



# Boulder County **TRENDS**

The Community Foundation's Report on Key Indicators

## **EDUCATION:**

What about the **"Gap Kids?"**

**OUR ENDANGERED MIDDLE CLASS:  
1 in 4 families can't afford  
to live here**

## **GIVING TIME OVER MONEY**

The **GREEN** Capital of America

**THE ARTS NEED  
AN ENCORE**

Over

**80**

**WAYS TO GAUGE**

the state of our  
Community  
and **BE INSPIRED**

## BOULDER COUNTY AT-A-GLANCE

**POPULATION: 294,654\***

Total **ACREAGE** in the County: **474,347**

Percent of **PRESERVED** land in County: **67%**

Unincorporated acreage of **PRIVATE** land remaining: **82,344**

Number of **HOUSEHOLDS: 118,434**

**FAMILY** households: **67,794**

**NON-FAMILY** households: **50,640**

**MEDIAN AGE: 36**

**RACIAL/ETHNIC** makeup:

**87%** White

**13.4%** Latino (any race)

**3.7%** Asian

**1.0%** African-American

**0.5%** Native-American

**2.7%** Two or more races

**4.9%** Some other race

Percent of People who speak a Language

**OTHER THAN ENGLISH** at home: **15%**

**EDUCATIONAL** Attainment:

**93%** High school graduates

**57%** Bachelor's degree or higher

**24%** Graduate degree

2008 **MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: \$89,164**

2008 **POVERTY LEVEL** for family of four: **\$21,200**

**PERSONS BELOW** poverty: **11%**

**FAMILIES BELOW** poverty: **5%**

All numbers reflect 2008 American Community Survey data unless otherwise noted.

Public land numbers from Boulder County Land Statistics 2008 by Meredith Dutlinger.

\* Department of Local Affairs, 2007



## **This is the place for inspired giving.**

The Community Foundation exists to improve the quality of life in Boulder County, now and forever, and to build a culture of giving. The 501(c)3 nonprofit organization was created by a group of forward thinking residents in 1991, to serve all the county's residents, businesses, decision makers, and nonprofit organizations. We all share a passion for this place—a vibrant, thriving community for all of us. Boulder County is a place that has overwhelming and unlimited potential. That's where The Community Foundation comes in. It's the place where giving is informed and inspired to have the greatest impact on the vision of a better Boulder County and beyond. We're committed to intimately understanding needs and connecting to the nonprofits that address those needs. Purpose and passion are the inspiration for everything we do. With you, we can make a meaningful impact on our fellow residents' quality of life today and in the future. The Community Foundation—inspired giving starts here.

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## A Letter from the President

I love taking visitors on hikes up Boulder County trails. It's a great way to get out, engage in thoughtful conversation, and enjoy amazing mountain views.

I sometimes think of our work at the Community Foundation as similar to that of a trail guide. We build community by leading people to a place where they feel inspired to engage with and invest in this place we all love.

This Trends report serves as our compass to help us navigate through the needs across Boulder County. It informs our grantmaking, and helps donors, nonprofits, and the public at large to make informed decisions as we all try to improve our community. We hope you will come to consider this our community's guide for how we're doing and what we need to care about next.

Our Civic Forum Director Morgan Rogers researched this report by aggregating all the demographic statistics she could find about Boulder County. She found data indicating we're more ethnically diverse than we realize. We're aging more rapidly than it seems. And we're in real danger of losing our middle class.

There's a lot to love about Boulder County, so long as you can afford to live here. The rising cost of living is widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

What should we do to celebrate and protect our considerable assets and fend off troubling trends that threaten our sense of community?

This report answers that question. We've examined education, healthcare, the economy, the environment, arts and culture and civic life. Each chapter identifies troubling trends and includes a call to action for those who feel inspired to address the issues.

## Education

### **A growing achievement gap.**

Our education chapter explores the Colorado paradox: Our state ranks 5th in residents with bachelor's degrees, yet we are 48th in public spending for higher education. That means we are not "growing our own" crop of great students to become tomorrow's Colorado business and community leaders. This has real consequences, as people with less than a high school degree earn 36% of people with graduate degrees.

We also examine Boulder County's achievement gap, between the  $\frac{3}{4}$  of students who thrive in our grade schools, and the  $\frac{1}{4}$  of mostly poor and Latino students who get left behind. This gap begins before Kindergarten and widens from there.

The achievement gap is a community issue, requiring a community-wide response. The Community Foundation recently launched its Early Childhood Initiative to bring awareness to this troubling trend. We have joined parents, our donors, community leaders, business partners and the community at large in calling for a sustainable source of public funding for equal access to quality early care and education for all Boulder County children. This, so that all kids show up to school ready to learn.

# Health and Human Services

**The wealthy are healthy.** Most in Boulder County are very healthy, thanks to a community emphasis on well-being and some extraordinary resources. Yet, we're not all well. The difference comes down to money.

Between 15 and 20% of adults in Boulder County are uninsured, and a disproportionate number of those uninsured are Latino. And while our overall teen fertility rate is low, 70% of teen mothers are Latina, and substantially fewer Latina women receive late or no prenatal care.

We remain troubled by another statistic when it comes to children: Despite movement in the right direction since 2003, more than 500 kids were present at formally reported domestic violence incidents in 2007.

More than 30% of high school students were offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property. On the positive side, we found data to support the wisdom that parents can influence this behavior: A teen is half as likely to drink alcohol if she believes her parent thinks it's wrong.

And here's another reason to be hopeful. The Community Foundation is working with local hospitals to launch a nationally cutting-edge online health records database. The Health Information Exchange aims to reduce overall healthcare costs while helping to identify community-wide health trends.

# The Economy

**What recession?** OK, that's an overstatement, especially if you lost your job or much of your 401K or IRA in the stock market in 2008 and 2009. But Boulder County was a late joiner to the national recession, and at the time of this writing seemed poised to exit the turmoil a bit earlier than the rest of the country.

Boulder County's economy also was already receiving a nice boost from the federal stimulus package, which incentivized the kinds of green and tech-focused jobs we have here.

Boulder County ranks 12th nationally in per capita personal income. Yet, it also costs \$66,000 for a family of four to live here. With more than a quarter of our families living on less than \$50,000 per year, you can see why we are at risk of losing our middle class.

# The Environment

**Green leadership.** President Obama signed his economic stimulus package in 2009 with Blake Jones, CEO of Boulder-based Namaste Solar, standing beside him. That exemplifies Boulder County's reputation as a leader in setting a green pace for our country.

An early U.S. adopter of the Kyoto Protocol, Boulder County has its sights on shrinking nearly one quarter of its carbon footprint from 2007 levels by 2012. Several cutting-edge programs already in place are helping us get there.

And new state policies incentivizing solar, regulating oil and gas production, and building transit are cementing Colorado's leadership role in the new energy economy.

## Arts and Culture:

**Recession blunts boom.** A booming subculture of world-class musicians, performers, authors and artists turned Boulder County arts into a “drive-worthy” event in recent years. But arts and cultural nonprofit organizations saw perhaps the sharpest drop in donor support of any sector when the national recession took hold in 2008.

At The Community Foundation, we believe that a thriving arts and cultural sector is key to a healthy community. The good news is the recession forced these groups to become even more efficient stewards of the resources they have.

Here’s hoping support for the arts returns soon to pre-recession levels, so that a key indicator of our community’s health can return to boom times.

## Civic Life:

**Giving more time than money.** When it comes to giving money, our research shows that Boulder County residents have a long way to go. We give 2.7% of our income on average to charity – well below the Colorado average of 3.1%, and further still below the national average of 3.4%. Raising Boulder County’s individual giving levels would help a lot, especially since our per capita personal income is higher than all but 11 counties in the United States.

That’s not to say we don’t engage in civic life. To the contrary, we vote in droves, we volunteer mightily, and we speak out often. But what will happen to our sense of community as the traditional broad sources of news and information shrink and become more specialized?

At The Community Foundation, we seek to preserve our “town square,” by convening the community and calling our citizens

and leaders to action to address pressing issues. That’s why we launched our initiative to increase our unrestricted grantmaking endowment, The Community Trust. If everyone in the community pitches in and helps us reach this four-year, \$4 million goal, we will double our support to local nonprofits across all sectors, now and forever. We will also focus significant time and funding on closing the achievement gap by improving school readiness.

## A community investment

Thank you for your interest in learning more about your Boulder County community. We encourage you to read the following Trends chapters in full and use the report like we do, as a compass to help you navigate local needs. Please share it with friends, use it as a launching point for family discussions about community, and display it on a coffee table at your home or office.

I am excited to refer you also to our new interactive Trends Website, which you can find through our Website, [www.commfund.org](http://www.commfund.org). There, you can build you own graphs, create maps, and compare the quality of life in Boulder County to the quality of life in other parts of the state.

We have a lot to celebrate about this place we all love. This report also shows we have room for improvement.

We can get there with each others’ help.

Yours in community,

**Josie Heath**

*President*

The Community Foundation



# Carta de nuestra Presidenta

Una de las cosas que más disfruto es el llevar a visitantes en caminatas alrededor de los senderos del Condado de Boulder. Es una manera excelente de salir a las afueras, participar de conversaciones amables, y disfrutar de las increíbles vistas de las montañas.

A veces pienso que nuestro trabajo en la Fundación de la Comunidad es similar al de un guía de senderos. Construimos comunidad guiando a las personas hacia un sitio en donde todos se puedan sentir inspirados de participar e invertir en el lugar que tanto queremos.

Este reporte de tendencias sirve como un compás para ayudarnos a navegar a través de las necesidades del Condado de Boulder. Informa nuestra elaboración de concesiones, y ayuda a nuestros donantes, organizaciones sin fines de lucro, y al público en general para tomar decisiones informadas mientras tratamos de mejorar nuestra comunidad. Esperamos que considere esta su guía comunitaria para ver como vamos yendo y que es lo siguiente que tenemos que hacer.

Nuestra Directora del Foro Cívico Morgan Rogers investigó este informe añadiendo todas las estadísticas demográficas que pudo encontrar acerca del Condado de Boulder. Encontrando información que indicaba que somos más étnicamente diversos de lo que pensamos. Estamos envejeciendo más rápido de lo que parece. Y nos encontramos ante un peligro real de perder nuestra clase media.

Hay muchas cosas para querer en el Condado de Boulder, mientras uno se pueda permitir el vivir aquí. El alto costo de vida está aumentando la brecha entre los que tienen y los que no tienen.

¿Qué podemos hacer para celebrar y proteger nuestro considerable patrimonio y combatir las preocupantes tendencias que amenazan nuestro sentido de comunidad?

Este informe responde a esta pregunta. Examinamos educación, asistencia médica, la economía, el medio ambiente, arte, cultura y vida cívica. Cada capítulo identifica preocupantes tendencias e incluye una llamada a la acción para aquellos que se sientan motivados a tratar estos temas.

## Educación:

**Una brecha de desempeño en aumento.** Nuestro capítulo en educación explora la paradoja de Colorado: Nuestro estado clasifica 5to en residentes con grados de licenciaturas, aún así somos 48 en gastos públicos para educación superior. Esto significa que no estamos “cultivando” nuestra cosecha de buenos estudiantes para que se conviertan en los líderes de nuestros negocios y comunidades. Esto conlleva consecuencias reales, ya que la gente con menos de un grado de escuela secundaria percibe un 36% menos que las personas con grados de licenciatura.

También examinamos la brecha de desempeño del Condado de Boulder, entre los  $\frac{3}{4}$  de estudiantes que prosperan en nuestras escuelas primarias, y el  $\frac{1}{4}$  de en su mayoría estudiantes pobres y Latinos que se quedan atrás. Esta brecha comienza antes del kindergarten y crece desde allí.

La brecha de desempeño es un tema comunitario, que requiere de una respuesta a través de la comunidad. Recientemente, La Fundación de la Comunidad emprendió una iniciativa de Educación Temprana para concientizar acerca de esta preocupante tendencia. Hemos reunido a padres, a nuestros donantes, líderes comunitarios, socios de negocios y la comunidad en general para encontrar una fuente sostenible de fondos públicos para un acceso equitativo de cuidados y educación temprana para toda la niñez del Condado de Boulder. Esto, para que todos los niños se presenten en la escuela listos para aprender.

# Salud y Servicios Humanos:

**Los ricos son saludables.** La mayoría en el Condado de Boulder es muy saludable, gracias a un énfasis comunitario en el bienestar y de recursos extraordinarios. Aún así, no todos estamos bien. La diferencia es cuestión de dinero.

Entre el 15 y el 20 por ciento de adultos de el Condado de Boulder no tiene seguro, y un número desproporcionado de aquellos sin seguro es Latino. Y mientras nuestra tasa de fertilidad en adolescents es baja, el 70 por ciento de madres adolescentes son Latinas, y un número sustancialmente menor de mujeres Latinas no recibe de cuidados pre-natales o los recibe tarde.

Hay otra estadística que nos mantiene preocupados en relación a la niñez: A pesar de un movimiento en la dirección correcta desde el 2003, en el 2007 más de 500 niños fueron testigos de incidentes de violencia doméstica formalmente reportados.

A más del 30 por ciento de estudiantes secundarios les ofrecieron, vendieron o daron una droga ilegal en propiedades escolares. En el lado positivo, encontramos datos que apoyan el buen juicio que los padres pueden ejercer en este comportamiento: Un joven tiene la mitad de probabilidades de tomar alcohol si cree que sus padres no aprueban de esto.

Y aquí existe otra razón para tener esperanza. La Fundación de la Comunidad está trabajando con hospitales locales para emprender una base de datos de registros de salud de última generación a nivel nacional. El Intercambio de Información de Salud apunta a reducir los costos en general de salud mientras ayuda a mantener la identificación de tendencias de salud a lo largo de toda la comunidad.

# La Economía:

**¿Qué recesion?** OK, esto es un sobre estimado, especialmente si perdió su trabajo o muchas de sus inversiones de 401K ó IRA en la bolsa de valores en el 2008 y el 2009. Pero el Condado de Boulder se unió tarde a la recesión nacional, y al momento de este escrito parecía preparado para salir de la confusion un poco antes que el resto del país.

La economía del Condado de Boulder también recibió un buen empuje del paquete de estímulo federal, el cual incentivó el tipo de trabajo de enfoque tecnológico y de conservación que aquí tenemos.

El Condado de Boulder está calificado como 12vo a nivel nacional en cuanto a ingresos per cápita. Aún así, también cuesta \$66,000 para que una familia de cuatro viva aquí. Con más de ¼ de nuestras familias viviendo con menos de \$50,000 al año, uno puede darse cuenta porqué es que estamos en riesgo de perder nuestra clase media.

# El Medio Ambiente:

**Liderazgo Verde.** El Presidente Obama firmó su paquete de estímulo económico en el 2009 con Blake Jones, presidente de la compañía de Boulder Namaste Solar a su lado. Esto demuestra la reputación de liderazgo del Condado de Boulder dando la pauta a el país en cuanto a conservación.

El Condado de Boulder, partidario desde el principio del Protocolo de Kyoto, tiene entre sus metas la disminución de casi el ¼ de sus emisiones de carbono a los niveles del 2007 para el 2012. Varios programas de última generación se encuentran establecidos para ayudarnos a llegar allí.

Y nuevas políticas estatales que incentivan la producción solar, regulan la producción de gas y aceite, y construyen el tránsito están consolidando el rol de liderazgo de Colorado en la nueva economía energética.

## Artes y Cultura:

**La recesión hace florecer.** En años recientes, una subcultura en auge de músicos, artistas y autores de primera línea convirtieron a las artes del Condado de Boulder en un lugar al que vale la pena ir para asistir a eventos culturales. Pero las artes y las organizaciones culturales sin fines de lucro observaron la que fué tal vez la caída más grande de apoyo de donantes de ningún otro sector cuando la recesión arraigó en el 2008.

En La Fundación de la Comunidad, creemos que un sector artístico y cultural próspero es clave para una comunidad saludable. La buena noticia es que la recesión forzó a que estos grupos se volvieran administradores aún más eficientes de sus recursos.

Esperamos que el apoyo a las artes retorne pronto a los niveles anteriores a la recesión, para que este indicador de la salud de nuestra comunidad pueda volver a los tiempos de esplendor.

## Vida Cívica:

**Ofreciendo más tiempo que dinero.** Cuando de dar dinero se trata, nuestra investigación indica que el Condado de Boulder tiene un largo camino para recorrer. Damos en promedio el 2.7 por ciento de nuestro ingreso a caridad – bastante más por debajo que el promedio de Colorado del 3.1 por ciento, y aún más por debajo del promedio nacional de 3.4 por ciento. Encontramos esta estadística especialmente sorprendente, considerando que nuestro ingreso per cápita es uno de los más altos de casi todos los condados de los Estados Unidos, habiendo únicamente once condados con ingresos más altos.

Esto no dice que no participamos de una vida cívica. Al contrario, votamos en hordas, hacemos mucho trabajo voluntario, y con frecuencia damos nuestra opinión. ¿Pero que pasaría con nuestro sentido comunitario si las fuentes tradicionales de noticias e información en general se encojen y vuelven más especializadas?

En la Fundación de la Comunidad, tratamos de conservar nuestra “plaza local”, reuniendo a la comunidad y haciendo un

llamado a la acción a nuestros ciudadanos y líderes para hablar de asuntos que apremian. Es por esto que lanzamos una iniciativa para aumentar nuestro poder de otorgar concesiones sin restricciones, El Fondo de Inversiones de la Comunidad. Si todos en la comunidad arrimasen el hombro y nos ayudasen a alcanzar nuestra meta de \$4 millones, doblaríamos nuestro apoyo a organizaciones sin fines de lucro locales en todos los sectores, ahora y siempre. También dedicaremos un tiempo y financiación significativos en cerrar la brecha de desempeño mejorando la preparación a la escuela.

## Una Inversión de la Comunidad

Gracias por su interés de saber más acerca de su comunidad del Condado de Boulder. Le animamos a que lea los siguientes capítulos condetenido y use el reporte como lo hacemos nosotros, como un compás para ayudarlo a navegar en las necesidades locales. Por favor compártalo con sus amigos, úselo como un punto de partida para entablar conversaciones familiares acerca de la comunidad, y expóngalo en una mesita en su casa u oficina.

Estoy muy entusiasmada de guiarlo hacia nuestra nueva página web de Tendencias Interactiva, la cual podrán encontrar a través de nuestra página web, [www.commfund.org](http://www.commfund.org). Allí podrá crear sus propios gráficos, crear mapas, y comparar la calidad de vida en el Condado de Boulder a la calidad de vida en otras partes del estado.

Tenemos mucho que celebrar acerca de este lugar que todos amamos. Este informe también demuestra que tenemos mucho espacio para mejorar.

Podemos llegar allí con la ayuda de todos.

Con ustedes en comunidad,

**Josie Heath**

*Presidente*

La Fundación de la Comunidad

# Building Our Healthy Community



The Community Foundation's Healthy Community Framework is a vision of what strong community life could look like and how philanthropy and volunteerism can play a role in creating it. Using this framework, community members see how they can help build a high quality of life for all Boulder County residents by focusing on seven core elements.



## A HEALTHY COMMUNITY:

- Meets the basic needs of its **PEOPLE**.
- Promotes **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**.
- Creates quality **EDUCATION** and learning opportunities for all ages.
- Ensures a vibrant and diversified **ECONOMY**.
- Acts as a steward toward sustaining a healthy **ENVIRONMENT**.
- Provides broad access to **ARTS AND CULTURE**.
- Fosters strong and connected **CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND GIVING**.

## WHAT ARE COMMUNITY INDICATORS?

Very simply, indicators are pieces of information that tell us something about the status of a larger system. Many kinds of indicators are used to inform many different kinds of decisions.

Community indicators reflect the status of a community's health and quality of life. In order to know if we're heading in a desired direction, we need some guides to show us the way.

Indicators are a tool for helping us understand ourselves as a community. They can aid citizens, policy makers, government agencies, the media, businesses and community activists in identifying and exploring the relationships among a wide range of community health trends and conditions.



The indicators used in this report were selected out of a broad, community-based process that engaged 400 Boulder County leaders, policymakers, business people, and neighbors nearly 15 years ago. This dedicated group outlined four visions for Boulder County (see: History of the Civic Forum, at the end of this report). They also selected 50 community indicators to track.

The Civic Forum continues to track these 50 indicators each year to provide longitudinal data on Boulder County and to help inform our community on how we are doing. Along the way, we've added several that may not have been relevant – or even existed – when the program began (like the number of registered hybrids or internet use!) The indicators give us an idea of where we've been, where we are now, and what may lie ahead.

The indicators are organized into 7 chapters and reflect the visions established by the Civic Forum founders and the areas in which The Community Foundation makes grants. We acknowledge that these indicators do not give the complete picture. Rather they attempt to give a broad overview of our community's health, while reflecting the practical limitations of the data available for collection. The data contained here is almost entirely reflected by numbers, though we know much of what measures community cannot be counted.

## DO YOU FEEL INSPIRED?

No matter who you are in our community, you have something to give. The challenge is to be strategic and purposeful in your approach. Each chapter provides

- a **list of indicators** included in that section
- the current status of these indicators
- a few **examples of programs** currently serving this sector
- a **list of action items** meant to offer suggestions for what you can do as an individual, a parent, a business, a donor, a volunteer, or just somebody who loves this place.

The programs highlighted offer only a few examples of what is being done right now in our community, but the opportunities are endless. To learn more about Boulder County's nonprofit community, visit The Community Foundation's Culture of Giving website, [www.cultureofgiving.org](http://www.cultureofgiving.org).