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El Pomar Foundation Grants \$30,000 to Early Connections Learning Centers at Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony

Colorado Springs, Colo. – Dec. 9, 2020 — El Pomar Foundation is pleased to recognize and award \$30,000 to Early Connections Learning Centers, whose mission is to deliver comprehensive, high-quality, affordable early childhood care and education to children and families of limited means. The award was presented on December 2, 2020 at El Pomar Foundation’s annual Trustee Memorial Tree Lighting Ceremony, a unique program designed to recognize and reward an outstanding nonprofit organization in the Pikes Peak Region in honor of one of the Foundation’s Trustees.

This year, in honor of her 150th birthday, the Trustees paid tribute to the legacy of Julie Penrose, a forward-thinking philanthropist with passion for community building and culture. She served Colorado through leadership and financial support of countless organizations including the Colorado Springs Day Nursery, now known as Early Connections Learning Centers. Julie inspired her husband, Spencer, with her commitment to civic engagement and philanthropy, and together they established El Pomar Foundation in 1937, where she served as a Trustee until her death in 1956.

“El Pomar Foundation is proud of its rich history with Early Connections Learning Center, which is the oldest nonprofit child care organization in Colorado and widely recognized statewide as a leader in the field of early childhood education,” said El Pomar President and CEO Kyle Hybl. “We are honored to continue the tradition started by our co-founder, Julie Penrose, of supporting their outstanding work.”

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Foundation held an intimate ceremony to light a tree in front of Penrose House, which included internal Trustees and Early Connections’ President and CEO, Diane Price.

“It’s such an honor to be recognized this year as a charity of El Pomar Foundation,” said Diane Price. “They’ve been so generous with their support to us through the years, particularly as they recognize Julie Penrose on her 150th birthday.”

She added, “I’m reminded each day when I walk through the doors of the Day Nursery, which was given to us by Alice Bemis Taylor -- a contemporary of Mrs. Penrose -- what a remarkable impact the women of Colorado Springs have had on weaving the fabric of this community that supports health, the arts and the social services. We are here to thank those women who came before us and continue to honor the work that they did to make this such an incredible place to live.”

Video footage of the 2020 Tree Lighting Ceremony can be found [here](#).

El Pomar Foundation is one of the largest and oldest private foundations in Colorado. El Pomar contributes approximately \$22 million annually through grants and Community Stewardship programs to support Colorado nonprofit organizations involved in health, human services, education, arts and humanities and civic and community initiatives. Spencer and Julie Penrose founded El Pomar in 1937. To learn more about El Pomar Foundation please go to www.elpomar.org.