

Boulder County nonprofit Blue Sky Bridge welcomes new executive director



Blue Sky Bridge, a Boulder-based child advocacy center, is welcoming a new executive director, Ivan Jackson. Gina Earles, right, is the outgoing director. (Cliff Grassmick/Staff Photographer)

By Dana Cadey | dcadey@prairiemountainmedia.com | Longmont Times-Call

UPDATED: January 10, 2025 at 4:24 PM MST

Boulder County nonprofit Blue Sky Bridge is stepping into a new era as longtime executive director Gina Maione Earles passes the torch to someone new.

Ivan Jackson started as the nonprofit's new executive director this week. Jackson brings over a decade of nonprofit leadership experience to the role, most recently as executive director of Lift-Up. Lift-Up works with people facing food insecurity in and around Glenwood Springs.

Blue Sky Bridge is the county's child advocacy center, providing intervention, therapy and prevention education to child victims of abuse. Blue Sky Bridge also conducts forensic interviews with children, which are recorded and often used as evidence in police investigations.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, Blue Sky Bridge conducted 258 forensic interviews and answered 168 community calls. The nonprofit also worked with 39 therapy clients.

"We want to make sure that we do the best that we can for the kids in our community," he said.

Maione Earles began her time as executive director in 2012. Under her leadership, the nonprofit started its therapy program and incorporated medical treatment into its intervention program. Blue Sky Bridge also expanded its education program to over 65 schools in the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley school districts.

“No child should have to go through the physical abuse that is unfortunately prevalent in our society today,” Jackson said. “And this is an organization that is well-equipped to deal with that.”

Jackson’s goals for the nonprofit include expanding its intervention and therapy programs, and getting its prevention education services into more schools.

“We want to make sure that we do the best that we can for the kids in our community,” he said.

Maione Earles began her time as executive director in 2012. Under her leadership, the nonprofit started its therapy program and incorporated medical treatment into its intervention program. Blue Sky Bridge also expanded its education program to over 65 schools in the Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley school districts.

The therapy program allows the nonprofit to provide services to clients free of charge.

“We do not charge families for intervention therapy or prevention education,” Maione Earles said. “We don’t believe that anybody should have to pay for the crimes committed against them.”

On Jan. 22, Blue Sky Bridge will hold a community open house where people can meet Jackson and say goodbye to Maione Earles. Guests can also tour the nonprofit’s Boulder headquarters and meet team members. The open house will be held from 3 to 6 p.m.

Maione Earles said her departure is a chance to inject new energy and ideas into Blue Sky Bridge. This year is also an important milestone for the nonprofit as it marks Blue Sky Bridge’s 30th anniversary.

“It’s really incredible to think of all the work that’s been done in this time, and all the good that has happened in this community,” Maione Earles said.

One of Blue Sky Bridge’s main goals in the wake of Maione Earles’s departure is securing a Longmont location for therapy and community engagement. The nonprofit is currently renting an office in Longmont at Fifth Avenue and Coffman Street, but staff hope to move into a standalone building in the city.

Before Blue Sky Bridge started, Maione Earles said, children in Boulder County had a “vastly different experience” if they had dealt with abuse.

“Now, kids have a safe place to come where they can talk about the abuse they’ve experienced,” she said.

“Kids all over this county are learning incredible skills to help protect themselves and to get out of unsafe situations. And the adults surrounding them have all sorts of resources, knowledge and people to call on. It’s just really incredible, the thousands and thousands of people in this community who we’ve been able to reach.”

Originally Published: January 10, 2025 at 4:22 PM MST