



July 7, 2022

National Philanthropic Day in Colorado
Association of Fundraising Professionals Colorado Chapter
PO Box 24745
Denver, CO 80224

Dear National Philanthropy Day Steering Committee,

The Latino Coalition for Community Leadership (LCCL) wholeheartedly supports the nomination of the Caring for Denver Foundation for the Outstanding Foundation award. The LCCL strongly believes that the Caring for Denver Foundation is fully deserving of this prestigious recognition. Over the past two years the LCCL has witnessed the Caring for Denver Foundation's effectiveness in meeting people's mental health and substance misuse needs by growing community informed solutions, dismantling stigma, and turning the community's desire to help into action. Of most notable significance is Caring for Denver Foundation's work in reaching marginalized communities of color and those most impacted but least resourced to respond to the needs in their own community.

A pandemic, social unrest, opioid epidemic, increased youth violence and economic uncertainty presented unprecedented challenges experienced by people across the country. Yet, not all groups of people experienced the same depth or breadth of impact resulting from these challenges. Marginalized communities of color experienced a disproportionate impact and had fewer resources available to address the issues faced. Many other foundations worked to respond by providing grants but for many marginalized community and faith based organizations (CFBOs), such resources were out of reach for several reasons. Such CFBOs did not know how to apply, were seen as "high risk" organizations, or did not have critical infrastructure in place at the time of application. This left marginalized communities more vulnerable to the challenges faced and at greater risk of experiencing negative outcomes.

Caring for Denver Foundation took a far more responsive, diverse, equitable and inclusive approach to grantmaking. In doing so, it took a novel strategy that recognized smaller, grassroots CFBOs deeply ingrained in marginalized communities as worthy of investment and critical partners in meeting the needs of community members. They focused efforts on soliciting from the community the types of innovative solutions needed to address challenges. They partnered with the community in learning how to be a responsive partner in meeting community needs and ensure that individualized support is provided for

each grantee. Their strategy to performance management and learning provided the flexibility that grantees need to be successful, accountable and build infrastructure during the course of engagement. The LCCL directly witnesses the change in CFBOs as they develop the organizational maturity and increased effectiveness in serving individuals and families experiencing disproportionate impact.

The LCCL was created in 2004 as an intermediary to drive funding into marginalized communities of color meeting the needs of individuals and families. Since that time, the LCCL has worked with federal, state and philanthropic organizations to provide over \$80 million to traditionally underserved communities. Bar none, the Caring for Denver Foundation is the only foundation that established intentional, focused and substantive efforts that provides a pathway for smaller organizations, reflective of the community they serve, to meaningfully engage in the health and safety of their own communities. The difference this has made, particularly in such challenging and turbulent times, is profound to everyday people who are experiencing hope and help rather than despair and abandonment. We sincerely hope the Steering Committee recognizes the Caring for Denver Foundation for their outstanding contributions.

Best regards,

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