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Photo by Joshua Buck/Consortium Productions Longmont

## After the election, Colorado still needs more revenue

*The Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, a project of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, was a leading proponent of Proposition 103 on the state's Nov. 1 election ballot. It would have re-stored state sales and income tax rates to their levels in the late 1990s and used the revenue to support education. In an audio interview, Fiscal Policy Institute Director Carol Hedges discusses the reasons Proposition 103 failed, lessons learned from the effort, and where Colorado goes from here. Excerpts of Hedges' remarks follow. To listen to the full interview, visit [bit.ly/chinterview](http://bit.ly/chinterview).*

"The primary message I take away from the results of 103 is that it is much harder to build a coalition of people to vote in favor of something than it is to build a coalition to vote against something. We know that

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*Staff and volunteers serve lunch at OUR Center in Longmont. Helping families with food enables them to stretch their budgets so they can put the money they save toward other expenses. Many people enjoy coming for meals because they appreciate the fellowship and support they receive from other folks who are also working toward self-sufficiency.*

## Self-Sufficiency Standard shows the true cost of living for Colorado families

A critical part of alleviating hardship is identifying the true cost of basic expenses for Colorado families. That baseline, whether it's annual income of \$83,980 in Aspen or \$43,220 in Pueblo, sets a standard families can use as a goal and lawmakers can use to guide policy.

Those are the ideas behind the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2011, which the Colorado Center on Law and Policy released in October. The research shows the true cost of living for various family types in each Colorado county.

Organizations across the state use the Self-Sufficiency Standard to help families move toward long-term economic security. One of them is OUR Center ([online at ourcenter.org](http://online.ourcenter.org)), a Longmont-based agency that provides a range of services for families in need.

OUR Center uses the standard and related tools to evaluate what resources would have the greatest effect on family financial stability, said Executive Director Edwina Salazar.

"It actually is reassuring to clients that 'there isn't anything wrong with me, that this is why I'm struggling. I'm struggling because the cost of child care is enormous, and until I get some resources to address this I'm not going to feel successful. There's nothing intrinsically wrong with me, there are structural issues here,'" Salazar said.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2011 was prepared for CCLP by the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington School of Social Work. It's online at [bit.ly/cosss2011](http://bit.ly/cosss2011).

# CCLP celebrates the holidays



*CCLP staff and friends celebrated the holidays Dec. 15 with a party to show appreciation for supporters. Above, Rice Fellow Ben Felson led a jazz trio that provided entertainment for the night. At left, attendees enjoyed food provided by Rock Bottom Brewery. Dozens of new donors joined CCLP as part of Colorado Gives Day on Dec. 6, and many more contributed as the year came to a close.*

## Foundation funders look to CCLP to advance family economic security, access to health

CCLP received financial support from several foundations during recent months:

- The Kresge Foundation awarded a \$371,000 grant over three years to CCLP's Family Economic Security Program to strengthen poverty-reduction efforts across the state. The three-year grant is the first of its kind The Kresge Foundation has made in Colorado. It will provide unprecedented resources to enhance the capability of CCLP to lead and participate with groups working to reduce poverty.
- The Chambers Family Foundation awarded the Family Economic Security Program a \$50,000 grant over three years to partner in the work under The Kresge Foundation grant.
- The JPMorgan Chase Foundation granted \$30,000 to the Family Economic Security Program to help nonprofits serve more Coloradans through a statewide strategic plan on poverty reduction and standard measurements of economic self-sufficiency.
- CCLP's Health Care Program is a partner in a one-year, \$100,000 grant from The Affordable Care Act Implementation Fund of Community Catalyst. The grant is designed to ensure Colorado's Health Benefit Exchange serves the needs of consumers by offering meaningful, affordable choices and providing adequate consumer protections. Other partners in the grant are the Colorado Consumer Health Initiative and Colorado Public Interest Research Group.

## Carol Hedges interview, continued from page 1

there were a lot of concerns about the actual specific measure itself that caused many people to decide to vote against more funding for schools. Not because they don't support funding for schools, but there were people that were concerned about whether it was the right mechanism, whether we were taxing the right people, whether it was big enough, whether it addressed enough of the comprehensive fiscal problems that the state is facing."

"We moved the conversation on a balanced approach to dealing with the state's fiscal problems, we moved that forward in a meaningful way. 103 was an important next step in the work that CCLP and COFPI have been doing over the last 10 years to start and to keep a conversation alive about the role of the public sector in building strong communities and a strong economy. ... People are beginning to sense the real costs of not making appropriate investments. They see what's happening in their communities because our schools and other public services aren't funded."

"One of the other interesting and important things about 103 is it allowed us to create contacts and relationships and identify literally thousands of people statewide who understand the importance of public education, understand the importance of public investments in having a vital and strong economy. We've got to keep talking to those people. We've got to help them with tools to be the advocates in their communities, to say 'Yes, taxes mean that each of us pay a little bit more, but think about the benefits for our communities.'"

# Health Care Program a statewide resource as Colorado develops Accountable Care Collaboratives

CCLP's Health Care Program is analyzing new mechanisms Colorado is implementing to serve the hundreds of thousands of residents who participate in the Medicaid program for families with low incomes. The state's Accountable Care Collaborative Program could help contain costs and improve the services Medicaid recipients receive. Without careful implementation, though, the ACC program risks creating new barriers to care, especially for Colorado's poorest and most vulnerable Medicaid participants.

CCLP lead researcher on the project is Danny Rheiner, who's working for the Health Care Program under a fellowship funded by the Rice Family Foundation.

ACC program administrators will need to ensure that newly developed health care provider networks are robust enough to meet the needs of people with complex health conditions, Rheiner said. They'll need to avoid imposing unnecessary administrative hassles on program participants. Consumers will need clear choices or they could become discouraged, confused and less involved in their health care decisions.

"If this is successful, it could lead to real cost savings in the Medicaid program without a cut to services," Rheiner said. "Given what a large portion of the state budget Medicaid makes up, legislators are looking for every possible way to cut costs, and this seems like a better way to do it than cutting services."

The ACC program's potential to improve health care delivery for Medicaid recipients and the risks for vulnerable populations show how vital it is for consumers, advocates, policymakers and providers to help shape the program's implementation.

In the initial phase of implementing the program, which runs until July 1, the state will enroll Medicaid clients into Regional Care Collaborative Organizations, which will provide a focal point of care (a medical home) for members including coordinated and integrated access to other services. Clients have 30 days to choose whether to participate in the program before they are automatically enrolled. The enrollment goal for the ACC Program during the initial phase is 120,000 Medicaid clients.

An expansion phase begins July 1, when the majority of Medicaid recipients who are not enrolled in a physical health managed care program will be passively enrolled into the ACC program. That includes Colorado's Medicaid expansion populations (expansion financed through the state's Health Care Affordability Act) and people who are eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare.

CCLP is watching the process, issuing research papers and weighing in at key points to ensure the interests of people with low incomes are served. The Health Care Program will launch a blog early in 2012 where experts will collect documents, research and other details that will be valuable as the program is implemented.

## CCLP short takes

**Follow the Health Care Program on Twitter.** Aiming for even more timely communication with Coloradans about critical health policy issues, CCLP's Health Care Program launched a Twitter feed in November. Follow [@cclpjusthealth](https://twitter.com/cclpjusthealth).

**Colorado spending near the bottom.** The Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute on Dec. 15 released "Aiming for the Middle 2011: Benchmarks for Colorado's Future," showing how the state ranks in spending on key services. Find the report and a three-minute video at [bit.ly/aftm2011](http://bit.ly/aftm2011).

## From CCLP Executive Director Christine Murphy



Colorado Center on Law and Policy staff and board members took a day in September to reaffirm our commitment to this vital work and realign ourselves with the organization's mission and values. I'd like to share some of the results of that meeting: a refined mission, and a new statement of values, both of which guide our work every day.

**Mission:** The Colorado Center on Law and Policy advances the health, economic security and wellbeing of low-income Coloradans through research, education, advocacy and litigation.

### Values

**Research integrity:** CCLP conducts fact-based research that is grounded in data, not ideology. CCLP presents results of research with a perspective but will not compromise the integrity of the product to get a particular result. We present facts in context, and we acknowledge the tradeoffs inherent in public policies.

**Independence:** CCLP takes positions with due consideration to political realities, but CCLP is mission driven and will not compromise in order to serve an outside agenda that is perceived as contrary to the mission, history and values of the organization and the low-income Coloradans CCLP serves.

**Integrity:** CCLP strives to be reliable in its partnerships with other organizations and an honest broker of strategies that will help achieve the CCLP mission. CCLP will not compromise its values or its mission for a quick or easy win and will act to ensure the best possible outcome for low-income Coloradans even if it means standing alone on an issue.

**Fairness and equity:** CCLP acknowledges the cultural and socioeconomic dynamics that create unfairness and inequity for low-income Coloradans. Through our work CCLP seeks to mitigate governmental, societal and economic factors that foster unfairness and inequity.

**Effectiveness:** CCLP is strategic in the work it undertakes so that we avoid activities that will not yield measurable results in the near term or systemic change over the long term. We practice principled pragmatism, always aiming for the ideal but accepting incremental progress when necessary.

*Christine Murphy is executive director of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy. Reach her at [cmurphy@cclponline.org](mailto:cmurphy@cclponline.org).*



## Events

It's a good time to mark your calendar for CCLP events coming in 2012. Keep an eye out for details about each event as the times get closer.

**February:** Valentine Drinks with CCLP at the Denver Press Club

**March:** "Meet CCLP" breakfast, a great opportunity to learn more about our work

**May 19-20:** Join a team for the Colfax Marathon and raise donations for CCLP

**June:** Another "Meet CCLP" breakfast

**June:** Join us for "CCLP Day at the Ballpark"

**August:** A mid-day brownbag lunch conversation with CCLP on critical issues in Colorado

**October:** An evening roundtable conversation with CCLP on critical issues in Colorado

**Oct. 17:** Poverty Day lunch, an event calling attention to the greatest needs in our state

Find details and more CCLP events on our website: [bit.ly/cclpevents](http://bit.ly/cclpevents)

## CCLP Board of Directors

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## Invest in CCLP, see the results

We depend on the support and investment of Coloradans statewide to help us advance the health, economic security and wellbeing of low-income Coloradans. Ways to donate:

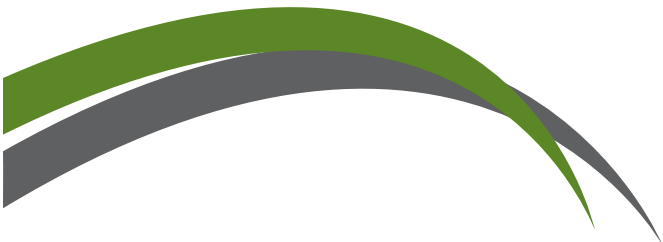
- Make a pledge. Options available for monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual gifts.
- Mail your donation. Please send your check to: CCLP, 789 Sherman St., Suite 300, Denver, CO 80203.
- Donate in-kind
- Donate your car, boat or RV
- Designate CCLP on your pledge form for the United Way or Community Shares
- Leave YOUR Legacy – Planned Giving Program
- Endowment 2015 – An investment in the future of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy. Contact Felicia Griffin at [fgriffin@cclponline.org](mailto:fgriffin@cclponline.org) or call 303-573-5669, ext. 315.

Find details at [cclponline.org/donate](http://cclponline.org/donate).

## Sidebar

A newsletter advancing the health, economic security and wellbeing of low-income Coloradans.

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