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# Gunnison County Multicultural Resource Office

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The Gunnison County Multicultural Resource Office (MRO) is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. We act as a single entry point for non-English speakers in the community. Here people can get information, education, referrals, resources, and any type of assistance.

One of the main jobs of the MRO is to help facilitate communication between people with non- or limited English speaking community members and medical professional service providers. We do that by translating documents, helping navigate the complex health system, and interpreting. Because of the nature of the grants, the majority of the time is spent working on health related issues. When people with limited English language skills have medical (or other) needs, the MRO helps with scheduling an appointment and when necessary, helps by contacting a trained interpreter. Interpreters facilitate communication between people that speak different languages.

Sometimes providers use a person the patient brings with them. However, if the provider does not speak the other language, they have no way to know if the person that is being used as an interpreter is fluent or if they are conveying everything that is being said. It is possible that the most convenient thing to do is use a family member or a friend of the patient, or even a child. This is not good for either the patient or the doctor because (1) Confidentiality or sensitive information is shared with a person that does not necessarily understand those concepts. (2) The provider does not know if the information is being interpreted accurately in either direction. (3) The person interpreting may be embarrassed or worried about some of the questions or terms used, and may omit important details and therefore mislead the conversation or discussion. (4) There may be a lack of professionalism.

When working with interpreters, providers should plan ahead to arrange an appropriate interpreter (Call the MRO 641-7999) and plan for longer than normal sessions. Once they are in a session, the provider should let the interpreter meet the patient, explain their role, talk about confidentiality, and arrange the seating. Use simple language, using short phrases, so the interpreter doesn't have to remember long complicated paragraphs. Know that the interpreter may interrupt to clarify or to explain cultural differences if needed. The interpreter will interpret everything that is said (even if it is not relevant to the visit, therefore, there should not be small talk with the interpreter). Speak directly to and make eye contact with the patient rather than to the interpreter, Use 'Do you....?' Instead of 'Does he.....?' Remember the interpreter is just the "voice." And please thank the interpreter.

The MRO has a list of 36 volunteer interpreters that collectively, speak 7 languages and have gone through different levels of training. If you need an interpreter please call the MRO. Please do not call the interpreter directly. The MRO needs to be contacted to record hours volunteers work so we can show the workload and for grant writing purposes. Using the MRO "filter" also protects the interpreters.

If you have any questions about working with interpreters, more information, or if you are bilingual and would like to volunteer, please contact 970-641-7999.

**translation** deals with written communication. **interpretation** is all about the spoken word

# Clients of the Multicultural Resource Office

The Gunnison County Multicultural Resource Office (MRO) is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. We act as a single entry point for non-English speakers in the community. Here people can get information, education, referrals, resources, and any type of assistance.

The MRO has been in existence for over 11 years. In 2012, we served 174 unduplicated families (Table 1) slightly down from 197 families in 2011. By helping those 174 families, we had a direct impact on 537 people, of those, 272 were children. On average, the MRO served 98 clients per month (Table 2). December was the peak month for clients served with 113 clients (Table 2). The majority of the clients that used the office were women (84%). The majority of the clients were between 36 and 40 years old (table 4). We worked with a large number of families, only 27% of the families we serve do not have children (Table 5) and 26% of the families have 2 children. Table 6 shows the age distribution of children.

Gunnison's minority population is changing. This population includes a considerable number of people who have limited English language skills. The majority of the clients we serve are from Spanish-speaking countries. 90%, of the clients that use the MRO are from Mexico (Figure 1). Of those, 47% are Cora Indians and 53% are immigrants from various Mexican states. 10% are from Central and South America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

The current economic climate continues to affect our clients. We again saw fewer clients in 2012 in comparison to years before. This is due to several factors: some people have returned to their native county, others have moved away in search of jobs, and several agencies in town have hired Spanish-speaking personnel. However we still provide a valuable service to the clients we see including people returning to Gunnison after trying their luck in other places. Also, many immigrants are learning English and know how to navigate our systems.

In 2012, we made 3,471 contacts (Figure 2) on behalf of our clients. A contact consists of a call or any type of communication with office staff or other people on behalf of clients or vice versa. Follow up calls were made when they were required. The following is a description of the typical contacts we make for our clients: Over 62% of contacts made in 2012 were health related (46.6% medical and 15.5% dental). These contacts include Public Health (appointments for immunizations, family planning services or other services); appointments at local clinics; prenatal care coordination; local and out of town medical, dental providers, and mental health providers; pharmacies, etc. We helped schedule appointments, interpreted during appointments or found volunteers to interpret during the visits. We made calls regarding medical bills, reminder calls, and phone calls to the pharmacies to refill prescriptions or to ask questions about prescriptions.

37.9% of the contacts included education (2.8%), Legal contacts (8.7%), Human Services (DHHS) (6.2%), and Other (20.1%).

**Education:** for example, talking to local schools about transportation, free or reduced lunch, sick children, and parent questions of any nature, CAFÉ (Center for Adult and Family Education) and GED. Local schools hiring bilingual staff and providing their own trained interpreters has resulted in fewer contacts in this category over the years.

**Legal contacts** include communication with Colorado Legal Services in Denver and Frisco and local and out of town law enforcement and lawyers. We contacted the local police department, sheriff's department, public defender's office, courts, jail, and victim's services. When necessary, we provide interpreters for these interactions. We help answer simple immigration questions and assisted with victim visas (U and V) (by referring to the appropriate resources). This year we helped young students apply for legal status (see page 6).

**Human Services** contacts include referral for food assistance, Medicaid or CHP+ applications, child abuse or neglect, LEAP, rental assistance, and other available programs through DHHS. Overall, DHHS has increased the number of bilingual staff which reduces the work load for the MRO.

**Other** contacts refer to contacts made with the Gunnison Arts Center, banks, DMV, Partners, telephone companies, the Post Office (for passport applications), the Social Security Office, utility companies, and job related issues (see page 7). We provide interpreters for some of these contacts when necessary. We also try to help our clients understand and navigate through many of the complex systems that exist in the U.S. We help communicate with existing or prospective employers and local businesses without assisting in job-finding.

# Interesting client statistics for 2012

**Table 1.** Number of families, people, and children Served

Year	# people	# children	unduplicated families
2002			94
2003	420	173	137
2004	420	189	147
2005	466	196	173
2006	523	215	196
2007	638	271	248
2008	623	264	253
2009	574	250	215
2010	552	258	190
2011	551	264	197
<b>2012</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>174</b>

**Table 2.** mean # of clients/month

Year	mean
2004	67
2005	81
2006	94
2007	109
2008	116
2009	104
2010	101
2011	100
2012	98

**Table 3.** Number of unduplicated families per month

Month	Families
Jan	89
Feb	84
Mar	92
Apr	100
May	107
Jun	96
Jul	103
Aug	101
Sept	101
Oct	89
Nov	96
<b>Dec</b>	<b>113</b>

**Table 6.** Age of children

age	# children	%
0	15	5.8
1	16	6.2
2	13	5.1
3	14	5.4
4	19	7.4
5	18	7.0
6	13	5.1
7	21	8.2
8	18	7.0
9	14	5.4
10	10	3.9
11	16	6.2
12	10	3.9
13	14	5.4
14	11	4.3
15	10	3.9
16	12	4.7
17	13	5.1
	<b>257</b>	

**Table 5.** Number of Children per family

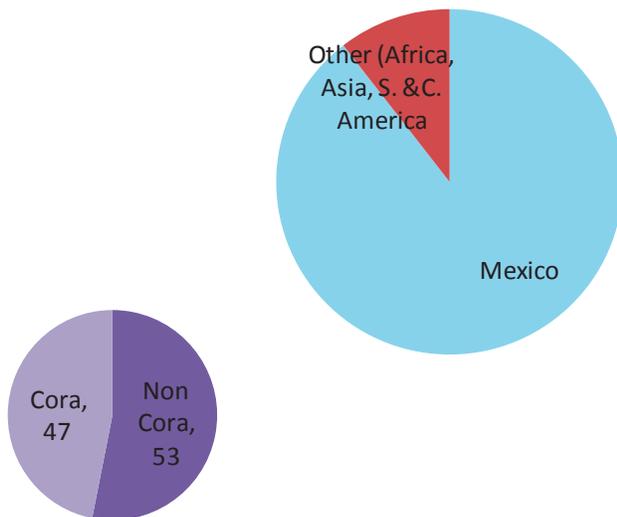
Children	%
0	27
1	21
2	26
3	18
4	5
5	2



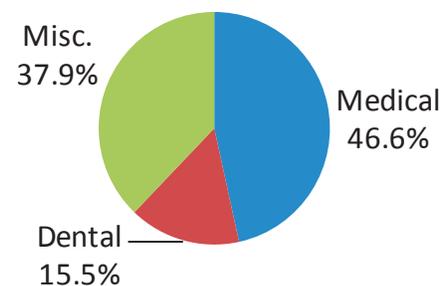
**Table 4.** Age range of women. N=154

Age	%
< 19	6
20-25	12
26-30	18
31-35	19
36-40	25
41-45	10
46-50	6
≥50	6

**Figure 1.** Country of Origin /Ethnicity of Families



**Figure 2.** contacts made on behalf of clients



Learn about our Cora neighbors

[http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/health\\_human\\_services\\_multi\\_cultural.html](http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/health_human_services_multi_cultural.html)

## Dental Programs

### Gunnison Dental Initiative

The Dental Initiative has been up and running for over 12 years. The program serves low income children who are uninsured and who do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+.

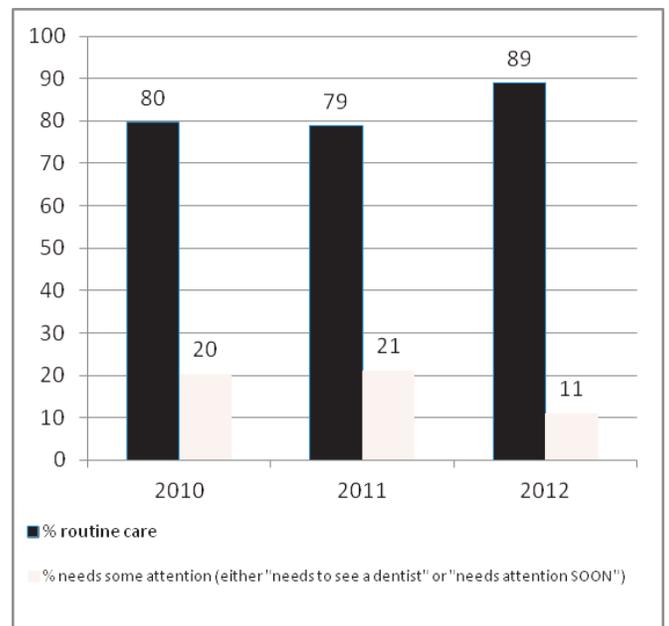
Dr. Anderson, Angela Fuller-Law, and the staff from Gentle Dental have generously donated their time and services to the children who are on this program. In 2012, Gentle Dental donated over \$20,000 in services to the 34 children in the program. The families pay the MRO 10% of the total cost of their visit. With that money, the MRO purchases dental supplies and educational materials for children and adults. The money collected also serves to pay for services for participants of the program who need more extensive dental work.

### Early Childhood Council Health Integration Grant through The Colorado Trust

We completed the third and final year of this grant which offered childcare provider, preschool, and kindergarten based preventative dental health services for children ages 3 to 5 in Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties. Leslie Hearne, RDH (Healthy Smiles) performed 766 screenings in 16 locations providing free dental screenings, education, and fluoride varnishes. In 2010 and 2011 about 20% of the children screened needed some kind of follow up (decay or possible decay). In 2012 dental health seemed to have improved and only 11% of the children needed some kind of follow-up. All children were encouraged to visit a dentist for routine care and/or a follow up.

Some children were screened up to 4 times over the years and in most of the cases dental concerns were pointed out during this program had been addressed in a timely fashion.

Location	Children screened
CB-School	98
CF3	9
Child Find (Gunn & CB)	60
Friendship House	6
GCMRO	37
Jessica Vollendorf	11
Lake City	6
Lake School	200
Little Red	102
Paradise Place	54
Seasons Schoolhouse	31
Stepping Stones	68
Tenderfoot	71
Wee Care	9
MOPS	8
	<b>770</b>



In the summer we had a **Cavity Free at 3** training that was attended by all Gunnison medical clinics: Gunnison Valley Family Physicians, Gunnison Family Medical Center, Main Street Clinic, Gunnison Valley Health Family Medicine, and Gentle Dental. The mission of Cavity Free at Three is to eliminate early childhood caries in Colorado's children, helping them to grow up free of dental disease. In Gunnison we are trying hard to promote oral health with various programs. Due to lack of Fluoride in public drinking water, our county is considered at higher risk for decay, and health assessments done in the schools substantiate this.



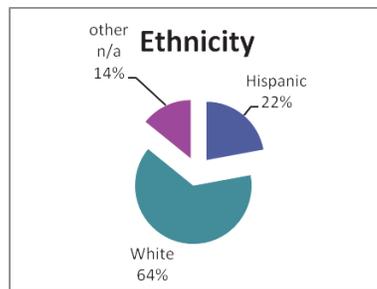
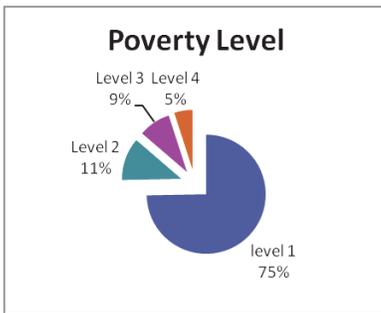


The Light Program is a sliding scale fee for medical services program that allows low income, uninsured individuals to see a primary care physician. To qualify, the person needs to fill out an application, provide proof of income, proof of Gunnison County residency, and a driver's license or identification card.

**THE LIGHT PROGRAM** The client pays \$20 to \$35 depending on their income. A person can see a medical provider up to 4 times per year.

The Light Program is now in its sixth year of helping our community. This program allows people to have access to health care that they would not, otherwise, have because of an economic barrier. This program reduces the ER visits and also allows users to establish a medical home with improved health outcomes. All participants are screened for eligibility for other programs to assure proper use of both public and private funds. Funding for the program comes from grants and private donations.

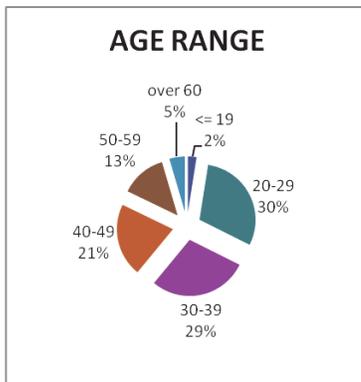
**Light Program For Children** was made possible by a donation a few years back from the Van Tuyl estate and a grant from the El Pomar Foundation. Children of low income families who are uninsured or underinsured and do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+ can apply for up to 6 visits/year to receive medical, dental, behavioral health, prescription, and vision services through a participating provider.



# used per person in 2012

# used per person in 2012	per person
1	123
2	32
3	12
4	16

Adults	
year	# of visits
2007	40
2008	180
2009	278
2010	239
2011	246
2012	247
Children	
year	#of visits
2010	8
2011	26
2012	42



Participating clinics	Number of vouchers	
	Adult	Children
Gunnison Family Medical Center	116	7
Gunnison Valley Family Physicians	82	20
G.V. Health Family Medicine Clinic	18	
Main Street Clinic	4	1
Town Clinic of Crested Butte	1	
ABBA Eyecare		8
City Market Pharmacy		2
Family Vision		3

**Funding:** Main support comes from **Caring for Colorado Foundation** (2010-present).

**Other grants:** Early Childhood Council Health Integration Grant Through The Colorado Trust (2009-2012); Community Foundation of The Gunnison Valley (2012-2013); Colorado Division of Behavioral Health, Substance Abuse Prevention Program (through Partners) 2011-present, Family Planning;

**Contributions:** Gunnison County, Community Services Block Grant, El Pomar Foundation.

**Donations / Support:** Gunnison Valley Community Alliance; Gunnison Valley Health; In Kind Volunteer Hours; Van Tuyl Estate Gunnison; Community Church; Saint Peter's Church; Union Congregational Church; Private donations.



**The Prenatal Program**

The prenatal program is available to low income uninsured women who do not qualify for Medicaid or CHP+. Program participants pay a fee that allows them to visit a participating provider for prenatal care during their entire pregnancy. Dr. Matthews, who speaks Spanish, saw most of the women while Drs. Garren, McMurren, and Niccoli also participated in the program. 14 healthy babies were born to women who participated in this program. All were born with an adequate birth weight. Any complications were addressed in advance and none of the participating mothers/babies had to be flown to larger urban hospitals. Early and comprehensive prenatal care gives children the best start in life



**Multicultural Resource Office Hospital Charity Program**

The MRO Charity Program began in 2006 as part of the collaboration with the Gunnison Valley Health and the MRO. The program serves those that do not qualify for the hospital's Charity Program. Clients who qualify pay a certain percentage of their total hospital bill based on a sliding fee scale using GVH guidelines. In 2012 we were able to help 15 families.

**Gunnison Valley Health Wellness Fair**

2012 saw another extraordinary collaboration with the Wellness Fair. Especially in a year of economic crisis, opportunities for health prevention services were needed more than ever. We had fewer free vouchers available for our clients, nonetheless their participation was high. Private donations, vouchers provided by the Gunnison Valley Health, and the participation of immigrants as interpreters made the Wellness Fair a success. The Multicultural Resource Office organized a night where clients who obtained their Wellness Fair results could come get their results read/interpreted by **Dr. Marie Matthews** and were able to have a better understanding of their results and could be in charge of healthier lifestyles.

**Toys for Tots**

This county-wide program gives Christmas gifts to children under 12 years of age. The Multicultural Resource Office participates in this program by advertising and enrolling children in the program. JoAnne Stone runs the program with the help of volunteers and donors of toys and money. Over 170 children of MRO clients (and many more non clients) received a bag full of presents thanks to this program!

In the fall, several volunteers from United Congregation Church Social Justice Program (UCC) helped organize workshops to assist young Gunnison residents with the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival) paperwork. HAP (Hispanic Affairs Project) and CIRC (Colorado Immigrants Rights Coalition) from Montrose, Inmigrantes Unidos de Gunnison, the CB Democratic Party, and Father Steve from Saint Peters Church were instrumental in helping with the process that will allow young immigrants to acquire legal status for 2 years.

**Managing for Results** This past year the MRO has participated in a county wide initiative called "Managing for Results". This is an initiative that provides a model for the development of a strategic business plan that allows for greater governmental transparency in a measurable and performance-based way. The MRO activities (the work we do) spans across the entire DHHS and the community at large. For this particular initiative we have selected priorities and performance measures that pertain to access to health care and include such services as health screenings, referrals to health care providers and programs, health care linkage, advocacy and case management services. We believe that access to health care is the foundation for an improved quality of life. For more information on Managing for Results, visit [www.gunnisoncounty.org](http://www.gunnisoncounty.org)

**Gunnison Arts Center: Book Talk.** The book discussed in March was "Just Like Us" by Helen Thorpe. It tells the story of four high school students whose parents entered the USA illegally from Mexico. All four of the girls have grown up in the US, and all four want to live the American dream, but only two have documents. As the girls attempt to make it into college, they discover their limitations and their friendships start to divide along lines of immigration status. We had an exciting discussion where the guest speakers were immigrant high school students that shared their own stories with book club members.

**High school Civics Service:** Caleb Wilson and Thomas Phillips collected a bus load full of coats and food. The food was donated to the food pantry and the coats to the MRO. This was a great project and everything went to good use. Thank you to the students and Ms. Waggoner.

In November 2012 the MRO was honored to become a board member of the **Food Pantry**. There will be more to report next year.

Betty de Casad honored us in Gunnison with her visit last summer. Betty and her late husband Eugenio lived in Jesus Maria, Nayarit, Mexico for several years in the 70's and they learned the Cora language. Betty taught several Cora classes for adults and children. Many adults learned to read Cora and children got to hear stories about their roots told from a different perspective.

# Volunteers

The Multicultural Resource Office has a list of 36 bilingual or multilingual volunteers of which 13 worked more than 5 hours in 2012. Together, these volunteers speak seven different languages (Cora, Czech, Danish, English, Hebrew, Spanish, and Sign Language (ASL &PSE)). Volunteers helped in translation and interpretation services at events or appointments that were set up through the MRO at doctor's appointments including dental and mental health, during landlord issues, and filling out applications and other forms (passport, rent, etc.)

In 2012 it was bit harder to keep track of volunteer hours because there were events in which new (not necessarily bilingual) volunteers helped with events organized by the MRO.

**We would like to extend a THANK YOU to our volunteers on behalf of our clients for all your help.**

**Your services are needed and very much appreciated by our clients.**

*The MRO relies heavily on interpreters to help facilitate communication between our non English speaking clients and the various agencies we work with. If you would like to volunteer please contact Ellen at (970) 641-7999.*

## 2012 Volunteers of the Year:

**Annie Romero, Arden Anderson and Rodrigo Marquez**

# 2012 Collaborations

The following is a list with a brief description of our work with other agencies (listed alphabetically).

**Catholic Charities of Pueblo;** Know your right workshops; **Clients and community members:** donate money, time, clothes, furniture, strollers, etc. to the Multicultural Resource Office; **Colorado Legal Services (Gunnison, Denver, and Frisco):** collaborate on civil law cases, Domestic Violence, U, and V visas. **Colorado State University Cooperative Extension/Extension Nutrition Programs Family & Consumer Science Agent:** Classes, announcements, and activities; **Community Church:** Assist families who are facing difficult circumstances in paying their rent, buying food, etc.; **Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley:** Dolly Parton's Imagination Library; **Department of Human Services:** the MRO Coordinator is a member of Child Protection Team, Health and Human Services Commission, Family Advocacy and Support Team (FAST), and the Early Childhood Council (ECC); **GVFP** Dr. Marie Matthews: interprets health fair results on one night (coordinated by the MRO); **Early Childhood Council (ECC); FAST** (Family Advocacy Support Team), **Gunnison County Substance Abuse Prevention Project (GCSAPP):** Member; **Gentle Dental:** Provider for Gunnison Dental Initiative; **Gunnison Area Restorative Practices (GARP); Gunnison Arts Center:** "Book Talk" every Spring we discuss a book related to immigrant lives in English or Spanish and have a bilingual discussion; **Gunnison Business Women:** donated winter coats; **Gunnison Valley Health:** Free vouchers for the Wellness Fair were donated by GVH and private donors; **Gunnison Congregational Church:** Social Justice Program actively involved in immigrant issues; **Gunnison County Parks and Recreation:** scholarships for activities; **Gunnison Shopper:** Publishes ads and announcements in Spanish; **Gunnison Valley Community Alliance,** involved in immigrant issues; **Gunnison Valley Health:** Worked to improve the quality of services for the non-English speaking community members: Language Barrier Program providing Medical Interpreters and substantial monetary support for the Charity Program. Bilingual volunteers worked at the Health Fair; **Gunnison/Hinsdale Confidential Advocacy Center:** collaboration on cases; **Law Enforcement;; Light Program Providers (Children's Portion):** ABBA Eye Care, City Market Pharmacy, Dr. Harvey, Dr. Zirker and Dr. Bichon, Family Vision Center, Gunnison Family Medical Center (GFMC), Gunnison Valley Family Physicians (GVFP), Main Street Clinic (MSC), Gunnison Valley Health Medical Center (GVHMC), Center for Mental Health, and Treasured Teeth, Community Dental, and Smiles for Kids and (Montrose); **Adult Light Program Providers:** Town Clinic of Crested Butte, GFMC, GVFP, MSC, and GVHMC; **Parenting Class:** Monica Billow; **Partners:** Promotion of Summer Youth Program, after school program, and all Partners programs; **Pat's Screen Printing:** Money, food and T-shirts donations, **Saint Mary's Garage (CB):** donated winter coats; **Saint Peter's Catholic Church:** Assist families facing difficult circumstances in paying their rent, providing food and clothing and constant support; **Schools:** Career Fair, Interpreter Program; **Toys for Tots:** Distribution of Christmas presents for children; **Translation of materials for organizations such as:** Gunnison Valley Health, Gunnison Schools, Gunnison County Library and the CAFE, Local Businesses, Partners, and Public Health, **and many more....**

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**Multicultural Resource Office**  
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**COLORADO**  
**TRUST**



**CARING FOR COLORADO**  
FOUNDATION



Please distribute to all interested people and organizations.

Please contact us if you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list.

Advisory group (**MULTICULTURAL CHAMPIONS**) Dawn Helman (School), Jon Nelson (School), John Tarr (health), Paul Duba (Community member), Sandy Shea (Community member, Crested Butte), Mary Burt (Early Childhood), Marketa Zubkova (immigrant), Diana de los Santos (immigrant), Sonia Lerma (immigrant), Renee Brown (DHHS), Carol Worrall (Public Health), Jonathan Houck (County Commissioner)

## **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Multicultural Resource Office is to provide client services, access to health care, and cultural competency development to residents, businesses, organizations and county departments so they can receive and provide culturally appropriate services and responses.