



The Legacy of UCP Colorado

WHAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR WORLD,
IS THE WORLD OF DIFFERENCE WE CAN MAKE!



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1946 Nine Mothers of children with Cerebral Palsy met in a waiting room at Children's Hospital and found themselves faced with a significant challenge: the difficult decision of whether or not to place their children in institutions. At that time, both opportunities for public education and the chance to lead a productive and functional life were non-existent for children with cerebral palsy and other disabilities. These visionary and brave mothers forged ahead to create a legacy that forever changed the lives of their children as well as thousands of other Colorado children. This fledgling organization started in a church offering education, socialization and therapies with teachers, volunteers and family members. Within a short time, there were over one hundred eighteen members! Somehow, the doors of the CP Center stayed open through the generous financial support and in-kind services from families, individuals and local companies. Throughout CP's dynamic and challenging history, the organization has operated under many different names. One thing has remained constant, the organization exists to maximize the human potential of every child, youth, adult and their family.



1949 The Colorado legislature allocates \$50,000 for educating children with disabilities, in a segregated classroom setting, supporting the efforts of the CP Center.



1953 Through the incredible efforts of Gerald Phipps, the Denver Construction Industry and twenty-two labor unions, the "gleaming castle of hope", a school for children and youth with disabilities, opens at 2727 Columbine Street. Fifty-three children were enrolled. The first School Board was appointed to oversee the school's operation and a Medical Panel was set up to determine eligibility.



The First CP Telethon, hosted by KBTB Channel 9, raises \$160,000 dollars for CP programs. Hundreds of volunteers manned the telephones while local celebrities emceed the show.



1954 CP becomes a member of United Way of Denver and the National CP organization. In addition, a gift shop, called Re-Mark, operated by family members and volunteers provided an opportunity for disabled adults to engage in business.



1957 Denver Firefighters initiate a fundraising effort collecting hundreds of dollars for CP by placing 5,000 canisters in local Denver businesses. Once again these dollars provided the vital services the CP Center offered.



1959 An addition is added to the CP Center to accommodate a sheltered workshop and life skills program for 40 adults with disabilities.

1960 A partnership is formed with local community businesses, resulting in assembling and packaging contracts for CP's Sheltered Workshop. Companies like Wright and McGill and others helped twelve adults experience the joy of earning money and feeling productive.



1964 After many years of tireless advocacy, adults with disabilities become eligible for Social Security benefits at the end of twenty working quarters. This legislation significantly changed the landscape of opportunities for the future of individuals with disabilities and their families. The CP workshop was the first one to become certified in the country.

The Colorado Legislature passes a bill allocating funding for programs that will serve people with disabilities through a Community Center Board system. This allowed the state to receive matching federal dollars while assuring that at least a portion of children and adults in the state would benefit from critical and necessary services.



1967 The Junior League of Denver donates \$5,000 to CP to establish a Special Education Library. The library was staffed with League volunteers for 3 years.



1970 Friends of CP, a group of volunteers join together to support CP school and workshop programs. Along with local foundations, these "friends" engaged community leaders and hosted tours to introduce the work of the organization to others. Homemade "Soup and Pie Luncheons" were held, as were many, innovative Special Events.



1975 Congress passes the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, later renamed IDEA. At the time EHA was enacted more than one million children in the US had no access to the public school system. This civil rights law mandated that children with disabilities finally receive a free public education.



1984 The First Annual Wine in the Pines, a wine and food tasting event, is inspired by Kelly Smith, the daughter of founders Mike and Margaret Smith. Held at Keystone, Colorado, this extravaganza raises \$4,000, with 150 people in attendance.



The First Annual Concourse D'Elegance, held at University Hills Mall, features over 100 exquisite and exotic cars and raises \$1,800 for CP's children services.



1985 Ten years after IDEA passes, CP ceases providing K-12 school services, due to declining enrollment. Children with disabilities begin attending community public schools.



1986 Through a HUD grant, 24 adults leave Ridge State Institution and move into three group homes, operated by CP. For the first time, they experience living in a non-institutional setting while enjoying a real home environment.



1988 A new era in employment services, called Supported Employment, begins at CP with a focus on placing individuals with disabilities in community-based jobs. Young adults finishing high school have the opportunity to realize their employment dreams, while earning a living wage. Over forty people with disabilities become actively employed in integrated employment, proving the value of the skills and talents each individual can offer to an employer



1992 A civil rights law is signed, the "American with Disabilities Act" (ADA). This significant legislation establishes a clear and comprehensive prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability. People with disabilities are promised full access to their communities.



Children of all abilities join the Early Education Program at CP. Full day, full year services are offered in an inclusive and integrated setting, paving the way for children to learn and accept each other's differences as well learning from each other.



1994 CP officially becomes a statewide organization, CP of Colorado, initially offering information and referral services to individuals and families with disabilities.

CP of Colorado Board announces intent to implement a policy of full integration and inclusion. The most dramatic change will be the transition of seventy adult clients from a sheltered workshop setting to community based jobs and lifestyles. It is anticipated that this transition will take thirty six months assuring that our clients will have the appropriate support to access the world around them. This intent follows National Policy that states “the continuing existence of discrimination, attitudinal barriers and prejudice has been shown to be directly related to the segregation and exclusion of individuals with disabilities”.



The First Annual “Great Balls of Fire” Billiards tournament, sponsored by Colorado Firefighters, held in honor of Kyle E. Fisher, takes place at Wynkoop Brewery and raises \$4,000. Proceeds provide therapeutic and early education scholarships for hundreds of children in the Early Education Program at CP.



1995 CP begins operating a Donation Pick up Service, of gently used clothing and household items, generating \$93,000 the first year. This business becomes sustaining revenue for CP programs.



1996 CP of Colorado continues to fulfill its legacy, moving from its home of 44years, to a new home for the one hundred and fifty children of all abilities in the Early Education Program. The quote by Gerald Phipps daughter, Karen Sass, sums it up, “It is truly wonderful that my father’s appreciation for education will continue as the facility once designed to educate children with cerebral palsy will now open its new doors to educate children of all abilities”. CP also helped sixty five adults transition to community-based settings, no longer relying on being segregated from the community, thus demonstrating people with disabilities can be employed in the community, live independently with support and become active in community life.



1997 Parent to Parent, a parent-run organization, joins CP of Colorado and offers information, parent matching and internet support for parents of children with disabilities, bringing to the forefront the legacy of parent determination and leadership.



Family Voices, also a parent-run organization, joins CP of Colorado, is dedicated to improving the health of children with special health care needs. Parents begin to aggressively advocate for systemic changes that will reduce healthcare waiting lists for hundreds of children with disabilities.



CP establishes Faith in Action, a service that connects children and adults with disabilities to a "Circle of Friends" with volunteers from local faith communities.



CP of Colorado is awarded the Aurora Head Start grant to serve at-risk children and families, thus expanding early education services to 345 Birth to 5 year olds while providing comprehensive education, health, developmental and family services.



1999 CP of Colorado is granted additional Aurora Head Start and Early Head Start funding, to serve over 600 infants, toddlers and preschoolers at five centers, providing more children and their family's early intervention and prevention services.



2001 Employment Works, CP of Colorado's employment program is awarded the Social Security Benefit Planning Grant helping people with disabilities take charge of their own benefits while taking charge of their own lives. In the first year, Four to five hundred people were provided the necessary tools to understand their benefits.



2002 Empower Colorado joins CP of Colorado's growing family of statewide family organizations, providing support groups for families coping with children and youth with brain disorders and mental health issues through education, shared parent wisdom, encouragement and resources.



CP held the First Annual Mother's Tea, a luncheon honoring and celebrating our founding Mothers and today's women, the primary caregivers for their families. Over \$25,000 was raised for the family organizations with 350 people in attendance.

2003 The Infantile Scoliosis Outreach Program (ISOP) joins CP of Colorado's family of statewide organizations. ISOP partners with medical professionals to educate physicians, other health professionals and parents about effective, noninvasive and life changing treatments for Infantile Scoliosis.

2006 First Annual Sporting Clay Event is held, hosting 232 shooters, while raising over \$110,000 for CP children's programs and ISOP.



2007 Colorado Citizens for Accountability, a patient safety organization, advocating for transparency and justice, joins CP of Colorado's family of Statewide Services. CCA makes the C.A.S.E for healthcare by helping Consumers learn how to Advocate, Support and Educate themselves.



CP of Colorado opens a new campus realizing and fulfilling the dream of the nine founding Mothers almost sixty two years ago, that children with disabilities and their families would be educated, supported and encouraged to fully experience their human potential. It is our hope and our dream today that we will continue to fulfill their legacy through:



The Kyle E. Fisher Center, serving 150 children birth-five with in a fully integrated learning environment with the essential wraparound services to support and encourage school readiness and the success of every child;



Vanguard Classical School, providing elementary education for 335 K-6th graders, supported by two teachers in each classrooms and a complete team of supportive services professionals whose primary purpose is to fully cultivate each child's potential;



The Kelly Smith Employment Center, offering services to 3,800 youth and adults throughout the state seeking employment, skills development and the dignity that comes with earning a paycheck;



and, Statewide Family Support Services, a group of six parent-driven organizations providing education, family leadership development, support, parent mentoring and advocacy for 17,000 Coloradoans affected by disability.

The UCP Colorado campus serves as a testament to the courage nine devoted Mothers had in 1946. Their vision of a more promising future for individuals, children and families is a legacy that will be shared among many— today and for future generations to come.



801 Yosemite Street • Denver, CO 80230
Phone: 303-691-9339 • Fax: 303-691-0846
www.cpco.org

