2019 Highlights

We share some highlights from our year:

$5.4 million in new donations

$4.3 million in grants and scholarships awarded (up over 25% from 2018)

16 new donor funds established

7 new legacy gifts documented

21% growth in long-term invested assets, from $61.5 million to $74.7 million*

* 12/31/19 financial statements are not yet audited. Total assets will include non-liquid assets as well as invested assets.

A big thank you to our donors and friends for their involvement and confidence in our Community Foundation!

Together, we make a big difference in improving the communities we live in and call home.

A great year!

Looking Back at 2019

2019 was another great year for our regional Community Foundation! We share our standard metrics for growth and impact through grants and scholarships (see story box to left). We continue to grow steadily, yet the year-end numbers paint but a part of a larger picture.

For several years, we have been actively building our local community funds. Last year, we received several significant donations to these funds from community-minded donors. We received our first end-of-life donation from Michelle Alford of Glenwood Springs, directed to their local community fund, the Two Rivers Unrestricted Endowment Fund. 2019 was also the year our newest local community fund, the Surface Creek Community Fund for Cedaredge and the surrounding communities, started organizing, with a formal launch in early 2020.

Our Community Foundation is also very committed to building permanent funds for targeted issue areas like hunger, housing, and substance abuse. In 2019, several new field-of-interest funds came on line: the Trutta Fund provided $70,000 to organizations providing services to veterans and their families; a suicide prevention fund made its first round of grants; the Bray Cares Foundation vetted applications for housing related needs in
2020 Theme for Community Grants
Youth Outside!

Our Community Foundation is pleased to announce our grantmaking theme for discretionary grants this year: Youth Outside! Youth, ages 12 to 18, are under stress across our communities, suffering from social isolation, anxiety, and even depression. Research shows many benefits of outdoor recreation and exploration for children and youth.

We have up to $100,000 to support youth development through outdoor recreation projects. The online application process opens at the end of February.

For more information, visit wc-cf.org/nonprofits/grant and click on the Community Grants 2020 tab.

2020 Scholarship Applications Now Open

Board Member Spotlight
Mike Sewell

Our Community Foundation's board chairman, Mike Sewell, has followed our work since its early days. Mike remembers first hearing about the community foundation concept back in 1998 from a long-time friend, Jane Quimby. Mrs. Quimby was the first legacy donor to our foundation when she passed away in 1999. Many members of the Quimby family are still involved with our organization today.

Mike and his wife, Jean, are originally from Mesa County; and our new CORE Fund starting funding conservation, outdoor recreation and environment projects.

In 2020, we will begin making grants from new field-of-interest funds for domestic violence programs, arts/culture/literacy, and animal care, funded by a generous legacy donation from Evelyn Haley.

These issue-focused grant funds are important for us to build, as they provide flexible funding to meet current and emerging needs in our community.
Our Community Foundation's scholarship application process is now open! Students can apply for one or more of 35 different scholarship funds managed by our Community Foundation. Scholarships range from $500 to $5,000+ and many are renewable for up to four years.

In addition to scholarships for graduating seniors, we manage several scholarship funds for non-traditional students and students interested in vocational and technical training.

The deadline to apply is March 3rd for graduating high school seniors and March 15th for non-traditional scholarships.

In 2019, our Community Foundation distributed $809,560 in scholarship funding.

For more information or to apply, visit: wc-cf.org/students/available-scholarships.

Save the Date!

Mike will be wrapping up his six years on our board of directors when he is term-limited in May. "Our board is doing strategic planning this year. I'm so excited about how far this organization has come, and how much potential there is."
**Breakfast** is Tuesday, March 10, 8:00 - 9:30 AM at the Two Rivers Convention Center. Hilltop Community Resources is lead sponsor as they celebrate their 60th Anniversary. Long-time donors to our Community Foundation, Bernie and Mary Beth Buescher will receive the Living Legacy award.

After the breakfast, nonprofit organizations are invited to attend a special presentation **Inspired Funders: Update 2020**. The presentation will feature a panel of foundations providing information on their funding priorities, including Caring for Colorado, NextFifty Initiative, the Colorado Health Foundation and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

More information and tickets, click [HERE](#).

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**Reflections from the Executive Director**

The year and the decade are over... roaring twenties - here we come!

We have barely wrapped up 2019 and are already busy looking forward to some special activities for 2020. In the coming months, our board will be undertaking a new five-year strategic planning process. We have made excellent progress on achieving the goals in our last plan, WCCF Vision2020. In the past eight years, we have greatly expanded our mission and purpose, becoming a full-service community foundation that not only works closely with our donors to develop charitable legacy plans, build endowments and distribute grant and scholarship funding but also providing leadership on important community issues. We had set $75 million in assets as our goal for 2020 and have zoomed past that target, as we are close to $85 million in total assets. We are excited to develop a new strategic plan that builds on the enormous accomplishments and growth of recent years to expand resources and have even more positive impact on the communities we serve.

Also in 2020, we are pulling together our Mesa County Blueprint to End Hunger. With a generous grant from the Colorado Health Foundation, Mesa County and our Community Foundation are pioneering local action plans to address hunger and food insecurity. Watch for more information about this blueprint and how to get involved in addressing hunger in the
Substance abuse is an ongoing problem in our community; more and more of our donors want to find out how to help, from prevention and education efforts to treatment programs to providing housing and supportive services to folks who are dealing with additions. As the opioid epidemic rages across our country, Colorado is not immune. From 2000 to 2018, Colorado lost 13,450 residents to drug overdose, and 44% of these deaths involved an opioid (either a prescription or heroin). In March, our Community Foundation, in collaboration with the Mesa County Opioid Response Group and the Brownson Memorial Fund, is producing a newspaper insert, highlighting this topic and the resources available to help.

In celebrating the new year this year, there was a lot of chatter about the "roaring twenties." Synonyms for roaring: booming, reverberating, thriving. Our Community Foundation will be roaring in 2020! These are just some of the many things we are working on, in the new year and the new decade, expand local philanthropy and engage community-minded donors to make a real difference, right here where we live. Join us!

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