

# TELLURIDE DAILY PLANET

## NEWS

### Telluride Gives to the community

#### *Annual 24-hour fundraiser starts Tuesday at midnight*

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There is a link between healthy development, lifelong health and doing well in school and oral health, according to Lauren deMercado, a registered nurse and program analyst with AmeriCorps VISTA and Tri-County Health Network.

DeMercado, along with dental hygienists, screens kids at schools around the region for tooth decay, educates them about brushing and flossing and administers fluoride treatments through the San Juan Kids Kavity Prevention Program, or SKIPPY. If they find cavities, they notify the child's parents that they need to visit a dentist to have it filled. Unfortunately, kids sometimes don't get the dental care they need and when SKIPPY returns a year later, the same kids' have the same cavities — only now they've spread to other teeth.

"If you keep letting it go, it can lead to other health problems," deMercado said.

But many families can't afford to see a dentist. According to deMercado, the average cost for a dental exam is \$78, the average filling costs between \$158 and \$309, many families don't have dental insurance and many providers don't accept Medicaid. That's why she's hoping people will contribute generously to the Tri-County Health Network during the third annual Telluride Foundation's Telluride Gives Day. SKIPPY is trying to create a fund to help kids get the dental care they need.

Tri-County Health Network is just one of 41 local nonprofit organizations that have signed up so far for Telluride Gives, an annual, 24-hour online fundraising blitz. The event this year is taking place on Tuesday, 11.12.13. On that day, the website [telluridegives.org](http://telluridegives.org) will go live at 12 a.m. and donors will have just 24 hours to give to their favorite local charities.

The Telluride Foundation, which launched the fundraising drive in 2011, has seen a huge trend in online philanthropy and wanted to give local nonprofits a chance to get a piece of the pie, said Telluride Foundation Development Manager Katie Singer.

"Another idea behind Telluride Gives is to engage the entire community," Singer said. "It's not just for major gifts. It starts at \$10."

Donors can log on and give to organizations like the Second Chance Humane Society, the San Miguel Resource Center, the Telluride Historical Museum, EcoAction Partners, Mountainfilm and many more. Last year there were 419 gifts totaling \$42,949. Telluride Rentals has pledged to give a percentage of their bookings — at least \$2,000 — as bonus prize money to the top four nonprofits that raise the most money during the day and which have the most unique donors. KOTO Radio will also be broadcasting information and updates all day Tuesday.

"Since we are trying to engage the entire community, we are hoping people will get online and donate at least \$10 to at least one of these fabulous organizations that does make such a difference for all of us," Singer said.

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