

Fall 2017

POWERFUL TIMES



Shawna's selfpower

Shawna found Project Self-Sufficiency in 2013, during a time when she felt there was no hope for her to earn a degree or find a well-paying job that would support herself and her son. Being a first-generation college student and a victim of violence, Shawna had additional challenges to overcome as she imagined a bright future for herself and Jeremiah.

Through the support of Project Self-Sufficiency, Shawna discovered her selfpower and was able to overcome many of these barriers and realize her true potential. She surmounted issues with her health and self-esteem and not only earned her degree in Natural Resources Recreation and Tourism, but she did so as a member of two honor societies: Golden Key International Honor Society, and Xi Sigma Pi forestry honor society. She earned PS-S Educational Scholarships, Reischer, Rotary, Oscher, and CSU scholarships during this time to help her stay afloat financially while she earned her degree. Shawna furthered her career prospects by completing a 600+ hour internship through Thorne Nature Experience, as well as over 300 volunteer hours with the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department, part of which was funded with a STEM internship

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stipend through the Women's Foundation of Colorado. Each of these accomplishments made her a much stronger candidate for hiring. When Shawna's car broke down on the way to her internship fifty miles away, PS-S was also there to help. Through the Transportation Fund, she received a donated car to help her reach her destination safely and economically. Her Advisor, Michele, says of Shawna: "It was very inspirational to me to walk with her on her journey of obtaining a college education and finding meaningful employment. Her talents, intelligence, and determination will ensure her success in the future."

Although Project Self-Sufficiency was there to support her, Shawna had to cultivate her own selfpower from within in order to successfully juggle her many responsibilities while excelling in her studies. This

drive and determination served as an excellent example for Shawna's son, Jeremiah. In addition to both benefitting greatly from the Healthy Families Program through Project Self-Sufficiency, Jeremiah was able to take guitar lessons with the Boundless Children's Fund and purchased new clothing for school through our Cool Kids Fund, both of which greatly bolstered his self-esteem. Witnessing the obstacles his mother has conquered, having new clothes and school supplies and discovering his own creative outlet are just a few of the tools Jeremiah has been able to use to realize his selfpower.

Shawna is now working full-time for Larimer County Solid Waste in their Hazardous Waste Department and has already increased her wages by 50%. She says of her experiences in our program: "Project Self-Sufficiency provided practical, realistic support at a time in my life when there didn't seem to be any options for my family besides day-to-day survival. [It] offered me the opportunity to not only dream again, but the guidance and resources I needed to be able to realize those dreams. Thank you Project Self-Sufficiency and all of the supporting organizations!"

Powerful Celebrations

"Often it is tenacity, not talent, that rules the day." ~Julia Cameron, Finding Water: The Art of Perseverance



Strengthening selfpower

We celebrate our 39 Participants who were awarded educational scholarships totaling \$68,100 from our Project Self-Sufficiency Scholarship Fund for the 2017-18 school year. These Participants are in the midst of their selfpower journey with us at Project Self-Sufficiency; they may be starting their first year of their education, or continuing toward their degree or certification, but either way, they are on their way!

Actualizing selfpower

We celebrate our 23 participants who accomplished their educational goals with us by earning a degree or certificate. They have devoted countless hours inside and outside of the classroom in order to advance their education and improve their skills, in order to selfpower toward their career of choice.



Launching selfpower

And, we celebrate those who have launched their selfpower. The 12 Participants who fully met our program requirements and who have not only graduated, but who have accomplished full-time employment in their career field, who are earning an average wage of \$19.81 per hour, and who are moving into the next stage of their life journey, with well-earned independence and confidence.



You can bring the power of education to our single-parent families

Do you know about the Colorado State Enterprise Zone Tax Credit?

Donations to Project Self-Sufficiency of \$250 and more may be eligible for the Colorado State Enterprise Zone Tax Credit. Visit our website (<http://bringthepower.org/donate/>) to learn how giving more actually costs the same with this state incentive!

Do you know about Colorado Gives Day?

For the third year in a row, Project Self-Sufficiency's stellar Board of Directors has committed to putting up matching funds as a CO Gives Day incentive! On **Tuesday, December 5th**, you can combine your end-of-year gift with our Colorado Gives Day campaign in order to access dollar-for-dollar matching funds. The amount of the match will be announced in late October, but get ready for an amazing opportunity to double your impact. Combine this with the CO State Enterprise Zone Tax Credit and whoa! Can you say, "Bring the power times two?"

Do you know about IRA Charitable Rollovers?

Under The Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015, Americans over the age of 70½ can distribute up to \$100,000 in a calendar year from an IRA to Project Self-Sufficiency and other charities, tax-free. This distribution to charity can be a significant benefit for IRA owners who are required each year to take minimum required distributions, which are included in their gross income for income tax purposes. If an IRA owner directs the IRA plan administrator to distribute any amount up to \$100,000 to charity, the distribution counts toward the owner's minimum required distribution, but is not included in his or her income for income tax purposes. Although the IRA owner is not entitled to a charitable deduction for the distribution, the distribution benefits charity. This option is known as the "IRA charitable rollover," and is available to individuals aged 70 ½ and older.

Do you know about planned giving as a tool to impact our work in the future?

Planned estate gifts help ensure the future success of Project Self-Sufficiency and offer membership into our Carraher Society. These days, there are a number of tools and options available to give cheaper, easier and smarter as well as broaden your impact on Project Self-Sufficiency. For example, you can make a gift that pays you income. You can make a gift that provides a tax deduction. You can make a gift that does both. You can designate a portion of your estate to Project Self-Sufficiency. You can name Project Self-Sufficiency as a recipient of your IRA. Contact Tracy Mead to discuss options that may be right for you.

Our Newest Board Members...



BOARD & STAFF
SPOTLIGHT

Amy Kolczak serves as Senior Associate General Counsel for University of Colorado Health, providing legal advice and guidance to all UCHHealth affiliated entities. In addition, she is also a member of the senior leadership team for UCHHealth Northern Colorado. Amy is also involved in Book Trust, and serves on committees for Leadership Fort Collins and Women Investing in Strategies for Health (WISH).

Nancy Symes brings a wealth of Human Resource knowledge to our organization. Originally from the Washington, D.C. area, Nancy demonstrated her expertise to numerous for-profit and non-profit organizations before coming to Colorado ready to make a similar impact.

Erin Moomey, a realtor, has seen first-hand how difficult affordable housing

...and Staff Members

is to obtain in Northern Colorado and immediately realized the impact this has on Participants in our Program. This concern led her to join our Board, and she plans to use this platform to raise awareness about our organization and of the housing deficit in our community.

Sarah Liggett's passion for helping people began at an early age when she observed her father provide caring and compassionate legal assistance to his clients. Sarah set out to follow in her father's footsteps. After completing her studies at the University of Kansas law school, she returned to Fort Collins where she practices family law, criminal defense, and juvenile matters. Sarah is dedicated to improving the lives of everyone in our community.

Kristen Larson Walters spent nearly twenty years as a single parent, so she is deeply familiar with the

struggles people face when entering our Program. Upon learning about Project Self-Sufficiency and our mission to help single parents in Northern Colorado, Kristen was compelled to give back. Kristen hopes that her successes in life will inspire our Participants and help them realize that they can do it too!

Ryan Cosner brings an abundance of financial knowledge to the table. In addition to owning his own financial planning group, Ryan has volunteered for four years with the Boys and Girls Club, advising the organization in safety and budget matters, among others.



John Kinnaird, LCSW joined our team as Program Director. John earned his MSW degree from Arizona State University and has spent a large part of his 23-year professional career working with youth and families. John brings an extensive background in Clinical Therapy as well with four years experience as the Executive Director of a local non-profit organization. Throughout his career he has been devoted to helping people succeed and brings that passion to his new role.



Anna Beeby is a Loveland Advisor. She earned her Bachelor's in Psychology from Colorado State and a Masters in Clinical Counseling from Adams State University. Anna loves working with the single moms and dads in our program, saying, "One of the best parts of my job is walking alongside individuals as they harness their **selfpower** and overcome obstacles that they never imagined possible."



Hannah Bade has a long history of working to break down barriers that keep people living in poverty. After earning her Bachelor's degree in Social Work in 2014, she began working with the Women and Gender Advocacy Center at Colorado State University. Her journey eventually led her to Project Self-Sufficiency as the WomenGive Navigator and Advisor.



Neva Menchaca is a Project Self-Sufficiency graduate who earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and joined our team as Program Coordinator. Of her new role, Neva says, "... I get to give back to the organization in ways that I never could have imagined while sharing my passion with others. Every day, I get to help others find their **selfpower** and inspire them to achieve their biggest, scariest goals!"

Summer Fun with Project Self-Sufficiency

No “lazy summer days” for Project Self-Sufficiency! Lots of events and happenings for our staff and our families. We started with the Rock Garden Concert at Fort Collins Nursery on June 15th, with music provided by Liz Barnez. Liz also graciously agreed to donate a dinner for six prepared by her as a silent auction item. Through the generosity of so many we raised over \$5,100 for our families.



Next, the annual **Houska Car Giveaway** was held at the CSU Lagoon Concert on lovely July evening. Our Participant, Irma, was the lucky recipient of a “new to her” car, a Subaru Outback. Reliable transportation is a necessity for our participants to be able to continue their education and transport their children.

July also included our annual **Mini Masters Family Fun Event** at Fort Fun. Our families had the opportunity to spend a Saturday morning together playing miniature golf, riding the giant slide and driving the bumper cars. The event, hosted by the Friends of Project Self-Sufficiency also raised funds for our Cool Kids Back-to-School Clothing Fund.



What a great way to “bring the power” to kids by sending them back to school feeling really confident about their appearance! Studies show that a child’s self-esteem directly correlates to how they perform in school. Each year donors step up to the challenge, so that all kids in our program entering grades pre-kindergarten through 12th grade receive a gift card to the store of their choice to purchase brand new clothes for heading back to school. Parents help their children shop sales and budget their funds to get the most value for their purchases. This year, 135 children were fortunate enough to receive “Cool Kids” Back-to-School Clothing Funds.

Thank you to all of our donors, volunteers and sponsors for making events and activities possible!

Donor Spotlight~Scholarship Fund

The cost for post-secondary education continue to climb and an important part of our model is accessing scholarships to pay the expenses of going to school. A committee of volunteers serves on our Scholarship Fund Committee and allocates awards each year to our Participants. Individuals and families may choose to support our annual Project Self-Sufficiency scholarship process and below we recognize those who donate annually to our Scholarship Fund.

Judith Aranow
Scot Wilson Memorial Scholarship
Fund

Plemmons Family Fund
Dusenbury Charitable Trust

Dorothy Dee Hamilton
PEO Chapter AL
Dot Cada

We would also like to recognize those who have made an investment of \$5,000 or more to our Legacy Scholarship Fund:

Looper Family Scholarship Fund
JoEllen Thornton Fund

Clara Michalek Memorial
Nancy Gunn Funds
Milton Goldstein Scholarship Fund
Teresa Keuter Memorial

"My parents Joe and Joan Looper lived their faith, including a strong belief and desire to share the many blessings they received with those in need. In Project Self-Sufficiency they discovered women in difficult circumstances that were both determined to transform their lives and willing to work hard toward achieving the goals of an education, a solid career, and a strong and supportive family environment. Financial and volunteer support increased over time as they became acquainted with some of these impressive single parents. Joe and Joan created a plan for the legacy they wanted to leave behind, including PS-S in a Charitable Trust. When Joe passed away in 2011, the extended family decided to establish a scholarship that would "pay it forward" for many years to come; the Looper Family Scholarship was born. Our parents did not live to see the first grants paid out, but they will be present in spirit, encouraging PS-S participants to reach their goals." ~ Catherine Looper Lehman



Joan and Joe
Looper



We need **34** cars.
Will you be **1** to help?

Do you have a car to donate?
Email neva@bringthepower.org
or call 970.407.0305 x5

Loveland Office
375 W. 37th Street, Suite 150
Loveland, CO 80538
970.635.5912

- **Fort Collins Office**
- 2001 S. Shields Street, D-203
- Fort Collins, CO 80526
- 970.407.0305

bringthepower.org



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.

The Cars for Families Program provides donated cars and car repairs to keep Participants powered toward educational and career goals, while building and maintaining strong and healthy families.

FRIENDS OF PROJECT SELF-SUFFICIENCY FALL 2017 HOLIDAY PLANT SALE

It's fall again, which means it's time for our annual Plant Sale. We will be offering red poinsettias (\$17), holiday cactus (\$16), and cyclamen (\$15). All profits go to the Scholarship Fund. The plants will be available for pick-up at Fort Collins Nursery. We need to give a big thanks to Fort Collins Nursery for their continued support of our sale and for always providing such beautiful plants! For more information on our Plant Sale, please contact Kay Williams at 970-223-1546 or Jason Johnson at 970-635-5912. You can also purchase your plant vouchers directly from the Fort Collins or Loveland offices. We will take orders through October 27th. The holidays will be here before we know it!



2018 Annual Luncheon

"UNSTOPPABLE"

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

11:30am-1:00pm

Embassy Suites, Loveland

Join us for our annual community luncheon to learn about our programs, hear about our successes, and find ways to get involved in our work. You are a partner in bringing the power of education to single parents! If you are interested in being a Table Host, contact Diane at diane@bringthepower.org.

Return Service Requested

Bring the power of education to single parents.



bringthepower.org

970.635.5912

375 W. 37th Street, Suite 150,
Loveland, CO 80538

