



# CPCD

giving children a head start

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **National Award for Colorado Springs Conservatory and CPCD...giving children a head start Partnership**

Colorado Springs, CO – The National Head Start Association (NHSA) in Washington, D.C. has awarded the Colorado Springs Conservatory the Edward Zigler Innovation Award for their arts and music partnership with CPCD...*giving children a head start*. This prestigious award celebrates local programs who have partnered to create high impact services to children and families honoring a pioneer in developmental psychology and the architect of Head Start, Dr. Edward Zigler.

The mission of the Conservatory under the direction of founding CEO Linda Weise, is to inspire, motivate and challenge students to aspire to their highest potential as artists and human beings through arts immersion studies and community arts advocacy. For the past 20 years, CPCD and the Conservatory have partnered to bring music education to Head Start children by welcoming classrooms to the Conservatory on a weekly basis.

Expanding the arts to very young children and families (age 0 to 3) then came 3 years ago with the Piccolo program. This program provides original songs by Ms. Weise around topics that are designed to support infant and toddler social emotional development and early learning skills. The Conservatory also provides instruction to CPCD Early Head Start teachers on the ukulele and the most effective ways to engage children.

Since March of 2020, as a result of the need to move to virtual classrooms, the Conservatory expanded access to these sessions by offering weekly live on-line classes for EHS and Head Start children. And, this has continued to grow through further community partnerships with Rocky Mountain PBS through the creation of *Simple Gift Series*, an early childhood televised version of the class experience and the El Paso County Department of Human Services for great child and family access.

“I am so pleased to learn that the Colorado Springs Conservatory and the Community Partnership for Child Development (CPCD) received recognition from the National Head Start Association for their partnership and remarkable efforts to make sure young children and families in El Paso County thrive. I value the preventative services these programs offer and am so grateful that they are a part of our community.” – Julie Krow, Executive Director El Paso County Department of Human Services

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Many parents have also commented that the Piccolo class is the highlight of their child's week...and theirs! It is keeping families connected while developing social emotional skills, which are the most difficult to impact when families are isolated in their homes.

“We are grateful and excited by the growth we see in children, the excitement we see in their parents or caregivers, and the staff's love of the program. I truly believe that this program will become a national model for the use of music education in Head Start and Early Head Start programs across the country,” explained CPCD CEO Noreen Landis-Tyson.

“This is truly one of the most impactful years of our 27 year history at CSC. The privilege to work alongside CPCD and the incredible leadership, team and teachers to continue to provide access to creative learning through music and literacy for young children and their families has been profound- the impact no doubt will last a life time for all of us! To be recognized by the NHSA is simply humbling.” shared Linda Weise, Founding CEO of the Colorado Springs Conservatory and the creator of the *Simple Gift Series* television program.

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**National Head Start Association (NHSA):** A national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the transformational work of Head Start.

**The Colorado Springs Conservatory:** The Mission of the Colorado Springs Conservatory (CSC) is to inspire, motivate and challenge students to aspire to their highest potential as artists and human beings through arts immersion studies and community arts advocacy. The CSC is the Pikes Peak region's only non-auditioned preparatory performing arts conservatory, offering world-class immersion studies and programs in instrumental music, vocals, music theory, theater arts, recording arts, dance, movement, history, and humanities to young people age's birth through high school seniors and adults in the community.

**CPCD...giving children a head start** prepares young children (0 to 5) and their families for success in school and in life by providing excellent comprehensive early childhood services in partnership with diverse families and the community. Eighty percent of families enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start programs live at the federal poverty level or are very low income and are uniquely affected by the COVID crisis. CPCD programs use a two-generation approach. Children attend infant/toddler and preschool classrooms while their parents and caregivers receive support in mapping their way out of poverty.