

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Caleb Munro

Telephone: (720) 507-0746

Email: cmunro@ycdiversity.org

**COLORADO TEENS CELEBRATE DIVERSITY**

**In the Wake of Political and Social Tension,
Teens Come Together for Respect, Tolerance and Unity**

DENVER (January 24, 2018) – More than 1,000 teenagers from 103 Colorado high schools and youth organizations will gather on Saturday, February 3, 2018 to celebrate diversity and strategize on how to create a safe and welcoming learning environment across the state’s high schools and communities.

This year marks the 25th year that students and teachers are participating in the annual Cherry Creek Diversity Conference, which takes place from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Cherry Creek High School, 9300 East Union Avenue in Greenwood Village.

The event is hosted by the Cherry Creek School District; organized by Youth Celebrate Diversity, a Denver-based non-profit organization; and underwritten this year with a generous donation by RBC Wealth Management.

“This unique event provides students with an open forum to discuss the social issues affecting them in their daily lives—from religion and politics, to sexual orientation and race,” says Caleb Munro, Executive Director of Youth Celebrate Diversity. “The event fills a gap left by standardized high school education that often avoids controversial topics, leaving teens to figure these issues out on their own. We believe that through communication, collaboration and positive support, school environments can improve so that everyone is able to achieve academically.”

The keynote speech will be delivered by Dolores Huerta, labor rights activist and civil rights leader who worked alongside Cesar Chavez to help farmworkers in California and across the country organize in the 1960s and ‘70s. She also is the originator of the phrase, “Si se puede,” which became a hallmark in Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential election campaign as “Yes we can.”

“As a company, we’re committed to enriching the communities where our employees and clients work and live and that is clearly what the young people who are involved in YCD have in their hearts as well,” said RBC Wealth Management Divisional Director Darryl Traweek. “Successful businesses are built on flourishing communities where people understand, appreciate and celebrate diversity. We could not be more proud of the commitment and growth of these young leaders as they participate in this very special 25th anniversary of the Cherry Creek Diversity Conference and prepare to lead our communities in the coming decades.”

Throughout the day, student and adult participants will break into discussion groups and workshops to address respect and diversity issues in their schools, including topics such as cliques, physical and mental challenges, religion, sexual orientation, conflict resolution, gender, socio-economic concerns, and teen social problems.

Among the 40 workshops offered:

* “A Day in the Life of an Undocumented Student,” where a panel of college students will share stories of their hopes, fears and dreams in an effort to help conference participants understand the dilemma many undocumented students face today.
* “Islam and Islamophobia,” an open forum for students and adults to ask questions freely as they learn some of the common myths and misconceptions surrounding the Islamic faith and Muslim people.
* “Locker Room Talk,” held in partnership with the non-profit organization You Can Play, to explore how young people can create a positive culture in athletics for everyone.
* “How to Spot Fake News,” led by the Denver Public Library, helping teenagers explore the idea of ‘fake news’ and social media, and understand how to discern factual reporting from sensational online rumors.
* “A Holocaust Survivor Speaks,” in which a survivor of the Holocaust will share stories about living through a period of time where diversity and respect for others was at its lowest point in human history.

The day’s closing ceremonies will feature a performance by The Reminders, a Colorado Springs-based husband and wife musical duo who blend hip hop and soul with insightful messages and thoughtful lyrics.

The 25th annual Cherry Creek Diversity Conference is co-chaired by Aaron Abai, a senior at Chatfield High School, and Lauren Banko, a senior at J.K. Mullen High School. The Executive Planning Committee is comprised of 30 student and adult volunteers from multiple schools around the Denver metro area.

**About RBC Wealth Management – U.S.**

In the United States, RBC Wealth Management operates as a division of RBC Capital Markets, LLC. Founded in 1909, RBC Capital Markets, LLC. is a member of the New York Stock Exchange, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, the Securities Investor Protection Corporation, and other major securities exchanges.  RBC Wealth Management has $323 billion in total client assets with approximately 1,800 financial advisors operating in 200 locations in 40 states.

**About Youth Celebrate Diversity**

Youth Celebrate Diversity creates eye-opening experiences for high school and college-aged youth to explore and address pressing social issues in their school, on their campus and throughout their community. Our vision is that one day, every teen in America will feel safe to achieve in school, no matter who they are. Learn more at [www.ycdiversity.org](http://www.ycdiversity.org).

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**Participating Schools and Organizations**

Alameda International Junior/Senior High School

Arapahoe High School

Arvada High School

Arvada West High School

Bear Creek High School

Bishop Machebeuf High School

Brighton Youth Commission

Broomfield High School

Bruce Randolph High School

Centennial Youth Commission

Center High School

Chaffee County High School

Chatfield High School

Cherokee Trail High School

Cherry Creek High School

Cherry Creek School District Office of Inclusive Excellence

Cherry Creek School District Student Affinity Leadership

Colorado Academy

Colorado Rocky Mountain School

Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind

Columbine High School

Commerce City Youth Commission

Community Prep School

Compass Montessori High School

Conifer High School

Crested Butte High School

Dakota Ridge High School

Dawson School

Denver Center for International Studies

Denver East High School

Denver Public Safety Youth Program

Denver South High School

D'Evelyn High School

Douglas County High School

DSST: Conservatory Green High School

DSST: Green Valley Ranch High School

Durango High School

Eagle Valley High School

Eaglecrest High School

Elizabeth High School

Endeavor Academy

Erie High School

Ethnic College Counseling Center (ECCC)

Evergreen High School

Fort Collins High School

Fort Morgan High School

Fountain Valley School

Fruita 8/9 School

Gateway High School

Glenwood Springs High School

Grandview High School

Greeley Central High School

Gunnison High School

Heritage High School

Highlands Ranch High School

Ignacio High School

I-Team Manor

I-Team Ranch

Jeffco Indian Education

Jeffco Public Schools Office of Inclusion and Diversity

Jefferson County Open School

Kent Denver School

Kunsmiller Creative Academy

La Junta Junior/Senior High School

Lakewood High School

Lincoln High School

Littleton High School

Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts

Mead High School

Mountain Range High School

Mountain Vista High School

Mullen High School

Nederland High School

New America School - Lakewood

Niwot High School

Noel Community Arts School

Northfield High School

Northglenn High School

Overland High School

Palmer Ridge High School

Pomona High School

Ponderosa High School

Poudre High School

Prairie View High School

PSD Global Academy

Pueblo Central High School

Pueblo East High School

Ralston Valley High School

Rangeview High School

Regis Jesuit High School - Boys Division

Regis Jesuit High School - Girls Division

Rocky Mountain High School

Sierra High School

Smoky Hill High School

St. Mary's Academy

Standley Lake High School

Strasburg High School

Thompson School District

ThunderRidge High School

Two Roads Charter School

Vail Mountain School

Westminster High School

William Smith High School



**Schedule of Events**

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| 7:30 – 8:30 am | **Registration and Breakfast**Faculty advisors will register their schools as they enter the main auditorium; registration takes a matter of minutes. Each school receives a packet containing materials for the conference day, nametags, and diversity and educational items. |
| 7:30 am – 12:00 pm | **Rocky Mountain Diversity Fair**Each year we invite dozens of colleges, universities, post-graduate programs and the military to join us the morning of the conference. On their way to breakfast, attendees will walk past the tables with representatives who are available to speak with high school students about their commitment to diversity. Members of the public are invited to attend the Rocky Mountain Diversity Fair as well. |
| 9:30 – 10:20 am | **Opening Ceremonies**We hear from a notable keynote speaker with an inspiring message related to diversity—this year, Dolores Huerta, labor rights activist and civil rights leader. |
| 10:30 am – 12:00 pm | **Discussion Groups & Lunch**Students join a discussion group to talk about diversity issues with students from across the state. Past topics included cliques, peer pressure, and harassment. Meanwhile, faculty advisors and adults gather to have their own discussion on diversity issues in the classroom and teaching techniques. |
| 12:10 – 1:20 pm | **Workshop A**Both students and faculty advisors attend a workshop of their choice. Workshops focus on a variety of themes, including gender, class and poverty, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental and physical challenges, history, and conflict resolution. |
| 1:30 – 2:40 pm | **Workshop B**Everyone attends a second workshop of their choice.  |
| 2:50 – 3:20 pm | **School Meetings**All attendees meet back with their schools or organizations for a discussion on how to take what they've learned back to their local community, and make a positive difference.  |
| 3:30 – 4:00 pm | **Closing Ceremonies**We finish our day with another performance, a video montage of the day's events, and a few words from our Conference Co-Chairs. |



**Directions**

Cherry Creek High School

9300 E. Union Avenue

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

**Conference day contact: (720) 554-2333**

*From I-25*

* Exit onto Belleview Avenue going East.
	+ from the South: a right turn from the exit ramp
	+ from the North: a left turn from the exit ramp
* Take a left onto Yosemite Street.
* After Chenango Avenue, turn right onto Campus Drive (at the light).
* Pass Stutler Bowl. Continue on Campus Drive until the West Building parking lot is on the left.
* Follow the signs to the West Building Lobby, adjacent to the West Café, where registration and lunch will take place.

*From I-225*

* Exit onto Yosemite Street going South.
	+ from the East: a left turn from the exit ramp
	+ from the West: a right turn from the exit ramp
* After Union Avenue, turn left onto Campus Drive (at the light).
* Pass Stutler Bowl. Continue on Campus Drive until the West Building parking lot is on the left.
* Follow the signs to the West Building Lobby, adjacent to the West Café, where registration and lunch will take place.