

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

## COLORADO GRASSROOTS TRAINING PROGRAM

Colorado Statewide Project

COLORADO

2 0 0 7 S C E N I C B Y W A Y A W A R D W I N N E R f o r  
V I S I T O R E X P E R I E N C E



Think globally. Act locally. This slogan seems to be an overarching theme for the Colorado Grassroots Training Program initiated by the Colorado State Scenic Byways program. Business owner Roxie Morris wrote in her letter of support for the award that the project addressed a real need: “We have tried to provide needed information to our customers and visitors, but after reading some of the questions asked [at the training], we became sadly aware of how little we really knew about the area we have lived in all our lives. ...but we do now!”

### INNOVATIVE TRAINING CONTENT & DELIVERY

The Colorado Grassroots Training Program was developed specifically to teach byway representatives how to train locals, including visitor center staff and volunteers; front-line hotel, restaurant and retail employees; and other members of the community who regularly interact with travelers. They are trained about all aspects of the local byway, from the byway's interpretive message to current resource protection strategies. The training program's strategic principle is that locals should teach locals, building on the foundation of existing local knowledge.



The Colorado Grassroots Training Program includes creative learning tools, such as games, interactive activities, map making, and quizzes. Its innovative content is the heart of the program, generating a fun atmosphere that engages participants far beyond many similar training programs. The program strikes a balance between meaningful content and entertainment in a way that has made it incredibly well received by the local trainers and the employees and volunteers who participate. The program's developers envisioned a learning experience that might actually help travel-related businesses keep their employees interested and employed for longer periods of time.

### MODEL FOR CREATING INTERPRETERS & LEADERS

Colorado's Scenic Byways' highly successful program demonstrates that tourism training with an authentic and substantive core can be most effective when it's also fun and engaging. This proactive program includes a thorough manual, too, intended for any byway in Colorado or any byway in the U.S. to use. Notably, several other State byway programs have already adapted and implemented the training. Its replicable approach will continue to create interpreters and leaders around the country.

*The foundation for the training program is the firm belief that locals should teach locals, building on the foundation of existing local knowledge.*



Sharing Success and Honoring Excellence