“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

— Fredrick Douglas
Merriam-Webster defines a mentor as

“SOMEONE WHO TEACHES OR GIVES HELP AND ADVICE TO A LESS EXPERIENCED AND OFTEN YOUNGER PERSON.”

Over the years at Partners Mentoring Youth, we have come to see mentors as so much more. Our mentors selflessly give of themselves and share their time with young people in our community whose circumstances and life challenges make reaching their full potential seemingly out of reach. All it takes is support, guidance and the unerring belief that anything is possible for our kids.

Mentors spend as little as an hour a week during the school year as a School Based Mentor or an average of three hours a week when they become Community Based Mentors. It’s amazing what happens when a positive adult role model steps in. All of a sudden, Junior Partners have a coach and cheerleader rolled into one. They have a trusted friend and advisor who listens, engages in activities, encourages and challenges them. The Senior Partner is someone whose only desire is to see their Junior Partner succeed and to provide the tools and life skills that make that success possible.

Mentoring increases self-esteem and self-confidence. Junior Partners are more likely to attend school regularly, become involved with extra-curricular activities and see their academic performance steadily rise. Instances of substance abuse lessen. Futures are gleaming and brimming with possibility.

Every day we see the benefits of our mentoring relationships and every day we ask ourselves, “How can we do more for our children?” It’s a question each one of us should be asking.

Please take a moment and remember the mentors who touched your life and helped propel you forward. Remember the wisdom they shared, their patience when you floundered and their joy when you succeeded. They saw the spark in you and handed you the flint that turned it into a brightly burning flame.

We’d like to thank all our supporters who helped make 2013 another successful year. We continue to be inspired by our generous northern Colorado community.

2013 Partners Staff
Maryann Fillingim, Development Manager
Sarah Helms, School Based Mentoring Coordinator
Chris Imsland, Executive Director
Kristi Ehlé, Estes Park Program Coordinator
Shanyna Nashelsky, Program Coordinator
Laura Reid, School Based Mentoring Coordinator
Tami Roskamp, Program Manager
Tori Queen, Program Coordinator
Gayle Ruitter, Business Manager
Gail Shatz, Greeley Program Coordinator
Heather Vesgaard, Associate Director

Pioneer Press
Proud supporter of Partners Mentoring Youth.
We are pleased to provide the printing of this Annual Report.

Fort Collins/Loveland: 970.484.7123 I Estes Park: 970.577.9348 I Greeley: 970.378.6501
Merriam-Webster defines a mentor as

Grace Taylor
MBA, FACHE
Senior Director, Physician Relations & Community Outreach, University of Colorado Health

As a Senior Director striving to improve local health care experiences, fostering meaningful outreach relationships and health related services for the past seven years, it’s no wonder Grace sits on the Board of Directors for Partners Mentoring Youth as well as the Northern Colorado chapter of the American Red Cross. It’s all about giving back to the community and making what is already a special place even more special.

Grace knows the impact of mentoring: “I’ve been fortunate in my own personal life and career to have had really great mentors along the way. I honestly can’t imagine not having those beneficial relationships. Partners is unique in that it provides young people who may not have adult role models in their lives with the opportunity to build strong and meaningful relationships. The entire focus is on mentoring.”

Mike Ketterling
Co-founder and PE-Principal
KBN Engineers

Count the ways Mike has served the Northern Colorado community: he’s held positions on numerous boards of directors including Partners Mentoring Youth, Weld County United Way, Greeley Area Habitat For Humanity and the Community Foundation Serving Greeley/Weld County. Currently Mike chairs the Poudre River Trail Corridor Board, serves on the boards for the Greeley Downtown Development Authority, the Stampede Foundation and the Great Western Trail Authority. He was a volunteer fireman in Eaton for 20 years.

“I’m involved with Partners because I have seen first hand the impact mentoring can have on kids,” he said. “I started getting involved in the early 80’s and over the years have had four Junior Partners. One of them I still stay in close contact with. We were matched when he was ten. Now he’s 41.”

Scott Tally
Financial Advisor/ Partner
Legacy Financial Group

Scott knows what it means to make a positive impact on someone’s life. As a financial advisor and partner at Legacy Financial Group, he helps his clients make important and significant decisions that directly impact their financial health. Today he sits on the boards for the Child Advocacy Center and Northern Colorado 20/30. For three years, he was a Senior Partner to a young boy who later moved out of the area. After that experience, he couldn’t get Partners out of his head and wanted to continue to give back to the organization — this time as a board member.

“Partners does a lot of good for kids in difficult circumstances,” he explained. “There is no other organization like it in Northern Colorado. Senior Partners make real differences for their Junior Partners by being stable and reliable — just being there for them. It doesn’t take a lot of time either, and it means so much to these kids.”

Pat McMeekin
Chief Operating Officer
Water Valley Land Company, LLC

Pat sees both Huskers red and the green and gold of the CSU Rams. The Omaha native graduated from CSU with a B.S. in Industrial Technologies and completed coursework for a graduate degree in Construction Management. Since 2001, he has held a variety of roles with Water Valley.

As a board member of Northern Colorado Active 20/30, Pat was introduced to Partners through 20/30’s fundraising activities, and it wasn’t long before he came on board with Partners. “Partners is such a great organization — especially when you look at the need here in Northern Colorado,” he stated. “It gives kids a chance to have a stable adult person in their lives; someone who is there for them, listening and answering questions, being their shepherd.”

2013 Board of Directors

Cathy Mathis, Past Chair
Pat McMeekin
Terri Hanna
Mike Laplante
Brett Kemp, Chair
Scott Tally

Lauren Roesener
Kevin William Ward
Stephanie Dohn-Augusto
Melissa Clary
Timiry Krieger
Katie Zwetzig

Eric Reisler
Peter Fardal
Celeste Smith, Secretary
Grace Taylor
Julia Crawford, Treasurer
Mike Ketterling, Incoming Chair,
PARTNERS HISTORY

An idea that put kids first — with results that last

The year was 1978. Mayor Nancy Gray, District Attorney Stu Van Meveren and a group of community leaders saw a significant increase of at-risk youth entering the Juvenile Justice system. Too often, these young people made their way back into the system—often due to a turbulent home front and the lack of a stable adult role model in their lives; someone who could guide them through tough times and help them make better, more thoughtful decisions.

“What we observed was that a lot of these kids—or a high percentage of them at least—did not have a positive role model in their lives, and usually, that’s a positive male role model,” remembered Van Meveren. “Nancy Gray, one of the deputies who was in charge of the juvenile division, Larry Abrahamson and I...pounded the pavement for several months to raise the funds necessary to start the program and hire an executive director. The problems we faced at the beginning are still problems Partners faces today; funding and more kids who qualify for the services than senior partners who can work with them.”

The trio was successful. Several local businesses contributed and the program was put in place. Larimer County Partners, Inc. (which is now Partners Mentoring Youth) was founded with the mission statement “To promote youth development and reduce and prevent delinquency in Larimer County” and was based on an effective and successful youth mentoring program in Denver. Originally the program was designed to help kids already in trouble with the legal system.

The first year saw 23 young people matched with mentors. The two-person staff, executive director Howard Burgeson and counselor Mary Pat Eby worked with a budget of $48,654. Within two years, Partners received awards for the Creative Program of the Year from the Colorado District Attorneys Association and a Family Violence Task Force Award of Excellence from the National Association of Volunteers in Criminal Justice.
Soon after the first match was made with an Estes Park youth in 1982, conversations started about opening a satellite office in the mountain town. Then a Loveland coordinator was hired in 1984. Partners was taking off. In a big way.

The number of Partnerships continued to grow. By 1990 there were 91 matches, and an annual budget upwards of $114,000, and a substantial increase in staff. In addition to the executive director, there were three counselors, a volunteer coordinator, a special events coordinator and two VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members. The organization was reaching out into the community—not just to the youngsters it worked with, but to community leaders who were sitting up and taking notice.

Mark Goldrich was one of those community leaders. As a member of the Board of Directors, he promoted the organization. He also organized fundraising events such as SuperStars Sports Challenge, where teams comprised of community members, mentors and board members compete in different sports challenges. “The event led itself to ongoing competition with other teams,” Goldrich, who is a Broker/Owner with The Group Real Estate, said. “For instance, you can beat a team from another real estate firm or take down a team that did really well the year before. It’s a lot of fun.” The event continues today and raises awareness of Partners as well as raising necessary program funding.

Partners has seen several executive directors over the decades. One of them, Gordan Thibedeau, who today heads up the United Way of Larimer County, recalls the struggles, the challenges and the victories he faced while overseeing Partners. “The biggest challenge on that very first day was how to get more volunteers to work with our Junior Partners,” he said. “That has always been the top priority. Partners had—and continues to have—many more kids needing the services it provides than volunteers. Second was funding, but first and foremost, it is introducing people to the organization, telling them the success stories and then getting them through the door.

“Nothing is more satisfying than seeing these relationships develop between Junior and Senior Partners,” he continued. “We could see self-esteem growing (in Junior Partners) and watched academic performance improve. They started making more thoughtful decisions and long-term plans for their futures. It’s very empowering for everyone involved, but especially the kids.”

Over the past several years Partners has expanded services and service area. In 2009, Partners started a new School Based Mentoring program in partnership with the Poudre School District. This program compliments the traditional Community Based Mentoring program. In 2010, Partners opened a Greeley office to begin serving Weld County youth, filling a void left by a previous Partners organization.

Partners employs eleven staff and works with 500 youngsters in Northern Colorado. In 2013 volunteer mentors donated over 20,000 hours collectively working directly with vulnerable young people in these communities. The organization continues to grow, continues to touch more children in need and continues to shine a brighter future on each one of them.
2013 FINANCIALS

**REVENUE**
- Grants and contracts: $185,663
- Contributions: $287,790
- In-kind donations: $61,668
- Special events, net: $160,792
- Rental income, net: $1,200
- Other income: $5,718
- Interest income: $130
- Endowment net investment earnings: $6,324

Total Revenue: $709,285

**EXPENSES**
- Program Services:
  - Youth programs: $585,340
- Support Services:
  - Management and general: $50,210
  - Fund raising: $72,603

Total Support Services: $122,813

Total Expenses: $708,153

Change in Net Assets: $1,132

Net Assets, Beginning of Year: $445,340
Net Assets, End of Year: $446,472

2013 Program and Stats

Since 1978, Partners has provided mentoring services to over 5,000 youth in northern Colorado. Our program matches youth facing challenges with responsible adults, creating relationships that make a positive, lasting impact. We are the most comprehensive one-to-one youth mentoring program in northern Colorado. We are exceptional at matching volunteer mentors with these youth, supporting their relationship, and providing activity programming, all based on mentoring best practices.

In 2013, Partners served 464 youth, between the ages of 7 and 17, in our Community Based Mentoring (CBM), School Based Mentoring (SBM) and Nexus programs throughout northern Colorado. The youth in our program (Junior Partners) all experience challenges in their personal, social and/or academic lives. Junior Partners are matched with a screened and trained adult volunteer based on similar interests, personality types and needs. These matches, called Partnerships, will spend an average of one to three hours a week together for one year or longer. During their Partnership, they are supported by Program Coordinators and have access to activities, life skill training, community service opportunities and round the clock support. All mentoring services are free to our youth, thanks to generous donors and funders.
Our 2013 year end data showed that:

- **85%** of our youth lived in low income or poverty level homes
- **83%** were victims of abuse/neglect or domestic violence
- **52%** were affected by substance abuse
- **66%** dealt with mental health issues personally or in their home
- **68%** struggled academically
- **23%** struggled with delinquency
- **45%** were involved or had a family member involved with the judicial system
- **57%** lived in single parent homes

The ethnicity of our youth last year was **56%** Caucasian, **25%** Hispanic, **4%** African American, and **15%** other/mixed race. **50%** of youth served were boys and **50%** were girls.

**Volunteer Information**

Volunteers are vital to our organization and they enhance our ability to fulfill our mission. In fact, without our volunteers, we could not run our program effectively. Our organization utilizes over 500 volunteers per year in a variety of capacities including Senior Partners (mentors), Activity Volunteers, event committee members, Board/Advisory Council members, interns and general event/office volunteers. They come from all walks of life and age groups. In 2013, 526 volunteers contributed 21,648 hours; valued at $479,287 (value of 2012 volunteer time per independentsector.org is $22.14/hr). Of that, 19,160 hours was volunteer time dedicated to supporting youth. That’s an amazing amount of support when you consider that the value of volunteer time is equivalent to over half our budget.

**Major Donors and In-Kind Contributions**

- Larry Abrahamson • Anadarko Petroleum Corporation • Anonymous
- Anonymous • Don & Debi Bade • Bob & Cindy Banta • Bella Fortuna Inc. • Mike & Lisa Bergerson • Chris Boyd • Bruce & Marlene Brown • Shane & Tori Brown • Burt’s Shirts • Butter Cream Cupcakery • Chik-Fil-A • Clif Bar • Chippers Lanes • Colorado State University • Old Chicago Restaurant • Laura Devoe • Dohn Construction • Egg & I Restaurants • EKS&H • Embassy Suites Hotels • Estes Park Medical Center • Eye Center of Northern Colorado • Eyecare Associates • Howard Fitz • Flood & Peterson • Rotary Clubs of Fort Collins/Peach Festival • Fort Collins Sertoma Club • Foundations Church • Scott Gillan • Michelle & Philip Glasgow • Deems Hargleroad • Hensel Phelps • High Country Beverage • Jeff Hollingsworth • Jen & John Houska • Information Point Technologies • Stan & Nicole Javernick • Don & Jan Jorgensen • Kaiser Permanente • Brett & Stephanie Kemp • Larry & Pat Kendall • Michael & Nomie Ketterling • Mama Roses/Poppy’s Restaurants • Mountain-n-Plains Inc. • Justin & Debbie Morrison • Noble Energy • Northern Colorado Association of Health Underwriters • Odell Brewing Company • Orthopaedic & Spine Center of the Rockies • Chris & Julie Otto • Overland Sertoma Club • Paisley & Dr. Kenneth Pettine • Phelps-Tonton Inc. • Phoco Photography • Qdoba Mexican Grill • RB+B Architects Inc. • Rotary Club of Estes Park • Sage Marketing Group Inc. • Ken Salazar • Celeste & Eric Smith • Sports Authority • Subway/Bobby Deck • Grace & Jason Taylor • The Human Bean • The Lind Foundation • Brian Thomas & Michell Pett-Thomas • Jo Ellen M. Thornton Memorial Fund • TCBY • Townsquare Media • University of Colorado Health • Verified Volunteers • Vista Solutions/Bob & Linda Vomaske • Whistle Blowers Grill • Whole Foods Market • Ralph Matt Will • Tim Williams • Jerry & Sue Winter • The W.W. Reynolds Companies Inc. • YMCA of the Rockies • Katie & Randy Zwetzig

We sincerely apologize if we have inadvertently left anyone off our list.

**Major Grants and Foundations**

- Anonymous • A.V. Hunter Trust Inc. • Adolph Coors Foundation • Bohemian Foundation • Colorado Office of Behavioral Health • City of Loveland – Human Service Grant • Fast Freddie Foundation • Foundations Church • Community Foundation of Northern Colorado • Community Foundation Serving Greeley and Weld County • Condon Family Foundation • Craftworks Foundation • Helen K. & Arthur E. Johnson Foundation • Northern Colorado Active 20/30 Foundation • Nordson Corporation Foundation • OJDP Federal Recovery Act/Poudre School District • OtterCares Foundation • RJ Clark Family Foundation • Realities For Children Inc • Town of Estes Park • Trois Coeurs Foundation • United Way of Larimer County • United Way of Weld County • US Bancorp Foundation • Victim Assistance Law Enforcement Fund • Walmart Foundation • Woodward
Partners in education: The School Based Mentoring Program

Blevins Middle School principal David Linehan has seen the impact mentors make on their Junior partners. The Partners program has worked with students in the school since 2009.

“I see it every day,” he said. “I see relationships being built. I see kids connecting and learning to trust adults. I see mentors playing basketball—establishing relationships based on common interests and hobbies—things like building remote-control cars and planes. I see what I call cultural capital.”

The School Based Mentoring Program is a joint venture between Partners and Poudre School District. The program places community volunteers in Rocky Mountain High School, Blevins Middle School, Webber Middle School and Olander Elementary to provide one-to-one mentoring services to students who are facing significant challenges in their social, academic or personal lives. Sometimes, it’s a combination of the three. All the kids are facing life issues that cause tremendous struggles they simply can’t navigate themselves.

Senior Partners spend an average of one hour a week with the same youth for a minimum of one academic year. Some of the Partnerships continue beyond the first year into long-lasting friendships. Partnerships are based on common interests, personality, characteristics, strengths of the volunteer and the needs of the youth.

“Mentoring is about breaking cycles,” explained Heather Vesgaard, Associate Director at Partners Mentoring Youth. “It’s about showing kids they have options beyond what they think exist for them. Mentors are resources for them—showing them they can attack problems differently and by doing so, completely change the direction of their lives. The goal of the School Based Program is to put adults in the (school) building to compliment what the teachers, staff and administrators are already doing. You can put a kid in a great school with great kids and a great curriculum, but for certain kids—the kids who have extreme difficulties outside that setting—that’s just not enough. They need a bit more support.”

Blevins has between 30 and 40 students involved in the School Based Mentoring Program in any given year. The entire program had 180 students involved in the 2013-2014 academic year.

Brad Stone, counselor at Blevins has seen tremendous positive changes. “There’s a student here who lives with his two brothers and his mom. Dad died so they’re dealing with some pretty big financial problems. This kid has behavioral and academic issues. The best way to describe him is angry and depressed,” he said. “But since connecting him with his mentor, he’s been thriving. They go to hockey games together and play basketball.”

“The mentor is theirs, and theirs alone,” says Vesgaard. “This is a person who chooses to be with them, someone who chooses to become a part of their life. It’s very important to the student, and many times, it’s what makes all the difference for them.”

“It does make a difference,” agreed Stone. “I’ve noticed a trend in the past few years. When mentors come in and want to pull a student out of class to meet with them, more often than not, the student will say, ‘Not right now, I’m taking a test.’ That shows me the program is working.”

“Absolutely,” said Linehan. “That is success. For the program, for the mentors, but most of all, for these kids who just need someone who thinks—no, someone who knows—they can be successful. It’s amazing to see it happen. It makes me so thankful we have this for our kids.”

“The mentor is theirs, and theirs alone. This is a person who chooses to be with them ... and many times, it’s what makes all the difference for them.”

— Heather Vesgaard, Associate Director at Partners Mentoring Youth
Laura and Tyiesha: Treasuring a long-time friendship

Laura Molzer and her Junior Partner Tyiesha have a treasure box that they pass between one another. Inside they tuck small tokens and gifts. But the real treasure is the relationship they’ve built and enjoyed over the past nine years.

Tyiesha remembers what life was like as a nine year old, when she became involved with Partners Community Based Mentoring Program and met Laura, who, at the time, was a graduate student at CSU. Tyiesha was struggling with a home life that didn’t regularly include her father and where her mother worked hard to make ends meet. There were problems at school as well, and her counselor recommended the program. “I do remember that my Mom and I weren’t communicating well at all,” she mused. “I wasn’t very open or trusting with anybody, for sure. I didn’t like talking about my feelings—I still don’t, but it’s gotten better.”

Early on, Laura and Tyiesha engaged in activities that helped them get to know each other better and to establish trust. They hiked, went to the movies and worked on craft projects together. “A lot of crafting,” stated Laura, who works as a therapist at ChildSafe, a nonprofit headquartered in Fort Collins. “I’ve kept all the stuff that Tyiesha has made for me over the years.”

Over time, Tyiesha let down her guard, and the friendship between the child and the young woman blossomed and grew. And as her trust for Laura grew, Tyiesha’s reluctance to allow herself to be vulnerable and to share her feelings lessened. She shared her thoughts and problems with Laura and let the Senior Partner offer up advice and guidance, especially with difficult school situations that bounced Tyiesha from one high school to another. Laura helped Tyiesha manage other relationships in her life—with family members, schoolmates and teachers.

But there have been celebrations too, such as Tyiesha reaching goals she set for herself, including getting her driver’s license and Laura’s graduation from her master’s program. They’ve watched each other grow.

“I feel truly blessed to have been matched with such a loving, respectful, caring, giving and fun person,” said Laura. “And I cannot imagine what the last nine years would have been like for me if we had never been introduced. Tyiesha is such a special person in my life and someone who is very important to me.”

Tyiesha’s feelings are right in line with Laura’s. “She’s my friend. She’s always there for me,” she nodded. “And I’m there for her, too, if she ever needs me.”

Tyiesha is an accomplished chef and baker. Once she graduates from high school, she plans on continuing her education and getting a degree in the Culinary Arts, something she readily admits she may not have considered had it not been for Laura and the encouragement she’s received. Since becoming involved with Partners Tyiesha has given more attention to her education. She sees a viable and fulfilling career in her future.

Another milestone that the two have marked is Tyiesha’s eighteenth birthday. Even though she has aged out of the program, they plan to continue on as they have for the past almost-decade. “Why would we stop?” asked Tyiesha.

Why, indeed?

“I cannot imagine what the last nine years would have been like for me if we had never been introduced.”

— Laura Molzer
“How can I help support Partners Mentoring Youth?”

Glad you asked. Like all non-profit organizations, Partners works hard to fund its programs. Through fundraising events that it hosts or events hosted by other organizations, private donations, corporate sponsorships and grants, Partners generates $709,285 in revenue, and as the organization grows and the number of youth served grows, that number grows, too.

Direct donations are important to the ongoing success of Partners, and so are the annual events. Events generate more awareness of the youth who benefit from the services provided. Each event is an opportunity to introduce new community members to the work Partners does throughout Larimer and Weld County.
Sharin’ O’ the Green — March, Fort Collins

Celebrating St. Patrick’s Day, this 5K run/walk in Old Town Fort Collins is a great way to start the running season, get your heart pumping and work the cricks out of your knees. The 2014 race raised over $90,000 towards Partners Mentoring Youth programming with nearly 2,500 runners competing. On that day, it’s four-leaf clovers all over. For everybody.

Party for Partners— June, Fort Collins

Party for Partners is the organization’s premier leadership event that caters to a crowd exceeding 150 business professionals and community leaders. Party for Partners celebrated in June in the Agave Room above the Rio in Fort Collins, and featured art and inspirational testimonials from both Junior and Senior Partners as well as other community supporters. Combined, the silent auction, live auction, sponsorship and donations raised over $55,000.

SuperStars Sports Challenge — September, Fort Collins

Partners Mentoring Youth’s signature fundraiser of the year is the exciting SuperStars Sports Challenge. 2014 marks the 32nd consecutive year and it just keeps getting better. SuperStars will be held on Saturday, September 13th at Rolland Moore Park in Fort Collins. Come out and run, jump and help raise money for Partners. Here’s a promise: You will have a boatload of fun!

Running of the Bulls — September, Estes Park

It may not be Pamplona, and these bulls tend to bugle rather than bellow or moo. The Running of the Bulls is a beautiful run/walk around Lake Estes, and all proceeds benefit Partners Mentoring Youth. The unique 3.75 mile course at a high altitude of 7,500 feet starts and finishes at Lake Estes Marina. The lap offers stunning views of snow-capped peaks, fall colors in and around Rocky Mountain National Park, and potential to see some elk! The event is dog friendly and stroller friendly!

Be the Difference — October, Greeley

The third annual Be the Difference event in Greeley will be on October 22nd at the NBCE Horace Elliott Center. Event hosts, Ken and Perry Buck will be back again this year along with keynote speaker and current senior partner, Chalice Springfield as well as special guest Former Denver Bronco, Reggie Rivers. It should be another powerful and exciting event in Greeley.

Christmas for Kids Campaign

The holiday season can be a particularly difficult time of year for Junior Partners, especially those whose households have been disrupted. The Christmas for Kids campaign supports vulnerable youth. This is a year-end appeal with a goal of raising $100,000, enough to serve 70 Northern Colorado youth for a full year in the Partners program.

One highlight of the campaign is a Life Skill activity which teaches young people how to budget wisely. More than 150 Northern Colorado youth, along with their adult mentors, are set loose in Wal-Mart. Armed with a gift card and tasked with finding gifts for their loved ones, Junior Partners must make decisions that keep them within their allotted budgets.

2013 Year-round Event Sponsors

University of Colorado Health, OtterCares, Chippers Lanes, Realities for Children, Kaiser Permanente.
Partnership, Prevention, Personalized Care

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