniversary impact grant will help a local therapist who specializes in adolescents to develop a curriculum and work with Hilltop Community Resources and Mesa County Libraries to pilot a series of programs this fall to help teens and their parents understand the new world they live in and the "terms of engagement" in the cyber world. The program will focus on issues of privacy, bullying, resilience, limit-setting, peer pressure, kindness and on-line relationships.

As noted in the *Cyber Strong!* program proposal: "We need programs that involve teens, parents and educators in encouraging awareness, beginning conversations and sharing tools to help address negative cyber influences and strengthen psychological health. The program will be offered in settings that encourage community through shared meals and opportunities to participate in generosity and kindness campaigns."

To start, Grand Junction High School teachers and counselors will receive training and tools. Future plans include programs at all Mesa County high



Micro Houses for Mesa County is a partnership between CASA of Mesa County and Housing Resources of Western Colorado. Working with youth from Hilltop's Residential Youth Services and the Division of Youth Corrections, foster kids build small, affordable houses with a goal of developing construction skills. In time, youth aging out of the foster care system can build and purchase their own home.

Our grant funding purchased tools and building equipment needed to start the project. The first house will be made available to a homeless veteran when it is completed. Proceeds from the home will yield funds necessary to continue the program and build more micro houses.



The Western Colorado Community Foundation is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations by the Council on Foundations.

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schools. Mesa County Public Libraries will organize a series of presentations aimed at younger children and their families. The series starts on November 6th and will include youth entertainers sharing positive ideas for young children. A Spanish language program will also be offered.

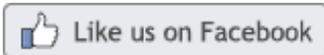
Through programs like these, program organizers hope to reduce the incidence of bullying and suicide in our teen population.

Mountain Family Health Centers New tele-psychiatry services for Rifle Clinic

Access to a variety of medical services, especially behavioral and mental health services, is limited in small rural communities across western Colorado. There are not enough psychiatrists and other trained mental health professionals to deliver services to meet the increased demand.

More and more, we are seeing "tele-health" services developed to take advantage of modern technologies like Skype and video conferencing to connect people needing access to specialized professionals and services beyond what is available in their local communities.

"We are grateful for this impact grant from WCCF for tele-psychiatry services for our Rifle clinic. Across Mountain Family Health Center's service area, we are seeing increased need for behavioral health services, including services for young adolescents in crisis. Tele-psychiatry helps our providers get our clients the help they need, when they need it."



Ross Brooks, CEO
Mountain Family Health Centers



Mountain Family Health Center's Rifle Clinic will now offer tele-psychiatry services with the help of a WCCF Impact Grant.

Reflections from the Executive Director

This year - our Community Foundation's 20th anniversary year - is our first year ever to organize a competitive application process for grants of relatively large size. Our "high impact grants" are \$20,000 per organization in celebration of our 20th anniversary. In developing this special one-time grants opportunity, we were hoping to encourage nonprofits to work together to propose new and creative solutions for community problems. We had no idea we would receive some 53 proposal applications! This level of nonprofit innovation in our region is very encouraging! And while we would have liked to fund many more than the eight projects we ultimately funded, we are encouraged by our donors' generous support. One of our organization's long-term goals is to raise more discretionary funding so that we can respond to unmet needs in the community and support new programs and emerging solutions to address those needs. That is a key role community foundations play in their communities. Our 20th anniversary high impact grants process showed just how much need and opportunity there is here in Western Colorado.

