

# SUCCESS SUMMIT & EXPO

Enlighten. Elevate. Empower.



**B.E.S.T.**

BLACK ECONOMIC SUCCESS TRUST

June 9 - 10, 2023

Sheraton Downtown Denver  
Empower Field at Mile High



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& OPPORTUNITY



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Enlighten. Elevate. Empower.



## SUCCESS SUMMIT & EXPO

### *We're Back!*

Welcome to the 2023 Black Economic Summit Trust (B.E.S.T.) Success Summit & Expo. After several years of hiatus, this powerful event is back in the Denver Metro area, bringing to the community connection, education, and focus on business and economic well-being for success. We are unparalleled in the Rocky Mountain region for several reasons and we are grateful you chose to join in today's activities here at the Sheraton Downtown Denver, Colorado.

In recent years, the Black Community has faced significant economic challenges grappling with the need to revitalize businesses and organizations while adapting to an ever-evolving business landscape. These needs were compounded specifically in our community by the aftereffects of the global pandemic.

Our organization, which has been serving the community since 2005, had to take the time to strategize and find new ways to re-engage and reconnect with those we serve.

During our hiatus and after careful consideration, we have undergone a major transformation. The Mountain Region Black Economic Summit (MRBES) organization is now known as the Black Economic Success Trust (B.E.S.T.). Our primary goal is to mitigate the damaging impacts of racism within the Black Community by forging strategic partnerships that dismantle systemic barriers obstructing wealth creation.

Beyond rebranding and restructuring, we have also refocused our efforts on four key pillars of economic empowerment through our 2028 Project. Over the next five years, we will prioritize:

- ◆ Small Business
- ◆ Workforce Development
- ◆ Leadership Development
- ◆ Youth Economic Empowerment

On behalf of the Board of Directors, sponsors, community partners, and steering committee of the Black Economic Summit Trust (B.E.S.T.), we are thrilled to present the return of the Success Summit & Expo.

Please find time today to learn from our captivating presentations, connect to make lasting partnerships, and contribute to our mission of economic success and sustainability.

It is an honor to offer you the opportunity to network, reconnect and grow from others in what promises to be a day filled with exciting discoveries.

Thank you for joining us this year, and please know that your presence is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

**Carla Ladd,**  
B.E.S.T. Executive Director  
[BestSuccessSummit.org](http://BestSuccessSummit.org)

# The strength of our community is its greatest asset.

When people work together, anything is possible. It's why we support organizations that bring people within our community closer. They reinforce the bonds we share and help us celebrate the traditions we hold dear. It's just one part of our investment in our neighbors and the community.

That's why KeyBank is proud to support the 2023 Success Summit.



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*Michael B. Hancock*  
Mayor



*City and County of Denver*

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June 1, 2023

Black Economic Success Trust  
Success Summit  
Sheraton Downtown Denver  
1550 Court Pl, Denver, CO 80202

Greetings:

As the Mayor of the City and County of Denver, it's my pleasure to welcome attendees, entrepreneurs, and business leaders to the Mile High City for the Black Economic Success Trust's Success Summit.

Your work in leveraging partnerships in and effort to reduce and dismantle barriers to economic success that have particularly impacted people of color is truly admirable, and we're excited that you've chosen Denver to hold this summit. Denver is aligned with the vision of creating an economy that works for everyone, and we're proud to be fierce advocates for those who have faced historical and discriminatory challenges and additional roadblocks in their journey to realizing their potential in the economic and business space.

As you gather in the heart of our city, we invite you to explore and enjoy all that we have to offer. We encourage you to dine at our local restaurants and take in our many museums and cultural amenities. Or if you're interested in an outdoor adventure, we are located just minutes from the beauty of the Rocky Mountains.

Best wishes for a productive, memorable and educational summit. Welcome to the Denver, we're honored to have you!

Respectfully,

Michael B. Hancock  
Mayor



The Collective for the  
Advancement of BIPOC+ Businesses

generating economic growth and  
generational wealth within  
our communities

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# JON PLATT

SPECIAL GUEST

Chairman & CEO of  
Sony Music Publishing



Jon Platt is Chairman & CEO of Sony Music Publishing, the number one global music publisher. Since his appointment in April 2019, Platt's inclusive leadership style has reshaped the corporate culture and created a powerful example for the music industry.

Under Platt's watch, Sony Music Publishing has significantly increased representation by women on the company's senior leadership team. He has also attracted key new signings and executive talent, as well as expanded opportunities available to songwriters. With a mantra to always put songwriters first, the company is setting the standard on how songwriters are paid and was the first music publisher to expedite foreign royalty payments.

Culturally, Platt is acknowledged for his influence as a creative executive. He is widely credited for bringing hip-hop music to dominance in the music publishing industry by elevating how R&B/hip-hop artists are respected and compensated as songwriters. Throughout his career, he has signed and collaborated with prominent songwriters including Jay-Z, Beyoncé, Kanye West, Pharrell Williams, Drake, Rihanna and Usher.

Platt previously served as Chairman & CEO of Warner Chappell and led the company's turnaround. Platt also worked for 17 years at EMI Music Publishing. He has received numerous honors including

Billboard's "Power 100", SESAC's "Visionary Award", Morehouse College's "Candle Award" and City of Hope's prestigious "Spirit of Life" award. In 2005, he launched the Big Jon Platt Scholarship Program for high school students from his hometown of Denver attending college.

# ALEXANDRA LEWIS

MISTRESS OF CERMONIES

9NEWS ANCHOR



Alexandra Lewis is an Emmy-award winning news anchor for NBC affiliate 9NEWS in Denver, CO. Alex's 20 year career has taken her to newsrooms and media centers across the country. From covering hurricanes in Louisiana and Texas, to historic elections in Washington, and investigating law enforcement in Ohio -

Alex's career has challenged her at every turn. Outside of news, Alex has used her skill-set in unique ways - creating educational programming used at NASA's Johnson Space Center and producing and hosting an award-winning national documentary with PBS on domestic violence. Among the many hats she's worn throughout her eclectic career, Alex's favorite role is Mom to her three-year old daughter, Ava.

# PRYCE CANTRELL

JUNIOR INTERVIEWER



Pryce will be an 11th Grader at Smoky Hill High School in the fall. He enjoys studying business and music.



# HELENA HAYNES-CARTER

GUEST SPEAKER

Executive Vice President



Helena Haynes-Carter is the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer for KeyBank. In this role, Helena is responsible for organizing and aligning strategic priorities, tactics, messaging, and operating rhythms for the DE&I space throughout Key and the communities we serve. With experience spanning the healthcare, financial services, energy and public sector industries, she most recently served as Senior Director, Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion for UnitedHealth Group. In this role, Helena led enterprise-wide DE&I strategic and business initiatives. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she orchestrated a \$14M response with community-based organizations throughout the U.S., deploying over 30,000 COVID-19 tests, wrap-around services, and care referrals.

Prior to that role, Helena was Vice President, Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for U.S. Bancorp, where she led enterprise and BIPOC segment strategy as well as DE&I-focused initiatives designed to achieve product growth. During her tenure, U.S. Bancorp achieved its first DiversityInc Top 50 Best Company designation. She has also held past roles at organizations including Rocky Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council, Xcel Energy, and Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.

Helena holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Marketing Management from University of Colorado and an MBA from Hamline University. She is actively involved in a number of community organizations, industry councils and currently serves on the board of National INROADS, the nation's largest non-profit source of paid internships for undergraduate, diverse youth. Helena has recently relocated to the Cleveland, Ohio area

# DANIELLE SHOOTS

GUEST SPEAKER

Managing Partner and  
Managing Director



Danielle Shoots is the Managing Partner and Managing Director of the New Community Transformation fund – Denver, a venture capital fund for BIPOC founders and the President and CEO of Wealth Equity Enterprises, a holdings company that owns several businesses that support the mission of building BIPOC wealth and leadership. Born and raised in Colorado, Danielle is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Denver, where she earned a degree in Business Administration.

At the age of 26, Danielle embarked on her executive leadership path ascending to the position of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. After the state, Danielle served as the Vice President of Finance and Business Operations for the West Division of Comcast, managing a billion-dollar capital portfolio, strategic FP&A, Mergers and Acquisitions and a team of sixty employees located in seven states. Most recently Danielle, was the Chief Financial Officer for the Colorado Trust where she grew the foundation's endowment from \$430 million to nearly \$600 million, reduced cash on hand to a recurring 1% while still operating the foundation. She also launched a direct investment portfolio across the State making investments in local media companies, real estate and housing and small businesses and leveraging the endowments' balance sheet for creative bridge financing across multiple sectors and industries.

Danielle is a passionate community member and serves as a trustee for the Women's Foundation, a mayoral appointed board member for the Prosper Denver Fund and the chief economic equity advisor to State Senator, James Coleman and State Representative, Leslie Herod.

# LASHEITA SAYER

GUEST SPEAKER

Owner and Principal,  
ZoZo Group



LaSheita Sayer is the Owner of ZoZo Group, an award-winning marketing and outreach agency that specializes in public engagement on infrastructure projects. As a small business owner, she is passionate about the expansion of electric vehicles (EVs) and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Sayer is actively involved with the Denver Sustainability Advisory Council and the Governors Colorado Electric Vehicle Coalition and is a member of the Equity, Policy, and EV Battery Recycling committees. She founded a non-profit, Women Who Charge, in 2019 to advocate for transition to clean energy with electric vehicles and expanding the charging station network.

A graduate of the University of Colorado School of Business, Sayer earned her degree in marketing and international business and has specialized training in strategic planning, project management, crisis communication, public speaking, and internet marketing. Expanding Colorado's small business community is also a passion for Sayer. She is a past Five Points Business Improvement District (FPBID) board member.

**Denver International Airport (DEN) is the top economic engine for the Colorado region, contributing more than \$33 billion to the state's economy.**

DEN's Commerce Hub serves as a resource for historically underutilized businesses to champion efforts that improve policy, increase access, and position firms to bid on a wide range of projects more competitively across DEN.

The Commerce Hub offers the following areas of support and more to help businesses engage with DEN:



#### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Technical assistance and resources to provide training and guidance on how to navigate city processes, ordinances, and guidelines. This includes providing education on financial matters, insurance needs and other important issues.



#### **CERTIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE**

Small business programs and opportunities exist at the airport for certified businesses. Commerce Hub will help determine whether certification is right for your business and then refer you to the appropriate agency to guide you through the process.



#### **OUTREACH AND NETWORKING**

Sessions are offered year-round for businesses to connect to industry experts, community entrepreneurs, and Prime companies already doing business at the airport.

**We'd love to connect with you and learn about your business goals at DEN! [DENCommercehub@flydenver.com](mailto:DENCommercehub@flydenver.com)**



# TIANA PATTERSON, ESQ

GUEST SPEAKER

Vice President of Social Impact  
and Wealth Equity



Tiana Patterson is the Vice President of Social Impact and Wealth Equity for Elevation Community Land Trust where she cultivates and oversees the creation and implementation of community engagement and partnership strategy before, during, and after project development. She also ensures that all aspects of the home sales process – from initial community engagement to homebuying through post-purchase support – align with the mission, values and goals of ECLT. She is also responsible for legal and compliance issues related to ECLT homeowners.

Previously, Tiana was the Public Partnerships and Legal Director for ECLT. She also served as State & Local policy director for Enterprise Community Partners in Denver, Colorado. Where she worked on affordable housing issues at Federal, State and Local levels. In that role, Tiana drafted and successfully advocated for the passage of an update to the Residential Tenants Health and Safety Act (HB19-1170), which was signed into law in May of 2019. This update was a comprehensive overhaul of housing quality standards for rental housing throughout Colorado. In 2019, Tiana was named as one of the Rising Stars in Housing by Denverite Magazine.

After graduating from law school, Tiana was selected for a post-graduate legal fellowship in Washington, D.C. where she worked on matters related to healthcare access and healthcare disparities on Capitol Hill. Tiana worked on Amicus Briefs submitted to the Supreme Court on reproductive justice and freedom. Tiana trained college-aged students on how to effectively advocate to elected officials and on how to engage in the political process.

Prior to her time in D.C., Tiana was a student of law at DePaul University in Chicago, IL where she assisted domestic violence survivors in obtaining orders of protection, researched and helped craft a textbook on tort law, and served as an ethics fellow during her undergraduate education at Emory University in Atlanta, GA.

# DAVID OGUNSANYA

## GUEST SPEAKER

Vice President of Real Estate,  
Elevation Community Land Trust

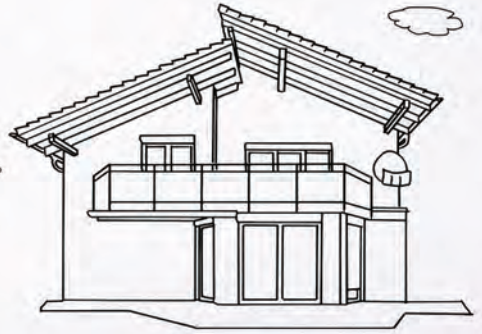


David Ogunsanya is the Vice President of Real Estate for Elevation Community Land Trust. In this capacity, he is responsible for the organization's land acquisition strategy, and external partner relations to create more than 700 affordable homes in metro Denver and ultimately statewide.

Prior to joining Elevation CLT, David served as the Director of Housing for Athens Land Trust in Athens, Georgia. In his role, he oversaw all real estate and strategic planning activities and led the management of a portfolio with more than 60 multi- and single-family homes. He also ensured the implementation of best practice models to preserve housing affordability and land trust ground leases. Prior to the Athens Land Trust, David served as the Community Program Manager for City First Homes, Inc. in Washington, DC., where he was actively involved in stewarding 244 units of permanently affordable housing.

David's expertise extends into the intersection of community engagement and policy awareness where he educates key stakeholders about the benefits of the community land trust model as a mechanism for creating permanent affordability and driving positive change in communities. His work focuses on affordable housing policies such as inclusionary zoning, to assist in the creation of more affordable homes within market rate developments.

David is a graduate of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) at the University of Pittsburgh and North Carolina Central University. Professionally, David has served on various community development boards, including the Athens-Clarke County Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan Community and as Vice President of the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing



Do you dream of becoming a homeowner but it feels out of reach?

**Elevation Community Land Trust has a program that can help make that dream come true.**

By providing down payment assistance of up to **\$50,000**, our **Doors to Opportunity** program makes it affordable and possible for more Coloradans to become homeowners. Depending on where you live in the state, you may qualify for up to \$150,000 in additional down payment assistance on a home of your choosing.

Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis, so don't wait. Apply today at [www.elevationclt.org/doors](http://www.elevationclt.org/doors).

**And make your way home!**

[WWW.ELEVATIONCLT.ORG](http://WWW.ELEVATIONCLT.ORG)

Learn more at the B.E.S.T. Expo on June 10!

## M.J. IVY

### GUEST SPEAKER

Director of Communications and  
Engagement for Jefferson  
County Public Library



M.J. Ivy currently serves as Director of Communications and Engagement for Jefferson County Public Library in the Denver Metro area. He is the first African American to be hired in this role that serves over 580,000 residents.

Prior to this appointment, M.J. owned his own Communications, Public Relations and Political Consulting firm at Ivy's Communications Group for 13 years.

M.J. has earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communications Studies from Lindenwood University and a Master of Arts Degree in Public Policy and Urban Leadership from the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

In addition, he is a Persian Gulf War, Air Force Veteran and the pastor of Kinship Community Church in Las Vegas.

In April 2023, Pastor Ivy was appointed Co-Chair of the first ever, Faith Leaders Superbowl Host Committee to serve the 2024 Superbowl in Las Vegas, Nevada.



# REGINA RICHARDS

GUEST SPEAKER



Experienced Director Of Diversity with a demonstrated history of working in the higher education industry. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Coaching, Team Building, Fundraising, and Management. Strong administrative professional with a Doctor of Social Work focused in Social Work and Education from Colorado State University. Educator, developed and delivered curriculum on Racism in Medicine. Trained and delivered workshops in Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions at the provider, student and systems-levels.

Developed longitudinal partnerships with Office of Admissions and Student Life, Faculty Affairs, hospital systems, facilitating trainings and workshops in anchored in best practices for positive changes in the areas of recruitment and retention practices, equitable and inclusive climate and culture using strategic data-driven approaches for initiatives and measurable outcomes. Highly skilled in developing, managing and sustaining pipeline programs using equity framework. Service to the community includes national, regional and local presentations, mentoring and coaching of professionals across disciplines and at various institutional levels.

Excellent communication skills both oral and written. Exceptional skills in cultivating, developing and sustaining partnerships and identifying key stakeholders that help advance the missions of the institutions which I am working with (this must be done using the principles related to diversity, inclusion, equity and reciprocity). Subject matter expert on best-practices for community engagement and service-learning.

JANUS HENDERSON IS PROUD TO SUPPORT  
THE BLACK ECONOMIC SUCCESS TRUST.

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## HON. WILMA J. WEBB

### *2023 WiLMA Legacy Award*

\*The WiLMA was created to honor the legacy of the Honorable Wilma J. Webb, who served Colorado and the nation as Denver's first active First Lady and first African American woman to be Denver's First Lady, the U.S. Labor Department's first woman to be Regional Administrator for Region VIII, and District 8's first woman to be elected to the Colorado House of Representatives, is a public servant and leader who has, without question, served with distinction. She is the first and only Colorado African American woman who has served on all three levels of our government.

This annual award is presented to an individual who has exhibited selfless commitment to her community via volunteer efforts and/or corporate support that has made a positive difference in the lives of others. The WiLMA Award recognizes women who offer their time, talent and resources to improve the community in one or more of the following areas: women's services, social services, youth or senior activities, health care, the arts, justice, education, housing, community growth and development; or politics.



## PATRICIA HOUSTON

### *2023 WiLMA Legacy Award Honoree*

Patricia Houston, the founder and executive director of EspeciallyMe™, dedicated her career to empowering African American high school and middle school girls. EspeciallyMe™ was a non-profit organization that offered positive model programs to help young girls develop a strong sense of self and make choices based on their inner voice rather than external influences like media or peer pressure.

Through the EspeciallyMe™ Conference, Patricia addressed a wide range of issues impacting the lives, spirit, dignity, and personal values of African American girls. Working alongside high school, college, and community mentors, the conference provided a supportive and non-judgmental environment for girls to discuss peer-related challenges. It also served as a platform for girls to create and implement constructive action plans. Each conference featured a distinguished keynote speaker and honored outstanding student achievers. Since its establishment in 1999, EspeciallyMe™ has welcomed over 15,000 participants.

In addition to her work with EspeciallyMe™, Patricia's career included various roles and accomplishments. She served as the Affirmative Action Officer for both the Samsonite Corporation and the Beatrice Corporation. Patricia also contributed to her community as a Commissioner on the Aurora Civil Service Commission, where she served for six years, including two years as the Commission Chair. Furthermore, she held positions such as Assistant Director of Admissions at Metropolitan State University of Denver, communication specialist for medical and healthcare students at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Center, and education consultant. Patricia conducted workshops for parents titled "Parenting Steps," focusing on raising successful children. She actively served on multiple commissions and boards and received numerous awards and honors, including the Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce Ascension Award, the African American Leadership Mountain Award, and the Colorado Association for Black Journalists Trailblazer Community Award.

Patricia earned an undergraduate degree in Political Science from Gonzaga University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington.

Sadly, Mrs. Houston passed away unexpectedly in April of this year. She is survived by her husband Herman, her four adult children, seven grandchildren, and a grateful community that will forever cherish her memory.



## DR. SYL MORGAN-SMITH

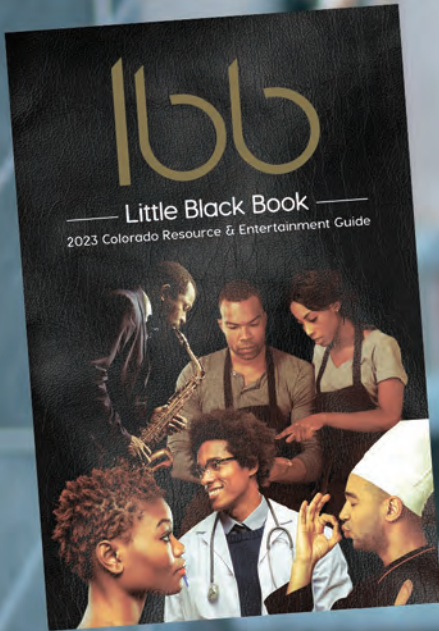
### *2023 Women in Leadership & Management Award (WiLMA) Honoree*

Dr. Syl Morgan-Smith has a God-given and unique set of expertise with successful careers as a graduate nurse, a Denver primetime television news anchor, television talk show host, radio newscaster, radio gospel music announcer, newspaper managing editor, Western Region reporter for the National Mutual and National Black Radio Networks, Colorado realtor, and Director of Public Affairs for Rockwell International at the U.S Department of Energy's (DOE) Rocky Flats Facility near Boulder, Colorado. She retired from the Midwest Research Institute of Missouri (MRI) after 30 years of service in various positions for their DOE contract operations at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Golden, Colorado, where she held various executive-level management positions that included Director of Corporate Communications, Director of Public Relations and Manager of Communications.

Morgan-Smith excels in directing corporate communications, public affairs, special events, marketing, diversity, government, and community public relations programs. She studied communications and business at the University of Omaha, Regis University, the University of Colorado, Jones Real Estate College, and Signal Broadcasting School. She has two Honorary Doctorates of Humanities and Liberal Arts from the Denver Urban Institute University, and Swisher Bible College. She is a respected and acknowledged professional communicator with vast knowledge, skill, and credibility as an acclaimed "go-to person," for leadership in fields of mass communications, mass media, community relations, event planning, workforce development, and corporate outreach programs. She also served the Bush Administration as Vice Chair of the National Small Business Administration Council.

Morgan-Smith is the Founder and President of the Colorado Gospel Music Academy & Hall of Fame which has honored more than 800 persons and groups. She is a trusted community leader that shares her expertise with local and national groups. She has served on countless boards of directors that include the Denver Zoo, Children's Hospital, First Interstate Banks and Norwest Banks in Jefferson County, American Red Cross, Columbine Permanent Memorial Foundation, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, the Denver Board of Ethics, American Association of Blacks in Energy, Metro Denver Urban League, Hope Center of Denver and many more.

She is an ordained Deacon at New Hope Baptist Church, a world traveler, and a proud mother of four children, Shiva, Andre, Melody, and Ramon. She's good at the White House but better in God's House.



“YOUR AD  
should be here!”

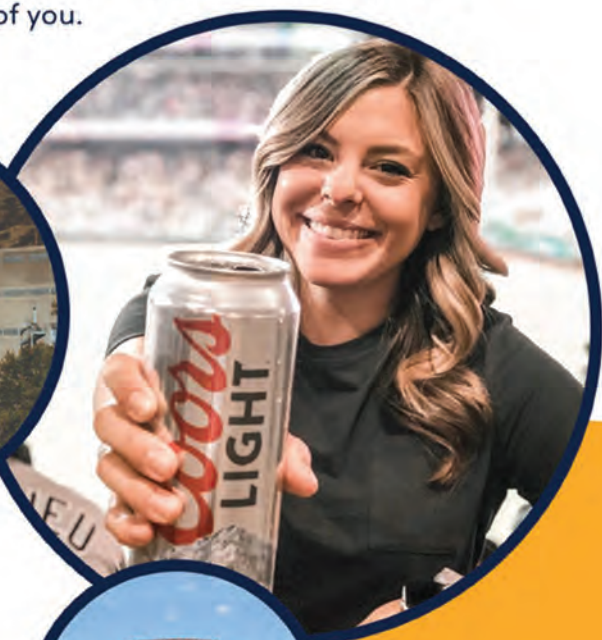
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# COLORADANS TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

We've loved Colorado before Colorado was a state. Our water, our employees and our beer are all born in the Rockies. But the thing we love most about Colorado is the community, which is why we'll always take care of you.



MOLSON  
COORS beverage  
company