

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Since then, every U.S. President has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week. Additionally, governors, mayors and other elected officials make public statements and sign proclamations in support of National Volunteer Week.

National Volunteer Week is celebrated during April, this year April 18-24, 2021. The Points of Light Foundation establishes a theme each year. This year's theme, "Volunteers Improve Today for Tomorrow" was selected to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges, to build stronger communities and be a force that transforms the world. Today, as people strive to lead lives that reflect their values, the expression of civic life has evolved. Whether online, at the office, or the local food bank, whether with a vote, a voice, or a wallet – doing good comes in many forms, and we recognize and celebrate them all.

I love saying thank you. It may be an odd thing to say but I like sharing a genuine thank you. Not only do I usually see a smile appear, but I, too, get inspired to continue my efforts. It is important to recognize the power of appreciation. I like to think that we are good at expressing our appreciation to our CLS volunteers all year. But it is nice when National Volunteer Week rolls around to give us a formal opportunity to say thank you. I witness the simple acts of kindness each day at Colorado Legal Services. Our volunteers bring something more precious in addition to their time, energy, dedication, and enthusiasm. They bring their heart and soul. They exemplify commitment and caring. It is about helping others; it is about working together – even during a tough year. Barack Obama said, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." CLS volunteers are that change, they make a difference in the lives of our applicants and clients.

In years past at CLS, we have hosted breakfasts, lunches, and dessert receptions in honor of our volunteers. Unfortunately, those kinds of celebrations are not in the cards this year. We look forward to a time when we can all be together again and mingle with each other and say out thank-you's in person. Instead, we would like to take this time to thank our CLS volunteers who have helped with the mission. We are proud you are our neighbors and privileged to be a part of your community.