

# CASA DE LA

# ESPERANZA



## Annual Report 2016



**Boulder County**  
Colorado



**BOULDER COUNTY**  
**HOUSING**  
**& HUMAN**  
**SERVICES**

Hope for the future, help when you need it.



# CASA ESPERANZA

## LEARNING CENTER

Dear Friends of Casa de la Esperanza,

We are very excited to share our accomplishments over the 2016 year. We are beyond thankful for our exceptional volunteers, donors, sponsors and community organizations who have supported our program for over 23 years.

Casa de la Esperanza encountered several new changes throughout the year, but the program was able to remain stable during those changes. One of the greatest changes was the change in residents. We had more than 10 families move out of the community, but six of those families were able to become homeowners and we are very proud of them for accomplishing such a big goal. We are hoping to continue offering great programs for the parents so we can see more families become homeowners in the near future. We are looking forward to an amazing 2017 year.

In 2016, the program continued to hold strong relationships with many partners we've had for many years, but most exciting, we were able to connect with new organizations to bring additional services and programs for the families and children of Casa de la Esperanza. New partnerships included Boy Scouts, the Longmont YMCA, Barrio E. Centro, Chain Reaction (Earn-a-Bike Program), Mentor Colorado and Salud Family Health Clinic.

Our program was made possible thanks to sponsors and the strong partnerships we hold with community organizations but most importantly we are thankful for the community members who spend their valuable time volunteering at the learning center. In 2016, we had a total of 127 talented volunteers who completed more than 3,480 hours with a total estimated value of \$69,780 for their services. Our volunteers share a variety of set skills and come with a diverse background to tutor, mentor and/or teach our students and parents new skills. We believe in strengthening our community by offering programs of interest, and we host many community events throughout the year to allow us to come together as one big family. We had over 30 different classes, events and programs to offer our community but we are always finding innovative ideas to keep the program interesting and successful.

Once again, we are very thankful for our community participation, partnerships, donors and funding received in 2016 and the amazing volunteers and staff who made our program possible.

Sincerely,

Vanessa M. Escarcega  
Program Coordinator

# Our Story

Casa de la Esperanza (House of Hope) is a 32-unit housing complex providing homes for seasonal farm worker families in Longmont. It is owned and operated by Boulder County Housing Authority (BCHA). The BCHA created the Boulder Community Housing Corporation (BCHC) which serves as the non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for all resident services. The BCHC is the umbrella agency for the Casa de la Esperanza Learning Center. This vibrant community of families boasts a busy Community Center which is the “Heart” of the community offering a year-long after school and summer program.

## History

In the fall of 1993, the Housing Authority collaborated with the Boulder County Commissioners and other community leaders to make Casa la Esperanza community a reality. For over 23 years, the Casa de la Esperanza has served and responded to the unique needs of dozens of hard-working families that live in the housing community. In 2000, Casa celebrated a new expansion of the academic center. It was upgraded with a new computer lab, small classrooms, additional storage and office space. The program has served hundreds of families and children over the years.

## Homeownership

The Casa de la Esperanza housing community offers residents affordable, quality three and four bedroom units that provide for economic stability in a safe, healthy community. Families reside in the Casa de la Esperanza community an average of five to ten years. As the children grow, they become wage-earning youth and young adults that contribute to the family income. Families have pooled resources to be able to afford homes in the local Longmont community. In the last twenty years, over seventy families have purchased homes in the local area, including five in 2016 alone.



## *Creating Community Leaders One Student at a Time*

### **Our Mission**

Casa de la Esperanza's education center is a state-of-the-art learning facility providing opportunities and resources towards excellence and self-empowering through collaboration and programming that nurtures each individual's potential.

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is one of a thriving community that encourages those around us by exemplifying the ideals of education, leadership, and self-sustainability.

### **Our Efforts and Impact**

The average graduating rate for the Casa students has held steady at 90+% throughout our history. But, most remarkably, the program boasts a 100% high school graduation rate for the last seven years which greatly surpasses Colorado's 60-70% average for Latino youth. Moreover, a total of eleven students have earned a college degree and five of them have also earned a master's degree. The Learning Center's success is evident in which a "culture of excellence" with a pathway to education has been developed for the families it serves.

<b>2016 TOP RATED CASA PROGRAMS</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
ROBOTICS (VEX, JR LEGO, LEGO Robotics)	26
Breaking Barriers Literacy Summer Camp	23
Early Learning Program (children 3-4 years old)	6
Art Class at the Firehouse Art Center	15
Youth Leadership Class (middle and high school students)	10
4-H S.T.E.M Program	28
Community Adventure Program—Cottonwood	10
Special Classes (piano, sports club, etc.)	24
Math Class (students in grades 2-7)	12
Community Food Share Weekly Distribution (number of families)	38
Adult Programs (Zumba, English Classes, Salud, etc.)	30

# The CASA Team



**Vanessa Escarcega Program Coordinator**

Vanessa started as a Program Intern in June of 2014. She soon became a part of the casa family and became Volunteer Coordinator and Program Assistant in January of 2015. Vanessa took over the Program Coordinator position in February of 2016. In addition to working at Casa, Vanessa was employed with the City of Longmont's The Place—After School program at Longs Peak Middle School as a Program Coordinator and with Children, Youth and Families program as a Youth Program Leader. Vanessa was also employed at Community Reach Center in Adams County at their Mental Health Center. Vanessa worked with students who were in a special education program and she set up behavioral plans, tracked student progress, planned lessons and helped the instructors. In addition, Vanessa was a chaperon for the 2015 Longmont Sisters City Association in which one of the Casa students and Vanessa went to Ciudad Guzman, Mexico for a 10 day cultural exchange. Vanessa is aware of the resources in the Longmont Community, considers Longmont her home and wants to contribute to the success of the families that live at Casa. Vanessa has her Bachelor's Degree of Arts in Psychology from Metropolitan State University at Denver with a Minor in Spanish from 2015.



**Michael Lozano STEM Educator**

A native of Peru and came to the United States fifteen years ago. Mike holds an Associate degree of Applied Science in Computer Information Systems. Also, he earned various certificates including Cisco Network Associate, Computer Technician A+, and Computer Technician Network+, at Front Range Community College. He is bilingual and bicultural and is fundamental to the maintenance and enhancement of the computer lab. He provides bilingual computer instruction to children and adults. He was the critical as our first MESA advisor and coordinated the first robotics and science programming for our community's students in 1st to 12th grade.



**Neil Mosser Program Assistant**

Born and raised in “small-town Texas,” Neil graduated from University of Texas at Arlington with degrees in History and English Literature. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Lake Alaotra region in Madagascar from 2013-2015, relocating to Colorado shortly after arriving back in the United States. He ensures good relations with Casa's many wonderful volunteers, and helps to make sure Casa's programming runs smoothly.



**Miguel Vazquez Graphic Design Intern**

Miguel Vasquez came to Casa de la Esperanza as an intern through Workforce Boulder County. After completing his mechanical degree, he decided to pursue Graphic Design at Front Range Community College. Aside from being the Graphics Design Intern for Casa, Miguel created a mural at the bike underpass at Kanemoto Park in Longmont through Art in Public Places. Miguel's passion for art and graphic design made him fit right in at Casa as he developed promotional materials for the learning center.

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

On Saturday, May 28th, our community celebrated the high school graduation of six youth from the Casa de la Esperanza community. Hundreds of children and adults including the Casa families, program volunteers, relatives and friends of the graduates greatly enjoyed the celebration dinner and dance. The majority of these students are the first in their family to earn a high school diploma. Their parents typically only achieved a sixth grade education or less.

Everyone from the Casa community attended to honor and celebrate the well-deserved graduates and to commemorate them for achieving an important milestone in their lives. This will move them towards new challenges in the near future such as continuing on to a university education and as role models for the children and youth of the Casa de la Esperanza community.



## CASA Robotics Academy and S.T.E.M. Education

The STEM program provides youth enrichment opportunities to increase students' interest in the diverse academic areas of science, technology and engineering. The STEM program promotes science education & inquiry based learning as well as post-secondary education.

### First Robotics Competition (FRC)

FRC teams spend six weeks designing and building a 120 pound robot. These robots compete to overcome obstacles and score points for their team. Casa's Robotics team came in sixth place at the event in 2016 out of over forty teams.



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### VEX IQ

VEX IQ is a robotics platform designed to transform STEM learning for young students and their teachers. Students can jump right in and snap robots together using this intuitive, tool less system. Educators can utilize free VEX IQ Curriculum to help teach valuable lessons and skills needed in today's changing world.



## Junior Robotics

For children ages 6-9, Junior *FIRST*<sup>®</sup> LEGO<sup>®</sup> League (Jr.FLL<sup>®</sup>) captures young children's curiosity and directs it toward discovering the wonders of science and technology. This program features a real-world scientific concept to be explored through research, teamwork, construction, and imagination. Guided by adult Coaches, teams use LEGO<sup>®</sup> bricks to build a model that moves and develop a *Show Me* Poster to illustrate their journey.



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## FLL Robotics

Introduces younger students to real-world engineering challenges by building LEGO-based robots to complete tasks on a thematic playing surface. FLL teams, guided by their imaginations and adult coaches, discover exciting career possibilities and, through the process, learn to make positive contributions to society.



# Academic Enrichment and Tutoring Services

Academic assistance is provided for the students at Casa de la Esperanza with the help of local university students and professionals. This assistance includes help with assigned homework, improving literacy, college scouting and preparation, as well as many other forms of support.

## Volunteers



Casa de la Esperanza volunteers Mariah and Andy accepting their grants from Boulder County Volunteer Initiatives on behalf of Casa de la Esperanza to create new programming. The two programs funded by event were Heritage Mural Art Project, and a Math Kit Program for elementary-aged girl.



## Volunteer Statistics

<u>Volunteer Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Robotics Mentors	18	853
Tutors/Mentors	95	1964
Parent Volunteers	14	672

# Academic Enrichment Programming

## 4-H S.T.E.M Program

This science-based class lets elementary aged students explore the fields of biology, chemistry, geology, and physics. It also helps to foster a love of science and the scientific method through fun activities like dissecting owl pellets or mixing diet coke and mentos.



## Headstart

This class prepares 3-4 year olds in our community for their first years of school. They learn their colors, shapes, to count and other basic concepts. In addition, they improve their motor functions and socialization skills.



## Firehouse Art

Firehouse Art is a hands-on class for learning different art techniques and styles. It takes place at the Firehouse Art Center in downtown Longmont, allowing students to see real work from real artists. In 2016, students created a map to trace their heritage which was on display for the public at the Firehouse Art Center.



## Boy Scouts

Casa de la Esperanza formed its very own Boy Scout Troop in 2016, pack 155. A total of 13 boys are actively participating in the program. They are currently ranked as Bobcats, having completed various community projects.



## Adult Programs

### English Classes

Casa de la Esperanza is fortunate to have English classes to help residents adjust to life in the United States. With our partnership with Intercambio Uniting Community, the casa residents have access to different level classes in their community. In additions, we had individuals who were paired one-on-one with an instructor to help facilitate the language learning class.

### Salud Family Health Clinic

Salud Family Health Center not only did health clinics at Casa de la Esperanza once a month, but in addition they held weekly meetings for the residents of Casa de la Esperanza. Topics included how to eat health, stay active and become aware of your lifestyle. The program helped families learn more about healthy eating habits and living a healthy lifestyle.

### Zumba

For three consecutive year, Margie Moreno has been able to keep the Casa community active by offering Zumba classes 4 times a week. The class is designed to keep the moms of the community active throughout the week.



# Summer Programs

## Breaking Barriers

Breaking Barriers is an intensive program for elementary school children aimed at improving literacy through auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning. Examples of activities for the twenty participants include scavenger hunts, field trips, journaling, and scientific experiments.



## Rocket Club

With the help of LASP (Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics) at CU, 5th-8th grade Casa students had the opportunity to learn concepts about rocketry and engineering. Staff guided students through a approximately two meter tall rocket build, which they launched near Pueblo.



## Community Adventure Program—Cottonwood Institute

Casa de la Esperanza, with the help of a talented Cottonwood Instructor, spend two weeks making a public service announcement for their community about Emerald Ash Borer. Their program ended with a camping trip, where Casa youth got to experience the great outdoors.



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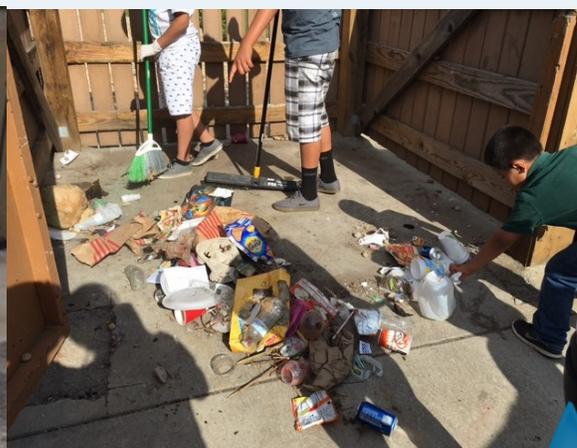
## Earn-a-Bike Program

Casa got a special visit from Chain Reaction and Boulder County Transportation, who did a two course session. The first one taught children how to fix a flat and the second class taught parents about bike repair and safety. At the end, participants received a free refurbished bike.



## Community Clean-up

Over the summer, Casa kids and staff participated in a program to make our community a clean and enjoyable place to live. The students would gather everyday to improve the state of their community by picking up trash. They began within the Casa property, and expanded outward to neighboring communities.



## FUNDING AND RESOURCE PROCUREMENT

Source	Amount	Status	Allocation
<b>Quarter 1</b>			
Collins Foundation	\$1,000	<b>Awarded</b>	General Operating
Credit Union of CO Foundation/Contribution	\$1,000	<b>Awarded</b>	General Operating
Ball Aerospace/Casa Robotics	\$500.80	<b>Awarded</b>	Robotics Academy
<b>Quarter 2</b>			
Joseph Gomez/Sandy Lawson Casa Donation	\$300	<b>Awarded</b>	Casa Scholarship
Longmont Community Foundation	\$4,300	<b>Awarded</b>	General Operating
Mindsports- Ball Donation Jeffrey Bladt	\$958.90	<b>Awarded</b>	General Operating
Schwab Charitable - 1778351	\$2,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Academic Support & STEM
Parrish Scholarship Support	\$200	<b>Awarded</b>	Casa Scholarship
Seagate- Contribution	\$2,500	<b>Awarded</b>	Robotics Academy
Ball- Contribution	\$10,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Robotics Academy
<b>Quarter 3</b>			
Lynn/Helen Clark/	\$1,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Casa Donation
Community Foundation	\$2,500	<b>Awarded</b>	General Operating
Group Publishing	\$1,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Academic Support
<b>Quarter 4</b>			
Volunteer Initiatives Award (Math Camp)	\$499	<b>Awarded</b>	Math Program
Volunteer Initiatives Award (Art)	\$500	<b>Awarded</b>	Art Program
IBM - Casa de la Esperanza Robotics	\$2,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Robotics Academy
Seagate Technology - CASA Robotics	\$3,000	<b>Awarded</b>	Robotics Academy
El Pomar Foundation - Karl E Eitel grant	\$3,500	<b>Awarded</b>	
	<b>\$8,999.00</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	
	<b>\$36,758.70</b>	<b>Year to date</b>	



Award for “Service for Children” and \$1,000 grant from Group Publishing

# Sponsors, Partners, and Key Organizations



Thank you!



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# LA VOZ

BILINGÜE

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## CU Boulder leads aerospace research

**SPECIAL EDITION**

**Juan Mora**

In the shadows of the state-of-the-art buildings of one of the nation's leading aerospace research universities, the University of Colorado at Boulder (CU Boulder), a non-profit struggling to meet the needs of scores of first-generation immigrant students, La Casa de la Esperanza Learning Center provides housing and hope — a home where students of Spanish-speaking families can hone English language skills and get after school tutoring help, and be instilled with hope for their own futures, for their families, and their entire communities.

Thanks in a great way to NASA and the University of Colorado at Boulder, the students of La Casa de Esperanza will get a glimpse of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) careers and work in the possibility of becoming a CU Boulder student through the Junior Aerospace Engineering program. In the second summer of the three-year program, 18 middle school students

**CU Boulder adelanta en investigaciones aeroespaciales**

In la sombra de la edificios estatales de la principal universidad en investigación aeroespacial del mundo...

Continúa en la p. 22 de...

Photos: University of Colorado at Boulder



**ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS**

## District plans fast start on bond

SVVSD expects to open two new schools in the fall of 2018

By Amy Bounds Staff Writer

The St. Vrain Valley School District is planning an accelerated time-line for construction projects from the \$260.3 million bond issue approved by voters last week.

The district expects to open both a new, 900-student pre-K-8 school in Erie and a new, 525-student elementary school in Frederick's Wyndham Hill neighborhood in the fall of 2018.

Multiple additions and improvements to existing schools, plus a new, district-wide Innovation Center, also are planned in the first

Paul Allen / Staff Photographer

lady: Moreno, left, and Friends Maria and Jose Jimenez laugh as Longmont Mayor Dennis Combs explains how many boxes it would take to deport millions of people as Donald Trump has promised to do. The group was at a community meeting Monday evening at Casa de la Esperanza in Longmont. See more photos and a video at timescall.com.

# 'They are all part of us'



