



# Chaffee County Government

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**SALIDA, COLORADO**

### **“We Are Chaffee” Announces Documentary Premiere Dates**

The Chaffee County “We Are Chaffee” storytelling initiative has been developing a community-focused documentary for the past year and is hosting two film premieres and several free showings throughout the county this summer and fall.

The dates for the premieres of “A Home in Paradise” have been set for Friday May 10<sup>th</sup> as part of the Salida Film Festival and will include a panel discussion with the people who share their stories in the film, the directors and producers, and local experts on housing and health. The evening will end with a Salida Film Festival Social. The second premiere date is Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Salida Steamplant and will be a free community event with only registration required. After the movie showing, We Are Chaffee will host a complimentary dinner and facilitated community discussion. See the [wearechaffee.org](http://wearechaffee.org) website to sign up for the We Are Chaffee newsletter, and follow us on Instagram or Facebook to be the first to know when tickets/registration is open for these premieres.

“A Home in Paradise” documentary grew out of the We Are Chaffee storytelling initiative which works with community members to share their stories of health disparities in short videos, written stories, and a podcast called, “We Are Chaffee: Looking Upstream” that is available worldwide on any podcast app. We Are Chaffee partners with local authors, Colorado Mountain College, and KHEN Radio to make this possible. “Storytelling is a powerful advocacy tool that empowers people to speak up about the issues that they care about and that impact them while also informing our community’s leaders and decision makers to make thoughtful and equitable policies and build inclusive systems. Chaffee County Public Health and the Chaffee Housing Authority have been working together for several years to ignite a



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storytelling movement, We Are Chaffee, to highlight the rich diversity of our county while also uniting us,” says Andrea Carlstrom, Chaffee County Public Health Director.

The documentary began as a discussion to create a more focused effort that can be dispersed to a wide group of community members and possibly beyond Chaffee County. We Are Chaffee engaged a local “Creative Committee” of 25 representatives from diverse parts of the community to help inform and guide the documentary process. The Creative Committee has been engaged throughout the process to ensure the documentary’s honest and accurate messaging. The goals developed by the committee based on Chaffee County’s Public Health and Housing Reports, and through their personal experiences, are: housing insecurity, behavioral health challenges, aging, transportation, and the general growing socio-economic divide within Chaffee County; with housing and behavioral health as most critical. “Shepherding this documentary has been a very important project for me personally,” says Julie Jackson, the film’s producer and director who also serves as the volunteer Chaffee County Film Commissioner. “I’ve lived in Salida since 2018 and have seen housing costs rise astronomically. Bringing together local talent, including Sarah Hamilton who’s the editor and lead videographer, Amy Turner who wrote the script, and many local musicians, allowed us to tell this story with completely local creatives. It’s truly a home grown documentary film exploring a phenomenon that’s happening across the country. We’re using our art to shed light on these issues and creating a tool that brings the community together to talk about it is a great first step to solving the housing crisis.”

We Are Chaffee is a storytelling initiative funded through a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: Office of Health Equity. The grant funds are managed by Chaffee County Public Health and the Chaffee Housing Authority. The focus of this grant is to enhance the community's awareness of local inequities through education, strengthening partnerships, and storytelling to create a cultural change that will influence policy and system change in the areas of equitable housing opportunities and community health in Chaffee County.

For more information visit [www.WeAreChaffee.org](http://www.WeAreChaffee.org).

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