



DELTA DENTAL OF COLORADO
FOUNDATION

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DELTA DENTAL OF COLORADO FOUNDATION AWARDS \$3.2 MILLION TO ADVANCE ORAL HEALTH EQUITY ACROSS COLORADO

DENVER, CO — January 13, 2026 — Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation (DDCOF) is proud to announce the recipients of its 2026 grant awards, investing \$3.2 million over three years to advance oral health equity across the state. These strategic grants will fund 25 innovative projects within DDCOF's prevention and access initiatives, reaching 57 of Colorado's 64 counties, including four organizations with statewide reach, and reaching urban, rural, and frontier communities.

Prevention efforts will deliver evidence-based services such as sealants, fluoride varnish, and oral health education for children ages 0–10 and older adults ages 60 and over, while embedding oral health into schools, programs for older adults, and even medical visits. Access initiatives will strengthen Colorado's oral health workforce by creating career pathways for youth and adults, expanding training and mentorship opportunities, and launching Colorado's first dental therapy program.

"These initiatives are the culmination of a year-long strategic planning process informed by data and driven by community voices," said D.J. Close, Executive Director of Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation. "By partnering with organizations that share our vision, we're breaking down barriers to oral health and creating a healthier future, one smile at a time."

We are proud to highlight several grantees whose work exemplifies innovation, scale, and systems change:

- **Inner City Health Center** — Integrating dental, medical, and behavioral health in one seamless workflow, with **bi-directional referrals** and **same-day appointments**, a model lauded at national oral health conferences.
- **Rocky Mountain Public Media** — A statewide bilingual campaign reaching **500,000 older adults monthly** and building on the success of "Pepper the Badger," which drew **4.3 million impressions** statewide last year.
- **Generation Schools Network** — Building **K-12 to higher education** pipelines that **connect 1,200 students annually** to oral health careers through experiential learning and mentorship.

Find the full list of 2026 recipients and a description of their grants [here](#).

About Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation

At Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of Colorado, we know oral health is essential to overall health and well-being. Yet too many Coloradans face barriers to care based on who they are, where they live, or what they earn. That's why we're committed to advancing oral health equity across the state. For more than 25 years, we've partnered with community-based organizations to drive meaningful change through strategic investments, policy advocacy, and systems change. Together, we're working toward a Colorado where everyone has the opportunity for a healthy mouth and a healthy life.