

WOMEN ACHIEVING GREATER ECONOMIC STABILITY (WAGES)

Progress of the WAGES Grantee Cohort

2019-20 Annual
Report





Progress of the WAGES Grantee Cohort: 2019-20 Annual Report

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Executive Summary

Women Achieving Greater Economic Security - WAGES

Too many Colorado women live in or on the edge of poverty or work in low-wage jobs with little opportunity for advancement. In 2017, The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) implemented WAGES - **Women Achieving Greater Economic Security** - to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families. WFCO funds direct service (DS) and policy advocacy (PA) organizations to implement services and strategies that are designed to propel women into careers that enable them to meet their needs and the needs of their families, with a special focus on issues of equity and two-generational approaches. Through WAGES, **23 diverse and expert organizations are coming together** to share and innovate strategies, foster new conversations and collaborations, and inform the larger field of stakeholders interested in improving economic opportunities for women and their families. The OMNI Institute is the learning and evaluation partner of the initiative.

This report provides updates and learnings from WAGES' second year of programming, the end of which coincided with the COVID-19 outbreak (March 2018 - March 2020). As such, much of the evaluation information included in this report reflects women's progress and efforts prior to the outbreak. However, COVID-19 was a large part of the discussion in the April and May 2020 convenings; a summary of key takeaways from those discussions on how COVID-19 is impacting WAGES work is included in this report.

730 Diverse Participants, and 1,642 Household Members, Have Been Reached

Most participants served through WAGES are **single mothers** (68%) with one or two children (72%). They live across Colorado, with about 40% outside of the Denver Metro area. WAGES participants are **more racially/ethnically diverse** than the Colorado population. Among WAGES participants, the majority identified as Latinx/Hispanic (51.8%), followed by participants who identified as White (29.3%) or Black or African American (21.1%).

At program entry, 62% of WAGES participants earned less than \$1,501 per month. From 46% to 54% of participants were experiencing **transportation barriers; lack of access to affordable child care and housing, and limited employment history**. WAGES grantees are providing participants with a variety of services to support advancement towards a livable wage, most commonly **financial assistance, case management, and employment services**. Qualitative data suggest that **financial stipends/support, referrals and wrap-around services, and ongoing support**, even post program-completion, are important for participants' success.

"We have learned that by addressing and meeting a woman's basic needs first, we have seen improvements in successful career placement and retention. We also know that when women graduate from our training, their [path] to self-sufficiency isn't over. We encourage them to continue putting into practice the lessons they have learned in class and to always remember that we are there for them."

- Direct Service Grantee

WAGES Participants are Achieving Positive Outcomes¹


Over the past two years:

- **180 participants made employment gains**, 29% of whom were unemployed and attained employment, and 44% of whom experienced across or within sector gains (e.g., a job change or a promotion).
- **337 participants reached educational goals**, 24% of whom obtained a high school diploma or GED, 19% of whom received a professional certification, and 7% of whom obtained a college degree.
- **61 participants reduced public supports** around income, housing, child care, food and healthcare.
- Of the 114 participants for whom gross monthly income data were available, the **percentage earning \$1000 or less fell from 48% at intake to 36% at program exit or follow-up.**

"When I first [started the program], I had only saved up enough money to be unemployed for one month. Well, in that one month, I was able to graduate from the [program] and get a job - I couldn't believe it! I now have a job that I'm passionate about that also has a family-friendly schedule and a higher salary."

- WAGES Participant

Policy Advocacy Grantees are Working to Advance WAGES Priority Areas



Earn equal pay regardless of social identity

Grantees engaged in coalition work on a variety of issues that support Colorado women and their families, including: fighting predatory lending practices and protecting consumers; safe banking for low-income communities; addressing debt and credit issues; exploring strategies for financial education and asset building; and leading efforts for a secure savings program to provide workers without access to retirement savings.




Find gainful employment and job training

Grantees worked in coalition for greater equity in workforce development and postsecondary education, as well as continuing work around registered apprenticeships and paid internships as career pathways (e.g., in healthcare, IT, etc.).



Access higher education

Grantees also worked in coalitions focused on policy efforts to address early child care and education workforce shortages; on community engagement practices to ensure strong community participation; and on a bill for Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI).



Access child care

On March 14th, 2020, the Colorado General Assembly suspended its session due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the legislature reconvened, balancing the budget and helping the state's economic recovery from the pandemic became the top priority of legislators, meaning many of the policies that PA grantees worked on did not pass or were not introduced in the truncated session.

¹ Outcomes were reported on participants as they became available (i.e., while in or after completing programs). The number of participants achieving outcomes is influenced in part by differences in the number of participants served by grantees who target educational versus employment-based programming. Data on gross monthly income are new and not all grantees track this information for the participants they serve. Outcomes were mostly collected prior to COVID-19.

What Helps Women and their Families Achieve Economic Security

Direct Service

Job training programs that include both hard- and soft-skills training, provide comprehensive supports to women and their families, and utilize relationship-building and strengths-based approaches.

- Financial supports, especially with COVID-19 to support financial stability
- Program flexibility to meet requirements (e.g., flexible training times, moving to online platforms, etc.)
- Connecting participants directly to employment opportunities, registered apprenticeships; paid apprenticeships ('earn to learn' opportunities)
- Dedicated case manager, advisor, and/or transitions/family advocate role
- Community partnerships (e.g., for wrap-around support, workforce training, etc.)
- Relationship-building, peer support, and working from strengths
- Individualized goals and success plans that are attainable and break down barriers
- Providing early childhood education and care as part of two-generation strategies
- Events with professionals in various fields as guest speakers

Policy Advocacy

Policy advocacy strategies that are bipartisan, multi-pronged, leverage organizational strengths and collaboration, engage impacted communities, and are well covered by the media.

- Being nimble and responsive to changing conditions (e.g., COVID-19)
- Enhancing messaging and communications strategies
- Advocating for sustainable ways to increase worker benefits and wages (e.g., FAMILI)
- Fostering bipartisan support; working on issues with broad-base appeal; showing how issues are interconnected to build support.
- Sharing research broadly and in ways that are relatable to non-policy experts
- Working in coalition and laying the groundwork in the 'off-season'
- Directly engaging the community, particularly those with lived experience around the issues; supporting leadership development of community members.
- Perseverance, patience, and leveraging openings
- Developing pilot programs to assess the impact new career ladder opportunities have on worker retention.

Recommendations

Shared Learning

Continue to prioritize formal and informal opportunities for WAGES grantees to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work, partner on shared priorities, and deepen relationships.

Policy

Continue to share updates around WAGES-related policies and explore entry points for supporting policies that promote greater equity for women and their families; continue to work on fiscal reform to the state constitution beyond the legislative process (e.g., Ballot Initiative 271).



Equity

Continue to explore internal and external organizational equity issues to help enhance grantees' DEI capacity. Continue to explore equity implications of legislative policies and of direct service grantee supports. Consider additional mechanisms for bringing in community voices to inform the work.

COVID-19

Consider equitable policy and direct services solutions at all levels (local, state, and federal), particularly as additional CARES federal stimulus funds become available. Continue to share resources and updates to support women and their families.

Introduction

The Women's Foundation of Colorado (WFCO) has a mission of "Catalyzing community to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families." WFCO also is committed to deepening understanding of how women's identities intersect and addressing structural systems that perpetuate inequity. In 2016, WFCO surveyed 1,300 diverse Coloradans and identified five key resources that women need to achieve economic security: livable wages, equal pay, employment opportunities, child care and higher education. WAGES (Women Achieving Greater Economic Security) is WFCO's programmatic body of work that promotes Colorado women earning livable wages through research, public policy advocacy, and strategic grantmaking.

The aim of WAGES is to propel more women into careers that enable them to meet their needs and the needs of their families by elevating "practices that work and by dismantling systems that continue to hold women back." Twenty-three diverse organizations across the state – 15 Direct Service (DS)² and eight Policy Advocacy (PA) organizations – were funded for three years to implement services, strategies, and tactics that aim to improve the lives of Colorado women and their families through attainment of livable wages. PA grantees were initially awarded grants in December of 2017 and DS grantees were awarded in February of 2018. In 2019, the WFCO board approved a fourth year of funding for the WAGES cohort. WAGES grantees include the following direct service and policy advocacy organizations.

Direct Service Grantees

- Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE)
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD)
- Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc. (CHIC)
- Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC), Women's Resource Center, and La Plata Family Centers Coalition (Southwest CO Women's Project)
- Eagle County Govt, DHS
- Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc. (EFAA)
- Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado (Flo Critt)
- Mi Casa Resource Center
- OneMorgan County (OMC)
- Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins (PSS)
- Pueblo Community College and Pueblo Community College Foundation

Policy Advocacy Grantees

- 9to5 Colorado
- Bell Policy Center
- Colorado Center on Law & Policy (CCLP)
- Colorado Children's Campaign
- Colorado Fiscal Institute
- Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation
- Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC)
- Young Invincibles

² WFCO funded 15 direct service organizations. However, because a few of these organizations are working in partnership or formal coalition to deliver their program, there are 15 organizations working on 12 projects. For simplicity, this report references 15 direct service organizations.

Components of the WAGES Initiative



Convening & Learning: Interested in harnessing the power and opportunity of bringing 23 diverse and expert organizations together, WAGES has put in place a “cohort learning model” or learning community among grantees to share and innovate strategies, foster new conversations and collaborations, and inform the larger field of stakeholders interested in improving economic opportunities for women and their families. As part of the cohort learning model, WFCO holds regular WAGES convenings to bring together DS and PA grantee organizations. From the beginning of the grant through September of 2019, these convenings were in-person sessions. However, beginning in November of 2019, a virtual almost-monthly format was employed to bring grantees together more frequently but for shorter periods of time. This change initially was implemented to be more responsive to the time policy advocacy grantees needed during the Colorado legislative session (January - May). However, as the COVID-19 pandemic began in mid-March of 2020, virtual convenings were continued to ensure safety.



Equity: WFCO strives to understand intersections of identities and to address structural systems of inequity to improve the lives of Colorado women and their families. At its core, equity means that everyone has what they need to be successful and acknowledges that what one person needs may be different than what another person needs. WFCO believes that deliberately including diverse perspectives in this work and their decision making will lead to better results. As such, equity has been a frame that has been intentionally infused throughout WAGES - in the selection of diverse grantee organizations from around the state; the types of evaluation questions that have been asked; the co-created and responsive approach to the evaluation; the selected WAGES facilitators; and the cohort learning opportunities that have been implemented as part of the WAGES cohort learning model.



Two-generation Approach: Additionally, WFCO is interested in promoting two-generation solutions to addressing gender and racial inequity, understanding that incorporating the interests of women and their children is key to advancing equity and breaking the cycles of poverty. Two-generation strategies focus on the family system and connect families to services that simultaneously address the needs of both adults and children. Although WAGES grantees vary in their capacity to implement two-generation strategies, all share WFCO's commitment to service-delivery reforms and policy solutions that help Colorado women and their families improve their economic security, which includes fostering healthy child development.

Evaluation and Learning

The OMNI Institute, a nonprofit social science consultancy that provides integrated research and evaluation, capacity building, and data utilization services to accelerate positive social change, was selected as the external evaluator and learning partner for WAGES. To develop the WAGES evaluation, OMNI co-created an evaluation framework with WFCO and grantee organizations. The co-creation approach included facilitated meetings with WFCO and grantee organizations to develop and refine evaluation questions; creating an evaluation plan with grantee input; and implementing data collection tools and processes to facilitate reporting. This collaborative and iterative process was key in the design of the evaluation due to the diversity of grantee organizations and the evolving nature of the work and stakeholder needs. OMNI will continue to provide an agile approach to the evaluation to remain responsive to the needs of the programs (see Appendix A for more description on the Methods of the evaluation).

Evaluation Questions: Designed to inform WFCO's strategic grantmaking and desires to support learning in the field, the WAGES evaluation seeks to answer the following overarching questions:

- **Reach** – Who are the women and families reached by WAGES direct service grantees?
- **Implementation** – What services and strategies are WAGES grantees using to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for women and their families?
- What are the strengths and challenges of a given approach?
- **Outcomes** – To what extent are WAGES grantees supporting women and their families' progress toward a livable wage?
- **Cohort Learning** – How is the cohort learning model implemented and facilitating improvements to grantees' strategies? How can these learnings be used to inform the field?



Annual Report: This Year 2 Annual Report provides updates on the women served by DS grantees from the beginning of the grant through April of 2020; the strategies and tactics that direct service and policy advocacy grantees are implementing; and learnings from these efforts. It should be noted that the 2020 WAGES Survey, which captures much of the information on women served to date and strategies and tactics being implemented, was administered in March/April 2020, which coincided with the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent stay-at-home orders. As such, the survey data mostly reflect women's progress prior to the outbreak. COVID-19 was a large part of the discussion in the April and May 2020 convenings and a summary of key takeaways from those discussions on how COVID-19 is impacting WAGES work is included in this report.

Reading this report: Please note that “grantees” will be used to indicate direct service and policy advocacy organizational representatives, and “participants” will be used to describe the women who were utilizing services and supports through the WAGES direct service organizations.

On the following page is a journey map highlighting key activities of the WAGES cohort from the beginning of the grant through May of 2020. The evaluation will continue to document the WAGES cohort's journey through the remainder of the grant.

WAGES Cohort Journey Map

WAGES grantees receive funding



1st Policy Advocacy Grantee Convening

Grantees focused on organizational **strengths** and **priorities** heading into 2018 legislative session, discussing needed support and what **good partnerships** look like.



1st All Grantee WAGES Convening

Grantees were introduced to the **vision** and **goals** for WAGES. They also focused on their organizations capacity for **equity** and **inclusion**.



December 2017

February 2018



2nd All Grantee WAGES Convening

Convening focused on continued learning around **equity**, **two-generation strategies** & identifying **cross-cutting policy issues**.



Two-Generation and Equity Webinar

Webinar deepened understanding of **two-generation strategies** and internal organizational capacity to improve **equity**, as well as created a space for WAGES members to **connect with each other**.



August 2018

July 2018



2nd Policy Advocacy Grantee Convening

Grantees explored the **changing legislature** and how they will need to shift strategies and tactics. Selected grantees also **shared their research** as it related to WAGES.



3rd All Grantee WAGES Convening

Grantees continued dialoguing about improving **equity** within organizations, **forming partnerships**, as well as identifying **shared policy priorities**.



December 2018

February 2019



4th All Grantee Convening



Grantees came together for a 1.5 day convening to continue **relationship and equity capacity building**, surface a **shared policy goal**, and deepen **learning**.



Evaluation Report Shared with Cohort

OMNI shared the 2018-19 evaluation report with the WAGES Cohort, **highlighting the work** done across organizations over the course of the grant.



September 2019

July 2019



All Grantee Virtual Convening

The inaugural virtual convening allowed for greater **connection**, with continued learning on **early childhood education** efforts, **equity-centered policy work**, and **relationship building** in advance of the upcoming legislative session.



All Grantee 2-Hour Virtual Convening

Policy grantees provided **updates on a variety of policy measures**. The group engaged in **equity learning** discussing **class culture** and identified future areas of focus.

November 2019

January 2020



All Grantee 2-Hour Virtual Convening

Direct Service grantees came together to **share successes and lessons learned** through their WAGES work, while Policy grantees shared **updates on policy measures**. Equity learning continued focusing **on examining the race and gender wealth gap**.



All Grantee 2-Hour Virtual Convening

Policy grantees provided continued **updates on policy measures**. **Equity learning** continued with an emphasis on **rural communities**. The **WAGES Mid-Year Report** was presented.

March 2020

February 2020



Optional 1-Hour Virtual Convening

Grantees came together to check-in around how they and their communities were **coping with COVID-19**, while WFCO **shared resources** with the cohort.



Optional 1-Hour Virtual Convening

Direct service and Policy Advocacy grantees provided **updates about their efforts** and received updates on the **availability of statewide funds**.

April 2020

May 2020



Optional 1-Hour Virtual Convening & Policy Advocacy Training

Direct Service grantees participated in a **Policy Advocacy training** and the group shared **opportunities for collective action**. Policy Advocacy grantees provided **updates on the legislative session**.



May 2020

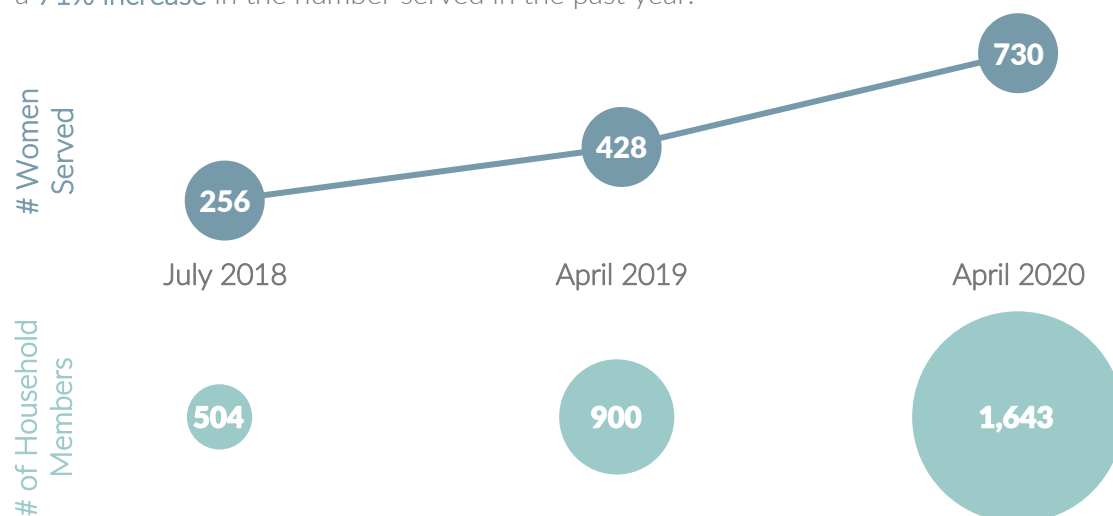
Direct Service Grantee Efforts

Reach

In March/April 2020, the 2020 WAGES Survey was administered. The 15 direct service DS grantees provided data on **730 women** who were reached through WAGES funding, serving an additional 117 women since the last reporting period a year earlier. Further, an estimated **2,373 individuals** benefitted from WAGES direct service grantee efforts - 730 women who were directly served and 1,643 household members (see Appendix C for more information on the number of household members in families).

FIGURE 1. NUMBER OF WOMEN SERVED THROUGH WAGES FUNDING

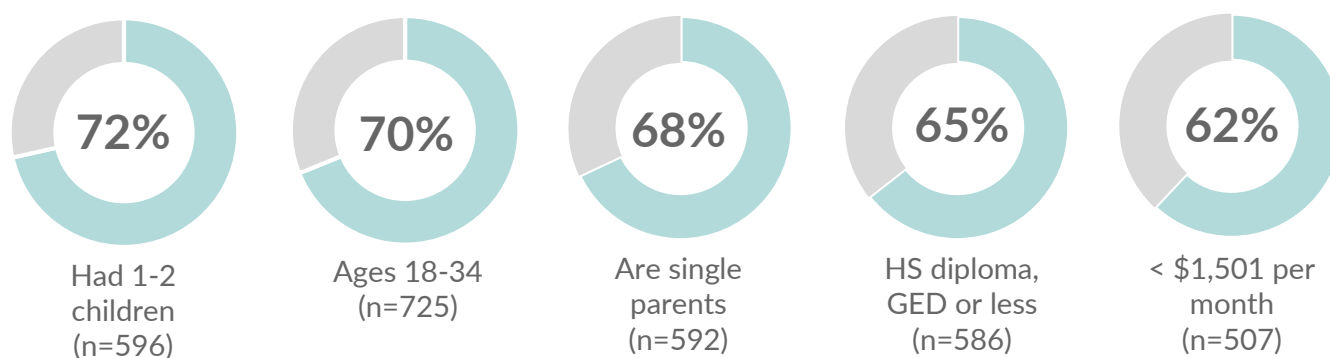
Direct Service organizations provided services to **730 women** since the beginning of the grant, a **71% increase** in the number served in the past year.



Demographic Profile

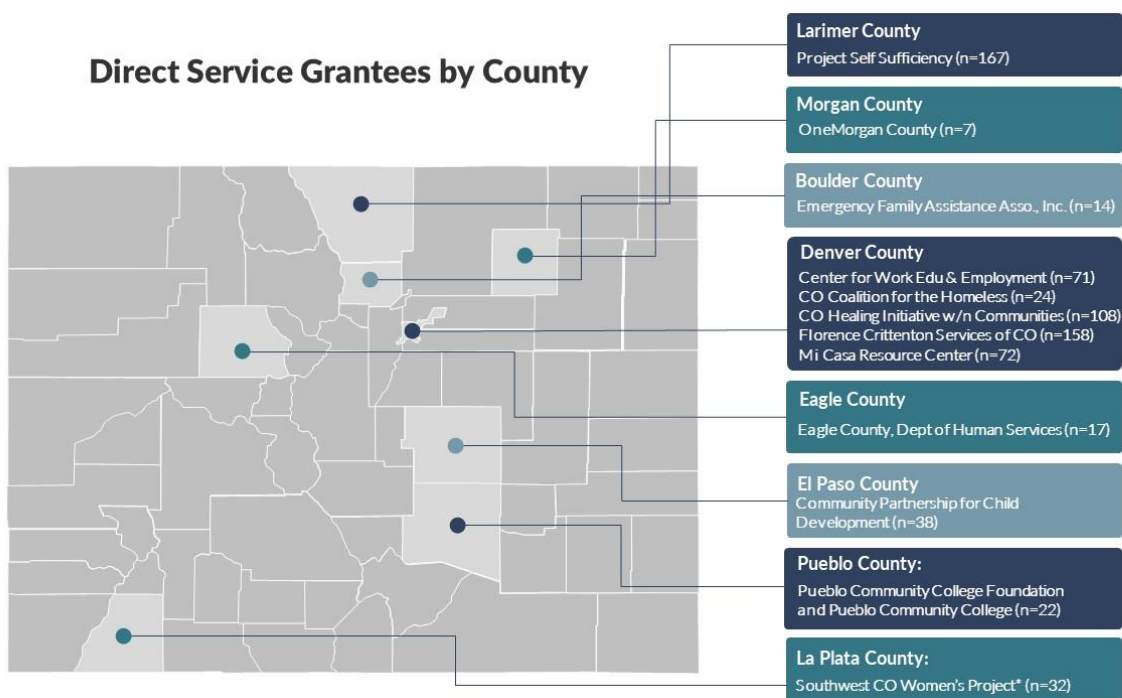
Overall, most WAGES participants are single mothers with one or two children (see Figure 2 below). At program entry, 65% of participants had a high school diploma/GED or less, and 62% were earning \$1,500 or less per month. For full demographic information, please see Appendix C.

FIGURE 2. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



As Figure 3 shows, DS grantees served women throughout Colorado, including in the Denver Metro Area (5), Boulder County (1), Larimer County (1), Morgan County (1), La Plata/Durango (3), Pueblo County (1), El Paso County (1), and Eagle County (1). About 60% of women served were in the Denver Metro Area.

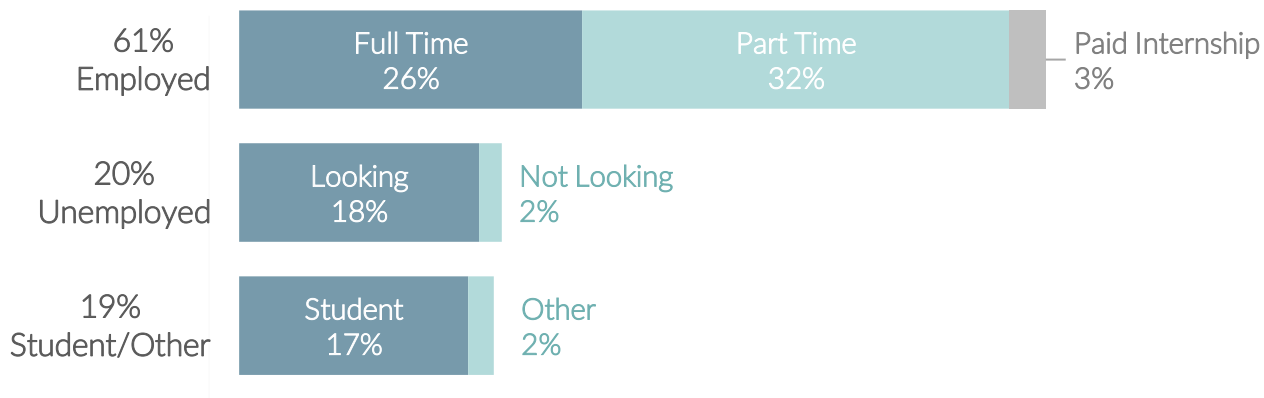
FIGURE 3. DIRECT SERVICE GRANTEE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS



Employment Status

At program entry, DS grantee organizations reported that most WAGES participants were employed (61%) and worked either full-time (26%) or part-time (32%). Twenty percent (20%) of women were unemployed. Recall that these data come from program entry and generally reflect pre-COVID-19.

FIGURE 4. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' EMPLOYMENT STATUS



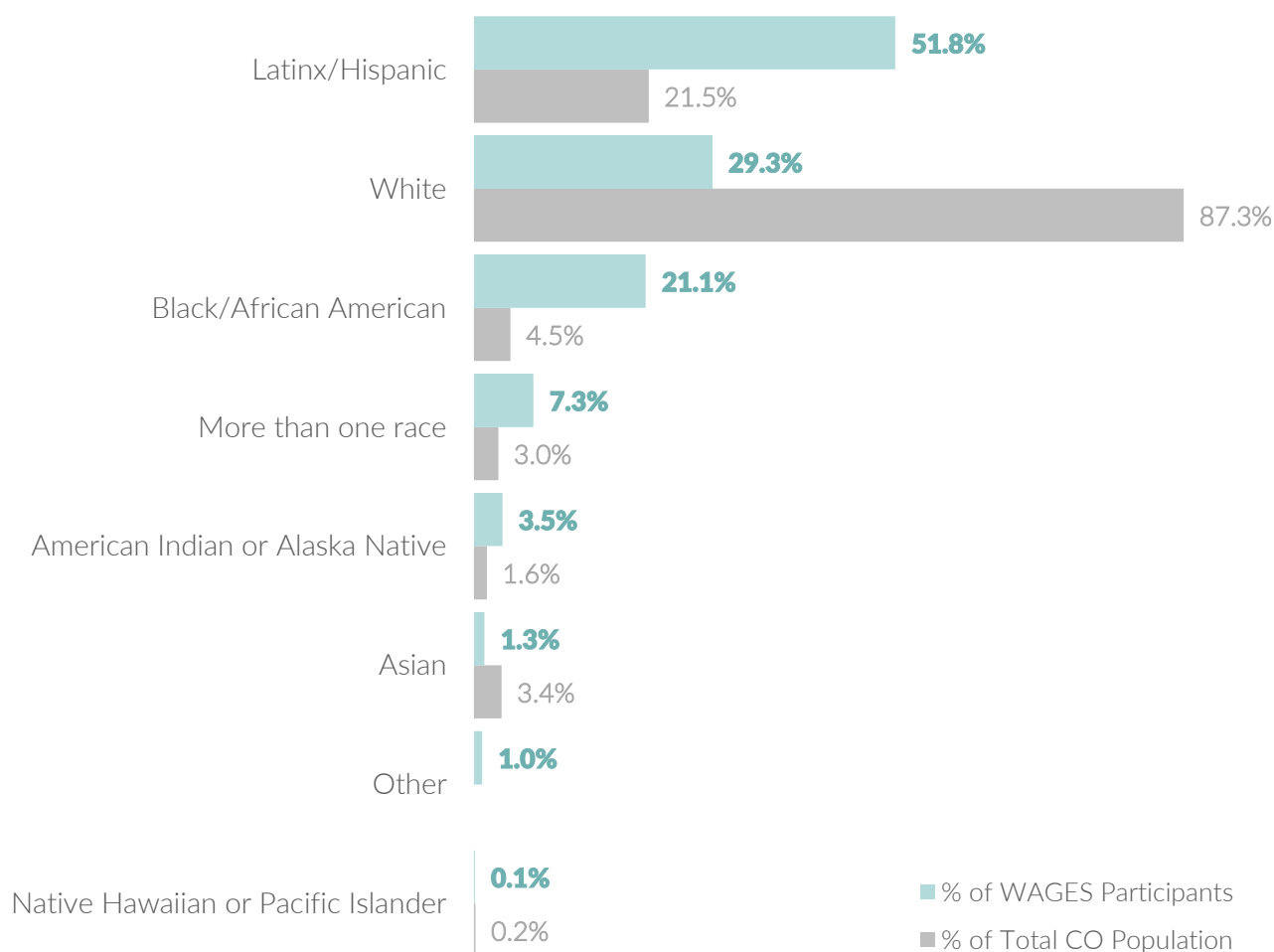
Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized (n=692).

Race and Ethnicity

As Figure 5 shows, WAGES participants are more racially/ethnically diverse than the Colorado population. Among WAGES participants, the majority identified as Latinx/Hispanic (51.8%), followed by participants who identified as White (29.3%) or Black or African American (21.1%). In other words, communities of color were reached at higher rates when compared to the racial/ethnic distribution of Colorado's population, except for Asian and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander individuals.

FIGURE 5. RACE/ETHNICITY FOR WAGES PARTICIPANTS COMPARED TO CO POPULATION

Most WAGES participants are women of color.

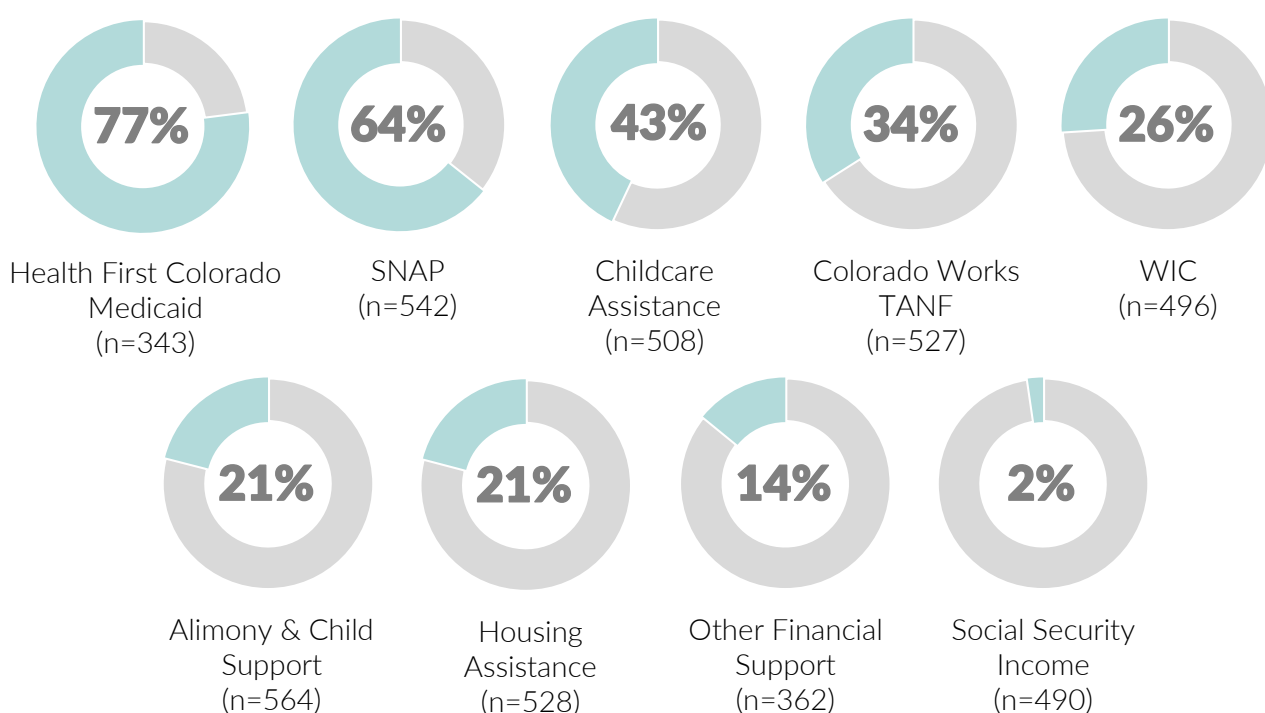


Note: Grantees were able to select more than one race/ethnicity for each participant. Percentages slightly exceed 100%. Colorado population estimates are from the 2018 U.S. Census estimates and for both women and men, as data were not available by race/ethnicity and gender. Further, the U.S. Census asks race and ethnicity questions separately, whereas WAGES grantees provided data on race and ethnicity as one question. "Other" race/ethnicity is not an option for the census data but was for WAGES grantees; for these reasons, comparisons are not exact.

Financial Support Systems

DS grantees were asked to indicate what financial support systems their WAGES participants utilized at program entry. As Figure 6 shows, Health First Colorado Medicaid had the highest valid percentage of users (77%), though fewer participants provided data (n=336), followed by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP (64%, n=542). Only 34% of participants reported receiving Colorado Works (the state's Temporary Assistance to Needy Families [TANF] program) and 26% received WIC (The Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children). When reading Figure 6, please note variation in missing data across support systems. Table C.3. in Appendix C provides more information on and definitions of financial support systems.

FIGURE 6. WAGES PARTICIPANTS' FINANCIAL SUPPORTS



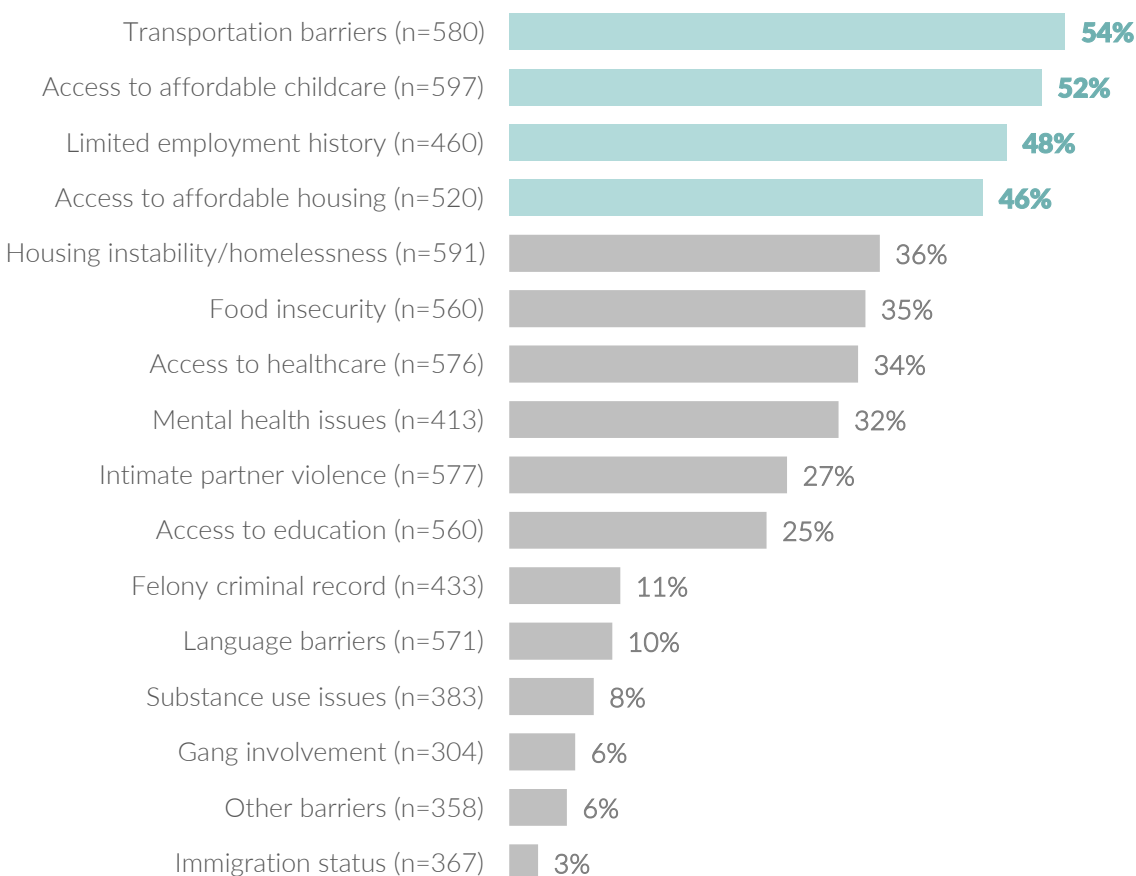
Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that missing data varies on several types of support. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes may not accurately reflect patterns of use.

Barriers to Economic Security

DS grantees were asked to report on the number of participants who experienced specific barriers to obtaining a livable wage. As shown in Figure 7, the top four barriers at program entry were transportation, access to affordable child care, limited employment history, and access to affordable housing. For limited employment history, there was a small increase from Year 1 (46%) to Year 2 (48%), which moved up the barrier to third among participants. However, it should be noted that most of these participants were served by the DS grantee that supports young high school mothers. Thus, participants' limited employment history largely reflects that these are young mothers who have not yet fully participated in the workforce. Also, please note the variation in available data across types of barriers when interpreting the finding below.

FIGURE 7. BARRIERS TO ECONOMIC SECURITY

At the end of Year 2, **transportation barriers**, **lack of access to affordable child care**, **limited employment history**, and **access to affordable housing** were identified as barriers by approximately 1 in 2 women reporting.



Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that data were missing on several types of barriers. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes should be read with caution.

Implementation

To address the diverse needs/barriers to achieving economic security, grantee organizations implement a variety of services and approaches. Table C.4 in Appendix C summarizes each DS grantee's programming and the targeted population/demographics of the women they serve. Below, we share common approaches/strategies to implementation.

Program Services and Activities at Intake

As Figure 8 shows, most participants received financial assistance, case management, and employment services, thus ensuring that a whole-person and individualized approach is being implemented to best support participants.

From qualitative feedback on the 2020 WAGES Survey, grantees continue to surface the importance of providing **financial stipends**³ to support participants on their path to economic security. Financial and basic needs assistance surfaced as a particularly important support during COVID-19 (see DS grantees' response to COVID on p. 34 for further information).

Referrals and wrap-around services to provide complimentary, whole-person services was also noted as an effective implementation strategy. One DS grantee further discussed the importance of employing a full-time Transitions Advocate dedicated to helping graduates and alumni continue progressing towards self-sufficiency (also see What Helps Women and Their Families Achieve Economic Security on p. 24).

"The ability to have quality follow-up with participants, even after they have finished their training courses proves very helpful in helping them take the next step in their pathway. We are in the process of hiring a family advocate who can offer intensive follow-up with all program participants and their families (following a two-generation approach)."

- Direct Service Grantee

"One of the pieces we are strengthening in the Transitions Advocate work is around budget-making and financial education. The Transitions Advocate completes a 'Checklist for Success' with soon-to-be graduates, along with a budget that helps the young mom think about expenses and income, in the context of post-graduation plans. For many, it has been an eye-opening experience."

- Direct Service Grantee

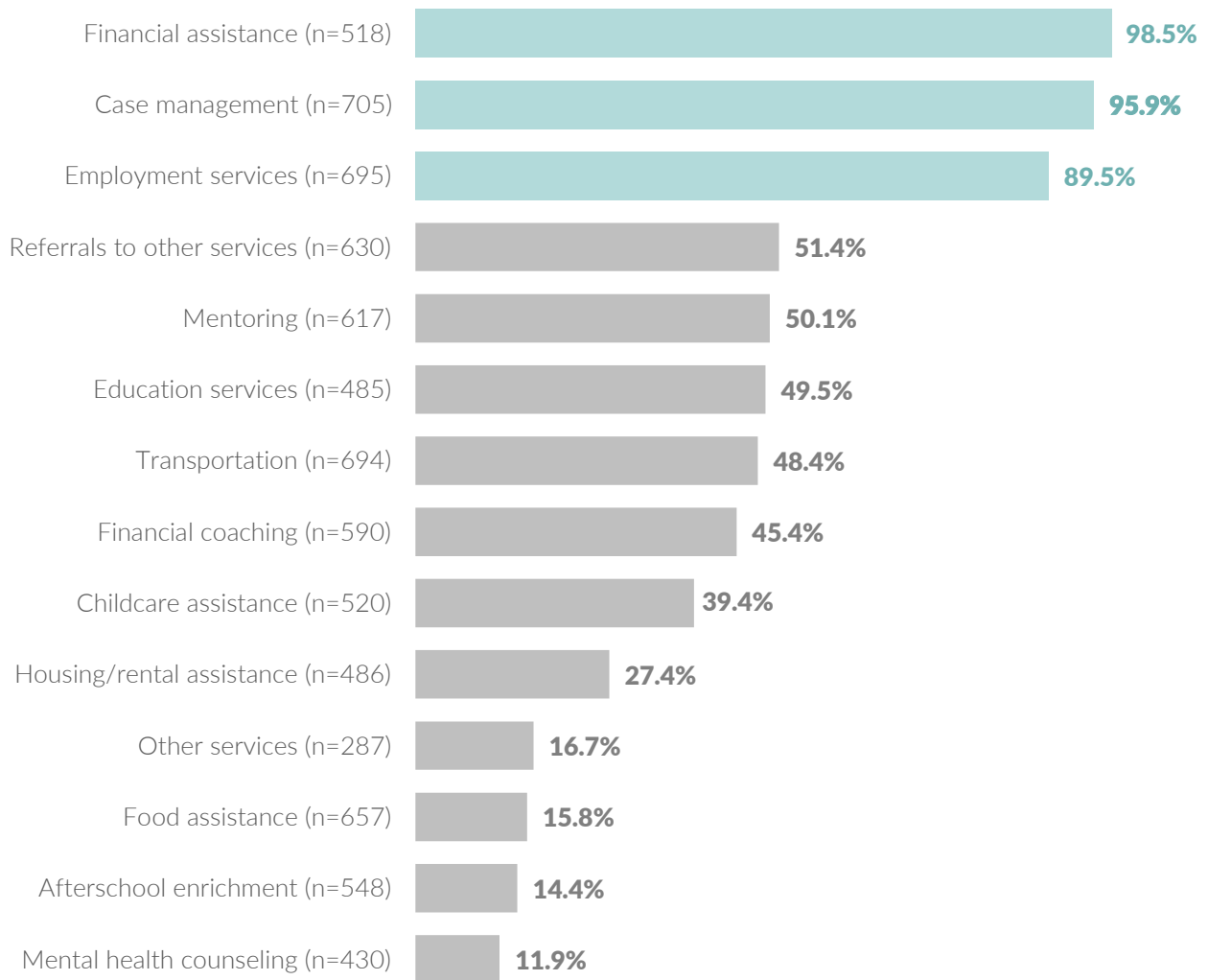
"We have learned that by addressing and meeting a woman's basic needs first, we have seen improvements in successful career placement and retention. We also know that when women graduate from our training, their [path] to self-sufficiency isn't over. We encourage them to continue putting into practice the lessons they have learned in class and to always remember that we are there for them."

- Direct Service Grantee

³ Stipends consist of a regular, fixed amount of money paid to women to offset expenses and allow them to participate in unpaid/underpaid educational opportunities, trainings, or internships.

FIGURE 8. PROGRAM SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES AT INTAKE

Most women served received **financial assistance**, **case management**, and **employment services**.



Note: Valid percentages that exclude missing data are utilized, and numbers in parentheses reflect the total number of responses available for each variable. Please note that data were missing on some service types. Percentages for areas with small sample sizes should be read with caution.

Progress Towards Achieving Economic Security

On the 2020 WAGES Survey, DS grantees were asked to report on the number of women who made gains in various areas (e.g., employment, education) and applicable job sectors in which those gains were achieved. Outcomes were reported on women as they became available (i.e., while in or after completing programs). The number of women achieving outcomes is influenced in part by differences in the number of women served by grantees who target educational versus employment-based programming. Recall that outcomes were mostly collected prior to COVID-19.

Employment

180 WAGES participants have made employment gains in various fields including child care, customer service, education, financial services, food services, healthcare, information technology (IT), non-profits, real estate and leasing, security services, pest control; construction, heavy machinery driving, etc.

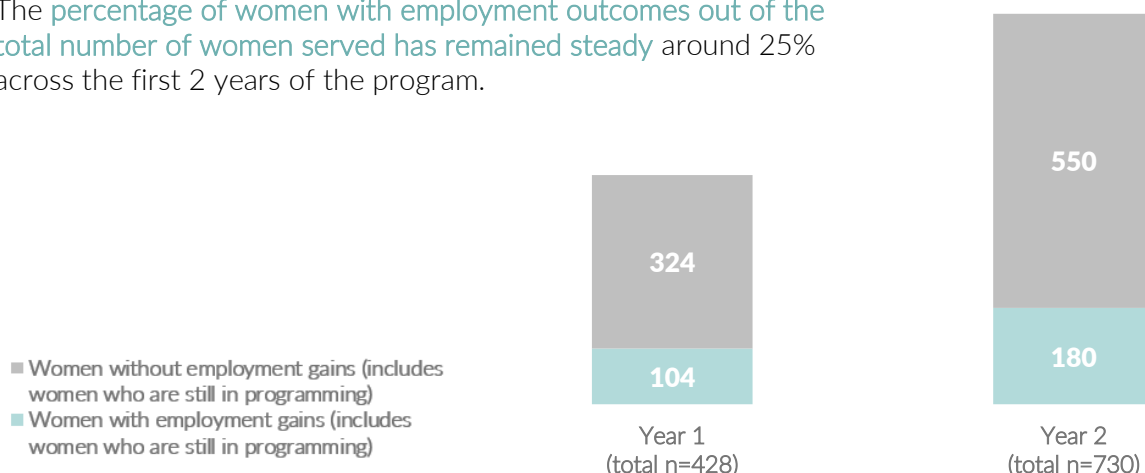
As figure 9 shows, the percentage of women making employment gains has remained steady from Year 1 to Year 2, with approximately 25% of participants making employment gains. However, as stated above, outcomes are reported regardless of program completion so that progress can be shared as it becomes available (see Data and Evaluation Considerations in Appendix A for more information around outcome reporting).

"When I first [started the program], I had only saved up enough money to be unemployed for one month. Well, in that one month, I was able to graduate from the Financial Services Technical Training and get a job - I couldn't believe it! I now have a job that I'm passionate about that also has a family-friendly schedule and a higher salary."

- WAGES Participant

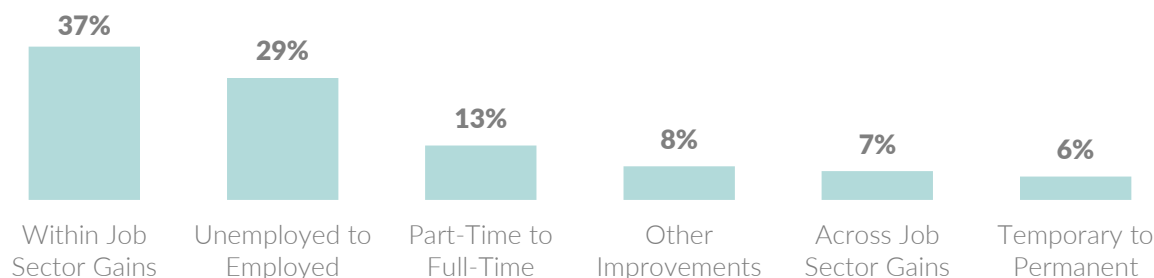
FIGURE 9. EMPLOYMENT GAINS FROM YEAR 1 TO YEAR 2 OF WAGES

The percentage of women with employment outcomes out of the total number of women served has remained steady around 25% across the first 2 years of the program.



As Figure 10 shows, in Year 2, the 180 women who have made employment gains did so in a variety of ways, including making within job sector gains such as a promotion, salary increase, added benefits (37%), gaining access to employment (29%), and making across sector gains such as gaining a full-time position in a more desired sector/field (7%). It should be noted that percentages were relatively consistent between Years 1 and 2; thus, only Year 2 data are visualized below.

FIGURE 10. YEAR 2 EMPLOYMENT GAINS



Gains that were described qualitatively in the 2020 WAGES Survey included, for example:

- Obtaining full-time employment (e.g., heavy machine operator, Health Information Technology position, office administrator, construction position, etc.)
- Gaining more flexible work schedules, allowing WAGES women more time to care for their families and remain employed
- Promotions within existing employment (e.g., to a supervisor role)

“After completing the program, [the participant] gained employment doing administrative work in a non-profit, working on-call and was taking as many shifts as she could, knowing that she would soon lose her TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] benefits...After working for over six months, [the participant] was promoted to a full-time position with set hours and benefits.”

- Direct Service Grantee

Education

337 WAGES participants have reached their educational goals in fields such as early childhood education, healthcare, financial services, the healing arts⁴, cosmetology, sociology, and apparel and merchandising. Comparing years, there has been a notable increase in the women making educational gains, with 25% of participants making educational gains in Year 1 compared to 46% of participants In Year 2 (see Figure 11).

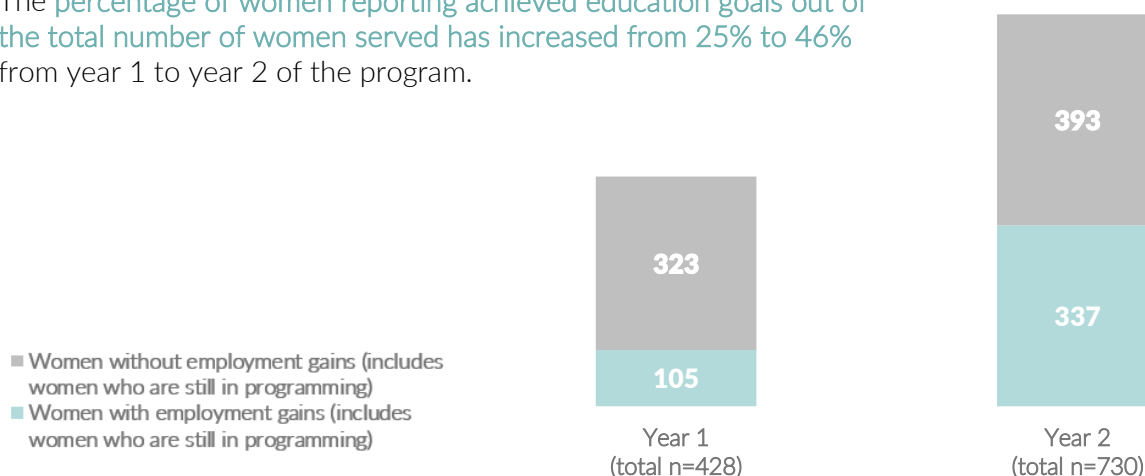
“In 2019, with support from peers, family, and [program] staff, [the participant] conquered her goal of getting her High School Equivalency and soon after enrolled in an Interior Design course.”

- Direct Service Grantee

⁴ The healing arts is a broad term that consists of practices in traditional, complementary and alternative medicines, which promote healing and wellness.

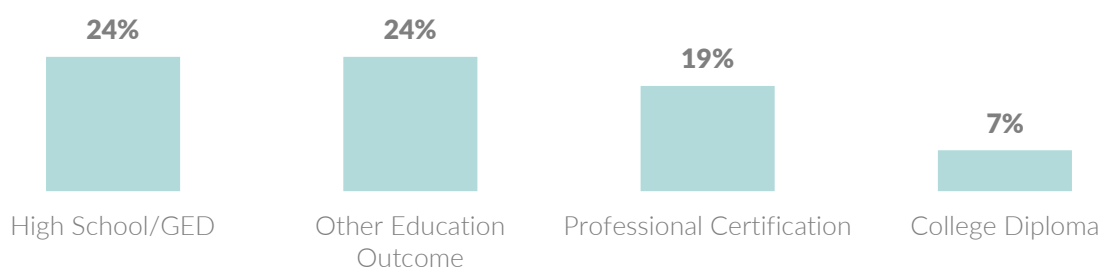
FIGURE 11. EDUCATIONAL GAINS FROM YEAR 1 TO YEAR 2 OF WAGES

The percentage of women reporting achieved education goals out of the total number of women served has increased from 25% to 46% from year 1 to year 2 of the program.



As Figure 12 shows, of those 337 participants attaining an educational goal in Year 2, 24% gained their high school diploma or GED, 19% completed a professional certification (e.g., Child Development Associate Credential; Family Developmental Credential; A+ Certification; MIG Welding Class Certificate, etc.), and 7% graduated from college. Of the 24% of participants who achieved "other" educational outcomes, this included achievements such as completing a series of entrepreneurship classes, courses necessary for professional licensing, job training skills (e.g., computer skills, communication skills, etc.), school-based internships, and attending leadership program/speaker events. It should be noted that percentages were relatively consistent between Years 1 and 2; thus, only Year 2 data are visualized below.

FIGURE 12. YEAR 2 EDUCATIONAL GAINS



In qualitative responses, grantees further indicated that participants:

- Attained educational degrees (e.g., GED), while still employed and caring for their children in many cases.
- Earned college credit through a new "stackable credential partnership" with two colleges. Upon completion of the program's training, participants can earn up to 9 credit hours. **"This opportunity helps job-seeking women successfully pursue post-secondary education and therefore advance into a lucrative field."**

Reduced Public Supports

61 WAGES participants have reduced public supports, including two women reporting they were completely off all public supports and were fully able to care for their families. Others have reduced government subsidies and supports in areas of income, housing, child care, food, and healthcare.

However, even after obtaining economic advancements, reducing public supports can be challenging. From the start of WAGES, grantee organizations have surfaced how the [Cliff Effect](#) impacts women's ability to achieve economic security. In the 2020 WAGES Survey, DS grantees continued to describe this impact on their participants. For example:

- One program noted that two participants did not accept a paid internship, choosing instead to volunteer for unpaid internships, as the extra income from a paid opportunity would force them to lose health benefits.
- Another program noted that better wages meant one of their participants would be ineligible for certain government assistance programs. When the participant's child became sick, the program connected the family to Child Health Plan Plus, so the participant could afford her child's prescriptions.

In some cases, DS grantees continue to provide stabilizing services (e.g., food pantry, short-term financial assistance) after participants obtain employment, as well as supports such as resources, training, and coaching. It is also important to note that these supports will be especially critical as WAGES participants continue to recover from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional Outcomes at Program Exit (New)

For the 2020 WAGES Survey, DS grantees were asked two additional outcome-related questions: What were participants' hourly wages at program exit? What were participants' family income at program exit? As with the rest of data requests, DS grantees were asked to report only on data they were currently and/or able to collect.

“When women gain employment, typically, they face the challenge of the cliff effect, and TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] is usually the first benefit to be reduced. With financial coaching, women are still finding that they are unable to spend money outside of their bills and are left with little money for other necessities. For most women in the program, taking a day or two off from work because a child is sick could mean that they will be short for one of their bills if they are working at a place that does not have benefits. The most common support women need in the program is assistance with rent and transportation (gas, bus passes, low-cost vehicles).”

- Direct Service Grantee

“We are proud to report that the average increase in wages for the women [in our program] was \$1.87/hour upon getting hired. This translates to almost \$4,000 more in income in a year!”

- Direct Service Grantee

92 WAGES participants (63%) for whom data were available earned above \$13.01 an hour at program exit or follow-up. Please note that hourly wage was only asked at program-exit/follow-up, with a total of 145 women reporting from five of 12 DS grantee organizations.



63% of WAGES participants earned at least \$1 above the Colorado minimum wage of \$12 per hour at program exit or follow-up (n=145)

Of the 92 women earning \$13.01 or above:

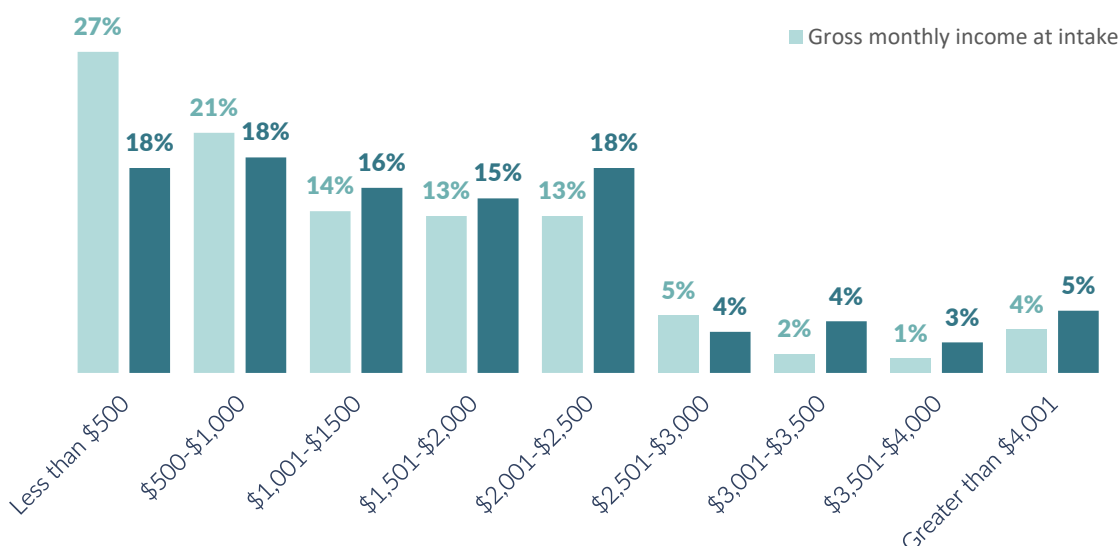
- 52% (n=48) were earning between \$13.01 - \$15.00.
- 35% (n=32) were earning between \$15.01 - \$20.00
- 7% (n=6) were earning between \$20.01 - \$25.00
- 7% (n=6) were earning between \$25.01 - \$30.00

“One of the most significant wages increase reported from one of our participants was going from minimum wage in 2016 to making more than \$20 per hour now. This participant stayed connected to [our program] and worked with our Employment Services team for support as she continued along her career path.”

– Direct Service Grantee

96 WAGES participants (85%) for whom data were available earned equal or less than \$2,500 per month at program exit or follow-up. Notably, participants earning \$1,000 or less made up 48% of the sample at program intake. At program exit or follow-up, this fell to 36% of the sample. A total of 114 women from two larger DS grantee organizations (of 12) reported gross income at program exit or follow-up. Thus, findings below should be read as suggestive and reflective of these two DS grantee organizations' participants.

FIGURE 13. GROSS MONTHLY INCOME AT PROGRAM INTAKE VS. PROGRAM EXIT



Reasons for not Completing Programs

DS grantees were also asked what reasons participants had for not completing programs. Primary reasons are listed below:

- **Personal and family circumstances** such as deciding on a different career pathway; family or health issues; difficulty balancing programming and family needs; an inability to meet basic needs, which affected the ability to concentrate on completing programs and obtaining employment.
- **The immediate need for employment** outweighing the long-term benefit of earning a high school diploma/GED, completing job training programs, etc. A couple of DS grantees reported that the pressure for immediate employment was also driven in some cases by family members (e.g., a participant's husband).
- **Lack of transportation**, especially as participants move farther away from where DS grantee organizations are located due to gentrification and the high cost of living/rents in metropolitan areas like Denver.
- **Falling out of eligibility requirements** according to one DS grantee, where, for example, family household composition changed (e.g., moving in with a romantic partner), the age of a dependent child was above 13, or a participant missed the required number of meetings.
- **Program "completion" is difficult to determine**, as some programs may never truly 'exit' clients; other programs will be better able to determine those who have truly completed or exited by the end of the grant, as it is common for clients to return to DS grantees for additional support on their journeys to self-sufficiency.
- **'Unknown'** reasons as in some instances, despite multiple efforts at outreach, DS grantees may be unable to locate participants to understand why they dropped out of the program.

"We work hard to help our young women understand that a high school diploma or GED will increase their earning capacity in the longer term, but some face enormous pressure at home to work, even though the wages are minimal."

- Direct Service Grantee

Solutions to Overcoming Challenges and Achieving Success



DS grantees were asked to share more about participants' challenges and barriers while working towards employment, educational, and other goals. Detailed information on participant barriers are reported in the 2018-19 WAGES Evaluation Report. In this section, we highlight innovative solutions that were highlighted in the 2020 WAGES Survey.

Participants' Innovative Solutions

As shared in prior reports, innovative solutions that participants use include creative child care and transportation solutions; creating opportunities through self-employment and/or through program stipends (e.g., utilizing program stipends to develop a business plan); and developing support networks (among peers and program alumni) to support child care needs, peer-to-peer connection, informal mentorship, and transportation needs. Below, we share additional strategies that emerged from the 2020 WAGES Survey.

Year 2 Highlights

- Utilizing program stipends and referrals to deepen skills training (e.g., coaching, certification)
- Enrolling in online classes to further education while satisfying family needs
- Leveraging opportunities to learn about American culture, develop community connections, and improve English skills
- Participating in support networks and cohorts, and peer-to-peer events to expand businesses
- Shedding preconceived, stereotypical professional roles to explore and enter traditionally male-dominated fields.
- Thinking "outside the box" to meet their needs while they complete program requirements (e.g., creative living arrangements, flexible study times, etc.)

"The women we serve often face multiple barriers (child care, transportation, work schedules, etc.), yet they persevere and set and re-set short-term and long-term goals in order to find ways to juggle their personal and professional lives and attend the classes and succeed in them. We find that often, these women are able to take their inherent strengths and past job experiences and thoughtfully articulate and weave these transferable skills into being successful with their new career goals."

- Direct Service Grantee

Further, DS grantees continue to adapt their services to help participants reach their goals (see What Helps Women and Their Families Achieve Economic Security on the following page).

"Participants' in the program often find the cost of higher education as a barrier to entering their desired careers. Participants are utilizing training in the community, informational interviewing, and supportive services to gain new skills and certifications related to their industry of interest."

- Direct Service Grantee

What Helps Women and Their Families Achieve Economic Security

Over the past two years, both DS and PA grantees have shared what direct service and policy tactics and strategies have worked to support Colorado women and their families make progress towards livable wages. The bullets below have been updated from Year 1 to reflect additional Year 2 reflections and include COVID-19-related observations.

Direct Service

Job training programs that include both hard- and soft-skills training, provide comprehensive supports to women and their families, and utilize relationship-building and strengths-based approaches.

- **Financial supports** like stipends and scholarships to reduce systemic drivers of inequity; direct cash assistance and public supports during COVID-19 to support financial stability; scholarships
- **Program flexibility** (e.g., flexible training times, moving to online platforms, etc.)
- Connecting participants directly to employment opportunities; registered apprenticeships; paid internships ('earn to learn' opportunities).
- **Dedicated case manager**, advisor, financial coach, and/or transitions/family advocate role to provide support and resources to participants.
- **Community partnerships** that support complimentary services for wrap-around/whole-person support. Partnerships with organizations that provide workforce training.
- **Relationship-building**, peer support, and working from strengths to build connections and recognizing that participants already have what they need to be agents of their own change.
- **Individualized goals** and success plans that are attainable and break down barriers; supports to meet goals.
- **Providing early childhood education** and care as part of two-generation strategies.
- **Events with professionals** in various fields as guest speakers

"The ability to have quality follow-up with participants, even after they have finished their training courses proves very helpful in helping them take the next step in their pathway. [Our organization] is in the process of hiring a family advocate who can offer intensive follow-up with all program participants and their families (following a two-generation approach.)"

– Direct Service Grantee

PA grantees' strategies are summarized below. In the following section, PA grantees' progress around policy advocacy strategies in Year 2 are described in further detail.

Policy Advocacy

Policy advocacy strategies that are bipartisan, multi-pronged, leverage organizational strengths and collaboration, engage communities impacted by the issues, and are well covered by the media.

- **Being nimble and responsive to changing conditions**, like COVID-19, and maintaining organizational capacity.
- **Enhancing messaging** and communications strategies (e.g., centralized depository for information on COVID relief; expanded visual communications [videos]; simplifying messaging that avoids industry jargon).
- **Advocating for sustainable ways to increase worker benefits and wages**, including paid family and medical leave.
- **Fostering bipartisan support** and working on issues with broad-base appeal; showing how issues are interconnected to build broader support.
- **Sharing research** broadly and in ways that are relatable to non-policy experts.
- **Working in coalition** and laying the groundwork in the 'off-season' when policy makers have more time to engage.
- **Directly engaging the community**, particularly those with lived experience around the issues; supporting leadership development of community members.
- **Perseverance**, patience and leveraging openings when available to take maximum advantage of opportunistic legislative environments.
- **Developing pilot programs** to assess the impact new career ladder opportunities have on worker retention.

“Organizations (both policy and direct service providers), lawmakers and foundations need to advocate for expanded career pathway opportunities, like registered apprenticeships, to advance the socioeconomic stability for women and their families. Not only do more opportunities need to be created but they need to be communicated through appropriate and trusted resource facilitators. In addition, clear messages regarding the benefits of registered apprenticeships (e.g. pay, skill sets, careers, etc.) need to be prioritized.”

– Policy Advocacy Grantee

Policy Advocacy Grantee Efforts

For the 2020 WAGES Survey, policy advocacy (PA) grantees updated information about their ongoing WAGES efforts in the following areas:


- 1) New or continued promising strategies and activities, including example achievements and wins at mid- and end-of-year
- 2) Key learnings from both successes and challenges that can inform similar efforts
- 3) Changes and adaptations in strategies
- 4) Challenges and barriers that require ongoing strategizing

PA grantees continue to employ a complex, multi-strategy approach to increasing economic security for women and their families. Most reported activities in the following strategy areas: Building coalitions, informal partnerships and networks; community and volunteer engagement; research and policy development; influencing policy and decision-makers; and information dissemination. Much of this work occurs at the state and local-levels, though a few indicated federal advocacy activities on WAGES-related issues. Across grantees, there were extensive efforts to engage stakeholders, build policy- and decision-makers' understanding of WAGES-related priorities, and identify strategies with the greatest level of support and feasibility of success.

For the 2020 WAGES Survey, PA grantees provided information on their efforts and progress in the past year. We organize their responses around WFCO's priority areas for WAGES (see Figure 12). The status of the bills that PA grantees worked on is then presented at the end of this section.

FIGURE 12. WAGES PRIORITY AREAS





Earn equal
pay
regardless
of social
identity

EARN EQUAL PAY REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

Grantee efforts in this area included moving research and coalition work forward to address the systemic and intersecting inequities that prevent women and communities from advancing economically and building assets and wealth across generations.

Research that was noted included (surfaced by one grantee organization):

- [The Future of Work: Education and Workforce Gaps Affecting Colorado Women](#) - a brief that builds on the previous [The Future of Work: Implications for Colorado Women](#), this time taking a closer look at women's attainment in two- and four-year degree programs and growth in women-dominated professions in Colorado.
- [The Future of Work: Alternative Work Arrangements in Colorado](#), a landscape analysis of Colorado's "alternative" workforce, many of whom are women.
- [The Racial Wealth Gap: A Primer; Colorado's Racial Wealth Gap: Homeownership and Credit; Colorado's Racial Wealth Gap: Mass Incarceration and the School-to-Prison Pipeline](#), and [Secure Savings: How the Racial Wealth Gap Manifests for Older Coloradans](#).
 - These publications highlight racial inequities in pay. It is well known that the intersection of race and gender means that women of color, and Black, Latina, and Native American women in particular, experience a larger pay gap than white women when compared to white men.⁵

Coalition work in Year 2 around financial empowerment and equity focused on bringing in more diverse voices to coalition meetings including additional organizations and young people. Priority areas have been around fighting predatory practices and protecting consumers; safe banking for low-income communities; addressing debt and credit issues; exploring strategies for financial education and asset building; and leading efforts for a Secure Savings program to provide workers without access to retirement savings with an affordable, accessible means to save for retirement. One coalition is also supporting plans to establish a first-in-the-nation, public-private partnership for a statewide Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) and the development of several local OFEs.

“Offices of Financial Empowerment provide local infrastructure to support consumer protection, strengths-based financial coaching, and access to affordable banking and credit resources. The Coalition is working with other leaders to advance the OFE model, with a focus on ensuring that this infrastructure supports existing work on community wealth-building and financial coaching and that it derives from community-identified priorities and needs.”

- Policy Advocacy Grantee

⁵ For example, see: <https://www.payscale.com/data/gender-pay-gap#section03>.



FIND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT AND JOB TRAINING & ACCESS HIGHER EDUCATION



Various PA grantees noted working in coalition for greater equity in workforce development and postsecondary education (coalitions that were noted included Prosper Colorado; Skills2Complete

Coalition; and Future of Work Advisory Council), as well as continuing work around registered apprenticeships and paid internships as career pathways (e.g., in healthcare, IT).

Coalition work and Policy Development in Year 2 included:

- Identifying the barriers preventing Coloradans from more fully accessing the economy, prioritizing racial/ethnic and gender disparities; leading a community dialogue session to unpack data further to uncover barriers.
- Prioritizing the HB20-1053: Early Childhood Workforce (see Access to Child care below and Table 1 for more information). The coalition worked to position the bill as a critical workforce support, with original provisions such as transferring credentials, providing paid work-based learning and scholarships, and affording credit for previous experience.
- Engaging approximately 25 experts in postsecondary education and workforce development - including adult learners and workers, workforce development and postsecondary education providers, and representatives from state agencies - to inform research on equity gaps in Colorado's postsecondary and workforce development ecosystem, as well as provide feedback on potential policy recommendations to address these gaps.
- Youth empowerment as part of workforce development was also the focus of two WAGES PA grantees (working on the Denver Opportunity Youth Steering Committee; CO State Youth Council; Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship Coalition). One PA grantee noted training 14 young adults on livable wages, apprenticeships, and advocacy skills. Another noted engaging five students as leaders in coalition work to center their expertise, develop their leadership capacity, and include their perspectives in policy work.

Research that was noted in this area was the continued work on Colorado's direct care workforce who provide care for older adults and people with disabilities or chronic health conditions (see [Actionable Aging Policy Agenda](#)). Notably, for WAGES priorities, most direct care workers are women and wages are low, despite the value these workers add to the community.



ACCESS TO CHILD CARE

PA grantees reported significant activity on issues related to early child care and education, including efforts to strengthen the Early Care and Education workforce. Coalitions (e.g., the Early Care and Education Workforce Coalition, Raise Colorado, and FAMILI Coalition) focused on policy efforts to address early child care and education shortages and on community engagement practices to ensure strong community participation (e.g., securing grant funds to pay for venue fees, food, child care, and a facilitator).

Coalition work included:

- In partnerships between WAGES grantee organizations, WFCO, the Colorado Children's Campaign (also a WAGES grantee), and the Governor's Office, working in coalition on [HB20-1053: Early Childhood Workforce](#) to streamline and align the early childhood professional credential, child care program licensing, and educator licensing so that requirements are clear and consistent and reduce the administrative and paperwork burdens relating to credentialing and licensing of early childhood educators.
- A bill for Family and Medical Leave Insurance was another major priority that several PA grantees continued to push for in coalition work. If introduced, the bill would create a family leave insurance program for partial wage replacement when an individual takes leave from work to care for a new child or a family member with a serious health condition. The FAMILI coalition website notes that almost 9 out of 10 Colorado workers have no paid family leave and 26% have only unpaid leave (see <https://cofamli.org/>).

"After analysis of alternatives, we concluded [paid family leave] should be set up as a social insurance model to ensure that all workers have meaningful access to leave and that the program can be implemented with fidelity across the state and industries. We sent a letter to all members of the legislature and the Governor's office expressing this position."

-Policy Advocacy Grantee

Research examples around access to child care that were noted:

- [KIDS COUNT 2019](#) report and statewide presentations to local communities around data trends in child well-being.
- [FAMILI Fact Sheet](#), describing what it is and why Coloradans need a quality paid family and medical leave program.

OTHER WAGES-RELATED PRIORITIES

PA grantees also worked on WAGES-related issues that affect women's ability to achieve greater economic security, though did not cleanly fall within one of the WFCO identified priority areas for WAGES. These were mainly around:

- Continued coalition work around [housing](#) and [transit](#); and [access to affordable healthcare](#)
- Producing research and communications on [Colorado's tax system and budget](#), including examination of the fiscal constraints that limit investment in programs and services that would advance women's economic security and potential options for the future.
- Extensive policy advocacy work through the Helping Colorado Families Get Ahead Act Coalition on the [EITC and Child Tax Credit measure](#) (HB20-1203). The coalition worked

closely with sponsoring representatives and engaged community members to testify in support of HB20-1203 and speak to the impacts that the EITC has on their families.

2020 COLORADO LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Leading up to and during the 2020 legislative session, all PA grantees indicated working on legislative policies, whether through providing research, developing and in some cases leading policy proposals, designing and reviewing amendments to proposed legislation, testifying on behalf of specific proposals, conducting community and statewide outreach, and working with policymakers and decision-makers. Many PA grantees worked in coalition or partnered with other WAGES grantees to advance this work.

However, on March 14th, 2020, the Colorado legislative session suspended its session due to the COVID-19 pandemic through May 26th. The session reconvened on May 27th and adjourned on June 15th. When the legislative session reconvened, balancing the budget and helping the state's economic recovery from the pandemic became the top priority of legislators, meaning many of the policies that PA grantees worked on did not pass or were not introduced. **"With the state now looking at severe cuts to its current budget and major budget shortfalls in the coming fiscal year [due to COVID-19], finding funding for [investments in child care and family economic security] priorities will be even more challenging,"** described one PA grantee. Table 1 provides information on the specific bills that PA grantees worked on and their status at the end of the 2020 Colorado legislative session.

TABLE 1. 2020 WAGES GRANTEE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND STATUS

	Bill	Status
WAGES Priority Area		
Access child care	HB20-1053 : Supports for Early Childhood Educator Workforce	Passed*
	HB20-1006 : Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants	Lost*
	HB20-1043 : Income Tax Credit for Early Childhood Education Fix	Lost
	HB20-1016 : Increase Quality in Early Childhood Education Programs	Lost*
	HB20-1011 : Helping Others Manage Early Childhood Act	Lost
	HB20-1138 : Public Real Property Index (which could support child care service providers)	Lost
	Family Medical Leave Insurance program	Not introduced**
Access higher education & Find gainful employment and job training	HB20-1015 : Future Educator Pathways Grant Program	Lost
	HB 20-1002 : Awarding College Credit for Work Experience	Passed

	Bill	Status
Earn equal pay regardless of social identity	SB20-193 : Creation of the Financial Empowerment Office	Lost
	SB20-200 : Implementation of Colorado Secure Savings Program	Passed
WAGES-Related Priority Area		
Financial supports to Women and their Families	HB20-1203 : Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit and Income Definition	Lost***
	SB20-029 : Cost of Living Adjustment for Colorado Works Program	Passed
Healthcare	HB20-1349 : Affordable Health Care Option	Lost
Housing	HB20-1332 : Prohibit Housing Discrimination Source of Income	Passed

Note: *Portions of HB20-1006 and HB20-1016 were included in the final version of HB20-1053. **Many of the coalition partners who worked on the FAMLI legislation joined a coalition working to get paid family and medical leave on the November 2020 ballot. See below for more information on Initiative 283. ***Although HB20-1203 did not pass, portions of the EITC expansion were included in HB20-1420 (Adjust Tax Expenditures for State Education Fund), which did pass.

Because of the challenges around the state budget, PA grantee priority bills that did not pass or were not introduced were discussed as laying the groundwork for future policy advocacy work. Further, some grantees also looked to the upcoming 2020 elections for advancing WAGES-related priorities.

Mainly, some PA grantees were working towards Ballot Initiative 271 (Fair Tax Colorado) for the November election. This work is through Vision 2020, the statewide network to build a public investment majority "to come up with common sense solutions to untie Colorado's fiscal knot and reshape our tax code for greater fairness and equity," explained a PA grantee.

- [Ballot Initiative 271](#) would reduce the tax rate for incomes below \$250,000 for all Coloradans and increase the tax rate for incomes that are \$250,000 and above, generating an estimated \$2 billion for the state and reducing taxes overall for 95% of Coloradans (see [Quick Facts: A Fair Tax for Colorado](#)).

"Until the pandemic, we were proceeding well. SB20-29 had passed Senate Finance and Senate Appropriations unanimously and was on the Senate consent calendar when the pandemic froze the clock. When the Legislature returns, the bill could be seen as an ideal, quick way to get more money in the pocket of Colorado's poorest families, or it could be seen as an impossibility given increasing demand for TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] dollars to meet rising caseloads."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee

Additionally, some PA grantees were working on [Ballot Initiative 283](#) for the November 2020 election. [Colorado Families First](#) is a coalition of individuals, organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders that are working to place a ballot measure that would ask voters to approve a statewide paid family and medical leave insurance program. If passed Initiative 283 would establish the below.

- Provision of up to 12 weeks of leave (additional 4 weeks for qualifying pregnancy or childbirth complications).
- Small businesses with fewer than 10 employees are exempt from paying employer premium.
- Employers and employees split 50/50 a contribution of .9% of employee wage (.45% each). Employers can choose to pay up to 100%.
- State and local governments are included, local governments including school districts can choose to opt-out.
- Workers are eligible for leave after earning \$2,500 in wages (same as unemployment insurance). Worker's jobs are protected after 180 days of employment.
- Private plans are allowed if they meet minimum requirements.
- Premiums begin in January 2023.
- Low-income workers (who make up to 50% of the state average weekly) receive 90% of their pay during time off. The maximum weekly benefit begins at \$1,100, then adjusts to 90% of state average weekly wage.

Cohort learning Model

WAGES brings together DS and PA grantees to share strategies and innovate, learn from one another, and collaborate. The learning community consists of grantees, WFCO, project facilitators (Davian Gagne and Zoë Williams), and the evaluators (OMNI Institute). In year 1, all DS and PA grantees came together for two convenings, and PA grantees came together two additional times in advance of the 2018 and 2019 legislative sessions.

In year 2, all grantees came together in September of 2019 for a 1.5 in-person day convening. Starting in November of 2019, a shift to shorter virtual convenings from an all-day in-person convening was made to facilitate deeper engagement and work around a shared policy goal for the 2020 legislative session. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, virtual convenings became a more pressing need, and the cohort came together in April and May for optional one-hour convenings.⁶

Below, we share key activities from Year 2 convenings to date in the areas of collaborative learning, setting and working towards a policy goal, equity, two-generation approaches, and COVID-19, followed by key learnings to date from implementation of the WAGES Cohort approach. Please see Appendix B for Year 2 agendas with further information on the structure of convenings.

September 2019: All Grantee Convening (1 and ½ day in-person meeting)			
Collaborative Learning	Policy	Equity	Two-Gen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Café to continue networking and relationship building Presentation on the 2018-19 Year 1 Annual Evaluation and Learning Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue cutting tool and process for what makes a good issue Voting activity to land on a key policy goal for WFCO and interested grantees to focus on Identification of shared goal to strengthen the Early Childhood Education (ECE) workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on how equity learning is being integrated into organizations Equity tool for policy development (4 I's of Oppression in relation to developing policy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on how organizations approach this work



⁶ April and May of 2020 technically fall within Year 3 of the grant, but activities are included in this Year 2 report due to the relevance of COVID-19 information that was shared.

November 2019: All Grantee Convening (4-hour virtual meeting)		
Collaborative Learning	Policy	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector-based discussions and large-group share-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative process overview Continued learning about ECE policy efforts; updates on WFCO ECE policy priorities Introduction of the “Supports for Early Childhood Educator Workforce” bill Discussion of entry points for supporting policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group activity to use the Equity tool on the ECE bill



January 2020: All Grantee Convening (2-hour virtual meeting)	
Policy	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued learning around policy advocacy entry points for the 2020 legislative session Updates on ECE Workforce Bill; cohort shared feedback on a HB20-1053 Fact Sheet Community Input Tool for Fair Tax/fiscal reform was shared FAMLI update (e.g., CO Matters Interview; WFCO will lead with what helps women) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class Cultures presentation and how it shows up in organizational/coalition work; how class cultures impact communities, collaboration/partnerships, and funding.



February 2020: All Grantee Convening (2-hour virtual meeting)		
Collaborative Learning	Policy	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OMNI presentation on Year 2 Mid-year report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HB20-1053 passed and going to House Appropriations; powerful testimonies from around the state SB20-029 hearing update and grantee orgs testifying in support; Updates on HB20-1203 on Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit Cohort identified opportunities for engagement and action Key policies repository for WAGES grantees to update (e.g., resources; amendments that have been made, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation and discussion on rural issues (economic opportunity, housing, transportation, health, etc.) and the intersections with LGTBQ status and race



March 2020 All Grantee Convening (2-hour virtual meeting)		
Collaborative Learning	Policy	Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing from DS grantees on implementation and /or participant successes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PA updates on policies connected to WAGES work; identification of opportunities for engagement and action ECE Workforce bill updates (e.g., shared fact sheets, status of the bill) Optional Advocating for Impact training offered on 3/31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on history of Colorado's economy and race and gender wealth gap (e.g., how it looks, how it is reproduced intergenerationally, etc.) 'Symptoms and systems' discussion with small groups



April 2020: All Grantee Convening (1-hour <u>optional</u> virtual meeting)	
COVID-19	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for WAGES grantees to connect and share updates and shifts around COVID-19 Fundraising updates (WFCO, and various DS and PA grantees) DS grantees providing emergency response and adapting services to participants (e.g., virtual services; cash assistance) PA grantee efforts shifting to address COVID-19 - centralizing and disseminating resources; considering implications of essential workers and child care needs 	



May 2020: All Grantee Convening (1-hour <u>optional</u> virtual meetings)	
COVID-19	Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DS grantees share updates on impact of COVID-19 to participants (e.g., lack of summer paid internships; grants have slowed down; onsite training modifications; participants have lost jobs) PA grantees adjust strategies and look to 2020 ballot initiatives due to CO budget shortfalls making the passage of grantee priority bills uncertain; looking into child care needs as workers return to work (e.g., ongoing coverage of absences in CCCAP; ongoing coverage of parent co-pays) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECE Workforce bill - continuing to put the bill forward, knowing that "anything that drives a cost is not viable" Sharing updates on policies and funding



May 2020: All Grantee Convening (1-hour <u>optional</u> virtual meetings)		
Policy	Advocacy Training	Opportunities for Collective Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on legislative session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll and discussion on ways DS grantees do advocacy currently; what DS grantees would like to learn Presentation on advocacy (e.g., arc of what advocacy can look like; examples; building value within directly impacted communities) Sharing of advocacy resources; discussion of guidelines and challenges for nonprofits interested in advocacy (e.g., not backing a candidate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General assembly legislative session update Census 2020 Election

Cohort Learnings to Date



Policy

In Year 2 of WAGES, policy was a central emphasis of the agenda. In the September convening, a voting activity was carried out to identify a policy goal that WFCO and interested grantees could work on together. The need for child care solutions through strengthening the Early Childhood Education (ECE) workforce emerged as the key issue. The cohort also identified fiscal reform in the state constitution as a top priority for systems change beyond the legislative process.

In November, policy discussions were deepened, and HB20-1053: Supports for Early Childhood Educator Workforce was introduced that WFCO, the Colorado Children's Campaign, the Governor's Office, and other grantee organizations had been working to put forward in the 2020 legislative session. The bill has three major provisions, which were described at the convening:

1. Catapult qualified, aspiring early childhood educators into classrooms by streamlining teacher licensing systems and easing administrative paperwork burdens and requirements.
2. Establish a scholarship and grant program to recruit and retain early childhood educators.
3. Build an apprenticeship program for early childhood educators.

During the convenings in 2020, WFCO and PA grantees regularly provided updates on the progress of the bill and other priority bills; entry points for supporting policy were also regularly discussed. Additionally, a community input tool for fair tax/fiscal reform was shared in the January of 2020 convening to help inform Ballot Initiative 271.

HB20-1053 ultimately passed and due to the irregular session combined two other ECE related bills, streamlining flexible pathways into the ECE workforce, facilitating the design and implementation of an early childhood mental health consultation program, and supporting quality improvements.



Equity

Grantees continue to value the equity lens that WAGES employs and have appreciated the various opportunities to learn and grow in this area. During Year 2 convenings, grantees have had multiple opportunities to deepen learning around equity issues.

TABLE 2. EQUITY LENS IN WAGES COVENING

	Equity Topic/Activity	Grantee Feedback
September 2019	World Café - “How are you integrating some of the learning around equity into your organization?”; Equity tool for policy development (4 I’s of Oppression in relation to developing policy)	Equity tool for policy development was valuable and deepened learnings on how to bring an equity lens back to organizational work.
November 2019	Small group work to examine the “Supports for Early Childhood Educator Workforce” bill for equity considerations.	Grantee discussion around the bill creating additional and accessible pathways that benefit ECE workforce; the way the bill will be implemented is key and equity needs to be a framework in that work (e.g., supports for rural communities, refugee and immigrant ECE workers, etc.).
January 2020	Class Cultures presentation and how it shows up in organizational/coalition work; how class cultures impact communities, collaboration/partnerships, and funding.	Class cultures was most favored activity, particularly mapping 'class paths' ⁷ ; grantee discussion around the relevancy and tensions due to class differences (e.g., in coalition work, policy workgroups, etc.); how to bridge class differences was raised as a need/desire to deepen learning.
February 2020	Presentation and discussion on rural issues (economic opportunity, housing, transportation, health, etc.) and the intersections with LGBTQ status and race	Grantee discussion on workers moving away to larger cities for more opportunities; lower organizational capacity to respond to competitive grants; rural legislators seeing policy as coming from urban policymakers who may not understand rural economies.
March 2020	Presentation on history of Colorado's economy, and race and gender wealth gap (e.g., how it looks, how it is reproduced intergenerationally, etc.); 'Symptoms and systems' discussion on the wealth gap with small groups	Grantees shared various ways that a race equity lens is infused in organizational work (e.g., race equity tools when reviewing policy; woman of color-led organization; dedicated staff role around race equity; DEI consultation); grantees valued the presentation and small group discussions on the topic.

⁷ <http://www.activistclasscultures.org/whats-your-class-path>

"We continue to refine coalition and community engagement practices to ensure potential advocates can show up as their authentic selves and do not encounter processes or attitudes rooted in White dominant values, including paternalism. To this end, we prioritize the ongoing personal and professional development of our staff and continuing evolution in our organizational culture to this end."

-Policy Advocacy Grantee



Shared Learning

OMNI administers a brief evaluation to gather cohort input on the format, content, and effectiveness of each convening. Participants were asked to rate three general items from a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. As Table 3 below shows, there was strong agreement among participants about the benefit of being part of the WAGES Learning Cohort. Scores remained consistently high through the shortened virtual format of convenings.

TABLE 3. MEAN SCORES OF CONVENING AND COHORT EFFECTIVENESS

	Sept 2019 - 1.5 day in- person (n=31)	Nov 2019 - half day virtual (n=19)	Jan 2020 - 2 hour virtual (n=21)	Feb 2020 - 2 hour virtual (n=14)	March 2020 - 2 hour virtual (n=19)
This convening was a good use of my time.	4.3	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.3
I will apply learnings from this convening in my future work to advance women's economic security.	4.3	3.6	4.1	4.1	4.3
My organization benefits from being a part of WAGES Learning Cohort.	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.7

Note: Convening Evaluation Forms were not collected at the optional one-hour convenings in April and May 2020.

WAGES grantees also provided feedback through qualitative items:

- Participants liked connecting and sharing updates and ideas with each other. The focus on equity topics has deepened organizational work. Generally, participants voiced appreciation for the shorter virtual format for its convenience.
- Participants had few suggestions for improvement - a desire for in-person connections, technology being "clunky" or "frustrating" at times was surfaced. Making meetings more streamlined by forgoing roll call was also suggested, and this feedback was incorporated in subsequent convenings.

"The WAGES learning cohort meetings have provided great opportunities to reflect on our strengths and opportunities for growth while building relationships with other grantees and learning from their efforts and stories."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee



Collaboration

Grantees were asked to share about any new collaborations developed with other WAGES grantees. Grantees shared a mix of both formal and informal collaborations and those that were new and developing, or growth in prior-existing collaborations. Grantees noted a few cohort-based collaborations working on key legislations including TABOR reform and Vision 2020. Grantees noted that new or enhanced partnerships offered the following collaborative support:

- Weighing in on policy development and design; tools for coordinating communications and joint efforts; a stackable credential program, which can inform both what makes for effective credentialing models, as well as inform future improvements to workforce policy
- Strengthened partnerships, coalition efforts, and networks, which in turn has supported organizational work. From a PA grantee: **"These partnerships have allowed us to have a larger impact collectively than we could have alone. The increased capacity and different perspectives have made our work more effective."**
- Bringing key stakeholders and communities to the table and cultivating relationships in the community with additional potential partners; outreaching to key communities about needed policy changes
- Utilizing direct service experiences and feedback through the learning cohort to better illustrate and explain issues for policy makers; examining equity issues and barriers in programs and systems
- Collaboration between DS and PA WAGES grantees around direct advocacy (e.g., All Families Deserve a Chance Day at the Capitol in February 2020). From a DS grantee: **"[The AFDC Day] provided staff and participants with an opportunity to apply their leadership skills, share their stories of impact to encourage systems change and to know that there are others like them fighting for social justice. People left with a sense of pride and encouragement."**
- Connections to training and workforce development opportunities; for example, a collaboration between a DS and PA WAGES grantee organization to develop a paid internship program whereby DS grantee participants take part in the PA grantee's paid internship program: **"[The PA grantee's] commitment to being a quality employer who offered flexible work hours, competitive wages and benefits aligned with [our] quality employer framework."**
- Exploring the effectiveness of services and programming; exploring new partnership opportunities between direct service providers to enhance supports for clients in shared communities/regions.

"Relationships have deepened and tools for coordinating communication and joint effort have been strengthened...The leadership of direct service providers willing to raise their voices on behalf of women, children, and their families has been extremely helpful in our policy advocacy efforts."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee

"The collaboration around public policy has been extremely valuable. We are grateful that the community has seen the importance of protecting childcare and childcare workers through better policies and look forward to continuing the effort next year."

- Direct Service Grantee



COVID-19

The 2020 WAGES Survey was launched just prior to closures related to COVID-19 and did not include direct questions about the pandemic's impact on grantees' work. Nonetheless, many grantees offered reflections about the impact of the pandemic in their survey responses. WFCO, DS and PA grantees also provided updates during WAGES convenings. Below is a brief summary of the preliminary impact of COVID-19 on WAGES grantee organizations and their participants, along with grantee organizations' responses of support.

WFCO's Response

Since March of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic first began, WFCO has:

- Offered immediate flexibility to all WAGES grantees to use their remaining grant funds as needed to respond to COVID-19 impacts
- Made a \$10,000 contribution to the Colorado's COVID-19 Relief Fund, serving as an Initiating leader on the community voices committee to center equity in grantmaking from the state fund.
- Signed on to various statewide letters making recommendations for early care and education, including a letter to Congress to prioritize funding for the Early Care and Education Workforce bill as part of the CARES Act.
- Established the Women and Families of Colorado (WFCO) Relief Fund with a generous grant from The Colorado Health Foundation and contributions from additional individual, nonprofit, and corporate donors. To date, through the WFCO Relief Fund, WFCO provided an additional \$5,000 general operating grants to each of the WAGES cohort direct-service and public policy grantees, an additional research grant, helped child care providers purchase essential supplies to continue operating, invested in women-led small businesses and social ventures, and awarded rapid relief grants to nonprofits serving women and families in communities across the state, for a total of **\$782,500 in grants to 102 organizations**.
- Utilized an intersectional gender lens to explore research on the economic impacts of COVID-19 on women in partnership with Colorado Center on Law and Policy as part of a larger project to establish WFCO's long-term research agenda and framework.
- Contributed to the strategy for the broader Colorado philanthropic and community response to the COVID-19 crisis by sharing: 1) WFCO's approach, 2) learnings from WAGES grantees and other partners, and 3) what emerging research tells us about how women and their families are being and will continue to be impacted by COVID-19.

Direct Service Grantees' Response

During WAGES convenings, DS grantees described the immediate impacts their participants were experiencing due to COVID-19, as well as grantee organizations' quick and responsive support.

Impacts to WAGES Participants:

- Loss of employment and income for WAGES participants
- Lack of child care for essential workers
- Lack of financial support to undocumented families who cannot receive federal aid (i.e., unemployment insurance or the federal stimulus through the CARES Act).

- Digital divide to fully participate in accessing online goods and services (e.g., lack of devices, access to internet, and digital literacy)
- Lack of summer internships that provide relevant work experience and a career pathway to WAGES participants.
- Lack of physical space for programming and services.

DS Grantees worked to support WAGES participants through:

- Increasing financial assistance and emergency services to help meet basic needs (e.g., direct cash, assistance with food, rent, and utilities).
- Offering services remotely, via phone calls, video conferencing, and text messaging; restructuring in-person trainings that cannot be offered remotely with social distancing and safety precautions.
- Helping women and families navigate community resources.
- Helping participants find employment and internship opportunities that offer safe working conditions and livable wages.
- Engaging in direct fundraising to provide additional financial support and emergency services to participant.

Concerns Moving Forward:

- A likely decrease in available funds next fiscal year from foundations and governmental entities; preparing for sustainability with less funds and increased demand in mind.
- What more can be done for undocumented families (e.g., a list of resources).

Policy Advocacy Grantees' Response

For PA grantees, updates on impacts and efforts were provided in 2020 WAGES Survey responses and WAGES convenings.

Impacts to policy advocacy efforts:

- In-person meetings with policy- and decision-makers was no longer feasible; shifted to remote engagement (e.g., virtual meetings, phone calls, emails). "This, of course, was a slower process and one where lawmakers' time was even more limited as they focused on responding to the growing coronavirus pandemic."
- More requests for reliable information from elected officials for communications
- Keeping up with the swift changes and passage of policies during the 2020 legislative session.

"[T]he impact of the pandemic and economic shut down actually put community mobilization on steroids. Suddenly, everyone had questions about what was going on, what had changed, what was each level of government doing, and organizations scrambled to coalesce virtually or via listservs to develop sophisticated in-depth recommendations on what steps our government (and some other entities) should be taking to help meet people needs in a quicksand environment."

- Policy Advocacy Grantee

PA grantees worked to support Colorado women and their families through:

- Colorado Emergency Child Care Collaborative under Governor Polis came together, which included state agencies, community and philanthropic agencies (including WAGES grantee organizations), technology experts and child care providers. The collaborative worked to ensure Colorado's essential workers had access to child care while battling COVID-19. Through this effort, 1,700 children were put into licensed child care through May of 2020.
- Providing research and advocacy support (e.g., signing on to letters) on a variety of issues including emergency supports to Coloradans living in extreme poverty; how the COVID-19 relief legislation will impact Coloradans; protecting the fragile early care and education sector; paid family leave; Medicaid and health insurance access; ongoing provision of critical health services, including behavioral health services; equitable access to remote learning opportunities; eviction foreclosure and utility moratoria; undocumented immigrant inclusion in federal relief legislation; and inclusion of protections for domestic violence victims in relief legislation; centralizing COVID-19 resources and providing more webinars and communications.

Concerns moving forward

- How to keep good policy changes that were passed for women and their families after the pandemic, while restoring other policies that should revert.
- Facing significant unknowns: "On the other side of the COVID-19 crisis, the context in which we work (political, policy, economic) at all levels (state, federal and local) will be different in ways that are difficult to imagine. The crisis will amplify existing and introduce new stresses on children and their families, affecting those already disadvantaged by structural inequities the most. It will shine a light on cracks in the state systems that serve families and children, inviting a public debate about their adequacy."

Recommendations

This report presents findings from evaluation of WAGES activities from March 2019 - through May 2020 and is designed to support ongoing learning for WFCO, WAGES grantees, and other stakeholders interested in advancing and accelerating economic opportunities for Colorado women and their families. The following recommendations are provided to support the WAGES cohort's ongoing learning and collaboration:



Shared learning: Continue to prioritize (formal and informal) opportunities for direct service and policy advocacy organizations to meaningfully connect and inform each other's work; explore how grantee organizations may informally and formally partner to enhance their collective impact, whether through new partnerships and/or deepening existing collaborations. Given the limited ability to gather in person due to COVID-19, additional ways to meaningfully connect virtually can be further explored (e.g., Q&A panels, guest speakers, informal networking, etc.).



Equity: Continue to explore internal and external organizational equity issues to help enhance grantees' capacity around diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices. Continue to explore equity implications of legislative policies and priorities and of direct service grantee supports. Consider additional mechanisms for bringing in community voices to inform the work.

- Bridging class divides in organizational and coalition work may be a topic for further learning/exploration during convenings.



Policy: With the passing of HB20-1053, the cohort may wish to continue to share updates around WAGES-related policies and explore entry points for supporting policies that promote greater equity for women and their families (e.g., child care solutions, FAMILI, EITC/CTC, affordable healthcare option, etc.). Continue to work on fiscal reform to the state constitution beyond the legislative process (e.g., Ballot Initiative 271).

- Trainings and discussion around public will-building considering recent events (e.g., COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, policy brutality) may be beneficial for cohort learning, particularly heading into the 2020 elections.



COVID-19: Consider what equitable policy and direct services solutions are possible at all levels (local, state, and federal) to support women and their families as they recover economically, and particularly as additional CARES federal stimulus funds become available. Continue to share resources and updates to help women and their families, the direct service organizations that support them, and the policy advocacy organizations that work on systems-level change.

Appendix A - Methods

To answer the WAGES evaluation questions and minimize reporting burden on grantees, two primary data collection methods were selected: 1) A WAGES Survey that is administered to grantees twice per year; and 2) Information gathering from grantees during WAGES Convenings through activities, facilitated discussions, and surveys, as applicable.

WAGES Survey: The WAGES Survey was designed to collect the following information:

- **Direct service information** (Direct Service grantees only) – participant demographics, barriers to a livable wage, financial support systems utilized, services accessed, and participant outcomes; and grantee successes and challenges with implementation of services and lessons learned.
- **Policy advocacy information** (Policy/Advocacy grantees only) – strategies and tactics implemented, outcomes, successes and challenges of strategies and tactics, and lessons learned.
- **Cohort learning** (all grantees) – reflections on the cohort learning model, including how the model has supported services/strategies/tactics, ways to improve the model, and new collaborations, strategies, and efforts that have resulted.
- **Evaluation & TA** (all grantees) – questions on areas for evaluation support as well as length of time spent on the survey and what felt difficult to answer to support future refinements to evaluation tools and processes.

WAGES Convenings: WFCO conducts WAGES convenings to bring together all grantees, and OMNI collects session evaluations as applicable to collect grantee feedback. OMNI also documents convening notes for analysis and reporting. In the second year of WAGES (March 2019 - March 2020) the WAGES cohort came together multiple times – In September of 2019 (1.5 day in-person convening with all grantees); November 2019, January 2020, February 2020, and March 2020 (two-hour virtual convenings with all grantees). Although technically not in Year 2, the April and May of 2020 convenings (one-hour optional convenings with all grantees) are also included in this report for relevancy, as grantees discussed COVID-19 and the impacts on WAGES participants and Colorado women and their families, more broadly. At the convenings, representatives from grantee organizations, WFCO staff (and board members for the September convening), the facilitation consultants, and OMNI staff came together. Convening agendas are provided in Appendix B.

Data and Evaluation Considerations

Below, we share important data and evaluation contextual information that will be helpful to the reader in interpreting evaluation findings.

Direct Service Data

Aggregate-level reporting. Grantees provide aggregate-level information on women served through WAGES (e.g., grantees provide the total number of women who received financial coaching services rather than a person-level data file with information on each woman served). After careful consideration during the planning stages, we determined that aggregate-level reporting will meet the needs of the evaluation and is appropriate for the resources available to support grantees in providing data for the evaluation. A limitation of this approach, however, is that the evaluation 1) relies on the accuracy of grantees to tally the information on women served and 2) cannot examine information beyond the set of variables provided (e.g., we cannot further disaggregate the data to explore additional questions by sub-groups of women such as the number of women employed by race/ethnicity).

Variation in number of women served. The number of women served through WAGES varies by direct service grantee. As such, summary information on women served is weighted towards those grantees who serve greater numbers of women. In this second year, Project Self-sufficiency served 22.9% (n=167) of the women included in the report, followed by Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado who served 21.6% (n=158), and CHIC who served 14.8% (n=108). The other 12 grantees (nine programs) served fewer than 10% each. For a breakdown of each grantee's number of women served in relation to the overall sample, see Table C.1. in Appendix C.

Information excluded: Through the co-creation process, it was determined that some questions about women's identities, although important, would be too difficult to collect systematically across organizations due to inconsistent existing data collection practices (e.g., sexual orientation, immigrant status were not typically captured). As such, the evaluation cannot report on these areas through the WAGES Survey but could capture information on these factors through qualitative efforts in the future.

Outcomes reporting: Due to the diversity of DS grantee programming, participant outcomes are reported as data become available to allow for greater flexibility in tracking when changes occur. This approach means progress can be shared during and after programming, regardless of program completion status, which can be particularly helpful for programs that take place over a greater length of time or for programs that do not truly "exit" participants due to the ongoing support that is offered.

In Year 4, it may be helpful to determine a "cut of" timepoint for WFCO, OMNI, and grantee organizations to determine where no new participants are added to programs. This timeline should also consider how much time participants will need to complete or exit programming, depending on the program. Establishing these deadlines will ensure that by the end of the grant, outcomes are reported on program "completers," which will better show the impact of WAGES.

COVID-19 impact on Year 3 outcomes reporting: Year 3 of the WAGES initiative coincides with the biggest public health and economic crisis the country has faced in decades. Prior to COVID-

19, we would have anticipated that the percentage of women making employment gains will increase as the number of women completing/exiting programs increases relative to the overall sample. However, it is unclear how COVID-19 and the economic and health consequences will impact program completion and employment gains.

Because COVID-19 has directly affected DS providers and the women and families that they serve, there are several implications for Year 3 evaluation efforts.

- Depending on the nature of the program, DS providers may have needed to shift, change, or delay how programming was delivered to keep both their staff and the women they serve safe. These changes may affect program completion and outcomes.
- With the guidance from WFCO to grantees when the pandemic began to utilize WAGES grant funds flexibly to address the immediate impacts of COVID-19 (e.g., shifting funds to support operational needs if necessary), it is not yet known if this will have an impact on the evaluation and programmatic outcomes.
- There may be challenges for grantees to track outcomes for women exiting programs, for those who had gains previously, and for obtaining accurate data on their current circumstances.
- Outcomes around employment, educational gains, and especially the reduction of public supports will likely be affected, as women make immediate changes to respond to their needs and the needs of their family (e.g., leaving programs before completion in order to find immediate employment and/or to care for children's school needs, increasing the use of public supports, etc.).

Policy Advocacy Data

Evaluating the impact of advocacy and policy work. Methods to evaluate policy and advocacy efforts lag other evaluation areas due to the complexity and evolving nature of the political process itself. The WAGES evaluation has an added layer of complexity in that it seeks to examine efforts across multiple organizations engaging in different focus areas and in different policy and advocacy arenas. As such, rather than evaluate the outcomes of these activities, the evaluation was designed to learn from the reflections of grantees as they engage in the work, and to leverage their expertise to understand the strategies and tactics that will help advance women's economic prosperity.

Contribution versus attribution. There are many forces at play and factors that intersect to influence changes in complex systems. It is rarely possible to attribute policy changes to a single organization, initiative or effort. As such, we are using the evaluation to learn about the work of grantees to identify a deeper understanding of the strategies and tactics that contribute to changes rather than trying to attribute definitive judgements about the successes or failures of efforts.

Isolating WFCO-funded activities. In some instances, WAGES funding is a small portion of an organization's overall operating budget. As such, it is often difficult for grantees to parse out and report on activities that are specifically WAGES-funded. On the WAGES Survey, grantees were asked to do their best to report on activities to which WAGES funding contributed, but it is important to note that the evaluation is not designed to isolate the impact of WAGES funding.

Strategic Learning

The WAGES evaluation is designed to learn about what grantees are doing to promote Colorado women's economic security – what services, strategies, and tactics are being carried out; what's working and what isn't – and what impact grantee organizations are having in different ways that are supportive to Colorado women and their families. The audiences for this information include WFCO, its board, grantee organizations, and when applicable, the larger field.

COVID-19 and Completeness of Data

The Year 2 WAGES Survey was administered in March of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Because of the need for grantee organizations to quickly respond to the pandemic, the survey remained open through April 2020. In total, 18 out of 20 grantee organizations completed the survey. There was one missing DS grantee and one missing PA grantee response. For the DS section of this report, the numbers that were last reported by the DS grantee were utilized (from the mid-year WAGES survey in October 2019). For the PA section of this report, reflections and updates from the missing PA grantee are not included.

Appendix B - Convening Agendas



The Women's Foundation of Colorado | WAGES Convening - Colorado Springs

September 16 - 17, 2019

Goals for the Session:

- Share report and relevant information from OMNI Institute: what has been learned so far and how it is shaping potential policy goal for WAGES
- Continued distillation on WAGES policy goal
- Continued relationship building and equity capacity building

Day 1 | September 16, 2019

2:00 pm - 2:15 pm	Arrival, Settle In
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Welcome, Intros, Icebreaker
3:15 pm - 5:15 pm	Continued Networking & Relationship Building
5:15 pm - 6:00 pm	Settle into Rooms/Break
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Transition to Dinner

Day 2 | September 17, 2019

7:45 am/8:00 am	Team Arrives/Preps for the Day
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast and settle in
9:00 am - 9:20 am	Welcome & Icebreaker
9:20 am - 10:00 am	Reflecting on the Journey So Far
10:00 am - 10:15 am	Break & Refreshments
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Continue Reflection on the Journey So Far
11:15 am - 11:45 am	Introduction of Equity Tool for Policy Development
11:45 pm - 12:45 pm	Lunch & Connecting
12:45 pm - 3:45 pm	Policy & Equity
3:45 pm-4:00 pm	Break and Complete Convening Survey
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Closing & Next Steps



Agenda | WAGES Cohort November 15, 2019 Convening | 10:00am- 2:00 pm
ZOOM Remote Meeting

Goals for Session:

- Shift to virtual meeting format, share and cultivate agreements for participating virtually
- Continue learning on ECE policy efforts and entry points for supporting policy on these issues - define how directly impacted communities can contribute to policy
- Continued equity learning anchored in policy work
- Continued relationship and cross-sector work related to WAGES and upcoming legislative session

10:00 am - 10:05 am	Participants Arrive
10:05 am - 10:40 am	Welcome, Intros & Zoom Review
10:40 am - 11:00 am	Leaning into the Process - facilitators – Z
11:00 am - 12:30 pm	ECE Policy Work Updates & Discussion (small groups)
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Break
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm	Sector Based Discussions - break out group by sector
1:45 pm - 2:00 pm	Closing



Agenda | WAGES Cohort January 14, 2020 Convening | 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm ZOOM Remote Meeting

Goals for Session:

- Continue virtual meeting format
- Share updates on policies connected to WAGES work and identify opportunities for engagement and action
- Continue equity learning anchored in class culture

1:00 pm - 1:05 pm	Participants arrive on Zoom
1:05 pm - 1:25 pm	Welcome, Intros & Short Zoom Review
1:25 pm - 1:55 pm	Policy Updates
1:55 pm - 2:45 pm	Equity Learning: Class Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• https://classism.org/missing-class/about-missing-class/• What's your class journey? http://www.activistclasscultures.org/whats-your-class-path
2:45 pm - 3:00 pm	Next Steps & Closing



Agenda | WAGES Cohort February 11, 2020 Convening | 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm
ZOOM Remote Meeting

Goals for Session:

- Continue virtual meeting format
- Share updates on policies connected to WAGES work and identify opportunities for engagement and action
- Continue equity learning on rural communities

Agenda:

1:00 pm - 1:05 pm	Participants arrive on Zoom
1:05 pm - 1:10 pm	Roll Call - Name & Org on Zoom Video
1:10 pm - 2:05 pm	Learning More About Rural Communities
2:05 pm - 2:40 pm	Policy Updates
2:40 - 2:55 pm	Omni Report
2:55 pm - 3:00 pm	Next Steps

Links that were shared:

- <https://www.lgbtmap.org/rural-lgbt>
- https://puebloupulp.com/who-in-pueblo-will-be-left-to-stop-generation-brain-drain/?fbclid=IwAR0ZwH1VFoRu3z_qwnnpCpXSrois-AGr3-j_12XmDZUMwOfSdjshS9Jepmc
- <https://child.caredeserts.org/index.html>



Agenda | WAGES Cohort March 10, 2020 Convening | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm ZOOM Remote Meeting

Goals for Session:

- Continue virtual meeting format
- Share updates on policies connected to WAGES work and identify opportunities for engagement and action
- Equity learning on Colorado's wealth gap through a race and gender lens

Agenda:

1:00 pm - 1:05 pm	Participants arrive on Zoom
1:05 pm - 1:10 pm	Roll Call - Name & Org on Zoom Video
1:10 pm - 1:30 pm	Sharing from Direct Service Grantees
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Race & Gender Wealth Gap
2:30 pm - 2:45 pm	Policy & Relevant Updates
2:45 pm - 2:55 pm	Evaluation
2:55 pm - 3:00 pm	Next Steps & Closing

Links that were shared:

- <https://www.bellpolicy.org/2019/10/30/racial-wealth-gap/>
- <https://www.bellpolicy.org/2019/12/03/racial-wealth-gap-homeownership-credit/>
- <https://www.bellpolicy.org/2020/01/27/mass-incarceration-school-to-prison-pipeline/>
- <https://www.bellpolicy.org/2020/02/12/secure-savings-racial-wealth-gap/>
- <https://healingjustice.podbean.com/e/coronavirus-wisdom-from-a-social-justice-lens/>
- <https://nonprofitaf.com/2020/03/a-few-things-for-nonprofits-and-foundations-to-consider-in-light-of-the-coronavirus/>



COVID-19 Resources | WAGES | April 2020 | 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Goals for Session:

- Offer a space for WAGES grantees to connect and share resources, challenges, and other items
- WFCO share updates via document

Agenda:

- Welcome
- Key questions posted on chat: How are you and your organization doing? How are you supporting the community/communities you serve? What are the challenges? What are some of the solutions?
- WFCO and WAGES Cohort Granter Partner Update
- Closing

Links that were shared:

- <https://fmaonline.net/ppptoolbox/>
- https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_COVID-19_Fed_Rural_Resource_Guide.pdf
- [Recently released data on COVID-19 and People of Color](#)

WFCO Resources Shared:

- [National Resource Database](#) (mutual aid, communications, LGBTQIA+, mental health, etc.)
- [Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for Nonprofits & Funders](#) (Colorado Health Foundation)
- [Community Resources](#) (WFCO)
- [Colorado Nonprofit Association COVID-19 Facebook Group](#)
- [Colorado Nonprofit Association information About and Support Tapping into Federal Resources](#)
- [Colorado COVID-19 Relief Funds](#) (Philanthropy Colorado)
- [Resources for Undocumented Immigrants](#)
 - [Letter](#) to sign on to letter requesting help for undocumented people in next stimulus package
- [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#)



Agenda | WAGES Virtual Convening | May 12, 2020 | 1:30 - 2:30 pm

Goals for Session:

- Provide opportunity for grantees to connect and share updates and shifts around COVID-19
- Share updates on policies and funding

Agenda:

1:30 - 1:35pm Welcome & Settle-In

1:35 - 1:50pm Direct Service Partners Share Updates

- How does your work continue to change?
- How is COVID and its impacts showing up in the communities you work in? What are ways that communities are showing up right now (assets, resilience)?

1:50 - 2:05pm Policy Organization Partners Share Updates

2:05 - 2:15pm Input on Virtual Convenings, Day-Long Convenings

2:15 - 2:25pm Statewide Funds

2:25 - 2:30 pm Next Steps & Closing



WAGES Training and Collective Action Agenda | May 26, 2020 | 3:00 - 4:30 pm

Goals for Session:

- Provide a brief advocacy training for direct service grantees
- Share opportunities for collective action
- Update cohort on legislative session

Agenda:

- Welcome and Goals
- Advocacy training for direct service grantees
 - What are ways you are currently doing advocacy work?
 - If you aren't using advocacy in your work, what would you like to learn?
 - What is advocacy? Why advocacy? Why not advocacy yet?
 - <https://bolderadvocacy.org/advocacy-defined/>
 - [Bolder Advocacy](#)
 - Can a nonprofit engage in advocacy, lobbying, etc.? Yes, here's how
 - Challenges Next steps for your organization
- Opportunities for collective action
- PA grantee updates
 - General Assembly
 - Census
 - 2020 Election
- Discussion of future convenings and request to take survey
- Closing and next steps

Appendix C - Data Tables

TABLE C.1. WAGES DIRECT SERVICE PARTICIPANTS SERVED BY DIRECT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Organization Name	n	%
Center for Work Education and Employment	71	9.7%
Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc.	108	14.8%
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	24	3.3%
Community Partnership for Child Development	38	5.2%
Durango Adult Education Center, Women's Resource Center, and La Plata Family Centers Coalition	32	4.4%
Eagle County Govt, Department of Human Services	17	2.3%
Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc.	14	1.9%
Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado	158	21.6%
Mi Casa Resource Center	72	9.9%
OneMorgan County	7	1%
Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins	167	22.9%
Pueblo Community College/Foundation and Boys and Girls Club of Pueblo County	22	3%
Total	730	100%

TABLE C.2. WAGES DIRECT SERVICE PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

General Demographics	n	%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	25	3.5%
Asian or Asian American	9	1.3%
Black or African American	151	21.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.1%
Latinx, Hispanic or of Spanis orgin	371	51.8%
White or Caucasian	210	29.3%
More than one race	52	7.3%
Other	7	1%
Note: Because grantees could select multiple race/ethnicity categories for participants, a Total row is not included.		
Age		
< 18 years old	11	1.5%
18 – 24 years old	233	32.1%
25 – 34 years old	274	37.8%
35 – 44 years old	141	19.4%
45 – 54 years old	46	6.3%
55 – 59 years old	13	1.8%
60 – 64 years old	3	0.4%
65 – 74 years old	1	0.1%
75+ years old	3	0.4%
Total	725	100%
Education		
Less than high school	209	29.5%
High school degree or GED equivalency	249	35.2%
Some college, no degree	113	16 %
Associate's degree	85	12%
Bachelor's degree	43	6.1%
Master's/ProgeSSIONal/Doctorate degree	5	0.7%
Other	4	0.6%
Total	708	100%

Family Demographics		n	%
Relationship Status			
Single (Never married, divorced, widowed, separated)		515	76%
Partnered (Married, common law, domestic partnership)		161	23.7%
Other		2	0.3%
Total		678	100%
Single Parents			
Single parents		403	68.1%
Non-single parents		189	31.9%
Total		592	100%
Number in Household			
1		74	10.5%
2		170	24.1%
3		179	25.4%
4		115	16.3%
5		80	11.4%
6		54	7.7%
7		18	2.6%
8 or more		14	2%
Total		704	100%
Number of Dependent Children			
0		65	10.9%
1		285	47.8%
2		145	24.3%
3		61	10.2%
4		25	4.2%
5		11	1.8%
6		4	0.7%
7		0	0%
8 or more		0	0%
Total		596	100%

Economic Demographics

Employment Status

Full time (35+ hours per week)	177	25.6%
Part time (Less than 35 hours per week)	221	31.9%
Paid internship	19	2.7%
Unemployed (looking for work last 30 days)	124	17.9%
Unemployed (not looking for work last 30 days)	114	16.5%
Homemaker	12	1.7%
Student	16	2.3%
Retired	1	0.1%
Participant that is unable to work	1	0.1 %
Other	7	1%
Total	692	100%

Gross Family Income (monthly)

Less than \$500	139	27.4%
\$500 – \$1,000	104	20.5%
\$1,001 – \$1,500	70	13.8%
\$1,501 – \$2,000	68	13.4%
\$2,001 – \$2,500	68	13.4%
\$2,501 – \$3,000	25	4.9%
\$3,001 – \$3,500	8	1.6%
\$3,501 – \$4,000	6	1.2%
\$4,001 or more	19	3.7%
Total	507	100%

TABLE C.3. FINANCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM INFORMATION

Funding Sources	Individual Programs	Program Definition
Alimony and/or Child Support	Alimony	An amount of money given by a former spouse for financial support.
	Child Support	An amount of money given by a child or children's co-parent to financially support the child/ren.
Child care Assistance Programs	CCCAP	The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) program provides child care assistance to families who are working, searching for employment, or are in training, and families who are enrolled in the Colorado Works program and need child care services to support their efforts toward self-sufficiency.
	DDP	The Denver Preschool Program (DDP) provides tuition support to families with 4-year-olds, in order to allow children to go to preschools of the families' choice.
	CCP	The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) allows eligible children to attend high-quality preschool for free (children are eligible if they have certain challenges in their lives).
Child Health Insurance Program and Child Health Plan Plus	CHP+/CHIP	Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) is public low-cost health insurance for certain children and pregnant women. It is for people who earn too much to qualify for Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), but not enough to pay for private health insurance. Outside of Colorado, this program may be known as CHIP.
Colorado Works	TANF	Colorado Works/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that provides cash assistance to families in need who have dependent children or unborn children. The program requires applicants to seek employment and be involved in a work activity from the day of the application.
Health First Colorado	Medicaid	Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) is public health insurance for low-income Coloradans.
Housing Assistance	HCV/ Section 8	The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV), which was formally known as Section 8, provides rental assistance to income-eligible tenants by subsidizing a portion of their monthly rent and utilities and paying it directly to their landlords.
	Section 811	The Section 811 Program assists the lowest income people with significant and long-term disabilities to live independently in the community by providing affordable housing linked with voluntary services and supports.
	S+C	The Shelter Plus Care (S+C) program provides housing options for homeless persons (and their families) with targeted disabilities, primarily those with serious mental illness, chronic problems with alcohol and/or drugs and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or related diseases. The program requires participants to engage in services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, job training and life development skills.
	FUP	Family Unification Program (FUP) provides a housing choice voucher program to assist homeless youth, aging out of the foster care system (ages 18 through 21) and families where available housing is an obstacle to full custody of their children.

Funding Sources	Individual Programs	Program Definition
Housing Assistance (continued)	HCV Homeownership Program	The Housing Choice Voucher Homeownership Program empowers eligible participants interested in purchasing their own home. The voucher may be applied toward the family's portion of a mortgage.
	VASH	The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) provides housing choice voucher rental assistance and intensive case management and clinical services to enable homeless veterans access to permanent housing while leading healthy, productive lives in the community
	CCT	The Colorado Choice Transitions (CCT) allows Medicaid funding to follow a person from an institutional setting to housing in the community. The goal of CCT is to move persons with disabilities out of nursing homes and other long-term care and into the community.
Social Security Income	SSI	The Social Security office gives monthly benefits to people with limited income and resources who are disabled, blind, or age 65 or older. Blind or disabled children may also get SSI.
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children	WIC	Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federal assistance program for low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and children under the age of five, that gives women and families food assistance, food education, and breastfeeding support.
Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program	SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the food assistance program in Colorado, formerly known as Food Stamps. SNAP helps households purchase food and individuals on SNAP receive an EBT card, which can be used at most grocery stores to buy food and other products.

TABLE C.4. OVERVIEW OF WAGES DIRECT SERVICE GRANTEEES, PROGRAMS, AND DEMOGRAPHICS SERVED

Please note that program descriptions were summarized from Year 1 grantee applications and programs may have made modifications to their services during implementation.

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE)	Steps to Success Program	Low-income women on TANF; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CWEE provides guidance and support for women as they enter livable wage careers through the Steps to Success Program, which was piloted with support from WFCO in 2013. The job retention services have helped single mothers maintain long-term, stable employment by mitigating the cliff effect.
Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities, Inc. (CHIC)	Collaborative Healing Initiative within Communities	Formerly/currently gang-involved women; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CHIC is a program designed to lift gang-affiliated women out of a cycle of poverty and violence through mentorship, education for employment, family and community engagement, counseling, and holistic healing. This grant will support education for employment programming, which connects participants with a CHIC mentor, a peer group with similar career goals, a workforce development specialist through IEG, Inc., and job training programs such construction apprenticeships for training and placement in construction careers.
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	Vocational Services	Formerly/currently homeless mothers; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	CCH will pilot a technology training program to prepare women who have been homeless for careers in the tech industry, with starting annual pay ranging from \$36,000 to \$50,000. Through this program, women will participate in four months of training with a local technology training provider that is designing coursework specifically for this group of women and that has a track record of employment placements with local companies. In addition to the Computer User Support Specialist and network maintenance training, participants will also receive soft skills training, job placement assistance, and job coaching upon entering employment. Participants will also have access to the full range of services and supports CCH provides to help people overcome homelessness.
Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD)	Two Generation Program	Low-income women; El Paso (El Paso County)	CPCD's Two Generation Program helps low-income parents (90% mothers) make progress toward economic independence while their children receive quality early childhood education. Participants have no-cost access to three career training tracks: child development associate, information technology, and advanced manufacturing, through partnerships with Pikes Peak Community College and Colorado Springs School District 11 Adult and Family Education Center. This grant will support the CPCD Two Generation Program Coordinator position, which provides long-term case management for participants, as well as small monthly stipends to help offset transportation and food costs while they are enrolled in training.
Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC)	Southwest Colorado Women's Project	Low-income women; La Plata (SW CO)	The Southwest Colorado Women's Project is a collaboration among the Durango Adult Education Center (DAEC), Women's Resource Center (WRC), and La Plata Family Centers Coalition (LPFCC). Together, the partners will support women into livable wage careers by providing case management, career planning, and targeted education and training, along with a range of additional supports. The collaboration will draw on the strengths of each partner, including DAEC as the region's educational

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
			safety net; LPFCC as the safeguard for parent and child health, education, and support; and WRC as the center for women seeking resources and educational support.
Eagle County Government (Department of Human Services)	Flexible Funding and Coaching	Single mothers; Eagle (Eagle County)	The Eagle County Department of Human Services recently piloted programs to ease the cliff effect for individuals transitioning out of eligibility for the Colorado Works and Colorado Child Care Assistance Programs. This grant will support a pilot of individualized coaching and flexible financial supports to positively impact outcomes for single mothers exiting public assistance and to help DHS build knowledge about empowering women for workforce and life success, including economic self-sufficiency, while also enabling them to simultaneously advance the well-being of their children. The participating women will have coaches to help build their executive functioning skills and up to \$1,200 in flexible funding to support identified goals.
Emergency Family Assistance Association, Inc. (EFAA)	Job Uptake for Motivated Parents Program	Low-income women; Boulder County	Originally piloted as the Internships to Careers for Motivated Moms program with support from WFCO in 2015, the renamed Job Uptake for Motivated Parents (JUMP) program connects participants with work-based learning opportunities in partnership with Workforce Boulder County and a full range of supports through EFAA. EFAA provides participants with basic needs supports, food, housing, resource referrals, and encouragement and problem-solving support to overcome hurdles to program completion. Additionally, EFAA provides up to \$1,000 in direct financial assistance to help address needs for employment, such as transportation, interview clothing, and child care support. This grant will support women's participation in the JUMP program.
Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado (Flo Critt)	Boosting Employability for Teen Mothers Project	Teen mothers/ young children; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	Florence Crittenton Services is beginning a three-year initiative to identify, incorporate, and share best practices to help pregnant and parenting girls increase their employability and probability of earning livable wages within three to five years of high school graduation. The Boosting Employability for Teen Mothers Project includes three integrated components: development of core skills and employment training, support for navigating the road to employment, and holistic, wraparound support that helps teen mothers provide and care for their children while completing education and training.
Mi Casa Resource Center	Career Development Program	Latina/ low-income women; Denver (Denver Metro Area)	Mi Casa's career development program has demonstrated success in moving women into careers that offer livable wages by engaging women in career pathways and providing training and wraparound supports. This grant will help Mi Casa provide individualized services for participants to ensure their success through foundational skills training, progress in career tracks, job search, and employment. Participants are primarily prepared for and supported in entry into careers in the financial services industry and have access to training for small business development, healthcare, and construction careers.
OneMorgan County (OMC)	Educational and Occupational Advancement of Women	Newcomer/immigrant women; Morgan County	OneMorgan County fosters community cohesion in Morgan County, a rural community with a high proportion of refugee and immigrant residents. Designed to jump start the educational and occupational advancement of women, this grant supported newcomer working mothers with stipends to offset lost wages to allow them to attend Morgan Community College full-time, along with support and career guidance. The participants will serve as role models, ambassadors, and mentors to inspire and support the next group of scholars, with the goal of cultivating a new culture whereby women's contributions are fully valued, supported, and sustained through the capacity building of local women

Organization	Name of Program/Project	Demographic Served	Description of Program/Project (from grant applications)
			leaders. Community partners have demonstrated a commitment to the project's success: Morgan Community College will cover participants' tuition, Colorado State University faculty will supervise graduate students to design the education support and career guidance manual, and Fort Morgan Cultures United for Progress will provide additional financial support.
Project Self Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins (PSS)	Selfpower Program	Single mothers; Larimer County	The Selfpower program helps single parents overcome barriers to completing the postsecondary education needed to earn a living wage. Participating families are supported through personalized intervention with a highly skilled advisor in a strengths-based program focused on growth. The program includes detailed career planning focused from the beginning on self-sufficiency wages, supports for children's success, resources and navigation support for educational completion and job search, as well as ongoing support once participants enter employment. This grant will invest in continuation of Project Self-Sufficiency's model.
Pueblo Community College and Pueblo Community College Foundation	DualStar Project	Low-income women Pueblo County	The DualStar Project is focused on engaging women and girls in exploring and pursuing STEM education and careers that offer livable wages. This partnership between Pueblo Community College (PCC) and Pueblo Community College Foundation (PCCF) supports women into STEM careers in several ways. The grant-funded project includes 1) encouraging women already enrolled in PCC's Health Information Technology program to build on that credential to pursue Cyber Defense Education, for which PCC was recently federally designated as an excellent provider of education in the growing cyber security industry and 2) engaging women STEM majors in the PCC Presidential Leadership Program (PLP) as mentors to women enrolled in the Health Information Technology program.