

2025 GRATITUDE REPORT



Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Future

Leading the Community



MISSION

Be a catalyst! Ignite our community's passion for nature and science.

VISION

The Denver Museum of Nature & Science envisions an empowered community that loves, understands, and protects our natural world.





STANISLAS ALBERT
JARDIN DES MINÉRAUX

Le STANISLAS ALBERT
est un jardin des minéraux
qui a été créé en 1880 par
Stanislas Albert, directeur
du Muséum National d'Histoire
Naturelle.



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Dear Friends and Supporters,

This past year marked the Museum's 125th anniversary, a milestone that invites reflection on the many hands, hearts and minds that have contributed to this institution over more than a century. From Edwin Carter's earliest collections to the community-centered work happening today, the Museum has grown because people believed in the power of curiosity and lifelong learning.

In that spirit, 2025 was a year filled with achievements that reflect the values guiding our work across generations. We celebrated two extraordinary paleontological discoveries: a dinosaur vertebra uncovered during coring beneath our parking lot and the exceptionally preserved *Triceratops* skull discovered by our field team in North Dakota.

Our Southern Plains Beadwork Project deepened relationships with Kiowa, Arapaho and Cheyenne

partners that culminated in a deeply meaningful community-curated exhibition at First Americans Museum in Oklahoma. We celebrated our 125th anniversary with the Galactic Gold Celebration, and we closed the year with an enthusiastic response to our inaugural Magical Winter Nights holiday experience, welcoming nearly 28,000 guests over six weeks.

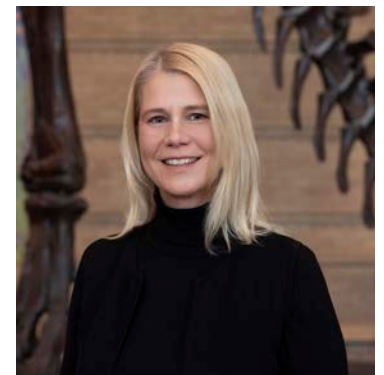
Above all, what defines this Museum is its people: our staff, volunteers, donors, members and guests. Your generosity, trust and belief make it possible for the Museum to serve Colorado and beyond, advance science and inspire curiosity at every age.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey and for helping carry the Museum forward into its next 125 years.

With heartfelt gratitude.



George Sparks
George Sparks, *President & CEO*



Jena Hausmann
Jena Hausmann, *Board Chair*

Year in Review

1,959,651 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

OFFSITE
575,014

ONSITE
1,384,637



SCFD COMMUNITY
FREE DAY
ATTENDANCE
80,340

106,326
VOLUNTEER HOURS AND

975
VOLUNTEERS
(70 more than 2024)

4
COLORADO
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
POLICY FELLOWS
working full-time at the State Capitol



TEMPORARY EXHIBIT ATTENDANCE **756,604**



49,924

MEMBER
HOUSEHOLDS



102

TONS
of waste diverted
from landfill



MAGICAL
WINTER NIGHTS
served nearly
28,000



41

PUBLISHED
peer-reviewed journal
articles, books, and
book chapters



186,583

TOTAL SCHOOL
& YOUTH GROUP
ATTENDANCE



\$254,034

IN
SCHOLARSHIPS
PROVIDED

TREASURER'S REPORT

Nearly 2 million people experienced the Museum in 2025, both onsite and through programs beyond our walls. That scale of engagement reflects more than attendance. It reflects sustained investment in access, science education and community connection. That momentum translated into strong financial performance. The Denver Museum of Nature & Science closed 2025 in a strong and stable financial position, supported by growth in attendance, membership and philanthropic support.

This success is made possible through the continued support of the citizens of the seven-county metro region, the City and County of Denver, and the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District. We are especially grateful for the ongoing investment through SCFD, which saw revenue growth of 1.47% over the prior year and remains one of the most innovative and impactful public funding models for cultural institutions in the nation.

From an operational standpoint, the Museum demonstrated both discipline and strength. Expenses totaled \$51.4 million, a 3% decrease from the prior year, while maintaining program quality and visitor experience. At the same time, total revenues and support reached \$53.5 million—an 8% increase year-over-year—underscoring the resilience and diversity of our funding streams.

This performance allowed us to expand access to programs, sustain world-class exhibitions and invest in new experiences for our community.

In parallel, we advanced two of the most important investments in the Museum's future. The Sturm Family Wing will transform how guests gather, learn and experience science together, with a grand opening anticipated in Fall 2026. We also accelerated progress on the Dea Family Gems & Minerals Hall, finalizing construction documents and building strong fundraising momentum. Construction will begin in 2026, expanding one of the Museum's most beloved experiences.

The following page presents our financial results with a clear distinction between ongoing operations and strategic investments.

The Museum received a clean audit opinion from our independent accounting firm, reflecting our continued commitment to strong financial stewardship.

We remain focused on disciplined growth and maximizing the impact of every dollar invested in the Museum's mission.



Ashley Bassim
Chief Financial Officer



Steve Halstedt
Co-Chair, Finance and Audit Committee



Paul Washington
Co-Chair, Finance and Audit Committee

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

	2025 Operations	2025 Initiatives	2025 All Museum
Admissions	10,883	-	10,883
SCFD	12,682	-	12,682
Gifts and Grants	11,903	23,414	35,317
Memberships	5,448	-	5,448
Gift Shop and Food Service (net)	7,160	-	7,160
City & County of Denver	2,875	1,683	4,558
Program	1,701	-	1,701
Other	798	1	799
Total support and revenue	53,450	25,098	78,548

EXPENDITURES

Program Activities

Exhibits/Visitor Experiences	13,802	15,514	29,316
Physical Plant	9,542	2,281	11,823
Admissions	3,505	-	3,505
Collections & Research	6,744	811	7,555
Education	4,878	-	4,878
Total program activities	38,471	18,606	57,078

Supporting Activities

General and Administration	6,863	508	7,371
Marketing	3,048	-	3,048
Fundraising	1,473	201	1,674
Membership	1,515	-	1,515
Total supporting activities	12,899	709	13,608

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	51,370	19,315	70,686
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Changes in net assets from operations	2,080	5,783	7,862
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*Excludes DMNS
Foundation
operating results

Year ended December 31, 2025 (in thousands)

The Museum Celebrates 125 Years



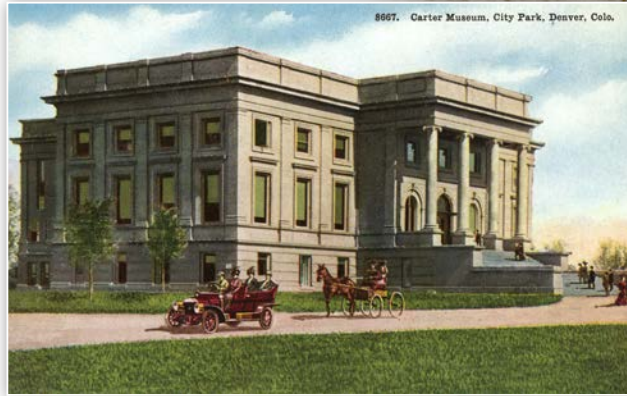
Egmont Reitt with Diplodocus femur,
Colorado Museum of Natural History.

In 2025, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science marked its 125th anniversary. The milestone honored more than a century of scientific exploration, public engagement and service to the community.

To celebrate this milestone, the Museum hosted the Galactic Gold Celebration, a cosmic-inspired evening that brought hundreds of guests in early August. For the event, the Museum was transformed into a space-western setting. Guests explored hands-on interactive science activities, enjoyed curated food and desserts and sipped specialty cocktails while supporting the Museum.

The festivities continued with a free admission day highlighting the anniversary, generously sponsored by the U.S. Bank Foundation. Nearly 5,000 guests traveled back in time with a scavenger hunt that matched current building locations with their past appearances. They also enjoyed viewing historic items including notable objects from the collections and the rarely seen original Articles of Incorporation for the Museum.

As the year came to a close, more than 500 donors raised a record-breaking \$275K for the Museum on Colorado Gives Day in honor of the anniversary. Community support is part of a legacy that spans more than a century.



The Museum's roots trace back to naturalist Edwin Carter, whose collections helped shape the foundation of the organization. Incorporated in 1900 and opened to the public in 1908, the Museum first welcomed visitors with displays of butterflies, moths, crystallized gold and other remarkable specimens that sparked fascination with the natural world.

The spirit of discovery quickly grew. In 1915, scientists uncovered the Museum's first dinosaur, a partial *Diplodocus* found near Cañon City. That specimen remains in the Museum's care today. It serves as a direct link to the curiosity that shaped the institution's earliest years.

Since then, landmark discoveries have continued. They include the Snowmastodon excavation in Pitkin County in 2010, the discovery of the adolescent *Tyrannosaurus rex* known as Teen Rex in North Dakota in 2024 and the dinosaur bone uncovered beneath the Museum's own parking lot in 2025.

From its start, the institution has remained committed to fostering curiosity, encouraging lifelong learning and building meaningful connections across communities. That mission continues today through bold exhibitions, engaging learning experiences and collaborative stewardship of collections preserved for future generations. As the Museum's first board president, John Champion, once observed, "a museum of natural history is never finished." The Denver Museum of Nature & Science remains deeply grateful to the generations of donors whose generosity has sustained the Museum's work to serve our community, advance scientific understanding and inspire a sense of wonder that extends far beyond our walls.



Dall DeWeese and Worker Excavating Diplodocus Fossil Bones in Canon City, Colorado, 1915-1916, IV.0090-509.N, DMNS Archives.



Image of a plant-eating ornithomimid dinosaur, Thescelosaurus during the latest Cretaceous Period, nearly 67 million years ago. Their vertebrae are similar to the one found in the rock core deep below the Museum.



Two Extraordinary Dinosaur Discoveries

“It was basically like winning the lottery and getting struck by lightning on the same day.”

That’s how Dr. James Hagadorn, Tim & Kathryn Ryan Curator of Geology, described the unlikely probability of finding a dinosaur fossil underneath the Denver Museum of Nature & Science’s parking lot earlier this year.

The discovery happened when the Museum undertook a scientific coring initiative alongside a geothermal test project in the parking lot that was made possible through a generous grant award from the Colorado Energy Office. The core excavated a column of rock and dirt going down nearly 1,000 feet into the Earth, allowing geologists to explore sedimentary layers from millions of years ago. When the core passed 763 feet, it came up with a piece of the spine of a plant-eating dinosaur that had died in what is now City Park approximately 67.5 million years ago.



Left: Dr. James Hagadorn examines scientific cores at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Right: A portion of the dinosaur bone recovered from the scientific core — drilled 763 feet below the surface of the Museum’s parking lot in City Park.

After identifying the bone, it took several weeks of study before scientists were completely confident that they had indeed pulled up a dinosaur fossil. The discovery announcement immediately created a tidal wave of stories in local, national and international media. No one could believe that the Museum, renowned for world-class prehistoric fossil collection and exhibitions, had discovered a dinosaur in the parking lot.



Right: *Triceratops* dig site bustling with activity. Above: Dr. Bob Reynolds examines the dinosaur fossil embedded in the scientific core sample.



But that wasn't the only landmark discovery Museum scientists would make this past year. Months later and hundreds of miles away in the fossil-rich badlands of North Dakota, a Museum-led field team uncovered an exceptionally preserved *Triceratops* skull, including the lower jaw, neck and an associated series of vertebrae and rib bones.

While *Triceratops* are relatively common dinosaurs to find in North Dakota, discoveries of this completeness are exceedingly rare. The skull and accompanying skeletal elements will provide scientists with a detailed look at the anatomy of one of the most recognizable and popular dinosaurs to ever walk the Earth.

Both the *Triceratops* and "Parking Lot Dino" discoveries are now on display for a limited time in the "Discovering Teen Rex" exhibition. Guests can observe as paleontologists remove surrounding rock and stabilize the *Triceratops'* bones, watching the skull emerge for the first time in millions of years.

This has truly been a year of remarkable discovery, and it has only been made possible because of your generosity and belief in the Museum and our mission.

Thank you for allowing us to indulge our teams' boundless curiosity and make

critical contributions to the scientific record of our Earth's natural history.

The Museum would like to extend special thanks to the donors who supported these unique scientific discoveries. "Parking Lot Dinosaur": Richard & Kathryn Ambrose, Rocky Mountain Section of AAPG, Rocky Mountain Association of Geologists Foundation, The Colorado Scientific Society, and Rocky Mountain Section of the Society for Sedimentary Geology. "Triceratops Dreams": Mark & Jenny Hopkins, Mary Lynne & Stephen Kneller, and Mark Sexton & the Sexton Family Foundation.

A New Model of Understanding

Southern Plains Beadwork Project was designed to close that gap by working with community, in community.



Kiowa Tribe representative Vanessa Paukeigope Jennings views bead collection.



Kiowa Dress from Denver Museum of Nature & Science Anthropology Collections.



A group of high school students from Carnegie High School in Oklahoma huddled around a table of Kiowa beadwork. Children from the Kiowa Head Start program called out their favorite colors as they studied the intricate beaded regalia created by their ancestors.

The Southern Plains Beadwork Project has been many years in the making. Conceived in 2016 as a publication highlighting the Museum's premier collection of Southern Plains Beadwork, it evolved into a new model for collaboration with tribal governments and cultural institutions.

The Museum routinely hosts consultations with community members about collections. Traditionally, those conversations require tribal representatives to travel to Denver. Many knowledge keepers, however, cannot make the trip, yet hold essential cultural insights. The Southern Plains Beadwork Project was designed to close that gap by working with community, in community.

During the meetings with Cheyenne, Arapaho and Kiowa and partners across Oklahoma, Museum staff shared images and documentation of belongings housed in the Avenir Conservation Center. Those conversations led to a partnership with First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City to bring selected belongings to Oklahoma.

In collaboration with tribal governments, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science supported community visits to Denver and selected 45 belongings to travel to First Americans Museum for listening sessions with beading artists and knowledge keepers.

Participants were invited to handle and closely examine the belongings, discussing design, methods of construction and traditional care practices. Historically, museums limited non-staff handling of collections. The Beadwork Project took a different approach, prioritizing access, trust and shared authority.

The sessions generated new knowledge while creating space for community members to exchange ideas. Participants spoke of the care and love embedded in each piece and emphasized that the makers and wearers remain present through these belongings. This project culminated in a community-curated exhibition of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science collection items at the First Americans Museum.

Alongside our cultural and institutional partners on this project, we thank the donors who make this work possible and help deepen understanding of historical collections and their relevance to living art and culture.



Right: Kiowa Dress from Denver Museum of Nature & Science Anthropology Collections.



Informing Decisions for Colorado

At the intersection of science and policy lies possibility, a fertile ground teeming with opportunities to better the lives of Coloradans. From cleaner air and water to mental and physical health benefits, disaster prevention and responsiveness, improved student outcomes and more, science delivers impact when paired with sound governance.

To advance that connection, the Museum's Institute for Science & Policy launched the Colorado Science and Technology Policy Program. The program connects scientists to the Colorado State Legislature to inform policy decisions with credible, nonpartisan expertise.



Samantha Lattof | Public Health, Mental Health and Human Services Fellow, Max O'Connor | Energy, Climate and Transportation Fellow, Leena Vilonen | Natural Resources, Agriculture, Wildfire, Water, and Economic Development Fellow, Dhivahari Vivek | AI and Technology Fellow

This three-year, \$1.5 million pilot program is funded by local supporters Boettcher Foundation, Gates Family Foundation, and national supporters Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation, Knight Foundation, and National Conference of State Legislatures. It supports lawmakers by providing independent, objective research and analysis designed to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and improve outcomes statewide.

Beginning in 2025, the program placed four fellows for one- to two-year appointments in the nonpartisan legislative research office at the Colorado State Capitol. Fellows will work in these crucial areas: artificial intelligence and technology; energy, climate and transportation; public health, mental

health and human services; and natural resources, water, agriculture, wildfire and economic development.

Through first-hand experience, fellows build the skills needed to navigate complex policy issues and communicate research findings and evidence to help legislators throughout the legislative process. Similar programs nationwide show strong outcomes. Many alumni go on to senior leadership roles in government, industry or academia.

The program has been informed by careful planning and in-depth research. Prior to implementation, the Institute conducted bipartisan outreach and interviews to understand how legislators use

scientific information, where expertise gaps exist and whether lawmakers would value this type of support.

That groundwork shaped a defining feature of Colorado's program. It is tailored to policy areas that legislators identified as state priorities. The result is relevance, efficiency and respect for lawmakers' time.

This pilot program points to a durable future. One where science informs decisions that affect millions of Coloradans. We are grateful for your support, which helped this program take root and begin delivering meaningful impact across the state.

Longtime Museum supporters Cathy and Peter Dea.

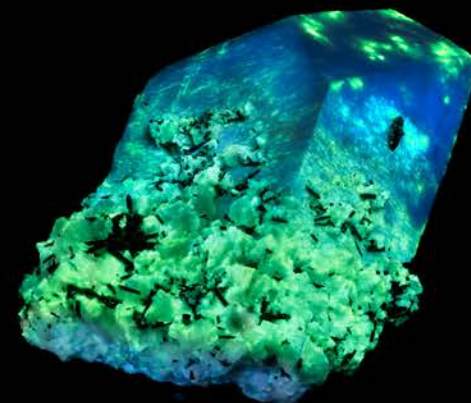


Reimagining a Classic

Minerals are essential to nearly everything we use and value. Because they are so common, they are easily overlooked. For more than four decades, the Coors Hall of Gems and Minerals has helped guests see minerals differently through remarkable specimens and the science that brings them to life.

This year, the Museum announced a bold next chapter. The classic hall is being expanded and renewed through an ambitious renovation that reflects both its legacy and future. Thanks to a generous, transformational gift from longtime supporters Cathy and Peter Dea (pictured left), the hall will expand by 50 percent and reopen as the Dea Family Gems & Minerals Hall.

First and third rocks on this page: Fluorite and Quartz mineral. Middle: Manganocalcite mineral. All from Denver Museum of Nature & Science Earth Sciences Collections.



These spaces will blend innovative design with the Museum's world-class collections.

The renovation reshapes how guests experience the mineral world beneath their feet. Guided by the theme “My World Is Made of Minerals,” the new hall will invite guests underground through immersive environments inspired by real caves and mines. These spaces will blend innovative design with the Museum’s world-class collections.

Beloved favorites such as the Crystal Grotto and Sweet Home Mine will remain. Much of the gallery, however, will be entirely transformed. Guests will explore how minerals form, how they are mined and how they shape everything from human health to modern technology. Throughout the space, standout hero specimens and interactive

displays will highlight iconic pieces alongside extraordinary specimens never before shown to the public. The result will be more gems and mineral specimens on display than ever before.

One of the most visually striking additions will be a large-scale fluorescent minerals experience. Under ultraviolet light, hundreds of specimens will reveal hidden colors, including vivid greens, blues, reds and yellows. This gallery will demonstrate the science of fluorescence while showcasing the depth of the Museum’s geology collections. It will be among the largest displays of its kind, built through years of research, community collaboration and volunteer dedication.

Together, these elements reflect a renewed commitment to curiosity, access, and community connection. When the Dea Family Gems & Minerals Hall opens, it will celebrate Colorado’s extraordinary geology and reveal how minerals connect us all to the natural world in both familiar and unexpected ways. The generosity of these visionary supporters has laid the foundation for this bold transformation, special thanks to: Peter A. Dea & Cathy L. Carpenter, The Anschutz Foundation, Dave Liniger, Don & Susie Law, Koelbel Family Foundation, Kristin & Blair Richardson Family, Royal Gold, Inc., Richard & Kathy Ambrose, Schlessman Family Foundation, Rollie R. Kelley Family Foundation, and Mark Sexton & the Sexton Family Foundation.

Left and middle: Fluorite and Quartz minerals. Right: Baryte and Fluorite mineral. All from Denver Museum of Nature & Science Earth Sciences Collections.



2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES



The Museum extends its deepest gratitude for your support, which makes science accessible, understandable, fun and meaningful — creating a vibrant Colorado community today and far into the future.

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Left Page: Front row: Rob Applegate, Hayden Hirschfeld, Christine Marquez-Hudson, Steve Halstedt, Amy Parsons, Jenny Hopkins, Kristin Richardson, Jena Hausmann, Jandel Allen-Davis.

Back row: Chris Chavez, Mark Spiecker, Leo Tilman, Roger Hutson, Doug Friednash, Jesus Salazar, Terry Fry, Rick Ambrose, Paul Washington, John Levisay, Alice Yake, Steve McConahey, Happy Haynes, Donna Lynne.

Not pictured: John Couzens, Don Law, Bruce Oreck

Edwin Carter Legacy Society

Thank you to these individuals for remembering the Museum in their estate plans.



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**Passed away in 2025*



Endowments

Thank you for supporting these endowment funds that will sustain the Museum for years to come.



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Avenir Conservation Fund
Avenir Endowment for Conservation
Bouslog Fund
Collections Fund
Coors Exhibit Fund c/o Adolph Coors Foundation
Education Endowment Fund
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Thank you for enhancing the Museum's research collections with your donations.



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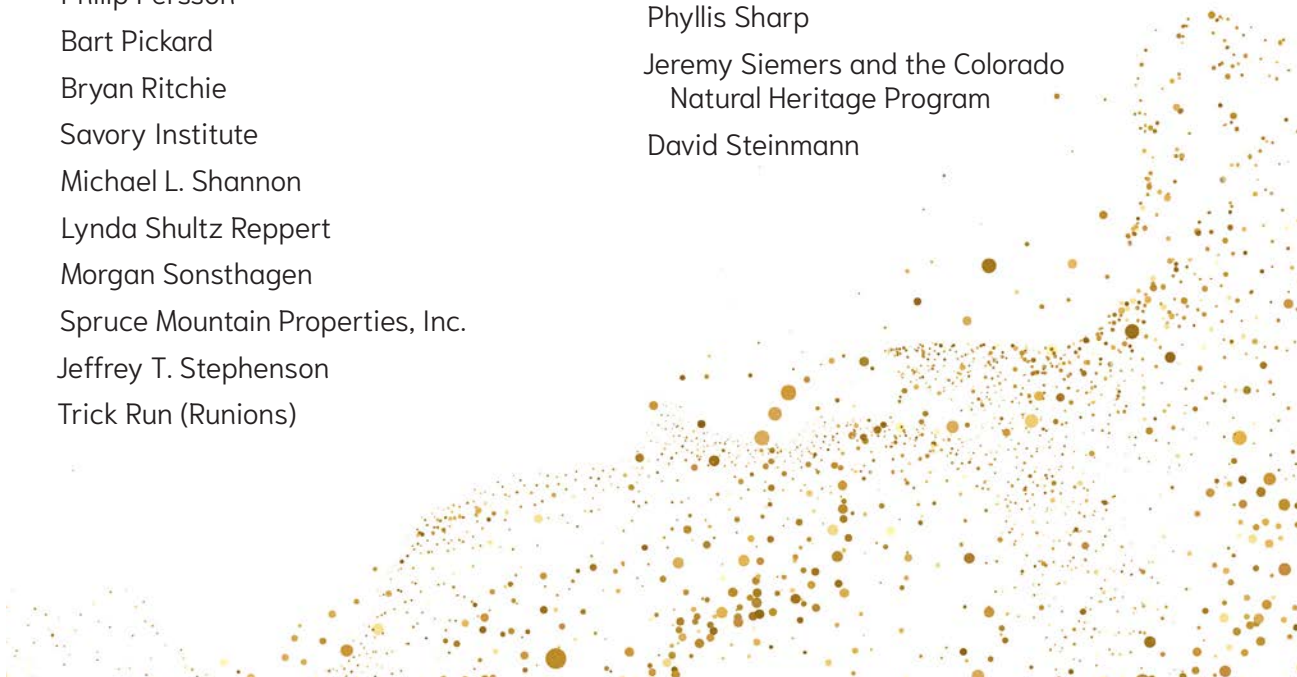
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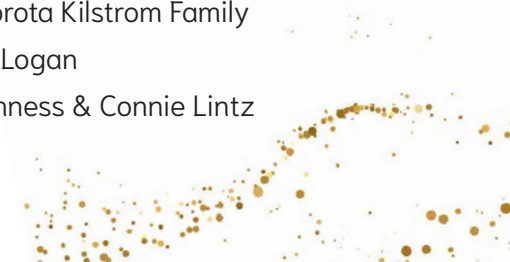
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