



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Through the Rural Philanthropy Days Program, Community Leaders are Invited to Discuss Downtown Revitalization and Workforce Readiness

The Southeast Rural Philanthropy Days (SE RPD) Listening Tour took place on April 28-30, 2014 and gathered over 100 community leaders and executive staff from six Colorado foundations and government agencies. This delegation, convened by the Community Resource Center and the Southeast RPD Steering Committee, sought to better inform statewide funding agencies of the opportunities and challenges in the communities of southeast Colorado. The results of these listening sessions are shaping the structure of the upcoming RPD conference this September in Trinidad.

Chris Wiant, President and CEO of Caring for Colorado, and Susan Steele, Executive Director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation, co-chaired the tour. The delegation heard from community leaders in Baca, Bent, Crowley, Huerfano, Las Animas, Otero, and Prowers counties. These open discussions allowed statewide representatives to learn more about the character of the southeast region, existing needs, and current actions to address them.

A white paper is **NOW AVAILABLE** at [www.crcamerica.org/rural-philanthropy-days](http://www.crcamerica.org/rural-philanthropy-days), summarizing what the delegation heard during the three-day, multi-county tour. Economic diversity and job creation, improved health resources, alternative and vocational education, youth and community recreation, and county-wide and regional transportation were the most prominent issues throughout the region.

Information collected on the Listening Tour is being used to structure the *“Community Solutions: Sharing Regional Perspectives & Establishing Vital Partnerships”* session at the Southeast RPD Conference on Thursday, September 25. The day's sessions convene a gathering of executive directors, topic experts, funders, and state and local government officials to foster collaborative dialogue and opportunities for regional success around two key issues identified during the Listening Tour:

**Downtown Revitalization:** Preserving History and Community on Main Street

**Workforce Readiness:** Supporting Local Industry through Vocational and Alternative Education

Participants will identify potential resources and discuss regional successes and challenges, learning from their local counterparts as well as statewide experts and stakeholders. This session will explore vital regional partnerships and potential collaborative solutions. The sessions are designed to strengthen relationships and encourage dialogue across sectors and jurisdictional boundaries.

While all of the issues identified in this report are important, the Southeast RPD Steering Committee and Listening Tour delegation believe that enough groundwork has been laid on these two issues to move the needle in a positive direction on a regional scale.

---

BACA • BENT • CROWLEY • HUERFANO • KIOWA • LAS ANIMAS • OTERO • PROWERS

SEPTEMBER 24-26, 2014 | TRINIDAD, COLORADO

---

Alisha Hall – Event Coordinator | Email – [SoutheastRPD@gmail.com](mailto:SoutheastRPD@gmail.com) | (719) 456-0106 | [www.southeastrpd.org](http://www.southeastrpd.org)

*Southeast RPD is a three-day conference where nonprofit professionals, public agencies, elected officials, business leaders and funders learn from one another and collaborate on projects and funding opportunities. Networking opportunities encourage relationships that lead to mutual understanding, successful grant proposals, and more resources for rural Colorado. The conference is designed, organized, funded and planned by community volunteers from the Southeast region of Colorado. Residents from the eight county region are invited to attend. Registration is NOW OPEN. For more information about the RPD conference on September 24-26, visit [www.southeastrpd.org](http://www.southeastrpd.org).*

###

Rural Philanthropy Days is a statewide program managed by the Community Resource Center (CRC).

**Media Contacts:**

Alisha Hall  
Southeast RPD Event Coordinator  
[southeastrpd@gmail.com](mailto:southeastrpd@gmail.com)  
719.456.0106

Leah Rausch  
Rural Philanthropy Days Program Manager  
[rausch@crcamerica.org](mailto:rausch@crcamerica.org)  
303.623.1540 x 170