

THE DENVER  
CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIMS



THE Carson J Spencer  
FOUNDATION

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**The Denver Center for Crime Victims wins The Carson J Spencer Foundation's  
Working Minds Contest  
Celebrating Mentally Healthy Workplaces in Colorado**

**For Immediate Release:**

**Denver, Co., August 5, 2010.** Each year The Carson J Spencer Foundation welcomes Colorado businesses, nonprofit, for-profit or governmental agencies to compete in the Working Minds Contest. This contest is designed to showcase workplaces in our community that practice innovative and effective approaches in promoting mental health at work. This year The Denver Center for Crime Victims won the contest and will be honored at the Shinning Lights of Hope Benefit on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

"The Working Minds Contest seeks to promote workplaces that are focused on the emotional well-being of their workforce – through policy, practice and overall culture," said Sally Spencer-Thomas, Executive Director of the Carson J Spencer Foundation. "In a time when lots of workplaces are becoming increasingly distressed, the Denver Center for Crime Victims is making a concerted effort to keep their team thriving. We are excited to hold up their practices as a model for others."

Cathy Phelps, Executive Director, of The Denver Center for Crime Victims created a self care program in order to mitigate the effects of vicarious trauma in her staff. Vicarious trauma results from exposure to information and feelings of a traumatic event experienced by another person. Many people working as social workers, crisis counselors, disaster relief workers and emergency medical staff experience vicarious trauma. The self care philosophy is an integral part of the DCCV workplace culture and is discussed with potential employees and volunteers and included in all job descriptions and orientations.

Staff creates confidential, results-oriented stretch goals addressing five areas: physical, emotional, financial, intellectual and spiritual health. These goals are supervised twice a month and included in annual evaluations. Because of the self care policies and workplace culture, DCCV staff ranks lower in burnout and compassion fatigue and have a higher sense of compassion satisfaction compared to the national average.

The self care plan has been formalized into an innovative workshop and is available to other mental health professionals. Entitled, Health Enabling for Listening Professionals (HELP), participants are educated about the negative effects of trauma and learn stress management techniques.

**About The Denver Center for Crime Victims:** The Denver Center for Crime Victims (DCCV) is a beacon of hope and safety net for more than 6,000 people each year. Our services are broad, supporting survivors of simple theft, domestic and sexual violence, to suicide/homicide survivors. We provide crisis intervention, brief therapy, case management, financial assistance, crime scene clean up and more, all without cost to victims. For additional details about programs, volunteering or if you are a

victim of a crime and need assistance please call (303) 860-0660 or see <http://www.denervictims.org/>. For more information about this contest or suicide prevention in the workplace call (720) 244-6535 or visit <http://www.WorkingMinds.org>.

**About The Carson J Spencer Foundation: - Sustaining a Passion for Life**

The Carson J Spencer Foundation ([www.CarsonJSpencer.org](http://www.CarsonJSpencer.org)) is a Colorado nonprofit, established in 2005. We envision a world where leaders and communities are committed to sustaining a passion for life. We sustain a passion for life by:

- delivering innovative and effective suicide prevention programs
- coaching emerging leaders how to develop sustainable social enterprises that raise money and awareness for suicide prevention
- supporting the education of young entrepreneurs and leaders through scholarships

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