



# WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## 2014 Community Grants Announced

Our board of directors approved \$50,000 in Community Grants at the November 4th meeting. These discretionary funds are in addition to the nearly **\$1.65 million** awarded so far this year in grants and scholarships from our donor-directed funds.

Outside Mesa County, our grants include:

**Garfield County:** With recommendation from our Garfield County partners, Two Rivers Community Foundation and Rifle Community Foundation, grants were made to: Glenwood Springs Family Bike Park; Junior Achievement; Raising-a-Reader; Houses for Higher Education; River Bridge Regional Center; One Moment Fund, (providing support for early infant loss); the Bob Willey Scholarship Fund; Riding Institute for Disabled Equestrians (RIDE), and Reach Out Colorado.

**Delta County:** Delta County School District J50 for science education programs; Delta County Girl Scout programs; The Learning Council-Paonia; Blue Sage Center for the Arts-Paonia.

\$20,000 awarded in Mesa County

## Community Grants Target Youth and Education Investments

Our Community Grants Fund is designed to respond to unmet needs as they arise in our community, helping local nonprofit organizations leverage matching grants and funding new projects that benefit the entire community. This year our Community Foundation is supporting four projects in Mesa County.

### **Riverside Educational Center (REC)** provides tutoring

and enrichment services to students with the most academic and financial need. The need for their

services continues to increase and this year REC is expanding to serve students at Grand Junction High School.



WCCF's \$5,000 grant will help REC obtain matching funds from another foundation.

**Mesa County Public Library** will use our \$5,000 grant to purchase a Mac Pro and software that will serve as a public workstation for use by District 51 students and the entire community. This equipment allows for the production of original local stories and creates new content for the library's digital collection.

**Ouray County:** In collaboration with the Massard Trust, grants were made to the following: Ouray County Performing Arts Guild; Ouray County Historical Society; Ouray County Arts Association; Wright Opera House; Uncompahgre RiverWay Trail; Sherbino Theater and the Ridgway Railroad Museum.

**Rio Blanco County:** Rio Blanco BOCES-Backpack project.



*Two Rivers Community Foundation board members, Jake Lasko and Ken Stein, present a check from WCCF to Blyth Chapman and Pam Szedelyi for the River Bridge Regional Center*

### Community Foundation Field Celebrates Centennial Anniversary

2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the Cleveland Foundation, the first in our field. Community foundations are uniquely American institutions, built "by the people, for the people" to improve the communities we live in.

To learn more, click [HERE](#) to read our recent Op Ed piece printed during National Community Foundation Week.

Denver Post's *On Philanthropy* columnist, Bruce DeBoskey, writes a compelling article on "putting the giving back in Thanksgiving." Read the article [HERE](#) to put yourself in a thanks-giving mood and as a counter- point to the commercialism of the holiday season.

Locally produced content includes the "Veterans Remember" project and Dinosaur Digs from the Museum of Western Colorado. These resources are part of a larger initiative to connect school learning back to the local context with features and stories from our local community.

An unplanned consequence of the State of Colorado's legalization of marijuana has left many of our communities struggling with an increased rate of minors entering the juvenile justice system. Mesa County is seeing a dramatic increase of minors in possession (MIP). **The Drug Threat Oversight Committee** (formerly the Meth Task Force) has a reputation for organizing prevention and education outreach, including mentoring and kids-teach-kids programs to help students make better choices. A grant of \$5,000 will help the DTOC explore approaches for teaching teenagers about the developmental effects and legal consequences of pot use.

**Mesa Land Trust** works to protect agricultural land, wildlife habitat and open space in Mesa County. The Monument Corridor/ Bookends project will help preserve open space, expand family trails and establish a shared-use path on Monument Road, connecting recreational opportunities with our vibrant Downtown. A \$5,000 grant from our Community Grants Fund is supporting this planning project.



## Reflections from the Executive Director

November and the thanksgiving season are upon us - always my favorite time of the year. This November is extra special for me and our organization. My youngest child is a senior in high school and, if the college admissions process goes as hoped, we will

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO  
ALL OUR E-NEWS READERS!!**

Our Community Foundation gratefully accepts donations of any size for our Community Grants Fund. Help us respond to more community needs in 2015 by writing a check today...

Make checks payable to:  
Western Colorado Community  
Foundation, P.O. Box 4334,  
Grand Junction, CO 81502.

All donations are tax deductible.



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have children living too far from home to be with us for Thanksgiving next year. As parents, we raise our children to spread their wings and fly out of the nest. And then have some serious adjusting to do when that Empty Nest becomes a reality. This Thanksgiving, I am thinking a lot about the journey of raising children and seeing them grow up and into their own lives. Helping children grow up strong and ready for all that awaits them is a key job of parents. And also of a community. At our Community Foundation, we are pleased to be able to use our discretionary funds this year to make larger strategic grants and invest in projects benefiting young people in our community. These are all fabulous projects - helping the Riverside Education Center expand its tutoring and enrichment programs, providing equipment for the Central Library to move forward with its exciting vision for libraries in the digital age, assisting our students to navigate a world with legalized marijuana.

So I end with a favorite quote, overused but very compelling: It takes a village to raise a child...

In many ways, our Community Foundation is a critical hub in that village - the community we live in. Happy Community Foundation Week and Happy Thanksgiving!

*Anne Wenzel*



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