

THE VILLAGER

SPRING 2026



If you fall 20 times, 20 times you have to get up.

— Yaney Peña

Resident at Warren Village at First Step
(See story on Pg. 2)

Celebrating Ten Years of Ethan Hemming

HONORARY TRUSTEE KYLE CRAIG HONORS OUR PRESIDENT & CEO FOR HIS LEADERSHIP AT WARREN VILLAGE

Dear Friends of Warren Village,

Ten years ago, we were interviewing several strong candidates for a new Warren Village CEO. However, one of them kept impressing the committee. He had such enthusiasm, and he was so personally committed to the mission that we kept putting him at the top of the list.

So we hired Ethan Hemming as our new CEO. Since then, the organization has continued to grow and set a new standard for helping single-parent families coming out of homelessness.

I have worked with Ethan both as a Board member and as the Board Chairman. It has been amazing to see his growth and his impact on the organization. Under Ethan's leadership, he and the team have taken Warren Village to new heights:

- Established a new campus and learning center, helping 89 additional families find stability
- During Ethan's tenure, 15 residents have become homeowners, vs. two in the previous decade
- Increased number of families achieving a college degree or certificate by 19% vs. previous decade.
- Weathering the tremendous strain of the COVID pandemic, managing to provide full and uninterrupted support for our residents and staff.
- Several prestigious awards, including Housing Colorado Eagle Award, Denver Business Journal Partners in Philanthropy honoree, and the Daniels Fund Salute to Excellence award
- Recognized speaker at national conferences on the two-generation support model.

And those are just a few of the highlights. His day-to-day support of the residents and his team has been unwavering. There is no doubt that with Ethan's leadership, Warren Village is a much more successful, respected, and dynamic organization in **achieving our mission of helping low-income single-parent families achieve personal and economic self-sufficiency.**

Well done, Ethan, and congratulations on 10 wonderful years at Warren Village.



KYLE CRAIG

HONORARY TRUSTEE AND FORMER BOARD CHAIRMAN,
WARREN VILLAGE

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Warren Village

Warren Village Resident Yaney Peña on Finding Home and Community at First Step



Yaney Peña is about to graduate high school—a milestone she’s worked toward diligently for years. She lives at Warren Village at First Step with her daughter Rosianny, where she’s discovered her capacity to build a future on her own terms.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO WARREN VILLAGE AT ALAMEDA?

I separated from my daughter’s father and went to live with my sister. After that, I wanted to live on my own so I could have my baby with me in my own place. Someone at my school told me about the program, and that’s when they helped me apply. That was two years ago.

YOU’RE ABOUT TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL. CONGRATULATIONS! WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO YOU?

It means so much to me. It’s been really hard for me. I was in Colombia and I couldn’t manage to graduate there either, but now I’ve done it. I still don’t want to claim victory until I have my diploma in my hands, but I’m very happy. I feel like I’m in the final stretch.

HOW DID FIRST STEP GET YOU TO THIS POINT?

My life changed because they helped me get transportation to school. Before, I had to take the bus all the way to school and back. With transportation, I was able to go back and forth every day. The house helped me so much with that.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES HAVE OPENED FOR YOU SINCE BEING HERE?

I’ve had the opportunity to be in school again because of the support of this house. They’ve also given me the opportunity to save money and helped me so much with childcare for my daughter while I’m studying. Sometimes there are classes here on Mondays and Wednesdays. That’s a very big help.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST HELPFUL PART OF THE PROGRAM AS A YOUNG PARENT?

The help toward me and my daughter—it can be emotional or economic. They help with cards for laundry, for food, personal items. But also the goal-setting. It could be studying to get my driver’s license, getting my work permit. Last semester when I was doing poorly in math, they set a goal that I had to do well in that subject. Putting that time limit to meet those goals makes it easier for me to work toward them.

“They give you the puzzle, and you yourself have to put the pieces together.”

— Yaney Peña
Resident at Warren Village at First Step

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FIRST STEP TO SOMEONE?

For me it was very good because they give you the resources and support to finish accomplishing your things. They give you the puzzle—they give you the complete puzzle out of order and you yourself have to put the pieces together. I think that’s a very good resource.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES AFTER GRADUATION?

I want to work and be able to rent my own apartment. [First Step] gives me the opportunity to still be here for a while longer after I graduate so I can get a job, save money, and rent an apartment. That’s my new goal and my new chapter.

WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO SAY TO OTHER YOUNG PARENTS WHO MIGHT BE IN A SIMILAR POSITION?

As we say, “he who doesn’t persevere doesn’t achieve.” But if you don’t do your own work for your own goals, you’re not going to reach them. You have to keep at it. And if you fall 20 times, 20 times you have to get up. Have a lot of patience, and above all know your limit as a woman and as a person.

IF YOU COULD TELL WARREN VILLAGE DONORS ONE THING ABOUT WHAT THIS PROGRAM MEANS TO YOU, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

For me this isn’t simply a program—it’s my home too. It’s been such a support for me, economically and emotionally, to be here with my daughter when I’m about to graduate. I’m already in the final stretch. I was able to accomplish the goals I set.

Architecture with Healing in Mind at Alameda

WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED DESIGN? Many parents and families at Warren Village have experienced trauma. Research shows that when families feel safe at home, they're better equipped to access services and thrive. With this in mind, we designed physical spaces at Alameda to prioritize their mental well-being. Here are a few examples:

CALM BY DESIGN
Mindful color palettes throughout the building evoke tranquility and support emotional well-being.

PEACE & QUIET
Enhanced soundproofing reduces noise, creating calm living spaces where families can truly rest.

LIGHT & AIR
Oversized windows bring in natural light and mountain views. Operable windows and adjustable thermostats let families personalize their comfort.

NATURE AT PLAY
The playground features natural play structures that spark curiosity and sensory environments that encourage exploration and interaction.

COMMUNITY BUILT IN
Even the laundry rooms are designed as welcoming gathering spaces. Spacious lobbies feature varied seating.

ART & IDENTITY
Exterior murals rooted in identity and purpose foster belonging, creativity, and vibrant community expression.



Building A Foundation of Trust at Alameda: Q&A with Angel Wallace

Angel Wallace joined Warren Village at Alameda as Family Services Director in December 2025. Raised by a single mother, she brings both professional expertise and deep personal understanding to her role.

CAN YOU SHARE YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW IT CONNECTS TO THIS WORK?

I was born in Kenya and moved to the U.S. as a young child. When I was around 13, my parents divorced. I was raised by a single parent. My mom worked and went to grad school full-time so she could become a teacher. Being the oldest daughter, I served as a second parent in supporting my mom and my younger siblings.

When my grandparents moved here during their retirement years, [I helped] them navigate systems—going with them to job interviews, helping them get settled. Seeing them work so hard really put that fire under me. I can relate to the families here. I've been there.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT COMBINING TWO-GENERATION WORK WITH PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING?

It allows us to see the impact of programming over a longer period of time. In community-based work, services are voluntary, so people tap in or tap out. But when we're implementing programming within the housing, we can provide support in ways that make it truly transformational rather than just transactional.

YOU ATTENDED YOUR FIRST FAMILY NIGHT RECENTLY. WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?

I was blown away by the engagement. We had to turn folks away because we hit capacity. That is such a rarity. Most of the time the challenge is getting people to engage. But this community is so hungry for connection. Seeing that has been really inspiring.



HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE AS FAMILY SERVICES DIRECTOR?

I see it as creating and upholding the structure of services we provide—making sure we have policies and procedures that align with best practices, maintaining trauma-informed care. But I also see my role as support for my team. How I describe it to them is: let me be your shield. I will protect you from the unnecessary stuff so you can focus on the work. This work is really hard. I've been a case manager, I've been a supportive services supervisor. I know what it's like.

WHAT PRINCIPLES GUIDE YOU?

Seeing people as people first—that's with residents, staff, and colleagues. Being client-led is also essential. Folks have to lead their own journey. My motto has always been: I am going to work for you as hard as you're working for yourself. And leading with empathy.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO?

In the next few months, having a full team and making sure the folks here feel appreciated and supported. And in five years, building such a strong foundation of trust that residents know they have psychological safety here. They can trust that the services are here to support them in the most trauma-informed, ethical way possible. That's the goal.

Advocating for Families: How Warren Village is Partnering for Policy Change in Child Care and Early Education

Our policy subcommittee has had an urgent topic on its mind lately: affordable, effective child care. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we still face a funding freeze on the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). CCAP is a subsidy that gives low-income families a massive boost to make child care affordable. Since the freeze, more than 14,000 kids are waiting for care. Many Warren Village families rely on CCAP, so we are taking action.

In early January, the state's General Assembly started its session. Since then, Warren Village has worked tirelessly to advocate for early childhood education and to support our families in several ways.

THE LAUNCH OF THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER ACTION NETWORK

Along with several other child care providers, Warren Village created the Child Care Provider Action Network. It has allowed us to better pool together resources and advocate for the needs of families. Among the providers represented are Mile High Early Learning, Clayton Early Learning, and Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. The group is partnering with **Cody Belzley**, a public policy expert, to advocate for large scale support.

CONNECTIONS BREAKFAST EXPLORES CHILD CARE SOLUTIONS

Warren Village hosted a Connections Breakfast on April 9th featuring an expert panel: **State Senators Scott Bright and Matt Ball**, **Natricee Bryant** of consulting firm WSP and Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC), and **Christina Taylor** of Northern Colorado Kids Thrive. They spoke to policy, business, and community leaders about how public policy can better support families and early learning centers. These conversations help ensure Warren Village families are continually supported.

Warren Village will continue working with policy makers to ensure families and children can have access to high-quality child care.

At a Glance: How to advocate for accessible child care

Contact legislators about the CCAP freeze affecting 14,000+ children

Share your story if child care access has affected your family or workforce

Attend advocacy events, like legislative "Day at the Capitol" sessions

Stay informed. Follow child care policy developments and spread awareness.

Learn more at <https://coloradoccap.org>

Volunteer Spotlight: Rachel West, First Interstate Bank



RACHEL WEST, Community Branch Manager at First Interstate Bank (pictured above), recently rallied her team to build a "diaper empire": they collected 1,214 diapers, 309 pull-ups, and 81 packs of wipes to donate to Warren Village families, some of the most needed items for our residents. It didn't stop there: Rachel and her team rolled up their sleeves for spring cleaning at Gilpin. We asked her to explain her partnership and what Warren Village's mission means to her.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PARTNER WITH WARREN VILLAGE?

I strongly believe in supporting local organizations, and I'm proud to work for a company whose values align with my own. I didn't grow up in a two-parent household and later became part of a blended family, so I understand how challenging it can be for a child when they're concerned about what the next day may bring rather than when they'll play at the park next.

As a parent myself, I deeply understand how important it is to raise children with stability and truly having your "village." Warren Village's two-generation approach resonates strongly with me. Their model helps break cycles that can leave parents and children feeling unseen, unsupported, and stuck. All I could ever ask for is to provide my son a better childhood than I had, and Warren Village gives that opportunity to their families.

HOW HAS YOUR TEAM BEEN INVOLVED?

We launched a diaper drive across our Denver Metro branches throughout March and organized employees to assist with spring cleaning at Gilpin. The team spent several hours sorting and organizing supplies, helping create a more functional and welcoming environment.

WHAT IMPACT DO YOU HOPE YOUR PARTNERSHIP WILL HAVE?

If I can help even one family lessen the stress during this season of life, we've won. Life deserves to be lived.

Interested in having your corporation or business partner with Warren Village for volunteer events like this? Please contact Sharda Perry-Miller at sperry-miller@warrenvillage.org.

Leave a Legacy: Join the Warren Village Legacy Society and Give a Gift that Lasts Generations

JEAN HELBIG first discovered Warren Village years ago while looking for organizations that aligned with her values. She began giving annually through the Colorado Gives Day platform, watching as families transformed their lives through our programs.

“I have long believed in the saying ‘Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime,’” Jean shared. “This is what attracted me to Warren Village. It teaches the skills and provides the opportunities for people to gain self-sufficiency.”

After losing her husband to cancer in 2025, Jean reconsidered her estate planning. With no children or immediate family nearby, she decided to incorporate her charitable giving into her legacy through planned gifts to six organizations—including Warren Village. Jean’s planned gift reflects her hope that families will continue finding the support they need long into the future.

“I recognize that there are a lot of people who, through no fault of their own, find themselves struggling to build a meaningful and stable life. When I am gone, I hope that my gift would provide a chance for success for some of these parents, and for a more secure life for their children.”

Legacy gifts like Jean’s ensure Warren Village can continue empowering families for generations. **Here are several ways you can create your own lasting impact.**

IRA or Retirement Plan

One of the most tax-effective legacy gifts available. Assets in retirement accounts are often heavily taxed when passed to heirs, but transferring to a nonprofit is completely tax-free — meaning more of your gift goes directly to the families who need it.

Life Insurance Policy

Name Warren Village as a full or partial beneficiary on an existing policy, or donate a policy you no longer need. It’s a meaningful gift that often requires nothing more than updating a form.

Financial Accounts

Bank and investment accounts can be designated to Warren Village through a simple beneficiary update — a process that typically takes just minutes with your financial institution.

Will or Living Trust

This is the most straightforward path to a legacy gift. You designate Warren Village as a beneficiary of a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or particular assets — and your attorney can often incorporate this in a single conversation.

Take the First Step

If you’ve already included Warren Village in your estate plans, we’d love to hear from you. And if you’re just beginning to explore what a legacy gift might look like, we welcome that conversation too.

To learn more or to notify us of your gift, contact Nick Daugharty, Associate Director of Individual Giving, at 303-320-5068



Scan to access our
Declaration of Intent Form



President and CEO Ethan Hemming with supporters at the Summer Garden Party. Photo: Bernard Wooten

Board Spotlight: Three Goodbyes and A Welcome



On March 31, three-long tenured board members saw their terms end. To honor their service, we gathered remembrances from their colleagues. Plus: Please welcome our newest board member, Linda Childears!

CRAIG BROWN (pictured above, left) has served on Warren Village's board for six years, including helping see through the construction of our Alameda campus.

President and CEO **Ethan Hemming** says that what stood out about Craig from the start was that he wanted to volunteer in Kids' Club as a tutor first to truly know the model and families. "He was a tireless and devoted volunteer there," Ethan recalls.

When he joined the board, Craig brought that same devotion—serving on multiple committees with content expertise. "He always brings his gifts with a sense of humility and purpose that can be rare in this world," Ethan said.

Board Chair **Tasha Jones** will miss "his willingness to roll up his sleeves and engage where it matters most."

Even after stepping off the board, Craig remains devoted. He will stay on critical facilities and growth taskforces, continuing to connect Warren Village to others who can support the mission.

NICOLE MARQUEZ (top middle), currently VP and Community Development Relationship Manager at Huntington Bank, joined our board six years ago driven by a simple conviction: housing changes lives. Growing up with teen parents, she often wondered what resources like Warren Village could have meant for her family. "I wanted to be brought on [the board] because of my skill sets—the affordable housing expertise, the residential lending background, the financial literacy component."

As Nominating Committee Chair for most of her tenure, Nicole transformed board recruitment from a three-person to a seven-member operation with structured onboarding and renewal systems. This "strengthened the way we think about our Board and fill empty positions," said board member **Marcus Divita**.

Her impact extended beyond process improvements. Nicole personally helped secure five major funders, raising \$1.3 million over six years. "Nicole believes in deep engagement," Marcus noted. "She loves being invested in the organizations she works with."

Nicole says she proudly carried Warren Village's impact report everywhere she went. **Debbie Herrera**, one of the first people Nicole welcomed to the board, remembers Nicole's warmth: "She always seemed to show up on Warren Village's behalf—board meetings and events—and is a true ambassador for the mission."

JOEL ROSENSTEIN (top right) served several terms on the Board—including an extended term as Chair to see the Alameda project through to completion.

"I have had the good fortune to witness Joel's leadership as a Board member 15 years ago to today," said board member **Debbie Herrera**. "I am always in awe of Joel's deep intellect, mixed with humor, wit and practicality—adding in sprinkles of innovation and curiosity, all on top of a strong foundation of unsolicited praise for others."

Debbie continued: "He elevates the voices that are not there, or will call upon them if they are, all while demonstrating his own humility and grace where he role models empathy, vulnerability and imperfection."

Board Chair **Tasha Jones** noted Joel's rare ability to see around corners: "He brings strategic thinking, generosity, and influence. His ability to leverage his network and open doors has had a lasting impact on our trajectory." Tasha will miss his steady presence as a trusted thought partner.

Marcus Divita said: "Joel is about the nicest person I've ever met. He has a way of making everyone laugh and feel included."

Joel, Craig, and Nicole: thank you for dedicating your lives to our families and organization. You will be greatly missed!



LINDA CHILDEARS brings decades of leadership in philanthropy and banking to the Warren Village board. She served as President and CEO of the Daniels Fund for 15 years, growing the foundation from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion while distributing approximately \$1 billion in grants and scholarships across four western states. Founder **Bill Daniels** hired her to help launch Young Americans Bank, a pioneering bank for kids. She later became the bank's President and CEO, capping a banking career spanning over 35 years. Linda chairs Firefly Autism and has served on over 35 state and local boards, chairing nine of them.

"I have admired the work of Warren Village for many years," Linda said about joining the board. "I strongly believe in the accountability aspect of the program. Warren Village has a strong CEO and very impressive Board of Directors. It will be an honor to serve with these people." **Welcome to Warren Village, Linda!**

Evening of Inspiration Highlights Resident Success Stories

On March 18, Warren Village held an Evening of Inspiration. Alumni **Jan Watkins, Kaysha Hudson, and Lee Ortega** shared their journeys with current residents.

Jan shared a powerful metaphor: “There’s a reason the rearview mirror is small but your windshield is big—what’s behind you is behind you. You have a future ahead of you.”

The three women spoke candidly about overcoming domestic violence, completing advanced degrees while raising children, and learning to ask for help. Kaysha (also pictured in our Alumni feature, right) emphasized giving yourself grace. Lee (see right) spoke about breaking cycles of codependency and raising self-sufficient adults.

When residents asked difficult questions about fear, financial transitions, and rebuilding trust, the panelists responded with both practical wisdom and heartfelt encouragement. As one resident said through tears: “The wisdom bestowed upon you through your struggles—that is the definition of power.”



Left to right: Jan Watkins, Kaysha Hudson, Lee Ortega pose after their panel. All photos by Eddie Schmid.



Current resident Jahmila asks questions for the panel.



Left to right: Annette Alexander, Alumni Program Manager; Jan Watkins, Kaysha Hudson, and Lee Ortega, alumni

Beyond the Village: Alumni Making Waves in the Community



KAYSHA HUDSON graduated from Warren Village as a young mother at 19. Today, she holds a master’s degree in Healthcare Administration and works in revenue cycle management at Ensemble Health Partners.



MICHELLE HORWITZ attended Warren Village’s preschool in the late 1980s, the daughter of a single father. Today, she is giving back: she is now a clinical social worker at Washington University, providing trauma-informed therapy to young children.



LEE ORTEGA earned her bachelor’s degree in sociology while at Warren Village and raising her children. Now she works in a nonprofit serving Denver’s homeless population while pursuing her dreams of law school and entrepreneurship.

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 **Warren Village**

Announcing: Aspire Reception 2027!

We're excited to announce an all-new event in support of our families: our **Spring Aspire Cocktail Reception**, which will take place **March 4, 2027 at Mile High Station**. Mark your calendars and tell your friends and colleagues!