The Colorado Health Foundation™

ABFE?Names?Karen McNeil-Miller, Ed.D., President and CEO of The Colorado Health Foundation,?the 2026 James A. Joseph Lecturer



ABFE: A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities?is proud to announce **Karen McNeil-Miller, Ed.D., president and CEO of The Colorado Health Foundation**, as the?**2026 James A. Joseph Lecturer**, one of the philanthropic sector's most distinguished honors recognizing visionary leadership advancing equity, justice, and opportunity for Black communities.?

Named in honor of ABFE Co-Founder James A. Joseph, the James A. Joseph Lecture celebrates leaders whose vision and service reflect his lifelong commitment to justice, community empowerment, and responsive philanthropy. Presented annually during the Harambee Conference, this year marks the?**35th Annual James A. Joseph Lecture**, continuing a powerful tradition of honoring transformative leadership while carrying Ambassador Joseph's legacy forward for future generations.?

A nationally respected leader in advancing health equity and community-driven change,?Dr.?McNeil-Miller has consistently?leveraged?the full power of philanthropy, its influence, investments, and institutional voice to drive meaningful and lasting impact. As President and CEO of The Colorado Health Foundation, she has led one of the nation's largest health-focused foundations in advancing policies and investments that improve health outcomes and expand opportunity for communities across Colorado, particularly communities historically excluded from philanthropic investment.?

"Few leaders have shaped the philanthropic sector with the courage, clarity, and community-centered vision that Karen McNeil-Miller has demonstrated throughout her career," said?**Susan Taylor Batten, president and CEO of ABFE.?**"Karen has consistently pushed philanthropy to move beyond intention and toward meaningful action—expanding opportunity, advancing health equity, and strengthening institutions that serve the public good. Her leadership reflects the ideals Ambassador James A. Joseph championed and underscores ABFE's commitment to safeguarding and elevating Black leadership, particularly Black CEOs, trustees, and senior executives, whose voices and decision-making power are essential to ensuring resources reach the communities they are meant to serve. We are proud to honor her as the 2026 James A. Joseph Lecturer and celebrate a legacy that will continue to shape the future of our field."

Dr.?McNeil-Miller’s relationship with ABFE spans decades of leadership and service. A longstanding member of the ABFE community?and?champion for leadership development and inclusion, she co-founded ABFE’s Black Women in Philanthropy (BWIP) Leadership Retreat—an influential space created to uplift and connect Black women leaders across philanthropy. She?also served as Board Chair during ABFE’s historic 50-year anniversary campaign, helping guide the organization through a pivotal moment of reflection, growth, and renewed commitment to advancing responsive philanthropy in Black communities.?

McNeil-Miller recently announced her upcoming retirement after years of transformative leadership at The Colorado Health Foundation, making this recognition a fitting moment to celebrate a career defined by courage, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to equity.?Her recognition also comes at a critical moment for the philanthropic sector, as many institutions navigate growing challenges to race-explicit work and investments in equity.?

?“I am deeply honored to be named the 2026 James A. Joseph Lecturer by ABFE, an organization that has shaped my leadership and helped strengthen our field’s commitment to justice, accountability, and community voice,” said?**Karen McNeil-Miller, president and CEO of The Colorado Health Foundation**.??

?“I entered this work because I wanted to be close to communities—to listen, learn, and hear directly from people about what they need to live well and thrive. Throughout my career,?I’ve?committed myself and the organizations I lead to diversifying our teams, cultivating cultures of belonging, and centering the experiences of families and communities disproportionately?impacted?by structural inequities. I share this recognition with the partners, colleagues, and communities who have reminded me that lasting change begins with listening, follows community leadership, and is sustained by humility and our shared humanity.”?

?Throughout her career,?Dr.?McNeil-Miller has?demonstrated?the clarity, conviction, and leadership needed to ensure philanthropy continues to support communities historically excluded from opportunity.?In a powerful full-circle moment honoring her decades of leadership within ABFE and across the philanthropic sector,?Dr.?McNeil-Miller will take the stage as the 2026 James A. Joseph Lecturer during the?**James A. Joseph Lecture Dinner & Awards Ceremony?**on?**Tuesday, April 21, 2026**, at the?**Harambee 2026 Annual Conference in San Francisco.**?

?Registration for Harambee 2026 is now open. Philanthropic leaders, partners, and advocates are invited to join ABFE in celebrating Karen McNeil-Miller's remarkable legacy and to gather with the field for this powerful moment of recognition and reflection.?Learn more?about ABFE?and register?for Harambee: www.abfe.org/harambee-conference?

?For media inquiries, please contact:?

?**ABFE's Director of Storytelling, Grace Oshin, at?**Show email.?

?**The?Colorado Health Foundation Senior Director of Communications and External?Influence, Taryn Fort?at?Show email**?

####?

About ABFE?
ABFE: A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities is a nonprofit membership-based organization that advocates for responsive and transformative philanthropy in Black communities. Through leadership development, research, and strategic convenings, ABFE works to ensure that philanthropy invests boldly in Black communities and advances lasting social change.?www.abfe.org??

About The Colorado Health Foundation?

The Colorado Health Foundation is a statewide philanthropic organization that champions the overall health and well-being of every Coloradan by advocating for and investing in solutions and policies that drive health equity and racial justice. Every day,?the Foundation?collaborates?with organizations and communities across the state to break down the many systemic inequities that stand in the way of health. Learn more at www.coloradohealth.org.?

TYPE

Announcements

POST DATE

Mar 18, 2026

MEDIA CONTACT

Taryn Fort
Show email
Show phone