

RYDER'S FUND

ONE BY ONE



Spring 2018 Newsletter | rydersfund.org | Ryder's Fund is Administered by the YMCA of Boulder Valley Endowment Committee

ORIGIN OF RYDER'S FUND

On January 17, 2016, our 20-year-old son, Ryder, went missing. It was a parent's worst nightmare. In the following days, weeks and months, hundreds of people searched thousands of acres in the vast and rugged Walker Ranch area west of Boulder. Mercifully, after 1 ½ years on July 29, 2017, Ryder's remains were found, and we were able to bring him home, say goodbye and have some sense of closure. In this tragic shared experience, we witnessed the goodness in people and greatness in our community. Ryder was a warm, caring and empathetic person so it seemed that Ryder's Fund was a fitting way to honor those qualities and begin to give back for a greater purpose. It is from this place that Ryder's Fund was created to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting life's challenges. —Rick and Cindy Johnson



There are several elements to our vision for Ryder's Fund, including schools/education, law enforcement, specialized service providers, faith community and youth programs.

YMCA OF BOULDER VALLEY — PEER TO PEER NETWORK PROGRAM

The YMCA of Boulder Valley was awarded a grant from YUSA regarding innovations in youth programs to support the initial development of a Peer to Peer Network Program. This program establishes volunteers from the age of 16 to college age to support school age program participants that need extra help to fully engage and to feel included. The peer to peer relationship provides a unique opportunity for volunteers to develop mentorship skills as well as understanding the varying issues and disabilities that may prohibit full engagement and inclusion. The program is designed to use a community of peers to help each other succeed and is based on the international Best Buddy model. Ryder's Fund provided a \$2,500 contribution in early 2018 to sustain and enhance the program.

ATTENTION HOMES MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND CAREER COUNSELING

Established in 1966, Attention Homes is a safe resource for youth in crisis — providing shelter, structure and access to crucial services so homeless and displaced youth can become stable and independent. Attention Homes is undertaking an ambitious capital project in downtown Boulder to provide supportive housing to homeless youth. After meeting with Attention Homes former Executive Director Claire Clurman, Ryder's Fund elected to target its \$2,500 gift toward free mental health and substance abuse counseling services. The other area selected was career counseling, including exploring career pathways and learning job interview skills. Ryder's Fund looks forward to continuing its relationship with Attention Homes to assist this vulnerable group of youth in crisis.

YOUNG FAMILY STARTING OVER IN LONGMONT

When Ryder's Fund learned of a young family trying to start over in Longmont and provide an addiction-free environment for their 19-year-old son, we wanted to help. In order to provide the family with a positive place to be together and pursue a healthy lifestyle, Ryder's Fund donated a six-month membership at the Longmont YMCA. The family was very appreciative of the gesture and was reminded that our community cares.



BOULDER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FIRST RESPONDER SUPPORT AND RESERVE CRISIS FUND INITIATIVE

Based on our experience with the search for Ryder, we came to develop a deep respect for the selfless service to our community provided by the men and women of the Boulder County Sheriff's Office (BCSO). We saw firsthand the difficult, emotional and dangerous work they do day after day. In late 2017, we met with Sheriff Joe Pelle and Cecil O'Farrell, Director of the BCSO's Community Assistance Program. Two areas of need were quickly identified. First, while BCSO can provide direct support to its employees, they are not able to support volunteer first responders, such as RMRG, Boulder Emergency Squad (water rescues) and other "extended family," in traumatic situations. Ryder's Fund will provide counseling and other assistance needed for these important volunteer first responders and extended family, encouraging them to stay healthy in mind and spirit. The second area of assistance involves Ryder's Fund providing a "reserve crisis fund" for victims assistance in the event of a major emergency or mass event. Across the country, from Las Vegas, Nevada to Parkland, Florida, we have seen the devastation caused by mental illness and related acts of violence. Attorneys General from several states are starting to discuss this gap in victims assistance funding, and Ryder's Fund is proud to be on the forefront of this initiative to provide immediate help to affected families in our community.





Pictured are Ryder's Fund contributor and Eldora General Manager Brent Tregaskis and Cindy and Rick Johnson. Ryder was an employee at Eldora and the Eldora family shared in our loss. In a wonderful gesture, Eldora renamed a run with terrain park features at the resort as Ryder's.

BOCO RETREAT WEEKEND

Ryder's Fund provided a scholarship for a young person to attend the BOCO Retreat Weekend in the fall of 2017. The retreat is sponsored by three area churches and provides a mountain camp experience along with mentoring to teens in our community. While only a modest scholarship was provided in this case, it seemed appropriate to begin by impacting one young person at a time. This is how the slogan "One by One" came to be.

JEFF PELLE FUNDRAISER

Ryder's Fund contributed \$1,000 as part of a Boulder Country Club fundraiser in February 2018 to raise donations for Jeff Pelle and his family. Jeff Pelle was one of five Douglas County Sheriff's Deputies shot during a New Year's Eve ambush in Highlands Ranch. Deputy Zack Parrish tragically lost his life in the attack. Jeff Pelle was seriously wounded, endured a lengthy hospital stay and the donations are intended to help with extra costs, care and lost family income. Jeff Pelle is the son of longtime Boulder County Sheriff Joe Pelle.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (RMRG) is an all-volunteer organization trained and equipped for search and rescue on mountainous terrain and in all-weather conditions. Founded in 1947, RMRG is one of the oldest and most experienced mountain rescue teams in the country. RMRG is Boulder County's primary mountain rescue agency. It is a non-profit 501(c)(3) and does not charge. RMRG was the first responder in the search for Ryder. In its infancy, through a series of golf events, sports memorabilia auctions and individual contributions, Ryder's Fund raised \$20,635 to assist RMRG with its mission.

GETTING A YOUNG WOMAN HEALTHY

A troubled 20-year-old woman was helped by Ryder's Fund in the fall of 2017. This person for several years experienced depression, high anxiety, low self-esteem, eating disorders, and thoughts and expressions of suicide. She experienced bullying in grade school due to a learning disability and social awkwardness, which contributed to her depression. In 2017, it was discovered that this young lady has a rare brain condition to which her learning disability is likely attributable and which makes her susceptible to certain types of seizures. When Ryder's Fund became involved with this person, these conditions had taken away her mobility (driving restrictions) and, with it, the freedom and work purpose so essential to the happiness of a young person. This continued and reinforced the vicious cycle of despair and depression. Ryder's Fund helped by providing a \$5,000 scholarship to assist with sending the young woman to a medical/health retreat, where she was immersed in a healthy and caring environment, received an intensive regime of professional medical treatment, psychological counseling, and nutritional training, and learned new habits and tools to employ in her struggle to become a whole person again. The young lady knew Ryder and her parents reported that receiving a scholarship from the fund that bears Ryder's name gave her motivation and strength to persevere in a way that money alone could not. We are happy to report this young woman has returned from her month-long retreat, she is regaining her footing both mentally and physically, and she is taking positive steps in school and with part-time employment.

RYDER'S FUND

Schools & Education

Youth Programs

Faith Community

Specialized Service Providers

Law Enforcement

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Ryder's Fund seeks to continue to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting and overcoming life's challenges. Make a charitable contribution at RydersFund.org or send a check (payable to YMCA of Boulder Valley – Ryder's Fund) to:

YMCA of Boulder Valley – Ryder's Fund
2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette, CO 80026

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total Contributions \$258,474.21*
Total Gifts/Grants..... \$32,350.00
0% spent on Administrative Costs.

**includes \$20,635 contributed prior to establishment of YMCA endowment account*