



WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

New Donor Fund Spotlight **Leitzinger-Hallenbeck Scholarship Fund**



Gwen Hallenbeck has lived on the family farm, a Centennial Farm outside Hotchkiss, for decades and has deep roots in the community. Several years ago Gwen and her late husband Charles (pictured above) set up several scholarship funds to honor members of their family - Charles Hallenbeck and Olivia Finnegan, Joe and Lettie Cribb Leitzinger. These have now been combined into one larger scholarship fund to be managed by our community foundation.

This year's recipient of the Leitzinger-Hallenbeck Scholarship is Tyler S. graduating from Hotchkiss High School. Active in the marching band and choir, Tyler plans to attend Western State Colorado

Exciting New Partnership Announced

Community Foundation and Delta County School District 50J Now Working Together to Offer More Scholarships

Delta County School District Superintendent Caryn Gibson and Business Manager Jim Ventrello find themselves super busy each Spring with budgeting and graduating 345 seniors from the District's four high schools. Helping these students graduate and launch in to their post high school careers or college is the School District's focus. That is one of many reasons that a partnership with our Community Foundation made so much sense. "We are thrilled to be partnering with an organization that specializes in scholarship administration and long-term investing. We are in the education business, they are in the scholarship funding business." Our Community Foundation will be managing funds and selecting scholarship recipients in collaboration with a committee comprised of School District administrators and high school counselors.

Our Community Foundation has five endowment funds that provide college scholarships to Delta County students and Delta County School District has eight. Combined we will be providing \$40,000 to 20 students from Delta County School District.

University to study psychology.

Tyler is one of 60 students graduating from high school this Spring who will be receiving a scholarship from the Western Colorado Community Foundation.

New Scholarship Program Helps Career-focused Students "Fast Forward" Their Post High School Career Plans

Not all graduating seniors want or need to go to college. Many young people have strong interests and want to develop skills to be successful in their jobs as auto mechanics, X-ray technicians, cosmetologists, welders or any of a number of much-needed vocations.

Paul Bushong of Glenwood Springs decided that helping these students succeed was something he was passionate about. He came up with the idea of providing scholarships and supporting students with their career and vocational training programs. Paul explains, "I really wanted to help students who have strong career interests and are motivated to learn the technical skills at vocational or career training programs so they can 'fast forward' into their careers."

Our new **Fast Forward Scholarship** awarded \$62,000 in scholarships ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year to eight



Delta County School District Superintendent Caryn Gibson (left) celebrates with scholarship winners Katelyn P. and Hailey S. at the Delta High School Scholarship Breakfast on May 2nd

Transitions at Our Community Foundation

We are pleased to welcome **Tedi Gillespie** as our Community Foundation's first Director of Grants and Community Outreach.

Tedi has an extensive background in non-profit management, marketing and community relations. Tedi has been working for KAFM Community Radio upon her family's return to Grand Junction from Anchorage, AK. She has served as KAFM's Executive Director for the past three years.

A new position, Tedi will help manage the Foundation's growing grant making capacity and increase public awareness of our mission and the needs in



Lee Gelatt Photography

our community.

Notes Executive Director Anne Wenzel, "We are very pleased to have someone with Tedi's experience and

deserving young people from Glenwood Springs, Roaring Fork and Bridges High Schools. The program is administered in partnership with our affiliate, the **Two Rivers Community Foundation** in Glenwood Springs.

Additional donations are gratefully accepted. Checks can be mailed to WCCF/Fast Forward Scholarship, P.O. Box 1539, Glenwood Springs, CO, 81601.

More information is available by calling 970-279-3410 or by emailing info2rcf@gmail.com.



DID YOU KNOW...

Dramatic statistics and stories abound in the media about students graduating from college with huge amounts of financial debt.

Per the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the average cumulative loan debt ranges from \$15,000 to \$30,000 for a public, four-year institution. The national average student loan debt for undergraduate degrees was \$25,672 in 2013.

Private scholarships account for only 4% of the total financial aid given to students in Colorado.

community knowledge to help as we grow and look to make even more impact in region." Tedi joined our staff team in mid April. She can be reached at tgillespie@wccf.org.

In late April, **Cindy Rhodes** resigned from her position as Scholarship Director. Cindy has served our Community Foundation well for the past six years administering grants, staffing our scholarship selection committees and encouraging young people to pursue their college dreams, and coordinating our NSTAR nonprofit training program. Cindy always had a lot of heart and enthusiasm for her work and will be missed.

Our board of directors held its annual meeting on May 6th. Former board chairman, Community Foundation donor and long-time advocate for community philanthropy, **Tony Prinster** rotated off the board after serving two terms. The WCCF board welcomes two new board members to its ranks: **Mike Sewell** and **Steve Watson** are both long-time community leaders and have served on a number of different boards in Mesa County. Mike will be serving on our Investment Committee, and Steve will be helping with marketing community grants and our website redesign project. The

WCCF Board of Directors boasts 18 active community leaders and philanthropists from the seven counties we serve and meets quarterly.

Reflections from the Executive Director

The busy scholarship season is upon us. And things are extra busy at our Community Foundation this year! We have ten more scholarship funds to manage this year than last year, including the new partnership with the Delta County School District. This translates into 16 different scholarship selection committees reviewing more than 200 applications over the course of six or seven weeks, preparing award certificates and getting to as many of the high school award nights in our seven counties as we can. All of our staff are helping with scholarship selection this year. This is the first time I've read applications and helped interview the students alongside our donors. I have to say it is a wonderful experience... helping a young person, dressed up and nervous, to relax and talk to three or more adults quizzing him or her about career interests and future plans. And while we keep growing and have more funds to give out, it is always hard to say "no, sorry" to many other deserving students.

Private scholarships are an important source of financial aid for young people interested in attending college and graduating with a reduced debt burden.

Want to help? Consider establishing a scholarship at the Western Colorado Community Foundation!

Visit our website wc-cf.org or call our office, 970-243-3767.

Students are always thrilled to receive scholarship support. I also see how excited our donors are to be able to impact one individual young person's life. Our donors see scholarships as not just charitable donations but as an investment in the next generation. The gift of education is a tremendous gift to give a young person.

Anne Wenzel



Confirmed in compliance with National Standards for Community Foundations by the Council on Foundations

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Charitable funds for community good

Want to learn more about setting up a CHARITABLE LEGACY FUND to honor a loved one AND help our community? Please visit our website or contact us for more information.

www.wc-cf.org (970) 243-3767