The Colorado Health Foundation™



Reflecting on My First Year

I didn't think it was possible, but as I wrap up my first year as president and CEO of the Colorado Health Foundation, I am even more excited than when I first arrived. I'm more excited about the work. I'm more excited at the opportunity to work with you to make positive things happen in the lives and in the health of Coloradans. And I'm more excited about the people.

Oh, the people! I have been so inspired by the people I met on the #HealthiestCO Statewide Listening Tour. The plan was for me to visit the entirety of Colorado to learn about health needs, concerns and assets within communities across the state. The tour was an opportunity for grantees, community residents and local leaders to come together and share their perspectives on health. It was an opportunity for us at the Foundation to listen.

But it became much more than that. It became an opportunity for me to listen to the heartbeat of the state through the voices of its people. Those that came out to meet with me demonstrated a genuine dedication in and commitment to making their communities healthier. Colorado residents I spent time with seemed proud but also realistic in tackling the challenges we face. The good news is that residents are willing to name the issues, which is a key ingredient to our ability to collectively address them. Unique in comparison to other states, Coloradans – with or without health in their titles – are showing up with continued acknowledgement and reinforcement that health is everyone's business. A notion driven by the love of their community and their neighbors. You don't see this just anywhere you go.

The tour left me and the Foundation with much to think about. In order to make the most impact, it's important that we remain focused and strategic in our work, and are responsible in the use of our resources. I am happy to share that the

Foundation’s Board of Directors agrees that priorities we heard on the tour – such as behavioral health, mental health and substance abuse – should be our priorities too. Stay tuned for future updates on how we plan to engage in this space.

Lastly, at our recent Health Symposium, I shared my excitement to be a part of a broader movement for health improvement in Colorado that is being fueled by many of you. The Foundation is here to push when necessary, pull if we have to, but we are always here to support the good work of our fellow neighbors to make health everyone’s business.

I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together in the years to come.

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Blog

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