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LiveWell Montrose-Olathe Will Lead Obesity Prevention Efforts as a New LiveWell Colorado Community

The Valley Food Partnership and the Montrose Community Foundation Receive \$40,000 from LiveWell Colorado to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategies in Montrose and Olathe

Montrose, Colo. (Aug. 1, 2012) – The Valley Food Partnership and the Montrose Community Foundation announced today that Montrose-Olathe has been named a new “LiveWell Community” by LiveWell Colorado, a nonprofit organization committed to preventing and reducing obesity in the state by promoting healthy eating and active living.

LiveWell Montrose-Olathe will be led by the Growing Healthy Communities Coalition, a subgroup of the Valley Food Partnership, under the fiscal partnership of the Montrose Community Foundation, which received \$40,000 from LiveWell Colorado to develop and lead a coalition focused on improving Montrose and Olathe residents’ access to healthy foods and opportunities for active living, in order to reduce obesity rates.

“This funding is being awarded to the Montrose-Olathe community for its solid plans to affect positive change through strategic education, action and collaboration,” said Maren Stewart, president and CEO of LiveWell Colorado. “We look forward to working with the Valley Food Partnership and the Montrose Community Foundation to advance community-level strategies that will make the healthy choice the easy choice for all Montrose and Olathe residents.”

The funding supports the newly named LiveWell Montrose-Olathe community through a one-year mobilization and planning process. During this stage, LiveWell Montrose-Olathe will work in partnership with local stakeholders to develop a long-term community strategic plan that will lay out strategies and guide future activities related to obesity prevention and reduction. At the end of this year-long planning cycle, LiveWell Colorado may invite LiveWell Montrose-Olathe to apply for additional funding to support strategy implementation.

LiveWell Montrose-Olathe joins 21 currently funded LiveWell Colorado Communities supported by LiveWell Colorado to develop and execute sustainable local policy initiatives designed to promote healthy eating and active living. In addition to financial support provided through a unique nine-year funding cycle, LiveWell Colorado provides significant technical assistance and opportunities for shared learning and collaborations. The community initiatives program has directly benefited more than a million Coloradans.

LiveWell Montrose-Olathe was selected for its characteristics and conditions that are well suited for this type of investment, including a sizable population with an interconnected network for multi-channel interventions; strong agricultural communities, creating a fertile base to link food and activity to health outcomes; community readiness for change based on prior successful food/agriculture funds and efforts; and a broad spectrum of local champions committed to improving health.

“We are thrilled to be a new LiveWell community and help improve our residents’ access to healthy food and opportunities for physical activity,” said Cathy Romaniello, a registered dietitian and the new LiveWell Montrose-Olathe Community Coordinator. “The needs and the strengths of this community are inextricably intertwined. We will be bringing together the health department, schools, hospital, recreation facilities, health care providers, non-profit agencies, state and local government agencies, migrants, farmers, seniors, youth, and others – all of whom are committed to sowing the seeds of change for better health and, thereby, reducing our obesity rates.”

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, obesity is the single greatest public health threat to the nation. In fact, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are the second leading preventable causes of death in the U.S. and Colorado. Fifty-eight percent of Colorado adults and nearly a quarter of Colorado children are overweight or obese. If trends continue, only 33 percent of Colorado adults will be a healthy weight by 2020. Colorado is ranked 23rd in the nation for childhood obesity and has the second-fastest rate of increase in the country. The overweight and obesity rate of adults in Montrose and Olathe (55 percent) is similar to the state average, with a higher rate for children (between 22-36 percent).

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About LiveWell Colorado

LiveWell Colorado is a nonprofit organization committed to preventing and reducing obesity in Colorado by promoting healthy eating and active living. Leading a comprehensive approach, LiveWell Colorado inspires and advances policy, environmental and lifestyle changes that aim to provide every Coloradan with access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity in the places they live, work, learn and play. LiveWell Colorado’s strategic partners and funders are the Colorado Health Foundation, Kaiser Permanente and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. For more information about LiveWell Colorado, visit www.livewellcolorado.org. “Like” LiveWell Colorado on [Facebook](#) and “follow” @livewellco on [Twitter](#).

About Valley Food Partnership

Located in the heart of Western Colorado’s Uncompahgre Valley, the Valley Food Partnership is a non-profit organization that supports dedicated volunteers who are working together to grow a healthy community by connecting local farms to local forks. The Valley Food Partnership includes a diverse group of stakeholders, each of whom are dedicated to growing our local food system while improving the health of our citizens and economy. Our membership includes farmers, parents, health professionals, restaurateurs, chefs, educators, non-profit organizations,

and community based organizations such as the hospital, school district, recreation departments, and senior programs. For more information about the Valley Food Partnership, visit www.valleyfoodpartnership.org.

About the Growing Healthy Communities Coalition

The Growing Healthy Communities Coalition (GHCC) is a subgroup within the Valley Food Partnership, which focuses on health issues, using local foods and agriculture as a basis for health outcomes, and incorporating physical activity primarily through recreation districts and local gardening partners. The GHCC involves multi-sector stakeholders from the agriculture industry, public schools, public health/health care agencies, city/town government-funded recreation districts, nonprofit organizations, federal government food assistance programs, faith-based agencies, and other state/local government agencies such as CSU Extension, Town of Olathe, and Montrose Association for Commerce and Tourism.

About Montrose Community Foundation

The Montrose Community Foundation is a charitable 501(c)3 organization committed to the development of our community. All contributions to the Foundation are tax-exempt. The Foundation celebrated twenty years of service to the community in 2009 and explosive growth in the level of participation in the community. This multi-faceted organization is growing the community strong by:

- Serving as a non-profit resource;
- Facilitating opportunities for area youth to experience the joys of philanthropy;
- Acting as a local funder to area grant recipients;
- Providing recognition to individuals actively serving the community;
- Administering scholarship funds for local students;
- Offering solutions to individuals struggling with chemical dependency;
- Collaborating with community groups to accomplish their dreams through fiscal sponsorships; and
- Creating a compassionate community focused on future generations through planned giving.

For more information about the Montrose Community Foundation, visit <http://www.montrosecf.com>.