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Call first: 3540 Evergreen Parkway, Evergreen, CO, 80439
Mailing Address: 750 W. Hampden Ave., Suite 225 Englewood, CO 80110
Phone: 303-566-4100
Web: JeffcoTranscript.com

To subscribe call 303-566-4100 or
Scan this QR Code



STEVE T STRICKBINE
President
steve@timeslocalmedia.com

NADINE JOHNSON
Director of Operations
nadine@timeslocalmedia.com

NICK OLIVERI
Director of Sales
nick@timeslocalmedia.com

COURTNEY OLDHAM
Production and Design Director
production@timelocalmedia.com

DYLAN LOTTS
Editorial Supervisor
dlotts@coloradocommunitymedia.com

ERIN ADAMS
Marketing Consultant
eadams@coloradocommunitymedia.com

LINDSAY NICOLETTI
Operations/ Circulation Manager
lnicoletti@coloradocommunitymedia.com

Columnists & Guest Commentaries

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CORRECTIONS

Colorado Community Media asks readers to make us aware of mistakes we may have made.

Email sgilbert@coloradocommunitymedia.com if you notice a possible error you would like us to take a look at.

Lakewood celebrates 40th Annual Park and Recreation Month

City will provide activities, discounts and more for residents

BY FRANK DEANGELI
SPECIAL TO COLORADO COMMUNITY MEDIA



Lakewood will provide its residents with activities, discounts, theme nights and more to celebrate the National Recreation and Park Association's 40th Annual Park and Recreation Month.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CITY OF LAKEWOOD

During the first five days of July, purchasing a 20-visit pass to Lakewood's four recreation centers will come with five bonus days tacked on free of charge. An annual pass purchased between July 20 and 22 will remain valid for 13 months rather than 12. Discounts will also be available for personal training packages, the city's Trail Running Series, nutrition consultations, and other health-oriented activities.

These offerings and festivities come in addition to Lakewood's other annual July events, including the Big Belmar Bash on Thursday, July 3 and concerts each Wednesday evening at Belmar Park.

A comprehensive list of July's events and other city programs is available at lakewood.org.



July marks the National Recreation and Park Association's 40th Annual Park and Recreation Month.

Jeffco Prosperity Partners helping families thrive

The nonprofit organization helps families escape poverty

BY DYLAN LOTTS
DLOTTS@TIMESLOCALMEDIA.COM

In a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet, Jeffco Prosperity Partners (JPP) remains steadfast in its mission to improve the lives of Jeffco families experiencing poverty.

JPP is a nonprofit, community-based organization focused on helping families get out of poverty and live prosperous lives.

Executive Director Jessica Hansen said helping families achieve their dreams is special.

"I am so blessed to see life-changing success stories on a regular basis," Hansen said. "I think what's so important about JPP is when you invest in families, you invest in your community, and when you give families the opportunity to create a future that is bright, their kids are educated and have quality opportunities, they will take it."

The organization utilizes a "two-way" coaching approach to support both parents and children. JPP focuses on improving their health, education, financial literacy and employment.

Hansen said the approach sets JPP apart from its counterparts.

"Our program is solely focused on what families want for their life," Hansen said. "And we are very unique in that they are not expected to go down one specific pathway. We really listen and help families figure out what they want and then help them achieve it."

Hansen emphasized how successful that approach has been.

According to JPP's 2024 Impact Report, 527 individuals were served, 99% of participating families are living in stable housing, 81% of families gained employment, 93% of families have healthcare, and 17 people earned degrees and certifications.

Every June, JPP celebrates the accomplishments of adults who are in the program. Hansen said

it's an impactful moment to see children celebrating their parents' success.

Hansen said that children seeing their parents follow through with accomplishing their goals has a ripple effect throughout a family.

"What I've learned in JPP is that when you engage a family and engage parents around their own education and opportunity, the children will follow," Hansen said.

Over the years, JPP has gained support from around the community. The organization has 60 partners in Jeffco, including the city of Arvada, the city of Wheat Ridge and Jeffco Public Schools.

Hansen said she appreciates the community's support. She added that the more awareness JPP can garner will go a long way in dispelling any preconceived notions people may have about families experiencing poverty.

"There's just so much misinformation out there about families who are experiencing poverty, and so the families in JPP are always committed to sharing their

story, their voice, and helping policymakers and local leaders understand what it truly takes to create solutions for families experiencing poverty," Hansen said. "It's really great seeing so many incredible partners come together because...solving poverty is a community solution. We can't do it alone. Not one program can do it."

Hansen will celebrate her 10th year working at JPP. She said she is proud of the work JPP has done, but there are many factors, such as a lack of affordable housing, that still need to be addressed.

She added that she hopes JPP can be a model for other organizations.

"I think we have a lot of hurdles, but as a community, I think we can solve those things together," Hansen said. "And I look forward to JPP continuing to highlight long-term solutions and family-centered approaches as the way of business moving forward in all programs, not just JPP."

To learn more about Jeffco Prosperity Partners, visit jeffco-prosperitypartners.org.