

Golden Civic Foundation awards grants to community orgs

Internet, scholarships and dinosaur tracks among many nonprofit grants

BY CHRISTY STEADMAN

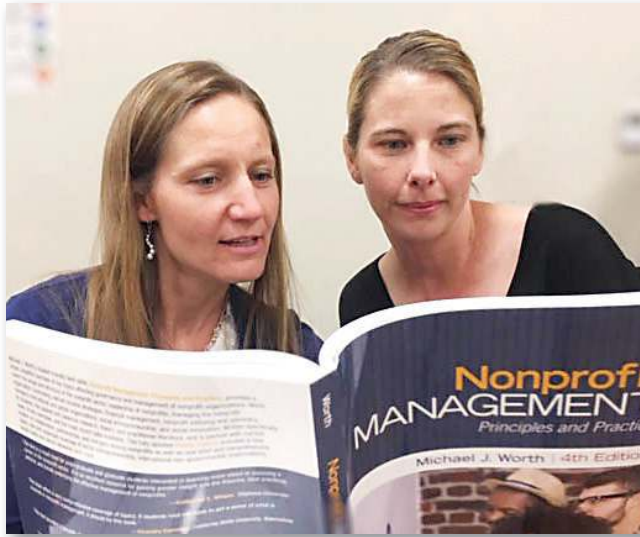
CSTEADMAN@COLORADOCOMMUNITYMEDIA.COM

The Golden Civic Foundation recently wrapped up its annual Community Grants program for the 2018/2019 year.

A total of nearly \$200,000 in grant money was awarded to organizations across Golden for the betterment of the community. This dollar amount includes \$75,000 that will benefit 37 Golden nonprofits directly.

The remaining money went toward special community grants, including the Golden Visitors Center to renovate its Heritage Community Meeting Center and Golden High School for its community track project.

Here is a look at a few of the nonprofit recipients:



Beth Loewen, of Community Faith in Action/Neighborhood Rehab Project, left, and Kelly Ivan of the Christian Action Guild, are last year's recipients of the Nonprofit Pathway program scholarships. The Golden Civic Foundation is awarding a grant to fund two more scholarships for the Nonprofit Pathway program this year.

Courtesy of Red Rocks Community College

only available in Golden."

Au Wireless is a nonprofit co-op that started out as a hobby about four years ago, Wachs said. The first few subscribers were his friends, Wachs said, who is a Golden resident and volunteer firefighter with the Golden Fire Department. Today, Au Wireless services about 300 homes or small businesses in Golden.

Currently, equipment is located on Lookout Mountain, some buildings in the downtown corridor and homes that are geographically situated to be able to serve the neighborhood.

The grant money from the Golden Civic Foundation will be used to purchase equipment that will allow Au Wireless to expand service without the need to make additional purchases of expensive radios or costly upgrades, Wachs said.

"This equipment will allow us to better utilize the equipment we already have," he said, "and provide a faster, more consistent experience to existing and future customers."

Wachs believes that everybody will have fiber internet their homes in the future.

"Internet access has become a need with similar importance to electricity in today's households," Wachs said. "We are going to continue growing our network."

However, Wachs added, there is no desire to offer Au Wireless outside of Golden.

"We're going to keep it local."

Learn more: www.auwireless.net

Nonprofit Pathway program/Red Rocks Community College Foundation

When a person wants to become an engineer or a doctor, for example, they know exactly what to do — which colleges to apply to and what type of degree to pursue.

But for those who want a career in the nonprofit sector, it's not so clear.

That's where Red Rocks Community College's (RRCC) Nonprofit Pathway program can help.

There are about 25 thousand nonprofit organizations in Colorado, and about 95 in Golden, said Kristin Aslan, the Nonprofit Pathway program director.

"We wanted to open that door and encourage people to pursue a career in a nonprofit organization," she said.

The Nonprofit Pathway Certification is open to anybody wanting to launch or advance a career in the nonprofit sector. It is an accelerated course, Aslan said, so it can be completed in one year for working professionals, the certification provides transfer options toward the Bachelor of Public Service degree at University of Colorado-Denver or the classes can be taken individually to focus on a specific skillset.

The RRCC Foundation is the recipient of the Golden Civic Foundation grant, but the money will specifically fund a scholarship for two students working in a Golden nonprofit to complete the Nonprofit Pathway Certification. The scholarship will cover about 75 percent of tuition and fees for each of the two recipients, Aslan said.

The RRCC Foundation was established in 1991, and since, has awarded more than \$5.8 million in scholarships which has benefitted about 3,440 students, Aslan said.

Nonprofit Pathways is relatively new — it launched in 2017 in partnership with Community First Foundation — but has already been successful, Aslan said.

"It's a really unique program," Aslan said.

Learn more: www.rrcc.edu/business/nonprofit-pathway

Friends of Dinosaur Ridge

Colorado is landlocked now, but that wasn't the case millions of years ago.

Back then, massive creatures



Although it's not as large as Dinosaur Ridge's primary location in Morrison, the Friends of Dinosaur Ridge's secondary location along Triceratops Trail in Golden is also impressive, with its dinosaur tracks measuring about two feet in diameter. Courtesy of Friends of Dinosaur Ridge

roamed the area, said Robin Morris, the operations director at Friends of Dinosaur Ridge.

"The fantastic finds" at Dinosaur Ridge, she said, "can take your breath away."

Dinosaur Ridge, 16831 W. Alameda Parkway in Morrison, boasts 300 dinosaur footprints and is the site of the first stegosaurus fossil found in the world, Morris said. However, less than five miles away on Triceratops Trail — a 1.5-mile gravel hiking trail in Golden — is a secondary location that's just as intriguing.

"It's a little smaller," Morris said, "but visually, it's very impressive."

Near Hole 13 on the golf course at Fossil Trace Golf Club, 3050 Illinois St., one can view dinosaur footprints that are about two feet in diameter, Morris said.

Triceratops Trail, like Dinosaur Ridge, is maintained by Friends of Dinosaur Ridge, which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary this April.

Friends of Dinosaur Ridge is a nonprofit organization and the recipient of the Golden Civic Foundation grant. However, the money will go toward improvements to Triceratops Trail. Specifically, it will help fund updates to the interpretive signs — which explain the dinosaur tracks and tell the history of coal and clay mining in Golden — as well as updating the kiosk on site.

There is no personnel at Triceratops Trail, but likely, visitors would still like the educational experience they would get from a guided tour, Morris said.

The kiosk is a solution to that — visitors will be able to get a 15-to-20-page free guidebook that explains what they can see and experience on their walk of Triceratops Trail, Morris said. There will be a donation box if people want to provide a small donation for the guidebook, but it's not required, she added.

The guidebook "will give visitors an opportunity to learn more about the science behind the tracks," Morris said, "as well as a fun souvenir they can take home with them after their visit."



Two Au Wireless technicians install equipment on the Gateway Station condos building in Golden in July 2018.

COURTESY OF AU WIRELESS

Au Wireless, Inc.

People like to have choices. And that includes who they choose as their internet provider.

So, with a goal to provide Golden residents with an alternative to XFINITY/Comcast and CenturyLink, Chad Wachs found Au Wireless.

"I set out to solve a problem in the Golden community," Wachs said. "We provide an affordable, alternative solution for high-speed internet that's

Weekly Carrier Routes Available

West Metro Lakewood area.

- Part-time hours
- Adaptable route sizes
- No suit & tie required!

Previous carrier experience encouraged; reliable vehicle and credit access, required.

no telephone inquiries - but email us at:

snevins@coloradocommunitymedia.com