

City of Westminster Inclusivity Programs

Westminster Inclusivity Board

In early 2015, the Westminster City Council formed the Inclusivity Task Force to help guide the city as it examined a potential permanent board or commission that would consider issues of inclusivity, diversity and other issues in our community. In October, the Inclusivity Task Force provided recommendations to City Council on the formation of an Inclusivity Board. On Nov. 9, City Council unanimously approved the formation of the Westminster Inclusivity Board.

The Inclusivity Board first began meeting in summer 2016 and will assist City Council in proactively addressing inclusivity issues in the City of Westminster. The Inclusivity Board envisions a diverse community where everyone understands the city belongs to them and their participation matters. The mission of the Board is to work with City Council to advocate for all voices within our community and to ensure everyone is treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Bilingual Merit Pay Program

The City of Westminster's Bilingual Merit Pay Program encourages and rewards benefited employees who are conversationally fluent in Spanish, Hmong, or Laotian. As the City's population continues to grow, one of the definite by-products of this growth, locally and nationally, is a significant increase in the number of customers who speak Spanish, Asian dialects and other foreign languages. Our ability to communicate more effectively with our non-English speaking residents, customers and visitors to the city, strengthens our overall service delivery system, enhances customer service, and makes us more responsive and friendly to the many different customers we serve.

City Council Outreach

The City Council Outreach Plan outlines, at Council's request, increased inclusive practices at Council community meetings, "The city will provide child care and language interpretation and translation of the meetings and communications about them." To meet this goal, staff in the Communication and Outreach Division have begun expanding the multi-lingual communications they do with the City Council's outreach program. In September 2015, City Council hosted the kick-off event of the Sunday hours at the Irving Street Library. At this event, Mayor Pro Tem Alberto Garcia spoke, and Spanish language interpretation of his speech was provided. In January 2016, City Council hosted the South Westminster City Council Community Meeting at the MAC where outreach information was translated in Spanish prior to the event, and Spanish interpretation was provided at the event. These practices have continued for subsequent council outreach events.

Top Spin and Takraw Courts

- Westminster has the first top spin court in the nation. The game is commonly known as "tuj lub" and is played locally by members of the Hmong community, many of whom have deep roots to Southeast Asia. The game also goes by the names top spinning or topspin. During play, large tops are flung by a stick and string onto a metal sheet. The court is located at Skyline Vista Park. Westminster has a team of top spin players that compete nationally.
- Parks staff met with members of the Hmong community back in late March 2016 at Skyline Vista Park to allow them to provide feedback and suggestions on the upgrades and improvements they would like to see. Staff has taken this feedback and is now working with a number of vendors to obtain some price estimates to see how we can maximize the use of the current available funding.



- The members of the Hmong community who we met with also provided some information on Takraw courts. This would be an amenity they would like to see, but they made it very clear that their number one priority would be to upgrade the top spin court to artificial turf and if future funding was available add a Takraw court.

City presentation to HMAAC Board

In January 2016, the City Manager invited the Board of Directors of the Hmong American Association of Colorado to a presentation about the city, including our history, services and future directions. The City Manager hosted approximately 15 board members in collaboration with our City Council and department heads. This was a successful event that allowed the city to connect with HMAAC in a way they had not yet before, sparking discussions and questions.

The Lao Buddhist Temple of Colorado

The temple is located in Westminster and staff across departments and City Council have been continually connected with the members at the local Lao Buddhist Temple. We are happy to be welcoming one of their members as a member of our newly forming Inclusivity Board. The temple burned down three years ago and the city has been working closely with the community in their rebuilt efforts.

Spanish Swim Lessons

The Latino community is at a higher risk of drowning. In order to combat the statistics the City of Westminster developed a Spanish swim lesson program for youth and adults. This program was featured on Telemundo, and we had participants from all over the Denver Metro area attend our program. The program has sold out every session we have offered it.

Summer Lunch Program

This is a continuation of the USDA Free & Reduced Lunch Program. The City of Westminster offers this program in partnership the Westminster Public School District. At the Summer Lunch Program we provide Recreational opportunities free to the public and supplement nutrition with USDA approved lunches.

Summer Camp Program

In partnership with Westminster Public Schools, and the Colorado Childcare Assistance Program, we are able to provide a summer camp experience at a reduced rate depending on income level and childcare assistance. This camp includes breakfast, lunch, field trips, swimming, crafts, and enrichment.

Spanish Movie in the Park

In 2015, the city of Westminster partnered with El Comercio de Colorado to present the first "Spanish Movie at the Park." The movie presented was "No Instructions Included/No se aceptan devoluciones." Over 1,000 residents attended the movie at the park. In 2016 two Spanish movies at the park took place.

Latino Festival

The first Westminster Latino festival took place on July of this year. The city partnered with El Comercio de Colorado for this event. The city has continued to support this event.

Westy POWER-PODER

Through the Great Outdoors Colorado Generation Wild grant, the city and local partners have been providing free outdoor education opportunities to support low income students from Westminster



Public Schools. These programs are for children of all ages and include free field trips for preschool students, after school nature clubs for elementary and middle school children, and experiences, both for recreation and career building, for high schoolers. Included in this grant is on-going community outreach with the Spanish and Hmong speaking residents of Historic Westminster to engage them in the planning and implementation process of this grant. Over the summer of 2019, the city offered its first bilingual junior ranger program at Standley Lake Regional Park and Wildlife Refuge. Families were provided transportation as needed to and from the park and bilingual staff to provide family-oriented programming ranging from nature education to camping 101.

Westminster Public Library (WPL) Programs

Note: There is no registration or charge for any of the programs listed below.

About WPL Programs

Our programs are recognized as very effective and popular with the community. We have been approached by different groups to share our program as models for other groups. We have shared how our Speak English Program works when requested faith communities & non-profits who model the programs that they are creating on ours. We have also been recognized by USCIS as making an important contact with University of Colorado, Boulder for the first Citizenship Preparation Class offered on that campus.

Drop-In Computer & Technology Help in Spanish is offered on the second Wednesday of every month from 3:30 to 4:30 pm at Irving St. Library. All the basics are covered in this free class including navigating with a mouse, surfing the Internet and communicating with email. Additional evening classes for computer and technology help are held the first and third Wednesday of every month from 6:30-7:45 pm. No registration required.

The weekly **Citizenship Class** is held at Irving Street Library every Saturday from 10-11:30 a.m. Skilled volunteer instructors prepare students for all aspects of the USCIS Citizenship Test using USCIS materials. The class can serve as a quick civics lesson for the community. The Citizenship Class is being used as a model by other libraries to develop their own Citizenship Class. Partnering with USCIS, the library began the Citizenship Corner which includes both free and library material to check out on citizenship.

Annual Citizenship Workshops are presented by the Lutheran Family Services – Immigration Legal Services in partnership with the Westminster Public Library. Eligible lawful permanent residents are able to meet with an attorney to discuss applying for citizenship. Lutheran Family Services provides an eligibility screening for all interested permanent residents. For cases accepted, Lutheran Family Services will conduct a case consultation, prepare and submit the N-400 and/or fee waiver forms to USCIS and provide the applicant with a naturalization interview preparation session.

Naturalization Oath Ceremony is held annually at the Westminster City Park Recreation Center. The Naturalization Oath Ceremony is hosted by the Westminster Public Library Citizenship Program in partnership with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The Ceremony features speakers including Westminster Mayor Herb Atchison, State Senators and Representatives, Adams County Commissioners and other elected officials. An immigration official leads the new citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance and administers the Oath of Allegiance to the new citizens, as well as giving the new citizens their naturalization certificates. At the conclusion of the ceremony, a student choir



welcomes the new citizens by singing "This Land Is Your Land." This is a highlight of the ceremony and is very meaningful to the new citizens, their families, the guests, and the students. The new citizens are from Westminster and surrounding areas. Guests attending are family and friends of the new citizens as well as invited members of the community and the Westminster City Council. A dessert reception follows the program and the new citizens are able to register to vote with volunteers from the League of Women Voters. The library has been asked by other libraries (i.e. Loveland Public Library) to help plan their own Nationalization Oath Ceremony.

At the request of the community, beginning in 2018 the library held voter registration events sponsored by Mi Familia Vota and Legal of Women Voters.

Our **ESL conversation groups (Speak English)** are also free and no registration is necessary. Participants can drop in as it is convenient for them. Speak English has morning and evening sessions at both College Hill and Irving St. libraries and runs from September through the first week of June each year. We have 15 different first language groups represented in our Speak English group. Participants come from Eastern Europe, Asia, Northern Africa and many Spanish speaking countries. At the request of the community, we have added an English conversation group on Tuesday at 5:30-6:30 pm at Irving Street for monolingual Spanish speakers to learn English.

We were asked to not just have our English conversation groups. And we responded with adding the **Spanish conversation group** that meets at College Hill Library. It offers another conversation group in the most requested other language – Spanish.

Adams County Colorado Workforce Center came to both the College Hill Library and the Irving Street Library to present the **Governor's Summer Job Hunt**, a statewide program to match young adults 14-24 with employers, and assist them in their job search. Job Hunt Help is every Wednesday from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Irving St. Library. Skilled volunteers work one-on-one with participants on every aspect of a job search including creating resumes, finding and applying for positions online, brainstorming career ideas and preparing for an interview. [Our Job Hunt Help volunteers were honored with a 7 Everyday Hero Award.](#)

Listening community who are continually seeking family programming – not just only adult and just only children programming, rolled out **Kids and Family Art Sundays** partnering with the South Westminster Arts Group once a month on the 3rd Sunday of each month at Irving Street Library. This free, drop-in program has been popular with the community.

Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program

The City of Westminster provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for an Emergency and Essential Home Repair Program, which is intended to assist owner-occupied, low-income households in making repairs deemed essential to preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the home's occupants. Up to \$5,000 in eligible home repairs can be made free of charge to income-qualified households located within Westminster city limits. Funding is limited and applications are only accepted while funds are available. Eligible repairs may include, but are not limited to: plumbing, carpentry, electrical, furnace and hot water heater repair or replacement, accessibility improvements, etc. Beginning in Fall 2019, the program will be jointly administered by the Jefferson County Housing Authority (for Jefferson County residents) and Brothers Redevelopment (for Adams County residents) to expand this valuable program.