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## **Arapahoe/Douglas Works! joins Youth Apprenticeship delegation in Switzerland** *Deputy Division Manager selected to represent region at international congress*

**LITTLETON, CO** --- Arapahoe/Douglas Works! recently joined the Youth Apprenticeship Champions Delegation in Zurich, Switzerland to learn about the Swiss apprenticeship model. Deputy Division Manager Kelly Folks, who is also the State Youth Council Chair, was invited to represent workforce development for the Central Planning Region and the Colorado State Youth Council.

The delegation included representatives from CareerWise Colorado, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and the Colorado Department of Education. Representatives from the White House and U.S. Department of Education also attended. Arapahoe County's participation in the trip was made possible through the generous support by the Colorado State Youth Council.

A/D Works! was one of only two county organizations at the congress. Attendance gave A/D Works! a firsthand look at the Swiss system in order to best develop and implement apprenticeship models throughout Colorado and within Arapahoe and Douglas counties.

"We were proud to send Kelly to represent A/D Works! in Switzerland," said Commissioner Nancy Jackson, who also serves on the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Board of Directors. "Having A/D Works! involved in this international delegation will ensure our youth are able to participate in apprenticeships and receive training in high growth industries, while also meeting the needs of our businesses."

Youth apprenticeship is a new statewide initiative to place 20,000 high school students in apprenticeships in fields not traditionally associated with on the job training by 2027. The program is inspired by the Swiss model for connecting employers and educational institutions in order to provide a meaningful career path for individuals while meeting the needs of businesses locally. The initiative is being driven by CareerWise Colorado with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

More than 15 local employers and five school districts in Colorado have committed to offering juniors and seniors paid, on the job training beginning next school year. Initially, students will be able to choose from four pathways including advanced manufacturing, business operations, financial services and information technology. In fall 2017, 250 students will have apprenticeships, with the goal of serving 10 percent of eligible high school students in Colorado within 10 years. Cherry Creek School District will pilot the program locally.

Students will spend time on-site with employers, getting paid a training wage while also earning credit toward high school graduation and post-secondary credentials. Additionally, students can complete another year of apprenticeship after graduation to prepare to enter the workforce or continue their

education. More information about this program will be available in 2017 as the delegation finalizes plans for implementation.

The Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Regional Workforce Center is located at 6974 S. Lima St., Centennial 80112. Workforce Centers also are located in Littleton, Aurora and Castle Rock. For more information on Arapahoe/Douglas Works! call 303-636-1260 or visit the A/D Works! website at [www.adworks.org](http://www.adworks.org).

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