

# RYDER'S FUND

## ONE BY ONE



Winter 2023 Newsletter | RydersFund.org | Ryder's Fund is Administered by the YMCA of Northern Colorado Endowment Committee

### ORIGIN OF RYDER'S FUND

On January 17, 2016, our 20 year-old son, Ryder, went missing. It was a parent's worst nightmare. In the following days, weeks and months, hundreds of people searched thousands of acres in the vast and rugged Walker Ranch area west of Boulder. Mercifully, after 1½ years, on July 29, 2017, Ryder's remains were found and we were able to bring him home, say goodbye and have some sense of closure. In this tragic shared experience, we witnessed the goodness in people and greatness in our community. Ryder was a warm, caring and empathetic person so it seemed that Ryder's Fund was a fitting way to honor those qualities and begin to give back for a greater purpose. It is from this place that Ryder's Fund was created to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting life's challenges. —Rick and Cindy Johnson



There are several elements of our vision for Ryder's Fund, including schools/ education, law enforcement, specialized service providers, faith community and youth programs.

### RYDER'S LOVE GRANT PROGRAM CONTINUES TO HELP NICU FAMILIES

In partnership with Love for Lily, and inspired by the story of little Carter James Allen, Ryder's Fund established the Ryder's Love Grant Program in 2021. This program, administered by Love for Lily, provides expanded reach to NICU families outside Colorado (with a regional emphasis). In 2023, Ryder's Love helped five families with six separate grants. The grants since the inception of Ryder's Fund total \$10,250. The mom of Baby Caio wrote as follows:

"The Love for Lily Foundation (and specifically the Ryder's Love Grant) has been an enormous help for my sweet Caio and I. After being abandoned by Caio's dad, finances were super tight to cover all of Caio's NICU expenses. Having these grants and support... has been a Godsend. We have been able to provide for our food expenses particularly with the funds received. We are eternally grateful for the donors and support which make these grants possible."



Ryder's Love seeks to offer NICU families a hand up at a time when their lives are in turmoil. Funds are available to families who spend 4 consecutive weeks in the NICU, in order to provide support such as therapies, services or modalities after discharge that contribute to the health and well-being of their children. Follow-up funding is focused on families who stay involved with Love for Lily programming.

### CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP WITH RISE AGAINST SUICIDE

Ryder's Fund has continued to team up with Rise Against Suicide to attempt to decrease the incidence of suicide by removing financial and social barriers to treatment for at-risk youth. The Rise Against Suicide program takes referrals of uninsured or underinsured youth suffering from depression or suicidal ideation and helps match those young people and their families with licensed therapists within 24 hours. Ryder's Fund provided a \$5,000 grant in 2023 (a total of \$15,000 for 2022-2023) to cover those situations where extended sessions (beyond 8) are necessary for continued counseling and treatment. Many of our youth are still struggling with the effects of isolation and loss of learning that came with Covid-19 lockdowns. The pandemic only escalated a youth mental health crisis that was already reaching worrisome proportions. Rise reports it continues to see an increase in sessions needed to move kids out of their suicidal ideation and into a more stable mental health condition.



Over the past year, Rise served 361 youth and funded 4,592 therapy sessions. 185 of the 361 kids received over eight sessions. A total of 1,969 of the 4,592 funded sessions were extra sessions. The total annual cost of the sessions without travel was \$177,210. The average number of sessions per kid has increased to 10 with few other similar available resources for our youth.

### GRANT FOR FIRST \$10,000 IN SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE YMCA FOR COMING YEAR

The YMCA also continues its long-standing commitment for kids of all backgrounds to learn, grow and have fun through youth sports. The YMCA creates community through its youth sports programs, giving everyone the opportunity for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Youth sports teach hard work, sportsmanship and teamwork – life lessons that are vital long into adulthood. The YMCA offers baseball, basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball, hockey and more. The YMCA now offers youth sports programs in Boulder, Lafayette, Longmont, Superior, Louisville, Johnstown, Loveland and beyond. Ryder's Fund has again donated the first \$10,000 in scholarships for the coming year to the YMCA of Northern Colorado's youth sports programs. Over one-third of YMCA youth sports participants receive some form of financial aid and no one is turned away because of an inability to pay.

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## RYDER'S FUND TEAMS WITH ROOTS AT BOULDER VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH TO SEND KIDS TO CAMP

Ryder's Fund continued its tradition of providing financial assistance for young people to attend Student Life Camp. This Summer, BVCC's Student Ministry Roots took 15 young people to Student Life Camp in Glorieta, NM, from May 30 to June 3, 2023. While at summer camp, students came together to engage with one another in activities, shared experiences, and conversations about their life. The goal is that the students come away from the week growing closer to one another and their leaders, as well as knowing God in a personal way. Unfortunately, for many families, cost acts as a primary barrier to participation. The program asks families to participate financially in some way, however, Ryder's Fund contributed \$2,625 (\$175 per student) to help defray a portion of the cost. Oz Costillo, Student Ministries Resident for Roots, stated "Thank you for the ways you help so many individuals over the years through Ryder's Fund. You provided a way for students to build relationships with God and one another, and our ministry has been better ever since."



## IN RECOGNITION OF TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE 2013 FLOODS, RYDER'S FUND SUPPORTS THE GERALD BOLAND SCHOLARSHIP FUND HELPING LYONS YOUTH WITH COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Ten years after the 2013 flood, the Town of Lyons held a commemorative event marking the fateful day in September 2013, when Lyons residents woke up to the sound of flood sirens and Lyons soon became a collection of islands due to high flood waters. The day of remembrance was named Grit, Grace and Gratitude Day by Lyons Mayor Holly Rogin. Julie Van Domelsen, Lyons mayor at the time of the floods, recognized the loss of homes (never to be rebuilt) and the loss of beloved community member and longtime teacher Gerald Boland. Former mayor Van Domelsen went on to state: "Despite this

loss, I sat in the eye of the hurricane and I got to see the best of us, and it was a mighty sight." At the event, Gerald Boland's son, Brent Boland, sang "The Last Lesson," a song he wrote about his parents. He said his dad was a teacher and kept on teaching to the end.

One of the foundational elements of Ryder's Fund is schools and education. In the aftermath of the 2013 floods, the Lyons Community Foundation established the Gerald Boland Scholarship Fund. Gerald Boland was a teacher for over 30 years and education was his life. The day of the flood, he was helping people get settled at the shelter and then drove back home looking for his wife. In the days that followed, his family endured the trauma of a prolonged search eventually resulting in the recovery of his body from the swollen waters of St. Vrain Creek. With the passage of time, the Boland family has learned to move beyond grief to gratitude. Gerald Boland strongly believed in young people and improving their futures. These core values align with the mission of Ryder's Fund, and we are pleased to assist the Lyons Community Foundation in helping to provide young people in Lyons with scholarship money to take the important next step in their education.

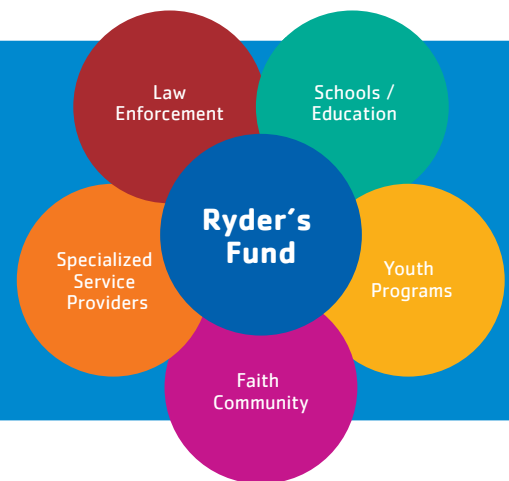
## SUPPORT FOR GOLF FUNDRAISER FOR ST. VRAIN VALLEY YOUNG LIFE

When Ryder's Fund was approached by Larry Lummis about a golf marathon benefitting St. Vrain Valley Young Life, we knew Ryder's Fund had to be involved. Larry Lummis was a long-time YMCA hockey coach in Lafayette who also happened to coach Ryder for many years. Larry and his son, Tyler, participated in a golf marathon where they played 90 holes in 9 hours (6 minutes per hole) in order to raise money for a cause they both feel strongly about – supporting St. Vrain Valley Young Life, an outreach youth ministry that specializes in building relationships with teenagers and walking with them through the highs and lows of their teen years. Larry has volunteered with Young Life for several years, including with the Special Needs Ministry, and personally attests to the impact the organization has on these kids. Young Life believes the best solution for today's problems is a mentor relationship with an adult and encountering Christian life and values. As Larry puts it, "Young Life is all about loving the hell out of kids in our community regardless of their beliefs. Your donation will help the 70 volunteers that touch 500 kids every week to keep pushing forward." Congratulations to Larry and Tyler on their accomplishment and commitment toward young people in our community.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Ryder's Fund seeks to continue to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting and overcoming the challenges of our modern world. Ryder's Fund also proudly supports the educators, faith leaders and first responders that help our young people and our larger community. Rest assured, one by one, we are making an impact on our local community and its most precious resource, young people. Make a charitable contribution at [RydersFund.org](http://RydersFund.org) or send a check (Payable to YMCA of Northern Colorado – Ryder's Fund) to:

**YMCA of Northern Colorado – Ryder's Fund**  
2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette, CO 80026



### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total Contributions ..... \$561,784.71\*  
Total Gifts/Grants..... \$241,798.21\*

**0% spent on Administrative Costs.**

*\*includes \$20,635 contributed prior to establishment of YMCA endowment account*

Ryder's Fund is administered by the  
YMCA of Northern Colorado Endowment Committee

