

social determinants of health CONNECTING THE DOTS



FEBRUARY 2021

This month, we want to share a broader look at the reality for those working (or formerly working) in Colorado. Health disparities in Colorado's workforce are largely connected to disparity in income and access to health care. Click [here](#) for a snapshot of inequities facing non-white Coloradans from the Colorado Office of Health Equity.

The Colorado Center on Law and Policy recently released their **2020 State of Working Colorado report**, which includes a discussion on how the drop in the economy due to the pandemic has highlighted disparities across race, ethnicity, gender and disability.

Colorado voters passed the **Paid Family and Medical Leave Law** this past November to build upon the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act that was passed in 2019 by the state legislature. Hopefully this is a step toward an improvement of the state's recent 37th place ranking in racial disparities by "Prosperity Now."



Mango House, owned by Dr. P.J. Parmar, a provider in our network, has a series of refugee-owned restaurants and clothing shops which helps provide some economic stability to many refugee families in Aurora. Click [here](#) to read an interview with Dr. Parmar from late 2019 about Mango House.

This new Colorado Access series will illuminate social factors that lead to health inequalities and disparities, or help to decrease them. We hope this monthly series will support your existing efforts by providing resources and educational opportunities while exploring current trends and best practices.

We know there are timely and progressive efforts in place to address the health disparities experienced by so many, sometimes by providers or community partners within our own network. We will share information about these efforts in the hope that it might lead you to consider what might be realized in your own practice or organization.

Each month we will introduce a topic and offer some brief highlights. If you want to dive a bit deeper, we will also include links to articles or websites that provide more comprehensive information.



The year 2020 was a tale of two pandemics: privileged white males like me comfortably working from home — and even saving money — while people of color often compelled to risk their health and lives working essential, high-risk jobs. Capitalism is supposed to reward the risk takers, but that's not really what happens, is it? We are not the equal society we thought we were.

—Michael L., 54, California



As Meghan Markle recently said on the inaugural episode of her and Prince Harry's new podcast, quoting the famous phrase by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that."

The podcast, Archewell Audio, spotlights diverse perspectives and voices. Here's to shedding light so that the darkness of health disparities can be revealed along with ideas for how they might be addressed.

This was featured in a recent "Coronavirus Update" from "The Washington Post" in a section that asked readers to submit what they had learned during the pandemic. Many submissions summarize what some have come to understand, and others already knew — we are not the equal society we once thought we were.



If you know of creative approaches or partnerships that are addressing health disparities, either by your organization or another entity, please contact us at [**practice_support@coaccess.com**](mailto:practice_support@coaccess.com).

We would love to share this information!