



**DENVER FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Recognizing Exemplary Volunteer and Community Service by Government Employees in Colorado: Inaugural 'United We Serve' Award Ceremony to be held in conjunction with 18<sup>th</sup> Annual MLK Unity Training*

(Denver, CO January 11, 2010) The Denver Federal Executive Board is proud to announce the winners of the 2009 UNITED WE SERVE AWARDS. These awards recognize four government employees from each level of government (city, county, state, and federal) who have demonstrated sustained excellence in volunteer service leading to significant positive outcomes for their communities. The award ceremony will take place during the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual MLK Unity Day luncheon on Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup> in the Korbel Ballroom of the Colorado Convention Center.

The UNITED WE SERVE Award winners for 2009 are:

City: Sergeant Steve Skundberg, City of Littleton Police Department  
County: Stephen Schneider, Larimer County FTTD  
State: Working Together Foundation Board of Directors, Karen Fassler, President  
Federal: Mike Williams, National Park Service

These individuals were nominated by their peers for their exceptional leadership skills in recruiting, inspiring and coordinating volunteer initiatives. Each of the UNITED WE SERVE AWARD winners has devoted substantial time and effort to the advancement of volunteerism. Some have provided exemplary service as volunteers and others have worked beyond the call of duty to spearhead the volunteer action to address a community need and to create a lasting impact.

The "United We Serve" initiative was launched by the President and Mrs. Obama in June of 2009 to encourage government employees to volunteer in their communities. The Denver Federal Executive Board collaborated with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the State of Colorado Governor's Commission on Community Service to create this award. Denver Federal Executive Board Executive Director Gay Page stated that, "It is a distinct honor to be the first state in the nation to present UNITED WE SERVE awards recognizing government employees that not only serve their respective agencies, but also their communities."

The Denver Federal Executive Board (DFEB) is one of the original ten Federal Executive Boards established by Presidential Directive in 1961. The Federal Executive Boards nationally serve as a cornerstone for strategic partnering in government, and provide a forum for communication and collaboration among Federal agencies outside of Washington, DC.



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### **WINNER PROJECT INFORMATION:**

#### *Sergeant Steve Skundberg, City of Littleton Police Department*

Sergeant Steve Skundberg was nominated by Sungate Kids, a not-for-profit organization that works with children who have been abused or have witnessed a crime. Sergeant Skundberg has been involved with Sungate kids for ten years after discovering their services as a detective. “Sungate is so important to the work we do and provides amazing support to children who have experienced an often unimaginable trauma,” Sergeant Skundberg said. “Volunteering to support their work came naturally and has provided some of my most memorable life experiences.”

#### *Stephen Schneider, Larimer County FITD*

Stephen Schneider was nominated by his colleagues for his volunteer contributions to the Civil Air Patrol Colorado Wing. According to colleague and nominator Roy Schutt, Stephen has taken the cadet program of the Civil Air Patrol to new heights; and has trained over 85 volunteers under the age of 18 to work in search and rescue and in disaster preparedness. Stephen and his cadets were mobilized during the Windsor tornado where the youth performed house to house welfare checks. Stephen’s colleagues offer that he firmly believes in the potential of youth to become leaders and gives tirelessly to create opportunities in which they can at the Civil Air Patrol.

#### *Working Together Foundation Board of Directors, Karen Fassler, President*

The 2009 State UNITED WE SERVE winner is an example of both the power of one and the will of many to address a community need. The Working Together Foundation Board is a group of 18 volunteers who have worked together since 1992 to assure that there is an emergency safety-net for State employees when times get tough. The Foundation has no paid staff and all of the work is performed by the State employees and retirees who comprise the Board. Working Together Foundation board president Karen Fassler describes the Foundation work as employees helping employees in times of crisis. “The Foundation makes small grants to employees who have hit a tough patch and who could possibly face eviction or an escalating health crisis.” Examples of grants made include utility bill payment for a family where the spouse lost their job and money for leave for a parent with a critically ill child.

#### *Mike Williams, National Park Service*

Mike “Mr. Make-A-Wish” Williams has been volunteering to make wishes come true for children with life-threatening illnesses and injuries for over 25 years. No matter where he has worked as a Federal employee, Mike has found a “Make-A-Wish” chapter and gone to work. After serving in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Main and Central New York, Mike came back to Colorado where he found a new not-for-profit “wish” organization in the Starlight Children’s Foundation. Mike now divides his time volunteering for both; giving his time, his money and mostly, his unyielding care for making children’s wishes come true.



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### ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED

Sungate Kids [www.sungatekids.org](http://www.sungatekids.org)

Contact: [Diana.Goldberg@sungatekids.org](mailto:Diana.Goldberg@sungatekids.org)

Civil Air Patrol Colorado Wing TVCS Squadron

Contact: [Von@nighthawknest.com](mailto:Von@nighthawknest.com)

Working Together Colorado

<http://www.state.co.us/dhr/wt/>

Starlight Children's Foundation

[www.starlight-colorado.org](http://www.starlight-colorado.org)

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