

# SMALL FUNDER-BIG IMPACT

Reflections from Megan Nyce, Grant Manager

*Prepared November 2019 by Evan Daly, 6th grade*



Since 1995, I have worked for large community mental health and homeless non-profits, and most recently, the State of Colorado. For years, Lindsey had talked to me about assisting with her family's foundation. Lindsey's persistence paid off and last December I joined the Hayes Family Foundation team. What stands out for me is that the impact we make is close to home. When I worked for the state, I was writing large dollar contracts with local mental health and homeless agencies. I did not always know the staff or individuals and families impacted by that money. With the Hayes Family Foundation, we know the person representing the agency personally. We know the impact we are making.



**Mental Health First Aid Course for Adults  
Assisting Youth-Sponsored by The Hayes  
Family Foundation**

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Lindsey invited me to join the team to fund projects that are inline with her sister Alison's story. Like my brother, Mark, who died in 2007, we know that if more support had been available to them, perhaps their stories may have turned out differently. Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches skills to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addiction challenge or is in crisis. The Hayes Family Foundation is sponsoring a class through Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) at the Park Hill Branch Library Saturday, December 21, from 8:30-5:00. This sponsorship allows for up to 30 people to take the class at no charge. Senior librarian Tara Bannon has taken the class and is very excited to be offering it to our community. For more information about the Mental Health First Aid Class, visit [bit.ly/MHC-Dyouth](http://bit.ly/MHC-Dyouth). To register for the Saturday, December 21 class, visit [bit.ly/MHFAHFF](http://bit.ly/MHFAHFF). Additionally, Lindsey and I are working to offer the Youth Mental Health First Aid class to staff and teachers at two local middle schools.

## PARK HILL SCHOOL INEQUALITY

Andrew Lefkowitz is the co-chair of Park Hill Neighbors for Equity in Education (PHNEE). Lindsey's family has known Andrew's since they were kids. At a 2017 PHNEE community meeting, I witnessed his passion for school equity bring him to tears in front of a crowd of neighbors. Today, PHNEE continues to publish monthly articles in the Greater Park Hill Newspaper and hold community meetings to discuss the inequality brought about by Denver Public School zones, funding, and testing. The Hayes Family Foundation provided a grant to PHNEE that helped bring forth this educational video [Imagine One Park Hill](#) about school choice and its impact on the four Park Hill elementary schools. Watch the video at [bit.ly/phneevideo](http://bit.ly/phneevideo).

I have been attending a Small Funders Group made up of some wonderful local family foundations. At one meeting I said, "our grants are 10% of the size of the grants you all do.... maybe this group isn't for me?" and the leader replied, "small grants can have a big impact." Now I understand what that means. We have done some amazing things right here in Park Hill. H. Michael Hayes would be impressed! To learn more, visit [bit.ly/HayesFF](http://bit.ly/HayesFF).