



The Colorado Health Foundation™



Four Distinguished Colorado Leaders Selected for The Colorado Health Foundation's Nonprofit Sabbatical Program

New Program Provides Respite and Organizational Support for Inspiring Executives Leading the Charge on Health Equity

DENVER, CO – Four long-term and respected nonprofit leaders have been selected as recipients of The Colorado Health Foundation's [2020 Nonprofit Sabbatical Program](#). The newly established program is designed to award Colorado-based nonprofit executives with a three-to-four month sabbatical, while offering funds for their organization's interim leadership and staff capacity building.

For its inaugural year of the Program, the Foundation is pleased to recognize the following award recipients (view bios below):

- **Jennifer (Jen) Fanning, executive director, [Grand County Rural Health Network](#)**
- **Janiece Mackey, PhD, co-founder and executive director, [Young Aspiring Americans for Social and Political Activism \(YAASPA\)](#)**
- **Kristen (Kris) Rollerson, executive director, [Sun Valley Youth Center](#)**
- **Sonya Ulibarri, president and CEO, [Girls Inc. of Metro Denver](#)**

“The unrelenting dedication to the health equity of Coloradans among our first class of sabbatical recipients is crystal clear,” says Karen McNeil-Miller, Foundation president and CEO. “In fact, the applications we received this year demonstrate the incredible strength and fatigue that is present among our nonprofit leaders in Colorado. Our hope for this program is that sabbatical

awardees return with a renewed commitment to the mission and a staff that is stronger than ever before. We couldn't be more inspired by the unique passions and experiences they bring to the work and look forward to embarking on this journey alongside them.”

The Nonprofit Sabbatical Program was developed in 2019 to award nonprofit executives the opportunity to step away from professional responsibilities and take time for themselves for rejuvenation. Ideally, the executive returns to their professional life with new ideas and a fresh sense of commitment to their work, the nonprofit sector as well as the health and health equity of all Coloradans.

In addition to providing support for sabbatical activities, the Program includes charitable funding for the following:

- Support for the awardees organization that will reward interim leaders who can step forward and strengthen the leadership bench during the sabbatical, along with organizational capacity building for staff.
- A one-month executive-in-residence at the Foundation that creates opportunity for a co-learning experience among the sabbatical recipient, Foundation executives and staff.
- Ongoing technical assistance support for awardees that provides consultation on nonprofit operations, finance and leadership.

Learn more about the [Nonprofit Sabbatical Program](#), which re-opens for applications in early November 2020. Read a [blog post from President and CEO Karen McNeil-Miller](#) on how the program was inspired.

Awardee Bios

Jennifer (Jen) Fanning, executive director, [Grand County Rural Health Network](#)

Jen Fanning has over 20 years of experience working with populations experiencing the highest needs on community health, program development and health care delivery implementation. Jen was hired by the Grant County Rural Health Network in July 2007 as the community health program coordinator and assumed the executive director's role in 2008. She received significant training and experience in her role as a community health and AIDS prevention agent in Togo, West Africa during her Peace Corps service. Additional experience and training includes health and racial equity, social determinants of health, inclusion, case management, marketing, environmental health, and teaching children who are developmentally delayed. Jen also volunteered for the National Sports Center for the Disabled for seven years and the American Cancer Society for three years. Jen received a Bachelor in Arts from Hamilton College, with a concentration in Psychology, and a Master's of Science from University of Denver in Healthcare Management, with a concentration in Strategic Leadership in Healthcare Organizations.

She was a 2009 fellow of the Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership Advanced Leadership Training Program. She was also a 2011 fellow in the Community Resource Center's Nonprofit Leadership and Management Training Program and a 2013 fellow of El Pomar's Emerging Leaders Development Program. In addition, Jen was co-chair of the Northwest Colorado Rural Philanthropy Days planning committee from 2012-13 and co-chair of the marketing committee from 2016-17.

Dr. Janiece Mackey, co-founder and executive director, [Young Aspiring Americans for Social and Political Activism](#)

Dr. Janiece Mackey grew up in Aurora, Colorado where she still resides as a wife and mother of four children. Dr. Mackey has built her career of servant leadership from [her narrative](#). By reflecting upon her counter-narrative, she was able to place “her story” into a larger sociopolitical context that reflects not just “her story,” but

that of many youth of color. She has been involved in politics since 17-years-old and noticed that she was often the only youth of color. She knew youth of color either weren't interested in activism or they didn't have a conduit to civically engage. Due to being one of a few Black folks within academic, civic and professional spaces, she created an organization entitled Young Aspiring Americans for Social and Political Activism (YAASPA). YAASPA endeavors to build the self-efficacy of youth to reclaim academic, civic and career spaces through race-conscious leadership and transformative organizing.

Due to her converging interests in education and policy, she been an Ethnic Studies and Political Science Adjunct Faculty and earned her PhD in Higher Education with a Public Policy and Curriculum and Instruction emphasis at the University of Denver. She desires to deepen and expand “healing praxis” for more youth and professionals within the public service sector. She believes that those who commit to transformational justice and racial equity must validate and innovate academic and career experiences that sustain, retain and rejuvenate youth and young professionals who identify as Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC).

Kristen (Kris) Rollerson, executive director, [Sun Valley Youth Center](#)

Kristen Rollerson has been the executive director of the Sun Valley Youth Center since 1999. She is a graduate of Calvin College, as well as the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative, and is currently working toward a master's degree in Management and Leadership at Western Governors University. Kris founded the Sun Valley Youth Coalition, sits on the Sun Valley Community Coalition and the Sun Valley Kitchen and Community Center's boards, and is a strong advocate for Sun Valley residents throughout the redevelopment process. Kris was on the Children's Museum Committee Master Planning Process and was part of the Denver Parks and Recreation stakeholders' group.

Kris has been serving urban youth since she was 18 years old, and she continues to show up in the hard times and places for this generation of hurting youth. She is a networker and community liaison as well as advocate for youth in the Sun Valley community. The Sun Valley Youth Center serves around 60 youth per day during the school year and serves over 200 youth and their families through outreach events and activities.

Sonya Ulibarri, president & CEO, [Girls Inc. of Metro Denver](#)

Sonya Ulibarri is the president & CEO of Girls Inc. of Metro Denver, an organization that inspires over 2,000 girls annually to be strong, smart and bold. She is a seasoned executive and successful fundraiser with 20 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. Prior to joining Girls Inc. in 2012, Sonya served as the executive director of YouthBiz and the Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training.

An active leader in the community, Sonya is on the Girls Inc. National Board, serves as a Denver Public Library Commissioner, and is on the Board of Advisors for the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver. She is a Bonfils Stanton Foundation Livingston Fellow, NYU Women of Color Policy Institute Lead the Way Fellow, Latino Leadership Institute Fellow, and Hispanas Organized for Political Equity (HOPE) Bi-National Fellow. Sonya is an eighth generation Coloradan, CU Denver alumna and mother of two who speaks frequently on issues that include: equity and inclusion, leadership development, fundraising and philanthropy, social enterprise, girls and women's empowerment, and youth development.

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MEDIA CONTACT

Taryn Fort

tfort@coloradohealth.org

303-953-3666