

# CREATE

*Colorado Resource for Emergency And Trauma Education*

## 2010-2011 Final Report

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### Overview

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The first year of the Colorado Resource for Emergency and Trauma Education (CREATE) program has been successfully completed. The program has been carefully developed, refined and improved to meet the needs of the funder and audience. The project is well-positioned to continue in future years to provide education funds to support emergency and trauma education in Colorado.

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### History

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The CREATE program is a part of the Emergency Medical and Trauma Services (EMTS) Provider Grant program through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). The grant focus is to assist private and public organizations in improving and expanding the emergency medical trauma system in Colorado. Types of providers eligible for this grant include: ambulance agencies, fire agencies, state and local governing agencies, training facilities, hospitals, clinics, special districts, and other public and private providers of EMS and trauma services. The CREATE program deals strictly with emergency and trauma education.

The CREATE program was created in response to constituent requests for educational funding to be offered in a more flexible manner than the Provider Grant Program could provide. Some of the primary facets that CREATE is able to offer are: application acceptance throughout the year, multi-application opportunities, fewer carry-over issues between fiscal years and a shorter process period. These changes result in a flexible program with greater access to grant funding to those who need it.



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### Process

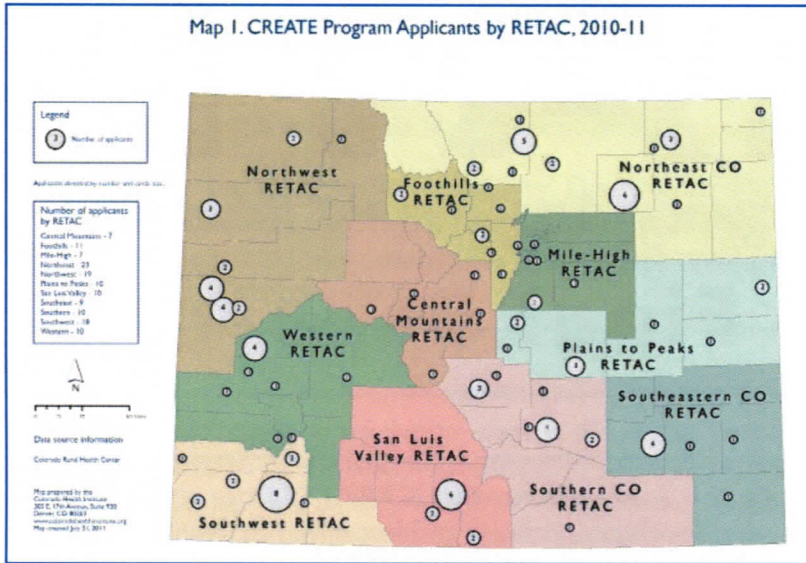
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Applicants access online grant web pages that walk them through the process of applying. Online resources include grant guidance, pre-application step-by-step instructions and links, frequently asked questions, a list of standard courses with funding levels and review dates. In addition, CREATE staff are available to help via phone, email and in-person presentations to answer questions and assist applicants with the process.

An Expert Review Committee (ERC) is in place to review grant applications and make programmatic recommendations for changes and oversight of the program. ERC members dedicate a significant amount of time each month to review applications and make programmatic decisions. The ERC is currently composed of members from the EMTS community. The ERC and the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) staff work closely with staff from CDPHE to ensure the intent of the grant program is met. CRHC staff provide program administration, manage day-to-day grant activities and conduct outreach services. Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Councils (RETAC) Coordinators help promote the program.

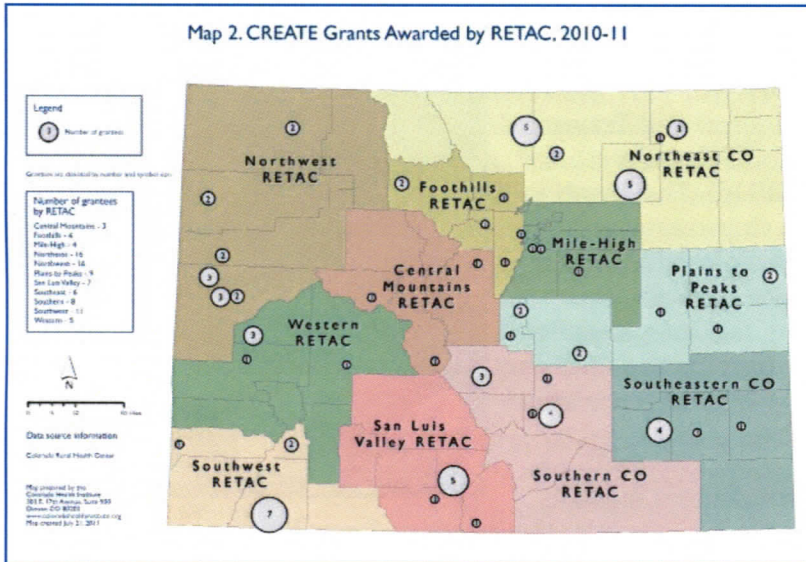
# 2010-2011 Program Maps and Statistics

Map 1. CREATE Program Applicants by RETAC, 2010-11



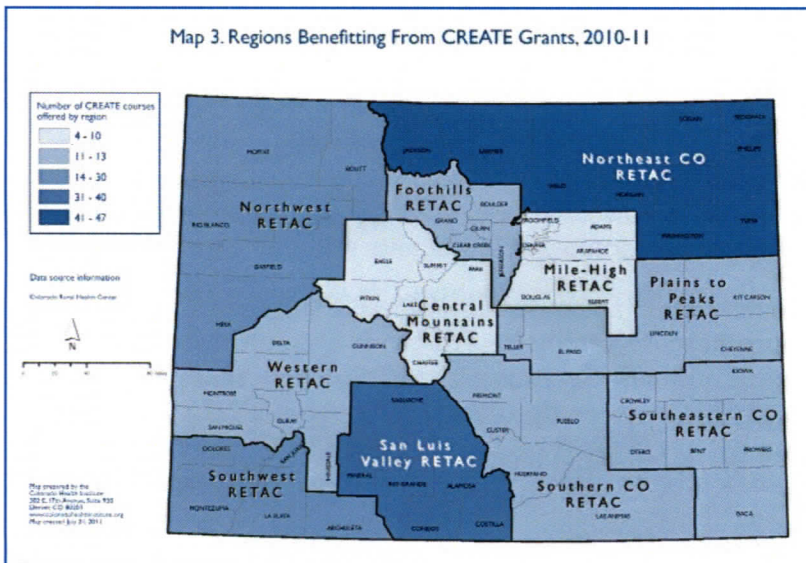
Map 1 (top) shows number of applicants by RETAC, with a larger circle denoting a higher number of applicants in that location. A total of 134 applicants started the CREATE process in the pre-application phase. The Northwest region had the most pre-applicants with 23. The fewest came from Mile-High and Central Mountains with seven each.

Map 2. CREATE Grants Awarded by RETAC, 2010-11



Map 2 (middle) shows the grants awarded by RETAC. Out of 134 pre-applicants, 94 went on to submit full applications. The majority of applicants submitted a single application, but one agency submitted seven. Out of the 94 applicants, 91 were approved. The Northeast and the Northwest received the most grants at 16 each.

Map 3. Regions Benefiting From CREATE Grants, 2010-11



Map 3 (bottom) shows the regions benefiting from CREATE grants. A darker color denotes a higher number of course offerings in that region. A total of 142 courses were funded, training a total of 1920 students.

CREATE courses were offered across the state, most across multiple counties. Of all the courses offered, the most were offered in the Northeast region, with the San Luis Valley close behind.

Overall Project Numbers	
Applications Started	134
Applications submitted	94
Applications approved	91
Courses funded	142
Students trained	1977
Total funds disbursed	\$290,761

Student Data Summary	
EMT through Paramedic Training Courses	318
Trauma/Facility/Physician	147
Standardized Continuing Education Courses	446
Educator Courses	14
Conferences	838
Other	214

## Evaluation

To evaluate the first year of the program, CRHC conducted an evaluation survey to gather feedback from applicants and grantees. Those who started the pre-application process, but did not submit an application were asked why they chose not to submit an application; whether there was anything that could have been done differently so that they would have submitted an application and whether or not they planned to submit an application in the future. Withdrawn or incomplete applicants reported that this was mostly done of their own accord. Reasons included, staffing or need changes, applied through a different arm of their system, and issues with obtaining their W-9.

Another factor in this category was starting the process late in the grant year. While those applicants were classified in the withdrawn or incomplete categories, they were extended the offer to transfer their file to the new grant year. All of the respondents in this category said they plan to apply for a CREATE grant in the future.

For people who went through the majority of the application process, applicants were asked about the application process, application materials, application assistance, award notification payment process and overall experience.

- 100% of the respondents rated the application assistance as “good” or “excellent”
- 96% of the grantees rated the notification process as “good” or “excellent”

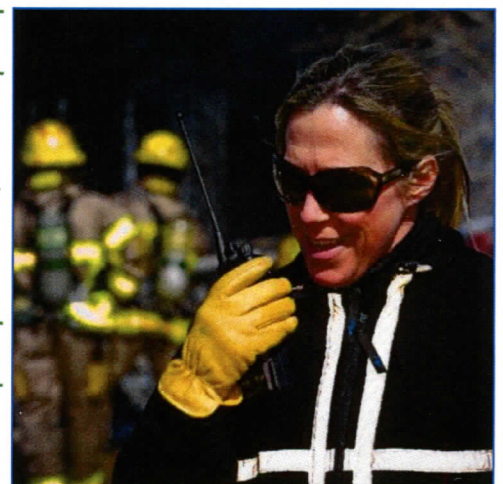
Areas for improvement were the application form itself and the payment process. Goals in the 2011-2012 year include enhancing the guidance for better application directions, looking for ways to improve the application and expedite the reimbursement process. Experience with the application and process itself during the first year will also aid applicants in future grant cycles.

## Marketing

The program was marketed throughout the year via postcard mailings, emails, RETAC, CDPHE staff, CRHC staff, State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council (SEMTAC) and other meetings/sources. RETAC Coordinators were the primary source most applicants reported as their referral source. Word of mouth from other organizations, councils and people in the EMTS industry were also influential.

## Challenges

As with any new program, challenges arose in the first year. The first obstacle was getting the word out in time to spend all of the grant funding. As the program picks up momentum in the second year, this does not appear to be an ongoing problem. Another barrier was a lack of knowledge about the purpose of the CREATE program. Many of the early applications were for projects that more appropriately belonged in the CDPHE Provider Grant Program. A transition year for this type of funding was allowed in order to educate applicants regarding the appropriate funding source for their project type. Issues with application errors are being addressed through improved guidance and one-on-one education from the grant staff.



Submitting appropriate report paperwork and length of the reimbursement process were also challenges for both the grantee and management. One form was eliminated and the reimbursement instructions in the approval letters have been improved for the new year. Due to grantee request, allowing applicants to be reimbursed for individual courses rather than only after all courses in the application were completed was originally incorporated. However, the ramification was an increased volume of reporting created for both applicants and staff. Staff resources have been re-allocated to spend more time assisting applicants with the process and moving the requests for payment through the system faster.

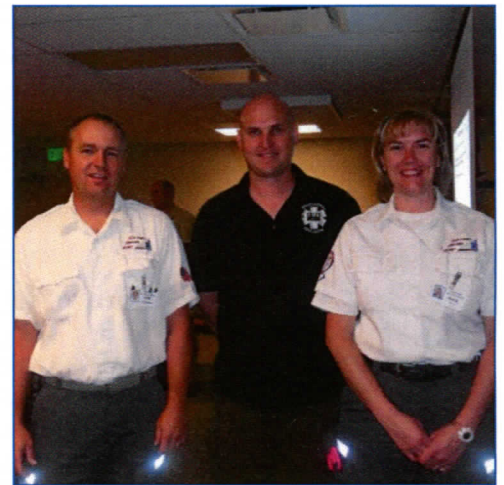
Another hurdle involved student eligibility. Due to confusion from applicants, student eligibility was further defined by the ERC as, "Eligible students must intend to provide emergency medical and trauma services in Colorado, be associated with an eligible agency, and must pass the course." This was added to the guidance, application and approval letters.

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## Successes

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The successes of this program can be seen in the evaluations. Overall, applicants appear to be pleased with the program and the support that has been offered to them as they learn the new system. The ERC has worked effectively and efficiently to make necessary programmatic changes and expedite requests in a timely manner. Staff from CDPHE and CRHC along with the ERC have worked well together to come up with viable solutions to challenges. CRHC provided the management of the program in a cost-effective, budget-conscious way. CDPHE staff, SEMTAC and RETAC members have been very supportive of the program, helping to promote it and make constructive suggestions. And, of course, the intension of this program, "to assist private and public organizations in improving and expanding the emergency medical trauma systems in Colorado" has been met. Every day students are being trained to save lives by providing quality emergency and trauma care to individuals in Colorado.



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## Looking Ahead

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As the second year of the program begins, programmatic improvements are being planned. ERC members have re-committed their time and efforts, the budget has been set and staff support has been secured. New applicants are being contacted and assisted. A number of grantees were selected to be interviewed for a video regarding their experience with CREATE and CRHC. The final video will be posted on the CREATE website as a marketing piece for the program along with other planned marketing materials. The program is well-positioned to make year two even better.

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## More Information

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Visit: [www.coruralhealth.org/programs/create](http://www.coruralhealth.org/programs/create)

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**CREATE**  
Colorado Resource for Emergency And Trauma Education

**COLORADO  
RURAL HEALTH  
CENTER**  
The State Office of Rural Health



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