



**Fall 2022  
Powerful Times**

**The Reality of being a Single Parent**

“The biggest and most grateful THANK YOU to Project Self-Sufficiency’s generous donors and grantors. Because of you, I am able to finish my education and focus on my grades without worrying how and if I will make it to my fieldwork, due to lack of gas and funds. I’m in my final semester, will study for my boards, take the exam and become a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. Thank you again for your generosity and support.”



- Average rent for a three bedroom in Larimer County is: \$1,933 a month.
- Groceries \$400 a month
- Personal care items \$100 a month
- Electric \$100 a month
- Gas \$100 a month
- Water \$100 a month
- Trash \$50 a month
- Phone \$50 a month
- Internet/Cable \$50 a month
- After school activities \$150 a month (depending on what kind of/how many activities each child is doing)
- Car payment \$350 a month (one car)
- Health Insurance \$300 a month
- Doctor/dentist visits \$50 a visit for basic check ups will be more for any treatment
- Clothes/shoes \$100 a child (saved for back to school shopping or when they outgrow current size)

“Thank you so much for your help in getting me through these final stages of graduation. I know it’s a lot of moving pieces that make this organization as great as it is, so thank you for the huge part you play in Project Self-Sufficiency overall. I can’t say that I would have made it all the way to this point had I not had the assistance and support of my Project Self-Sufficiency family. You are all so special and your immeasurable generosity will never be forgotten and always will be a huge part of my success. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for everything!”

For a Total of \$3,533 a month which is \$42,396 a year

[bringthepower.org](http://bringthepower.org)



# Become a 2023 Right Size Giving Partner

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 Partners 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 Partner contact Dani at 970-829-5316 or [daniela@bringthepower.org](mailto:daniela@bringthepower.org)

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

We recently partnered with a new car repair shop, McCormick Automotive Center. After opening their doors in 2007 in Fort Collins, they embraced the core value of "Do it right. Do it Honestly."

Often, our Participants experience issues with their vehicle, and this can be a huge barrier to their success in reaching their education and career goals. Having partner garages like McCormick's gives them peace of mind, knowing that they are taking their vehicle to mechanics they can trust.

McCormick's motto is "Treat every car like it's your mom's car." Their dedication to the community is very important to them and they are thrilled to partner with us through our robust Cars for Families Program, which covers car repairs and donated vehicles for families.

We are thankful to have such a valuable partnership with repair shops like McCormick, along with Houska, Performance Automotive, Scott's, Metric Motors, Uptown and Community Auto.

If you are interested in becoming a partner auto shop or can donate a vehicle, please contact Natasia at [natasia@bringthepower.org](mailto:natasia@bringthepower.org).

**We currently have 6 Participant families on our waitlist! Please consider donating a vehicle today!**



# Dreams to Reality - A selfpower letter from the Director of Development

Hello!

It's Fall again, my favorite time of year. My windows are open more now that the temperatures have cooled; I enjoy the crisp, clean scent of autumn. It's a time to pause and look back at our lives, but also a time to plan ahead. Many single parents come to Project Self-Sufficiency wanting to lead a different life for their children and for themselves. It is not for the faint of heart and requires grit, determination, and bravery. I am honored to share their stories of bravery in the community. For example, when I speak with students like the 6th graders at Resurrection Christian School in Loveland, I start by asking a particular question. What is bravery?



We chat about superheroes and first responders for a bit and then I ask, what about parents? Are they brave? We explore what life as a parent looks like, the typical expenditures a parent would have in a family like their own, and what the average salary is in Larimer County. We play a budgeting game with the goal of surviving a month on only \$1,000. Vehicles break down, family members get sick, layoffs happen, and an unexpected move has students deciding between eating and paying a medical bill. We end our conversation with some examples of what bravery looks like as a single parent:

Bravery is...

- Sitting in a college classroom full of 20 year olds, when you are 31, and you never finished high school.
- Raising your kids alone, with no car, no family resources, no stable employment, and sometimes, no safe, secure housing.
- Tucking your child into bed each night with a smile and reassurance, when you are unsure of tomorrow and what challenges it will bring.
- Getting into your old beater of a car, and praying it will get you to where you need to be, for one more day.
- Saying yes to your future.

A Project Self-Sufficiency Program Advisor shared, "Only the strongest and bravest people know when to ask for help because they can't handle things on their own. There is strength in knowing every once in a while we all need a little help".

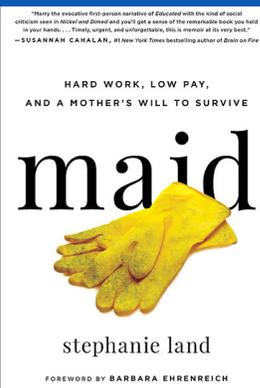
The times we are most fierce and courageous are also the times we are most afraid. Change is nearly impossible when you are alone, thankfully Project Self-Sufficiency is a trusted resource to help those desiring change. Please consider investing in a single parent and their family today. This newsletter details many ways you can help now, from volunteering your time to sponsoring a family for the holidays. I invite you to reach out if you have any questions, my email is [daniela@bringthepower.org](mailto:daniela@bringthepower.org).

With gratitude,

Dani Morzos



# Bring the Power Social with Special Keynote Speaker



You won't want to miss next year's Social! The theme is "A Celebration of Tenacity". Our keynote speaker will be Stephanie Land, the author of MAID. If you've seen the Netflix series, you already know the vast amount of tenacity Stephanie accessed to come out of an abusive relationship, survive homelessness, and overcome the lack of a living wage- all to care for her daughter.



## Welcome New Staff to Team Awesome!

We are thrilled that Yaricza Castaneda and Jan Barela-Smith joined us as Program Advisors in October.

Yaricza is a first-generation Latinx student with a B.A in Sociology and in 2021, she graduated with a Masters in Social Work from Colorado State University. She is currently working on her licensed clinical social worker hours.

Yaricza grew up very low-income from Mexican immigrant parents and her first language is Spanish. She became a single mom during her first year of undergrad and dropped out when her partner discouraged her. She is excited to be working here at Project Self-Sufficiency because she believes in our mission and values and the power of education to help transform lives through resiliency!

Jan is a third-generation Fort Collins native and the first in her family to graduate from a university. She is an alumna of Colorado State University and received her B.A. degree in Speech Communication and master's degree in Organizational Performance and Change Program at CSU.

She just recently started working for Project Self-Sufficiency, her "dream job". Her passion is helping others in their quest in higher education "Having the opportunity to receive a college education is life-changing and changes one's destiny for generations to come."

## Staff Spotlight - 30 years of Service to our Community

Nicole is celebrating 30 years as an employee of Project Self-Sufficiency, serving 289 Participants in her tenure so far. She started at our organization, when we were only a few years old.



"When I interviewed for this job at the age of 24, I was adamant that it was my dream job. Having grown up in a low-income, single-parent household, I watched my mom struggle working dead-end jobs. It felt like coming full circle to empower and guide people out of that stuck place."

"I am humbled by the trust Participants place in me and I am astounded by their bravery. Now that I am 54, I have (hopefully) made an impact on hundreds of families who found their way out. I am both grateful and fortunate that I can look back and see that this was indeed my life's work."

"Nicole is an incredible Advisor! She is dedicated to providing the best possible service to Participants, and many families have been able to benefit from her skills and knowledge. Her impact will last long after her work with her Participants ends." - Hannah Dahl, Program Manager, Project Self-Sufficiency



Nicole, your many years of service are a true testimony of your dedication to Project Self-Sufficiency and its Participant families. We are so proud to have you as part of our work family. Congratulations!

# Board of Director Updates

## Thank you to our outgoing Board members...

Thank you to Cathy Hager, Kerrie Luginbill, and Wynne Odell who recently ended their volunteer time with us, and Kim Bitner and Emily Jones, who will be departing our Board in December.

Thank you all for your years of service and support of our mission!



## Welcome to Our Newest Board Member Blake McBarlett!

Blake McBarlett joined our Board in September. He is a Partner/Broker Associate at The Group Real Estate, helping buyers and sellers across Northern Colorado. Prior to joining The Group, Blake worked at Larimer County Department of Human Services and SummitStone Heath Partners in operational leadership roles. Blake and his husband Kelly are passionate about the Northern Colorado community.

Outside of work and volunteering Blake enjoys spending time with his Greyhounds Lexington and Viktor and all the amazing things Colorado has to offer. Blake is honored to be a part of the Project Self-Sufficiency Board and looks forward to supporting the organization's mission and vision.

We are now accepting applications for our Board of Directors, please contact Edie at [ekmatesic@gmail.com](mailto:ekmatesic@gmail.com) for more information.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Janene Dellenbach has played an exceptional role as a volunteer for Project Self-Sufficiency for 20 years.

Janene first served as a Board Member for several years. Once her term ended, she continued to serve on our Cars for Families Committee up until 2022.

Her dedication to our organization was driven by her belief and passion in the mission of assisting low-income, single parents through education. "I love the entire encompassing program that assists single parents to feel good about themselves through accomplishing educational goals, childcare and financial stability while being clearly laid out, with guidelines and expectations for Participants."

We want to thank Janene for all her years of hard work and time that that she invested into our organization.

If you are interested in hearing about current volunteer positions please contact Natasia, [natasia@bringthepower.org](mailto:natasia@bringthepower.org)



