

Agency for Change Podcast: Debra Brown, Executive Director, Good Business Colorado

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Debra Brown:

Find what you're passionate about. Find what you care most about and do something with it.

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:

Hey everyone, this is Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist at KidGlov. Welcome to another episode of Agency for Change. If you have listened to our podcast before, and I hope you have, you know that at KidGlov we strongly believe running a business is not just about making money, but also about making a positive impact in the world. If you're new here, we call this being a purpose-driven business, and it is at the foundation of everything we do here. Today's guest shares this belief so much that she serves as the executive director of Good Business Colorado, a grassroots organization of employers and entrepreneurs working to build a prosperous economy, equitable communities, and a sustainable environment within the region. I cannot wait to hear her story. Debra, welcome to the podcast.

Debra Brown:

Thank you so much for having me, Lyn. Really appreciate it.

Lyn Wineman:

I just can't wait to talk to you and hear about all the great things that you're doing, but I'd love to start with you just taking a minute to tell us more about the organization and the work that you're doing.

Debra Brown:

Sure. Good Business Colorado is an organization for values-driven business owners that are working to build a more prosperous, equitable and sustainable Colorado. So, we've got members from across the state. We have over 460 members in 23 counties across the state.

Lyn Wineman:

Nice.

Debra Brown:

And the glue that holds us all together in a wide range of industries with very different amounts of business experience and success and acumen and wide range of demographics, but the thing that glues

us all together is that belief that you can be a good business and be profitable and still take care of your employees and be an environmental steward. Make sure your community is taken care of in your operations. That's kind of who we are and what I say makes our members among the best businesses in the world.

Lyn Wineman:

I love that. I love that you just said that too, because KidGlov is very proud to be part of the glue ball that is Good Business Colorado, and I've never spoken those words before. So, there you go.

Debra Brown:

Well, as a relatively new member, we're so grateful to have you involved and to figure out how we can help you make your values real in the world.

Lyn Wineman:

Absolutely. What I love about being a value-based business is it just feels good. It makes getting up and coming to work every day feel good. But it's interesting how often I get the question, can you balance being profitable, and values driven? I find that to be such an interesting question. The answer is yes, and usually doing the right thing is not a bad thing for business. I'm sure you're finding the same thing with your organization and your members.

Debra Brown:

It's really interesting because if you think about, if you go really far back in time, to be able to be a business, to get a charter that authorized you to do business in the United States, you had to state your benefit to society.

Lyn Wineman:

I did not know that, Debra. That was a thing a long time ago.

Debra Brown:

Yeah, back in the day to get an actual charter to do business with the United States of America, you actually had to prove that you were providing value to its citizens.

Lyn Wineman:

Wow.

Debra Brown:

I would say we often say this is not the leading edge, the bleeding edge, this is, yes, it's the future because it has to be, but it's also the past. And not just even back from that requirement phase, but it's very intuitive that businesses that take care of their employees, keep their employees; that businesses that take care of their environment are going to be recognized and seen for that. Nobody wants to buy a product that is responsible for massive destruction, whether it be human life or the environment.

Lyn Wineman:

Amen.

Debra Brown:

It's not even a choice anymore. People, employees...they want to feel good about the place where they spend the majority of their time. People are being way more savvy about how they spend their money and really voting with their dollars. It's really no longer an option. Operating in the triple bottom line is becoming the norm, and the businesses that fail to or refuse to do that are going to be left in the dust.

Lyn Wineman:

Debra, I love everything that you're saying. Can I have you clarify one point for me? Because I have heard and used the phrase "triple bottom line" a lot of times, but would you mind explaining that maybe for people who haven't heard it before?

Debra Brown:

Thank you. And that was such a nice way to say, don't use acronym stuff that people...triple bottom line stands for people, planet, profit. And at Good Business Colorado, we talk about the prosperous economy, equitable communities, and sustainable environment. But it's that integration that you're not just looking at that total net income that oftentimes in business we look at for what is our total financial profit or loss. And it's I think especially important because our laws have facilitated and we've gotten in this habit of externalizing the cost of so much, whether it's subsidizing wages for people who aren't being paid a livable wage, whether it's the government entities that are tasked with cleaning up after our manufacturing, that we keep the profits as business, we keep the profits, but we externalize the cost and the cost of doing environmental regeneration.

And so, it's really about changing the practice of looking at the triple bottom line to incorporate all the things that go into the making of the product or service, not just the things that show up on a balance sheet.

Lyn Wineman:

I think too, a lot of us know intuitively that it's the right thing to do. You referenced this earlier, but I'm seeing more and more research from a lot of sources about how both consumers and employees want to align with organizations that are making a positive impact. They're using their dollars, they're using their time and talents in return for a job. But more and more research is really, I think, leaning into the fact that this is the right path. I'm really curious, how specifically does Good Business Colorado work with the community to do this work to create a more fair and sustainable economy? What does that look like?

Debra Brown:

Well, again, I think it goes to voting with your dollars. So, everybody loves small business, but when it comes time to prioritize that purchasing, I think it's oftentimes we go for the fast and ease of Amazon. Whereas sometimes you have to do a little more work to find a local vendor that can provide usually a higher quality product, but the most importantly, that money stays in the community instead of being siphoned off to Amazon headquarters. So, for us, it's really about empowering the community and making it easy for them to align their values with their purchasing behavior. Everything we try and do to promote our members so that people are trained. So, if you're looking for a restaurant, go first to Good Business Colorado members. If you need a mechanic, well guess who's not going to screw you? There's lots of great honest mechanics out there, of course.

But I think one value of shopping GBC is that these are businesses that are part of a community of values driven business owners, and they care deeply about that. We try and make it as easy as possible for the

community to share, to actually put action behind their intention to support small business. We work really hard to make sure that we have members that can service a broad range of needs. Our vision is to someday be able to have a Good Business Colorado member for every possible product and service that, *most* every product and service that a conscientious consumer would ever want and need.

Lyn Wineman:

That is a great dream. I love that dream. I love your collaboration, and I just want to make sure all of our listeners know we're going to make sure to have a link to your website and a link to your list of vendors, your local vendors for Colorado, in the show notes on the KidGlov website, so that that's very easily accessible. And we'll make sure to hit that web address later as well. So, you're doing a lot of collaborating, you have a lot of organizations that are members that are coming onto your list. But I'm curious about what other kinds of partnerships do you have?

Debra Brown:

Thank you. And that's a great question. From the get-go, GBC has really been about the ecosystem, and so we're a player in multiple ecosystems. I would say the partners that we work most frequently with are other organizations that serve business owners across the state. We have really strong partnerships with organizations like Local First and Durango, Partnership for Community Action, and the Salida Chamber of Commerce the Pueblo Latino Chamber of Commerce in Pueblo. All in all, we have over 75 organizations that specifically serve business owners, because we believe-

Lyn Wineman:

That's a lot.

Debra Brown:

And honestly, the pandemic changed a lot of things. Organizations that we've been reaching out to for years suddenly realize we have to pivot right now to serve our business owners and we can't do it all, we don't know what to do, so let's come to the table and do it together. And so really since then we started with the pandemic, this growing together as much programming as we could to help our business owners navigate this uncharted territory, hinges overnight to rules and regulations, the landscape of how you can retain your employees, what the nuances of getting all these sources of funding were. And so, we've been able to maintain those partnerships that were really jumpstarted with the pandemic because that need and benefit of collaboration never goes away.

So oftentimes, instead of creating our own programming, if there's an organization that already is doing it really well, we just promote what they're doing instead of trying to do it ourselves. I think that's really important in an ecosystem where the need is so much greater than any of our group's capacity. We just have to collaborate and really leverage our expertise and resources.

Lyn Wineman:

It's such a good principle. There's really, from an association standpoint there's no need to compete, but to collaborate and make each other stronger and leaning into your area of expertise, because it's impossible for every association to have all of the resources and talent and expertise needed to cover such a broad range. I love the fact that you've got those partnerships and over 75, I think you said, that's a big ecosystem right there. And each of those 75 are touching so many businesses. I think that's fabulous.

Debra Brown:

We also work closely with a variety of government agencies in rulemaking and implementation of new laws and we have a whole range of community partners we work with in the policymaking space as well.

Lyn Wineman:

As a business owner myself too, I find it's impossible to stay on top of all of the issues that are going on. And so, I appreciate organizations that can help me with that, advocate on my behalf, and educate me on, hey, you really need to start paying attention to this. And so that leads me to my next question. What are the big policy issues that Good Business Colorado is currently focused on and what kind of impact do you hope to have?

Debra Brown:

Every year we survey our members. We're a fiercely member led organization. And so, every year we ask our members to take our annual policy survey, and we call, we text, we email until we get that D1 plus participation rate that lets us know we actually have a mandate to pursue these priorities. Every year our priorities are set by our members, and then we have a policy council. It's not pay to play. Anyone who's a member of GBC can apply to be on the policy council. They receive honorariums for their time, so that's not a barrier to participation. And they really do the deep work of vetting the policies and selecting the specific bills where they think we can have the greatest impact and best align with our values. I wanted to tell you a bit about the process before saying the specific policies.

Lyn Wineman:

I like that you told me about the process. It's not just willy-nilly, we're not just picking numbers or things out of the air. It's not just Debra's favorite issues. I love the phrase being a communicator. I wrote down when you said, "we are fiercely member led." I love that so much. That makes me even more excited about being a member.

Debra Brown:

Well, thank you. And it's so true. And the double-edged sword of that is we ask a lot of our members, as you've probably already seen, Lyn, we're right now setting our educational programming and not only did we ask members to submit ideas for content, we then ask members to vote on which content would be most valuable.

Lyn Wineman:

I appreciate that. Because A, as somebody who does presentations, there's nothing worse than presenting in front of a group that your topic doesn't really interest them and you spent a lot of work and time in front of an empty room. And likewise, as a member of organizations, you want to look at that programming calendar. That's what keeps your members really engaged as well. They want to look at that programming calendar and go, yeah, they get me. These are the things I want to know more about.

Debra Brown:

Exactly. That's exactly why we do it. So that applied to the policy.

Lyn Wineman:

Let's hear it. I'm really curious to know. What are the big ones that you want to talk about?

Debra Brown:

Sure. So, climate ranked as the single highest priority in our survey this year. And so, there's a range of bills that are geared at reining in greenhouse gas emissions, to new energy improvements and even studying workforce transitions to other industries so we're not leaving behind the people whose livelihood depends on the extractive industries. You can find the details of the specific bills on our website.

Lyn Wineman:

That's great.

Debra Brown:

And there's a whole suite, seven or eight of these specific environmentally related bills, everything from agricultural producer's use of agrivoltaics. To again, supporting the workforce development in the new energy economy as well as helping transition from the old. One that crosses over from our top priorities is the big land use bill. You're hearing a lot about it. Certainly, it's not perfect in its current form, but our members really selected this as an issue that really gets at the heart of affordable housing as well as environmental impact. And those two things are really linked in a way that you just can't separate out. DE&I, equity, advancing equity is also an initiative that, it was the number two overall priority on our annual member survey.

And so certainly there are bills that are specifically aimed at increasing equity. So, there's a bill that takes aim at age discrimination and employment by just simply prohibiting people from asking for a graduation year on their initial application.

Lyn Wineman:

It's pretty easy to do the math and figure it out when you have a graduation year in there, yes.

Debra Brown:

Exactly. And there's so many other ways for people to get at, does this person have the skills to be successful in this job? But when we talk about equity, we really are looking at when we have policies for things that we know need to be done, how do we do them in a way that we don't leave behind the most vulnerable business owners? And that's a really important thing for us, because we've learned the hard way that sometimes what is the greater good can have tremendously disproportionate burden on our most slim margin businesses. So that's really, when we talk about equity and policy, it's not just about passing policies that advance equity, but making sure that equity is a central component of all of our policy analysis and that we're not supporting policies that are for the greater good, but don't have a plan. And with a plan comes resources.

So, if they're not providing funding and technical support to support the most vulnerable business owners in being compliant with the law, we're not going to support it.

Lyn Wineman:

That's a really good point. Because for a small business, that extra funding required to comply or change in workflow or that extra employee that you might need to hire or retrain, that can be crushing.

Debra Brown:

Exactly. Exactly. We don't want to be in this situation where you find sometimes some mainstream business organizations, it's kind of an equation, it's right, if you do this, the sky will fall, or you can't do this. We know this is a problem, but X isn't the solution. That's not it. But it really is being tentative to make sure when we put out solutions, that they really work for everything.

Lyn Wineman:

I appreciate that. Thank you for that overview, Debra. Debra, a bit ago you mentioned DE&I being a top priority of your members. I know you're launching a demographic task force to advance your work in this area. Could you tell me a bit more about that and the why behind it?

Debra Brown:

Absolutely. Thank you, Lyn. As I mentioned, Good Business Colorado is fiercely member led, and so we try and apply that to all areas of our work. And so, we had developed an equity roadmap some time ago that was developed by staff, with board contributions and participation, and it was great, and it was important. And we implemented the first part of that roadmap, which was doing some training for our membership and our greater community on equity. We also did an assessment as part of that first phase of the roadmap. And what we learned from the assessment was we have to be very careful that our efforts to diversify our membership and the reasons for which we know that we can only achieve our greatest ambitions when we have the right people at the table. Because being an entrepreneur in Pueblo is a very different experience than being an entrepreneur in Sterling or Fort Collins.

Just like the experience of being a Black entrepreneur is a very different experience of being white entrepreneur and the access to capital and the barriers that you are forced to overcome as a BIPOC business owner. And so, we know that to do our best work with policymaking and to best support businesses on their journeys to being a better business, we have to have all of the voices represented at the table. And at the same time, because right now I think, especially, there's so much buzz around DE&I and so much that might be best of intentions, but people just trying to check boxes instead of really doing the work. We have to be really careful that we are not being perceived as or unintentionally tokenizing people. Because whether it's perceived or actual, the damage is done.

And so, we decided that by launching a demographics task force we could really look into, again, using that broad life experiences, bringing together a group from very different life experiences, to look at how we are collecting demographic information and how we're using it. Because nobody's as simple as box, right? Everybody has so many unique intersecting identities, and we really do our best to support our members and serve our greater membership and community and advance our mission when we look at everybody as a unique individual and all of their different identities that converge to bring forward their life experience and what they can contribute to both our policy work and our peer-to-peer learning for helping businesses on their journey to be in better businesses.

So, the demographic task force is limited in scope, really to dig into the, how are we collecting those demographic information, what are we going to use it for and why and how, and are we doing it in a way that really does justice to the complexities of people's identities? With the goal of that group then laying the foundation for an entire rewrite of our equity roadmap that is written by our members this time round.

Lyn Wineman:

What I am so excited about is this sounds like such good foundational work and with the great collaborative networks and partnerships you are involved in, I think it has the opportunity to really

impact a lot of different people, a lot of different organizations and businesses. Kudos to you for doing the work. And then I'm also going to admit, as we talk about being fiercely member led, it also is a call to arms for me as a member to make sure I'm worthy of being part of that fierce member leadership and stay active and engaged as well. A lot of this work is about hearing different voices. I'm just really curious as an organization, and as you think about civic engagement, what are some of the ways you encourage voices to be heard and encourage this diversity and inclusion and make sure marginalized groups are represented?

Debra Brown:

Thank you for that question, Lyn. And also, just to say we never want it to feel burdensome to be a Good Business team member. Because-

Lyn Wineman:

I'm like, wow, I hope I'm up for this.

Debra Brown:

And people step up and back as their business flow allows. We have restaurant owners, when they are opening a new location, sometimes they check out, they step back a little bit till they get their restaurant open. Life happens, people take care of sick parents, sick children. GBC is never intended to be a burden. Really, it's just the criteria for membership is that belief in business as a force for good. And then we ask members to show up in the ways that's meaningful to them.

Lyn Wineman:

Sounds good.

Debra Brown:

And so, if we're not creating the opportunities that are right to advance your business and your business goals, then we need to go back to the drawing board and find the right opportunities. But we really want it to be rewarding.

Lyn Wineman:

Absolutely, Debra. I just want to make sure I'm worthy of being a member, which I'm confident that I am, and you made me feel confident and accepted as well.

Debra Brown:

At Good Business Colorado we always start with the assumption that people have no experience in civics. Because the truth of the matter is, I think some belief that a business owner comes out of the shoe knowing how to engage in civics, and in our experience that just isn't the case. Most of our members, when they go to the capitol with Good Business Colorado, it's the first time that they've been there. Often times when people are doing a press conference or writing an op-ed or an LTE or testifying on a bill that's important to them, it's the first time they've ever done it. And I think our system is not made to be accessible. It is set up with a variety of barriers that make it challenging. Our approach is always to meet people where they're at and walk them on their journey from wherever they're at to what their next level looks like.

And it can be very different. Everyone can level up their engagement. We have members that have gone from never stepping foot in the capitol, to they find a bill that's really important to them. And so, they testify on that bill. And then as a result of that bill, they create a task force to study the impact of that policy and that member can then be on that task force. And so, we've seen a couple times where we have members like Edwin with Zoe Ma Ma, he advocated for paid family and medical leave. And then he was appointed by the Senate majority to be on the task force that studied what it would look like to implement paid family and medical leave. And then he participated in the amicus brief when we had to defend the paid family and medical leave in the court. So many different ways for people to engage in policymaking at the state level, regardless of what their current experience is, regardless of what they're passionate about. If somebody is interested and willing to be part of it, there's a way to engage.

And that can be customized depending on what it is you care about and what your capacity is and what you get joy from. Not everybody loves doing media interviews, but some people do. So, creating opportunities where people can speak to the media about the things they're doing in their business that are really exemplary or why there's a barrier to being the business they want to be, and how we could pass a law that would help eliminate that barrier. The opportunities are endless, and our approach is always to meet people where they're at and let them know what the levers are. What are the points of influence? And do it together, because there's nothing that we teach people to do that they can't do on their own. But it's so much more fun and fulfilling to do it as part of a group.

Lyn Wineman:

And you have much more confidence when you do it as part of the group. I liken business ownership a little bit to parenting because you aren't going to know everything you need to know when you start. You are going to figure it out along the way and people are going to help you and reach out to you and you're going to find resources. I appreciate that you help businesses take baby steps in the civic engagement arena as well. So, here's a big question for you. Why should values driven business owners consider joining Good Business Colorado?

Debra Brown:

I think we hear from members when we ask them, why have you joined GBC or what's the greatest value you get? The number one thing we hear is about the community. People want to be connected to other business owners that share their values. They want to do business with them. When they troubleshoot, they don't want to go, when I had my tech company, I stopped engaging my advisors for my tech company because I know when I'm asking them to think about an issue, they're thinking about it in one diameter and that's how to maximize profit. When I want to do problem solving with people who share my values, I want to get better outcomes by doing problem solving with people who share my values. I think it's the community of peer support to trade and to be really honest about things that don't work and to have a community where you can troubleshoot that.

And then I think the ability to be part of something bigger than yourself. I think that there's other organizations that serve values driven business owners a lot in terms of working on their business practices, but GBC is really for a space for bold business owners that say, I want to use my stature as a business owner to make my values real in the world. I want to be a part of a campaign that's not going to just change things for my business, but for my great-grandchild's business. Those are the type of people who join GBC. They're not just the doers. All business owners are doers by virtue of the fact they started their own business.

Lyn Wineman:

You have to be. You have to be willing to be a jack of all trades, at least for a bit.

Debra Brown:

Exactly. And that's great. I think the next level is for our members who want to be part of a community that wants to do better together and to do better on a systematic level.

Lyn Wineman:

Got it. Got it. I hear the passion in your voice as you talk about these issues, which makes me want to ask you a personal question. And that is just, how did your path lead you to this place, to being the executive director of Good Business Colorado?

Debra Brown:

Thanks, Lyn, for that question. By chance certainly, and when I say chance, I mean it's all of my past experience. I had a tech company myself for about 12 years. I met my business partner right out of college. We were in a class together and we launched our business. We were trying to use technology to bridge the digital divide. So, before the term social enterprise was really popular, I feel like that's what we were without even knowing there was a term for it. But those businesses have been around forever. Well, we definitely found our share of uphill battles including getting funding. And for the first 10 years or so, I did a lot of moonlighting working second jobs. And the last job that I did moonlighting was organizing businesses around the statewide ballot initiative to increase the minimum wage to \$12 by 2020.

And that was the convergence of my passion for organizing and economic justice with my own personal entrepreneurial journey. After that campaign I was getting texts and calls and emails from the businesses that have been part of it saying, what are we going to do next? We want to keep working together. I think that was really, for most in our world it was a pretty dark time, the 2016 election. And so, people were just really longing for community and a sense of meaning, a way to fight back against the darkness that was impeding to be quite honest. I don't know how else to say it. And so, a small group of us started meeting regularly to talk about what it would look like to start an organization for values driven business owners that wanted to say, hey, big chamber, you don't speak for me.

I actually think that raising the minimum wage or providing access to paid family and medical leave would be good for my business. We started Good Business Colorado in October 2017 with 52 founding members.

Lyn Wineman:

That's honestly quite a few founding members. Good for you for having that kind of support from the very beginning.

Debra Brown:

It's amazing that I would say the majority of those businesses are still members that are active today and have-

Lyn Wineman:

That's great.

Debra Brown:

... really helped to grow the organization, because that fire never goes away. You've got it, Lyn. You know it. And to be a part of a community where everyone shares that means something. People step up and back as their business allows, but they want to remain part of a community that aligns with their values.

Lyn Wineman:

Yep. All right. I've got another personal question for you, because I read somewhere that you've done something pretty spectacular that is in support of women and moms, and this podcast is going to air right before Mother's Day in 2023. But tell me about tennis and being pregnant.

Debra Brown:

Thank you, Lyn. Yes, I did. I played tennis growing up and in high school, and then competitively for some years. I ended up winning the Colorado State Open when I was pregnant with my kiddo. To be fair that's 4.0 women's tennis. So, people who know tennis know there's a system and 5.0 is like teaching pro. So not like that. I didn't win any money.

Lyn Wineman:

Still, I think it's amazing.

Debra Brown:

It was pretty awesome to do pregnant nonetheless.

Lyn Wineman:

Good for you.

Debra Brown:

Some people would say I was cheating because I had two players. Right? It's like two on one.

Lyn Wineman:

You should have been in the dual. I love that because I think it's that determination and strength that also probably really helped make you good at what you're doing right now. And leaning into that, what advice would you have for other leaders who want to make a difference in the world?

Debra Brown:

I think you have to be honest with yourself and what matters to you. And that very well may or may not align with what's popular at the time or what your parents or your best friend. But to be true to yourself and to really honor your own journey, I think is what minimizes resentment and regret and maximizes your ability to live your best life, is when you truly, truly not just listen to but honor and pursue what is in your heart of hearts.

Lyn Wineman:

That is beautiful, beautiful advice. I'm going to ask you another question that's in the same vein. This is my favorite question. Everybody who listens to Agency for Change knows that I am inspired by motivational quotes. I am lucky in that I get to speak to so many inspirational people like you, and I'm hoping you can give us a few of your own words of wisdom to inspire our listeners.

Debra Brown:

Well, in addition to what I said previously, I think that what else? I think truly following what's in your heart of hearts. I think in terms of civic engagement, find what you're passionate about, find what you care most about and do something with it. You don't have to be everything to everyone. And of course, if you try, you will fail, but find the thing that means the most to you and do something about it. For me, when I was pregnant was also when we started Good Business Colorado. And right when we started Good Business Colorado, we were approached about paid family and medical leave. And having just given birth myself, we thought of a woman being forced to go back to work three days after having a baby is-

Lyn Wineman:

I can't imagine.

Debra Brown:

... literally time against humanity. I am passionate about paid family and medical leave because now I've had that experience of giving birth. I can't comprehend how we're only country in the world with exception of Papua New Guinea, but any other country besides Papua New Guinea, they have paid family and medical leave. It's just us and Papua New Guinea. And so, I think the advice I would say is whatever issue it is that is most impacted your life, that is most meaningful to you, do something about it. It doesn't have to be grand. It doesn't have to be something worthy of a Nobel Prize, peace prize, but you will get so much satisfaction I think out of doing something that is meaningful to you that will have an impact beyond you.

Lyn Wineman:

Debra, that's beautiful. I love it. Thank you for that. It's so authentic. It weaves into all of the comments that you have made today. So, for our listeners who would like to find out more, who would like to get to that great list of Good Business Colorado businesses, how can they find you?

Debra Brown:

Yes. Thanks so much, Lyn. The Good Business Colorado website is goodbusinesscolorado.org. And there's a join tab. We, again, are really into eliminating barriers of course. So, you'll see that the forum are basically just to test that you are people, that you're a good fit, the values alignment is there, and it'll ask you about what you care about and how you want to be engaged. Because again, business owners are so incredibly busy. It's our job to be judicious with your time, and that means making sure that the opportunities we put in front of you to make your values real in the world, align with the things you care about and the capacity you have to take action on them.

It's just a quick form that helps us collect that information. And then membership dues, we have a sliding scale, pay what makes sense for your business, because we never want that to be a barrier to a good business joining our community. And that's it. If you want to see who our current members are, and especially for all you out there, even if you don't own a business, but you want to make your values real in the world by contributing to businesses that care about the environment and their employees, you can visit our member directly.

Lyn Wineman:

That's great. Once again, we'll have that linked in the show notes on the KidGlov website. I can attest to the fact that when you hit the link button, the process to join is really fairly easy. I thought your do structure was also very reasonable and attainable as well. Debra, I have loved this conversation. Even as a member I've loved learning more about the organization and how it was founded. And as we wrap up this time together today, I'd just like to close with, what's the most important thing you would like our listeners to remember about the work that you're doing?

Debra Brown:

The most important thing that we want listeners to remember about the work we're doing is, anybody can do it. Anybody can be the change that they want to see in their community. And it starts first with our individual practices. Are we doing the things that align with our values? As Good Business Colorado, again, it comes back to purchasing in alignment with your values. On the voluntary level there's that piece. And then anybody can have an impact on the policies that govern our lives, our businesses, our communities. We did our Day at the Capitol a few weeks ago, and we had this remarkable woman who's starting a business, who's Colorado native. She said, I think she drove past the Capitol for 20 years or something every day on her way to work, and it never had occurred to her that she could go into that building and meet with the people who she elected.

Lyn Wineman:

Who she's paying for.

Debra Brown:

She elected to represent her and to serve her community. And so, I think that there's these barriers that seem that they're insurmountable, but especially when you do it in partnership with other groups, it doesn't matter if it's ours or you're an animal activist, if there's an animal rights group. There are so many things, whether it's healthcare advocacy, but to pick whatever the issue is that you're passionate about and find a good group of people that are passionate about it too, and make that personal practice statewide law, go federal.

Lyn Wineman:

I love it.

Debra Brown:

Anyone can do it, and everybody should.

Lyn Wineman:

That is a great place to leave it, Debra. I have loved this conversation. I truly believe the world needs more people like you, more organizations like Good Business Colorado, and I just thank you for taking time to talk with us today.

Debra Brown:

Well, thank you so much, Lyn, for having me and for being part of the Good Business Colorado community. Absolutely members like you that make us what we are. You are who we are, so thank you for being a part of it.

Lyn Wineman:

Awesome.

Announcer:

We hope you enjoyed today's Agency for Change podcast. To hear all our interviews with those who are making a positive change in our communities, or to nominate a changemaker you'd love to hear from, visit KidGlov.com at K-I-D-G-L-O-V.com to get in touch. As always, if you like what you've heard today, be sure to rate, review, subscribe, and share. Thanks for listening, and we'll see you next time.