



**Energize Colorado Portfolio of Work
Q1 2022**

Our mission is to catalyze change for a more resilient and equitable small-business ecosystem across the state of Colorado.

Our Values are

Community First
Be a Place for All Coloradans to Serve All Coloradans
Assume Good Intent
Lead Through Action & Impact
Many Hands, Light Work
Be Open, Be Grateful, Be Generous



Segments

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Mentorship Segment

Leadership: Jamie Gardner & Marc Wheeler

Date launched: April 2020

Weekly Standup: Tuesday 11a-12p

Purpose: The Energize Colorado mentorship program is designed to provide Colorado-based very small businesses with access to industry and functional expertise as a community-based resource.

Mentorship is made available and promoted to businesses associated with Energize Colorado's initiatives and serves as a resource to all small businesses and related support organizations (government, public, and private) augmenting existing mentorship programs.

Current Projects:

- *Mentor Engagement Effectiveness:* Migration to and utilization of Startup Space tools and functionality in managing mentorship engagement with small businesses.
- *Gap Fund:* Have identified and confirmed mentors for the next round of funding in early 2022. Training timed with GAP Fund.
- *Newsletter:* Continue monthly newsletter updates to mentorship volunteers.
- *Sourcing and Recruiting new mentors:* With the migration to Startup Space, launch outreach effort to expand mentorship pool.

External Partners:

- *Local Chambers of Commerce:* Continue outreach to local chambers in identifying mentorship needs and coordination.

Impact Delivered:

- 1100+ businesses served
- 376 business guides
- 636 Gap Fund support engagements



Rural Segment

Leadership: Sara Gutterman

Date launched: June 2020

Weekly Standup: Thursday 4-5p

Purpose: The lack of sustainable, attainable housing is one of the top challenges for rural communities throughout Colorado. The rural segment of Energize Colorado is establishing a sustainable community development program that integrates housing and business opportunities. By creating scalable, sustainable communities that can be replicated across markets throughout rural Colorado, the project can achieve economies of scale and scope that will attract a consortium of public and private partners, including government entities, business organizations, and private investors and developers.

The developments created through this program will feature high-performance, healthy homes, community gathering areas, co-working spaces, and other desirable amenities. The homes will utilize cutting-edge products, systems, and technologies to meet today's environmental realities and homebuyer needs. Price points will include entry-level, move-up, and semi-custom. There will also be a blend of for-rent and for-sale units. The homes will be prefab (constructed offsite) to address the labor challenges, soaring material costs, and material shortages that are currently plaguing the building industry.

Current Projects:

- *Milestones:*
 - (Current Stage) RFP vetting & pilot location selection process
 - Finalize plan for design & development
 - Finalize public & private partners & funding
 - Finalize community designs & entitlement process
 - Start construction

External Partners:

- Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)
- Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT)
- Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
- Colorado Division of Housing (DOH)
- Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC)
- Green Builder Media
- Private investors and developers (Crescent)

Impact Delivered:

- 38 applications received for pilot location



Women-Owned Business Segment

Leadership: Anja Koltes

Date launched: July 2020

Weekly Standup: Tuesday 4-4:45p

Purpose: The Women-Owned Business (WOB) Segment expands opportunities for small business owners who identify as women in Colorado by fostering supportive and dynamic community engagement, empowering through advocacy, and addressing vulnerabilities that are barriers to success.

Current Projects:

- *Survey:* Develop a second version of the EC WOB survey to identify the current status of WOB in Colorado as well as the latest gaps and needs with an opportunity to compare select results to the first survey to start identifying trends over time; the initial survey informed the creation of the segment's key initiatives.
- *Newsletter:* A quarterly newsletter is sent to promote businesses, events, and opportunities for Women-Owned Businesses.
- *Quarterly events (one of each/quarter):*
 - *Speaker Series:* Intimate interviews with inspirational women sharing their stories, tips, and tricks, followed by Q&A.
 - *Lunch and Learns:* Short interactive sessions to provide active learning opportunities on key topics relevant to WOB in Colorado (topics informed by initial survey and Facebook group).
 - *Networking Events:* Opportunity for WOB owners to connect, share resources, and extend their network. Currently fully virtual.
- *Facebook Group:* Ongoing efforts to provide an active community of and for WOB in Colorado, including informal networking, promoting businesses, requesting or sharing information, etc.

External Partners:

- *Ambassadors:*
 - Second Act Women
 - RISE Collaborative

Impact Delivered:

- 955 respondents for the first survey
- 1,024 members in WOB Facebook group
- 2 virtual networking events in 2021: ~100 registered participants
- 2 speakers series events in 2021: ~200 registered participants
- Newsletters sent to 6-8k recipients with an average open rate of 60%



Veteran-Owned Business Segment

Leadership: Carla Stephany

Date launched: June 2020

Weekly Standup: Tuesday 9:30-10a

Purpose: The Veteran-Owned Business Segment supports Veteran-small business owners to connect to resources and solve for gaps and needs in the community.

Projects:

- *Survey:* A survey was conducted and data is currently being analyzed to determine gaps and needs amongst veteran-owned businesses; more outreach is planned to reach additional survey respondents.

External Partners:

- Bunker Labs
- Patriot Boot Camp
- *Potential additional partners:*
 - SBDCs
 - Mt. Carmel Center of Excellence
 - Colorado Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

Impact Delivered:

- 63 survey respondents



Child Care Initiative

Leadership: Brooks Johnson and Co-Lead TBD

Date launched: July 2021

Weekly Standup: Tuesday 3-3:30p

Purpose: The Child Care Initiative supports owners of child care businesses through mentorship, access to resources, and community connection through a 3-month intensive.

Current Projects:

- *Child Care Intensive:* 3-month intensive that cultivates connections between child care providers throughout the State and provides a facilitator-led curriculum.
- *Mentor Program + Resources:* Provide self-serve resources + trained mentors to home-based and center-based child care providers.
- *Child Care + Mental Health:* Provide mental health support to child care providers through a three-part webinar series.

External Partners:

- Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance (ECCLA)
- Experienced Engaged
- Colorado Office of Early Childhood (CDHS-OEC)
- Gary Community Investments
- Mile High United Way
- The Women's Foundation of Colorado
- CU Denver - Anschutz's Johnson Depression Center

Impact Delivered:

- 70 child care providers applied for the pilot Child Care Intensive
- 10 center-based child care providers participated in the Child Care Intensive
- 7 strategic partners engaged to deliver impact, 4 of whom were funding partners for the intensive
- 62 child care providers responded to May 2021 survey focused on identifying the greatest areas of resource support needed
 - 8 child care-specific resources were developed to address the greatest areas of concern as identified by the survey
- 2,500 engagements with child care resources across energizecolorado.com
- 11 dedicated child care mentors identified
- 11 successful mentor matchings and engagements
- 3 mental health webinars for child care providers is underway in partnership with EC Mental Health Initiative



Mental Health Initiative

Leadership: Kristen Jackson

Date launched: March 2020

Weekly Standup: Monday 3-3:30p

Purpose: The Mental Health Initiative supports small business owners in learning about and treating their mental health needs and those of their staff.

Current Projects:

- *Group Therapy:* CU students & professors offer a 4-week virtual group therapy program for small business owners.
- *Child Care + Mental Health:* Providing mental health support to child care providers.
- *Business Skills for Mental Health Professionals (being proposed):* Courses for mental health professionals to learn the business skills to move into private practice.

External Partners:

- CU Denver - Anschutz
- Johnson Depression Center Anschutz
- Member of the National Network of Depression Centers (26 of the country's leading depression and academic medical centers of mood disorders)
- Potential partner: University of Denver

Impact Delivered:

- 120+ people (25% from rural areas) served through partnership with University of Colorado-Denver doctorate psychology program by providing "tools and techniques" groups for managing stress.



Digital Readiness Initiative

Leadership: Ziah Orion

Date launched: September 2020

Weekly Standup: Wednesday 9-9:30a

Purpose: The Digital Readiness Initiative intends to strengthen digital readiness and literacy for Colorado's small business owners by pairing them with mentors to go through a curriculum to develop, expand, and grow their businesses through digital tools.

Current Projects:

- *Digital Readiness Intensive:* Meet businesses where they are in their digital literacy journey and help them grow and expand their reach.
 - This program focuses on cybersecurity, marketing growth, and e-commerce.

External Partners:

- Mastercard
- Cyber Readiness Institute (CRI)
- Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute (RMMFI)
- *Potential Additional Partners:*
 - Amazon
 - Verizon

Impact Delivered:

- 3 participants completed the Digital Readiness intensive pilot
- 2 planned intensives for Q1 2022
 - SBRI cohort
 - RMMFI cohort



Small Business Resiliency Index

Leadership: Wendy Lea

Date launched: March 2021

Weekly Standup: Friday 10:30a-12:15p

Purpose: The Small Business Resiliency Index (SBRI) Initiative was created to provide an ongoing capability to better prepare the state and Colorado small businesses for future external economic challenges. Resiliency is defined as the readiness and capability of a small business to be flexible in wavering economic conditions.

Powered by data-driven insights, this capability is designed to not only capture the current state of resiliency, but it will also provide actionable guidance, resources, and programs to drive change identified by small business owners.

The project provides two reports: a state-level executive report and a small business peer report.

Current Projects:

- *Part 1:* State report (launched 12/21)
- *Part 2:* Small Business Report (launches 1/22)
- *Part 3:* Education on Resiliency Vectors/Resources

External Partners:

- McKinsey & Co.
- CU Boulder Leeds School of Business
- CU Denver/CAM
- Underrepresented People of Purpose (UPOP)
- OpenAxis

Impact Delivered:

- First culturally responsive data set that assesses and predicts small business resiliency
- 729 small businesses responded
- Methodology/Insights showcased with OEDIT/SoS's Office, Gov's OSPB



Capital Access, Absorption, Technical Assistance

Leadership: Wendy Lea & Brooks Johnson

Date launched: October 2021

Weekly Standup: Monday 3-3:30p

Purpose: Colorado has an unprecedented opportunity to improve the resilience and overall health of its small business economic engine through capital deployment. However, to capitalize on this opportunity we need to better understand and alleviate constraints around capital deployment channels, limited capital access, and TA needs.

Current Projects:

- *Better understand the Colorado small business lending landscape:*
 - Develop a map of Colorado small business lenders, identifying service overlap and gaps, if possible.
 - Convene key stakeholders to gain a common understanding and to develop solutions to these problems.
- *Provide recommendations to improve absorption:*
 - Provide concrete recommendations to reduce these constraints.
 - Possible recommendations could be some combination of structural, process, or digital solutions.

External Partners:

- Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)
- Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT)
- WellsFargo
- Federal Reserve
- Community Reinvestment Funds (CRF)
- Gates Foundation
- Colorado Banking Association

Impact Delivered:

- Interviews completed with a sample pool of capital deployment organizations across the state.



Gap Fund

Leadership: Ryan Cobbins

Date launched: September 2020 (501c3 status achieved)

Weekly Standup: Monday 11-11:30a

Purpose: The Energize Colorado Gap Fund will provide nearly \$50M in small business loans and grants to boost small business enterprises that are the economic engines throughout the state. So far, more than \$26 million in grants have been connected to Colorado small businesses, and our loan program continues to fundraise.

Current Projects:

- *Square Mile:*
 - Deploy ~\$6M in low-interest loans to Gap Fund priority groups & communities
 - Pair local technical assistance with loan recipients
 - Enhance community connectivity
 - *Increase access to capital and loan readiness*
- Deploy \$15M in state-allocated grant capital with an expected impact of 1000+ small businesses
- Increase access to capital and loan readiness through Technical Assistance programs
- Raise \$1.2M in private PRI/donation dollars to access an additional \$1.5M from the Economic Development Commission

External Partners:

- Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)
- Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT)
- Colorado Economic Development Commission (EDC)
- CDFI's & Lenders
- Wells Fargo

Impact Delivered:

- \$25M Awarded in Grant; 2060 Businesses Served; 99% from Priority Businesses
- \$793,187 in loans going to 47 businesses
- \$15M to deploy in additional grant funds in Q1 2022
- Square Mile loan readiness, technical assistance, community connection & cohort deployment in 2022



Energize Colorado Team

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