

MEET THE COMMUNITY EQUITY COALITION OF CHAFFEE COUNTY

Equity means that everyone has a fair shot at life. The Community Equity Coalition advocates for more fair and community-driven policies and systems that give everyone in Chaffee County an equal chance to succeed.

Racism, classism, and discrimination exist in rural Colorado, just like every community across the US. While inequities are often hidden here, we aim to shine a spotlight on places where broken systems and attitudes bring harm to the most vulnerable - and work to encourage positive solutions.

Rooted in our community's history and values, we are working towards an anti-racist Chaffee County that is safe and welcoming for everyone –regardless of their background. Formed during the summer of 2020 as a local response to national social justice efforts, we mobilize citizen action to achieve greater equity in Salida, Poncha Springs, BV and the broader County.

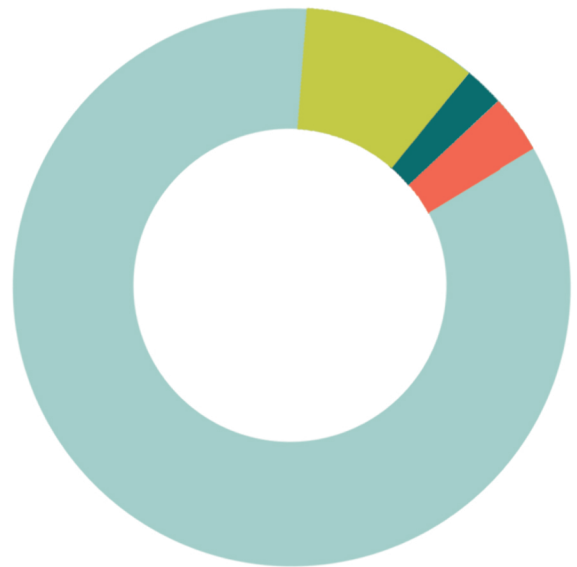
ABOUT CHAFFEE COUNTY

- Population: 19,164
- Household income for a family (median): \$54,000
- Median home value: \$335,900 (only affordable for those making more than \$75,000 per year)
- Percentage of population living below the poverty line: 10.1% (most affected are women between the ages of 25-34 and 55-64)
- Percentage of population with employer-sponsored health coverage: <40%

MISSION STATEMENT

To catalyze a more positive future for the Chaffee County community by raising awareness and mobilizing around equity issues including racism, class, and gender/sexuality.

CHAFFEE'S RACIAL MAKEUP



- White: 85%
- Hispanic: 10% (13% of those living in poverty)
- Black: 2%
- Other 3%

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY EQUITY COALITION WORK?

The CEC works with community members, local leaders and groups towards solutions that can improve the lives of our neighbors, colleagues, visitors, friends, and families.

We aim to infuse local conversations about important topics with an equity lens. Some of our areas of focus include:

- Advocating for affordable housing
- Increasing public safety for all
- Working towards more perspectives in our education system
- Preventing discrimination against those who think or live differently

We identify policies and conversations that could benefit from more perspectives – and work to bring those voices to the table. We encourage decisions from our leaders based not on a few peoples' viewpoints, but on the experiences of many. We build relationships with local leaders, community groups, and elected officials. Our most powerful tools are advocacy, two-way conversation, and building community.

“Look closely at the present you are constructing: it should look like the future you are dreaming.” - Alice Walker

WHAT HAS THE COMMUNITY EQUITY COALITION DONE SO FAR?

Since the summer of 2020, we have:

Initiated a dialogue with local officials by delivering a petition with more than 1,500 signatures calling for more focus on equity in Chaffee County.

Created monthly email Spotlights that educate our membership on racism and equity-focused topics, like Mutual Aid Projects and Equity Efforts in the Salida School District.

Successfully advocated to the Salida City Council for a resolution establishing Salida as a Hate-Free Zone. Created and launched “Show your Heart Salida” campaign in support of the resolution.

Hosted in-depth conversations, including briefings from policy experts, on local education, housing, public safety, health and the environment.

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY EQUITY COALITION DOING IN 2021?

In 2021, we aim to:

Become an official 501c3 nonprofit organization with an active nonprofit board.

Initiate a Listening Tour project to better understand barriers to civic participation and craft a plan to bring more advocate voices to the decision making table.

Build relationships with other community groups and leaders, in order to support their work and promote advocacy and a broader understanding of equity issues.

Advocate to the city of Salida for a representative public art piece that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

Build our capacity to respond quickly to important policy discussions where we can bring an equity perspective.

Interested to learn more and get involved? www.communityequitycoalition.org



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