



# Wellness, Opportunity, Resiliency Through Health (WORTH)

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS**

WORTH was conceived through a close collaboration between The University of Colorado's School of Medicine and Colorado's Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, the state agency that operates Colorado's Medicaid program. (HCPF). Using input from community organizations and people with lived experience of incarceration, WORTH provides supported planning and access to community-based medical, dental, behavioral health providers and community resources to incarcerated individuals as they leave jail. WORTH's Peer Support Specialist and Health Navigator work together starting while a participant is in custody so that they can return to the community with a team of experienced, trained, professionals who they already know and trust, and a plan to work towards their goals.

*Our vision is a community where going to jail doesn't prevent someone from having access to safe, respectful, quality medical care and support.*

## WHAT WE DO:

We assist our participants with accessing healthcare by equipping them with knowledge, resources, confidence, and support. We respect that THEY decide what a healthy life looks like for them, so we support them in working towards their goals to get there.

Our **Health Navigator** supports participants in:

- Tracking, scheduling and coordinating follow-up doctor appointments
- Coordination of medical records between jail and community providers
- Getting medication refills
- Education about health and the health system
- Enrolling in, and troubleshooting, Medicaid coverage

Our **Peer Support Specialist** supports participants in:

- Assistance in setting, tracking, and advocating for our participants' health goals
- Relationship building to bridge the gap between participants and providers
- Resource navigation
- Resiliency support

\*\* Of note-

We do **not** work with or report to courts or judges to make sure that participants are compliant with probation or parole. We are a safe place outside of the judicial system and we aim to support our participants no matter their standing with the courts, as they still deserve care and respect.

AND...

We do **not** require, force, or encourage sobriety or abstinence from substances unless that's what the PARTICIPANT wants. We believe that every human deserves medical care independent of whether they are using or not.

# WHO WE WORK WITH:

At this time, we are only accepting referrals from the medical teams inside of county jails or the Arapahoe County Public Defender's Office. Participants who we work with must be:

- In custody of a county jail
- Over the age of 18
- Likely to be released to the Denver Metro area within a year of being referred
- Wanting medical care when they are released
- Wanting to work with us

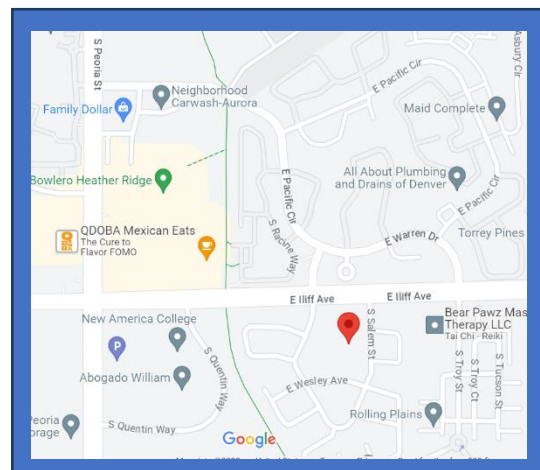
# CONTACTING US:

Our office is located inside of the Aurora Park Plaza II building off Peoria and Iliff.

The closest bus stop to our office is the "Iliff Ave and S. Revere St" stop off of the 21 line.

Our exact address is:

**12510 E Iliff Ave  
Suite 340  
Aurora CO, 80014**



If you have questions about us, our community board, or our program, please contact us via email at:

[CUWORTH@cuanschultz.edu](mailto:CUWORTH@cuanschultz.edu)

# WHO WE ARE:

We help formerly incarcerated individuals find the healthcare that THEY want in order to live a healthier life. In our program, each participant decides what healthy looks like for them. We serve people who are affected by incarceration because we are those people. Our team has experienced many of those struggles first-hand, and it gives us a unique insight into what the needs are coming out of jail and how we can meet them. We work closely with various health care professionals and clinics in the Denver/Aurora area and can connect participants with providers who are open to working with people without judgment or stigma. Right now, our team consists of:

## **Angel Soto** (Health Navigator)



I'm Angel, the CU WORTH Health Navigator. I've worked in medical administrative and clinical positions for over 10 years. I am a Colorado native and grew up in the Denver Metro area. During my time, I've experienced addiction, recovery, incarceration, and being unhoused at the age of 12. I taught myself how to navigate the healthcare system while experiencing stigma and trauma within the medical setting. This is why I choose to become part of that system and try to change it from the inside out. Through it all, I have found a passion for supporting those who are currently in a situation similar to where I was. I use my past experiences to advocate for others by walking with them through their hard times to find the strength and resilience within themselves.

I believe EVERYONE deserves quality healthcare and to be treated as a human despite their past situations; together we all can make a difference to change the stigma and stereotypes around folks who have experienced incarceration, mental health challenges, gang involvement, trauma, and/or addiction.

## **Jessie Henderson** (Peer Support Specialist)



Jessie Henderson is a self-proclaimed urban enthusiast in the land of majestic mountains. In a twist of fate, his formative years took an unexpected turn, plunging him into an offbeat adventure. It was an extraordinary opportunity filled with joy and pain, where he encountered challenges that defied convention and learning experiences that sparked his imagination. Jessie emerged from this adventure with a unique perspective and a hunger for meaningful change.

Jessie stumbled upon his calling as a peer support specialist, where he skillfully employs his natural curiosity to guide and uplift individuals in the community. With a lighthearted touch, he has an uncanny talent for striking up the most random and surprisingly inspiring conversations with people, especially grandmas, who warmly welcome his presence. As a passionate CrossFit enthusiast, he embraces the exhilaration that comes from pushing his body to its limits, finding a unique sense of joy in the transformative process of growth. The occasional muscle ache becomes a satisfying reminder of his dedication to self-improvement and the pursuit of a stronger, healthier version of himself.

With an optimistic spirit and a genuine desire for positive change, Jessie dreams of playing a role in fostering cultural transformation and bridging the gap between the powerful and the vulnerable. Drawing from his own lived experiences and acquiring new skills along the way, he aspires to make a meaningful impact on the world around him. With a touch of idealism and a belief in the collective power of compassion and understanding, Jessie embarks on a journey to contribute his part in creating a more inclusive and equitable society.

## Megan Robins (Program Manager)



Megan Robins started her career in 2007 when she moved to Mozambique and was thrown headfirst into the complexities and nuances of life and public health. Since then, she has continued pursuing a wide array of experiences, from clinical work in a sexual health clinic to deworming cows on a Brazilian farm to arranging medical care for ICE detainees, that push and challenge her to expand her understanding, curiosity, and compassion. Megan's desire to use these experiences and her privilege as a force for change caused her to conceptualize and start building out the WORTH program in 2018. Using her natural tenacity, Megan strives to create authentic opportunities for those who have experienced incarceration to find wellness and use their voice and power to benefit themselves and the community. By helping others find their place,

Megan aims to break down societal barriers and create a more inclusive and equitable society where people are healthy and respected, independent of their history with the criminal legal system.

## WORTH's Community Advisory Board:

A Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a group of people who have a similar lived experience brought together with the objective to develop or improve a particular clinic, service, or program. In the case of this program, the CAB is a group of formerly incarcerated individuals who have volunteered to use those experiences to provide insight into the needs and priorities of people who are currently incarcerated or recently released. This insight is critical as plans are made around the program's priorities, services, evaluation plan, and dissemination of findings.

The role of our CAB is to:

- Give feedback on the program's services, processes, and plans using their personal lived experience
- Hold WORTH and its leadership accountable to its mission statement and the needs and priorities of the community
- Provide a structured community entity that serves as an important program stakeholder

Our community board is made up of the following community experts:

## Deshea Bumphus (CAB Member)



Hello my name is Deshea Bumphus, I've been a heavy supporter of the LGBTQ 🏳️ community who helps in Care Management, as well as outreach for It Takes A Village. I intend to find better ways to heal the homes of LGBTQ NEGLECT-ION to find ways to help people live in their truth with no regrets. My mission is to help those who are willing help themselves stay safe and live their best life with as much support to ensure a brighter future. I once was lost, but thanks to 5yrs in prison I'm able to see better for myself to ensure the same for others. I've learned so much and realized I have so much more to learn as well. I can help make a difference in someone's life for the better, so I'm here to support and help. For we all know, life was given not to be easy, but to overcome, so let's start overcoming more today... With Love Peace & Happiness we all can still make a better way if we are willing... 🍌



## Anne Cabello (CAB Member)



My name is Anne Cabello, after over 20 years of addiction I found someone who believed change is possible for me and gave me time to express her faith. She helped me get a house I've been here for 4 years. Clean from drugs over 4 years and haven't drank for over a year. I am state certified as a peer and family specialist. I am in my second semester at CSU Pueblo. In my first semester, I got 3.75 grade average and waiting for grades of this semester. When a child is in kindergarten and asked what do you want to be when you grow up you might get a fireman, teacher, zookeeper but I promise you not one child would say I want to be an addict and destroy my life and the lives of people I love. It happens to people of all culture. Addiction is not racist and does not care if you're rich or poor; addiction wants everyone. I'm very thankful for my last 4 years to be able to have a home to come home to and the changes that have happened since I've gotten clean have been life-changing. I know that you might be going through something and think that nobody knows what you're going through and we don't know exactly your situation but there's people that care about

you and are willing to help you find your path to recovery we can't tell you what to do but we can walk you through it. Recovery is possible and it is a beautiful thing!

## Betsy Craft (CAB Member and CAB Representative)



Greetings!

Betsy is from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Her family moved to Colorado Springs, CO from the Midwest in the early '90's, and she has been a Denverite since 2005.

Betsy's 20+ years of lived experience with incarceration, houselessness & substance misuse led her to change career paths from corporate cannabis compliance to working in direct service in Denver's first Safe Outdoor Space for LGBTQ+ folx and women. In February 2021, Betsy became certified as a Peer Support Specialist with Colorado Village Collaborative, a grassroots organization that serves people living in transitional housing communities. In March 2022, Betsy moved to a Peer Navigator role with the Office of the Municipal Public Defender with the City of Denver. Using a harm reduction and lived experience lens, and her training as a Certified Peer and Family Specialist (CPFS), Betsy connects people to culturally & linguistically

competent behavioral health resources, housing in the community & peer support as they navigate the court process.

In 2022, Betsy graduated with her B.S. in Business and Organizational Leadership. She is passionate about creating Peer-led solutions to combat the overdose crisis, societal stigmas & inequities. In 2022, Betsy also became a first-time homeowner in Denver where she currently lives with Radar, her 8-year-old lab/border-collie mix rescue dog.

### **Roger Cullen** (CAB Member, CAB Representative)



I am a care worker for Life-line Colorado.org, which has a number of departments. I work as a Re-entry care worker assisting men and women coming out of incarceration. I have lived experience, having been incarcerated for 39 years in CDOC. I am a certified peer recovery coach, peer support professional, AcuDetox Specialist, and several other certifications over the years. Having lived experience, I have learned a lot and can assist our people in a unique way. I am also an Assistant pastor of a church in Westminster.

### **Hazel Dew** (CAB Member)



Hello, my name is Hazel Dew. I grew up in Denver. My parents moved here from North Carolina and Virginia. My father was one of the first Black Air Traffic Controllers and my mother was one of the first Black Social Worker to arrive in Denver in the 50's. I had a great childhood; both parents drank alcohol excessively. I went to the University of Colorado, Boulder and received a degree in Education in 1980. I became a school teacher with Denver Public Schools for 12 years. I started having children and became a stay-at-home mom. This relationship was abusive from the start. I managed to become addicted to crack cocaine. To support my habit, I stole from stores, used other people's credit cards and checkbooks. These crimes eventually led me to Prison and Half-way Houses. I have worked with homeless women at The Gathering Place as a housing Navigator. I have worked with human trafficked women, as a recovery coach and many other volunteer agencies. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of The WORTH Program. I am blessed to have overcome every obstacle placed before me. My four children 2 girls and 2 boys all have received degrees and I have 2 with Master Degrees; very successful. My oldest daughter ran a detox center has a Masters in Social Work CAC 3 and various credentials that deal with substance abuse because she saw everything first hand from me.

### **Daniel Dias** (CAB Member, CAB Representative)



Hello, my name is Daniel Dias & I am a Hope Dealer! I just did 26 years in prison and coming out I have learned so many new coping skills and ways to challenge my irrational thoughts as this helps me to stay focused. I'm so grateful for the life I have today. I love helping people and giving back to my community. Have a great day and remember you're amazing and appreciated.

## **Brian Godinez** (CAB Member)

## **John Olander** (CAB Member)



John is a self-described DCCA, “Dot Connecting Change Agent”. A Denver native, he is a graduate of Denver’s East High School with a street degree in real estate sales and development. Enjoying his new “rewirement” and being active in the community. John likes to create and tell stories which describe his lived experience while encouraging others to be the author of their own unique re-writes and encores.

## **Avel Rodriguez** (CAB Member)



My name is Avel Rodriguez, I was born in Colorado in 1971 and have remained here for my whole life. I have about 25 years of lived experience and my goal is to use those experiences to reach out and give others the opportunity to use those resources that may be available to them. I don’t have much for a resume but I’m currently continuing to improve my life. I have had a few medical issues which I’m trying to take care of, and I hope to be able to help others and also myself in the process. I’m interested in reaching out to people and hopefully being able to guide somebody in the right direction.

## **Rica Rodriguez** (CAB Member)

Rica Rodriguez-Hernandez has over 17 years in the care management and advocacy field working with individuals from diverse cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. Rica is a fierce activist who sits on several community advisory boards as well as board of directors of organizations both locally and nationally. She is a certified trainer in peer recovery coaching, peer support professional, AcuDetox Specialist and is a fearless grassroots organizer in the Denver metro area.

Rica is currently a full time gang intervention and prevention specialist who provides mentorship and support to at-risk youth in the Denver metro area.

As the part-time Director of The *Promotores De Esperanza* program, Rica aims to promote racial/ethnic health equity through the provision of culturally and linguistically competent services, designed to minimize barriers in the Latinx and other marginalized communities. Rica offers prevention support and services around sexually transmitted diseases, drug overdose awareness, Narcan education/distribution and fentanyl testing to prevent loss of life and loved ones

## **Kenneth Smith** (CAB Member)

My name is Kenneth Smith, and I am the founder of a nonprofit media company named Your Colfax News. My life’s journey started pleasantly enough, even though I grew up poor and in a single-family home. To be honest I didn’t even realize when I was younger what poverty was because my mother worked doggedly to provide for me and my

two siblings. I was born the middle child and fit the stereotype that comes with that by being the problem child. I started using drugs at a very early age and of course that led to me having run-ins with the criminal justice system. By the age of 21, I was on my way to the first of 4 tours in the Colorado Corrections System. My journey has found me homeless, traumatized, and at one point, broken, but by the grace and mercy of God I have rebounded. Along the way I have managed to get a degree in Small Business Management, but like many who have been touched by the disease of addiction, I didn't get a chance to use the education that I had gained.

Today I am honored to say that I have started a business, graduated from the Family Leadership training institute in 2017, I am certified as a Peer Support Specialist, and have a Doctorate from the School of Hard Knocks. I continue to work in the arena of media through my nonprofit, by giving people the chance to share their stories their own way. As the saying goes, "nobody can tell your story better than you". I also have an amazing job working for Well power (formerly known as the Mental Health Center of Denver) as a Peer Support Professional.