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GUEST OPINION: What kind of community are we building in Colorado Springs?

Annie Snead Aug 27, 2025



This August, I had the chance to take part in three milestones that stand out as powerful examples of what's possible when we come together with purpose. A groundbreaking with Early Connections Learning Centers to expand access to early childhood education downtown; a ribbon-cutting at

Catholic Charities' Hunt Family Housing, which adds 24 transitional apartments for families experiencing homelessness; and the investiture of a new endowed chair in Pediatric Otolaryngology at Children's Hospital Colorado, advancing specialized Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) care for children across the state.

These moments are more than ceremonial. They reflect a shared commitment to addressing root causes, creating lasting change, and ensuring that every person has access to the building blocks of a fulfilling life. Education, housing, health and community.

The needs are real. And they are urgent.

In El Paso County alone, an estimated 16,000 additional child care spots are needed to meet current demand, according to the Joint Initiatives for Youth & Families.

At the same time, housing costs across Colorado have risen nearly 50% over the past five years, making access to safe, stable housing more critical than ever. And at Children's Hospital Colorado, nearly 30,000 unique pediatric patients are seen each year for ENT conditions such as hearing, speech, breathing, and sleep problems.

These are among the most common reasons for pediatric doctor visits and hospitalizations, with lasting impacts on a child's quality of life, emotional well-being, and academic performance.

Yet, even in the face of these challenges, there is hope. And that was on full display this month.

Nonprofits, foundations, businesses, and individuals are stepping up every day to close these gaps and help people thrive. These recent milestones are a testament to what can be achieved through thoughtful collaboration and long-term investment.

As someone who works in philanthropy, I've seen how strategic giving that is grounded in trust, shared values, and measurable impact can transform lives. It's not about one-time donations or quick fixes. It's about listening, showing up and staying committed.

Edward Filene, a pioneer of the credit union movement, once said, "Progress is the constant replacing of the best there is with something still better." That spirit of cooperative innovation continues to guide many of us working to build a better future for Colorado families.

As our city continues to grow and evolve, so too must our collective commitment to inclusive, strategic philanthropy. Let's keep asking: What kind of community do we want to build, and how can we build it together?

Because when we invest in people, we invest in possibility. And that's a return we can all believe in.

Annie Snead is the executive director of Philanthropy & Community Relations at Ent Credit Union where she works alongside nonprofit partners, funders and civic leaders to support collaborative solutions that strengthen Colorado communities.