

Climb

W Y O M I N G

PROGRESS REPORT 2020



"I CAN SEE MY FUTURE NOW"

A MOM'S JOURNEY TO START HER MEDICAL CAREER STORY ON PAGE 6

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Dear Friends,

During a year unlike any other in our lives, we care that you can truly see the difference you make at this critical time. We have specifically designed this report to show you how you matter to the many moms who have reached out to us feeling isolated, afraid, and disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

“I HOPE THE STORIES IN THIS REPORT, SO BRAVELY SHARED, INSPIRE YOU TO STAND WITH WYOMING FAMILIES WORKING HARDER THAN EVER TO LIFT THEMSELVES OUT OF POVERTY.”

Thanks to you, we’ve stabilized more single moms than ever by providing intensive support so they are ready to enter Wyoming’s workforce. We’ve also transitioned our job trainings to a virtual format and maintained a group model that allows isolated women to learn from and grow with each other. This expertise has caught national attention: We’ve been asked to share our best practices with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Federal Interagency Council on Economic Mobility, and we were featured in *USA Today*.

Our state’s most vulnerable families will face continued obstacles in the year ahead. Your help boosts resiliency so that the success of Climb moms will carry into their children’s lives and a new generation.

For all these reasons and more, I hope the stories in this report, so bravely shared, inspire you to stand with Wyoming families working harder than ever to lift themselves out of poverty.

With Gratitude,

Ray Fleming Dinneen, Psy.D.
Climb Wyoming Founder and Executive Director

Photo above: © Lindsay Linton Buk/Women in Wyoming



STABILIZING FAMILIES

A mom may be at the lowest point in her life when she makes that first phone call to Climb Wyoming: feeling overwhelmed and in a place without hope after a lot of doors have closed.

One of the critical ways we serve families is by creating a meaningful connection right away, as soon as a single mother reaches out from the depths and sadness of poverty.

Since the pandemic began, hundreds of moms have come to us for many different reasons. Some no longer have a safe place to sleep at night, some are losing custody of their kids, and some are struggling with addiction. Some are finding that human services programs have been cut back or shut down, all while they’re slipping so far into poverty that they can’t see a way out.

Climb’s intervention begins with a relationship, our cornerstone for almost 35 years. It’s not transactional—it’s the start of a real and ongoing conversation with each mom that lays the groundwork for her future success and empowers her to take the first step...and the next.

Helping a single mother develop tools to calm the toxic stress and chaos of poverty and find stability brings her one step closer to work readiness, even if she’s not yet in one of our job training programs.

We walk alongside each mom we work with every step of the way. It makes all the difference to realize you’re not alone.



GAINING STABILITY FOR WORK

Our services include one-on-one work with a mom as she prepares for the Climb program and employment.

- Guidance to strengthen executive functioning skills: decision making, problem solving, prioritizing, and more
- Training on workplace professionalism, interview skills, and resumes
- Mental health services
- Connections to food, housing, and childcare resources
- Support with preparation for work, including access to substance abuse counseling, and dental and vision care

With the **PANDEMIC** significantly impacting low-income families, we’ve prioritized supporting **850 MOMS IN CRISIS** so they can gain stability in preparation for work.



“I CAN’T WALK AWAY.
I’M NOT GIVING UP.”

After losing her job of many years, Kerry worked part-time as a waitress, earning just \$377 per month and relying on food stamps. She now has a higher-paying career with a construction company.

A STEEP AND SCARY SLIDE

It’s Getting Harder for Families to Climb Out of Poverty

A year ago, the oil and gas facility where Kerry had worked for 13 years shut its doors. “That hit me hard,” says the 50-year-old mother of four kids. “I had a heck of a time with depression.” She applied for several positions, but due to the economic downturn in Wyoming’s energy industry, a lot of other people were looking for work, too. “For me, the low point was when I had to shut off my bank auto payments because my severance had dried up. I just cried my eyes out. Everything was falling through. It was all just beating me down.”

The pandemic’s economic impacts have pushed single mothers like Kerry into unstable situations. Often, single moms who have reached this deep and devastating level of poverty don’t feel like there’s anywhere to turn. At Climb, Kerry found the support she needed to get back on her feet and into the workforce. She especially benefited from individual sessions with Climb’s licensed therapist to address the challenges she faces balancing work and parenting her youngest son, who has ADHD. Kerry’s job placement is with the construction company Lewis & Lewis, Inc. in Rock Springs, where she now drives a large dump truck and is eligible for high-paying overtime jobs making as much as \$31 an hour. “It’s been a hard year,” says Kerry. “There were days when I wanted to give up. But I have a family to feed. I can’t walk away. I’m not giving up.”

THE TOUGH CHOICES OF POVERTY



More than half of Climb’s participants are unemployed when they enter the program. Those who are employed make an average of just \$1,200 per month. Living at this level of poverty makes for tough choices:

ONLY 16% of participants come to Climb with **PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.**

Suffering with a medical condition because you can’t afford to go to the doctor

Having the water shut off in your home so you can pay rent

Leaving a job because your kids can’t go to school and you can’t afford childcare

Spending your last paycheck on dinner instead of filling up an empty gas tank



Virtual medical skills classes, mock interviews, and other elements of Yaneli's training maintained Climb's therapeutic model of working in groups.

“WE WERE ENCOURAGED TO SHOW UP AS WE ARE AND SPENT THOSE FIRST FEW SESSIONS BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS.”

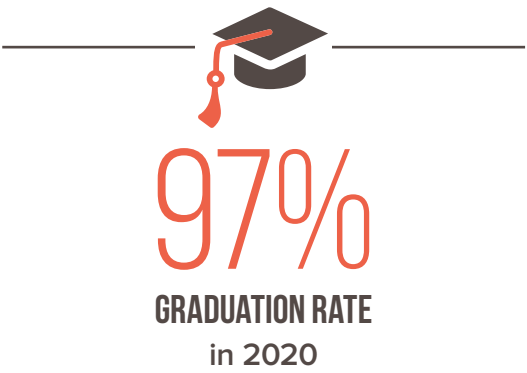


“I CAN SEE MY FUTURE NOW”

Technology Brings Hope, Support, and Job Training to Isolated Families

“It was scary at first to see everyone on screen,” says Yaneli of the first time she connected online with the other women in Climb’s Teton Area Medical Careers training. “One of the first things we did was talk about ground rules, like not judging each other’s background. We were encouraged to show up as we are and spent those first few sessions building relationships. We shared pictures of our kids. Very quickly, I realized that I’m not alone as a single mother.”

When the pandemic hit, Climb’s therapeutically driven model, which has developed over the past 35 years to help remove barriers to employability, transitioned to an online format. Families in poverty often don’t have access to technology, including computer equipment and reliable internet service. By providing laptops and technical support, Climb overcame these obstacles so the 13 participants in Yaneli’s group were able to take classes in parenting, budgeting, and professionalism; receive mental health counseling; and train in Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) work, electronic medical record keeping, Microsoft Office,® and more.



As a native Spanish speaker, Yaneli hopes to one day work in a medical setting where she can translate for patients. For this, she acquired a Spanish medical dictionary and spends hours and hours memorizing terms in both languages.

Yaneli’s group did mock interviews that involved more than 25 people in one Zoom® session. Virtual breakout rooms allowed each participant to practice with different interviewers. In another part of the training, her group used an online simulator to practice medical coding live with an instructor.

“It’s been a lot of hard work,” says Yaneli of Climb’s intensive and innovative training. “But in five years I will tell my son, ‘See, it was worth it.’ I will make him proud of me.”

CLIMB WYOMING SERVED 1,100 FAMILIES IN 2020 THROUGH:





FILLING THE GAP

Graduates Meet a Critical Need for Healthcare Workers

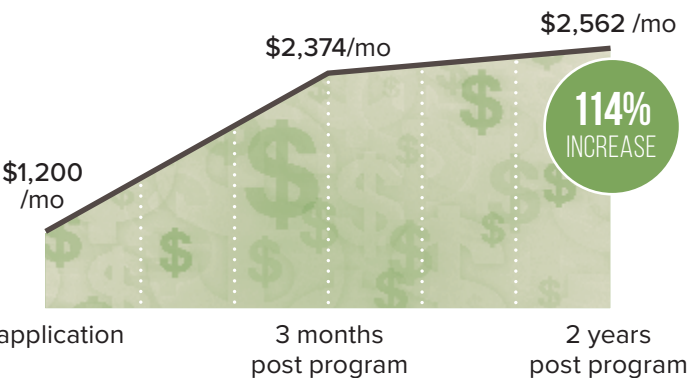
As Wyoming continues to navigate an economic downturn, our graduates are part of the state’s workforce solution. “In my mind, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) are superheroes,” says Holly, who graduated from Climb more than 10 years ago and now works as the Clinical Director of Epsilon Health Solutions. “They are the backbone of what we do.”

Holly’s team of CNAs cares for more than 100 patients in the Casper area. She says that during the pandemic, home healthcare has limited patients’ exposure to COVID-19 and allowed staff to use tele-health technology to take vital signs and communicate other critical information remotely.

“There’s also an important social and emotional part of what our CNAs do every day,” says Holly. “It’s really about making a connection with someone who’s isolated, visiting with them about their grandkids, just having someone to talk to.”

In the past five years, Climb has trained more than 310 participants statewide in various medical careers; these graduates are now filling severe shortages in the state’s healthcare workforce.

UPWARD GROWTH IN THE WORKFORCE: GRADUATE WAGE PROGRESSION



Holly, who experienced homelessness before Climb, is now a registered nurse and the Clinical Director at Epsilon Health Solutions, where she hires other graduates as CNAs.

Recent medical trainings have covered skills in contact tracing, medical recordkeeping, and phlebotomy to meet the needs of local economies.

Holly demonstrates the kind of upward workforce mobility that many Climb graduates experience. “Before Climb, I was in an abusive marriage. My ex-husband threw our belongings onto the front yard, and we became homeless. I applied for the training because I had no skills, no way to provide for my children. I had only waited tables.”

After her job placement, Holly worked as a CNA for several years before deciding to earn a nursing degree through Casper College. She has since hired several Climb graduates to work for Epsilon.

“I tell new CNAs that the most important thing you can do is be dependable and steadfast. In this field, people rely on us for everything.”



Climb’s trainings in transportation and other essential industries are selected to meet a local economy’s workforce needs.

A WIN FOR WYOMING! POSITIVELY IMPACTING WYOMING’S ECONOMY

Moving families into a place where they can contribute to local economies creates a stronger Wyoming for all—resulting in more stable, healthy, and vibrant communities.

- 2020 Climb graduates increased their total annual earnings from \$681,216 to \$2,320,766.
- Wyoming saves **\$2 million annually** from decreased Medicaid, food stamp, and childcare expenses.



“IN MY MIND,
CERTIFIED NURSING
ASSISTANTS ARE
SUPERHEROES.”



Tony Haller (1986–2020) worked for Cheyenne’s UA Local 192 Plumbers and Pipefitters Union and dedicated much of his career to getting more women into the trade, including Climb grad Michelle (right).

BLAZING THE WAY

Remembering a Champion for Women in the Workforce

When Tony Haller tragically passed away this year, Wyoming lost a fierce advocate and champion for women breaking into the plumbing and pipefitting trade. Tony, who was a business agent and training coordinator at Cheyenne’s UA Local 192 Plumbers and Pipefitters Union, was determined to find a way for employers in the construction industry to hire more women. So, five years ago, he came to Climb and proposed a unique pre-apprenticeship training opportunity. One of Tony’s first students was Michelle, who today is blazing her way as an accomplished welder. She has achieved

Journeyman and works for Azco at Holly Frontier Refinery. Tony left a lasting legacy for Michelle and the other women who went through these trainings with Climb. He was among the strongest advocates for hiring Climb graduates. “They’re great employees,” he often said. “They’ll show up very willing to learn, which is something you don’t always see.” Especially during the pandemic, Climb graduates like Michelle have been able to significantly contribute to Wyoming businesses with their resilience, skills, and motivation to work in industries that bolster the state’s economy. Employers, meanwhile, can take pride in being part of changing a family’s future. Thanks to Tony, there are single mothers paving their way in a new industry, benefiting Wyoming’s economy and their children’s lives along the way.

“CLIMB GRADUATES ARE GREAT EMPLOYEES. THEY’LL SHOW UP VERY WILLING TO LEARN, WHICH IS SOMETHING YOU DON’T ALWAYS SEE.”
— TONY HALLER



THE FOLLOWING EMPLOYERS HAVE HIRED SKILLED AND MOTIVATED CLIMB GRADUATES IN 2020.

- CASPER**
71 Construction
All About Family
Casper Mountain Rehabilitation and Care Center
(Edgewood) Meadow Winds Assisted Living
Natrona County School District
Optimal Physical Therapy
Shepherd of the Valley Healthcare Community
Sterling Surgical Center
Wyoming Food Bank of the Rockies
Wyoming Medical Center

- CHEYENNE**
Cheyenne Regional Medical Center
Cindy’s Cleaning Services
Dobbs Trucking, Inc.
Express Employment
Gill Window Company
Laramie County School District #1 - Transportation
Lowe’s Distribution Center
Magpul Industries
May Trucking
Minuteman Press
Morandin Concrete
Paramount Cafe
Prime Inc. - Denver
Redi Services RDI - Rifle
Sierra Trading Post
UPS - Cheyenne

- GILLETTE**
FedEx - Gillette
HUB International
Overhead Door Company of Gillette
Titan Solutions

- LARAMIE**
Basic Beginnings
Cook and Associates, P.C.
Cowboy Moving and Storage
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Head Start of Laramie
I-80 Towing
Laramie Vision Clinic
McPherson Dental
NADA
Pathways Counseling
Rostad Law LLC
Spring Wind Assisted Living and Memory Care
Stitches Acute Care
Tungsten Parts Wyoming
Wyoming Analytical Laboratories - Laramie

- SWEETWATER AREA**
Able Hands
Huxford Chiropractic Clinic
LDE Corporation
Legend Oilfield Services
Lewis & Lewis, Inc.
Mission at Castle Rock

- PMG Vegetation
Sage View Care Center
Stout Services
Summit Line Construction
Sweetwater County Road & Bridge
Swift Transportation
- TETON AREA**
First Interstate Bank - Jackson
Jackson Hole Land Trust
Jenkins Lumber & Hardware
Sublette County School District No. 1
Summit Insurance Services, Inc.
Teton County
The Turning Point
Vertical Harvest
Wells Fargo - Thayne



“IT’S AMAZING HOW BUILDING YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE AND BEING SUPPORTED IN YOUR CAREER JUST INFUSES INTO ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE.”

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

How Life Looks a Decade After Climb

Looking back over the last decade, Lindsay can see how far she’s come each evening when she returns from work to the cozy home she proudly owns.

“Buying a house is something I never saw happening,” she says of a time in her life when she had no idea how she was going to support a new baby alone. “When you’re a single mom beat up every day by the world, you need a life preserver. For me, that was Climb.”

Besides being a homeowner, Lindsay is also extremely proud of the career she has built at Premier Bone & Joint, her Climb job placement 10 years ago. Since then, she has held both medical and business positions, at one point flying with doctors around the state to treat patients.

Lindsay has watched the business grow significantly, recently building a new surgical center in Laramie. “I’m personally proud of that building,” she says. “I feel like I

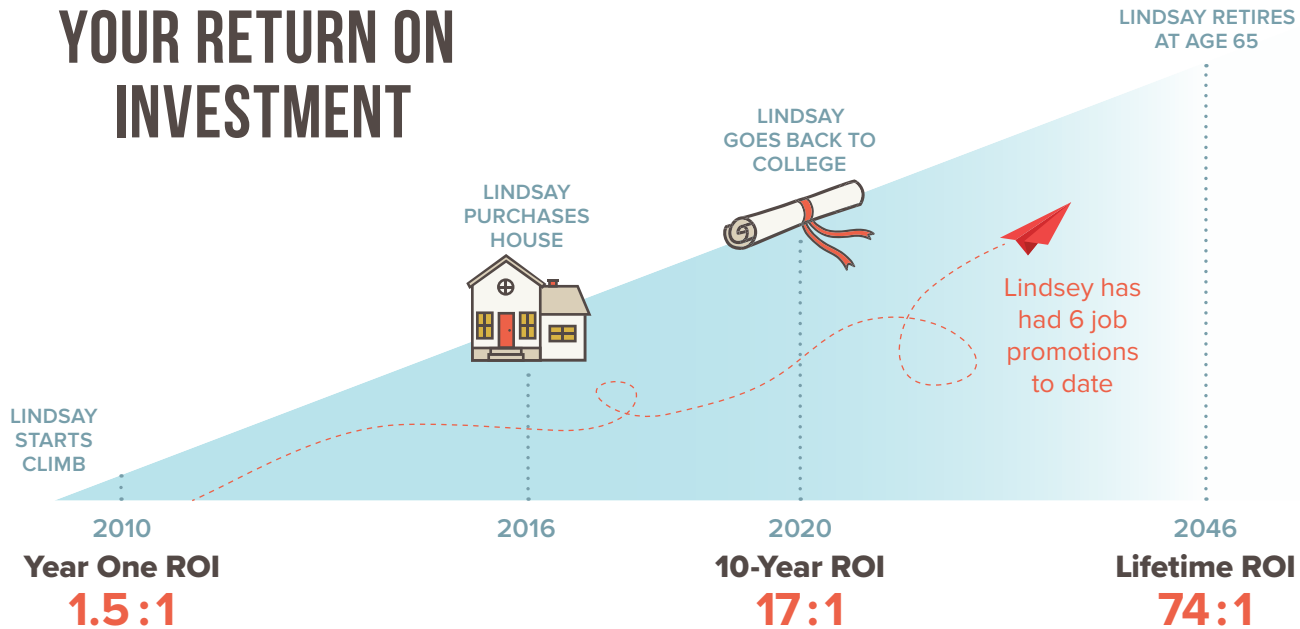


After visiting her mom’s workplace in a medical setting, Lily, age 11, wants to be a veterinarian to care for animals like her dog, Libby.

helped build it with my own hands. They invested in me, so I invested in them.”

Lindsay is also going back to college to finish a degree in healthcare administration. “It’s amazing how building your self-confidence and being supported in your career just infuses into all other aspects of your life.”

YOUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Lindsay stands with her daughter Lily outside the home she bought in 2016.

Ten years ago, Climb invested \$17,249 to train Lindsay. She has since earned \$300,000 in additional wages (a 10-year ROI of 17:1). When she reaches retirement at age 65, Lindsay will have earned \$1,275,000 in wages made possible through your investment in Wyoming families.

2GEN IMPACT

Wyoming is Better When Our Kids Move Out of Poverty

When Sherry worked irregular hours at a Gillette coal mine, she missed a lot of her daughter Florence’s softball games. Florence, an eighth grader, plays catcher. After the mine closed, Sherry found herself unemployed and came to Climb to find a more family-friendly career that didn’t bring so much stress into the household. “It’s important for me to be there to watch Florence play sports, but it’s bigger than that,” says Sherry. “She’s the top priority in my life.”

Sherry’s job placement in retail has the improved schedule she was looking for and has continued through the pandemic. It includes benefits like health insurance so Sherry can afford a medication to help her quit smoking.

These days, Sherry is there in the stands a lot more often watching Florence play, cheering her on in sports...and life. “I want to major in psychology, art, or teaching in college,” says Florence. “I’ve always wanted to go to college.”

Her mom supports her dream. Sherry says, “I hope Florence keeps doing her best and believes in herself enough to follow what makes her happy. We talk a lot about how to make that happen.”

When children
MOVE OUT OF POVERTY, they are
THREE TIMES
more likely to be employed
as adults.



Sherry talks with her daughter Florence about making her goals and dreams for the future a reality, including college.



CLIMB HAS IMPACTED **4,967** CHILDREN, ENOUGH TO FILL **276** WYOMING CLASSROOMS.

EVERY DOLLAR YOU GIVE IS MORE THAN DOUBLED

YOUR DOLLAR HELPS CLIMB LEVERAGE
ADDITIONAL FUNDING



2020 EXPENSES

Program	80%
Management and Support . . .	12%
Fundraising	8%

2020 REVENUE

Public Funding	67%
Federal • County • City	
Private Funding	33%
Individual • Corporate • Foundation • Investment and Other Income	

YOU MAKE OUR PROGRAM POSSIBLE. THANK YOU!

Fiscal year 2020 Investors (October 2019–September 2020)

Thank you to our **FUNDING FUTURES GIVING SOCIETY DONORS** for their multi-year pledges that contribute to our stability and help us plan ahead.

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Devon, a recent Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) participant in Casper, during training.

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Brittany, pictured here with her daughter, is an Office Careers graduate whose job placement was at Laramie Vision Clinic.

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“One reason we’ve made a long-term investment in Climb Wyoming is because of
the power of the 2gen approach: as single mothers increase their education and
income, kids benefit in ways that contribute to their own success in life, and so it
continues into future generations.”

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Graduates in Laramie have a socially distanced celebration of their achievements after completing the program.

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Kaysha and Jamie practice clinical skills during the Teton Area’s Medical Careers training.

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“I can’t imagine our
community without
Climb Wyoming.
Watching a single
mother enter the
workforce, increase
her wages so quickly,
reduce her reliance on
public support...all of
this benefits first and
foremost the families.
At the same time, Climb
benefits our local
economy and makes our
community a healthier
place to live and work.”

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Participant Breann with her son during Climb’s “Mom and Kid” event last fall in Gillette.

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Shalema celebrates her completion of Climb's recent Professional Business Careers training in Cheyenne.

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“During the COVID-19 pandemic, Climb Wyoming has been adaptive and innovative, pivoting quickly to provide critical support to at-risk families in safe and responsible ways. Despite all the challenges of the past year, single mothers still have a place to go to find the stability and hope they need to overcome poverty.”

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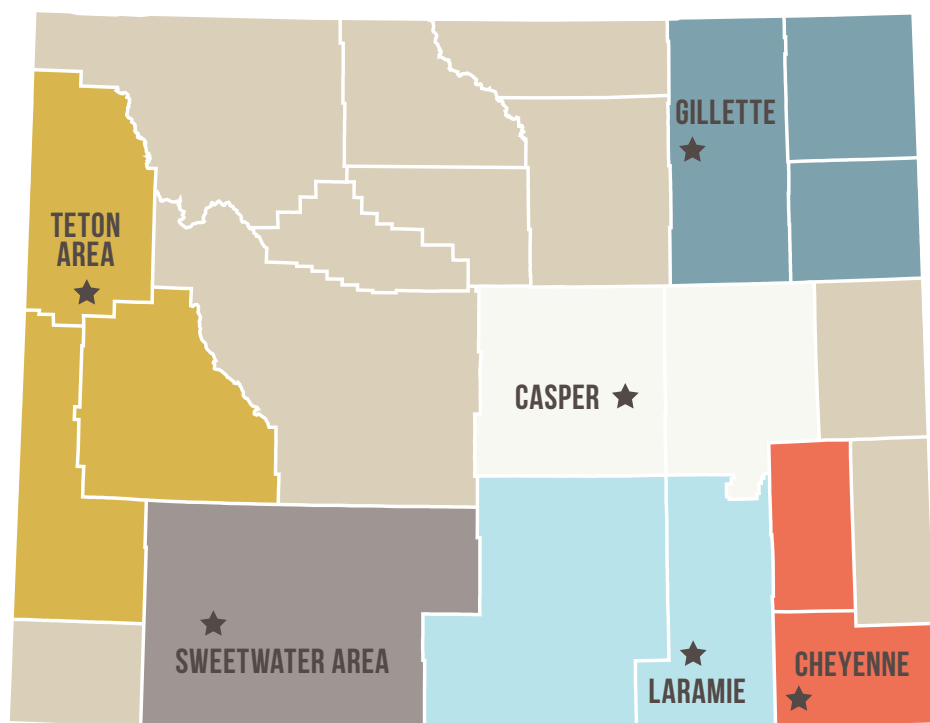
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For low-income single mothers to discover self-sufficiency through career training and placement.

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For more information about becoming an employer partner, investor, or program participant, contact:

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