

NONPROFITS

THE POLITICS OF GIVING

Volunteers, organizations power public policy in Colorado



GETTY IMAGES

BY THE COLORADO POLITICS STAFF

Colorado runs on volunteerism, from the church groups that adopt and clean a section of highway to the activists who keep watch on the Capitol for those who can't.

Except for "grassroots" groups that are more AstroTurf with special interest money, volunteer organizations don't have the big bucks with which to do battle.

For their ideas to be heard, they do it with a commitment to delivering meals for neighbors, building trails, advocating for the homeless or giving a few bucks to promote their ideology.

"Our whole system of government rests on the idea that everyday people elect officials to represent their interests, but the very wealthy and powerful have done their best to commandeer the process, lobbying and spending obscene amounts of money to hang on to their outsized influence," said Jenny Davies, who leads the consulting firm Progressive Promotions, which specializes in helping nonprofits and community groups that tend to skew left.

Colorado Politics plans to highlight the nonprofits and do-gooders who make our communities better places to live. By doing so, we hope it gives a clearer picture of how power

is shaped in Colorado.

Yes, money talks, but so do people who can rally on the Capitol steps, testify in committees and ensure public policy is shaped just as much by people as it is by money and influence.

In the magazine each week, look for pages that offer news from nonprofits about what's happening in their ranks and features on the people and groups who power Denver's nonprofit community. And if you have news to share, send it on to nonprofits@coloradopolitics.com for consideration.

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WILD IDEAS

Gov. Jared Polis may have veered into treacherous territory. **Insights, Page 2**

CLEAR FOCUS

AG Phil Weiser keeps his eye on what he can do for the state. **Profile, Page 20**