



Great Grants and Initiatives

Grantor: The Denver Foundation

Grantee or Initiative: Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative (ENII)

Amount: \$350,000

Period of Grant Award: 2002-2008 (7 years)

The Metro Denver community is changing dramatically in terms of race and ethnicity – the city of Denver is now a “majority minority” city. But the nonprofit sector does not always reflect our changing community, nor are people from all segments of the community involved in nonprofits as staff members, donors, board members, and volunteers. The Foundation created the Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative to help community leaders expand the involvement of people of color in the nonprofit sector.

“I want to be more inclusive, but I just don’t know where to start,” is commonly heard from a nonprofit leader. For years, The Denver Foundation had heard from grantees and community leaders that they want to become more diverse and inclusive, but did not know how to accomplish this. To help ENII talked about best practices and barriers to inclusiveness with more than 1,000 board and staff members of nonprofits. It also expanded The Denver Foundation’s on-line Technical Assistance Database to include local consultants who provide services in the areas of diversity and inclusiveness. Additionally, ENII published Inclusiveness at Work to help nonprofits develop inclusiveness blueprints. ENII also gives grants to organizations to work on building inclusiveness and studies the link between an organization’s inclusiveness and how effective that organization is at achieving its mission. ENII’s long-term goal is to replace the common quote above with another: “Now that we’re inclusive, our organization can do so much more to accomplish our mission.”

The Denver Foundation itself is using the findings from the Initiative to change our own practices. We’re now providing our Neighborhood Leadership Development Program in Spanish as well as English to monolingual Spanish-speakers in Original Aurora. The community leaders who participate will have the tools and knowledge to make differences for their children, for their neighbors, and for their communities.