



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

2 A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

3 OUR STORY

4 STRATEGIC GOALS

5 AINC ORIGINAL PROGRAMS

7 SUCCESSES

9 CHALLENGES

11 STRATEGY

13 OUR LISTENERS

15 VOLUNTEERS

16 MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

17 FINANCIALS

T
A
B
L
E
O
F

C
O
N
T
E
N
T
S

Wrapping Up 2022

Significant changes occurred for AINC in 2022. We lost our volunteer director of over 20 years, but amazing people joined our team. The Program Advisory Committee started their work which resulted in new programming relevant to the community.

The Audio Trekkers skied and hiked at our fundraising events, and triple the number of hikers with vision loss participated at our third annual hike. As we began to look toward 2023 and beyond we knew we needed a plan.

Several months were spent in the strategic planning process. It was wonderful to have so many invested voices in the same room talking about the future of AINC.

One of the reasons we wanted perform strategic planning was that there were SO MANY great ideas coming from staff, volunteers, listeners, and board members. Together, we came up with a plan to guide us forward.

The staff and board are excited for 2023! We appreciate everyone who has joined us on this journey.

Sincerely,



Kim Ann Wardlow



Kim Ann Wardlow
Executive Director

AINC HISTORY

OUR BEGINNING

In 1990, David Dawson knew that people with vision loss or blindness needed better access to news and information. There was simply no service in our area that offered accessible editions of local newspapers, magazines, grocery store ads, transit guides, and more. He set to work and established **Audio Information Network of Colorado** in order to offer **Audio Editions** of print materials. A broadcasting alliance was formed with RMPBS, and this our 30+ year adventure started.

AINC TODAY

ORIGINALS, STREAMING, AND ONLINE GROUPS

After three decades in service, AINC launched our first **AINC Original Podcast** in August of 2021. This podcast, **Aftersight**, shares stories and experiences of people with vision loss. This was a new, untried effort for us, and it was an instant hit. Aftersight led to *a lot* of discussions about how we could use audio in new and exciting ways. We brought listeners and board members into this conversation, and everyone agreed -- there was a lot more we could do with audio.

So, we added a Podcast Producer to our ranks to take the reins and to build a schedule of AINC Original Podcasts. We now offer three AINC Originals that focus on a wide array of topics. And, we have found other new ways to use audio to serve people with low vision or blindness. We now offer an Audiobook Club and a Low Vision Support Group.

Finally, getting registered and connected is easier than ever! And, AINC programming is now EXTREMELY easy to access - we're on Apple Podcasts and Spotify... and recently we added Amazon and iHeartRadio.

AINC TOMORROW

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In Fall of 2022, AINC gathered stakeholders including staff, volunteers, listeners, and board members to discuss where we were and where we should be. After a lot of thinking by a lot of great minds, we now have a strategic plan to guide our focus over the next three to five years. Our strategic priorities came directly from this process.

AINC now has three strategic priorities:

1

Support Informed Independence

Make sure listeners have access to the tech and information they need; nurture relationships with peer orgs; continue to solicit feedback.

2

Build inclusive communities

Enhance our events; expand AINC presence, educate and equip ALL of AINC's listeners, volunteers, staff, and board; expand Spanish-language services; find and develop the new home of AINC.

3

Ensure AINC is future-ready

Grow financial stability through funds diversification; develop the organizational culture of the board and staff; invest in the resources needed for positive change; rebrand for clarity simplicity.

AINC ORIGINALS

SELF-PRODUCED PROGRAMMING



NAVIGATING LIFE WITH VISION LOSS

A weekly podcast that is all about giving a voice to the challenges facing people with blindness or vision loss. Hosted by AINC's own Executive Director, *NLVL* brings experts on to discuss topics like mental health, self-advocacy, legal rights, finding and connecting to resources, travel, and much more.



BLINDSIGHT

Is dedicated to the healing of the mind, body, and soul. The host, Bill Lundgrin addresses behavioral health topics ranging from addiction, grief, and denial, to overcoming trauma, dealing with relationships, and "next steps" in your specific journey.



AFTERSIGHT

AINC's first podcast. Each week Penn Street is joined by a guest to talk about how blindness or low vision has impacted them – and how THEY have impacted the community. Penn began her journey into vision loss at the age of nine and uses her lived experience to have frank, intimate discussions with interesting people.

AUDIO EMPOWERMENT

COLLABORATIONS AND MORE



LOW-VISION BOOK CLUB

Vision loss doesn't mean you can't still be a bookworm. In partnership with Enight Skills Center, AINC offers a virtual space where readers can burrow through books and get together once a month to chat about their insights. Jim Fellion hosts every fourth Friday.



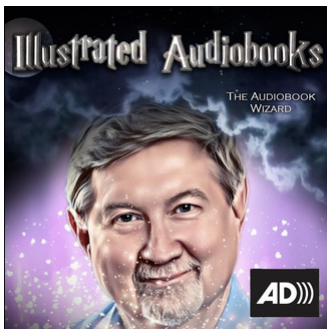
LOW-VISION SUPPORT GROUP

In partnership with Enight Skills Center, AINC hosts an online, low-vision support group. AINC's very own Penn Street takes turns hosting with Jeff Flodin. Jeff's mission is to tell his story of life with vision loss honestly, to share its inherent tragedy and comedy and to shed light in dark places.



ACCESSIBLE TECH (AT) MINUTE

New as of 2022, AINC's youngest staff member, Evan Starnes, covers a wide variety of tools and technology for individuals that are blind or low vision to live independently. Videos are available on YouTube.



THE AUDIO BOOK WIZARD

We have partnered with Imagination Videobooks to add to our programming their award-winning audiobook series. The audiobooks include audio description (AD) for children who are blind or have low vision.



SUCCESS EVENTS

AINC's Second-Annual Fundraising Hike



In August 2022, AINC held our second-annual fundraising hike in Estes Park. It was a perfect late-summer day in the Colorado hills, and almost all of our staff was at the event. We were blessed to be joined by almost 30 hikers with a blindness or low vision and even more volunteers who came along or be sighted guides. Our 2022 attendance was almost triple that of 2021!

We had so many attendees that we ran out of AINC shirts for the event! Even so, we made an amazing streak of AINC blue on the side of the mountain. We are so grateful to everyone who hiked or supported the event so that those with a visual impairment were able to attend free of charge and able to get to/from the event with ease.

AINC in the news!

In 2022, AINC was featured **NATIONALLY** on PBS. A camera crew joined us on our fundraising hike and produced a wonderful video. They highlight some wonderful people and some powerful moments - you can find it [here](https://www.pbs.org/video/2022-08-22-ainc-fundraising-hike)!



ow.ly/BQtt50PCFpy

SUCCESSES

PROGRAMMING

Program Quality

AINC has over 100 programs which are powered by just as many volunteers. Prior to the pandemic, volunteers would come to our office and use our studios to record their programs. But when the pandemic hit we moved to a remote model... literally overnight. We went from using standardized equipment in a controlled studio environment to a hodgepodge of different microphones that were placed in bedrooms, on kitchen tables, and even in closets (as makeshift studios!) Our volunteers *really* stepped up when we needed it - but it meant that we had inconsistent quality.

In 2022, our audio production team audited all of our volunteer-read programs and assigned a numerical value. Sometimes our volunteers were submitting studio-grade recordings, and sometimes there would be a buzz, crackle or echo. AINC staff reached out and helped our volunteers address any issues. As a result, our overall quality has gone up - and so has our listenership! We have seen growth in the number connections and in length of listen!

Program Availability

We can't give ALL the credit to our amazing volunteers and audio production team (though they deserve *almost* all of it.) We have also put in a lot of work making our programming extremely accessible. In 2021 we started an effort to get our programming on streaming services like Spotify and Apple podcasts. Last year, we added even more access points like iHeartRadio and Amazon. Finding AINC programming is easier than ever.

Program Diversity

And - we've added programming that addresses some of the needs we identified last year. We have been going through our existing programming and adding in content where needed. And, we even made our own content as needed. Our AINC Originals have taken on the issues of mental health and accessibility that we talked about in last year's annual report.

CHALLENGES

EVERYTHING ELSE

Programming

While our programming is the source of many successes, it also offers *many* challenges. Can our listeners continue their traditions of reading and stay informed about their communities? Do our listeners feel empowered and connected? Are we effectively serving our Spanish-speaking audience? These are some - but not all - of the challenges we face. We identify challenges with the help of listener feedback, and input from staff and board. Solutions aren't always straightforward, but we're always striving.

The shifting sands of tech

Since our inception, AINC has worked to stay on top of advancing technology. Recent years have seen an explosion of devices that can help make life easier for people with vision loss or blindness. But, this has created a landscape that is often difficult to navigate - which devices are best for our listeners? It's not such an easy question... some are savvy with tech, others are not. Some want functionality, some want simplicity. And, of course, price is always a concern. At AINC, tech is a constant discussion - and pilot projects are common.

Continued need to diversify funding

We have been in continuous operation for over 30 years thanks to grants and donors, but in order to respond to the unmet needs we have found - and the unmet needs we have not - we need to broaden our fundraising efforts. We need to be poised to meet needs as they arise.

Audio Information Network of Colorado

That's right - Audio Information Network of Colorado. Our name has been a pain point for a while. It's long, and it can be hard to remember. And, some people think we offer services for people with hearing loss. We've been thinking long and hard about ways to make our name shorter, clearer, and more memorable.

CHALLENGES

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

The right people

In 2022, AINC experienced the sudden and tragic loss of one of our most treasured (and longest serving) staff member, Kat Bradbury, our Director of Programming and Volunteer Services. This loss left a hole not just in our hearts but in our work. We honored her memory this year and have worked to fill her shoes.



Kat's work with volunteers now continues with AINC's newest addition, Lauren Bear. We are so excited to have Lauren on our team as our Volunteer Coordinator. She's a warm soul that is passionate about connecting with people, especially when finding ways to help others.



And, the work we have done to improve our audio, accessibility, and outreach has meant more listeners. So many new listeners, in fact, that we needed more help. **Michael Sisneros** also joined our team and has been AMAZING! His warmth and spirit have helped us spread the word of what AINC is and what we do.

STRATEGY

We need to continue to do what we do well

AINC is all about **connection**. We connect people with voices that understand and heal, with tools that offer self sufficiency, with news that informs and educates, with events that empower, and with stories that entertain. We have passionate, dedicated staff who :

- Manage team of about 130 active - and unbelievable - volunteers
- Oversee the broadcast of over 125 hours of audio content, every week
- Offer listening devices, setup, and support to our registered listeners, free of charge
- Analyze data and adjust our programming and strategies accordingly

We need be honest about what we need:

The media landscape has shifted dramatically since AINC's founding in 1990. The role of the local paper in people's lives has been a part of that shift. So, while there is still very much a need for Audio Editions of local papers (and so many other materials) - we now have the power to use audio to *do* more than ever before.

In 2021 and into 2022, we have been thinking critically about what this means for our organization. The desire for honest input and a clear direction led us to form our first-ever Program Advisory Committee which has helped us to identify a path forward through targeted programming.

Finally, we need to *reach*:

We know that success rarely comes easy - or without a few *failures learning opportunities*. In 2022 and beyond, we are committed to reaching. We have already launched two podcasts in addition to *AfterSight*. These include Navigating Life with Vision Loss - which covers mental health, resources, and more. And, it includes Blindsight, a mental health podcast/therapy series to life with the help of a therapist who is blind. We've got a lot of other irons in the fire, too: hiking, music, white canes, new programming, and more.

BY THE NUMBERS

DATA AND TRENDS

750
episodes
per month

9,000 program
hours per year

about \$269,550 in donated volunteer
hours to power our Audio Editions!

1,222

Registered listeners
across the state of
Colorado

130+

Programs available

28,000+

Downloads in one
month

In 2022, AINC made a huge push to offer our programming on streaming platforms like Apple Podcasts and Spotify which had an immediate impact on our listenership.

Listenership continued to grow until we reached about 28,000 downloads in a month - with our peak month hitting about 33,000! We have also seen our length of engagement. We are extremely proud of this as it reflects our efforts to improve our program quality and make our content easier to find and listen to.

OUR LISTENERS

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

2022 Survey Responses

27% of our listeners tune in a few times a month, 31% tune in a few times a week, and 25% tune in every day. As our listeners endured pandemic confinement in their homes, apartments, and rooms in senior communities, our services were instrumental in reducing social isolation for some.

Specific Benefits of Listening Endorsed

AINC supports independence	90%
AINC helps connect me to the community	90%
Would recommend AINC	91%
A human voice is important for AINC	75%



Our youngest registered listener is 7 years old, and our oldest listeners are over 100!

We serve anyone who needs an alternative to print - whether that need comes from macular degeneration, Parkinson's, a stroke, or a genetic condition that manifests early in life.

As of March 2022, about 72% of our listeners identify as White, 17% as Latino/Hispanic, 2% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 5% as Black or African American, and the remainder have chosen not to identify or have specified "other." 62% of our listeners identify as female, 36% as male, 2% have chosen not to identify, and one listener has identified as non-binary.

We know that we could help so many more Coloradoans! An estimated 1.9% of Coloradans have some form of visual disability. This represents an estimated 100,000+ individuals in our state! Our recent efforts to make our programming more accessible (by adding content to Spotify, etc.) is an effort to reach even more of these individuals.

OUR LISTENERS

Feedback

- *Audio Information Network of Colorado does an outstanding job providing me, a blind veteran, with access to books, magazines and other materials otherwise unavailable to me. The phone and online services are superior and are an asset to me and many other individuals I know who would otherwise have no access to such an abundant supply of great and timely information. Alan M.*
- Thank you for bringing music and print material back into my family's life. My dad lost his eyesight and having this service gave him the independence to read again but on his schedule. The freedom to have this without having to ask for help was one small gold nugget that made each day a little easier to hear. Thank you for each day you have brightened for so many.
- I love the good news network!
- Thank you - you make my life so much enjoyable, and informed! Hugs to All the volunteers!

A listener story

Bette Barford started listening to AINC in 2022. An Amazon Echo Dot was installed in her home by AINC's Listener Services team, who also trained her to access AINC audio on her smartphone. She is an avid follower of the AINC original podcasts, such as Blind Level Tech and Aftersight. "The podcasts give you both, a connection and a lot of information" she says. "I learn about people who are struggling with the same things I am, and they are thriving. There is a lot to learn there."

Bette rarely misses AINC's weekly virtual support group. She enjoys the conversation and information exchange among her peers. "Somebody said they purchase rubber adhesive buttons at the dollar store. I had never heard of that," she says. "My husband drove me to one and I purchased a bunch of them for a dollar. They are great for marking the buttons on the microwave and other appliances."

OUR VOLUNTEERS

AINC's CHERISHED RESOURCE

Our volunteers power our work, and this team of over 100 generous individuals was built up by Kat Bradbury who recently passed away. Losing Kat was a profound loss. To honor her memory and dedication, we the Ice Cream Social she had planned and invited the entire AINC community to join. We also hiked in her honor and each of us grieved in our own way. Losing Kat was a heavy blow that still sits on our hearts.

But, our listeners still need AINC, so we hired Lauren Bear as our new Volunteer Coordinator to continue Kat's legacy. We plan to elevate our volunteer experience, offer more training to hone voiceover skills for both AINC and potential external opportunities. We're also expanding volunteer activities, including events, webinars, and personalized training. As our studios reopen post-pandemic, we've added safety measures for our returning volunteers. We're even exploring how to open our studios to the wider public as a potential revenue source, aligning with AINC's 2023 vision.

We Couldn't Do this Without our Volunteers

Our 2022 Volunteers of the Month:



- **DECEMBER 2022:** Sarah Rothwell • Audio Book News
- **NOVEMBER 2022:** Ray Wallander • Colorado Springs Gazette
- **OCTOBER 2022:** Dan Pawlowski • Discount Ads Target • Discount Ads Walgreens • Grocery Ads King Soopers
- **SEPTEMBER 2022:** Thomas Fears • Greeley Tribune
- **AUGUST 2022:** Brooke Burks • Pueblo Chieftain • Douglas County News
- **JULY 2022:** Gretchen Miller • Food & Stuff
- **JUNE 2022:** Susan Shirey • Black Experience • Indian Country news
- **MAY 2022:** Greg Stewart • Aspen Times
- **APRIL 2022:** Steve Bates • Safeway Grocery Ads
- **MARCH 2022:** Janet Beatty • Loveland News • 50 Plus Marketplace
- **FEBRUARY 2022:** Michelle Wecksler • Ark Valley Voice • NYT Travel
- **JANUARY 2022:** Tammy Parker • Denver Post

OUR VOLUNTEERS

NOT JUST READING

As AINC grows so do the roles of our volunteers. They do much more than read newspapers. Volunteers provide sighted guides for our blind/low vision hikers at our annual fundraiser, the Audio Trekker Hike. Our volunteers help pack and ship smart speakers and white canes. Volunteers provide transportation to for our blind/low vision listeners to/from our events.

Companies and organizations send their employees to us from Rocky Mountain PBS, Be My Eyes, Colorado Lions, Trinware, Colorado Retina Associates, and Mile High United Way.

Each year we celebrate our volunteers with a summer volunteer appreciation ice cream social. We give out awards for milestone achievements, and we invite our listeners, employees, and our board members to attend to meet our volunteers and give in person thanks.

Audio Information network of Colorado was unanimously voted in as an official Colorado state lions project. This gives AINC large pool of volunteers, networking opportunities, community partnering and a large pool of volunteers, networking opportunities, community partnering and grants. Lions international is the largest and oldest community organization in the world. two of AINC staff hold leadership roles in Colorado lions. lions provide, prepare, and served the food for annual hike this year.

AINC works closely with each of our volunteers to place them in a volunteer role where they feel empowered. as we continue to grow we will continue to fulfill the needs wherever possible with an amazing volunteer.



FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

Funding is provided through grants from foundations, trusts, and jurisdictions, as well as donations from corporations, service clubs, and **individuals**.

State of Colorado

Counties

- Broomfield City & County

Cities

- Arvada
- Commerce City
- Thornton
- Westminster

RMPBS Stations that air AINC include:

- KRMA-TV Channel 6 (Denver)
- KTSC-TV Channel 8 (Colorado Springs/Pueblo)
- KRMJ-TV Channel 18 (Grand Junction)
- KRMU-TV Channel 29 (Durango)

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

- Boulder County
- Denver Regional Council of Governments

Service Clubs

- MD6 Lions Clubs

Businesses and Corporations

- Newspapers and Magazines that donate subscriptions
- Benevity Matching Gift Program
- KCO, Inc.
- Kroger
- Wana Brands
- Trinware
- Orion Reverse Mortgage

Individual Donors

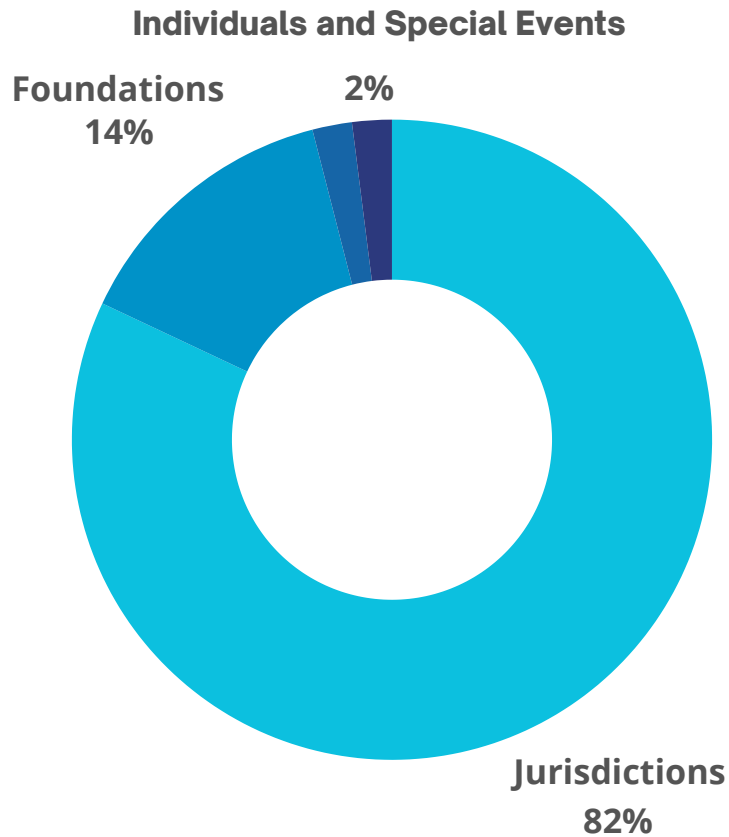
- Anonymous Donors
- Listeners, Volunteers, and Staff
- AINC Board

Foundations and Trusts

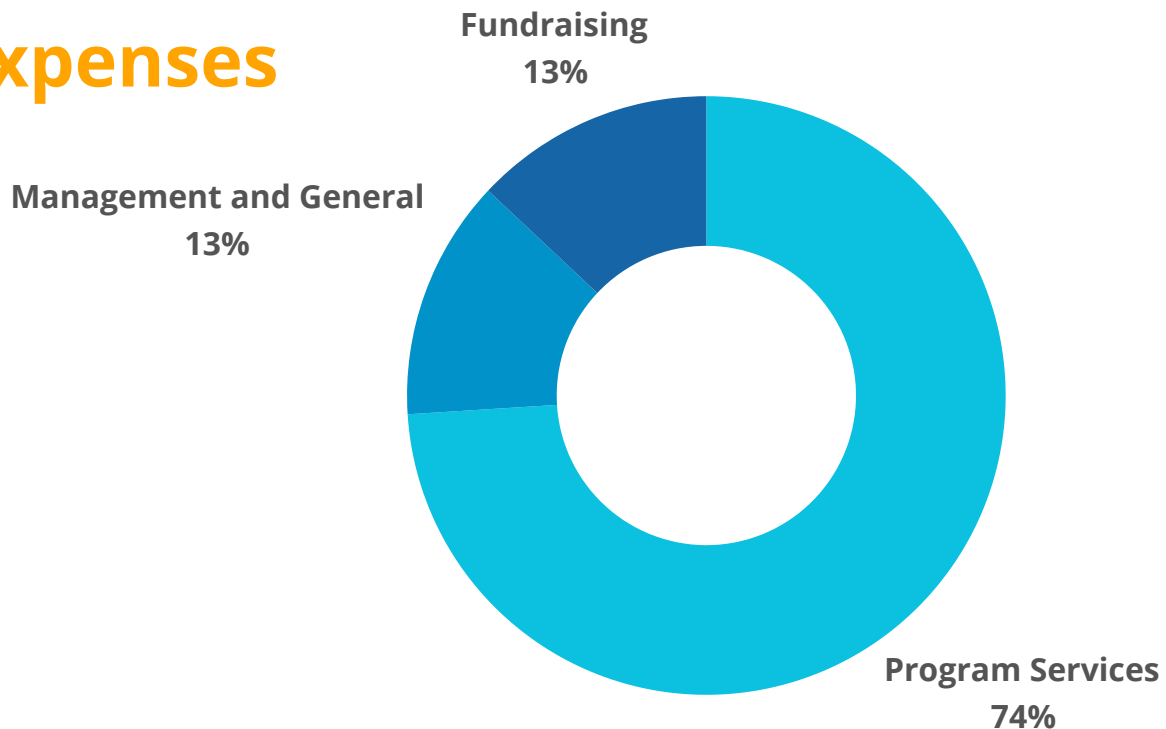
- AEC Trust
- Anschutz Family Foundation
- Anschutz Foundation
- April Fund
- Adams County Community Enrichment Grant
- Broomfield Community Foundation
- Colorado Trust
- Collins Foundation
- Community Foundation of Boulder County
- Credit Union of Colorado Grants
- DAV Charitable Service Trust
- Denver Senior Coalition
- Edmund T. & Eleanor Quick Foundation
- Erikson Fund of the Pikes Peak Community Foundation
- Erikson Foundation
- Erik Weihenmayer Reach Foundation
- Fort Collins Lions Foundation
- Virginia W. Hill Foundation
- Hynd Trust for the Blind
- Longmont Community Foundation – Live and Give
- Longmont Lions Foundation
- Network for Good
- William B. O'Rourke Foundation
- Joslyn Charitable Trust
- James Hynd Blind Trust
- Henry W. Bull Foundation

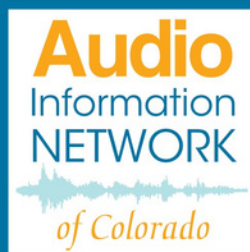
FINANCIALS

Income



Expenses





Bringing Print to Live

1700 55th St., Suite A, Boulder, CO 80301 - 303-786-7777 - aincolorado.org