



LEADERSHIP PROFILE



The Colorado Health Foundation™

Vice President, Community Investment & Impact
The Colorado Health Foundation
Denver, Colorado

“Bringing Health in Reach for All Coloradans.”

THE CONTEXT

The largest foundation in the state of Colorado and one of the largest health philanthropies in the nation, [The Colorado Health Foundation](#) has earned a stellar reputation within Colorado and beyond as an innovative thought partner, a flexible grantmaker and an intentional advocate “bringing health in reach for all Coloradans.”

Just this month, the Foundation announced the planned retirement of Chief Impact Officer Bruce Byington, effective in March 2021, and the promotion of Amy Latham, currently Vice President of Philanthropy, as his successor. As part of the transition, the Philanthropy department is being renamed, and thus the current search for the newly titled role of Vice President, Community Investment & Impact.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Colorado Health Foundation has more than two decades of history, during which the organization has undergone many changes, shifting both partnerships and roles in its work.

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In 1995, the nonprofit hospital system HealthONE entered into a joint venture with Hospital Corporation of America (HCA); the resulting entity, HCA-HealthONE, became the largest health care provider in the Denver metro area. The partnership also marked the beginning of the Colorado Health Foundation, then known as HealthONE Alliance, which held a significant equity stake in the joint venture.¹

In 2011, the Foundation sold its stake in HCA-HealthONE for \$1.45 billion, resulting in a four-fold increase in the Foundation's assets. The sale signaled a shift in the Foundation's identity and the responsibility to positively impact health throughout Colorado, prompting a more rigorous philanthropic, systems-change approach to its work that included both grantmaking and public policy. The transition from a public charity to private foundation status, which had begun in 2011, was finalized in 2016.

Today, the Colorado Health Foundation has assets of approximately \$2.6 billion and a staff of 68, all committed to advancing health, health equity and a time when all Coloradans can say, "We have all we need to lead healthy lives."

*"We are fearless, nimble,
mission-obsessed and equity-propelled."*

*--The Colorado Health Foundation's
cultural attributes*

Under the leadership of Karen McNeil-Miller, CEO since 2015, the Foundation and its operating culture have shifted to be more externally focused, reflecting the belief that the road to better community health and health equity often begins at the local level where individuals and families live out their daily lives.

Informed by deep conversations with grantees, partners and stakeholders in every corner of the state and by periodic surveys conducted by the Center for Effective Philanthropy, the Foundation adopted three cornerstones that underscore all its work:

- *We prioritize Coloradans of color, who live on low income and have historically had less power and privilege.*
- *We do everything with the intent of creating health equity.*
- *We are informed by the community and those we exist to serve.*

As one consequence of the Foundation's evolving approach, staff are now expected to engage more deeply and more personally with the communities and people the

¹ HealthONE Alliance was rebranded as The Colorado Health Foundation in 2006

Foundation serves and the organizations and initiatives it supports. Whereas previously a majority of conversations may have been internally focused, now the majority of those conversations are taking place in community.

At the same time, the Foundation has continued to examine its own structure, staffing and processes to help catalyze meaningful change in community. This approach moved the Foundation beyond traditional grantmaking and more fully leverages its role as facilitator and advocate, helping community stakeholders develop a vision for community health unique to local conditions.

The Foundation's [Community Engagement IMPACT Practice Model](#) summarizes a core set of guiding principles for working effectively at the local level. The fact that it is a public document readily accessible on the Foundation's website is testament to the transparency with which the Foundation pursues its efforts. More than a theory, the IMPACT model is central to the work of the Foundation and to the Community Investment & Impact team's mandate. Key to the model's success is a shared commitment to authentic engagement, active listening and continuous learning, whether in dealings with colleagues or communities.



The VP, Community Investment and Impact is critical to the Foundation's effectiveness. Leading a team of professionals numbering two dozen, the Foundation's only Vice President is one of just four members of the executive team (along with the CEO, the Chief Impact Officer and the CFO). Together, they share responsibility for the deployment and effectiveness of grants and community investments, which in 2020 totaled \$146 million.

Overseeing a large team and an expansive portfolio of interests in normal times is as challenging as it is fulfilling; the COVID-19 pandemic has added urgency to the mix even as it has made the state's health inequities even more apparent.²

THE MANDATE

The new Vice President, Community Investment & Impact will be tasked with an

² Earlier this year, in response to the unique demands of the coronavirus pandemic, the Foundation's board increased the 2020 budget for grants and community investments by 25%

extraordinary responsibility: Ensure the Foundation's Community Investment & Impact staff and resources are deployed to optimum effect to increase the health, health access and health equity for the people of Colorado.

A significant part of the Foundation's effectiveness derives from its highly matrixed approach to philanthropy. The various internal departments have their own unique functions, of course—Accounting & Compliance, for example, or Learning & Evaluation—but the commitment to work in tandem, across functions and roles, is real, and interdisciplinary efforts both inside and outside the organization are the norm. Grantmaking and other types of investments are among the core tools—along with policy advocacy and strategic communications—that help drive impact for the mission.

In addition to the racial equity focus, the Foundation has an overarching commitment to diversity and inclusion, and almost everything it does, both within the Foundation and in the larger community, is viewed and evaluated through an equity lens. Today, nearly half of the Foundation's staff are people of color, and 20% of its endowment is overseen by external investment managers of color.

"The Foundation's support was life-saving for our organization, for our mission, and for the people we serve. They took a chance [on us], and we've never forgotten it."

--A grantee's Executive Director

Such metrics notwithstanding, the Foundation must continue to explore ways to deepen its work in racial equity and social justice, embracing equity in its internal practices while supporting such efforts across its footprint. The new VP will be expected to champion the Foundation's health and racial equity initiatives, not just from a perspective of intellectual understanding but also from one of professional engagement.

The Colorado Health Foundation works in response to this volatile, uncertain and complex world. The strategy and tactics continue to evolve, but the commitment to progress is unwavering. Success in pursuit of progress will be greatly influenced by the of the Vice President's nuanced leadership.

Further details about the Foundation, its guiding premise and its approach to philanthropy are available on its extensive website, accessible [here](#). Biographies of the Foundation's team are available [here](#), and the latest available financial information is available [here](#). Additional information is available on the Foundation's pages on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



THE RELATIONSHIPS

<i>The VP, one of four members of the executive team, reports to the</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Impact Officer
<i>And has direct responsibility for</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Portfolio Directors, who in turn guide the 20-person Community Investment & Impact team
<i>While stewarding such critical relationships as those with</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-functional leaders and teams within the Foundation • Current and potential grantees • Leaders from civic, business, academic and professional contexts across Colorado and beyond • Peers in other grantmaking organizations • Community-based health advocates & thought-leaders

THE LOCATION

The Colorado Health Foundation is headquartered in its own purpose-built space in Denver’s Uptown neighborhood. Featuring a “health-positive” design and development standards that aim to improve the health of both staff and visitors, the headquarters embodies the emerging focus on impact and engagement.

Denver is Colorado’s largest city, and a majority of the state’s residents live within the ten-county metro area. The city has a rich and varied cultural history and a diverse population to match. For example, just under a third of Denver’s population self-identifies as Hispanic or Latino, and Colorado is home to significant indigenous and refugee populations.



THE CANDIDATE

The ideal prospects to become The Colorado Health Foundation's next Vice President, Community Investment & Impact will combine a genuine heart for the work with the experience and perspective to foster fresh thinking, new questions and creative collaborations, both within the Foundation and within the communities we serve.

The best candidates will have a passion for deepening the Foundation's work in race and equity and be willing to step into such issues as a leader. Among the assets, traits and experiences being sought:

Competence: We seek a leader with

- A deep history of interdisciplinary effectiveness and comfort with interdependent teams; someone accustomed to leading a fluid, matrixed organization in a multifaceted operating environment
- A commitment to racial and health equity, born out of lived experience or professional engagement; someone with a clear view of how to center race and equity in the Foundation's efforts so they are woven into the work, not separate from it
- Working knowledge of philanthropy and philanthropic leadership, with an unyielding focus on impact
- Proven competency in relationship-building, issues management, and community engagement in the broadest sense
- Demonstrated respect for diverse people, interests, constituencies and philanthropic initiatives
- Significant team-building skills, exploring the power of connections and intersections that individual performers might overlook
- A love for developing fresh ideas that provide solutions to all types of challenges
- An analytical mind; an executive who examines data to understand issues, draw conclusions, and solve problems
- Truly superb communications skills as an organizational representative, whether when one-on-one or in large gatherings
- Natural comfort with people from all areas and backgrounds
- An indefatigable appetite for working with communities
- A record of creative collaboration and innovation within and without the



candidate's current organization

- The competence and confidence to lead in the creation of systems, structures, and the process for sharing and leveraging knowledge within the team and across the organization for alignment and impact.
- The reputation as an active learner and respected coach informed by a mindset of growth; someone at ease with an organization still moving from a 'knowing' culture to a 'doing' culture; a people leader, artful in the practice of coaching and providing feedback
- A willingness to experiment and take smart risks
- An inviting, collaborative spirit matched with a propensity for action
- The cultural sensitivity, humility and competence to thrive in an exceedingly dynamic and demanding operating environment.

Character: We expect to hire an executive who is

- Strategically agile and equity-propelled
- A manager with integrity, embracing real transparency in both internal operations and external dealings
- A gifted mentor for whom life-long learning is a natural bent, a source of joy, and a model for colleagues
- Bold yet caring in shaping the Foundation's philanthropy; someone who understands the power dynamic in philanthropy and wears it lightly
- An impassioned leader who can call on reserves of urgency, tenacity and patience.

*"We seek a leader who will **add to** our culture, not merely fit into it."*

Culture: The VP must be

- A thought partner for colleagues and the community
- Passionate about the Foundation's mission; someone whose understanding of *how* to work in community is informed by deep respect for the *why*
- A leader practiced in inclusivity beyond diversity; someone who can add materially to the Foundation's momentum by guiding colleagues to unexplored ways in which equity can be embraced their work with one another
- A boundary-spanning executive who embodies a spirit of collaboration both within the Community Investment & Impact team and, importantly, across the organization as well; a bridge-builder and connector in pursuit of systems change

- A nimble and facile learner courageous in pursuit of goals with an authentic, inviting leadership style
- A low-maintenance colleague who understands when to ask and when to act
- An executive who will thrive being “a grantmaker with dusty boots,” embracing visibility without ego
- A leader committed to progress, not perfection.

The challenges and opportunities facing the new Vice President are significant indeed. Seizing them in a time of social distancing and remote working is geometrically more complicated, especially in an environment whose culture is routinely informed by serendipitous conversations and informal gatherings.

**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect,
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Sam Pettway at (404) 420-5843.**

