



GETTING INVOLVED IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR



THE DENVER FOUNDATION



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GETTING INVOLVED IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

The Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative (ENII) is a project of The Denver Foundation. The mission of ENII is to enhance the effectiveness of Metro Denver's nonprofit organizations by helping them become more inclusive of people of color. ENII accomplishes its mission by working at three levels:

- At the *sector-wide level*, ENII seeks to promote the value of *inclusiveness and diversity* through the nonprofit sector.
- At the *organizational level*, ENII seeks to give organizations the *tools and support* they need to build inclusiveness.
- At the *individual level*, ENII wishes to increase the “*pipeline*” of people of color joining nonprofits as board members, staff, volunteers, and donors.

On the individual level, ENII seeks to provide information about opportunities in the nonprofit sector and support to people of color within the nonprofit sector. ENII calls this work “building the pipeline.” Getting Involved provides information about the various ways people can connect with the nonprofit sector as board members, staff members, volunteers, and donors. ENII hopes this information will serve as a useful resource for individuals who want to make a difference in their communities. Please note that these are a sample of available resources, not a comprehensive list. More information about ENII's activities and resources is available at www.nonprofitinclusiveness.org.

Key Definitions:

What is a diverse organization?

The term diversity describes the extent to which an organization has people from diverse backgrounds and communities working as board members, staff, and/or volunteers.

What is an inclusive organization?

An inclusive organization not only has diverse individuals involved; more importantly, it is a learning-centered organization that values the perspectives and contributions of all people, and strives to incorporate the needs and viewpoints of diverse communities in the design and implementation of universal and inclusive programs. Inclusive organizations are, by definition, diverse at all levels.

What is the nonprofit sector?

The nonprofit sector is comprised of organizations designed to help improve life in the community by developing programs and strategies to help people in need, support charitable causes, and address community needs and issues. Organizations in the nonprofit sector receive money from tax-deductible contributions and rely on the work of volunteers to sustain themselves.

Note that the nonprofit sector is different from the public sector, which is a part of the economy that deals primarily with the delivery of goods and services by and for the government. Further, the nonprofit sector is also different from the private sector, which is a part of the economy comprised of businesses, corporations, banks, etc. designed to make a profit.

What is philanthropy?

Philanthropy is the act of giving money, goods, talent, time, or effort to support a charitable cause, promote goodwill, and improve the quality of life.

GETTING INVOLVED: VOLUNTEER!

Volunteering is a cornerstone of making a difference in the community and supporting the important work of nonprofit organizations. The Denver Foundation's 2005 Giving and Volunteering Study found that 74% of Metro Denver residents do some kind of work each month for no money in service to people or causes outside of their households. Many nonprofits attribute their success to individuals volunteering their time. For example, many programs rely on volunteer mentors to work with at-risk youth or volunteer drivers to deliver food to the elderly. You can help to improve life in Metro Denver by volunteering today!

- ❖ **Metro Volunteers**, Denver's volunteer center, helps individuals, families, and corporate and community groups find volunteer opportunities with diverse service organizations throughout the Metro Denver area. Their capacity-building programs and services allow volunteers to work hand-in-hand with nonprofit organizations to develop strong and vibrant communities. Nearly 100,000 potential volunteers utilize their website and other services annually to build community and meet critical needs. For more information, please contact Metro Volunteers at 303.282.1234 or metrovol@metrovolunteers.org, or visit their website at www.metrovolunteers.org.

Resources:

The following are websites dedicated to connecting individuals with volunteering opportunities in the nonprofit sector. These sites offer a variety of online services to support engagement in the nonprofit sector. They provide information about volunteering opportunities available in communities nationally and internationally, including opportunities specifically in Colorado. Check them out to find a volunteering opportunity best for you.

- **AmeriCorps** (www.americorps.org)
- **Idealist** (www.idealist.org)
- **Metro Volunteers** (www.metrovolunteers.org)

- **Network for Good** (www.networkforgood.org)
- **Points of Light Foundation** (www.pointsoflight.org)
- **Volunteer Connection of Boulder County** (www.volunteerconnection.net)
- **VolunteerMatch** (www.volunteermatch.org)

If you are specifically interested in joining a board, please contact Metro Volunteers about their BoardConnect program, or visit www.boardnet.usa to find out information about board opportunities near you. Metro Volunteers includes training and face to face contact, as well as a new online service to be offered by May 1, 2007.

Tips:

1. Many people donate and volunteer within their own families. Think about what you most enjoy doing to help your family and use that as a starting point to explore other interests.
2. Determine your motivations and goals for volunteering. Why do you want to volunteer? Motivations and goals can include meeting new people, gaining work skills and experience, or simply giving back to the community.
3. Identify skills and talents that you can bring as a volunteer. Are you most interested in volunteering directly with people, in a back office, at a special event, or in another way?
4. Choose an issue you care about. Are you interested in arts, youth development, health, homelessness, education, etc.? If so, there are many nonprofits in the Metro Denver area that work in various areas of interest. Contact Metro Volunteers to find out how you connect with a nonprofit or support an issue that's important to you.
5. Research nonprofit organizations doing good work in your areas of interest. Visit the Colorado Nonprofit Association website at www.coloradononprofits.org, or The Denver Foundation's website at www.denverfoundation.org. Organizations that have received dollars from The Denver Foundation's Community Grants Program have undergone rigorous review for quality of service and efficiency.
6. Consider how much time you have to volunteer. Is it a couple of hours a month or can you only help on weekends? Whatever it is, nonprofits appreciate any help you can give. Ask potential nonprofits what expectations they have of you as a volunteer. Ask how your volunteer time will help the nonprofit achieve its mission.
7. Make it a social outing. Volunteer with friends, family, business associates, and neighbors.

GETTING INVOLVED: CONTINUE YOUR GENEROUS GIVING!

Chances are you are already a donor – The Denver Foundation’s 2005 Giving and Volunteering Study found that more than ninety percent of households give to charity. A donor is someone who financially supports charities on a consistent basis. Donors support philanthropy in many ways, including writing checks to nonprofits or tithing at churches on Sunday. Whether it’s \$5, \$500, or \$5,000, you are promoting philanthropy and making our communities better through your charitable donations.

Donors provide critical support to the nonprofit sector. Charitable donations help nonprofits do their work in improving life in the Metro Denver community. Contact a local nonprofit to find out how you can support their efforts.

- ❖ **The Denver Foundation** helps generous people like you build charitable legacies that make a difference today and in the future. As Colorado’s oldest and largest community foundation, The Denver Foundation provides the expertise and leadership to help people give back to Metro Denver in ways that are meaningful – to them and to the community. Established in 1925, The Denver Foundation is dedicated to improving life in Metro Denver through philanthropy, leadership, and strengthening the community. For more information, please contact The Denver Foundation at 303.300.1790, or visit their website at www.denverfoundation.org.
- ❖ **Community Shares** provides funding, raises awareness, and manages resources for their 122 member nonprofit organizations working on providing local solutions in Colorado communities. They help to connect individuals to the charities and causes they care about most and strive to increase overall philanthropy in Colorado. Through their annual Community Giving Campaign, they raise funds from the community to benefit the nonprofit sector. For more information, please contact Community Shares at 303.861.7507 (Denver office), 303.441.7808 (Boulder office), or cshares@cshares.org, or visit their website at www.cshares.org.

Resources:

There are many causes that you can support to help improve life in the Metro Denver community. Think about some of the following ideas as you consider how to spend your charitable dollars.

- Support organizations that provide direct services. For example, give money or canned goods to a local food bank. Or donate to organizations that provide victim services.
- Interested in the arts? Consider supporting local museums, performing arts groups, or after-school programs that expose youth to the arts.

- Improve the health of your community. Consider supporting local hospitals or clinics.
- Want to help kids? Consider supporting mentorship programs, after-school programs, summer youth programs, or early childhood education centers.

The following are websites dedicated to providing information to individuals to help guide your charitable giving. They include information about charities you may want to support. Check them out and become informed about nonprofits you may want to support.

- **Charity Navigator** (www.charitynavigator.com)
- **GuideStar** (www.guidestar.org)

Tips:

1. Determine your motivations and goals for giving. These might include helping a particular nonprofit, funding a specific project, supporting a specific issue, or simply wanting to help people in the community.
2. Do your research and find organizations that you want to support. The internet is one good resource to find out information about local charities and nonprofit organizations.
3. Prior to giving a gift, explore the work of the nonprofit recipient in depth by looking at their website, reviewing their publications or annual reports, or, especially in the case of a larger gift, talking with staff members.
4. Feel free to ask charities or nonprofits how they intend to spend your money. It shows that you care about how your money is being used and gives you a better understanding of what the organization does.
5. Consider talking with tax professionals about receiving tax deductions for your charitable donations.
6. Check with your employer about matching contributions or programs that will automatically deduct a designated amount from your paycheck. Also, contact Partnership For Colorado (PFC) at 800.808.4038 or pfc@partnershipforcolorado.org for information about a variety and diversity of workplace giving options. PFC works to efficiently offer as many choices as possible in employee giving campaigns.
7. Give what you can. Nonprofits appreciate donations in any size, and individual donors who provide small donations are often the lifeblood of an organization.
8. Spread the word. Encourage your friends to support your favorite organizations. Talking to your friends and family about philanthropy and supporting causes that matter to you - and to them - is a good way to strengthen your community.

GETTING INVOLVED: FIND A JOB IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR!

In the nonprofit sector, there are many opportunities to work for causes that matter to you while also earning an income. Many nonprofits are constantly exploring ways to become more diverse and inclusive. Some of their strategies include developing a diverse pool of candidates for job positions, considering how to recruit and retain individuals of color, and creating a welcoming environment that values a variety of perspectives. Specifically, many nonprofits are looking to incorporate the perspective of individuals of color as staff members. There are many opportunities for you to get involved in the nonprofit sector in a staff capacity.

Resources:

You can find information about jobs that are available in the Metro Denver nonprofit sector through the following resources.

- **Colorado Nonprofit Association's** nonprofit job board (www.coloradononprofits.org)
- **Regis University's** nonprofit job board (www.regis.edu)
- **Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group's** free monthly newsletter, filled with helpful tips, a feature article covering a topic central to your nonprofit job search, announcements of new job searches they are conducting, as well as information regarding their job seeker consulting services, to more than 17,000 job seekers. This newsletter is meant to help you in your search, it will always be free, and you can sign up at www.nonprofitprofessionals.com/newsletter_sign_up.htm

Tips:

1. Think about your transferable skills. Simply put, what are the skills that you have acquired during any experience in your life -- jobs, school, parenting, hobbies, sports, etc. -- that are transferable and applicable to what you may want to do professionally. For example, being personable, writing effectively, communicating with diverse audiences, working in a team environment, and strong speaking ability are all skills that can help you be successful in the nonprofit work environment.
2. Consider nonprofits doing work in your area of interest. Check job boards for opening positions. Ask yourself how a nonprofit will help you give back to your community and help you gain valuable skills.
3. Practice your interviewing skills - practice makes perfect. Keep your résumé up to date - include past job and volunteer experience in the nonprofit sector. Write an engaging cover letter - it helps to paint a fuller picture of who you are and what you can contribute to an organization.

4. Interview the organizations. Interviewing is a two-way street. Employers will ask you questions to see if you are a good fit for their organization. Interviewing is also a good opportunity for you to ask questions of them to make sure their organization is the right place for you.
5. Consider your professional goals. How can an organization help you achieve your goals and support your professional development?
6. If you are applying for a position, ask how the position is being funded.

GETTING INVOLVED: PARTICIPATE IN A LEADERSHIP PROGRAM!

Colorado has many leadership programs designed to help individuals develop skills that will help them to more effectively contribute to their communities. The following is a list of some of the leadership programs in the Denver Metro area.

Resources:

- The mission of the **African-American Leadership Institute (AALI)** is to develop leadership skills that empower individuals to become influential citizens who successfully author and implement solutions to the needs of businesses and the community. Since 1990, AALI has graduated 157 people and provided mentoring to over 9,000 boys and girls in grades 5-12. For more information, please contact AALI at 303.299.9064 or aali@aali-rockymtn.org, or visit their website at www.aali-rockymtn.org.
- The goal of the **Circle of Latina Leadership** is to create, train, and nurture a network of Latina leaders who understand the critical issues affecting the Latino community in Denver and can implement strategies to address them. The Circle of Latina Leadership educates and mentors young and emerging Latina leaders to empower their community through advocacy, skill training, and community advocacy. For more information, please contact the Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at 303.534.7783, or visit their website at www.dhcc.com.
- The **Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce (CBCC) Chamber Connect** is designed to offer 10 weeks of executive training and networking opportunities for business, community, and entrepreneurial leaders in Colorado. CBCC Chamber Connect participants will interact with members of the CBCC Board of Directors, as well as Colorado's mayors, governor, business and community leaders at various networking events throughout the Denver Metro area. Also, they will have the opportunity to gain an inside view of the various programs of the Chamber including economic development, public affairs, leadership programs, small business development, and networking. For more information, please contact CBCC Chamber Connect at 303.831.0720 or staff@coloradoblackchamber.org, or visit their website at www.coloradoblackchamber.org.

- The mission of the **Colorado Progressive Coalition** (CPC) is to build coalitions, conduct research, organize communities, get out the vote, develop new leaders, and work with elected officials to build a progressive future for Colorado on issues of racial, economic, environmental, and social justice. CPC has Leadership Academies located in the Aurora and Pueblo communities. For more information, please contact the CPC at 303.866.0908 or cpc@progressivecoalition.org, or visit their website at www.progressivecoalition.org.
- The mission of the **Denver Community Leadership Forum** (DCLF) is to convene community leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sector to explore new ways to address community challenges. DCLF focuses primarily on the development of collaborative leadership skills and cooperative problem solving. For more information, please contact Effley Brooks at 303.315.2053 or Effley.brooks@cudenver.edu, or visit DCLF's website at <http://www.cudenver.edu/Academics/Centers+and+Institutes/Centers/Leadership/DCLF/default.htm>.
- The **Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce** is a customer – focused membership organization dedicated to providing its members with value-added benefits, collaborating and convening with other community organizations to achieve mutual goals, representing its members' interests in government and legislative issues, enhancing our region's global competitiveness, and ensuring the highest standards for an improved community quality of life. The following are a few leadership programs the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce has. For more information about any of these programs, please contact the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce at 303.534.8500 or dmcc@denverchamber.org, or visit their website at www.denverchamber.org.
 - ◆ **Impact Denver** is a 6-month program providing introductory civic leadership skills training and issues orientation specially designed for Metro Denver's emerging community leaders, generally 25-40 years old.
 - ◆ **Leadership Denver** is a 10-month program for leaders and emerging leaders focused on promoting informed and committed civic volunteerism combined with retreats, seminars and group community action projects.
 - ◆ **Legacy Denver** is a leadership mentoring program convening established and retiring community leaders for small group conversations regarding issues of regional importance, personal leadership development, and the process of community engagement.
- The mission of **Mi Casa Resource Center for Women** is to advance the self-sufficiency of primarily low-income Latinas and youth. Mi Casa offers a number of programs to achieve this goal, including their leadership development program, Leadership for Community Change, which seeks to create youth and adult partnerships in order to inspire community change. Through this



program, Mi Casa hopes to develop a diverse community leadership, improve the Denver community through community mobilization and action, and achieve a shared vision of a just community. For more information, please contact Mi Casa Resource Center for Women at 303.573.1302 or info@micasadenver.org, or visit their website at www.micasadenver.org.

- The **Strengthening Neighborhoods Program** (SNP) is The Denver Foundation's grassroots neighborhood grantmaking program. SNP works directly with residents of ten Metro Denver neighborhoods to help build upon the strengths and assets already present in their neighborhoods to make them better places to live. SNP offers the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program (NLDP), a free eight-month training program that runs from October through June each year. Learn what it takes to become a neighborhood leader as you develop and implement an actual neighborhood project. The program is also available for Spanish-speakers. For more information, please contact Strengthening Neighborhoods at 303.300.1790 or visit The Denver Foundation's website, www.denverfoundation.org.

GETTING INVOLVED: EXPLORE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE!

Chambers of commerce are organizations typically designed to advance the interests of their member businesses. Chambers of commerce serve as resources for the entire community, including the nonprofit sector. Below is a list of many of the minority chambers of commerce located in the state of Colorado. On their websites, you will find membership information, event listings, job information, and other helpful resources to support their members.

Resources:

- The mission of the **Asian Chamber of Commerce** is to promote awareness of the Asian business community, and to assist in its economic development. For more information, please contact the Asian Chamber of Commerce at 303.595.9737 or asiancc@rmi.net, or visit their website at www.asianchambercommerce.org.
- The mission of the **Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce** is to provide leadership for the growth and development of African-American businesses and to facilitate the economic empowerment of the African-American community. For more information, please contact the Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce at 303.831.0720 or info@coloradoblackchamber.org, or visit their website at www.coloradoblackchamber.org.
- The mission of the **Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce** is to help women achieve their business goals and connecting women in business. Their programs cultivate business development, professional excellence, and leadership. For more information, please contact the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce at 303.458.0220 or info@cwcc.org, or visit their website at www.cwcc.org.

- The mission of the **Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce** is to promote and advance the growth of Hispanic business. DHCC is a membership driven organization comprised of small-business owners, corporate representatives, community leaders, and association members representing various professions. For more information, please contact the Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at 303.534.7783 or info@dhcc.com, or visit their website at www.dhcc.com.
- The mission of the **Latina Chamber of Commerce** is to promote and advance the personal, professional, and business interests of Latinas, their families, and their communities. For more information, please contact The Latina Chamber of Commerce at 303.962.1491 or lcinfo@latinachamber.org, or visit their website at www.latinachamber.org.
- The mission of **Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce** is to promote awareness of the Indian community, and to assist in its economic development. For more information, please contact the Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce at 303.629.0102 or info@rmicc.org, or visit their website at www.rmicc.org.

GETTING INVOLVED: EXPLORE AFFINITY GROUPS!

Introduction to Affinity Groups

Explore affinity groups in the nonprofit sector as a way to meet and connect with other individuals who share similar interests and goals. Support groups are a great opportunity to expand your personal and professional network. The following include a few affinity groups in the Metro Denver area.

Resources:

- The mission of the **Young Nonprofit Professionals Network** (YNPN) is to promote an efficient, viable, and inclusive nonprofit sector that supports the growth, learning, and development of young professionals. They seek to engage and support future nonprofit and community leaders through professional development, networking and social opportunities designed for young people involved in the nonprofit community. For more information, please contact YNPN at denver@ynpn.org, or visit their website at www.ynpn.org/denver/.
- **Colorado Blacks in Philanthropy** seeks to support nonprofit organizations and raise the level of involvement and voice of African-Americans in philanthropy in Colorado. For more information please contact LaDawn Sullivan at 303.996.7350 or lsullivan@denverfoundation.org.

- The mission of **Hispanics in Philanthropy** is to promote stronger partnerships between organized philanthropy and Latino communities and to increase resources for the Latino and Latin American civic sector and to increase Latino participation and leadership throughout the field of philanthropy. For more information about Colorado Hispanics in Philanthropy, please contact their regional office in Colorado at 303.398.7438, or visit their website at www.hiponline.org.

GETTING INVOLVED: PARTICIPATE IN A MENTORING OR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM!

Mentoring and internship programs present engaging opportunities to build your individual capacity and skill set. The following includes information about a few mentoring and internship programs in the Metro Denver area.

Resources:

- **The Denver Foundation** will launch a pilot internship program in the summer of 2007. The new program will fund ten internships at nonprofit organizations in the seven-county Denver Metro area. It seeks to introduce college students from diverse backgrounds who have had limited experience with nonprofit organizations to opportunities within the sector. For more information, please contact the offices of The Denver Foundation at 303.300.1790, or visit their website at www.denverfoundation.org.
- The mission of the **Youth Mentoring Collaborative** (YMC) is to increase communication, cooperation, and resource acquisition among the organizations providing volunteer mentors to Denver area youth. YMC is comprised of 15 mentoring organizations and eight resource partners that share a united vision: To positively impact all Denver Metro area youth by providing more mentors through the collaboration of quality mentoring organizations. The YMC Youth Mentoring Program operates under a grant funded by Denver Human Services. The YMC is sponsored by Bank of the West, Mile High United Way and the Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships. These organizations have come together to combine their resources, knowledge and talents to match more adult mentors with mentees. To volunteer to become a mentor or for more information, call United Way's 2-1-1 or go to www.metrovolunteers.org.
- Students can check with the career office at their schools for information about internship opportunities that fit your interests. Many schools also offer service-learning opportunities that connect students with the nonprofit sector - check with your school to find out if such opportunities are available.

GETTING INVOLVED: **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES!**

The following are additional resources for getting informed about or involved in the nonprofit sector.

Resources:

- Call **2-1-1** to access **Mile High United Way's free, multi-lingual service** that refers callers to non-emergency health and human services such as early childhood education programs, after-school programs, emergency assistance, counseling, senior services, and volunteer opportunities. For more information, visit www.211colorado.org.
- **The Colorado Nonprofit Association** is a statewide nonprofit membership coalition connecting nonprofits of all sizes, missions, and geographic locations. They help to strengthen the nonprofit community through trainings, issue discussions, and public advocacy about the importance of the nonprofit sector. They support members by providing tools for communication, networking, and administration. For more information, please contact the Colorado Nonprofit Association's offices at 303.832.5710 or info@coloradononprofits.org, or visit their website at www.coloradononprofits.org.
- **The Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships** (DOSP) is the connecting bridge between the City and its nonprofit and philanthropic organizations. They work with individuals, foundations, corporations, and nonprofit partners to raise critical funding for cooperative initiatives, foster innovative partnerships to support nonprofits, and engage the entire community in volunteer efforts that help to make Denver a great city. For more information, please visit their website at www.denvergov.org/strategicpartnerships/.



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