

## Agency for Change Podcast: Cato Kraft, Executive Director, Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center

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- Learn more about the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center: <https://www.epononprofit.org/>

### **Cato Kraft:**

If I can live my life following my values, then I am on the right path.

### **Announcer:**

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

Few people are as passionate about helping nonprofits as today's guest and fewer still are in a more perfect position to do so. As executive director of the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, she's able to support nonprofits in her hometown, enabling them to continue providing vital assistance to the community. Stay tuned as we discuss how this organization is amplifying the impact of local nonprofits, why fostering a sense of community is so important to the giving sector, and how they're leveraging tourism in Estes Park, Colorado, to fuel their efforts. Hey everyone, this is Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist at KidGlov. Welcome to another episode of the Agency for Change podcast. Today's guest is Cato Kraft executive director at the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, which aims to support, connect and inspire community nonprofits. Cato, welcome to the podcast.

### **Cato Kraft:**

Hi, Lyn. Thanks so much for having me.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

I'm so looking forward to talking to you, because you're in one of my favorite places in the world, and we're going to talk about how you're helping important organizations do important work there. Cato, let's start out with, for our listeners who may not be familiar with the organization, can you talk a bit about what the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, or the EPNRC for short, does, and how you help nonprofits?

### **Cato Kraft:**

Absolutely. Yeah. The Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, or the EPNRC, because it is a mouthful. We are a capacity building organization here in beautiful Estes Park, Colorado. Capacity building is not a very sexy term or alluring term to most people, but basically what that means is that we help nonprofits in our community give opportunities to support, to connect and to inspire. Our main why is we elevate local nonprofit impact.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

I love that. You know what? Capacity building may not sound like a sexy term if you're in the for-profit world, but boy, if you're the head of a nonprofit, capacity building is sexy stuff, I think.

**Cato Kraft:**

It definitely is.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Cato, we're going to talk more about the organization, but first I'd really love to hear about you because you are a young woman. You're only 28, but you're already leading this big organization as its executive director. Can you tell me about your passion for this nonprofit sector and how your career path led you here at such an early age?

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah, so I often say that leading the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center is my proudest passion. I moved to Estes Park around five years ago. Fun fact, I was living in Hawaii prior to that on the big island.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow. From the beach to the snow.

**Cato Kraft:**

I was actually in Vail prior to that. I went mountain to beach and then was planning on staying in Hawaii. My best friend went away for a couple weeks and there was this really handsome guy with a beard. He looked like he was from Colorado, that was in Hawaii. We went on a couple dates. Turns out he was on vacation there for a couple weeks and he got the best souvenir of his life when he picked me up and I came back to Estes Park with him. We are now married and that's been wonderful. But I moved to Estes Park kind of wanting a life transition. I had previously worked in more hospitality industry during my early twenties. I was a preschool teacher. I worked for a company in Hawaii. I worked for the Alliance at Ski School in Vail. But prior to that I was working with a camp company that was based in Brooklyn that put on academics camps for high school students around the country.

Really, I felt that my talents are utilized best when I can be creating something, when I can be sustaining change, when there is an end product of fulfillment that comes from it. When I moved to Estes Park, I was trying to figure out where my next career move would be. There was a job opening for a local nonprofit, the Estes Valley Crisis Advocates, which is a wonderful team that does victims advocacy work here in Estes Park. They operate the only domestic violence shelter here in the Estes Valley. They work with law enforcement to be able to be with victims of crime or trauma on scenes. Very, very different than the snorkel work that I was doing before.

**Cato Kraft:**

When I got my position at the crisis advocates, I was lucky enough to be joined by an executive director who had previously worked with the Greeley Police Department, and she just brought a wealth of knowledge, but also compassion for me being a young female in this nonprofit world. She has actually turned into one of my biggest advocates, my professional mentor. Where I sit today is because of this woman. I truly owe so much to this woman here.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. Cato, I applaud you for being so self-aware at a young age. It feels like you have so much figured out that take many of us quite a lot longer. It also sounds like you had a great mentor, which I think that's also just a fabulous reminder to everyone to either seek out mentors or to volunteer to be a mentor. I'm curious, as a young leader and as a woman in a position of leadership, what challenges have you faced during your career?

**Cato Kraft:**

I think one of the biggest ones that I would say, and I will just put it out there, that I am a white cis woman that grew up in a privileged environment. Comparatively, to other BIPOC women or BIPOC men, my struggles are relatively small, and I just really want to hold space for those community members that have had to endure and push through glass ceiling, after glass ceiling, after glass ceiling.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I appreciate that. I think a lot of us are becoming more aware that our challenges maybe are not as challenging as others, and I appreciate that acknowledgement.

**Cato Kraft:**

But I would say it's honestly being young in this field. The average age in Estes Park is, I believe now it's 63.7 years old.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh, I didn't realize that.

**Cato Kraft:**

I'm quite literally a newborn baby here. But there's often been this authority that comes with age, you have experienced more, you have more knowledge. I have been fortunate enough to pack a lot of life in my short years.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah.

**Cato Kraft:**

I think that I also like to consider myself this kind of sponge of knowledge. I will do these deep dives into situations and subjects that I don't necessarily have a ton of knowledge on, but I constantly find myself collecting pieces of education through experiences or anything like that. I would say being young is the most difficult part because as soon as someone hears, "Oh, you're 28," there's this automatic bias that I think comes about because of lack of lived experience.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah. I love the way you put that. You've packed a lot of life into your young years. That's a good way to say it. I first met you a couple of months ago, you spoke on a panel for the Colorado Nonprofit Association, and I was struck by the fact you mentioned that there are somewhere around 90 nonprofits in and around the Estes Park area, which I found shocking. It was quite a bit more than I would've thought. I'm curious, what do you think it is about the town, or maybe even Colorado in general that makes it so popular for these organizations?

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah, this is actually one of my favorite mouth drop tidbit moments. Estes Park has a year-round population of around 6,500 people, and-

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's not very many, really.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah. We are the gateway town to Rocky Mountain National Park on the eastern side. We actually have over a hundred nonprofits that are in service to and in the Estes Valley.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's crazy.

**Cato Kraft:**

When you think about it, we have one nonprofit for every 65 residents.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Thank you for saying that, I was trying to do the math in my head and I wasn't sure where the decimal landed.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah. We have a large and in charge nonprofit sector, but my favorite part about it is that not one nonprofit in our community is duplicative of each other.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's cool.

**Cato Kraft:**

Naturally, our nonprofit sector came about because of the geographic isolation of Estes Park. For those of you who have been to Rocky Mountain National Park, you have probably driven through Estes Park. It's a beautiful mountain community here, but there's only... During the winter, there's three ways in. All of them are through windy mountain canyons. Then the way in and out during the summer is Trail Ridge Road, which is through Rocky Mountain National Park. It's actually the highest and the longest continuous paved road in the United States.

You go up to 12,500 feet and it drops you down into the Granby area. Naturally, we are isolated from the rest of Larimer County, the rest of Boulder County. There's this natural "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps," mentality that I think Estes has adopted. It was formed, I believe, it was in the mid 18

hundreds. This was a pioneering town. People came here to get away and to get to the mountain. I think naturally, our history lends itself to be kind of inward and not outside help, which is how our nonprofit sector started. In years past, there was community members who saw that there were needs within the community and community members whose basic needs weren't being met. There was land being bought up by property developers to build upon.

People were like, "Oh no, no, wait. We moved to Estes Park for this beautiful land in this view. Let's start a nonprofit to help conserve land." That is how we got our Estes Valley Land Trust. We saw that there were people dealing with domestic violence and sexual assault. That's how we got the Estes Valley Crisis Advocates. We needed a nonprofit to provide basic needs for our population, so shelter, a food bank, assistance. That's how we got Crossroads Ministry of Estes Park. Everything came about because of a community members seeing that there were needs not being met, and the lack of governmental social services that exist in Estes Park.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah, I love that. I don't love the fact that you're kind of landlocked or separated in some cases, but I love the fact that the community is seeing the needs. Nonprofits are taking care of the needs that so often what our non-profits do for us. Then you are the resource for the nonprofits who are taking care of the people. I think that's fantastic. Cato, when this episode first airs in January of 2023, you are going to be getting ready for a big and fun event. Do you want to tell us a little bit about that event?

**Cato Kraft:**

I would love to. Thank you so much for asking Lyn. The EPNRC will be celebrating 20 years of being a nonprofit and serving our nonprofit sector.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Congratulations.

**Cato Kraft:**

Thank you. In Estes Park. We were formed in 2003. A little fun fact is that EPNRC has been continually led by a female executive director since its inception.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah. In order to celebrate our female lineage, our 20 years, we have decided to throw our annual fundraiser, which is always a costumed themed event in the middle of winter, which it's always super fun, it's always super cold, but people bear it and come out. This year we'll be doing a Queen's Ball celebrating 20 of the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center. That's going to be on Saturday, January 28. The historic Stanley Hotel will be hosting this event. We're super excited to have this fabulous and philanthropic, truly fundraiser and fun. We were also lucky enough to be chosen by the American Fundraising Foundation, and they will be partnering with us on some fabulous around the world trips for us to auction off.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Cato Kraft:**

We're very excited. We've already gotten some calls from people saying, "What do I dress up as for a Queen's Ball?"

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yes.

**Cato Kraft:**

We tell people, "You can be anything from Freddie Mercury to Queen Elizabeth to Queen Latifah to the evil queen."

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love it.

**Cato Kraft:**

We're going to see some really cool costumes. Then there's a dance party for only \$15 at the end of the event. We can hopefully bring in our next generation of philanthropists to be able to participate in a great low-cost event and not break the bank.

**Lyn Wineman:**

You know what? I cannot think of a better place to have the Queen's Ball than the Stanley Hotel. I think that all sounds fantastic. Cato, do you have your costume?

**Cato Kraft:**

I do actually, when this airs, we'll be close enough. It's fine. I am actually going to get a traditional tulle gown and pin the names of all of our different nonprofits on it.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh.

**Cato Kraft:**

I can be the nonprofit queen.

**Lyn Wineman:**

The nonprofit queen. I love that. I love that so much. Well, I am trying to work my schedule so I can be there, because it sounds like a lot of fun. Also though, supporting a great cause, which I think is not to be forgotten and to dig more into the organization. Cato, your website describes your work as elevating local nonprofit impact. Going back to that capacity building statement, how does that actually look in practice for you? What are the services that you do?

**Cato Kraft:**

This question comes at a very wonderful time, because I actually just left our full day 2023 program planning retreat.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Nice.

**Cato Kraft:**

That had the whole staff this morning. This is fresh in my mind, but we base everything we do off of these three categories in our mission. That is to support, to connect and to inspire local nonprofits.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Very nice.

**Cato Kraft:**

Every program we put on must fall in one of those categories, and the outcome of those programs must work towards elevating local nonprofit impact. That's kind of our organizational checks and balances that we do. We are planning really great educational opportunities for our nonprofit sector. Something about being in a remote place in Colorado means that the traditional conferences, and high-class speakers are usually in more metropolitan areas, which means that nonprofits have to leave their office, drive two plus hours, sit in traffic, get reimbursed for mileage. The EPNRC is actually able to bring speakers like that up, to make sure that the sector stays informed.

Within best practice educational models. Something very exciting that happened in 2022 is that we were able to get a completely community-, grassroots-funded, diversity equity coordinator. When I first started here, I went around and met with all of our nonprofits and community stakeholders and governments and all that. I asked them, "What is something that your nonprofit needs or your organization needs that is not currently being met?" Overwhelmingly, it was an authentic connection to our diverse populations.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Cato Kraft:**

Estes Park has a very rich culture of different populations. We are a dream retirement town for some people. We are the place that people come to year after year for vacations. We have J1 visa students. We have a thriving population of people that identify as Hispanic, of Nepalese of Ukrainian. We are a diverse community, not as diverse as larger communities, but for a community of 6,500 people.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yes, yes.

**Cato Kraft:**

There are all different sects of socioeconomic classes, to colors of skin, to religions. One of the things that nonprofits have continually found difficult is creating those authentic connections to our diverse populations without it being via services needed. Just getting these people on our board of directors, having their input be heard and be respected and be implemented. One of the things that we did was we

were able to grassroots fund this position and we had a hundred percent funding that came from community members who are also interested in this program. In July of 2022, I was able to hire Gena Duran, who is our diversity equity coordinator. She is absolutely incredible. She's been doing this type of work for...this is her life. She has lived it. She breathes it. But she will be working with our board, because the nonprofit resource center often calls ourselves the test kitchen or the guinea pig for nonprofit programming. We like to try everything out that no one else wants to try because it could be a major flop, and we eat the costs. Or it could be so wildly successful that we then replicate for the nonprofit.

Gena is going to be working with the EPNRC's board of directors beginning in June to do a year-long diversity, equity and inclusion and belonging audit for our board of directors and create this policy manual that foundationally challenges who traditionally sits on small nonprofit town boards. Our hope is that once our board goes through this year-long process that we can hand this beautifully wrapped package of and questions to ask and classes to attend to our town board, to our county board, to the other 99 nonprofit boards.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a lot of nonprofit boards. Honestly, almost every person has to serve on two boards to make that all work out.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes, absolutely.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. I love the way you look at that, and I can completely see where having this coordinator would be of such value to nonprofits. I also... Cato, I respect the fact that you have these guiding principles of support, connect, and inspire. Because I think one thing we see in the nonprofit world is sometimes nonprofits and associations and resource centers can get spread too thin. When you have your lanes, and you know are going to stay in your lanes in service to your stakeholders, then you can be strong in those lanes. I'm sure you get pulled thin anyway because it's just the nature of who we are as we work in this field. But I like the way that you really speak to that. I'm curious, are there any other kinds of resources you provide to nonprofits that you want to share? Can you give me any insight into how this work is impacting some of the organizations that you serve?

**Cato Kraft:**

We have a couple of core programs that have just been standing programs of the nonprofit resource center, one of them being our partnership network monthly meeting. That is quite literally a round table we all gather in a circle and we go around to hear, "What has happened in your organization over the last month. What vibes do you have? What has been going really great? What do you need some help on? What programs are happening? Do you have any volunteer opportunities?" Then we usually get between 20 and 25 local nonprofits there to give us updates. My wonderful marketing coordinator will actually take all that information and turn it into a newspaper article to inform our community. Estes Park is interesting, where we are a newspaper and a Facebook town.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I know exactly what you're saying, and what I love about that is what works.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes.

**Lyn Wineman:**

You use it. I do think different local markets have different things that they lean into, but I think that also kind of goes with, you mentioned an average age in the sixties. I think those two things kind of work in that arena, as well. You're not a market that's large enough to have your own television stations. Any money spent on television would be mostly wasted in other areas, as well.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah, I actually think one of my most proud programs that we have fully developed since I have started is a Giving Guest program. That is a collaborative between the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, United Way of Larimer County, and the Estes Chamber of Commerce. Basically, what it does is that it utilizes the tourism economy that Estes Park thrives off of. We get anywhere from 4.6 to 8 million visitors per year that come through Estes Park. Estes Park has a generational tourism market. We have grandparents who have brought their kids, who now bring their kids, who now bring their kids every single year.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Okay. I'm guilty of that. I'm one of those people. I came with my grandparents and now I will soon bring, I've already brought my kids and their significant others. Soon I will be bringing my own grandchildren. Yes, I'm raising my hand.

**Cato Kraft:**

You know, it is such a wonderful thing to see how much pride people have in Estes Park, especially as a vacation spot. This community could be where your grandchild takes their first steps, where your child's had their first ice cream cone on Elkhorn Avenue.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Probably the first place they'll see an elk, as they mean meander by the golf course, right?

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes, exactly. Our guests, as we like to call them, not tourists, they have an immense pride coming to our community, and that's why they keep coming year after year. But something that our nonprofits deal with is that there's a pillow tax, which guests pay and that helps fund our local marketing district. There's a sales tax that guests pay that helps fund our town government. There are mill levies, on top of that to help fund our school districts and our fire department. All very, very, very worthy causes to fund. But nonprofits don't have any type of tax that they could benefit off from guests coming into the place where we live year-round. We actually developed this giving guest program in order to tap into this economic resource that nonprofits usually don't have the capacity to tap into. Our slogan is, "Give to the place you love to stay and play." You are able to select six sectors of nonprofits, since having a list of a hundred nonprofits people would-

**Lyn Wineman:**

It is a little overwhelming. Yes.

**Cato Kraft:**

You would get to E and there's 40 "Estes Park" this, "Estes Valley" that, so we have actually asked our nonprofits to self-identify under one of these six categories. Let's say, you, Lyn, you have a huge passion for childcare.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I do.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes, that is your passion back in Nebraska. You give your heart and your soul to this, and you come to Estes Park. You are talking to a waiter, and he says that he actually has to quit next week because there's only two infant spots here in Estes Park for childcare.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a real problem actually, right?

**Cato Kraft:**

It is, yes. Through this program, you can scan this very easy QR code, go to [epgivingguest.org](http://epgivingguest.org) and you can click, "I would like to give towards youth and families." So, you give a hundred dollars, let's say, and there's 10 nonprofits that are under that realm. That money, at the end of each six-month Giving Guest season will be equitably dispersed to those nonprofits without having any type of grant ask. That was a big thing that I wanted to make sure was that our nonprofits don't have yet another way to ask-

**Lyn Wineman:**

Form to fill out or measurement to supply. Sometimes that measurement is harder than the work itself. You just have people tracking data, tracking data. That's such a fantastic idea, Cato.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah. We were actually able to launch that this past summer. Unfortunately, it didn't do monetarily as well as we thought it would. But this is a program that this-

**Lyn Wineman:**

Give it time, sometimes it just takes a little time, because in some ways you're hoping the hospitality workers and representatives need to take a part in getting the word out on this. They, themselves are... I'm sure have plenty of things they have to do. I would say give it time. Sometimes adoption just takes a little while.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes.

**Lyn Wineman:**

It's a really great idea.

**Cato Kraft:**

Thank you. This is going to become one of our core programs. We are not going to give up on this program.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Good for you.

**Cato Kraft:**

This literally hits all of our boxes as to support, to connect, to inspire, to elevate local nonprofit impact. This is a soapbox that I'll stand on for the rest of my life, is that we have too many talented executive directors in this town that are passionate and so good at working towards the missions in which they serve. Yet, so much of their time is spent looking for the next dollar or trying to cultivate a donor that their expertise is being taken away from the critical missions that they serve. If EPNRC, as their local nonprofit resource center working to elevate their impact, can step in and take that burden off of them. Even if we got \$1 from every tourist or guest that comes into Estes Park, we could fund fundamentally change how our nonprofit sector is funded. We have not been able to find any other community doing something like this.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I've never heard of it. I spend a lot of my time doing nonprofit marketing. I think it's just such a good idea. It's going to take off.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes.

**Lyn Wineman:**

You and I'll have a cocktail, we'll talk it through.

**Cato Kraft:**

Oh, I love it.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Cato, I love the idea of that program. So innovative, so passionate also makes a lot of sense for the area that you're in. I completely agree with you. I love to visit Estes Park and have that same level of pride, and look forward to bringing my family back, and talk very fondly of a lifetime of memories, too. You have mentioned the word community several times, not surprising that community is really important to the nonprofit work. But I'm curious your opinion on why it's so important to foster a sense of community instead of competition in this nonprofit world.

**Cato Kraft:**

The 10-million-dollar question, Lyn. No, I firmly believe that especially in small communities, there's this natural aversion to being fully collaborative, because we are all sharing the same pool of donors. We're all sharing the same local grants. It's not very often that our community nonprofits go way outside of the realm of Colorado or even federal funding that's pigeonholed for certain missions. There's this apprehension just naturally from being able to be truly collaborative and open. One of my mottos in life is community over competition. That is because we need to create this community, both within the

partnership of nonprofits to people that receive those services. There are so many layers to this. I would say that the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center has that at our very core. That is, we are here to foster this community, to uphold this community of nonprofits, to speak for the community of nonprofits. When hard conversations need to be had with government entities or with businesses. We all work stronger together.

**Lyn Wineman:**

For sure.

**Cato Kraft:**

Even if sometimes there's this fear of, "Are we stepping on each other's toes? What if I go after this donor?" At the end of the day, yes, we all need money to make our missions happen, but we get into the work we do because we are trying to leave a better community for the next generation. How that's really going to be accomplished is not by competing with each other, going to be having this strong sense of pride within our nonprofits, within our missions, within the Estes Park community. Our vision is actually "Strong nonprofits, strong community," that is in the bylaws. The EPNRC has this overarching just theme of, "In order to create a strong and vibrant community, you must have strong and vibrant nonprofits."

**Lyn Wineman:**

Absolutely. Here, here, Cato. I think that's fantastic. I love it. I love it. You're doing so many great things. You've got this great history, you've got a great event, you've got great programs. What's left to do? What do you see for the EPNRC in the next five to 10 years?

**Cato Kraft:**

I think we're truly going to level up as an organization. I have often said that we are the chamber of nonprofits. We are this microcosm of very heavily diluted nonprofit sector, and it's unusual for a small community to have a dedicated nonprofit resource center. Most of those lie at the state level, at the county level. Our work, as in what we're doing, is in and of itself a little bit puzzling to think about.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah, yeah.

**Cato Kraft:**

Because it's so rare. But I really feel like the organization can take the next step into an advocacy role. We can be the ones informing our nonprofits about what's happening at the state level, at the county level, at the town level with different bills and taxes, and educating our nonprofit sector about how can you advocate? Civic engagement is important. It's especially important for our BIPOC community members non-profiters to get out there, to get their voices heard, to represent those who they are serving. I have big hopes for this amazing Giving Guest program. I think this could truly be transformative for this large nonprofit community, once it's successful. Honestly, I'm really proud about the collaborations that EPNRC works with. We work very closely with the town of Estes Park, with the Estes Park Marketing District, with our Chamber of Commerce, with our economic development center.

It's wonderful to have these higher-level conversations and for our nonprofit sector to not only be seen as the fluffy, nice, and good work, but as a true economic sector in the Estes Valley. We have millions upon millions of dollars coming into this community, either via nonprofit donations, via nonprofit people

who are volunteering, and those hours are being used for match funds for grants. We have a huge workforce that is nonprofits. The nonprofit sector here is not just your typical social service entities. It is truly its own, vibrant, and it's a very successful economic sector here.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah, I think sometimes people - it's a misnomer of nonprofits - people forget that there is an economic impact, there is a workforce, there are budgets that must be met, payrolls that must be made. Sometimes people forget about that aspect. I think it's great that you are there supporting all of that work. Just doing the math in my head once again, which is not my specialty. I'm a marketing person, not a math person. But if you think about in a community of 6,500 people, there's roughly a hundred nonprofits, and they all employ probably somewhere between two and 20 people. That's a huge segment of the population there, just on its own as part of the workforce there, as well.

**Cato Kraft:**

We have very large nonprofits like the YMCA of the Rockies.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh yeah.

**Cato Kraft:**

They have their own core team and then they bring in seasonal workers. Then we have our very, very tiny nonprofits, that is one person running this as a volunteer basis and the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center, why I think I am so just incredibly proud and passionate about this organization is that we serve them all. It doesn't matter if it's a 100 million budget or if it's a \$5,000 per year, completely small basis. We will help serve you in order to create and sustain a vibrant nonprofit sector here.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's awesome. That's awesome. Cato, obviously you do a lot of inspiring work. You're very passionate about it. I'm going to segue here to one of my favorite questions, because people who know me know that I love motivational quotes. I, on this podcast have the opportunity to talk to so many inspiring, passionate people. I'm wondering if you could give us a few of your own words of wisdom to inspire our listeners.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes. What's very funny, Lyn, is that in my office right now, there is a signed Jim Carrey headshot, which he ended up mailing us because I asked him for a donation and we got this, which is fabulous, but it says, "Spank you very much." That is what's staring at me and not that that is my motive. But it's literally a headshot of Jim Carrey saying, "Spank you very much."

**Lyn Wineman:**

Spank you very much. I love it. Anyways, and for people who don't know, I mean Jim Carrey's kind of famously tied to the town, through the Stanley Hotel and the movie Dumb and Dumber, which was partially filmed in the area.

**Cato Kraft:**

Yes, and my personal favorite movie. This was very exciting to me, but I digress.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love it. I love it.

**Cato Kraft:**

Something that was told to me by a dear colleague and friend recently was, "Live your values."

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh, yeah.

**Cato Kraft:**

That really struck home, because A, I had never thought about what my own personal values are. I don't think that's something that people intrinsically sit down and say, "My values are X, Y, and Z." I was really able to sit down and kind of think, "What are my values in life?" One of them that I have been able to identify and truly start living my life by is passion. I am a very passionate person, obviously, when it comes to things that I enjoy and I'm passionate about. But even just as an individual. I like to feel fully, I like to be immersed. I love experiencing life in its fullest extent. That quote of "Live your values," has just really sat with me. I think I will know when my time at the EPNRC is up and that is when I'm no longer passionate about it. Obviously, that's not the case right now. I have-

**Lyn Wineman:**

No, it's not.

**Cato Kraft:**

If I can live my life following my values and self-checking with myself of, "Is this something that aligns with my values?" Then I am on the right path, that would be mine.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. I love it. I am going to say this is, I think this is only the third time I've ever spoken with you, but I think that's what caused me to want to come up and meet you in the first place, because I could feel your passion when you spoke of the work that you were doing. Cato, how can people find out more about the EPNRC?

**Cato Kraft:**

Yeah, so we have a really fabulous website, which is all due to my fabulous marketing coordinator. She's wonderful.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yay for the marketing people, right?

**Cato Kraft:**

Oh gosh.

I truly don't know what I would do without my staff. I have an amazing operations director that's been with the organization for seven years. Through three executive directors, a lot of change in the organization. She is wonderful. I have a marketing coordinator who just, I can tell her "I want something with elk antlers and that kind of has this Alphonse Mucha vibe to it," and she-

**Lyn Wineman:**

She gets it. She gets you. Yeah.

**Cato Kraft:**

Then I have our wonderful, wonderful, wonderful DEC, or our diversity engagement coordinator. But we have an awesome website. It's [www.epronprofit.org](http://www.epronprofit.org). That's where-

**Lyn Wineman:**

[epronprofit.org](http://epronprofit.org). We'll link to it in the show notes for anybody who wants to go onto the KidGlov website and grab that, too.

**Cato Kraft:**

Oh, thank you. That's where you can see about our local nonprofit sector. There's an entire list of nonprofits. Again, once you get to E, your eyes kind of glaze over.

It also gives you updates about some of the really awesome events we do in town. We actually host the Estes Valley National Philanthropy Day. That is a community gathering. It's kind of like nonprofit prom meets state of the union. We get 300 community members that come out in November, and we celebrate the amazing work that's happening with our nonprofits, with our philanthropists, and with amazing volunteers. It is truly a feel-good event, there's photos on there. We also talk about all of our different types of programming. I obviously talked about a couple of our programs. We have an entire list of what programs we're doing to help connect, support, and inspire our non-profit sector. Invite you to go on there. There does happen to be a big "Donate Now" button because we are a nonprofit and it is-

**Lyn Wineman:**

Of course, it would be irresponsible if you, not to put that there.

**Cato Kraft:**

Exactly.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I bet too, there's information about the Giving Guest program, as well.

**Cato Kraft:**

There is, yeah. There's actually an entire toolkit for both nonprofits and businesses who need to know, "What do I need to do to be a part of this program? How do I implement this program? I need words." We give you all the work.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah, good for you.

**Cato Kraft:**

It's just, yeah, it's really wonderful.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. Cato, as we wrap up this very fun conversation today, what is the most important thing you would like our listeners to remember about the work that you're doing?

**Cato Kraft:**

I think I'm going to go back to our vision statement, and that is "Strong, nonprofit, strong community." I encourage everyone, no matter where you're living, to try to find a nonprofit organization that is doing something that align with your values, something that you are passionate about and get involved. Our nonprofits so often, we are usually small budgets. We have staff that are not adequately paid, and that's just kind of across the nation, this underpayment for nonprofit workers.

We don't get a lot of perks and frills as a nonprofit employee. There's this moniker that people say where, "You don't get into nonprofits to make the big bucks." I would like to challenge that and say we should make the big bucks. But nonprofits rely on community donors. We rely on volunteers. We truly rely on advocates to be out there on our behalf. As we are doing these critical services, these missions in our communities, we need people who are out there saying, "Hey, did you know about the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center? Here's what they do." We cannot do the work we do without our community support. I feel so lucky that we are in this very strange little snow globe bubble of non-profitness.

**Lyn Wineman:**

The snow globe bubble of non-profitness. That's my favorite quote of the day.

**Cato Kraft:**

It's wonderful. I truly believe that when you have a strong nonprofit sector that is being supported, that is having their needs met, that their morale is high, because they know that they matter in this community, that's when your strong community emerges.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Ah, that's so fantastic. Cato. This has been such a fun conversation. I have to say, I fully believe the world needs more people like you, more organizations like the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center. Since you brought it up earlier, I'm just going to say, "spank you very much."

**Announcer:**

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