



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods to Celebrate
50th Anniversary this Wednesday**
*Denver's oldest, largest registered neighborhood organization to launch new initiatives
as it celebrates 50 years of community impact*

DENVER, CO—Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (C.H.U.N.), one of Denver's largest and longest-running registered neighborhood organizations (RNO), will celebrate its 50th Anniversary this Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2019 at the Denver Botanic Gardens. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. (VIP Reception); general admission is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. Remarks will be at 7 p.m.

“In 1969, during the height of urban renewal movement, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods fought for neighborhoods and successfully persuaded then-Mayor William McNichols to abandon a plan to convert 12th Avenue and 11th Avenue into one-way streets,” said Travis Leiker, President of C.H.U.N. “Since then, Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods has organized neighborhood stakeholders to address the most vexing issues facing Denver. As we look ahead to the next 50 years with a renewed commitment to collaboration, innovation, and organizational viability, we are excited to implement a series of initiatives focused on furthering C.H.U.N.’s mission.”

Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods has much to celebrate beyond its 50th Anniversary. Two and a half years ago, the organization grappled with systemic operational, financial, and cultural struggles. Today, the organization is no longer in debt, membership has increased by 300 percent in two-years, and board engagement and composition are at an all-time high. The organization has refined its operations and enhanced its internal culture, thus becoming more innovative and inclusive. “My deepest appreciation goes out to Zander Oklar and Molly Williams [the celebration’s co-chairs and chief organizers], members of the event planning committee, and the entire board for their hard work and dedication,” Leiker continued.

In addition to celebrating its anniversary, the organization will announce three new community initiatives:

- **One Little Kindness:** One Little Kindness—conceptualized in partnership with C.H.U.N. member and small business owner Mark Whistler—will be the first, RNO-driven kindness campaign promoting greater kindness, community cohesiveness, and neighborliness through both word and

deed within C.H.U.N.'s geographic boundaries. One little act of kindness each day can change Denver's neighborhoods for the better.

“One Little Kindness seeks to inspire all of us to perform, acknowledge, and appreciate small acts of kindness towards each other. The 50th Anniversary is an exciting time to announce this vision.” - Mark Whistler, C.H.U.N. Business Member and owner of the Goods Restaurant Colfax

- **Community S.E.E.D. Funding:** S.E.E.D. Awards will encourage civic entrepreneurship and community engagement by providing financial support for projects that align with C.H.U.N.'s mission and values. Funding priorities include: **S**mart, solutions-oriented development; **E**nrichment through educational programming and other lifelong learning opportunities; **E**nvironmental sustainability and combating climate change at the neighborhood level; and **D**iversity efforts and projects fostering an inclusive community.

“The event [50th Anniversary] is an opportunity for CHUN to bestow small financial awards to put ideas for improving neighborhoods into action. I look forward to working with anyone who has an idea for a Community SEED Award! All are encouraged to apply.” - Vickie Berkley, C.H.U.N. Delegate

- **Enhance the Historic Tears-McFarlane House and Community Center and Deliver a 50 year vision:** The historic Tears-McFarlane Mansion was built in 1899 and is recognized as an architectural jewel in Capitol Hill. The mansion and adjoining property have been the home of C.H.U.N. since 2005. After a century of intensive use, even though C.H.U.N. has leveraged several state historic fund grants for restoration, there is still years of deferred maintenance and needed repairs. C.H.U.N., in partnership with City Street Investors, will soon embark on an effort to revitalize and restore the property—creating a stream of funding for C.H.U.N. initiatives and creating an economically viable and sustainable place for the community to gather.

“The investments we hope to make in this property will serve the greater Capitol Hill community for decades to come and revitalize a community asset that the original owners intended to shine as a beacon for the neighborhood.” Bill DeMaio, C.H.U.N. Board of Delegate and VP, Tears-McFarlane House

“We are thrilled to host our golden anniversary event and eager to implement new, community programs,” said longtime C.H.U.N. board delegate and event sponsor Margie Valdez. Molly Williams, VP of Fundraising added, “We are honored by the outpouring of support from the community, and we are excited to have more than 250 people join us to celebrate five decades of impact throughout the greater Capitol Hill community.”

For more information, please call 303.830.1651 or email chun@chundenver.org.

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Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (C.H.U.N.) is a registered neighborhood organization and a Colorado nonprofit corporation. Founded in 1969, C.H.U.N. has evolved into one of Denver's oldest, largest, and most influential neighborhood organizations. The organization's mission is **Preserving the Past, Improving the Present, and Planning for the Future** of Capitol Hill and Denver. C.H.U.N. accomplishes this mission through its emphasis on historic preservation, affordable housing and homelessness, land use and zoning,

and public safety. At the foundation of its work is the critical importance of civic participation– that a community becomes healthier and more vibrant through the active involvement of those who live and work in our neighborhoods.