



DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Community Connection

NEWSLETTER

Jan - Mar 2022

Douglas County is often ranked among the healthiest and wealthiest counties in Colorado, and with the annual statewide movement to celebrate and increase philanthropy through online giving, it also proved to be one of the most generous. Thank you, Douglas County, for a record-breaking Colorado Gives Day on December 7, 2021.

Increasing giving by approximately 60% over last year, Douglas County raised \$1,655,845 during the 24-hour online giving event. Ninety-six Douglas County-based nonprofits benefited from the 4,810 donations.



organizations for the 24-hour online giving campaign every December, DCCF maintains agile funds for county emergencies and responsibly manages philanthropic contributions throughout the year.

Working directly with individuals, families, financial advisors and corporate donor partners, DCCF guides your giving journey, ensuring that 100% of contributions go toward making the maximum impact. Access to matching grants and other vetted resources allows DCCF to make your giving easy, effective and enduring, year-round.

“Douglas County residents have clearly demonstrated the importance of supporting local nonprofits and the ‘give where you live’ philosophy,” said Mike Waid, executive director of the Douglas County Community Foundation (DCCF).

“While Colorado Gives Day is an amazing 24-hours of focused giving and philanthropic awareness, DCCF can help continue to fill the gap for those in Douglas County who need it most, when they need it most,” said Waid.

DCCF is the regional champion for Colorado Gives Day and Douglas County Gives. In addition to inspiring generosity and providing support to local nonprofit

To learn more about DCCF and to make the most of your charitable contributions, visit dccf.org, email foundation@dccf.org or call 720-733-2656.

LET THE GRANTING BEGIN ...



Three Douglas County nonprofit organizations received a nice year-end surprise when the Douglas County Community Foundation (DCCF) awarded them more than \$55,000 in grants in December 2021. All three organizations (pictured above) work with mental health and awareness. Robin’s Nest Foundation performs equine-assisted therapy for all ages, The Happy Crew destigmatizes teen mental health issues, and The Foundation for Douglas County Schools Sources of Strength program harnesses the power of peer social networks to change unhealthy norms and culture to prevent suicide, bullying and substance abuse.

Nonprofit profile - The Happy Crew



Depression, anxiety and suicide are major issues for teens, and Colorado ranks among the highest in the nation for most teen deaths by suicide. Statistics like this led Douglas County resident Amy Mays to form The Happy Crew.

Mays said, “We founded The Happy Crew as a way to encourage and train teenagers in Douglas County how to listen to and help friends dealing with mental health issues. Since most teens approach their friends before reaching out to an adult when they are struggling, we want teens to know how to respond. We equip teens to be excellent listeners, know how to offer coping skills, recognize when a friend needs to be put in touch with an adult, and to stay with a friend who is suicidal until expert, professional help arrives.”

During weekly dinners together, often at Mays’ own home, Mays and trained mentors lead members in group discussions and strategize about ways to reach out and help friends and fellow students. “You matter, you belong” is the mantra for the group, which has more than 100 teens participating from nearly all Douglas County high schools.

During meetings, teens work on supporting each other, developing their abilities to actively listen, help with peer coping skills and better manage their own mental health. Teens role-play to learn how to deal with different scenarios that friends may share with them. Meetings aren’t always filled with serious discussions; there are plenty of laughs and a feeling of community among friends too.

“We welcome all teenagers,” said Mays. “Participating in this program gives teens the ability to provide basic mental health first aid to friends. We want to make responding to mental health issues as easy as helping a friend with a cold. We train teens in important steps they can take to help a friend in pain. Listening skills are vital and will impact every life relationship – with friends, parents, family, teachers and employers. Together, in community and conversation, we can destigmatize mental health issues and make a positive impact,” Mays said.

To learn more about The Happy Crew, visit thehappycrew.org.



In the event of a tragedy such as a natural disaster, DCCF has established a Community Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) to provide Douglas County residents immediate assistance in times of critical need.

DCCF will be the conduit between those in need and those able to provide assistance. We partner with pre-vetted organizations that provide front line assistance and support and connect them with those impacted.

DCCF is incredibly agile and is able to distribute funds in a timely and efficient manner, allowing those in need immediate access to the CERF funds.

Criteria for eligibility for access to the funds include scenarios like: Does event affect at least 50% of a Douglas County municipality or subdivision? Does the event limit access to basic life needs for a neighborhood population or greater? Does the event represent a threat to life and limb of a group of people at a single location? Does the event represent a level of egregious impact on the mental health of a population? Or, has a state of emergency been declared by a responsible government agency?

All requests for CERF funding will be initiated through the DCCF executive director. To learn more, contact foundation@dccf.org.

Save the Date! –



golf fundraiser at Ravenna on June 20.

Update – a life saved

After receiving a \$25,000 grant from DCCF in December 2021, executive director for The Happy Crew, Amy Mays, sent DCCF this update and expressed gratitude:

“On Valentine’s Day, we had a huge celebration. Valentine’s Day can be especially difficult for teens dealing with depression and anxiety, and teens can feel worthless, alone and unloved. We wanted every student to know that they are loved, that they matter, and that they belong!”

The celebration included a house full of balloons, Valentine note cards that students filled out and exchanged, great food and a very special gift – a Valentine hoodie (pictured above right). The hoodie’s message: Speak the language of ‘we.’ The lower left sleeve was printed with the words, ‘Kākou is the Hawaiian value of inclusiveness. It means, ‘all of us’, and ‘we are in this together.’ Kākou is unifying when applied to language and all are taught to learn, speak and practice the language of ‘we.’ Happy Crew embraces Kākou. You matter, you belong.



Several days later, I received a call from a student – one most would identify as strong, independent, and ‘having it all together.’ This student began with, ‘I want you to know Happy Crew saved my life last night. I now understand why teens die by suicide. I have never experienced such darkness. It was a brutal, all-encompassing feeling. But I had my new hoodie on, and I kept reading the words reminding me that I belong, that I am part of a community, and I knew I would hurt the people I love if I died. I decided to live. Thank you.’”

HEARTS & ACES FUNDRAISER

Douglas County Community Foundation (DCCF) showed some love for first responders, educators and veterans at its inaugural Hearts and Aces Valentine’s fundraiser on February 13 at the PACE Center in Parker.

The evening of philanthropy started with dinner and was packed with casino-themed fun, including blackjack and poker tables, roulette and craps. Many of the corporate sponsors forfeited their tickets so that frontline workers who labor tirelessly for our community every day could attend.

Cheers erupted throughout the night from the gaming tables, as event-goers earned chips that would be traded in at the end of the evening for some great prize baskets. Silent auction items featured several exclusive whiskey selections, and other gift baskets brought forth “spirited” competitive bidding, all raising money for a good cause. Several local government officials and TV personalities joined in the fun as well.

The event raised a total of \$8,762. “The needs in Douglas County are real,” said DCCF Executive Director Mike Waid, “and we are honored to be stewards of these philanthropic resources.”



Now accepting applications for 2022 Q2 grants!

DCCF will distribute \$35,000 in grants in the second quarter; applications are due before 5 p.m. on June 10.

Nine Douglas County nonprofit organizations working in the mental health arena will receive the funds. Apply at dccb.org.

FOLLOW THE FOUNDATION!







Meet our
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JUSTIN VAUGHN, BOARD CHAIRMAN

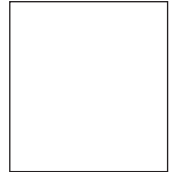
Justin Vaughn is a civic leader and philanthropist in Douglas County. A firm believer in supporting charitable and community causes, Justin currently serves as the Chair for the Douglas County Community Foundation as well as a Board Member of Make-A-Wish Colorado.



**DOUGLAS COUNTY
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dccb.org

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Special thanks to our donor partners:





























Douglas County Community Foundation is committed to responsibly managing philanthropic contributions, maintaining agile funds for emergencies, inspiring generosity, and providing support to local nonprofit organizations serving the needs within our community.