

2018-19 Annual Report on the WAGES Grantee Cohort



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Executive Summary

Too many Colorado women live in or on the edge of poverty or work in low-wage jobs with little opportunity for advancement. The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) implemented WAGES - **Women Achieving Greater Economic Security** - to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families. For three years, WFCO will fund direct service and policy advocacy organizations to implement services and strategies that are designed to propel women into careers that enable them to meet their needs and the needs of their families, with a special focus on issues of equity and two-generational approaches. Through WAGES, 23 diverse and expert organizations are coming together to share and innovate strategies, foster new conversations and collaborations, and inform the larger field of stakeholders interested in improving economic opportunities for women and their families. The OMNI Institute is evaluating the three-year initiative. This report provides updates and learnings from WAGES' first programmatic year.

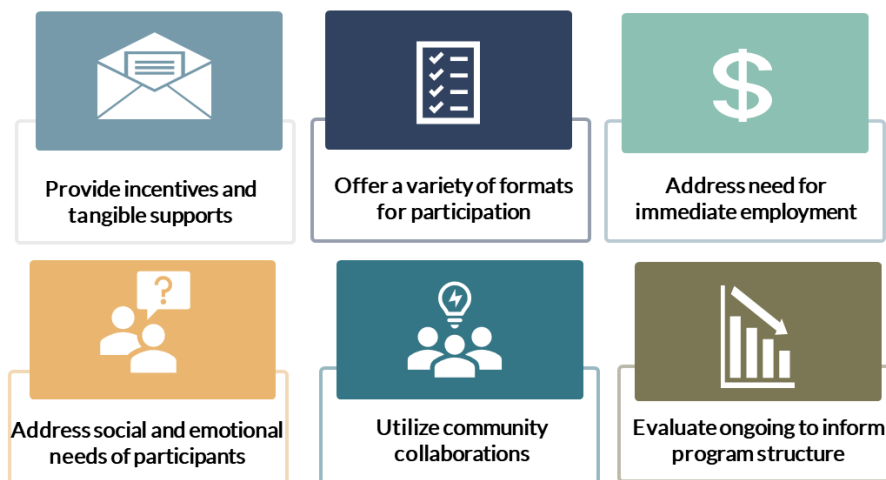
To Date, 428 Diverse Women Have Been Reached Across Colorado

Most women served through WAGES are single mothers (73%) with one or two children. About 38% are Latinx/Hispanic, 35% are White, and 18% are Black or African American. At program entry, about 29% were employed full time and 63% earned less than \$1,501 per month. Many women were experiencing transportation barriers; lack of access to affordable childcare, affordable housing, and education; limited employment history; mental health issues; and food insecurity. WAGES grantees are providing women with a variety of services to support advancement towards a livable wage, most commonly case management and employment services, followed by financial assistance, education services, referrals to other services, financial coaching, and transportation supports.

Multiple Strategies are Needed to Promote Program Completion

Grantees identified several challenges with engaging and retaining women in programming, as well as multiple strategies to overcome barriers and to support women who are experiencing economic distress to complete WAGES-funded programming. These include:

Key Strategy Areas



WAGES Women are Achieving Positive Outcomes for Themselves and their Families

- **104 women made employment gains**, 34% of whom were unemployed and attained employment, and 44% of whom experienced across or within sector gains (e.g., a job change or a promotion).
- **105 women reached educational goals**, 49% of whom obtained a high school diploma or GED, and 14% of whom obtained a college degree.
- **31 women reduced reliance on public supports** around income, housing, childcare, food and healthcare.

As one grantee notes, these outcomes impact not only the women who received the training, but their children as well. As such, **an estimated 1,328 individuals in 428 households will benefit from WAGES direct-service grantee efforts** (428 women who were directly served and their household members).

"Not only did 16 Participants earn a certificate or degree, but also their 25 children saw their moms reach their goals of pursuing post-secondary education."

- Direct Service Grantee Staff

Policy Advocacy Grantees Use Multiple Strategies to Increase the Economic Security of Women and Families

- **Formal coalitions:** Grantees participated in over 20 Formal Coalitions to advance policy priorities in financial equity, workforce training, family-friendly policies, child care and education, housing and transit, and voter education/public investment.
- **Community & Volunteer Engagement:** Grantees led community/volunteer engagement efforts, such as community events, trainings, workshops, lobby days, and successful campaigns, including in civic leadership development, early childhood, transit, and apprenticeship pathways.
- **Research and policy development:** Grantees have developed and disseminated reports, briefs, and blogs to policymakers, opinion leaders, and the public; supported and in some cases led policy development efforts; provided research and analytic support; and engaged in research conversations. Example topics include research on the welfare of women and girls (e.g., brief on TANF); report on middle-class jobs; how to make child care more affordable in Colorado; and achieving gender equity in Colorado apprenticeships.
- **Information dissemination to the public:** Grantee organizations have disseminated information to the public in various ways, including through reports and presentations (e.g., taxes and constitutional policies, 2018 Ballot Guide); postings on websites and social media (e.g., hosting a twitter conversation on women in CO apprenticeships); and generating action alerts (e.g., on early child care educators; paid family leave).
- **Strengthened informal networks:** Grantees have engaged in various activities to strengthen informal networks whether with other WAGES grantees or with other partners, decision-makers, and stakeholders. Example issues that were being tackled included understanding the implications of FAMI on child care providers; the future of work (e.g., the gig economy) and economic mobility issues; and reforming early childhood school removal and inclusion policies.
- **Influenced policy & decision-makers:** Grantees have testified in the House and Senate on multiple bills; provided research and information to bill sponsors and the legislature; held meetings with elected representatives and state agency officials in different ways (e.g., Lunch

and Learns); provided presentations; mailed outreach packets; worked on campaigns; and garnered support for policy priorities.

2019 Legislative Successes Aligned with WFCO's Strategic Plan Priorities

- Wins around access to quality childcare and education included:
 - State funding for full-day kindergarten; income tax credits for early childhood educators; support for development of an infant and family child care action plan; a pilot for K-5th grade social and emotional health support; and tax credits for low-income families for child care expenses.
- Wins for earning equal pay regardless of social identity included:
 - Limits on most employers to ask about criminal history on an initial employment application; prohibiting employers from discriminating in rate of pay based on sex; and a study of the implementation of a paid family and medical leave program in the state.
- Wins around access to higher education included:
 - Removing equity gaps by ensuring more students have access to supplemental academic instruction; regulating student education loan servicers; and requiring that state employees receive information about student loan repayment and forgiveness programs.
- Wins for finding gainful employment and job trainings included:
 - a three-year pilot program to provide emergency employment support and job retention services to eligible, low-income individuals.

What Helps Women and Their Families Achieve Economic Security?

Grantees shared direct service and policy tactics and strategies that support Colorado women's advancement towards livable wages.

Direct Service	Policy Advocacy
<p>Job training programs that include both hard- and soft-skills training, provide comprehensive supports to women and their families, and utilize relationship-building and strengths-based approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partnerships that support complimentary services. • Relationship-building, peer support, and working from strengths to build connections and recognizing that participants already have what they need to be agents of their own change. • Individualized goals and success plans that are attainable and break down barriers. • Financial supports to reduce systemic drivers of inequity. • Connecting participants directly to employment opportunities. • Providing early childhood education and care as part of two-generation strategies. 	<p>Policy advocacy strategies that are bipartisan, multi-pronged, leverage organizational strengths and collaboration, engage communities impacted by the issues, and are well covered by the media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering bipartisan support and working on issues with broad-base appeal. • Sharing research broadly and in ways that are relatable to non-policy experts. • Working in coalition and laying the groundwork in the 'off-season' when policy makers have more time to engage. • Directly engaging the community and supporting leadership development of community members. • Perseverance, patience and leveraging openings when available to take maximum advantage of opportunistic legislative environments.

"Our program has three organizations providing wrap-around services to support our clients and their families.... Relationship-building and rapport with our clients has made our clients feel fully supported and we have seen growth and commitment to achieving their goals. The additional funding through WAGES has given the tools necessary to remove barriers that other programs in our community cannot."

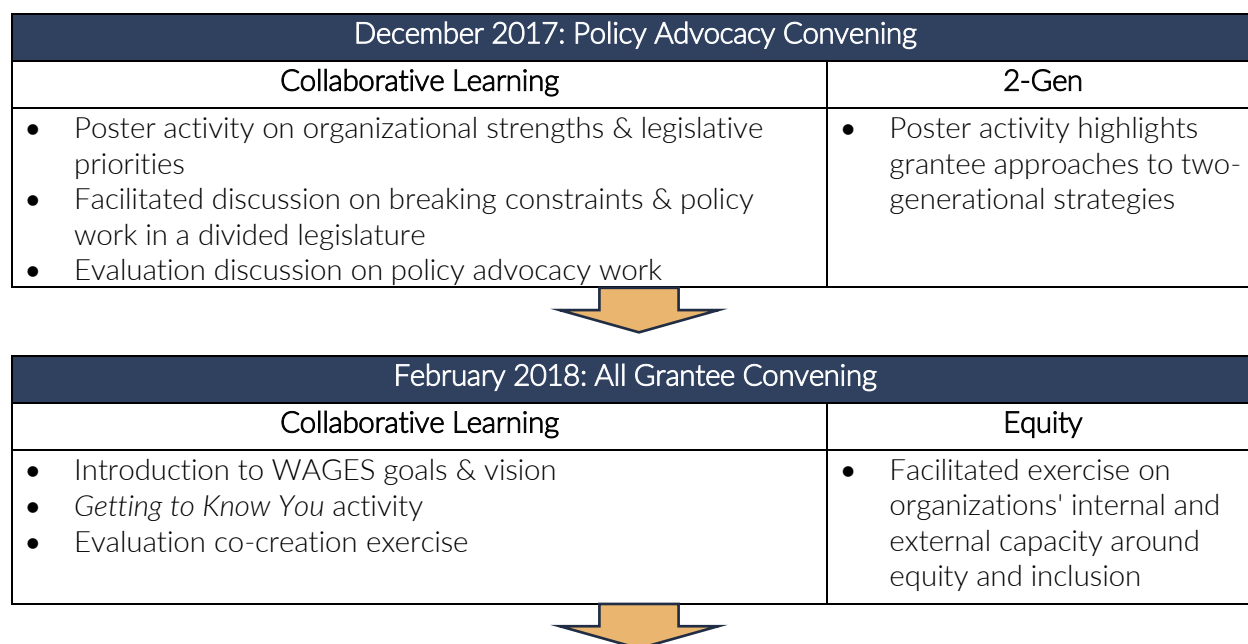
- Direct Service Grantee Staff

"By working on policies that influence the systems (child care, workforce development and training, health care, financial systems, etc.) affecting women's ability to move forth economically, we help level the playing field and demonstrate that women's economic success is tied closely to the economic success of our entire state."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee Staff

Cohort Learning Model

WAGES brings together direct service and policy advocacy organizations to share strategies and innovate, learn from one another, and to collaborate. All grantees come together twice annually, and policy advocacy organizations come together a third time in advance of the legislative session. The learning community consists of grantees, WFCO, project facilitators (Davian Gagne and Zoë Williams), and the evaluators (OMNI Institute). Below, we share key activities in the areas of Collaborative Learning, Equity, and Two-Generational Approaches (2-Gen) from each WAGES-led event, followed by key learnings to date from implementation of the WAGES Cohort approach.



July 2018: 2-Gen and Equity Webinar		
Collaborative Learning	Equity	2-Gen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional opportunity/forum to learn together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated discussion on integrating equity into an organization Introduction to an organizational equity screening tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert panel shares insights and work on two-generational strategies in Colorado



August 2018: All Grantee Convening	
Collaborative Learning	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduates from one program share their experiences Session on uncovering cross-cutting issues for policy change - surfaced & further broke down ideas for a WAGES-focused policy goal Presentation on direct service findings and follow-up small group work on strategies to address implementation challenges Small group discussion on cohort learning model and grantees' desires for group engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Voices panel focuses on creating systems change Grantees provide feedback on equity goals via convening session evaluation



December 2018: Policy Advocacy Convening	
Collaborative Learning	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research sharing session Discussion on election results and implications for the legislative session Revisit issues discussion to further develop a shared policy goal for WAGES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The four 'I's of oppression - case study activity



February 2019: All Grantee Convening ¹		
Collaborative Learning	Equity	2-Gen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWIFI) presentation Share-out from December convening & small-group work on WAGES policy priorities Cross-sector small group conversations to discuss policy advocacy and direct service partnerships Evaluation presentation on policy advocacy findings to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO Trust participants and other WAGES grantees invited to share on learnings around internal organizational equity work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWIFI presentation highlights 2-Gen approach

¹ Please note that the February 2019 all grantee convening was shortened due to inclement weather, and a virtual meeting or webinar was held later in the month to complete the agenda content.

Cohort Model Learnings to Date

Shared Learning

- Grantees value learning from each other.
- Grantees provide positive feedback on convening activities and WAGES work.
- Grantees would like more opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work.



Partnerships

- New partnerships have been formed and existing partnerships have been strengthened.
- Grantees are working together in coalition to move policies forward.
- Grantees have worked collaboratively to develop and inform policy proposals, jointly advocated for or testified on specific policies, and engaged in efforts that support WAGES priorities.



Equity

- Grantees value the equity lens and opportunities to learn & grow in this area.
- WAGES efforts have focused on building equity awareness and increasing organizational capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.
- Grantees want to engage communities in equitable ways, including more inclusive feedback loops for people affected by policies to help set policy priorities.



Policy Goal

- During convenings, grantees have had policy-setting agenda conversations, but no single issue has emerged yet for the group to move forward on together.
- Although diversity among grantees supports learning, it creates challenges in unifying around a policy goal to tackle as a group.
- Identifying a shared policy goal for the cohort to work on together is a priority moving forward.



Recommendations

The following recommendations are provided to support the WAGES cohort's ongoing learning and collaboration:

- **Shared learning:** Prioritize continued (formal and informal) opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work.
- **Partnerships:** Continue to explore how grantee organizations may formally partner to enhance their collective impact.
- **Equity:** Continue to explore internal and external organizational equity issues to help enhance grantees' capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.
- **Policy goal:** Continue to explore what a policy goal(s) for the cohort could look like and how the cohort would like to collaborate around it (i.e., the mechanism/format for this collaboration).

Introduction

The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) has a mission of "Catalyzing community to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families." WFCO also is committed to deepening understanding of how women's identities intersect and addressing structural systems that perpetuate inequity. In 2016, WFCO surveyed 1,300 diverse Coloradans and identified five key resources that women need to achieve economic security: livable wages, equal pay, employment opportunities, child care and higher education. WAGES (Women Achieving Greater Economic Security) is WFCO's programmatic body of work that promotes Colorado women earning livable wages through research, public policy advocacy, and strategic grantmaking. The aim of WAGES is to propel more women into careers that enable them to meet their needs and the needs of their families by elevating "practices that work and by dismantling systems that continue to hold women back." Policy grantees were awarded grants in December of 2017 and Direct Service grantees were awarded in February of 2018.

The OMNI Institute, a nonprofit social science consultancy that provides integrated research and evaluation, capacity building, and data utilization services to accelerate positive social change, was selected as the external evaluator and learning partner for WAGES. To develop the WAGES evaluation, OMNI co-created an evaluation framework with WFCO, grantee organizations, and stakeholders (e.g., WFCO's board). The co-creation approach included facilitated meetings with WFCO and grantee organizations to develop and refine evaluation questions; creating an evaluation plan with grantee input; and implementing data collection tools and processes to facilitate reporting. This collaborative and iterative process was key in the design of the evaluation due to the diversity of grantee organizations and the evolving nature of the work and stakeholder needs. OMNI will continue to provide an agile approach to remain responsive to the needs of the program.

Strategic Grantmaking: As part of WAGES' strategic grantmaking, 23 diverse organizations across the state – 15 direct service² and eight policy advocacy organizations – have been funded for three years to implement services, strategies, and tactics that aim to improve the lives of Colorado women and their families through attainment of livable wages. WAGES grantees include the following direct service and policy advocacy organizations.

Direct Service Grantees

- Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE)
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD)
- Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc. (CHIC)
- Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC), Women's Resource Center, and La Plata
- Eagle County Govt, DHS
- Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc. (EFAA)
- Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado (Flo Critt)
- Mi Casa Resource Center
- OneMorgan County (OMC)
- Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins (PSS)

² WFCO funded 15 direct service organizations. However, because a few of these organizations are working in partnership or formal coalition to deliver their program, there are 15 organizations working on 12 projects. For simplicity, this report references 15 direct service organizations.

Family Centers Coalition (Southwest CO Women's Project)

- Pueblo Community College/Foundation and Boys and Girls Club of Pueblo County

Policy Advocacy Grantees

- 9to5 Colorado
- Bell Policy Center (Bell)
- Colorado Center on Law and Policy (CCLP)
- Colorado Children's Campaign
- Colorado Fiscal Institute
- Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation
- Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC)
- Young Invincibles

Convening & Learning: Interested in harnessing the power and opportunity of bringing 23 diverse and expert organizations together, WAGES has also put in place a “cohort learning model” or learning community among grantees to share and innovate strategies, foster new conversations and collaborations, and inform the larger field of stakeholders interested in improving economic opportunities for women and their families. As part of the cohort learning model, WFCO holds biannual WAGES convenings to bring together both types of grantee organizations and holds a third convening with policy advocacy organizations ahead of the legislative session to inform the work WFCO and policy organizations conduct to advance conditions for Colorado women and their families.

Equity: WFCO strives to understand intersections of identities and to address structural systems of inequity to improve the lives of all Colorado women and their families. WFCO believes that deliberately including diverse perspectives in this work and their decision making will lead to better results. As such, equity has been a frame that has been intentionally infused throughout WAGES - in the selection of diverse grantee organizations from around the state; the types of evaluation questions that have been asked; the co-created and responsive approach to the evaluation; and the cohort learning opportunities that have been implemented as part of the WAGES cohort learning model.

Two-generation Approach: Additionally, WFCO is interested in promoting two-generation solutions to addressing gender and racial inequity, understanding that incorporating the interests of women and their children is key to advancing equity and breaking the cycles of poverty. Two-generation strategies focus on the family system and connect families to services that address the needs of both adults and children. Although WAGES grantees vary in their capacity to implement two-generation strategies, all share WFCO's commitment to service-delivery reforms and policy solutions that help Colorado women and their families improve their economic security, which includes fostering healthy child development.

On the following page is a journey map highlighting the various ways in which the WAGES cohort has come together from the beginning of the grant through March of 2019. The evaluation will continue to document the WAGES cohort's journey through the remainder of the grant.

WAGES Cohort Journey Map

WAGES grantees receive funding



1st Policy Advocacy Grantee Convening

Grantees focused on organizational **strengths** and **priorities** heading into 2018 legislative session, discussing needed support and what **good partnerships** look like.



1st All Grantee WAGES Convening

Grantees were introduced to the **vision** and **goals** for WAGES. They also focused on their organizations capacity for **equity** and **inclusion**.



December 2017

February 2018



2nd All Grantee WAGES Convening

Convening focused on continued learning around **equity**, **two-generation strategies** & identifying **cross-cutting policy issues**.



Two-Generation and Equity Webinar

Webinar deepened understanding of **two-generation strategies** and internal organizational capacity to improve **equity**, as well as created a space for WAGES members to **connect with each other**.



August 2018

July 2018



2nd Policy Advocacy Grantee Convening

Grantees explored the **changing legislature** and how they will need to shift strategies and tactics. Selected grantees also **shared their research** as it related to WAGES.



3rd All Grantee WAGES Convening

Grantees continued dialoguing about improving **equity** within organizations, **forming partnerships**, as well as identifying **shared policy priorities**.



December 2018

February 2019

Evaluation Questions: Designed to inform WFCO's strategic grantmaking and desires to support learning in the field, at a high-level, the WAGES evaluation seeks to answer the following overarching questions:

- **Reach** – Who are the women and families reached by WAGES direct service grantees?
- **Implementation** – What services and strategies are WAGES grantees using to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for women and their families?
 - What are the strengths and challenges of a given approach?
- **Outcomes** – To what extent are WAGES grantees supporting women and their families' progress towards a livable wage?
- **Cohort Learning** – How is the cohort learning model implemented and facilitating improvements to grantees' strategies? How can these learnings be used to inform the field?

Methods

To answer the WAGES evaluation questions and minimize reporting burden on grantees, two primary data collection methods were selected: 1) A WAGES Cohort Survey that is administered to grantees twice per year; and 2) Information gathering from grantees during WAGES Convenings through activities, facilitated discussions, and surveys, as applicable.

WAGES Cohort Survey: The WAGES Cohort Survey (WAGES Survey) was designed to collect the following information:

- **Direct service information** (Direct Service grantees only)–participant demographics, barriers to a livable wage, financial support systems utilized, services accessed, and participant outcomes; and grantee successes and challenges with implementation of services and lessons learned.
- **Policy advocacy information** (Policy/Advocacy grantees only) – strategies and tactics implemented, outcomes, successes and challenges of strategies and tactics, and lessons learned.
- **Cohort learning** (all grantees) – reflections on the cohort learning model, including how the model has supported services/strategies/tactics, ways to improve the model, and new collaborations, strategies, and efforts that have resulted.
- **Evaluation & TA** (all grantees)– questions on areas for evaluation support as well as length of time spent on the survey and what felt difficult to answer to support future refinements to evaluation tools and processes.

WAGES Convenings: WFCO conducts WAGES convenings to bring together all grantees, and OMNI conducts evaluation-related sessions as applicable to collect grantee feedback. OMNI also documents convening notes for analysis and reporting. This first programmatic year (December 2017 - March 2019), the WAGES cohort came together multiple times – in December of 2017 (Policy Advocacy grantees); February and August of 2018 (all grantees); December of 2018 (Policy Advocacy grantees); and February of 2019 (all grantees). At the convenings, representatives from

grantee organizations, WFCO staff and board members, the facilitation consultants, and OMNI staff came together all-day sessions designed to support cohort learning and networking opportunities. Convening agendas are provided in Appendix A.

This report includes information from two administrations of the WAGES Survey (summer of 2018, spring of 2019), as well as from data collection efforts at the grantee convenings.

Data and Evaluation Considerations

Below, we share important data and evaluation contextual information that will be helpful to the reader in interpreting evaluation findings.

Direct Service Data

Aggregate-level reporting. Grantees provide aggregate-level information on women served through WAGES (e.g., grantees provide the total number of women who received financial coaching services rather than a person-level data file with information on each woman served). After careful consideration during the planning stages, we determined that aggregate-level reporting will meet the needs of the evaluation and is appropriate for the amount of resources available to support grantees in providing data for the evaluation. A limitation of this approach, however, is that the evaluation 1) relies on the accuracy of grantees to tally the information on women served and 2) cannot examine information beyond the set of variables provided (e.g., we cannot further disaggregate the data to explore additional questions by sub-groups of women such as the number of women employed by race/ethnicity).

Variation in number of women served. The number of women served through WAGES varies by direct service grantee. As such, summary information on women served is weighted towards those grantees who serve greater numbers of women. In this first year, Project Self-sufficiency served 33% (n=140) of the women included in the report, followed by Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado who served 15% (n=62), and CHIC who served 13% (n=55). The other 12 grantees (nine programs) served fewer than 10% each. For a breakdown of each grantee's number of women served in relation to the overall sample, see Table B.1. in Appendix B.

Information excluded: Through the co-creation process, it was determined that some questions about women's identities, although important, would be too difficult to collect systematically across organizations due to inconsistent existing data collection practices (e.g., sexual orientation, immigrant status were not typically captured). As such, the evaluation cannot report on these areas through the WAGES Survey but could capture information on these factors through qualitative efforts in the future.

Policy Advocacy Data

Evaluating the impact of advocacy and policy work. Methods to evaluate policy and advocacy efforts lag behind other evaluation areas due to the complexity and evolving nature of the political process itself. The WAGES evaluation has an added layer of complexity in that it seeks to examine efforts across multiple organizations engaging in different focus areas and in different policy and advocacy arenas. As such, rather than evaluate the outcomes of these activities, the evaluation was designed to learn from the reflections of grantees as they engage in the work, and to leverage

their expertise to understand the strategies and tactics that will help advance women's economic prosperity.

Contribution versus attribution. There are many forces at play and factors that intersect to influence changes in complex systems. It is rarely possible to attribute policy changes to a single organization, initiative or effort. As such, we are using the evaluation to learn about the work of grantees to identify a deeper understanding of the strategies and tactics that contribute to changes rather than trying to attribute definitive judgements about the successes or failures of particular efforts.

Isolating WFCO-funded activities. In some instances, WAGES funding is a small portion of an organization's overall operating budget. As such, it is often difficult for grantees to parse out and report on activities that are specifically WAGES-funded. On the WAGES Survey, grantees were asked to do their best to report on activities to which WAGES funding contributed, but it is important to note that the evaluation is not designed to isolate the impact of WAGES funding.

Strategic Learning

The WAGES evaluation is designed to learn about what grantees are doing to promote Colorado women's economic security – what services, strategies, and tactics are being carried out; what's working and what isn't – and what impact grantee organizations are having in different ways that are supportive to Colorado women and their families. The audiences for this information include WFCO, its board, grantee organizations, and when applicable, the larger field.

Reading this report

Please note that “grantees” will be used to indicate direct service and policy advocacy organizational representatives, and “participants” will be used to describe the women who were utilizing services and supports through the WAGES direct service organizations.

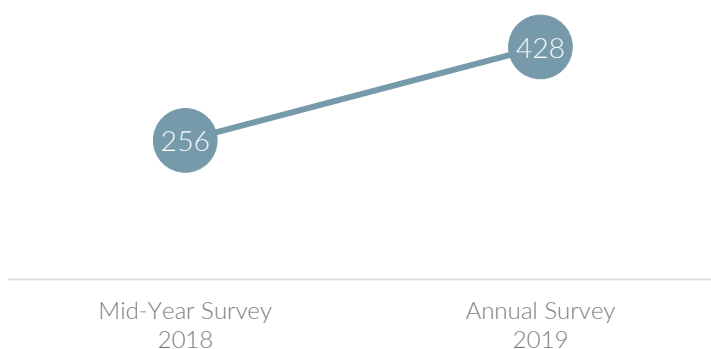
Findings

WAGES Direct Service Grantee Efforts

Reach

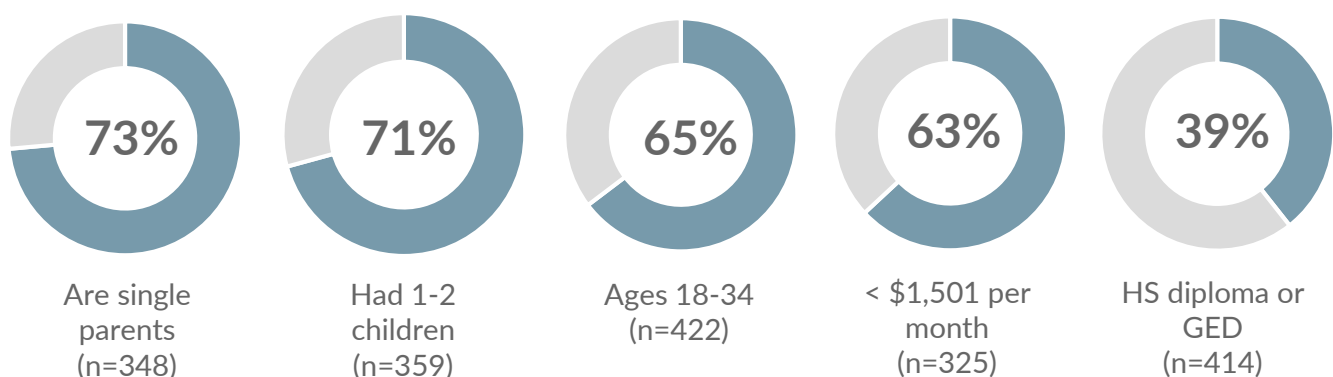
The second WAGES Survey (sent out in March-April 2019) was administered to the 15 direct service (DS) grantees. DS grantees provided data on 428 women who were reached through WAGES funding, serving an additional 172 women since the last reporting period.

FIGURE 1. WOMEN SERVED THROUGH WAGES FUNDING



Overall, most WAGES participants are single mothers with one or two children. At program entry, 63% were earning \$1,500 or less per month, and 39% of participants had a high school diploma/GED. For full demographic information, please see Appendix B.

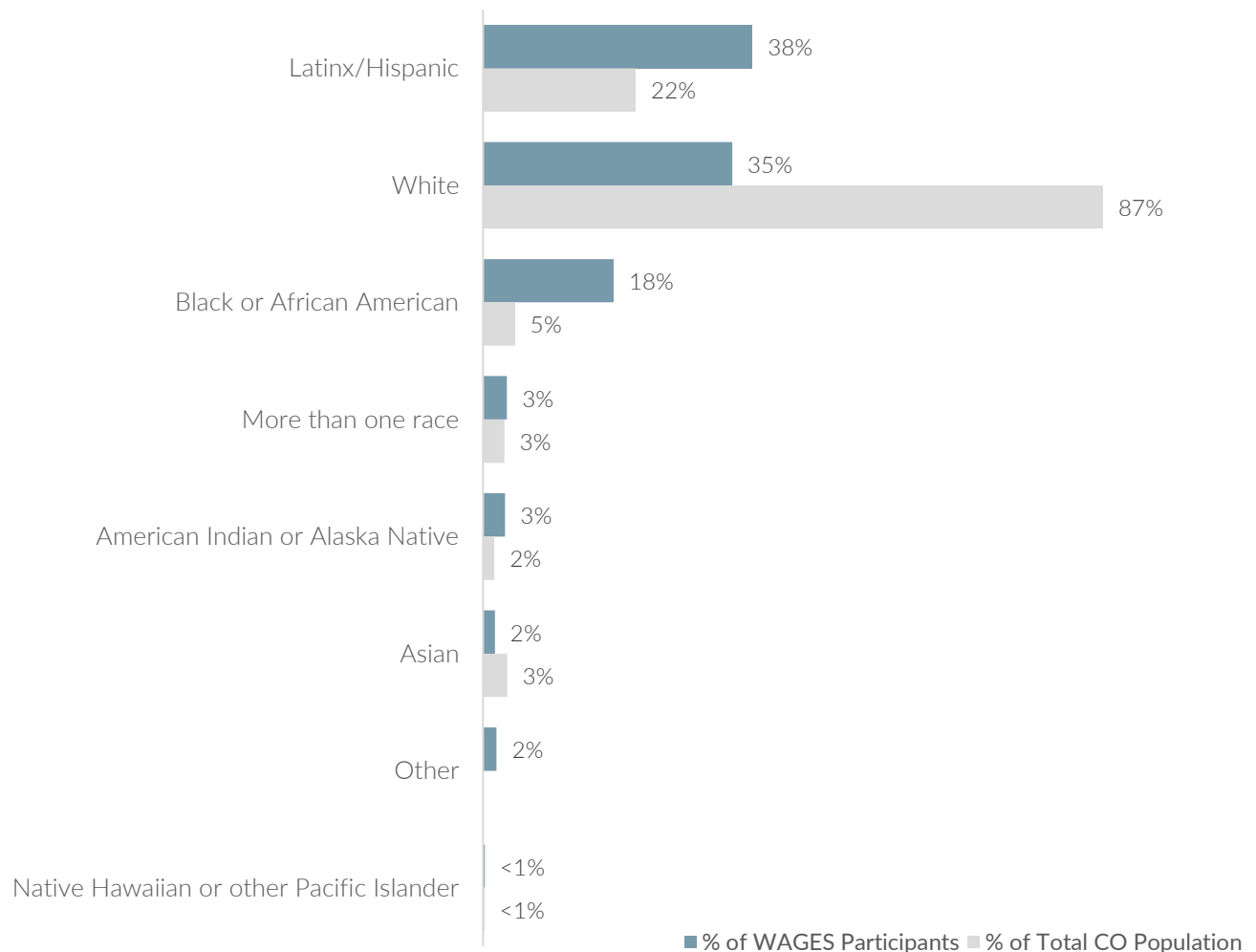
FIGURE 2. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



Race and Ethnicity

As Figure 3 shows, WAGES participants are more diverse racially/ethnically compared to the Colorado population. Among WAGES participants, the majority identified as Latinx/Hispanic (38%), followed by participants who identified as White (35%) and Black or African American (18%).

FIGURE 3. RACE/ETHNICITY FOR WAGES PARTICIPANTS COMPARED TO CO POPULATION

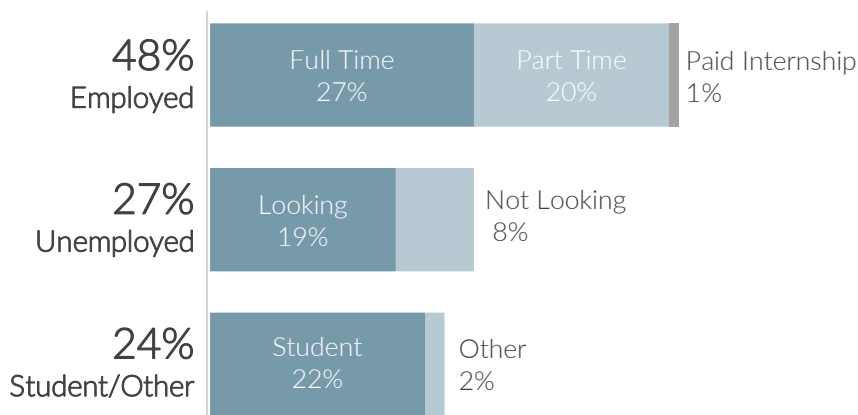


Note: Grantees were able to select more than one race/ethnicity for each participant. Percentages slightly exceed 100%. Colorado population estimates are from the 2018 U.S. Census estimates and for both women and men, as data were not available by race/ethnicity and gender. Further, "other" race/ethnicity is not an option for the census data but was for WAGES grantees; for these reasons, please use caution when comparing the data.

Employment Status

At program entry, DS grantee organizations reported that most WAGES participants were employed (48%) and worked either full-time (27%), part-time (20%), or had a paid internship (1%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of women were unemployed, and 22% were full-time students.

FIGURE 4. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' EMPLOYMENT STATUS

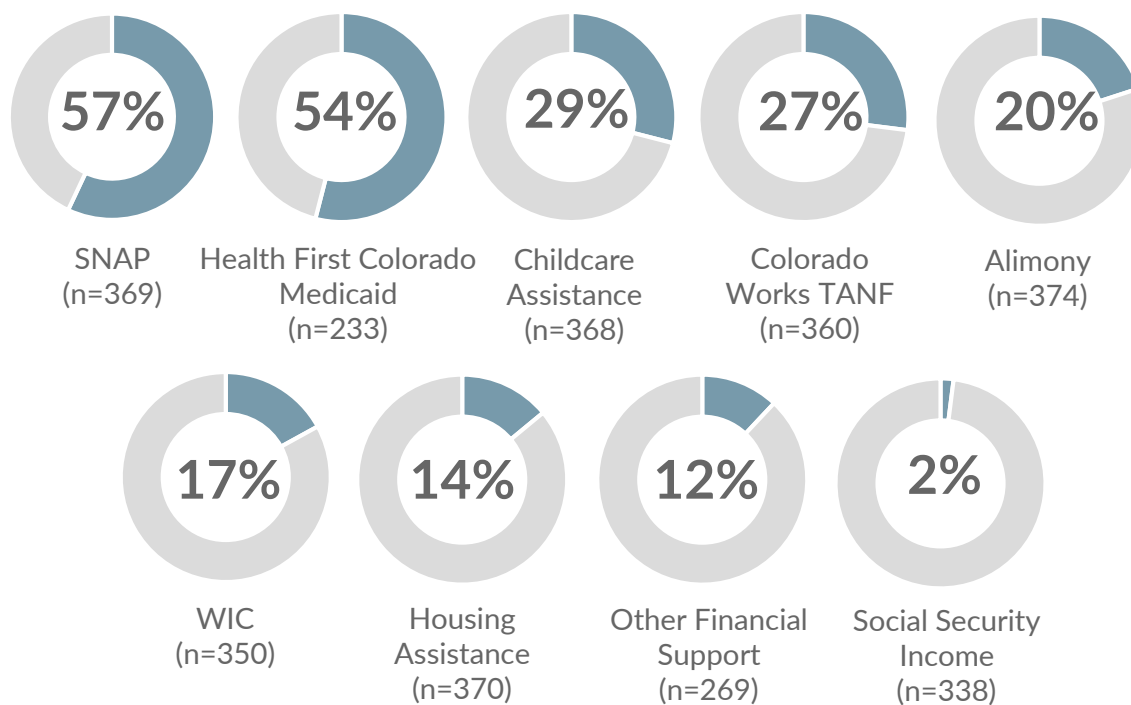


Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized. n = 347

Financial Support Systems

DS grantees were asked to indicate what financial support systems their WAGES participants utilized. When reading Figure 5, please note variation in missing data across support systems.

FIGURE 5. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

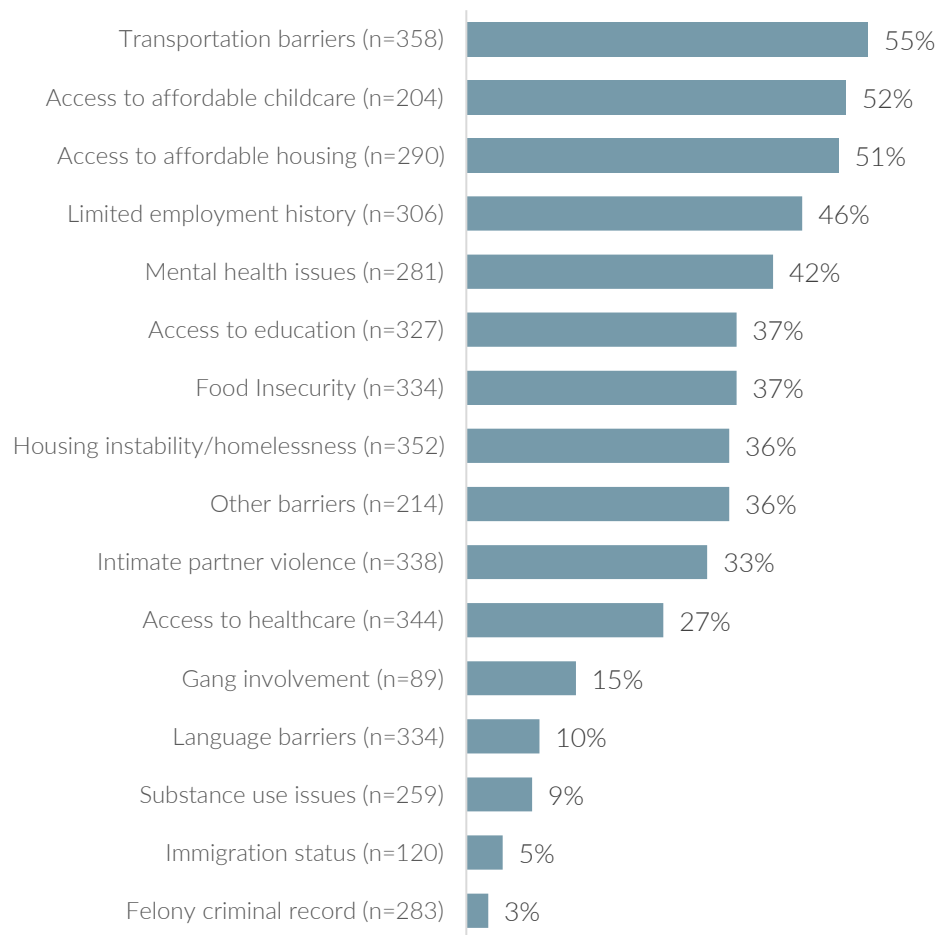


Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that missing data varies on several types of support. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes should be read with caution.

Barriers to Economic Security

DS grantees were asked to report on the number of participants who experienced specific barriers to obtaining a livable wage. As shown in Figure 3, many participants struggled with transportation barriers, access to affordable childcare, access to affordable housing, and limited employment history. Please note variation in available data across types of barriers.

FIGURE 6. BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC SECURITY

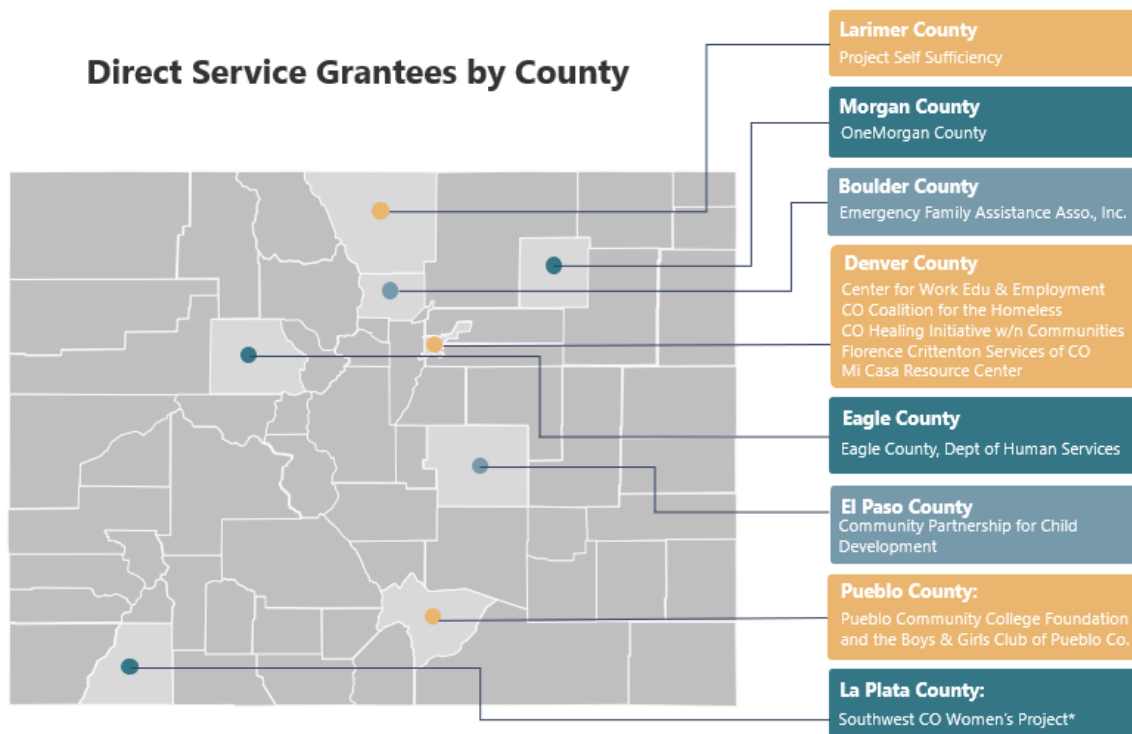


Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that data were missing on several types of barriers. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes should be read with caution.

Geography

DS grantees served diverse women throughout Colorado, including in the Denver Metro Area (5), Boulder County (1), Larimer County (1), Morgan County (1), La Plata/Durango (3), Pueblo County (1), El Paso County (1), and Eagle County (1).

FIGURE 7. DIRECT SERVICE GRANTEE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS



Note: The Southwest Colorado Women's Project is implemented by the Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC), Women's Resource Center, and La Plata Family Centers Coalition.

Implementation

Table B.4 in Appendix B summarizes the DS grantees' programming and the targeted population/demographics of the women they serve.

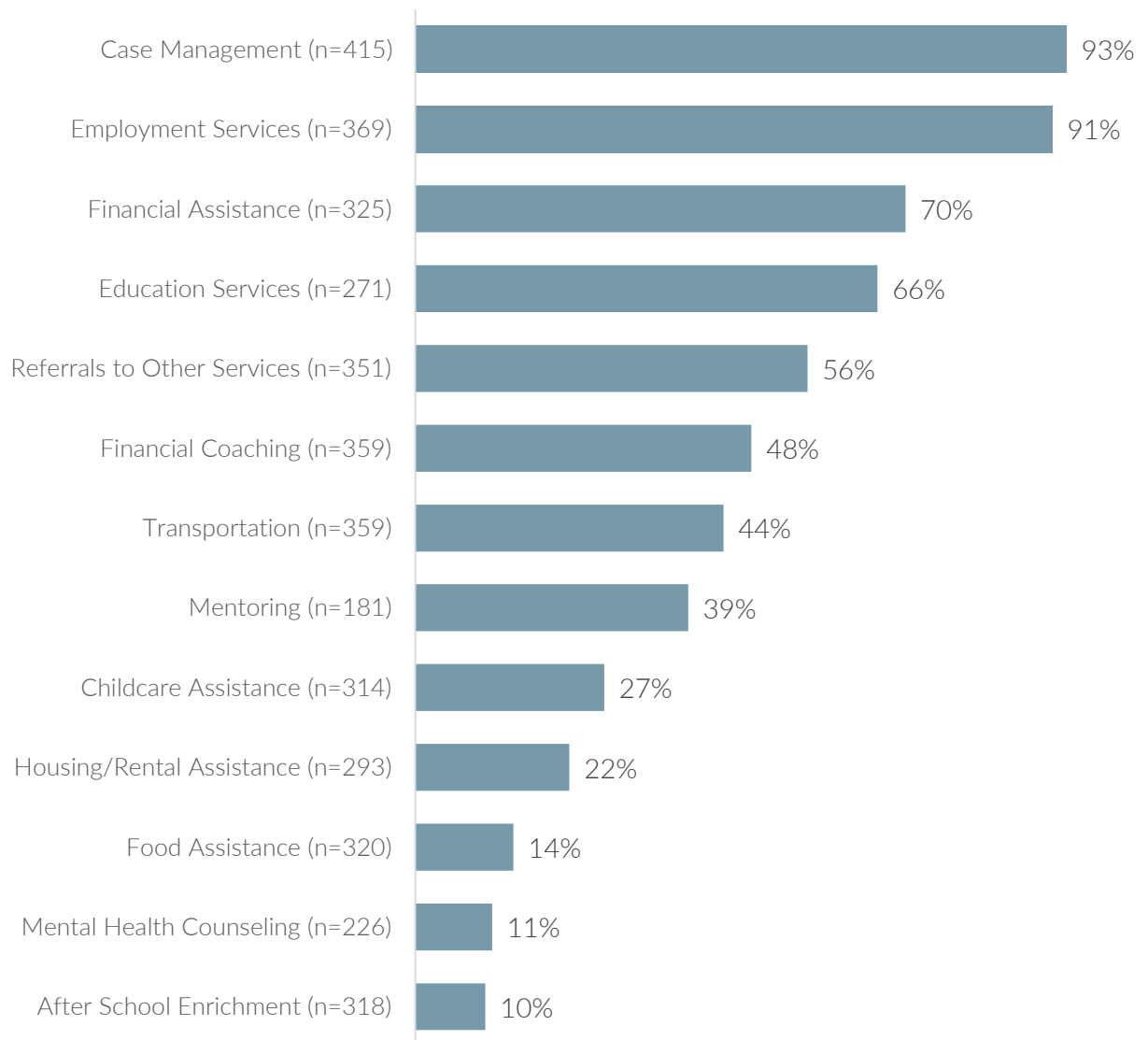
Program Services and Activities at Intake

DS grantees provide various types of programming, services and activities to support WAGES participants. As Figure 8 shows, most participants received case management services and employment services. More detailed information about program services and activities, including information about what holistic service delivery entails, will be collected at the September 2019 convening.

"I think having such positive people around me here made the biggest difference. I love this program and this staff. It has truly motivated me, and I don't believe I would be where I am today without it."

- WAGES Participant

FIGURE 8. PROGRAM SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES



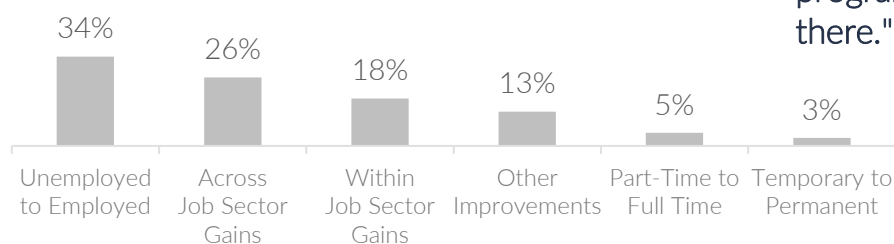
Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that data were missing on some service types. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes should be read with caution.

Early Outcomes

In the WAGES Survey, DS grantees were asked to report on the number of women who made gains in various areas (e.g., employment, education) and applicable job sectors in which those gains were achieved.

104 WAGES participants have made early employment gains, including access to employment, within job sector gains (promotion, salary increase, added benefits), and across sector gains (moving to a more desired salary in another field), as shown in Figure 9. Participants have found employment in various fields including: childcare, customer service, education, financial services, food services, healthcare, information technology (IT), non-profits, real estate and leasing, security services, and staffing.

FIGURE 9. EMPLOYMENT GAINS



- WAGES Participant

"I really love my new job, and I am so grateful to [the program] for connecting me to these opportunities. Everything they taught us in the training was exactly what we needed to know for a career...And, the staff are still there for me. Ever since I got hired, they're still checking in on me to see how I'm doing, and I really appreciate that. I want to tell everyone I know if you want to change, [this program] will help you get there."

One grantee reported that their successful program graduates (who were already employed) increased their wages by an average of \$20,952 annually. For example, one participant was supported by the program as she completed her college degree and after graduation became employed as an accountant. Another grantee noted that all graduates who received training/certification for the construction field saw increased wages. For example, one participant graduated from their eight-week construction job bootcamp and is now bidding her own post-construction clean-up contracts.

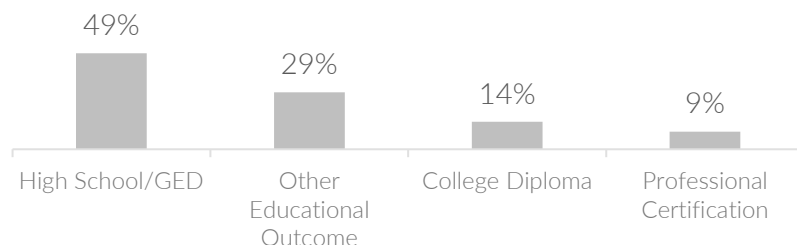
31 WAGES participants have reduced public supports, including two women reporting they were completely off all public supports and were fully able to care for their families. Others have reduced support on government subsidies and supports in areas of income, housing, childcare, food, and healthcare.

However, reducing public supports can be a more complex story. For example, one WAGES participant who completed her GED was able to find employment in the Human Services field but soon experienced the 'Cliff effect.' As part of the program's employment retention services, the participant was supported with mentoring, financial coaching, and monetary support for three months while she transitioned to employment. The participant noted, *"This was a great program. When I got my job, I was cut off from food assistance right away, and I did not have money saved. This program helped me buy food for my boys and gave me the time to get through the first few months so that I could plan for my future without assistance."*

105 WAGES participants have reached their educational goals

in fields such as early childhood education, healthcare, financial services, interior design, social work, sociology, apparel and merchandising. Fifty-one women (49%) gained their high school diploma or GED, and 30 women (29%) completed work-based learning.

FIGURE 10. EDUCATIONAL GAINS



Specific examples of educational successes were provided by grantees. One grantee shared: *"At 15 years old, [our participant's] life took an unexpected turn when she found out she was pregnant. Three years later, she has finished all her high school classes a semester early and will graduate with the class of 2019. Her bright and playful daughter is two years old."* Another grantee noted that one of their participants emigrated to the United States with her family, and despite having completed higher education in her country of origin, she struggled to find a job. The participant completed an Information Technology (IT) internship, received A+ certification and has decided to continue her training with an additional technology certification class. *"Once she completes this class, [our participant] is excited to secure a full-time position in the IT field."*

"Not only did 16 Participants earn a certificate or degree, but also their 25 children saw their moms reach their goals of pursuing post-secondary education. The two-generational impact of this accomplishment is highly impactful and sets the stage for the next generation of children to also pursue higher education."

- Direct Service Grantee Staff

Early Direct Service Implementation Challenges

DS grantees were asked to describe any challenges or barriers that they faced in program implementation. They discussed a variety of issues that can influence the recruitment of interested participants as well as participant ability to follow through with program commitments. Challenges typically fell into three core areas including:



Program-specific challenges

- Determining effective strategies to recruit interested participants
- Program timing (e.g., services that need to happen concurrently to realize best program outcomes)
- Program length (e.g., longer program durations that can be difficult for participants to sustain)
- Lack of available funding for supplementing lost wages during participant education/training
- Organizational issues such as staff turnover or unclear processes that can make navigating services more difficult for participants

System-level barriers

- Lack of affordable housing, including accessing assistance such as vouchers and locating available housing units
- Lack of affordable child care
- Male-dominated fields that can result in a lack of participant interest, discomfort, stress and risks for women entering the workforce
- Transportation barriers such as adequate bus routes or prohibitive costs
- Fragmented or siloed workforce systems that make it difficult for participants to navigate complex or competing program requirements

Individual-level stressors or challenges

- Participant emotional and mental health challenges such as exhaustion, feeling overwhelmed, lack of confidence, and management of persistent and acute stressors, all of which can impact one's ability to follow through with program commitments
- An urgent need and/or preference for the reliability of low-wage employment over education and training that does not yield an immediate pay off
- Language barriers or immigration status

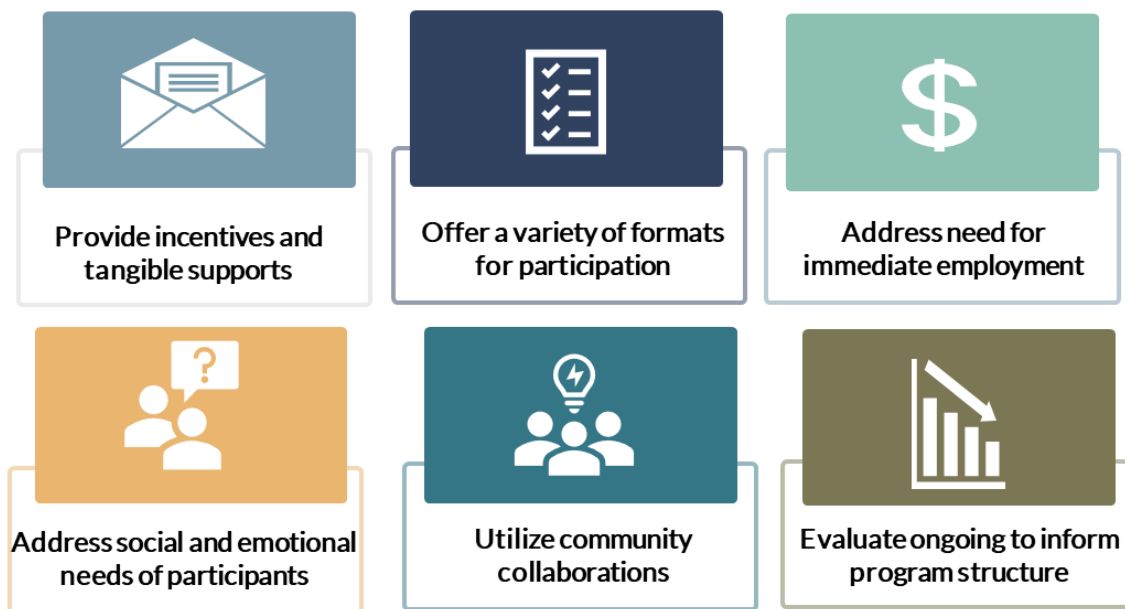
" The amount of mental and physical energy that living in poverty consumes should not be underestimated.... As they are working to move their families out of poverty and into self-sufficiency, they may not have the ability to tackle even one more thing in their lives, and [a] critical resource is literally left on the table. We in the sector need to remain highly aware of this and incorporate this into programming as much as possible.

- Direct Service Grantee Staff

Solutions for Overcoming Barriers to Program Completion

Through survey items as well as in-person dialogue at the August 2018 convening, grantees shared a broad range of strategies for overcoming barriers to program participation and completion. Some grantees also shared specific program changes and modifications they had already implemented, including changes to program structure, content, and processes; outreach approaches; staffing; and community partnerships to enhance programming. Potential strategies as well as implemented changes are outlined below and can serve as a useful resource for current and future grantees. Strategies may also be applied to the larger field of programs serving low-income women.

Key Strategy Areas



Provide incentives and key accommodations



- Offer on-site childcare to women receiving services or participating in classes and/or trainings.
- Provide transportation to and from programs and/or trainings.
- Offer incentives for high attendance rates; for example, payments for completing classes would allow participants to complete programming while covering their basic needs.
- Provide incentives, such as gift cards, meals, childcare, etc. to reward clients for completing the follow-up assessment.

Offer a variety of formats for participation



- Offer program flexibility, such as part-time participation and programming on evenings and weekends.
- Allow participants to receive programming through multiple methods (e.g., live stream via online access; video-taped presentations; mobile programming to meeting clients in various locations; in home training; etc.).
- Consider community-based services (i.e., meeting participants in the community) to reduce transportation burden, time, and cost for participants.
- Ensure flexible communication using multiple methods (e.g., e-mail, text, phone, skype, video message, etc.). Home visits and meeting clients at a convenient location was also suggested.
- Allow for independent follow-up completion, such as through automated follow-up surveys that are triggered at specified time points.
- Offer flexible program/training schedule that allows participants to work while they are enrolled in programming.

Address need for immediate employment



- Offer stipends and wage supplements, such as paid participation in training programs, scholarships, and internships to allow participants to meet basic needs while receiving services.
- Offer job prospecting assistance and connect participants with workforce career center/career coaches to help participants find employment while in the program and/or following programming.
- Expand available job opportunities by broadening outreach to less traditional fields.

Address social and emotional needs of participants



- Provide outreach, ongoing communication and long-term case management to participants to build rapport, lasting relationships; create expectations of regular communication with participants and increase program engagement.
- Increase opportunities for participant self-care, as well as overall confidence and morale-building.
- Provide social opportunities and build networks through activities such as coaching, tutoring, meet-and-greets, in-house trainings, and roundtable discussions to decrease feelings of isolation

Utilize community collaborations



- Create community collaborations to enhance programming (e.g., partner with local universities to provide certifications or local college counselors to assist with mental health and wellness needs).
- Foster partnerships with other agencies and to share learnings and strategies, and merge resources.
- Engage partners in planning through implementation to ensure transparency and jointly determine milestones and measures of success.

Evaluate ongoing to inform program structure



- Ensure ongoing evaluation through numerous feedback loops (e.g., participants, staff, community partners) to inform program modifications.
- Increase clarity of services provided and how they align with participant and community needs.
- Modify and/or broaden eligibility requirements to expand reach and serve more of the community.
- Improve core program processes such as referral and intake to reduce participant burden and minimize discomfort.
- Utilize quality assessments to best match program participants with appropriate training.
- Add additional training elements, content or program areas as needed.
- Restructure teams or staffing as needed to address gaps (e.g., hire staff dedicated solely to participant follow-up and/or staff that allow for quality and long-term follow-up with participants).
- Ensure that staff are well-qualified and adequately trained to provide high quality services and meet the goals and needs of the program.

At the September 2019 WAGES convening, an evaluation activity will be conducted to facilitate better understanding of how WAGES grantees are implementing the best practices above, and how grantees may need more support in helping women and their families overcome barriers.

Program Participants' Innovative Solutions



DS grantees were asked to share any innovative solutions they had seen participants taking to achieve success and a range of creative strategies were noted. Some grantees highlighted the strong personal qualities of the women they serve such as determination, resilience, grit and courage. Many also shared specific strategies they had observed, including:

- Pooling resources
 - Pooling **transportation**
 - Sharing **child care**, including sharing providers and developing study groups that meet where a friend, family member, or free licensed provider can provide child care
- Developing **support networks**
 - Providing and/or receiving informal mentorship from peers
 - Creating opportunities for increased social connection
- Employing creative **budgeting solutions** such as using tax return funds to pre-pay housing costs
- Using creative **schedule management strategies** such as working flexible, temporary or part-time jobs while continuing coursework or training
- Developing opportunities to create a **personal business** (i.e., self-employment)
- Identifying **targeted personal goals** to stay on track
- Investing in **internal work** such as self-care, self-reflection, dealing with past trauma, and confidence-building.

Policy Advocacy Grantee Efforts

On the WAGES Survey, policy advocacy (PA) grantees were asked to share what strategies, tactics and activities they were implementing as part of their WAGES-funded (or most related) work. PA grantees also were asked to reflect on any early outcomes. Below, a synthesis of grantee responses is presented.

Implementation of Policy Advocacy Strategies and Tactics

All PA grantees indicated utilizing multiple strategies to increase economic security for women and their families, including coalition building and collaborative development; community and volunteer engagement; research and policy development; dissemination of information to the public; development and strengthening of informal alliances; and activities to directly influence policymakers, policy influencers, and decision makers. Within strategies, grantees led many of the efforts, leveraged their organizational strengths, and collaborated with others to amplify impact. Below is brief summary of the activities and early wins that have taken place.

Formal Coalition & Collaborative Development

PA grantees were asked to list up to three coalitions they worked on that were most closely related to WAGES, and all PA grantees indicated working in at least one formal coalition to advance their priorities for improving the lives of Colorado women and their families. Coalitions were grouped by the below focus areas (the number in parentheses indicate how many coalitions were listed within focus areas).

- **Financial equity (2):** [Financial Equity Coalition](#) focuses on advancing retirement security, stopping predatory lending, promoting asset building, addressing student loan debt; [Work Here Thrive Here](#) works to increase local minimum wage by working with local communities to pass minimum wages higher than state-set minimum wages.
- **Workforce training (4):** [Skills2Complete](#) is a multi-sector coalition that promotes policies to bridge the gap between jobs that employers offer now and in the near future and the skills that current job seekers have, focusing on skills training from adult education through middle-skills jobs; [Colorado State Youth Council](#) influences policy and practice at state and local levels to develop successful economic pathways for employers and workers; [Denver Opportunity Youth \(OY\) Steering Committee](#) works to create a pipeline for Opportunity Youth by securing support services (e.g., housing, affordable childcare), education, training opportunities, work experience and job placement; [Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship Coalition](#) creates pathways for Opportunity Youth in the healthcare sector.
- **Family-friendly policies (2):** [Colorado FAMILI Coalition](#) is working to pass the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMILI) bill to create a program for partial wage replacement benefits when an individual takes leave from work to care for a new child or a family member with a serious health condition; [Strengthening Working Families Initiative \(SWFI\) Planning Team and Policy Workgroup](#) provides research and data on child care issues (e.g., deserts in the SWFI service area, best practices for two-generation programs, issues related to the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program) and identifies opportunities to address barriers students are experiencing from a policy perspective, as well as working on strategies for how this model program could expand to other community colleges within the state.

- **Child care and education (8)³:** [Child Care Tax Credits Coalition](#) focuses legislative attention on several aspects of the Colorado tax code to improve access to child care for working families; [Child Related Tax Credit Coalition](#) is the informal name for a fluid/ad hoc legislative coalition and is a sub-group of the EITC Coalition; the subgroup focuses on coordinating, clarifying, strategizing and supporting bills that support child tax credits; [Colorado Child Care Assistance Program \(CCCAP\) Advocacy](#) works to reform and invest in CCCAP, the largest investment in child care access for low-income and working families in the state. **In 2019:** The coalition advocated for maintaining increased CCCAP funding levels in the state budget in the coming fiscal year (\$10.5 million investment required); secured the endorsement of over a dozen organizations on a joint letter to the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budget and to the Joint Budget Committee of the legislature. [Family, Friend, and Neighbor Learning Community](#) explores both policy and non-policy related approaches to supporting informal child caregivers such as family members, friends or neighbors, works to ensure access to quality early experiences, and focused on learning how to connect families and informal caregivers with additional resources like state libraries and home visitation programs. [Full Day Kindergarten NOW Coalition](#) worked on a bill to fund full-day kindergarten (HB19-1262), and the Joint Budget Committee appropriated funding for each 2019/20 kindergarten student attending for a full day. [Raise Colorado](#) promotes policies that support Colorado's pregnant women and people, expecting families, infants, and toddlers through public awareness, policy development, and advocacy efforts. Policy priorities **in 2019** included strengthening the state's Maternal Morality Review Committee, infant mortality prevention, developing a strategic action plan to address the state's infant and child care shortage, authorizing special districts for early childhood development, paid family leave, and housing issues that directly impact family stability. [Early Childhood Educator Tax Credit Coalition](#) tackles Inadequate compensation of early care and education workforce. The credit was passed and represented an innovative way to build economic self-sufficiency among the early childhood workforce and will add stability to the \$1.4 billion early care and education industry in Colorado. [Early Childhood Special Districts Coalition](#) – Passage of an administrative amendment to add "early childhood services" to the definition of qualified expenditures under the special districts statute. HB19-1052 Early Childhood Special Districts passed.
- **Housing & Transit (3):** [Colorado Homes for All Coalition](#) works towards safe and affordable housing; policy priorities include overturning the ban on rent control, strengthening the current Warranty of Habitability, limiting housing application costs, and building renter power across the state. **In 2019**, the coalition was successful in passing two housing bills through the state legislature and was also successful in getting a task force approved in the city of Aurora to tackle mobile home displacement; the City of Aurora voted in March 2019 to provide \$10,000 per lot in relocation fees to all remaining residents of one mobile park community. [Rent Control or Local Control campaign](#) worked to overturn the statewide ban on rent control so that municipalities can do what they need to do to address the housing crisis without the significant limitations that are currently in place. [Affordable Fares Task Force](#) is a collaborative that advocates for affordable transit options and better route services. A main priority has been to get an income-based pass for riders, which was successful.

³ Please note that one grantee organization provided information on six coalitions around child care and education, as three new coalitions related to WAGES priorities had emerged during the 2019 legislative session.

- **Voter education/Public investment (2):** [Vision 2020](#) works to build a public investment majority by getting network members to communicate regularly about the important role that public investments play in building strong communities; laying the foundation for successful efforts to revise constitutional tax policy in ways that provide a better opportunity for robust investment in community activities that benefit women and girls. **In 2019:** The coalition continued to expand the number of organizational and individual participants in the coalition; created different subcommittees; expanded communications and outreach capacity, contracting with dedicated communications support and creating a monthly newsletter to update and inform coalition members; have begun the process of "testing" different ballot measures and language around repealing and replacing TABOR; presentations to different partners and potential stakeholders across the state. [Count Me In!](#) in 2018 worked to build a public investment majority, focusing on 1) reminding voters of their unique policy making role in Colorado and 2) providing voters/decision makers with information about the ballot issues that were on the 2018 state ballot.

Community & Volunteer Engagement

Five out of the eight grantees indicated working in this strategy, and areas of work included community events, trainings, and workshops on the legislative process and specific campaigns to enhance civic engagement and develop community leadership. One grantee also engages in canvassing, knocking on doors, and collecting stories from community members about housing, transit, and CO FAMLI.

In 2019, PA grantees' updated responses included:

- Denver Youth Leadership Academy had 15 participants successfully complete the program, five of whom are now on the State Youth Council.
- The Equity in Early Childhood Coalition leveraged strengths around grassroots mobilization, lived experiences, data, research and policy development to blend for effective advocacy at the Capitol.
- A year and a half of community organizing around transit, which resulted in RTD agreeing to a more equitable transit pass program, including a new low-income fare program, which will provide a 40 percent discount to households at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level; increase the discount offered to riders 6-19 years old to 70 percent; and up to three children 5 and younger can ride free with a fare-paying adult.
- Development of a new consumer-facing training in 2019 on apprenticeship pathways, wages, and ways young adults can engage with policymakers and other stakeholders on workforce issues in Colorado.
- The All Families Deserve a Chance Coalition held its second lobby day, with about 85 attendees from multiple organizations.

Research & Policy Development

Almost all grantees indicated working in this area, developing and disseminating reports, briefs, blogs to policymakers, opinion leaders, and the public; supporting and in some cases leading policy development; providing research and analytic support, and engaging in research conversations.

"Our report was used by the *Together We Count* coalition to develop legislation for census funding in the current session, which is incredibly important for women and girls because it determines federal funding in our state budget."

Example research that was indicated for 2019 included:

- Policy Advocacy Grantee Staff

- Research relating to the welfare of women and girls, including a series of briefs highlighting the history, eligibility criteria, and economic impact of [TANF](#) and of the Low-Income House Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); a summary of the importance of federal programs for Colorado families; a brief on [Inequities in the Senior Homestead Exemption](#) and an analysis of the census funding necessary for Colorado to get a complete count in 2020.
- [Is Middle-Class Entry Possible Without a College Degree?](#): A Look at Construction and Extraction Jobs in Colorado, a brief exploring construction and extraction jobs and their potential to help Colorado families move into the middle class. A series of pieces on aspects of paid family leave, including Colorado Paid Leave: Learning from Massachusetts and Washington; and [Why Coloradans Need Paid Leave and How to Offer It](#); Retirement Security: Learning from Oregon and Washington; By the Numbers: Colorado Workers in Low-Wage Jobs; Several pieces on early childhood and child care issues, including Early Childhood Policies in Colorado and [Making Child Care More Affordable in Colorado](#); Several pieces on student debt, including Student Debt Solutions: Sizing Up Colorado's Approach and Understanding the Student Debt Crisis and How We Got Here; The Predatory Lending Landscape, a look at what's been done in Colorado to protect consumers, how we stack up to other states, and what things we should be mindful of moving forward.
- [Achieving Gender Equity in Apprenticeships in Colorado](#) analyzing data from the U.S. Department of Labor on Registered Apprentices and Registered Apprenticeships in Colorado; focus groups with young women ages 16 to 34 in the Denver Metro Area on what they knew about and wanted from apprenticeship programs; and examples of best practices for creating equitable apprenticeships from other states.
- Development of the 2019 [KIDS COUNT](#) in Colorado report was underway, which will have an opening essay about the 2020 Census.

Information Dissemination to the Public

Grantee organizations have disseminated information to the public in various ways, including through report dissemination and presentations; postings on websites; and social media (e.g., hosting a twitter conversation on women in apprenticeships in Colorado; generating pieces of media coverage). In 2019, examples included:

- Delivered more than 25 presentations for the public and partners on taxes, the Colorado state budget, and constitutional policies.
- Led social media and email campaigns, including the use of short videos, newsletters (e.g., weekly KidsFlash newsletter to 3,700 subscribers); and action alerts (e.g., Public Charge Action Alert, Help Support Early Childhood Educators alert, Support the Equal Pay for Equal Work Alert, etc.).
- One grantee reached more than 3,400 followers through Twitter and more than 3,600 followers via Facebook and had 66,798 unique page views.
- 2018 Ballot Guide educated more than 870 people about the issues; produced and promoted a series of brief videos on issues from the Ballot Guide, which collectively reached more than 26,000 people with 73,732 impressions. 5,611 people viewed the Ballot Guide on the grantee's website and spent an average time of 5:12 on the site interacting with the Guide.
- Media attention on efforts (e.g., research, grassroots campaigns) by various newspapers, online sources, and/or on the radio.
- Led seven stakeholder meetings with over 150 individuals on achieving gender equity in Colorado apprenticeships.

Informal Partnerships, Alliances, and Networking

Grantees have engaged in various activities to strengthen informal networks whether with other WAGES grantees or with other partners, decision-makers, or stakeholders. Examples that were provided in 2019 included:

"Through relationships developed with WAGES cohort members, [we are] getting help on research into the implications the Family Leave [FAMLI] bill might have on the financial stability for child care providers."

- Sharing knowledge about workforce issues to CO Thrives. - Policy Advocacy Grantee Staff
- Collaboration with Denver Pre-Trial, Probation and Diversion to increase education and workforce outcomes for youth involved with the justice system.
- Working with other WAGES cohort members to better understand the implications of FAMLI on child care providers.
- Hosting a number of conversations with leaders, influencers, and community members around key issues, such as the future of work (e.g., the gig economy) and economic mobility issues; also working with WAGES cohort members around the future of work.

- Deepening ties with state entities, such as the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), and Workforce Boulder County.
- Coalition work - for example the Equity in Early Childhood Coalition was indicated, which is co-led by the Arc of Colorado, the Black Child Development Institute's Denver Chapter, the Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence led by Rosemarie Allen, Padres & Jovenes Unidos, the Hope Center, and Clayton Early Learning to reform early childhood school removal and inclusion policies.

Influencing Policymakers, Policy Influencers & Decision-Makers

Grantees have testified in the House and Senate on multiple bills; provided research and information to bill sponsors and the legislature; held meetings with elected representatives and state agency officials; provided presentations; worked on campaigns; and garnered support for policy priorities. Specific examples that were highlighted for 2019 included:

- Influencing the Denver Metro Chamber's Legislative Policy Committee to support two bills related to economic opportunity.
- Presenting twice at the Public Investment Caucus for a small, bipartisan group of legislators; research being cited by members of the General Assembly on a variety of bills, including FAMLI, the child tax credit, cuts to the income tax rate, census funding and demographic notes.
- One grantee testified nearly 20 times in front of legislative committees.
- A biweekly legislative email during the 2019 legislative session, highlighting emerging issues, research, and facts for all legislators.
- Hosted two Lunch and Learns for legislators, their staff members, partners and state agency staff - one on child well-being and another on infant and maternal mortality in Colorado.
- Mailed or hand-delivered 245 candidate outreach packets (containing the relevant electoral district fact sheets, the issue-focused fact sheets and other information related to children's well-being) to all State House and Senate candidates, all statewide office candidates, all U.S. Congressional candidates, and U.S. Senators; this was followed by one-on-one meetings with dozens of candidates (including current office holders) to walk through the materials.
- Created hand-made Valentines for every legislator including district-level data on the Child Tax Credit.
- A monthly legislative newsletter that goes to every member of the General Assembly.
- Discussed policy recommendations around registered apprenticeships with key decision-makers at the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC), and Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS).

2019 Legislative Session Wins

Leading up to and during the 2019 legislative session, all PA grantees worked on legislative policies, whether providing research, developing and in some cases leading policy proposals, designing and reviewing amendments to proposed legislation, testifying on behalf of specific proposals, conducting community and statewide outreach, and working with policymakers and decision-makers. Many PA grantees worked in coalition or partnered with other WAGES grantees to advance this work.

Table 1 provides information on the specific bills that PA grantees worked on that ultimately passed and are considered wins for Colorado women and their families. The most wins were around access to child care and education.

"The 2019 Colorado legislative session resolved many issues that had languished for years with a split legislature at the Capitol. Economic mobility was front and center, as the conversation focused on ensuring opportunity for Colorado families, making Colorado competitive for future generations, and helping everyone attain the Colorado way of life."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee Staff

It should be noted that not all bills that PA grantees were active on may be reflected in the table below. Further, there were legislative wins that PA grantees worked on that support Colorado women and their families that are not in the table below, as they did not fit within the traditional WFCO focus areas that the bills were organized around. These included:

- HB19-1038: Dental Services for Pregnant Women on Children's Basic Health Plan Plus
- HB19-1122: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Maternal Mortality Review Committee
- HB19-1170: Residential Tenants Health and Safety Act
- HB19-1106: Rental Application Fee
- HB19-1223- Social Security Disability Assistance

TABLE 1. 2019 LEGISLATIVE WINS FOR COLORADO WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

WFCO Focus area	Bill	Brief description of the bill
Access child care	HB19-1005	Income Tax Credit for Early Childhood Educators for eligible early childhood educators and who for at least 6 months of the taxable year, are either the head of a family child care home or are employed with an eligible early childhood education program or a family child care home.
	HB19-1013	Child Care Expenses Tax Credit Low-Income Families provides a tax credit to households earning \$25,000 or less for child care expenses.
	HB19-1017	Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Social and Emotional Health Act requires the Department of Education to select up to 10 pilot schools to participate in a pilot program that ensures that a school mental health professional is dedicated to Kindergarten through 5th grades.
	HB19-1052	Early Childhood Special Districts authorizes the creation of early childhood development service districts to provide services for children from birth through 8 years of age.
	HB19-1262	State Funding for Full-day Kindergarten in districts that offer it; school districts that do not offer full-day kindergarten are invited to submit proposals to the Department of Education addressing how it could phase in a full-day kindergarten educational program.
	SB19-063	Infant and Family Child Care Action Plan requires the Department of Human Services, in consultation with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and stakeholders, to draft a strategic action plan addressing the declining availability of family child care homes and infant child care.
Access higher education	HB19-1206	Higher Education Supplemental Academic Instruction removes equity gaps in higher education by ensuring more students have access to supplemental academic instruction.
	SB19-002	Regulate Student Education Loan Servicers requires an entity that services a student education loan owned by a Colorado resident to be licensed by the administrator of the "Uniform Consumer Credit Card."
	SB19-057	Employee Information Student Loan Repayment Programs requires the Department of Personnel to develop and annually facilitate the distribution of information to state employees concerning federal student loan repayment and forgiveness programs for which state employees may be eligible.
Earn equal pay regardless of social identity	HB19-1025	Limits on Job Applicant Criminal History Inquiries prohibits most employers from asking about criminal history on an initial employment application.
	SB19-085	Equal Pay for Equal Work Act prohibits employers from discriminating in rate of pay based on sex; removes the authority of the Division of Labor to enforce wage discrimination complaints based on an employee's sex and instead permits an aggrieved person to bring a civil action in district court to pursue remedies specified in the bill.
	SB19-188	Family Medical Leave Insurance Program creates a study of the implementation of a paid family and medical leave program in the state, requiring the Department of Labor and Employment to contract with experts in the field of paid family and medical leave.
Find gainful employment and job training	HB19-1107	Employment Support Job Retention Services Program establishes a three-year pilot program to provide emergency employment support and job retention services to eligible, low-income individuals.

Policy Advocacy Grantee Strategy Challenges & Solutions

PA grantees were asked “What services, strategies, and/or tactics have been challenging to implement or are NOT showing promise in helping women and their families achieve economic security? What are the barriers?” In responses, PA grantees also surfaced solutions to these challenges. Please note that due to the small number of policy advocacy grantees, several challenges were raised by only one or two respondents.

- **Working in coalition effectively can be challenging:** While a vital strategy to advance PA grantees' policy priorities, coalition work can be challenging, as disagreements around coalition issues and strategies to target can surface, even among allies who share policy goals. Another challenge is having the capacity to support one another in coalition during the legislative session, which can be fast-paced and hectic.

Strategy solutions:



- Direct conversations with partners and being transparent about organizational interests and activities
 - Planning and setting the foundation of the coalition as much as possible ahead of the legislative session
 - Creating a system within coalitions for rapid-response requests: *“Be ready to act on unexpected opportunities. Sometimes 'hot issues' spring up in the media or in people's imagination. That makes moving issues much easier.”*
- **Gaining bipartisan support of issues in a changing legislature:** Some PA grantees reflected that gaining bipartisan support during the 2018 legislative session was challenging, due to the divided legislature. In 2019, PA grantees strategized how to continue positing sound policy proposals with bipartisan support, while some prepared to counter the narrative that the Democratic-majority in the legislature was “overreaching.”

Strategy solutions:



- Bills that do not require General Funds or bills with a healthy leverage of non-state funds (e.g., HB19-1122 [Mortality Review Committee] and HB19-1038 [Dental Services for Pregnant Women on CHP+])
 - Finding effective frames to talk about issues perceived as exclusive to people in poverty, or to women
 - Encouraging compromises across party lines to create a community of colleagues
- **Fiscal policy and the inability to generate public investments:** The need for fiscal reform was noted among a couple of grantees as many of the policy and systems changes that would have the greatest impact *“depend on public investment, and public investment is limited until we address our fiscal challenges”* in Colorado.

Strategy solutions:



- Reforming the state's property tax revenue system to bring a more uniform approach to how property is taxed and provide a more equitable basis for how taxes are collected. *"The resulting shift away from state general funds being used to backfill artificially low local property taxes in high property value communities could generate up to \$450 million in new revenue for the state to invest in a diversity of programs."*
- Supporting a proposal to "[de-Bruce](#)" state revenue collections (i.e., TABOR). This would allow the legislature to retain hundreds of millions of dollars in already-collected revenue without raising taxes.
- Responding to emerging opportunities to address the state's deeper fiscal challenges via a ballot measure in 2020.

Finally, some PA grantees also noted specific challenges that need to be addressed to better support low-income women and their families, including the need to address affordable, quality child care and housing; requirements in TANF, Employment First, and CCCAP that can put strains on women as they try to better their lives (e.g., child care assistance from TANF is cut back after mothers receive placement into work-based learning opportunities); a lack and growing need for workers in "caring" professions (e.g., early childhood, senior care); and the need to develop more registered apprenticeships as a pathway to attract women to both traditional and non-traditional careers.

What helps women and their families achieve economic security?

Direct service and policy advocacy grantees were asked *“What services, strategies, and/or tactics are showing promise/have been effective in helping women and their families achieve economic security? How are these efforts helping women?”* Responses are summarized below.

Job training programs that include both hard- and soft-skills training, provide comprehensive supports to women and their families, and utilize relationship-building and strengths-based approaches: Although individual models vary, the 15 direct service organizations and one policy advocacy grantee that provides some direct services all provide a mix of hard-skills job training or college education in competitive, in-demand fields, including in traditional and non-traditional fields for women (e.g., IT training [A+ certification], STEM degrees, welding certification for the construction industry, financial services, healthcare, etc.), as these jobs pay a livable wage, provide benefits, and have the potential for increasing wages and skills.

A focus solely on hard skills training neglects to address the realities of women experiencing poverty and job insecurity. Understanding this, grantee organizations also provide soft-skills training, mentoring, case management, and comprehensive/wrap-around supports that are individualized to the needs of participants and their families.

“Our program has three organizations providing wrap-around services to support our clients and their families, and this has been extremely effective. Relationship-building and rapport with our clients has made our clients feel fully supported and we have seen growth and commitment to achieving their goals. The additional funding through WAGES has given the tools necessary to remove barriers that other programs in our community cannot.”

- Direct Service Grantee Staff

To deliver these holistic services, grantees noted the following important considerations:

- **Community partnerships** help programs enhance their services by looking to partners to deliver complimentary services (e.g., housing partners, mental health partners). When formal partnerships are not pursued, strong collaboration and effective communications between providers remain important to support women's smooth navigation of complex systems.
- **Relationship-building, peer support, and working from a strengths-based approach** helps build connections between programs and participants, between participants themselves, and recognizes that participants already have what they need to be agents of their own change. Programs vary but many indicate providing coaching and mentoring with a focus on relationships with participants. For example, one program used WAGES funding to pilot a Transitions Advocate position to further support participants during and after programming.

Two programs were implementing a cohort model so that participants can benefit from peer-to-peer learning, support, and problem-solving, and another program utilizes alumni mentors to coach current participants.

- **Right-sizing programs:** Identifying and including the optimal number of participants can "amplify participants' confidence, problem-solving abilities, sense of accountability, and resilience." One program has found that 5-10 participants within a cohort is the ideal size to foster connection and support among participants.
- **Developing individualized goals and success plans** allow for identification of tailored, small, incremental, and achievable goals to remove the barriers/challenges participants may experience to achieving self-sufficiency. One program utilizes both an individualized success plan and a self-sufficiency matrix as a self-assessment tool to measure progress on reducing barriers and challenges. By working in partnership with clients to determine feasible goals and plans, clients' have ownership over the process and programs can support clients through coaching, accountability, and problem solving to reach those goals.
- **Financial support to reduce systemic drivers of inequity** such as a lack of affordable housing, transportation and childcare. Grantee organizations worked to address the financial stressors of poverty so that women can complete the training and education they need for better jobs. They provided stipends, facilitated entrée to paid apprenticeships, and assisted with small-dollar emergencies (e.g., helping to pay for car repairs).⁴
- **Connecting participants directly to employment opportunities** as part of program services through grantee relationships with employers in different industries (e.g., construction, banking, healthcare, etc.). These connections to employers have been fostered through internships, job fairs, and pre-apprenticeships, and provide direct onramps and pathways towards livable-wage careers.
- **Providing early childhood education and care as part of two-generation strategies** as participants complete educational and employment goals is key to helping families achieve economic security. Two grantees indicated providing these types of two-generation services and have found them to be vital for women's success.

Policy advocacy strategies that are bipartisan, multi-pronged, leverage organizational strengths and collaboration, engage communities impacted by the issues, and are well covered by the media: To help build the case for making policy change, grantee organizations are involved in many interrelated activities that work towards more equitable policies for Colorado women and their families.

Along with patience and perseverance, factors attributed to policy advocacy gains included:

- **Fostering bipartisan support of issues** is a key cornerstone of much of PA grantees' work. In the first year of WAGES, the Colorado legislature shifted from a divided legislature to a Democratic majority in both the House and Senate (along with a new Democratic Governor). With these shifts, policy advocacy grantees' tactics and efforts to gain bipartisan support of the issues were evolving. As an example of a bipartisan approach,

⁴ Small-dollar assistance to individuals has been shown to keep individuals from being derailed by a financial obstacle that could be easily overcome, and HB19-1107 pilots a three-year program to provide emergency employment support and job retention services to eligible individuals in the state.

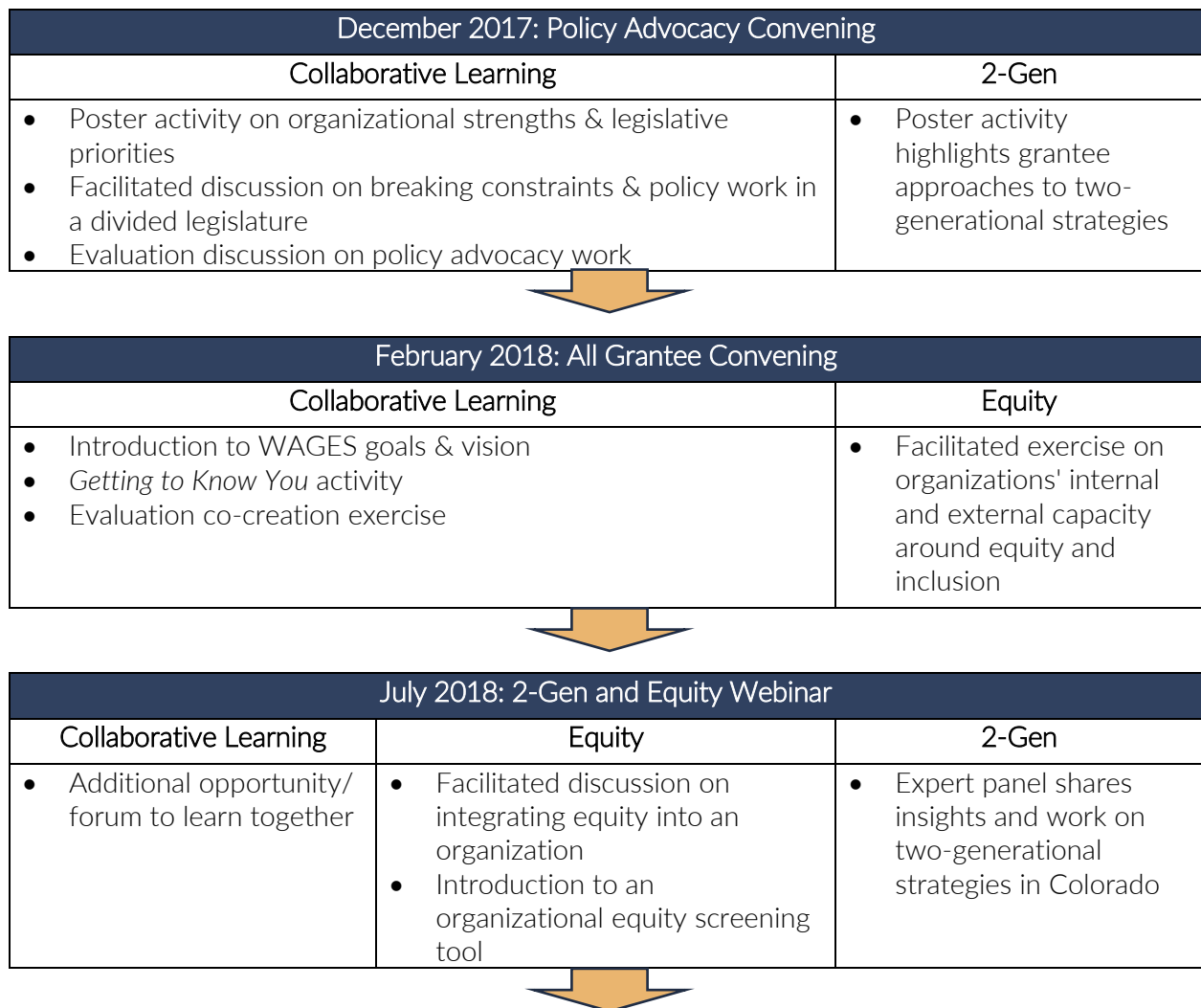
one grantee shared, *"We highlight early childhood issues as a non-partisan issue and help policymakers with the information and education to provide them 'cover' to vote to support children and their caregivers in ways that lead to economic self-sufficiency."*

- **Sharing research with decision-makers and a wide audience** was noted among a few grantees as a strength that they bring and is an effective way in helping women and their families achieve economic security. *"Facts and research are a vital part of policy debates, and at the same time, they must be shared in a way that is relatable to people who are not policy experts."* Further, by working on policies that influence the systems that affect women's ability to move forward economically (e.g., child care, workforce development and training, health care, financial systems, etc.), grantees help "level the playing field" and demonstrate that women's economic success is tied closely to the economic success of the entire state.
- **Strong relationships with policymakers** facilitate direct lobbying and policymaker education, which, are key for policy wins. Finding a champion was noted as a key component, as was laying groundwork in the 'off-season' when policymakers have more time and are more willing to listen to policy ideas and goals.
- **Collaboration** with other organizations and leveraging organizational strengths (e.g., policy expertise, communications), while looking to partners for complementary strengths (e.g., community organizing) was noted as an effective strategy. Coalition work was a common way that WAGES grantees collaborated with one another to further policy goals.
- **Community- and grassroots-level support** of the issues (e.g., directly involving affected community members in the work, supporting leadership development of community members) is vital for the success of policy priorities. Various grantees have found deep public and broad-based support for systems-level issues, including fair and affordable housing, paid family leave, affordable transit, improving the minimum wage, and tax credits.
- **Press attention** around efforts, such as press on reports that have been written about needed policies, on campaigns/rallies that have been conducted, etc.
- **Working locally and leveraging local wins for statewide impact:** One grantee has been successful in its municipal efforts by working towards the passage of two resolutions to halt the redevelopment of mobile home parks in the community and successfully advocating for a taskforce to look at mobile home displacement. In Denver, an ordinance was passed to protect residents from being discriminated against for their source of income (e.g., housing vouchers) when looking for housing: *"This Denver win can now be used for leverage to demonstrate an effective policy that we need statewide."*
- **The ability to leverage opportunities** was noted as potentially the most effective policy advocacy strategy. *"The 2018 election results gave rise to new policy opportunities...We have extended our organizational capacity to its limits to take maximum advantage of these windows while they are open."*

Finally, **leadership and civic engagement development** has been a successful strategy across both DS and PA grantees. By providing leadership, civic engagement and advocacy training, community members gain the knowledge to become leaders and advocates for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Cohort learning Model

WAGES brings together direct service and policy advocacy organizations to share strategies and innovate, learn from one another, and to collaborate. All grantees come together twice annually and policy advocacy organizations come together a third time in advance of the legislative session. The learning community consists of grantees, WFCO, project facilitators (Davian Gagne and Zoë Williams), and the evaluators (OMNI Institute). Below, we share key activities in the areas of Collaborative Learning, Equity, and Two-Generational Approaches (2-Gen) from each WAGES-led event, followed by key learnings to date from implementation of the WAGES Cohort approach. Please see Appendix A for agendas from all convenings.



August 2018: All Grantee Convening	
Collaborative Learning	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduates from one program share their experiences • Session on uncovering cross-cutting issues for policy change - surfaced & further broke down ideas for a WAGES-focused policy goal • Presentation on direct service findings and follow-up small group work on strategies to address implementation challenges • Small group discussion on cohort learning model and grantees' desires for group engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Voices panel focuses on creating systems change • Grantees provide feedback on equity goals via convening session survey



December 2018: Policy Advocacy Convening	
Collaborative Learning	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research sharing session • Discussion on election results and implications for the legislative session • Revisit issues discussion to further develop a shared policy goal for WAGES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four 'I's of oppression - case study activity



February 2019: All Grantee Convening		
Collaborative Learning	Equity	2-Gen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWIFI) presentation • Share-out from December convening & small-group work on WAGES policy priorities • Cross-sector small group conversations to discuss policy advocacy and direct service partnerships • Evaluation presentation on policy advocacy findings to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CO Trust participants and other WAGES grantees invited to share on learnings around internal organizational equity work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWIFI presentation highlights 2-Gen approach

Cohort Model Learnings to Date

Shared Learning

- Grantees value learning from each other.
- Grantees provide positive feedback on convening activities and WAGES work.
- Grantees would like more opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work.



Partnerships

- New partnerships have been formed and existing partnerships have been strengthened.
- Grantees are working together in coalition to move policies forward.
- Grantees have worked collaboratively to develop and inform policy proposals, jointly advocated for or testified on specific policies, and engaged in efforts that support WAGES priorities.



Equity

- Grantees value the equity lens and opportunities to learn & grow in this area.
- WAGES efforts have focused on building equity awareness and increasing organizational capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.
- Grantees want to engage communities in equitable ways, including more inclusive feedback loops for people affected by policies to help set policy priorities.

Policy Goal

- During convenings, grantees have had policy-setting agenda conversations, but no single issue has emerged yet for the group to move forward on together.
- Although diversity among grantees supports learning, it creates challenges in unifying around a policy goal to tackle as a group.
- Identifying a shared policy for the cohort to work on together is a goal moving forward.



Shared Learning

Grantees have emphasized the value of learning from another and working together to better understand key issues. For example, a few policy grantees highlighted the importance of direct service input and direction on policy efforts as well as key barriers women may face as they pursue training and education opportunities. For example, one grantee wrote, *"We have benefited from the informal perspectives we receive from WAGES cohort members, particularly direct service providers, to gain insights about some of the barriers facing women as they pursue child care, education, and training opportunities."*



From the Convening Session Evaluation form that grantees completed in February of 2019, a handful of participants who completed the survey (n=4)⁵ rated highly that their organization benefited from being part of the WAGES Learning Cohort (5.00), that they would apply learnings from the convening in future work (4.75), and that the convening was a good use of their time (4.25).⁶ One grantee shared, *"I like to hear how other organizations are working to take ideas back to my work,"* and another wrote, *"It was beautiful to be yet again in the company of like-minded people to learn from others."*

Both DS and PA grantees reported utilizing input and knowledge from other grantees and program participants to inform programming and to grow knowledge of key system and policy issues (e.g.,

⁵ It is worth noting that the February 2019 all grantee convening was shortened due to inclement weather, which may help explain the small response size to the convening session evaluation.

⁶ Participants were asked to rate their agreement on questions from a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

equity issues within the workforce training and post-secondary ecosystem in Colorado). Grantees would also like continued opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work.

Partnerships



Asked if in the past six months whether WAGES grantees had collaborated with another outside of convenings, 60% (12 out of 20 respondents) indicated they had. Grantees reported that partnerships have increased their understanding of available services and resources and have expanded networks. One grantee noted that growing this network resulted in "illuminating where our organizational goals overlap, often in unexpected ways," though further

information was not indicated.

Direct Service Grantees

- Some DS grantees were formally contracting to provide services or share information with participants from other organizations or systems (e.g., local human services or jails).
- Some DS grantee efforts to build partnerships were still in early, more informal stages. Examples included networking efforts with local campuses or other local nonprofits and resource centers that can provide training and connect participants with other career opportunities. *"We are trying to find ways to work together to support the women that we both serve."*
- DS grantees also reported that increased partnerships increase the options they can offer to program participants and that relationships with partner organizations allow for successful "soft hand-offs" between staff.

Policy Grantees

- Some PA grantees have collaborated on research on the general workforce policy landscape as well as specific initiatives (e.g., research support from PA grantees to elucidate implications of the Family leave bill on child care providers).
- PA grantees have also "joined forces" and used collective advocacy efforts to promote policy changes.

Equity

Grantees have indicated valuing the equity lens that WAGES employs and have appreciated the various opportunities to learn and grow in this area. To further learnings around equity, grantees would like to continue to:



- Deepen understanding of how to advance equity within organizations, given limited capacity: *"I am excited to learn how I as an individual can help foster equity and inclusion in our organization, particularly given limited resources and time. Where are some places to start?"*
- Continue learning how other grantees are advancing equity in their work.
- Ways that DS and PA grantees can partner and collaborate to advance greater equity.
- How to engage communities in equitable ways, including more inclusive feedback loops for people affected by policies to help set policy priorities.

Policy Goal



During convenings, grantees have had policy-setting agenda conversations, but no single issue has emerged yet for the group to move forward on together. While diversity among grantees supports learning, it creates challenges in unifying around a policy goal to tackle as a group.

One way that some grantees are collaborating around a shared policy goal is by participating in WFCO's Early Child Care and Education/Workforce Development Two-Generation Policy Workgroup. This workgroup, which is part of WFCO's broader two-generation advocacy work supported by a grant from the Women's Funding Network, comprised of 50 diverse leaders, works to identify needed workforce development and child care and education resources, along with policy priorities.

Further, at the February 2019 Convening, grantees participated in a polling activity to surface which key issues grantees were most excited about, from issues that had been identified via previous convenings and the WAGES survey. Of all the issues, a clear priority among all grantees was the need to address the lack of affordable and high-quality child care options in Colorado. Additional, related child care issues included that not all care centers take CCAP and that there are workforce development needs around early childhood.

Recommendations

This report presents findings from evaluation activities conducted over the first year and four months of WAGES (December 2017-March 2019) and is designed to support ongoing learning for WFCO, WAGES grantees, and other stakeholders interested in advancing and accelerating economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families. The following recommendations are provided to support the WAGES cohort's ongoing learning and collaboration:

- **Shared learning:** Prioritize continued (formal and informal) opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work.
- **Partnerships:** Continue to explore how grantee organizations may formally partner to enhance their collective impact.
- **Equity:** Continue to explore internal and external organizational equity issues to help enhance grantees' capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.
- **Policy goal:** Continue to explore what a policy goal(s) for the cohort could look like and how the cohort would like to collaborate around it (i.e., the mechanism/format for this collaboration).

Appendix A



WAGES Agenda for Inaugural Grantee Convening | December 6, 2017 | 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

9am - 10am	Meeting prep and set up
10am - 10:40am	Welcome, Intros, Agreements (use of technology, confidentiality)
10:40am - 11am	Overview of WAGES
11am - 11:40am	Poster Overview of Organization & Work pm)
11:45am - 12:30pm	LUNCH
12:30pm - 2:30pm	Poster Overview of Organization & Work (continued)
2:45 - 3:00 pm	Break
3pm - 4pm	Evaluation Discussion OMNI <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group discussion on evaluating policy advocacy work from grantee perspectives.
4pm - 4:30pm	Closing



WAGES Cohort Agenda | February 8, 2018

8:45 am – 9 am	Arrival, check-in, breakfast
9 am - 9:30am	Scavenger Hunt
9:30 am - 10:30am	Getting to Know You - Short, Pecha Kucha Style Presentations
10:30 am - 10:45 am	BREAK
10:45 am - 11:45 am	WAGES Cohort Introduction from The Women's Foundation of CO
11:45 am - 12:30 pm	Grantee Lunch w/ Lauren Y. Casteel, President & CEO, WFCO
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Equity and Inclusion Activity
1:30 pm - 1:45 pm	BREAK
1:45 pm - 4 pm	Introduction to OMNI Evaluation and Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review evaluation framework, small group work to review evaluation questions, possible data sources, and challenges with the evaluation framework. Debrief after with large group.
4 pm - 5 pm	Social Hour



WAGES Cohort Agenda | WAGES August 22, 2018 Session

Goals for Session:

- Continued learning about equity issues as they relate to 2-gen strategies
- Identify cross-cutting policy work
- Omni evaluation

8:30 am - 9:00 am	Arrival, Check-in, Breakfast
9:00 am - 9:50 am	Welcome, Intros & Icebreaker
9:50 am - 10:00 am	WFCO updates
10:00 am - 10:20 am	Mi Casa Graduate Visit
10:20 am - 10:30 pm	Break
10:30 am - 11:45 pm	Equity Panel - Community Voices
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm - 2:15 pm	Policy: Uncovering the Cross-Cutting Issues for Policy Change
2:15 pm - 2:30 pm	Break/Movement
2:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Omni Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omni update on the evaluation plan and presentation of selected Direct Service Process Survey findings • Group discussion around 1) early implementation successes and challenges identified from the Direct Service Process Survey and 2) opportunities for the cohort learning model (e.g., connecting direct service and policy efforts, enhancing equity work)
3:45 pm - 4:15 pm	Closing & Next Steps
4:15 pm - 5:15 pm	Social Time



WAGES Public Policy Convening | December 5, 2018, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Goals for Session:

- Understand political climate after the election and how this may impact policy work over the next year
- Continue to refine policy focus based on exciting issues
- Continue to learn about equity and how it interfaces and informs policy

8:30 am - 9:00 am	Arrival, Check-in, Breakfast
9:00 am - 9:45 am	Welcome, Intros, Icebreaker
9:45 am - 10:20 am	Research Sharing: Grantees Share Out Research
10:20 am - 10:30 am	Break
10:30 - 11:45 am	Equity Session: 4 I's of Oppression
11:45 am - 12:30 pm	Lunch & Networking
12:30 pm - 1:45 pm	Election Debrief & Legislative Session Preparation
1:45 pm - 2:00 pm	Break
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Revisiting Exciting Issues - Small Group Work & Large Group Discussion
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Visioning: What's Possible for Policy Work Through WAGES?
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Closing & Next Steps



The Women's Foundation of Colorado | WAGES Convening
February 6, 2019, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Goals for the Session:

- Share relevant report and information from OMNI Institute and overview of SWFI
 - Create dialogue between direct service and policy groups about forming partnerships
 - Continue to refine the policy framework for WAGES
 - Provide a tool for organizations to further their individual equity work based on their organization's capacity
-

8:30 am-9:00 am	Arrival, Check-in, Breakfast
9:00 am-9:45 am	Welcome, Intros, Icebreaker
9:45 am-10:30 am	Strengthening Working Families Initiative (SWFI) Presentation
10:30 am-10:40 am	Break
10:40 am-11:40 am	Equity Activity
11:40 am - 12:40 pm	Lunch & Networking
12:40 pm-1:10 pm	OMNI Institute Report Sharing
1:10 pm-2:00 pm	Policy Framework Sharing
2:00 pm-2:10 pm	Break
2:10 pm-3:00 pm	Updates and Opportunities
3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Partnerships Conversation (Davian & Zoë)
4:00 pm- 4:30 pm	Closing and Next Steps

Appendix B

TABLE B.1. WAGES DIRECT SERVICE PARTICIPANTS SERVED BY ORGANIZATION

Organization Name	n	%
Center for Work Education and Employment	33	7.7%
Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc.	55	12.9%
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	12	2.8%
Community Partnership for Child Development	23	5.4%
Durango Adult Education Center, Women's Resource Center, and La Plata Family Centers Coalition	21	4.9%
Eagle County Govt, Department of Human Services	13	3.0%
Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc.	10	2.3%
Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado	62	14.5%
Mi Casa Resource Center	35	8.2%
OneMorgan County	8	1.9%
Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins	140	32.7%
Pueblo Community College/Foundation and Boys and Girls Club of Pueblo County	16	3.7%
Total	428	100%

TABLE B.2. WAGES DIRECT SERVICE PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

General Demographics	n	%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	13	3.1%
Asian or Asian American	7	1.7%
Black or African American	77	18.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.2%
Latinx, Hispanic or of Spanish origin	159	37.9%
White or Caucasian	147	35.1%
More than one race	14	3.3%
Other	8	1.9%
Note: Because grantees could select multiple race/ethnicity categories for participants, a Total row is not included.		
Age		
< 18 years old	6	1.4%
18 – 24 years old	115	26.9%
25 – 34 years old	158	36.9%
35 – 44 years old	99	23.1%
45 – 54 years old	33	7.7%
55 – 59 years old	8	1.9%
60 – 64 years old	3	0.7%
65 – 74 years old	0	0%
75+ years old	0	0%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	6	1.4%
Total	428	100%
Education		
Less than high school	97	22.7%
High school degree or GED equivalency	163	38.1%
Some college, no degree	51	11.9%
Associate's degree	63	14.7%
Bachelor's degree	33	7.7%
Master's/Professional/Doctorate degree	3	0.7%
Other	4	0.9%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	14	3.3%
Total	428	100%

Family Demographics	n	%
Relationship Status		
Single (Never married, divorced, widowed, separated)	285	66.6%
Partnered (Married, common law, domestic partnership)	73	17.1%
Other	2	0.5%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	68	15.9%
Total	428	100%
Single Parents		
Single parents	256	59.8%
Non-single parents	92	21.5%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	80	18.7%
Total	428	100%
Number in Household		
1	38	8.9%
2	126	29.4%
3	98	22.9%
4	64	15.0%
5	35	8.2%
6	28	6.5%
7	7	1.6%
8 or more	12	2.8%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	20	4.7%
Total	428	100%
Number of Dependent Children		
0	43	10%
1	163	38.1%
2	91	21.3%
3	36	8.4%
4	15	3.5%
5	8	1.9%
6	3	0.7%
7	0	0%
8 or more	0	0%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	69	16.1%
Total	428	100%

Economic Demographics

Employment Status

Full time (35+ hours per week)	99	23.1%
Part time (Less than 35 hours per week)	87	20.3%
Paid internship	3	0.7%
Unemployed (looking for work last 30 days)	65	15.2%
Unemployed (not looking for work last 30 days)	70	16.4%
Homemaker	6	1.4%
Student	15	3.5%
Retired	0	0%
Participant that is unable to work	1	0.2%
Other	1	0.2%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	81	18.9%
Total	428	100%

Gross Family Income (monthly)

Less than \$500	71	16.6%
\$500 – \$1,000	71	16.6%
\$1,001 – \$1,500	63	14.7%
\$1,501 – \$2,000	53	12.4%
\$2,001 – \$2,500	34	7.9%
\$2,501 – \$3,000	15	3.5%
\$3,001 – \$3,500	6	1.4%
\$3,501 – \$4,000	4	0.9%
\$4,001 or more	8	1.9%
Don't know/Missing/Refused	103	24.1%
Total	428	100%

TABLE B.3. FINANCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM INFORMATION

Funding Sources	Individual Programs	Program Definition
Alimony and/or Child Support	Alimony	An amount of money given by a former spouse for financial support.
	Child Support	An amount of money given by a child or children's co-parent to financially support the child/ren.
Childcare Assistance Programs	CCCAP	The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) program provides child care assistance to families who are working, searching for employment, or are in training, and families who are enrolled in the Colorado Works program and need child care services to support their efforts toward self-sufficiency.
	DDP	The Denver Preschool Program (DDP) provides tuition support to families with 4-year-olds, in order to allow children to go to preschools of the families' choice.
	CCP	The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) allows eligible children to attend high-quality preschool for free (children are eligible if they have certain challenges in their lives).
Child Health Insurance Program and Child Health Plan Plus	CHP+/CHIP	Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) is public low-cost health insurance for certain children and pregnant women. It is for people who earn too much to qualify for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), but not enough to pay for private health insurance. Outside of Colorado, this program may be known as CHIP.
Colorado Works	TANF	Colorado Works/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that provides cash assistance to families in need who have dependent children or unborn children. The program requires applicants to seek employment and be involved in a work activity from the day of the application.
Health First Colorado	Medicaid	Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) is public health insurance for low-income Coloradans.
Housing Assistance	HCV/ Section 8	The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) , which was formally known as Section 8 , provides rental assistance to income-eligible tenants by subsidizing a portion of their monthly rent and utilities and paying it directly to their landlords.
	Section 811	The Section 811 Program assists the lowest income people with significant and long-term disabilities to live independently in the community by providing affordable housing linked with voluntary services and supports.
	S+C	The Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program provides housing options for homeless persons (and their families) with targeted disabilities, primarily those with serious mental illness, chronic problems with alcohol and/or drugs and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or related diseases. The program requires participants to engage in services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, job training and life development skills.
	FUP	Family Unification Program (FUP) provides a housing choice voucher program to assist homeless youth, aging out of the foster care system (ages 18 through 21) and families where available housing is an obstacle to full custody of their children.

Funding Sources	Individual Programs	Program Definition
Housing Assistance (continued)	HCV Homeownership Program	The Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program empowers eligible participants interested in purchasing their own home. The voucher may be applied toward the family's portion of a mortgage.
	VASH	The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) provides housing choice voucher rental assistance and intensive case management and clinical services to enable homeless veterans access to permanent housing while leading healthy, productive lives in the community
	CCT	The Colorado Choice Transitions (CCT) allows Medicaid funding to follow a person from an institutional setting to housing in the community. The goal of CCT is to move persons with disabilities out of nursing homes and other long-term care and into the community.
Social Security Income	SSI	The Social Security office gives monthly benefits to people with limited income and resources who are disabled, blind, or age 65 or older. Blind or disabled children may also get SSI.
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	WIC	Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federal assistance program for low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and children under the age of five, that gives women and families food assistance, food education, and breastfeeding support.
Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program	SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the food assistance program in Colorado, formerly known as Food Stamps. SNAP helps households purchase food and individuals on SNAP receive an EBT card, which can be used at most grocery stores to buy food and other products.

TABLE B.4. OVERVIEW OF WAGES DIRECT SERVICE GRANTEES, PROGRAMS, AND DEMOGRAPHICS SERVED

Please note that program descriptions were summarized from Year 1 grantee applications and programs may have made modifications to their services during implementation.

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE)	Steps to Success Program	Low-income women on TANF; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CWEE provides guidance and support for women as they enter livable wage careers through the Steps to Success Program, which was piloted with support from WFCO in 2013. The job retention services have helped single mothers maintain long-term, stable employment by mitigating the cliff effect.
Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc. (CHIC)	Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities	Formerly/currently gang-involved women; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CHIC is a program designed to lift gang-affiliated women out of a cycle of poverty and violence through mentorship, education for employment, family and community engagement, counseling, and holistic healing. This grant will support education for employment programming, which connects participants with a CHIC mentor, a peer group with similar career goals, a workforce development specialist through IEG, Inc., and job training programs such construction apprenticeships for training and placement in construction careers.
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	Vocational Services	Formerly/currently homeless mothers; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CCH will pilot a technology training program to prepare women who have been homeless for careers in the tech industry, with starting annual pay ranging from \$36,000 to \$50,000. Through this program, women will participate in four months of training with a local technology training provider that is designing coursework specifically for this group of women and that has a track record of employment placements with local companies. In addition to the Computer User Support Specialist and network maintenance training, participants will also receive soft skills training, job placement assistance, and job coaching upon entering employment. Participants will also have access to the full range of services and supports CCH provides to help people overcome homelessness.
Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD)	Two Generation Program	Low-income women; El Paso (El Paso County)	CPCD's Two Generation Program helps low-income parents (90% mothers) make progress toward economic independence while their children receive quality early childhood education. Participants have no-cost access to three career training tracks: child development associate, information technology, and advanced manufacturing, through partnerships with Pikes Peak Community College and Colorado Springs School District 11 Adult and Family Education Center. This grant will support the CPCD Two Generation Program Coordinator position, which provides long-term case management for participants, as well as small monthly stipends to help offset transportation and food costs while they are enrolled in training.

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC)	Southwest Colorado Women's Project	Low-income women; La Plata (SW CO)	The Southwest Colorado Women's Project is a collaboration among the Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC), Women's Resource Center (WRC), and La Plata Family Centers Coalition (LPFCC). Together, the partners will support women into livable wage careers by providing case management, career planning, and targeted education and training, along with a range of additional supports. The collaboration will draw on the strengths of each partner, including DAEC as the region's educational safety net; LPFCC as the safeguard for parent and child health, education, and support; and WRC as the center for women seeking resources and educational support.
Eagle County Government (Department of Human Services)	Flexible Funding and Coaching	Single mothers; Eagle (Eagle County)	The Eagle County Department of Human Services recently piloted programs to ease the cliff effect for individuals transitioning out of eligibility for the Colorado Works and Colorado Child Care Assistance Programs. This grant will support a pilot of individualized coaching and flexible financial supports to positively impact outcomes for single mothers exiting public assistance and to help DHS build knowledge about empowering women for workforce and life success, including economic self-sufficiency, while also enabling them to simultaneously advance the well-being of their children. The participating women will have coaches to help build their executive functioning skills and up to \$1,200 in flexible funding to support identified goals.
Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc. (EFAA)	Job Uptake for Motivated Parents Program	Low-income women; Boulder County	Originally piloted as the Internships to Careers for Motivated Moms program with support from WFCO in 2015, the renamed Job Uptake for Motivated Parents (JUMP) program connects participants with work-based learning opportunities in partnership with Workforce Boulder County and a full range of supports through EFAA. EFAA provides participants with basic needs supports, food, housing, resource referrals, and encouragement and problem-solving support to overcome hurdles to program completion. Additionally, EFAA provides up to \$1,000 in direct financial assistance to help address needs for employment, such as transportation, interview clothing, and child care support. This grant will support women's participation in the JUMP program.
Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado (Flo Critt)	Boosting Employability for Teen Mothers Project	Teen mothers/ young children; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	Florence Crittenton Services is beginning a three-year initiative to identify, incorporate, and share best practices to help pregnant and parenting girls increase their employability and probability of earning livable wages within three to five years of high school graduation. The Boosting Employability for Teen Mothers Project includes three integrated components: development of core skills and employment training, support for navigating the road to employment, and holistic, wraparound support that helps teen mothers provide and care for their children while completing education and training.
Mi Casa Resource Center	Career Development Program	Latina/ low-income women; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	Mi Casa's career development program has demonstrated success in moving women into careers that offer livable wages by engaging women in career pathways and providing training and wraparound supports. This grant will help Mi Casa provide individualized services for participants to ensure their success through foundational skills training, progress in career tracks, job search, and employment. Participants are primarily prepared for and supported in entry into careers in the

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
			financial services industry and have access to training for small business development, healthcare, and construction careers.
OneMorgan County (OMC)	Educational and Occupational Advancement of Women	Newcomer/immigrant women; Morgan County	OneMorgan County fosters community cohesion in Morgan County, a rural community with a high proportion of refugee and immigrant residents. Designed to jump start the educational and occupational advancement of women, this grant supported newcomer working mothers with stipends to offset lost wages to allow them to attend Morgan Community College full-time, along with support and career guidance. The participants will serve as role models, ambassadors, and mentors to inspire and support the next group of scholars, with the goal of cultivating a new culture whereby women's contributions are fully valued, supported, and sustained through the capacity building of local women leaders. Community partners have demonstrated a commitment to the project's success: Morgan Community College will cover participants' tuition, Colorado State University faculty will supervise graduate students to design the education support and career guidance manual, and Fort Morgan Cultures United for Progress will provide additional financial support.
Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins (PSS)	Selfpower Program	Single mothers; Larimer County	The Selfpower program helps single parents overcome barriers to completing the postsecondary education needed to earn a living wage. Participating families are supported through personalized intervention with a highly skilled advisor in a strengths-based program focused on growth. The program includes detailed career planning focused from the beginning on self-sufficiency wages, supports for children's success, resources and navigation support for educational completion and job search, as well as ongoing support once participants enter employment. This grant will invest in continuation of Project Self-Sufficiency's model.
Pueblo Community College	DualStar Project	Low-income women Pueblo County	The DualStar Project is focused on engaging women and girls in exploring and pursuing STEM education and careers that offer livable wages. This partnership between Pueblo Community College (PCC), Pueblo Community College Foundation (PCCF), Boys & Girls Clubs of Pueblo County (BGCP), and Destination Imagination (DI) will support women and girls on the path to STEM careers in several ways. The grant-funded project includes 1) encouraging women already enrolled in PCC's Health Information Technology program to build on that credential to pursue Cyber Defense Education, for which PCC was recently federally designated as an excellent provider of education in the growing cyber security industry; 2) engaging women STEM majors in the PCC Presidential Leadership Program (PLP) as mentors to women enrolled in the Health Information Technology program; 3) engaging PCC PLP students as DI coaches for girls enrolled in BGCP to inspire interest in STEM in the younger girls and build STEM leadership and project management skills in the PCC students.