



Spring 2021

POWERFUL TIMES

Jessica's selfpower

As Jessica reflects on her path to self-sufficiency, she acknowledges years of hard work and a strong sense of accomplishment. She finds her current career as a high school Special Education teacher, Student Council Advisor, and Special Olympics cheerleading coach, to be highly rewarding. Jessica also celebrates her daughter Katie's recent graduation from high school and her subsequent pre-med studies at the University of Colorado. As a first-year student, Katie is already taking classes in neuroscience and psychology.



When Jessica joined Project Self-Sufficiency, she was a new student at Colorado State University. She was also employed at Red Lobster, where she worked for years to pay for her college and living expenses. Jessica majored in Nutrition and earned her Bachelor of Science degree while enrolled in Project Self-Sufficiency. She took heavy class loads, sometimes 19 credits or more each

semester. She also enrolled in summer semesters to advance her education more quickly. All this time, Jessica was parenting a young daughter and maintaining a household alone.

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“Her compassion and gentle spirit made her destined to work with people.”

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Jessica's Program Advisor, Maggie, quickly built rapport with Jessica when she joined the program. Maggie provided emotional and practical support while also creating structure and accountability. Together they looked at Jessica's strengths and career goals, outlined next steps, and secured scholarships and other resources. Maggie says this about Jessica, “Her compassion and gentle spirit made her destined to work with people. Jessica demonstrated confidence and determination that left no doubt about the great things she could accomplish with her life. It was my great pleasure to be a part of her journey toward self-sufficiency.”

After earning her degree and securing various short-term positions, Jessica was hired at Fort Collins High School

(FCHS). There she discovered a strong interest in working with students and the realization that she needed a Master's degree to do the work she truly wanted to do. Jessica began part-time Master's level classes at the University of Northern Colorado while continuing her duties at the high school. She earned a Master's degree in Special Education and was then qualified to teach math to Special Education students at FCHS. Jessica also creates Individual Education Plans for the students and serves a case management role for approximately 17 students. Under Jessica's leadership the Student Council has implemented the “Spread the Love” initiative to help those in need. Jessica also feels great joy as she coaches the Special Olympics cheerleading team.

COVID has created new and serious challenges for teachers this past year. Jessica has been working remotely and finding new ways to help students learn and complete assignments. She has also become a Foster Parent for Larimer County.

Project Self-Sufficiency would like to recognize Jessica for her considerable and impressive accomplishments and thank her for her many contributions to this community.

Project Self-Sufficiency Welcomes Our 2021 Right Size Giving Business Sponsors

Right Size Giving provides a platform for businesses to maximize their social impact and community exposure at the same time. Businesses sign up and give once each year, with recognition and benefits provided throughout the year, based on their "Power Level," or level of investment. Our Right Size Giving Sponsors are dedicated to our community and the important work we do because they 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 fully in all this community has to offer;
- Changes the course for multiple generations; education and career become the norm and not the exception. We see our children pursue the same level, or more, of education as their parent.

For information on becoming a Right Size Giving Sponsor, contact Ricki at 970-635-5904 or ricki@bringthepower.org.



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Thank You To Our Amazing Community Partners!

We don't support our families by ourselves. We are honored to highlight some of the groups and partners who have stepped up and played important roles to ensure that our families had access to food throughout the pandemic.

Each year, the ABC Women's Group delivers Thanksgiving food bags to Project Self-Sufficiency to distribute to our Participants. In 2020, families received meal essentials and a grocery store gift card to create their holiday meals. The Loveland Rotary KidsPack provided Holiday Food Baskets and snack packs to fuel our families throughout their virtual-learning school days. And holiday food support didn't stop there! First Presbyterian Church provided each of our families with a grocery store gift card for the holidays.



Hot Corner Concepts and The Bohemian Foundation - Feeding Our Community are providing those at risk of food insecurities with local, fresh restaurant-prepared meals, and we are grateful that we have been able to deliver 250 of these meals to our families!

The Food Bank for Larimer County has been a pillar throughout the pandemic by allowing agencies to distribute food. We have been able to keep our Food Pantry stocked with groceries all year round. At the end of 2020, The Rotary Club of Fort Collins District Grant Project secured grocery store gift cards for each of our families, which we had the pleasure of distributing over the New Year.



Project Self-Sufficiency sends our sincerest gratitude to all our community partners that have worked tirelessly to ensure that our families were fed and our community had access to food during a tumultuous and uncertain year.

Colorado State University Adult Learners and Veteran Services Program

When thinking about partners who ally with parents, the Adult Learners and Veteran Services Program (ALVS) at Colorado State University (CSU) cannot be overlooked. ALVS is an advocacy center that works with any parent who attends CSU.

Their mission is to *“support increased academic achievement and holistic development for all adult learners, including but not limited to veterans and student parents, resulting in graduation from CSU and sustainable personal and professional success. We do this through engagement and leadership opportunities, community building and resource facilitation.”*



They are the supporters and champions for parents at CSU. ALVS streamlines on-campus resources for student parents. They offer Peer Advisors/Mentors to assist in navigating systems like class registration, online web portals,

advocating with professors, and finding campus resources like tutoring. In normal years, ALVS offers a warm and welcoming space in the Lory Student Center. Here student parents can build a community, ask questions, study, utilize free printing for assignments, or use the computer stations for whatever they might need. Did we mention they offer study hours that include childcare? One branch of ALVS is the Ram Kidz Village (RKV). RKV is a drop-in educational program available to all currently enrolled parents. RKV offers up to two hours of supervision at the Morgan Library so parents can work on projects, meet with study groups, or just have quiet study time.

Although COVID-19 has changed much of how programs run, ALVS has been able to continue offering valuable resources. Their office is still a warm place to land on Mondays from 10am-2pm and both Peer Advisors and Staff are available virtually. RKV has transitioned to distributing four Activity Kits a month for families on and off campus.

This past February, they hosted the first Parent Resource Fair virtually. The fair offered a full week of parent-focused workshops covering financial planning, parent panel interviews, childcare, student loans, advocacy with professors, food resources, and much



more. Project Self-Sufficiency partnered with ALVS to host a workshop allowing students to learn about our program.

For Lisa Chandler, the Acting Director of ALVS, our goals and mission are aligned completely. *“The goal is to create a lifetime of sustainability by helping student parents find passion and build their community to help them reach their dreams.”* Lisa believes that through her team and their work they can *“help everybody access higher education and a degree. Everyone deserves the resources to help them get there and things like childcare or financial barriers should not stop someone from reaching however high they want to.”*



ELEVATE

Farewell to our Stellar Board Members...



Thank you to Debbie McCubbin, who served on our Board for six years, bringing leadership in her roles as Board President and Donor Relations Committee Chair. Thank you Debbie,

for your impact on our single-parent families!



Gratitude to stellar Board Member Kari Boxleitner. Kari served on the Finance and Investment Committee, sharing her expertise in wealth management to advance the organization’s goal of long-term sustainability.

Thank you, Kari, for your support of single-parent families!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Davis Glasgow Donated Computer Program

At our annual Bring the Power Virtual Luncheon on March 4th, we presented our "VisionMaker Award," which celebrates an organization, business or person who has been instrumental in advancing our mission, to our longtime volunteer computer expert, Davis Glasgow.

Davis has been volunteering for Project Self-Sufficiency since 2006. He was recruited by former Executive Director, Mary Carraher, to help with our donated computer program.

Davis receives donated computers and printers, removes old files and software, installs new software, and passes refurbished computers on to our Participants to aide them with their schooling. However, Davis gives the organization far more than that. He has been our "go to" guy whenever technology issues come up with our staff, as well. In the past 15 years, he has given over **6,500 hours** of his time! What payment does he get? Chocolate! And, of course, our unending gratitude.

It took time for Davis to discover his passion for computers. He started working in a glass factory after college graduation, with a degree in sociology. That wasn't a fit, so he returned to school to get an education degree. He taught high school math for a few years, but discovered teaching wasn't his "thing" either. Realizing his affinity for the sciences, he returned to school to get a third degree in electrical engineering, where he found his passion. Davis worked as a software engineer with HP for 25 years, before retiring in 2005.

Davis and his wonderful wife Patty will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on May 1st. We are seeing a little less of him these days, because they now have a one-year-old grandson, Brooks, who lives in Gunnison. Davis beams when he tells stories and talks about Brooks! They try to get to Gunnison on a regular basis to spend time with him.

Thank you Davis, for all your work to support our program and our single-parent families!



Welcome to Our Newest Board Members...



Carol Barnes is the Vice President of Customer Support Field and Channel at HP Inc. She joined HP in 2000. Since then, she has held leadership positions within Supply Chain, Manufacturing, Operations, Support, and R&D. She is a passionate

champion of employee engagement and diversity. She is known for driving global business transformations to decrease cost while significantly improving customer loyalty.

Carol has lived in Fort Collins since 1990 and is married and has two grown daughters. She is part of the HP Northern Colorado site leadership council, executive sponsor for the Young Employee Business Impact Network, volunteers for Poudre School District and joined the Project Self-Sufficiency Board in September 2020. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, hiking, and is an avid yoga student.



Wynne Odell moved from Seattle to Fort Collins in 1989 to co-found Odell Brewing Company with her husband, Doug, and her sister-in-law, Corkie. In business for 32 years, Odell Brewing is now the 22nd largest of the 8,500

independent breweries in the US. Believing Odell's greatest value resides in the co-workers that had helped them build the business, Wynne, Doug and Corkie sold the majority of the brewery to their co-workers in 1995. She retired from Odell in 2020, but remains closely connected with the Brewery as a shareholder and Board Chair.

Wynne has served on several community boards over the past 30+ years, including the DDA, CFNC, and currently serves on the Employers' Council and CSU's College of Business Global Leadership Council.

Cars for Families Program

Keeping Families on the Road to Success

Project Self-Sufficiency has been delivering on the promise of education to low-income single parents in our community for over 30 years. Transportation is essential for Participants enrolled in Project Self-Sufficiency, as they take steps to increase education, gain work experience, and accomplish personal goals. Single parents need reliable and safe transportation to get to school and work, get their children to school and appointments, and do basic errands. For most families, relying on public transportation or borrowing a vehicle is unsustainable. The Cars for Families Program, created in 1998, provides donated cars and funds for car repairs to keep Participants driving toward their educational and career goals, while building and maintaining strong and healthy families.

Our Cars for Families program volunteer, Don, recently reflected on his own personal experience with our program and our Participants:



Why is transportation important to Project Self-Sufficiency single parents?

Participants in the program are balancing school, work and child care every day. Having personal transportation to meet schedules can be a critical part of their success in the program. Managing their day-to-day schedules, much less dealing with any surprises that may come along, gives them an advantage in meeting these challenges and confidence that they have reliable transportation.

What is rewarding about working with the car recipients?

Participants are always so appreciative and grateful when I meet them and hand over the keys and paperwork for a donated vehicle. Big smiles and hugs are the usual reaction even today and you can tell how having their own transportation certainly boosts their confidence.

How have local businesses stepped up to support Project Self-Sufficiency in this area?

Project Self-Sufficiency works with several garages in the Fort Collins and Loveland areas. All provide discounts on parts and labor for our Participants and, more importantly, they all take a very personal interest when we have repair needs. All are very supportive of the Project Self-Sufficiency program, and enjoy playing a part in the success of Cars for Families and the individual Participants. I work very closely with the garage representatives, and they often provide solutions and guidance for me, so we can meet the needs.

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Each year, we receive approximately 15-20 donated vehicles and give them directly to our Participants. Currently, we have **SIX families** in need of a car and your vehicle could help keep a single-parent family on the road to success! We are looking for: 4-door, mid-size vehicles newer than the year 2000, with under 175,000 miles, that have passed a recent emissions test, have not been in a major accident, and have less than \$1,500 in repair costs.



None of our donated vehicles are sold at auction, which is important to maximize your tax deduction with the fair market value of the vehicle. We can provide all of the paperwork and make it easy for you.

For more information, email brittany@bringthepower.org or visit our website to fill out the Cars for Families Vehicle Donation Form to begin the process.

www.bringthepower.org/donate



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bringthepower.org



Return Service Requested

Bring the power of education to single parents.

Details coming soon for this fun, family-friendly event!
Visit bringthepower.org/events for updated info as it become available.

Proceeds from your ticket purchase will go to single parents working toward their goals of self-sufficiency through education and career development.



Get ready for some summer fun at our second annual Front Seat Fundraiser at the Holiday Twin Drive-In!
Join us for a summer night to celebrate the selfpower of Project Self-Sufficiency's single-parent families at one of our community's local gems and one of the country's few remaining drive-in cinemas!

Save the Date: June 24th!

FRIENDS OF PROJECT SELF-SUFFICIENCY
JOIN A GROUP THAT MAKES A BIG IMPACT!

Since 2009, the Friends group has served an important function in supporting Participant needs at Project Self-Sufficiency. Each year, Friends provide for the Participants' Mother's Day and Father's Day gifts and prepare birthday cards for Participants. These are small gestures, but mean so much to a single parent. The group also orchestrates the Holiday Plant Sale in support of the Project Self-Sufficiency Strengthen Scholarship Fund, which helps support single parents in their educational goals. We have raised \$35,234 for the fund since the group's inception!

Friends meets every other month, on the second Monday, in south Fort Collins (although we're meeting online now). If you have any questions, or are interested in joining us, please contact **Kay Williams** at buddyboy78@comcast.net or 970-310-3093.