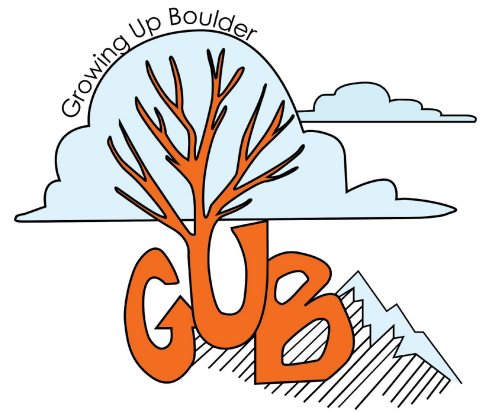


Growing Up Boulder

Annual Report

2016-17



Overview

Growing Up Boulder is a “child- and youth-friendly city initiative” that began in the spring of 2009 as a collaboration between the University of Colorado (CU), the City of Boulder, and the Boulder Valley School District, working in partnership with local nonprofits, businesses, and many children and youth. Child- and youth-friendly cities recognize the rights and interests of children in local policy, law, programs and budgets as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Growing Up Boulder’s partnership is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding between the three founding institutions. It is a program of the Community Engagement and Design Center (CEDaR), a collaborative of CU faculty, staff and students engaged in community-based education and research in city design and urban management.

Our vision is to make Boulder an exemplary child- and youth-friendly city. Our mission is to empower Boulder’s young people with opportunities for inclusion, influence, and deliberation on local issues that affect their lives. We accomplish this through many diverse partnerships and supporters. Because underrepresented children and youth are even less likely to have their voices heard than majority groups, we aim for 50% or more of Growing Up Boulder participants to include young people who are immigrants, English Language Learners, low-income, ethnic minorities, first generation college-bound students and/or young people with disabilities.

Growing Up Boulder has four programmatic goals:

1. Make Boulder a more inclusive place for children and youth of all income levels, ethnicities, and abilities.
2. Ensure meaningful opportunities for young people’s participation in Boulder decision-making.
3. Give GUB partners a voice in setting the direction of GUB projects.
4. Disseminate lessons learned from GUB to the community (Boulder-at-large, youth, academics, GUB partners, other child- and youth-friendly city communities).

“Collaborating with Growing Up Boulder was phenomenal. I witnessed middle school students, university students, and professionals all learning from one another while simultaneously participating in community based decision-making. It was a textbook example of multi-generational action research at its best. In my 30 years as a teacher, this particular community-school collaboration with GUB around the Alpine-Balsam district goes down as one of the more fruitful.”

-Lester Lurie, Casey Middle School

Total Numbers

From July 2016 through June 2017, Growing Up Boulder's programs involved many children and partners:

- Number of children and youth involved in youth participatory planning through Growing Up Boulder: 144
- Number of CU students involved through GUB: 29
- Number of adult community partners and volunteers: 27

This report provides an overview of projects conducted by GUB during the 2016-2017 school year. For more details about any of these projects, please visit our website at www.growingboulder.org or contact growingupboulder@gmail.com for full project details and reports.

Planning, Housing and Sustainability

Alpine-Balsam Redevelopment Project

Dates and groups involved:

August 2016 - May 2017

- Casey Middle School
- Boulder High School
- City of Boulder, Planning, Housing, and Sustainability
- Community members, partners, additional city staff
- University of Colorado, Environmental Design student mentors
- University of Colorado, Environmental Design faculty
- University of Colorado, Office of Outreach and Engagement
- Growing Up Boulder staff and interns

Project description:

The Alpine-Balsam Redevelopment Project engaged 6th through 9th grade students and a number of CU Boulder ENVD students to gather design ideas for the redevelopment of the 8.8 acres of land located on the former Boulder Community Hospital site. Students were asked to use an "ecodistrict" lens to improve the space. Ecodistricts focus on six priorities: place, prosperity, health and well-being, living infrastructure, connectivity and resource restoration. Students presented their findings and ideas to city and community members, and also provided feedback to undergraduate design students about how to make their designs for Alpine-Balsam more child- and youth-friendly.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 6 Casey Middle School Leadership students, 18 Boulder High School AVID students

- Number of CU students: 2 GUB interns, 8 undergraduate ENVD mentors, 11 ENVD praxis students
- Number of CU instructors/professors: 6
- Number of City staff participants: 9
- Number of community leaders and experts: 11
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 4 (GUB, City of Boulder, CU Boulder, Boulder Valley School District)
- Number of GUB staff: 1
- Number of classroom hours: 17 contact hours with GUB, 25 additional hours without GUB team in classroom

Main findings:

Several common themes emerged from working with the students on the Alpine-Balsam project. The 6th through 9th graders expressed desires for inclusiveness. They wanted the Alpine-Balsam site to be welcoming for all people, especially younger children, teens, the homeless, and people with chronic illness. The students wanted the site to be multi-generational to reflect Boulder’s multi-generational community. Play was another element desired by students. Teens specifically wished for indoor and outdoor play equipment and sports fields because they value movement in healthy ways. Many students discussed wanting to access the site in multiple ways without the interference of cars. Finally, various garden spaces, water play opportunities, and artistic designs were some of the other desires of students for the space.

Project Photo by Aria Dellepiane:



Participant quote:

“I will always remember the Share Out Day. It was valuable because I got the chance to share my ideas and actually be heard by adults.” -Boulder High School Student

Transportation/GO Boulder

Teen Mothers East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Focus Group

Dates and groups involved:

March 24, 2017

- Arapahoe Ridge High School
- City of Boulder, GO Boulder

Project description:

The purpose of this focus group was to gain the perspective of female youth, who are both parents and teenagers, regarding their use of transportation in the community and specifically around their school. Arapahoe Ridge High School is located on Arapahoe Avenue, which is undergoing a major transportation study for the East Arapahoe Transportation Plan. Teen mothers used maps, a transportation worksheet, and discussion to describe how they get around town.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 2 teen moms, 1 former teen mother (now a young adult)
- Number of CU students: 0
- Number of CU instructors or professors: 0
- Number of City staff participants: 1
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 3 (GUB, Arapahoe Ridge High School teen mothers program, City of Boulder)
- Number of GUB staff: 1
- Number of classroom hours: 1

Main findings:

The teen mothers in the focus group took either the specialized teen mother bus or drove on their own to get to school because of the convenience of correct seat sizing for car seats and a direct trip to the school. Before having children, the women said they relied on public transportation to get around. After having children they said that public transportation was a challenge without car seats and inconvenient because of longer commute times to reach their destination. Neither of the young mothers had considered walking and biking as modes of transportation for enjoyment or health until it was mentioned in the focus group, but they said they would now consider these alternate modes in the future.

Whittier HOP Transit Study

Dates and groups involved:

Fall 2016

- Boulder Valley School District
- CU Environmental Design Student Mentors
- CU Boulder Professors
- Community members and partners
- GO Boulder/Transportation Staff
- Growing Up Boulder

Project description:

The objective of the Whittier HOP Transit Study was to have second grade English Language Learners (ELL) study the HOP bus in order to make recommendations on how to improve the bus riding experience. City planners are seeking community input to the HOP, whose route and service will be updated over the next year. The students were visited by experts, learned about public transit, mapped out the HOP bus route, rode the bus, and identified advantage and disadvantages of their riding experience before presenting their ideas to city and community members.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 12 ELL students ages 7-8
- Number of CU students: 2
- Number of CU instructors or professors: 2
- Number of City staff participants: 4
- Number of community leaders and experts: 2
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 4 (Boulder Valley School District, CU Boulder, GUB, GO Boulder)
- Number of GUB staff: 3
- Number of classroom hours: 21

Main findings:

The students wanted the ability to ride the bus independently, and in order to do this they provided suggestions on how to make their experience more child-friendly. The first was to lower the signs at the bus stops so they could be more easily read by elementary students. The Whittier students also expressed a desire for seating at bus stops, specifically at the 20th and Pearl bus stop, which is nearest to their school. Lastly, they wanted more interesting and engaging signage and artwork inside the buses to make their ride more enjoyable. The students worked with a local artist to create a mural geared towards children for each HOP bus.

Project Photo by Alysia Hayas:



Participant quote:

“A lot of heads are better than one.” -Second grade Whittier Elementary student

Open Space and Mountain Parks

[Focus Group with Junior Rangers: How to Include Ongoing Youth Voice in Open Space and Mountain Parks](#)

Dates and groups involved:

July 27, 2016

- Growing Up Boulder
- OSMP staff and Junior Rangers

Project description:

The purpose of this focus group was to determine if there should be a year-round youth voice in OSMP and if so, how youth would like to share their ideas. A series of activities with a group of Junior Rangers was facilitated to build community, explore the concept of an ongoing OSMP Teen Advisory Group, and identify the characteristics of said group.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 12 Junior Rangers ages 14-17
- Number of CU students: 1
- Number of CU instructors or professors: 0
- Number of City staff participants: 0
- Number of community leaders and experts: 2
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 2 (GUB and OSMP Junior ranger Program)

- Number of GUB staff: 2
- Number of classroom hours: 2

Main findings:

Students were highly enthusiastic about a year-round youth voice in OSMP and recommended a Teen Advisory Board which could meet one to two times per month. This group of Junior Rangers prioritized friendships, teamwork, and meeting new people, and they were keenly interested in being empowered by and learning new things from their peer group. They shared the idea of using technology as an outreach tool to collect child/youth voice in the community.

Project Photo by Sarah Bartosh:



Participant quote:

“Yes it is important to collect youth voice because we are just as large a part of the community as any other demographic and should have a say on what the community decides.” -OSMP Junior Ranger

Child Involvement in Open Space and Mountain Parks' Master Planning Process

Dates and groups involved:

March 2017

- Foothill Elementary School
- Growing Up Boulder
- OSMP
- University of Colorado students

Project description:

The goal of this project was to engage 30 Foothill Elementary School students in sharing their ideas on how children could participate in the OSMP Master Plan process. Students attended a two-day workshop to learn what open spaces are, become familiar with different habitats that fall under OSMP, and to become acquainted with the timeline of the Master Plan process. Through small groups, presentations, larger group discussions, and share outs, students expressed their ideas on how they want to give their input to OSMP.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 30 4th grade students
- Number of CU students: 5
- Number of CU instructors or professors: 0
- Number of City staff participants: 2
- Number of community leaders and experts: 2
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 4 (GUB, OSMP, University of Colorado, and Foothill Elementary School)
- Number of GUB staff: 2
- Number of classroom hours: 3

Main findings:

The students at Foothill Elementary shared both “where” and “how” they would like to share their input with OSMP on the Master Planning process. It was found that students preferred to be engaged in both familiar (home, school, and parks) and community-oriented places (Pearl Street, the library, and community centers). They discussed that obtaining input should not occur in places where it would be a distraction, like on the bus or in restaurants. There were five major themes within students’ ideas on “how” input should be collected; input should be: multimodal, creative and open-ended, cooperative, include formal structures, and build upon relationships with trusted adults.

Project Photo by Will Oberlander:



Participant quote:

"I like how they [OSMP] help animals and nature to live and be safe from mankind. This definitely matters." -4th grade Foothill Elementary student

Parks and Recreation

Urban Forest Strategic Plan with Preschoolers

Dates and groups involved:

March 2017

- Boulder County Head Start
- Boulder Journey School
- City of Boulder Parks and Recreation
- Growing up Boulder

Project description:

This project gathered input from preschoolers on their feelings about trees in Boulder in order to inform the City's Urban Forest Strategic Plan. The purpose of this project was to gain a child's perspective on which trees should be planted around the city of Boulder, especially near parks, schools, and public spaces that seek to be child-friendly.

By the numbers:

- Number of children and youth: 58
- Number of CU students: 1
- Number of CU instructors or professors: 0
- Number of City staff participants: 1
- Number of community leaders and experts: 3
- Number of organizations coordinating the project: 4
- Number of GUB staff: 2
- Number of classroom hours: 70

Main findings:

The children from Boulder County Head Start and Boulder Journey School, who ranged in age from 0 to 5, showed a preference for trees that:

- provided shade,
- had seeds, berries, or pods for imaginative play,
- encouraged wildlife,
- are deciduous (so children can play in the leaves), and
- bear fruit for eating and accessible trunks for climbing.

A variety of shapes, sizes, colors, and textures on trees can be educational and interesting for younger children.

Project Graphic by Mara Mintzer and Will Oberlander:

Young Children's Tree Preferences for Boulder's Urban Forest Strategic Plan

Why young children's opinions matter for the BUFSP.

Young children's preferences can help professional planners and home landscapers alike make decisions about which trees to plant, especially in areas such as parks, schools, and child-friendly homes.

Our children preferred trees that:

- **Provide shade.**
- **Have berries, seed pods, and acorns to squish and use for imaginative play.**
- **Encourage wildlife (squirrels and chipmunks).**
- **Are deciduous, so they can play in the leaves.**
- **Bear fruit, because they can eat the fruit and climb these trees more easily.**

"I find the seed pods inside the leaves and play with the seeds."

Drawings by created by children learning about the Emerald Ash Borer Beetle at Boulder County Head Start.

"Trees give me shade, I LOVE shade."

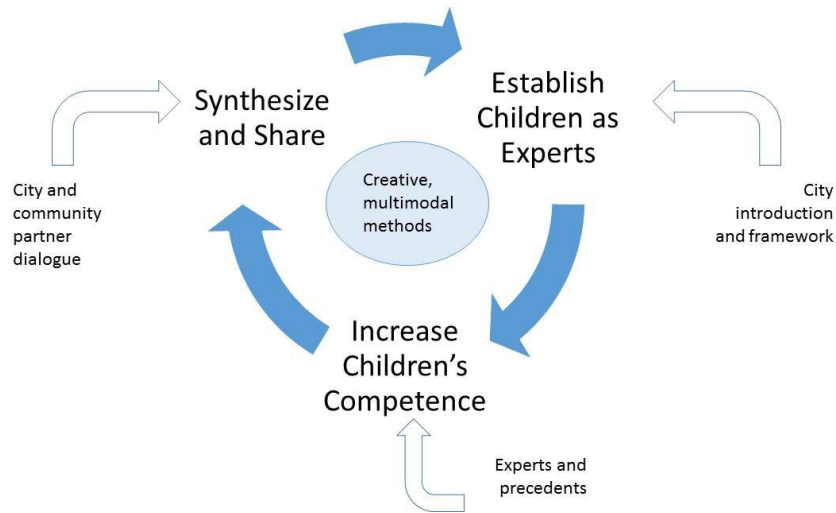
Drawings created by children at Boulder Journey School, created while exploring the trees on their playground.

This project was facilitated by Growing Up Boulder as a collaboration between the City of Boulder, Boulder Journey School, and Boulder County Head Start. Growing Up Boulder is Boulder's Child-and-Youth-Friendly City Initiative and is based out of the Community Engagement Design and Research Center at the University of Colorado Boulder; its mission is to empower Boulder's young people with opportunities for inclusion, influence, and deliberation on local issues that affect their lives.

Participant quote:

"Trees give me shade, I LOVE shade." -Preschool student from Boulder County Head Start

Growing Up Boulder Model



GUB Strategic Planning Retreat

In April 2017, GUB held a strategic planning retreat with more than 30 city and community partners in attendance. Partners helped our team envision in what ways GUB will grow and thrive in the next 5 years. 2017-18 priorities include capacity building through fundraising and increased staff, reaching more children and youth by expanding partnerships, and developing a marketing and communication plan.

2016-17 Funding

The following organizations funded Growing Up Boulder during the 2016-17 fiscal year:

- The City of Boulder: Planning, Housing and Sustainability; Parks and Recreation; Transportation/GO Boulder; and Open Space and Mountain Parks
- In-kind support from the University of Colorado
- University of Colorado Office of Outreach and Engagement
- Anonymous donation

Presentations

Growing Up Boulder presented at conferences, public meetings, and in several university classrooms throughout the year.

Academic/professional presentations:

- Chawla, L. "Children—the future of conservation." Conversations on Conservation, Cincinnati Nature Center, 30 April 2017.
- Chawla, L. "Connecting children to nature: Why and how." Young Children in Nature Conference sponsored by the School of Education, University of Cincinnati. Cincinnati Nature Center, 29 April 2017.
- Chawla, L. "Embedding child and youth participation in city decision-making and design education." International Conference of the Architectonics Network, Barcelona, 31 May 2017.
- Chawla, L. "Partnerships for child and youth friendly cities." Cities and Kids: Enabling Optimal Development for Urban Youth Conference, Boston University Initiative on Cities, 23 March 2017.
- Mintzer, M. Participant at European Child in the City Conference. November 2016.
- Mintzer, M. and colleagues. "A network approach case study: Growing Up Boulder." Engaged Scholarship Conference, October 2016.
- Mintzer, M. and colleagues. "Becoming community minded and culturally creative: Better design and development for all." Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute, March 2017.
- Mintzer, M. "Hearing Unheard Voices: How Growing Up Boulder Improves City Planning through youth involvement." Environmental Design Research Association, June 2017.
- Van Vliet--, Willem. "Engaging Children and Youth in Urban Planning: Towards a Rights-Based Approach." Child in the City Foundation and the European Network of Child Friendly Cities, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 19-20 June 19-20 2017.

University classes:

- Hill, Cathy. Environmental Design: Stacey Schulte's, "Praxis class: Creating a vibrant mixed-Use civic space at Alpine-Balsam," March 2017.
- Mintzer, Mara. CU Engage: Public Achievement workshop, "Peace Park Features," October 2016.
- Mintzer, Mara. Environmental Design: Bruce Goldstein's, "Inclusive community design for global cities," September-October 2016.
- Mintzer, Mara. Environmental Design: Siobhan Brook's, "Human behavior in environmental design and planning," November 2016.

Presentations to city boards and groups:

- Mintzer, Mara. Participant at City of Boulder, EcoDistrict Charette, September 2016.
- Mintzer, Mara. "The Growing Up Boulder - Parks and Recreation Partnership: Including Young People's Voices in Planning Since 2012." City of Boulder, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting, October 2016.
- Mintzer, Mara. "Introduction to Growing Up Boulder." Coalition of Manufactured-home Owners in Boulder (C-MOB), April 2017.
- Mintzer, Mara. "Public hearing and consideration of a Floodplain Development Permit." City of Boulder, Planning Board Meeting, October 2016.
- Mintzer, Mara and Camille Bauer. "Growing Up Boulder: How Designing with Children and Youth Creates Better Cities for All." City of Longmont, Longmont Neighborhood Group Leaders Association, April 2017.

Writing

GUB's work was featured in blogs, websites, journals, and books during 2016-7, including:

Academic:

- Chawla, L. and W. van Vliet-- "Children's rights to child-friendly cities." *Handbook of Children's Rights*. Ed. M. D. Ruck, M. Peterson-Badali & M. Freeman. New York: Routledge, 2017. 533-549.
- Chawla, L. "Le soin de la nature chez les enfants et les adolescents" (Care for nature by children and adolescents). *Le Souci de la Nature* (Concern for Nature). Ed. C. Fleury and A-C. Prévot. Paris: CNRS Editions (a collection of American environmental writing compiled for the Museum of Natural History in Paris), 2017. 191-205.
- Chawla, L., W. van Vliet-- and M. Mintzer. "Turning Young People's Ideas into City Government Actions: Lessons Learned from Three Decades of Participatory Urban Design and Planning." *Youth inclusion in the public realm*. Ed. J. Loebach, S. Little, A. Cox, and P. Eubanks Owens. Book in development.
- Derr, V. "Participation as a supportive framework for cultural inclusion and environmental justice." *Revista Internacional de Educación para la Justicia Social* special issue titled "Education and Architecture for Social Justice." 6.1 (2017): 77-89, Ed. Santiago Atrio and Jorge Raedó. DOI: 10.15366/reijs2017.6.1.004
- Derr, V. "Urban Greenspace as Participatory Learning Laboratories." *Urban Design and Planning*, special issue titled, "Built Environment Education and Participation of Children and Youth. Ed. Angela Million, Rosie Parnell and Thomas Coelen. In Press.
- Derr, Victoria et al. "Honoring Voices, Inspiring Futures: Young People's Engagement in Open Space Planning." *Children, Youth and Environments*, 26.2 (2016): 128-144. www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.26.2.0128.
- Derr, V., L. Chawla and W. van Vliet. "Child friendly cities as resilient cities." *Beyond Playgrounds and Skateparks: Designing for Kids in the City*. Ed. K. Bishop and L. Corkery. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Derr, V., L. Chawla and I. Pevec. "Early Childhood." *Urban Environmental Education*. Ed. A. Russ and M. Krasny. Ithaca: Comstock Publishing Associates, 2017. 155-164.
- Derr, V., L. Chawla, and M. Mintzer. "Engaging Young People in the Planning and Design of Sustainable Cities: A Practical Guide." In progress.

- Derr, V., Y. Corona, T. Gülgönen. “Children’s Perceptions of and Engagement in Urban Resilience in the US and Mexico.” *Journal of Planning Education and Research*. In Press.
- Mintzer, M. and D. Flanders Cushing. “Growing Up Boulder: Engaging children and youth in local decision-making.” *Designing for Kids in the City: Beyond Playgrounds and Skateparks*. Ed. K. Bishop and L. Corkery. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Van Vliet--, W. Review of: “Intergenerational Space.” *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*. 14.4 (2016): 1-2. Ed. Vanderbeck, R.M. and N. Worth.
- Van Vliet--, W. and D. F. Cushing. “Children’s Right to the City: The Emergence of Youth Councils in the United States.” *Children’s Geographies*. 15.3 (2017): 319-333.
- Van Vliet--, W. and D. F. Cushing. “Intergenerational communities as healthy places for meaningful engagement and interaction.” *Geographies of Children and Young People*. (2016): 1-27. Ed. Samantha Punch, Robert Vanderbeck and Tracey Skelton. Families, Intergenerationality, and Peer Group Relations. Springer.

News

- “Boulder’s 11th Street Spine Pedestrian Bridge opens.” Daily Camera, 24 April 2017.
- “Collaboration Gives Children ‘Seat at Table’ in City Planning.” CU Today, 27 April 2017.
- “Boulder’s Plan to Become a Child-and Youth-friendly City.” International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Interview, 14 June 2017.
- “Young Voices Heard in Boulder.” City of Boulder Newsletter, June/July 2017.
- “Growing Up Boulder: Getting Around Town through the Eyes of Teens.” BikeLife Boulder Magazine, Summer 2017.

GUB reports and graphics:

- Alpine-Balsam Ecodistrict Project Report
- Whittier HOP Transit Study Report
- Focus Group with Junior Rangers: How to Include Ongoing Youth Voice in Open Space and Mountain Parks Report
- Child Involvement in Open Space and Mountain Parks’ Master Planning Process Report
- Teen Mothers’ Recommendations for East Arapahoe Transportation Plan Project Log
- Valmont City Park graphic: How Young People’s Ideas are Included in the Valmont City Park Vision
- Urban Tree Strategy poster: Young Children’s Tree Preferences

[Acknowledgements](#)

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GUB Executive Committee:

- Leslie Arnold, BVSD Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Initiatives
- Kathleen Bracke, City of Boulder Public Works, GO Boulder Manager
- Louise Chawla, University of Colorado, Professor Emerita
- Leslie Ellis, City of Boulder Planning, Housing and Sustainability, Comprehensive Planning Manager
- Jeff Haley, City of Boulder Parks and Recreation, Planning, Design and Community Engagement Manager
- Brian Muller, University of Colorado, CEDaR Faculty Director and ENVD professor
- Willem Van Vliet--, University of Colorado, Professor Emeritus
- Tracy Winfree, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Director

GUB Steering Committee Organizations:

- Boulder County Head Start
- Boulder County Sustainability Office
- Boulder Housing Partners
- Boulder Journey School
- City of Boulder
 - Open Space and Mountain Parks
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Planning, Housing, and Sustainability
 - Transportation/GO Boulder
 - Youth Opportunities Program
- I Have a Dream Foundation
- Trestle Strategy
- University of Colorado
 - Community Engagement Design and Research Center (CEDaR)
 - CU Engage
 - Community members
 - ENVD professors
 - ENVD student advisors
 - Office of Outreach and Engagement
 - Theater and Dance professor