

Spring 2018

POWERFUL TIMES



Cindy's selfpower

Cindy joined Project Self-Sufficiency in the summer of 2014. She was attending Front Range Community College and hoping to transfer to CSU to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture and Business Management.

Like many first-generation college students, Cindy had been in school for a long time but without much guidance, support or information. She had changed majors and schools due to life circumstances. One of her earliest discoveries in Project Self-Sufficiency is that she did not have enough financial aid remaining to support completion of a Bachelor's degree.



Cindy entered the Project Self-Sufficiency and started the career planning process, knowing that it was critical to make well-informed decisions so she could accomplish her degree. At the same time,

.....
"Looking back on this path I forged, I see that even in my darkest hours I found the 'selfpower' within me to push on and overcome every obstacle that came between me and my dreams."

Cindy also used every opportunity available to gain relevant work experience and start building her career in horticulture. She obtained an internship with the Gardens on Spring Creek through the Colorado Works Program and led volunteer groups in landscape installation, maintained the botanic grounds, and created 13 innovative garden designs for the youth program. Shortly after her official internship ended, Cindy's supervisor recommended her for a seasonal position with the City of Fort Collins Parks Department. Cindy maintained parks, trails, flowerbeds and began getting hands-on experience with irrigation installation and repairs.

Cindy was zealous in researching her career options in the horticulture field and conducted ten informational interviews with career mentors in Greenhouse Management,

Larimer County Natural Areas, Forestry Management and The Parks Department. Cindy learned that a Bachelor's degree was not essential to reaching her career goals and carefully constructed a semester-by-semester plan for earning an AAS in Horticulture with valuable certifications in irrigation, landscape maintenance and turf grass management within the confines of her remaining financial aid. Cindy returned to FRCC in the fall of 2015. She earned outstanding grades, managed heavy course loads and was awarded numerous scholarships. Cindy's Advisor, Nicole, says: "She was on-fire to learn as much as she possibly could. Despite her heavy workload her enthusiasm for everything she was learning never waned."

Cindy continued to advance in her career and employment. She accepted a part-time position with the Fort Collins Utility Department where she helped to develop a xeriscape landscaping incentive program, taught classes, and inspected landscapes to see if they qualified for a rebate.

After an intensive preparation to search for jobs with her Advisor, Nicole, Cindy obtained full-time employment at a self-sufficient

(Cindy, continued on page 4)

Selfpower and Project Self-Sufficiency

In 2016, our Participants, stakeholders, staff and donors shared their perceptions of our work and our impact, and from these interviews, we realized that the foundation of our work is selfpower. While our name Project Self-Sufficiency will stay the same, we consider selfpower to be the cornerstone of our programs and our work with single parents.

What is selfpower?

Selfpower is the power and confidence that comes from deep within the human spirit.

Selfpower is what pushes someone through a challenge, even on the worst day.

Selfpower is intangible; you can't actually see it, but you can see the results of it.

Selfpower is essential to write new future stories.

Our goal at Project Self-Sufficiency is to cultivate the grit and determination necessary for a lifetime of achievements for single parents and their children. Selfpower honors the crucial role that each Participant plays in their own success, in pushing through barriers in order to accomplish their education and career goals. The journey to a new life is very much self-driven. At Project Self-Sufficiency we simply help Participants own their selfpower...to see it, to believe it, and to achieve it.

YOU bring the power!

We are enormously grateful to you for the power you have brought to our work as supporter, collaborator and friend. Together, we embolden single parents to tap into their selfpower so they not only reach the finish line in their work with us, but actually create a vibrant and sustainable future for themselves and their children.

Project Self-Sufficiency Welcomes Our Right Size Giving Business Sponsors

Right Size Giving provides the platform for a business to give once each year and with recognition and benefits provided throughout the year, based on its "Power Level," or level of investment. We know that our work is important to businesses because we know that every investment in Project Self-Sufficiency:

- Is an investment in human capital; education and training create a qualified workforce that is essential to business growth and success.
- Perpetuates a positive cycle in our community; educated and employable families become self-reliant, thrive and are able to participate in the wonder that this community has to offer.
- Changes the course for multiple generations. We see our children more often than not pursue the same level of education as their parent. Education and career become the norm and not the exception.



Will you join the trailblazing businesses above and bring the power of your Right Size Giving Business Sponsorship to our work in 2018? To learn more, call Tracy at 970.635.5901.

Thank You, Mark and Kara!



Our thanks go out to Mark Kornblau and Kara Jones, who, after serving six years, are departing our Board of Directors this March. Mark has served as our

Fiscal Officer during most of that time and Kara has served on our Finance Committee. They have brought financial expertise and advisement to our organization and have been instrumental in providing focused attention on our key financial indicators.

Mark says, "I believe the Board's role should be to advocate for single parents as they strive to improve their lives and the lives of their children by becoming financially self-sufficient."



Kara shared similar sentiments when she joined the Board: "Watching a single parent I know use her education to secure a good job

and be able to provide for her son, opened my eyes to the struggles of



single parents. I think it is important that the mission of Project Self-Sufficiency is not only to help single parents, but to give them the tools they need to be able to provide for themselves and their children." Thank you both for your many years of volunteer time.

Welcome, Ann, Rachel, Edith and Kari!



Ann Bedient joined our Board in January and will take over as Fiscal Officer. She received her MBA from Salisbury University in Maryland. A

commercial lender for most of her life in Maryland, she moved to Fort Collins in 2013 to be closer to family and was a Commercial Lender for Home State Bank and Guaranty Bank until 2017. She participated in Leadership Loveland, Larimer County 101 and Fort Collins City Works. She has been on the Board of several nonprofits in Maryland and is on the Board of Fort Collins Rotary Club Breakfast. She loves hiking with her dogs, exploring the bike trails, reading and sailing.

Advisors and its predecessor firms for 20 years and currently holds the Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and Certified Investment Management Analyst (CIMA) designations. She is a graduate of Colorado State University with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Business Administration, with a concentration in Finance.

Kari is the proud parent of two children, Taryn, who currently attends Colorado State University and Tyler, a junior in high school in Loveland. The family enjoys rodeo together with Kari and Taryn barrel racing and Tyler calf roping.



Kari Boxleitner is a Senior Vice President and Investment Officer for Wells Fargo Advisors in Loveland, Colorado. She has been with Wells Fargo



As a first generation college graduate from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, Rachel LeValley moved to Fort

Collins for a career with State Farm Insurance 23 years ago. As a board member, Rachel brings twenty-two years of local non-profit volunteer experience and prior



Edith Matesic is a Registered Nurse with over 30 years experience. Professional nursing experience ranging from public health, intensive

care, academic faculty, ultimately transitioning into a hospital executive role. In the role of Chief Nursing Officer, Edith collaboratively developed and executed strategic

(Edith, continued on page 4)

Fund Spotlight: Child Care Fund

Our Child Care Fund is available to our Participants who are attending school and need to cover the high cost of childcare while they are enrolled in training and academic programs in order to pursue a rewarding career. Child Care Assistance Grants are awarded each semester through a competitive process and are selected by a group of volunteer committee members based on merit and need. Participants must have completed career exploration and an academic plan or degree overview with their program Advisor. The average award per family, per semester is \$1,800, but can range upwards of \$4,000.

The average cost for full-time, center-based, licensed childcare in Larimer County is \$1,172.77 per child, per month. Forty-two percent of single parent families say it is likely they will withdraw from school due to responsibilities for dependent care. While we have a strong partnership with United Way's WomenGive fund, which also awards childcare scholarships to single moms in

Larimer County, childcare center availability is very limited countywide. In addition, the Colorado Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP) waitlist is at capacity and only available for parents who are working, not attending school.*

The goal of this fund is to provide Participants with safe, quality childcare, which allows parents to pursue their education and children to have an enriching environment and improve their quality of life. When you donate to the Child Care Fund, you or your business may be eligible for a 50% Colorado Child Care Contribution Credit, in addition to your regular state and federal contribution deductions. For more information, please visit our website.

"This fund reduces the financial strain of supporting myself and my family while I attend school, and helps to make success a possibility for me." – Katherine, Participant

**Sources: United Way WomenGive; CCAP website; Early Childhood Council for Larimer County*



Photo by Valerie Moseley

Genesis, 1, looks around on her first day of child care on January 18, 2018. Her mother, Veronica received child care assistance from Project Self-Sufficiency so she can go to school to become a dental assistant and, ultimately, a dental hygienist.

(Edith, continued from page 3)

plans to achieve nursing Magnet designation twice, developing staff to become self-actualized leaders for excellence in patient care outcomes. She earned her doctorate in nursing with a research focus on stroke patients and leadership development. She

is currently employed part-time at University of Colorado Hospital as a Research Nurse Scientist. Edith has served on professional state and local community boards, with a passion to impact parenting skills for healthy childhood outcomes. She

and her husband moved to Timnath over 2 years ago from Santa Monica, CA, however, they are natives of Illinois. They enjoy hiking in the Rocky Mountains, traveling, and visiting her granddaughter to practice yoga.

(Cindy, continued from page 1)

wage in the spring of 2017. She has been able to maintain her job while completing the last two semesters of her degree program. Cindy has achieved self-sufficiency in a fiercely competitive field. By summer 2018, she will no longer have to rely on government assistance programs, and is actively taking steps to buy her own home. She is looking forward to enjoying her daughter and family time at

the end of the workday. It has been a long journey with a heavy workload. She says, "The moment my daughter was placed in my arms, the need to bring safety, security and a future to my home became imperative. Every step taken since has harbored immense challenges and painful sacrifices that I never imagined I could actually endure. Looking back on this path I forged, I can't help but see that even in my

darkest hours I found the selfpower within me to push on and overcome every obstacle that came between me and my dreams. The journey was painful and even felt hopeless at times, but my daughter can say she saw firsthand that when you really put your mind to it, you can make dreams come true!" Cindy has arrived to find herself living the exact life she had dreamed of in 2014 when she came to Project Self-Sufficiency.

Holiday Thanks Abound

The holidays are a time for celebration and happiness, something that doesn't come easy for many of our single-parent families. A huge thank you to our community for opening your hearts, spreading good cheer, and helping strengthen our families' **selfpower** during the holidays. Because of you, we were able to distribute almost 60 food boxes, 24 freshly cut Christmas trees with decorations, 21 brand new Trek bikes with helmets and locks, 10 handmade doll houses complete with furniture, and 10 barns with accessories to match. Our Holiday Family Sponsors provided "under the tree" gifts to 103 Project Self-Sufficiency families with 191 children! For our Annual Holiday Party, we received books, games, hats, scarves and yummy homemade cookies and for the 150 children and their parents that attended to decorate! We are so grateful to the following businesses, organizations, and churches for their tremendous support of all of our holiday programs that provided assistance to the families of Project Self Sufficiency:

Acey Designs**
 Affiliated Moving*
 Alpine Cabinet Company#
 Beta Sigma Phi**
 Delta Kappa Gamma**
 EKS&H**
 First National Bank**
 First Presbyterian Church
 Fort Collins
 Gift of a Green Christmas

Lee's Cyclery*
 Ken Sandberg Photography**
 National Charity League**
 Old Firehouse Books**
 Overland Sertoma*
 PEO, Loveland**
 Poudre Golden K Kiwanis Club**
 Quota Club**
 Realities for Children** #

Red Hat Society**
 She She Nail Lounge**
 Soroptomist International,
 Fort Collins**
 The Group, Inc. Real Estate*
 Townsquare Media**
 Toys for Tots**
 Trek Cycles*
 Young Men's Service League**

*Christmas on Wheels **Holiday Party #Holiday Sponsorship



We wish we had the space to list every individual, family, business, and organization that sponsored families, some new and some that give year after year! We appreciate you all.



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bringthepower.org



Return Service Requested

Bring the power of education to single parents.

Benefit Concert for Project Self-Sufficiency
at Fort Collins Nursery

June 14th / 6:00pm
Lineup TBA
Details & Tickets available soon at www.FortCollinsNursery.com

selfpower PROJECT SELF SUFFICIENCY
Fort Collins NURSERY



Trisha Jones
Trisha began volunteering with Project Self-Sufficiency in June of 2016,

coming in on Thursday mornings to cover our Loveland office

front desk. Trisha always brings such a positive, uplifting mood to the office and because of this, many times she is tasked with making follow-up phone calls. Trisha states, "I was introduced to the Occupational Therapy Department at CSU. One of our Master's students was in the program and explained what a difference it made in her life and how it enabled her to achieve her goal. I decided that when I retire, I would volunteer with that organization and now, here I am."

Trisha and her husband Tom love to travel and explore new places, history, cultures, food and wine. Trisha, we are grateful that you decided to volunteer with us.



Janell Goad
A lover of music, books, travel, art, continuous learning and her most recent endeavor, learning to play acoustic guitar, Janell has been a volunteer with Project Self-Sufficiency since December 2013. She is our Tuesday morning Loveland office volunteer, sender of Participant birthday cards, organizational queen and ready to assist in any way possible. Janell enjoys going to the theatre and will let the staff know if what she saw is worth our time. Thanks Janell, we are so glad you are part of the Project Self-Sufficiency family.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT