



**Media Contact:** Lisa Christie  
303-285-2961-office  
917-609-0839-mobile  
[lisac@wfco.org](mailto:lisac@wfco.org)

## **For Immediate Release**

# **The Women's Foundation of Colorado Announces New President and CEO**

## ***Lauren Y. Casteel brings unmatched experience leading foundations***

**DENVER (Jan. 15, 2015)** — The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) builds resources and leads change so that every woman and girl in Colorado achieves her full potential, and today announced its new president and CEO following a nationwide search. Lauren Y. Casteel, who currently serves as the vice president of philanthropic partnerships for The Denver Foundation will join The Women's Foundation of Colorado starting Feb. 23, 2015.

When Casteel takes the helm at WFCO, she will be the first person to have led three separate foundations in Colorado. Previously she served as the executive director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation and as president of the Hunt Alternatives Fund. Since 1998, she has been with The Denver Foundation, Colorado's oldest and largest community foundation, where she created and led the philanthropic partnerships and donor services departments and served in a senior program officer role. For her pioneering work at The Denver Foundation and in the public, private and nonprofit sectors, she was inducted into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame in 2014.

"The Women's Foundation of Colorado is thrilled to benefit from Lauren's track record of leading high-profile foundations successfully," said Anahita Kemp, chair of the board of trustees of WFCO. "Lauren has been dedicated to social and economic justice her entire life; she is a natural connector, focused leader and inspiring communicator; and she possesses a spirit of inclusion as well as deep ties and established relationships throughout our state. These qualities will be key to Lauren's growing WFCO's footprint in Colorado and expanding upon the mission established by our founders 28 years ago."

The Women's Foundation of Colorado works to lead systemic change that will advance economic opportunities for all women and girls in Colorado by amplifying their voices through research, education, public policy and community investments. WFCO's community investments are strategically focused to:

1. Help girls graduate from high school
2. Increase opportunities for low-income single mothers through education and job training
3. Encourage and enable women and girls to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math).

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"I'm honored to have the opportunity to lead this outstanding organization that is so deeply committed to improving the lives of women and girls in Colorado," said Casteel. "I look forward to adding another layer to the legacy of The Women's Foundation of Colorado by bringing a wide spectrum of voices to our story and using a gender lens to magnify the critical issues of our day. I will leverage the time, talent, treasure and testimonials of the men and women who have supported WFCO since its inception and work to ensure that it is the go-to organization for all issues affecting the economic security and success of women and girls in Colorado."

A recognized advocate for women, children, youth and families in Colorado, Casteel launched the award-winning program, The Inclusiveness Project, at The Denver Foundation. The program engages with Metro Denver nonprofits, including philanthropy, to become more inclusive of people of color, and thereby has changed the face of Colorado's nonprofit community and engendered national attention. In addition to her induction into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, she has received many other distinctions throughout her career, including:

- Being named a *Denver Urban Spectrum* "Living Legend" in 2012
- Being named a Girl Scouts' "Woman of Distinction" in 1997
- Receiving the "Investment in Excellence Award" from the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver in 1997.

A few of her current and past community leadership initiatives include:

- Board member of the Association of Black Foundation Executives
- Former member of the Council on Foundations' Community Foundations Leadership Team
- Participant in The White House Social Enterprise and Opportunity Series on the Philanthropic Sector
- Founding board member of Qualistar Colorado

"Lauren Casteel has been a key leader in Metro Denver for decades and has given a great deal to The Denver Foundation over the past 16 years in grantmaking, donor services, and philanthropic partnerships, including leading the creation of the nationally recognized Inclusiveness Project and the Nonprofit Internship Program," said David Miller, CEO of The Denver Foundation. "We are delighted that she is going on to lead The Women's Foundation of Colorado and that we will continue our partnership with Lauren in years to come."

In 2014, The Women's Foundation of Colorado granted more than \$1.3 million to dozens of agencies in communities across the state, achieving the highest level of granting in its history. Since 1987, WFCO has invested more than \$13 million in Colorado communities.

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### **About The Women's Foundation of Colorado**

The mission of The Women's Foundation of Colorado is to build resources and lead change so that every woman and girl in Colorado achieves her full potential. We are committed to boldly leading systemic change to advance economic opportunity for all women and girls in Colorado; using research to build knowledge and guide action; building philanthropy that supports and champions women and girls in Colorado; demonstrating and promoting inclusiveness and commitment to a diversity of people, partners and ideas; and creating strategic partnerships throughout the state to service our mission. For more information, visit [www.wfco.org](http://www.wfco.org) or call 303-285-2960.

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