



# THE PROGRESS REPORT

The Colorado Health Foundation's newsletter provides updates highlighting programs, policy issues and events related to our mission to improve the health of Coloradans.

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## In Good Health: A Piece of the Truth

*Editor's note: "In Good Health" is now featured on the Foundation's website in [our blog](#).*



This year's Colorado Health Symposium, in Keystone Aug. 2-4, is titled [Let's Talk About... Inequity](#). Inequity... Some are lucky enough to never experience it, while for others it's a daily occurrence.

I once heard that everyone has a piece of the truth. That saying affected me and has been one of my core beliefs ever since. If you want to get the truth, you have to talk to as many people as possible to get their piece or you end up with an incomplete truth.

My truth about experiencing health inequity is something I will never forget. I was a new mother, in the process of finalizing the adoption of my two kids. Before the adoptions were final, both kids were on Medicaid. My daughter's adoption was final first, so she was able to move over and receive coverage from our commercial insurance plan, while my son was still on Medicaid. One day, I called the pediatrician to make an appointment for my daughter. Together, the receptionist and I set a time that was convenient for me a few days from that phone call. A few weeks later, I called back to schedule an appointment for my son. The receptionist said, "We'll see you Thursday at 2:30, as we only see Medicaid patients one afternoon a week."

I thought to myself: I'm the same person, and they are the same system. With my daughter, I had a few days' notice and plenty of time options. But with my son on Medicaid, I had zero flexibility and zero options. How is that fair? How is that equitable?

Which brings me back to the Symposium. At this year's conference, we will dig into the issue of inequity and its connection to poverty, unemployment, immigration, geography, behavioral health, gun violence and more.

When I first arrived at the Foundation I reviewed the lists of attendees from the past few symposiums. I noticed the many wonderful people who come to the conference and the organizations they represent. But I also noticed it was an incomplete group – and an incomplete story and perspective of Colorado's health. We were missing a stronger presence from those who work and lead in rural, minority-led, grassroots and community-based organizations. It wasn't that people from these organizations didn't want to be at the table, but their institutional or other

circumstances may have kept them from having a place at the table. So we did intentional outreach to those leaders in the form of a scholarship program and we added 62 new voices to our Symposium conversation last year.

So, for the second year, I'm delighted to say we are offering a [scholarship program](#) to make it possible for even more diverse voices to be heard at the Symposium. If you are from a rural, minority-led or community-based organization — or you know someone who is — [scholarship applications are due by next Friday, March 31](#). Join the conversation and share your important piece of truth with us in Keystone. We need you at the table to share the perspective, depth and richness of your truth. We need to better understand what health equity means to you in your daily life, your work and to the Coloradans you serve. Without you, we cannot succeed at achieving health equity for all Coloradans in all communities across the state.

In good health,



Karen McNeil-Miller



## Symposium Scholarships

If you are a Colorado professional from rural-based, minority-led and/or community-based organization, apply now for a scholarship to attend the 2017 Colorado Health Symposium in August.

[Apply...](#)



## Health Affairs March Issue

The Foundation sponsored the March Health Affairs issue about delivery system innovation, which includes more than a dozen papers examining specific delivery system innovations.

[Read...](#)



## March is National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Join the campaign using this toolkit.

[Participate...](#)

# Foundation Names Dr. Ben L. Bynum as Portfolio Director of Private Sector Engagement



The Foundation this week [announced the hiring of Portfolio Director of Private Sector Engagement, Ben L. Bynum, MD, MBA, MPH](#). In this role, Dr. Bynum will develop the Foundation's impact investing strategy and manage its impact investment portfolio, including [program-related investments and mission-related investments](#). He will also be responsible for building and maintaining relationships with a wide variety of individuals and organizations in the health field; collecting, analyzing and disseminating market intelligence; and implementing strategic activities and events that will engage the private sector in pursuit of shared goals.

Previously, Dr. Bynum helped to plan the creation of [Vital Healthcare Capital](#) (V-Cap), where he served in two separate director roles. V-Cap is a nonprofit organization that provides flexible financing and development services to support quality health care and good health care jobs in low-income communities. Dr. Bynum also spearheaded the work that led to the launch of V-Cap and the Foundation's Strengthening Primary Care funding opportunity.

Dr. Bynum will begin his new role at the Foundation effective Monday, April 3. [Read more about Dr. Bynum](#) and our work in [private sector engagement](#).

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## Explore the New Online Early Care and Education Map



Interested in learning where quality, licensed early childhood resources are located relative to where young children live? The [Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Map](#), which was developed by [Shift Research Lab](#), leverages neighborhood-level data from Denver's seven-county metro region to help illustrate the existing landscape of early care and education providers.

The ECE Map was designed to serve as a comprehensive early care and education data resource and help inform decision-making related to public and private sector investment, provider expansion, spending of quality improvement dollars and identifying where additional subsidies are needed. The tool utilizes data to better understand how far parents travel when choosing an early childhood option, ultimately helping to identify which communities have a

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shortage of care, which communities lack high-quality care and if there is enough care in communities where vulnerable children live. [Visit the ECE Map to learn more.](#)

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## 2017 Healthy School Champions Award Winners Announced



Every year, the [Healthy School Champions Program](#) recognizes Colorado schools for their success at creating a healthy school environment, implementing effective school health efforts and demonstrating how they comprehensively address health and wellness while embedding it in their culture and systems. Schools and districts are awarded based on their implementation of best practices in school health through an assessment tool called Smart Source, a narrative outlining their work and letters of support.

This year, 46 Colorado schools were award winners for demonstrating the critical link between student health and academic achievement. Healthy School Champions is now in its seventh year and has awarded more than \$300,000 in awards to Colorado schools and districts. This program was

developed by the [Colorado Education Initiative](#), a nonprofit organization that seeks out schools that have excelled at creating health and wellness programs that support student learning. [Read more about this year's winners.](#)

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## Valley Roots Food Hub Promotes a Healthier San Luis Valley



The Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F) recently announced its support of Valley Roots Food Hub (VRFH), a new enterprise of the San Luis Valley Local Food Coalition. In San Luis Valley, a predominant agricultural region in the state, VRFH is the only food distribution system of its kind. Through its aggregation and distribution operations, VRFH serves local farmers and ranchers, wholesalers and retailers, schools through its "Farm to School" initiative, and consumers through its Community Supported Agriculture Fresh Box program and online market. The majority of retailers VRFH serve are in areas where access to fresh, healthy food is limited. In 2016, VRFH secured a \$10,000 loan and a

\$30,000 grant from CO4F to support its capital improvements. Read more about Valley Roots in the latest [CO4F newsletter](#).

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# Mark Your Calendar

[Deadline to Apply for a Symposium Scholarship](#)

March 31, 2017

[Next Grant Application Deadline](#)

June 15, 2017

[Colorado Health Symposium](#)

Aug. 2-4, 2017

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