



The Colorado Health Foundation™

## Locally Focused Work: Morgan County



At the Foundation, our community engagement approach is significantly enriched through our locally focused initiatives. We invest substantial time and effort in understanding individual communities.

Morgan County is one of nine communities where we are deeply committed. Our goal is to cultivate profound and meaningful relationships, connect with local residents and support long-term efforts that prioritize community-informed,

collaborative solutions to health challenges.

Why local focus? We firmly believe that solutions generated at the local level are more likely to address the community's unique needs and drive lasting change.

## What We Do In Morgan County

Morgan County has unique assets and challenges when it comes to health. Our approach to local work begins with attentive listening and a sincere commitment to learning from the people of Morgan County.

Rose Green, our initial program officer in this community, was central to this effort but has since transitioned to another role at the Foundation. Senior Program Officer Michael Smith has taken on the role of continuing to support locally focused work in Morgan County.

Rose's work in Morgan County centered around listening to the community and helping to support their efforts and ideas. She sought ways to enhance the capacity of local institutions, improve policies and systems, expand local leadership and stimulate broad civic engagement.

Today, Michael partners with the community to harness this energy so that Morgan County becomes a place where health is within reach for everyone who calls it home. This work takes shape through meaningful conversations, relationship-building and collaboration with a diverse range of community members.

Over the past few years, the Foundation has forged partnerships with institutions like the Center for Creative Leadership, which specializes in helping individuals customize and develop their unique leadership styles while supporting collaboration and strong networks. Additionally, we've partnered with KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to balanced and active play. Through these collaborations, local leaders are honing their skills for greater impact, and the community is creating safe spaces for children to play. We also work with Civic Canopy to harness the power that already exists within the community by providing a range of services to organizations, including coaching, advising, coordination, facilitation, resource sharing and other types of capacity building.

During a series of events in 2018, we had the privilege of hearing directly from community members. The information and feedback shared during these events have helped us better support work in the county and move toward a healthier Morgan. You can read about Rose's experiences during these events on our website.

## Get Involved

If you have ideas about creating a healthier community or want to learn more about the Foundation, please email [Michael Smith](#), senior program officer, or call him at 303-953- 3625.

## Activities In Morgan County

The Foundation has cultivated partnerships with various organizations in Morgan County and provided financial support for several key initiatives, including:

- **Fort Morgan Cultures United for Progress’ Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment:** Funding supports a comprehensive housing needs assessment to better understand housing issues and address health equity around access to affordable and attainable housing.
- **Kids At Their Best Leadership Pipeline for Low-Income Youth in Morgan County:** Funding supports leadership programming beginning with children as young as 5 and continuing through their teen years. The programming culminates in teen leadership of the summer enrichment program. This funding also supports efforts to bring together youth leadership efforts around the county.
- **Little Lambs, Trinity Early Learning School’s Multigenerational Outdoor Space:** Funding supported the development of a safe, inviting outdoor play area that fosters physical development, as well as social-emotional interactions and development for families. This included renovations to the existing preschool playground and fitness equipment for the surrounding trail.
- **Morgan Strong’s Bringing Sustainable Recreation to Morgan County Program:** Funding supported a complete recreation needs assessment using a health equity lens to build a sustainable recreation plan for every resident and develop a strong countywide recreation plan.
- **KaBOOM! Playground Builds:**
  - On Aug. 11, 2018, KaBOOM!, community members and partners came together for a singular goal: build a [brand-new playground](#) at Log Lane Village in Morgan County. Check out [photos](#) from the

Park's new opening.

- On Sept. 29, 2018, more than 150 volunteers from the Morgan County community, Kids At Their Best and The Colorado Health Foundation came together to build a brand-new, kid-designed playground in a matter of hours. Check out photos from the event on [Facebook](#).

## Resources

- Morgan County Health Data Infographic: In [English](#) | en [Español](#)
- **Sign up for our mailing list:** Stay updated on upcoming publications, [funding opportunities](#) and events.

## Program Officers



**Michael H. Smith** Senior Program Officer