Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging Launches Blue Zones Ignite to Improve Well-Being of Chaffee County

Blue Zones to assess community's well-being and create a plan to help residents live better and longer

CHAFFEE COUNTY, CO, UNITED STATES, October 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging, A Program of the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments, and Blue Zones, the global leader in longevity research and community well-being transformation, have announced a partnership to launch Blue Zones Ignite™ in Chaffee County.

Blue Zones uses an evidence-based, environmental approach to making healthy choices easier in the places where people spend the most time. Blue Zones will work with the Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging and other community leaders to conduct an in-depth readiness and feasibility study to determine how to make Chaffee County a healthier place to live, work, and thrive. Together with the community, the Blue Zones team will assess readiness and build a plan for change.

"We are excited to partner with Blue Zones and our local community to improve the well-being of our region and our aging population," said Tom McConaghy, Director of Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging, identifying current challenges and exploring new innovations. “We are making lasting changes so that Central Colorado remains a place where everyone can thrive."

Blue Zones employs a proven solution in collaboration with communities to help people live better and longer lives. The company’s work is based on research and principles developed by National Geographic Fellow and New York Times bestselling author Dan Buettner, who identified the cultures of the world – or blue zones – with the healthiest, longest-living populations.

The Blue Zones approach focuses on the largest determinant of health: the environment in which we live. Instead of focusing solely on individual behavior change, Blue Zones helps communities make permanent and semi-permanent changes to policies, systems, streets, surroundings, and social networks so it's easier for residents to eat wisely, move naturally, and connect more with others as they move throughout their day. By improving the Life Radius®—the area close to home where most Americans spend 90% of their lives—Blue Zones transformations have been able to move the needle dramatically in improving overall population health and well-being. Participating communities have seen double-digit drops in obesity and smoking rates, economic investment in downtown corridors, grant funding awards to support policies and programs to improve health equity, and measurable savings in healthcare costs.

“We’re honored to work with the Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging and local leaders on this first-ever effort attempted in the state,” said Danny Buettner Jr., Executive Vice President of Blue Zones. “This partnership represents an incredible opportunity to combine local leadership and innovation to create a healthier, happier future for everyone in Chaffee County.”

The Blue Zones team of experts will connect with community leaders and organizations to begin immediate work assessing the strengths, needs, and challenges that residents are facing today. Blue Zones will then create a transformation plan that, once implemented, can drive widespread improvements in well-being, reductions in healthcare costs, and improve economic vitality in the region.
Learn more and stay up to date by visiting www.bluezones.com/ignite-chaffee-county.

About Blue Zones
Blue Zones employs evidence-based ways to help people live better, longer. The company's work is rooted in explorations and research done by founder and National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner in blue zones regions around the world, where people live extraordinarily long and/or happy lives. The original research and findings were released in Buettner's bestselling books The Blue Zones Solution, The Blue Zones of Happiness, The Blue Zones, Thrive, and Blue Zones Kitchen—all published by National Geographic books. A hit docuseries, Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones, was released on Netflix in 2023. Using original Blue Zones research, Blue Zones works with cities and counties to make healthy choices easier through permanent and semi-permanent changes to our human-made surroundings. Participating communities have experienced double-digit drops in obesity and tobacco use and have saved millions of dollars in healthcare costs. For more information, visit www.bluezones.com.

About Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging
The Central Colorado Area Agency on Aging (CCAAA) is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Colorado Planning and Service Area 13, serving adults age 60 and older and their caregivers in Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, and Lake counties. A program of the Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments, CCAAA plans, coordinates, and delivers Older Americans Act and Older Coloradans services so older adults can maintain health, dignity, independence, and quality of life in the communities they call home. Services are provided at no cost to eligible participants,

with priority to those in greatest social and economic needs.

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