Urban Peak is pleased to profile Urban Peak client Eloy Arguello who was recently honored by Mayor Michael B. Hancock at The Mayor’s Youth Awards on April 17, 2013.

The Mayor’s Youth Awards honors teenagers between the ages of 13 and 19 who have overcome difficult situations in their lives. The award seeks to recognize and support young people who have made positive changes and exhibited strength and resilience in the face of adversity.

Award recipients are chosen through a nomination and selection process to recognize 30 young people at a ceremony with the Mayor in the spring of each year.

Client PROFILE // Eloy Arguello, Mayor’s Youth Awards Recipient

Meet Eloy.

Eloy Arguello is a young man of incredible resiliency, hope and determination. Growing up, Eloy’s mother was never around. He lived with his father; but sadly, Eloy’s father struggled with an addiction to drugs that often lead to abusive situations. Eloy was forced to grow up without parental support.

At sixteen, Eloy’s father demanded he leave home. Eloy bounced around from couch to couch, staying with friends for short periods of time. Eventually, Eloy and his father made amends, but less than a year later, at age 17, Eloy once again found himself on the streets. Without guidance and encouragement, Eloy dropped out of high school in March of his senior year, two months short of graduation.

Alone, scared and without hope, Eloy began to see himself in the eyes of his father, as a “bum.” He launched into a path of self-destruction, hanging with the wrong crowd, experimenting with drugs.

Eloy felt worthless.

That is, until his girlfriend at the time helped him see otherwise. She saw the phenomenal potential Eloy possessed, and eventually he came to believe in his own worth.

It’s Eloy’s own determination that has led him to the successful position he is in today.

Take a Sneak PEEK // Tour Urban Peak

Are you considering making a donation or partnering with Urban Peak? Do you own a business and believe that you can offer products or services that benefit the youth we serve? If you’re interested in learning where your donation goes and the impact your contribution has on youth experiencing homelessness here in Denver, we would be honored to give you a tour of Urban Peak.

Your donation to Urban Peak can truly change lives.

To schedule a tour or to learn more about Urban Peak, contact our Development Specialist, Sydney Park, at 303-974-2958 or via email at sydney.park@urbanpeak.org.
From our CEO // Launching THE JOURNEY

Over the past 25 years, Urban Peak has grown from a small storefront to a church basement, from a house to an overnight shelter, from one building to five, from Denver to Colorado Springs. Urban Peak is growing to meet the needs of our clientele, thanks to your overwhelming support. Your generosity means so very much.

We pride ourselves in being excellent stewards of the resources you provide. As our greatest supporters, we want to provide you with insight into the tremendous work we do – day in, day out – that allows us to meet the youth where they are, both physically and emotionally. As you can see, we’ve redesigned our newsletter with this issue to bring you more stories about the youth we serve at Urban Peak, the programs and services we offer the youth throughout the year, as well as spotlight a few of Urban Peak’s volunteers and business partners.

We have a lot planned for Urban Peak in the next few years and we’re excited to share our successes with you along the way. We recently hired a new executive director, Shawna Rae Kemppainen, to lead the Colorado Springs organization and added three new members to the Denver Board of Directors: David Jennings, Jamie Kilcoyne and Marcy Pelecky.

The Journey Campaign
This year marks Urban Peak’s 25th anniversary. To coincide with this milestone year, we’re launching The Journey, a three-year, $3,000,000 comprehensive campaign designed to meet Urban Peak’s long-term sustainability, support ongoing operational needs, and optimize our facilities.

Throughout the year, you will be hearing more from our staff and ambassadors from Urban Peak regarding the campaign. They will be sharing updates with you and asking for your support as we fulfill our vision of supporting youth experiencing homelessness well into the next 25 years.

Due to drastic cuts at the federal and state levels, Urban Peak has lost approximately $500,000 in funding from government sources in 2013 alone; we know this funding will continue to decline. Through the campaign, Urban Peak can and will enhance our strategic fundraising strategies to diversify and grow funding sources that will allow for long-term financial sustainability. Along with your help, we can continue the phenomenal programming and services we offer the youth and expand our services even more to meet the growing need.

With an estimated 800 youth experiencing homelessness on the streets of Denver on any given night, we know our work must continue.

Journey with us into a future that builds confidence, reinstates belief, restores direction, and heightens opportunity. Join us as we continue the journey together.

My door is always open. I would be honored to meet with you and show you Urban Peak at any time.

Until then, please enjoy this newsletter. If you have any ideas for future issues, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you once again for your generosity and support!

All my best,

Kim Easton

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Mel Hallenbeck
Overnight Shelter
Ext. 2904
Steve Hughes
Volunteer Opportunities
Ext. 2958
Suzanne Kittelson
and Item Donations
Ext. 2907
Krista McNamara
Transitional Housing
Ext. 2965
Sydney Park
Research and Program Evaluation
Ext. 2957
Chris Venable
Donation Recognition
Ext. 2958
Lori Weiner
Education & Employment and Outreach
Ext. 2906
Chris Weiss
Clinical Services
Ext. 2905
Marcie Willms
Monetary Donations
Ext. 2954
Communications & Events
Ext. 2947

Mission
Urban Peak helps youth experiencing homelessness and youth at risk of becoming homeless overcome real life challenges by providing essential services and a supportive community, empowering them to become self-sufficient adults.

Vision
Urban Peak will be a service model of innovation and success for youth experiencing homelessness and will achieve outstanding results for our clients, supporters, donors and employees.

Let’s Connect!
Did you know that you can follow the latest news regarding Urban Peak on social media? If you haven’t already, please consider ‘liking’ or ‘following’ us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. You can also subscribe to our eNewsletter from our Facebook page!

We are currently in the process of redesigning and upgrading our website; so, for now, following us on social media is the fastest way to get your Urban Peak news. Connect with us today!

LinkedIn.com/Company/Urban-Peak
Twitter.com/UrbanPeakCO
Facebook.com/UrbanPeakCO
YouTube.com/user/UrbanPeakCO
More than 700 people came out to celebrate Urban Peak’s 25 years of positive impact in the community at our 13th annual Maverick Thinkers Awards Dinner held on Thursday, March 7, at the Hyatt Regency in Downtown Denver. Over $480,000 was raised during the evening’s festivities, making it Urban Peak’s most successful Maverick Thinkers event to date.

The event, Urban Peak’s largest fundraiser of the year, serves to honor an outstanding individual that has made a substantial contribution to helping youth who experience homelessness in our community, as well as a former Urban Peak youth who is making significant strides toward self-sufficiency.

This year Urban Peak had the pleasure of honoring Roxane White, Chief of Staff to Governor Hickenlooper. Ms. White served as CEO of Urban Peak from 1995 to 2003 and went on to create Denver’s Road Home, the city’s 10-year plan to end homelessness. In addition to her many contributions to the Denver community, Ms. White has published numerous articles related to high-risk youth and homelessness, and spent sixteen years developing programs to serve the needs of youth experiencing homelessness at Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco.

Adrian Muro was the recipient of the 2013 Maverick Thinker Youth Award.

Urban Peak would like to extend a special thanks to this year’s presenting sponsors The Anschutz Foundation, DaVita, Liberty Media, MDC Holdings/Richmond American Homes, and W.G. Nielsen & Co.; special guest Governor John Hickenlooper; emcee Tami Door; the amazing 2013 Maverick Thinkers Event Committee; and our evening’s guests.

Thank you to all who made this year’s Maverick Thinkers a resounding success!
Winter RECEPTION

On Thursday, February 28, Urban Peak had the pleasure of honoring nearly 40 youth at Urban Peak’s Winter Reception for GED and Job Readiness Training Graduates. Urban Peak’s Education & Employment staff recognized 19 youth who have successfully completed their General Educational Development (GED) or high school equivalency exams and 18 youth who successfully completed Urban Peak’s Job Readiness Training program so far this fiscal year. The graduates, along with any friends and family the youth chose to invite, were treated to a catered Italian meal courtesy of Mici’s Handcrafted Italian and cupcakes from a local bakery.

Please join us in congratulating our winter graduates on a job well done! To view portions of the ceremony, check out our YouTube page at www.youtube.com/user/urbanpeakco. Thank you for your support! Your financial contributions help us to pay for GED testing, among many other vital services. Your donation truly makes dreams come true.

Emily Griffith TECHNICAL COLLEGE

If you could go back to school, what would you study? Cosmetology? The culinary arts? Cabinet making and millwork? Landscape management? Heating, ventilation and air conditioning? Thanks to the amazing partnership between Urban Peak and Emily Griffith Technical College, youth at Urban Peak had the opportunity to explore a wealth of career options at Emily Griffith, a Denver Public School alternative high school and technical college, during a tour in mid-March.

The Education & Employment team at Urban Peak works tirelessly to ensure that the youth we serve are provided with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a highly competitive job market. In helping the youth to obtain their high school and college degrees or alternative education, we’re helping Urban Peak youth build their paths to self-sufficiency and a brighter tomorrow.
SOS Outreach
SNOWBOARDING ADVENTURE
Building Confidence on the Slopes

Several Urban Peak housing clients were treated to an opportunity of a lifetime this season. Approximately 20 youth were invited to participate in Learn to Ski/Ride (LTR), the largest and most fundamental program of SOS Outreach, a group formed to expose underprivileged youth to the sport of snowboarding. Created for underserved youth ages 8-18, LTR features a five day program centered on one of five core values: courage, discipline, integrity, wisdom and compassion.

Benefits include a 5-day lift ticket, all necessary snowboarding/skiing equipment, snow sport clothing, professional ski/snowboard instruction, and character development via a core-value curriculum.

Urban Peak would like to thank SOS Outreach for providing this amazing opportunity for the youth, and to our incredible donors who supplement the funding necessary to make valuable life skill opportunities like this one possible. For many of our clients, this was the first time they’ve ever been to a ski resort!
Volunteer Spotlight—
NOELLE BENJAMIN

Nicknamed “Queen Noelle” by several youth at the Drop-In Center, volunteer Noelle Benjamin is well deserving of her regal title. She exhibits all the traits of true royalty: kindness, compassion, loyalty and leadership. Noelle, a volunteer with Urban Peak since 2005, has lent her talents to our youth through Art from Ashes and, more recently, through cooking classes offered through the Drop-In Center.

Every Monday afternoon, Noelle dedicates her day off from work as the owner of Salon Noelle, a hair salon located in Cherry Creek, to Urban Peak. She cranks up the music and dances around the kitchen teaching our youth how to prepare delectable dishes like pasta primavera, enchiladas, soups, pizza and gourmet grilled cheese.

Many of Urban Peak youth, having experienced trauma at such a young age, were never taught the fundamentals of cooking. Noelle is changing that. She is helping them on their respective paths to self-sufficiency by teaching them vital life skills from meal planning and preparation, table manners (they eat together following the preparation of every meal), to the responsibilities of post-meal clean up.

“Noelle has shown true dedication and commitment in helping the youth at Urban Peak,” says Clayton Gonzales, Drop-In Center Supervisor. “She warms the kitchen, not only through the amazing meals she creates with the youth, but also through her smile and welcoming demeanor. It’s no wonder the youth race to sign up for her cooking classes every Monday.”

Noelle Benjamin, once on the verge of homelessness herself, is happy to be filling bellies at Urban Peak, but her spirit is satiated as well. “I am filled with so much joy and gratitude at the end of each week. The youth at Urban Peak take nothing for granted, especially friendship. I am so thankful I have the opportunity to work with these amazing youth.” Noelle, we’re thankful for you too! Thank you for cooking up such fabulous memories for our youth.

Urban Peak volunteers change lives. If you’re interested in volunteering with Urban Peak, please contact Steve Hughes, Volunteer Manager, at 303.974.2910 or via email at steven.hughes@urbanpeak.org.

Eloy continued from front

Following his sister’s lead, Eloy began his journey with Urban Peak in November of 2011 and enrolled in Urban Peak’s GED program. Within one month of coming to Urban Peak, Eloy passed four of the five tests required to obtain a GED. The only test holding him back? Math. After failing to pass the last exam, Eloy’s self-doubt got the better of him. He left Urban Peak.

Five months later, Eloy returned with unbridled energy and an unparalleled level of determination. He spent countless hours in the Urban Peak Education & Employment Center honing his skills and passed his last exam. In June 2012, Eloy donned his cap and gown, and crossed the stage at Urban Peak’s GED Graduation Ceremony. He received his certificate and celebrated with his father, sister, and niece by his side.

A month later, still energized and full of hope, Eloy engaged in Urban Peak’s Job Readiness Training Program, completing the curriculum with accolades. He earned a job referral through Urban Peak and worked with his Urban Peak case manager to apply for subsidized work experience with the Glass Doctor, a windshield glass and repair company, through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. After his internship ended, Eloy was hired on as a full-time staff member.

During his tenure at Urban Peak, Eloy volunteered at Resource Area for Teaching and So All May Eat (SAME) Café. Through this experience, Eloy uncovered his desire to help others which lead him to become a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Member through RTD-Denver, and later apply for FEMA Corps. Part of the AmeriCorps NCCC program, FEMA Corps is a full-time, team-based residential program for youth ages 18-24 whose mission is to strengthen communities and develop leaders through team-based national and community service. Eloy was accepted and began his year of service with FEMA Corps in February 2013 in Sacramento, California.

Although Urban Peak’s programs offered Eloy the tools to help him on his journey, it’s Eloy’s own determination that has led him to the successful position he is in today. He has exhibited unprecedented strength and perseverance throughout his journey, rising above the challenges of homelessness and unemployment. Eloy is truly an inspiration.

Please join us in helping youth like Eloy in overcoming homelessness and fulfilling their dreams. Make a donation today. Your gift will make a difference.

Grants AWARDED

Urban Peak is deeply grateful for our strong partnerships with corporations, foundations, churches, and civic groups who support our programming for youth experiencing homelessness through grant funding. Below is a list of some of our many partners who have supported us through Q2 (ending March 31, 2013) of this fiscal year. Thank you so much for your support of Urban Peak!

Augustana Lutheran Church
Boettcher Foundation
Colorado Creative Industries
The Denver Foundation
The Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
KeyBank Foundation
LARK Foundation
Nationwide Foundation
The Nord Family Foundation
Room & Board
The Schoen Foundation
Spirit of Christ Catholic Church
Xcel Energy Foundation
Partner SPOTLIGHT

Snooze AM Eatery has been partnering with Urban Peak since 2008. Over the course of our five year partnership, Snooze employees have donated their time working with our Education & Employment team through our Job Readiness Training program, conducting mock interviews with Urban Peak youth, reviewing youths’ resumes and cover letters, and even employing a few Urban Peak clients. Snooze AM Eatery currently employs three youth from Urban Peak.

Urban Peak is extremely thankful for Snooze’s support and we’re thrilled to feature them in our quarterly newsletter. Recently we had a chance to sit down with the Snooze team to learn more about their company and their involvement in the community. Here is what they had to say:

Why did you choose to partner with Urban Peak?
We see the direct reward and benefit from being a part of such a special organization. We find great, responsible employees through Urban Peak and we also get to meet really incredible youth that are in need of a “family” atmosphere. Snooze is excited to give them that!

What has been your greatest memory so far in your interactions with Urban Peak?
One of Snooze’s favorite moments was at Urban Peak’s 2012 Community Breakfast. We had eight owners and managers present and we watched one of our very own, Louise Noynay, explain how Urban Peak and Snooze have changed his life for the better. Tears filled all of our eyes and that moment made all of our time and commitments to the organization completely worth it. It was a very special moment.

What might someone be surprised to know about your company?
Snooze has spent the past seven years creating a family. A strong one at that. Urban Peak clients employed through Snooze can be proud that they work for a company that supports its surrounding community and creates an environment where everyone is welcome to be themselves and be unique. They might be surprised to know that we have an Urban Peak participant that has worked for us for nearly four years and is one of our most loved employees. We are proud that he came to us through Urban Peak!

How is Snooze involved in helping those who experience homelessness in our community?
Snooze annually donates 1% of our total sales to the communities we serve. At the Ballpark location we have donated to and dedicated our time and resources to helping the homeless since our inception in 2006. In addition to our volunteer activities at Urban Peak, our staff donates their time to serving meals at the Denver Rescue Mission and has participated in the PJ Party for Denver’s Road Home six years in a row. Snooze also donates to the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, just around the corner from us; Sox Place; and the Denver Voice Newspaper.

By the NUMBERS

In the first quarter of our 2013 fiscal year (October 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012):
» Urban Peak served over 1,000 unduplicated youth
» Roughly 40% of youth served in Q1 were new to Urban Peak
» An average of 42 youth stayed at the Urban Peak shelter each night, above our capacity of 40 beds
» Urban Peak served 11,600 meals and snacks

Upcoming EVENTS

GED Graduation
Wednesday, June 5
6:00 p.m.
St. Cajetan’s Center – Auraria Campus

Cirque du Soleil – Benefit Performance for Urban Peak
Friday, July 19 -or- Thursday, July 25
8:00 p.m.
Pepsi Center

Urban Nights – Benefit Fashion Show for Urban Peak
Friday, August 23
Mile High Station

Community Breakfast
Tuesday, September 10
7:45 a.m.
Westin Denver Downtown

Plates for the Peak – A Benefit for Urban Peak
Monday, October 7
Vesta Dipping Grill
Needs LIST

- Backpacks
- Bottled Water
- Chapstick (New)
- College Ruled Spiral Notebooks
- Deodorant (Men’s or Gender Neutral)
- Gift Cards to Fast Food Restaurants
- Men’s Belts
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

Please drop off all donations at our administrative office located at 730 21st Street, Denver, CO 80205.

Donations are accepted Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.