



The Community Foundation BOULDER COUNTY

Non-profit e-News

March/April 2010

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READYSETLEARN

Richard Garcia, Guest Columnist

Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition and Trustee, The Community Foundation

My passion for early childhood education began in 1970, when my children were enrolled in the Boulder County Head Start program. I saw firsthand how my children were engaged in their learning through play. I would copy many of the classroom activities that I saw their teachers use. I was a student so I had the advantage of being able to be in their classroom frequently. Fast forward my experience to the lives of my two younger daughters. They had the opportunity to enroll in the wonderful For Love of Children (FLOC) program, where they experienced the same level of learning as my older children did in Head Start. The one major difference between the two experiences is that I had to pay for the latter. Fortunately for my younger children, we had the means to do so.

In 1990 I had the opportunity to become one of two Family Resource School Coordinators for the city of Boulder. I was assigned to University Hill Elementary School. Uni Hill, as many parents fondly call the school, was an experiential bilingual school and, I must say, a fine one. The school was very diverse, as it is today, with children from many backgrounds. We had children whose parents came from Mexico, Russia, Serbia, Croatia, and other Latino countries. There were a significant number of Native American children, Chicanitos, and African American children. Uni Hill was and is rich in diversity.

One of my activities was informal Friday home visits. I would make appointments to visit families and have conversations about their children. During visits I saw that parents were intense about their desire to help their children but didn't know how. This is when I got the idea of developing our Los Padres program that would provide information and skills to the parents about how to enhance what they did as a family.

Part of my responsibility was to provide interventions and assistance to meet families' needs. One of the major needs was to get young children enrolled in the Kindergarten Enrichment program. This program was designed to provide early education services to the families who had children in half-day kindergarten. The children could be enrolled in the morning class and the afternoon enrichment program, if they could afford it. Yes, there was some assistance, but it was limited.

The lucky ones would have a full day of learning. The children that couldn't participate would be put on the bus and taken home. If a parent was home, some of those kids might get further learning support. Others ended up watching television all afternoon until their parent came home.

Let's go back to 1990. The schools did not have full-day kindergarten services. Early childhood education was limited to those who could afford it, and 95% of those who could not afford it were Latino families. There was an achievement gap, but we were not calling it that. We knew what kids needed was full-day early education services, and we knew that we had a drop-out problem, but we were not reporting it.

Today, we still know about the problems, and we know what the answers are. Early childhood education opportunities are critical for children from low-income families. These opportunities give children the same chance that kids from higher-income families have and can prevent gaps in learning right from the beginning.

Join us at The Community Foundation in addressing Boulder County's achievement gap issue. Let's help all Boulder County kids be ready and set to learn from the start. **For more information about the Foundation's [ReadySetLearn: The Starting Point Matters](#) awareness campaign, please contact, Chris Barge at 303-442-0436 x110 or Chris@commfound.org.**

Program Director Bulletin

As I near the end of my fourth month back in Colorado, I'm reminded of the beauty that we are privileged to witness each day. But I'm also privileged to witness the enormous dedication you demonstrate each day to making our community a better place for all of us. I have been struck, not only by the scope of services here, but by the depth of caring and commitment I've seen. I'm hoping to get out to meet you and to learn firsthand more about what you do. In the meantime, I invite your participation -- work with me and we can all learn more together. Email me ...what information can help you in your day-to-day efforts --remember Carly's tips in this e-newsletter? How can our processes work more effectively for you? And keep me posted. If you have a new program about which you're excited, send me a message; a success that you're proud of, write to me; a new need you've identified, let me know. I am a passionate believer in collaboration and in the wisdom that grows exponentially when we learn together. Elvira@commfound.org

Honoring PassageWorks Founder, Rachael Kessler



On January 27th, Rachael Kessler died, surrounded by family and friends. The Community Foundation would like to extend our deepest condolences and help share this tribute to Rachael--an incredible community leader. [Rachael Kessler Tribute](#)

Announcements & Events

Millennium Trust Request for Letters of Intent--Due March 31st

[Check Here](#) for details about the 2010 funding focus, how to apply, and deadlines.

What Interests Nonprofits (W.I.N.)

Join us April 7th or April 15th
YWCA Boulder (2222 14th St.)
2-3PM - FREE

Hands-on training for the TRENDS online database. We're limited to 13 computers per session (or you can bring your own laptop). Folks need to RSVP to morgan@commfound.org. Together we will search the indicators database, build maps, build graphs, and help build your organization's case for future funding!

Social Venture Partners Boulder County

Getting Started: Introduction to Social Media, Non-profit Case Studies, and Top Ten Lessons Learned

April 20th from 12:00 to 1:15pm

REI Boulder

Free to Boulder County non-profits

Getting Started is being presented by Doyle Albee of Metzger & Associates, a leading communications firm based in Boulder, and Jennie Arbogash of Social Venture Partners Boulder County. Please visit www.svpbouldercounty.org/events to learn more and [RSVP to jennie@svpbouldercounty.org](mailto:jennie@svpbouldercounty.org).

Open Door Dinner

The annual **Open Door Dinner will be May 8, 2010**. [Check here to learn more and purchase tickets.](#)

Thank you Community Partners!

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Bolderwomen
Daily Camera
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Vermilion
tuggl
Ehrhardt Keefe Steiner & Hottman PC
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Sterling-Rice Group
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