Colleen Abdoulah
A Model of Generosity

Colleen Abdoulah grew up in the prairie province of Saskatchewan, Canada, the fourth of five children in a family that was a model of tenacity and generosity. Colleen worked in the family restaurant, where she learned first-hand about helping others.

"Our parents taught us to work hard, to share our success, and to feel grateful for good fortune, rather than entitled to it." The entire family chipped in to help at the restaurant, and workers always shared in the profits. When a worker's family member was ill, the Abdoulah family provided support as well.

Colleen received an undergraduate degree in Publications and Marketing from Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta, and an MBA from the University of Denver. Today she is the President and CEO of Wide Open West (WOW!), a regional internet, cable, and phone provider headquartered in Denver. Colleen built the company, then sold it in 2006. At the suggestion of her financial advisor, she opened a donor-advised fund at The Denver Foundation as a way to maximize the charitable aspects of her financial success.

A generous supporter of many causes, Colleen believes that philanthropy is spiritually based. She states, "We are here not just to care for ourselves but to care for others." She focuses her philanthropy on causes that affect women and children, especially those who are marginalized. She also gives to organizations that combat abuse, hunger, and poverty nationally and internationally. A cancer survivor, she also supports health issues. In addition to her demanding work schedule, Colleen finds time to participate on four boards: the American Cable Association, C-SPAN, the Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center, and the Women's Vision Foundation.

Colleen Abdoulah constantly challenges herself to do more, to give more, and to help others. Thank you, Colleen, for challenging each of us, as well.

For more about Colleen Abdoulah, visit www.denverfoundation.org and click on Donor Stories.