



TEAM DECC presents: William “Bill” Mitchell, Denver Police Department
Featured Nonprofit: Laradon

I have been a volunteer board member for Laradon for the past six years. In fact, I am currently, the Chairman of the Board. My wife and I have given to this organization for years and they are my current selection for my monthly contributions through DECC. Please join me in supporting Laradon and the important service they provide for people with developmental disabilities and their families.



This week’s featured agency: **Laradon**

Mission Statement



Laradon’s mission is to be an organization of excellence that provides superior services to children and adults with developmental disabilities and other special needs to help them realize their full potential and maximize self-sufficiency.

In 1948, at a time when the public school system denied an education to their two sons because they were “mentally retarded,” Joseph and Elizabeth Calabrese invested their life savings into the creation of a very special school-Laradon. Named after their two sons, Larry and Don, Laradon was the first charitable organization in the Rocky Mountain region to offer support, education and training to children with developmental disabilities. News of this much needed school spread quickly and within two years, Laradon was filled to capacity. At a time when few other services were available to children with disabilities, Laradon was a blessing for the many parents who were concerned about their children’s futures. Within a short time, Laradon gained national recognition as an innovator of education and training services for people with special needs. As referrals dramatically increased, the need for a larger facility, additional staff, and financial support became apparent. In 1950, Laradon moved to its current facility at 5100 Lincoln Street in northwest Denver, where services continue to expand and enrollments continue to rise. In partnership with parents, professionals, philanthropic organizations and generous community members, Joseph and Elizabeth Calabrese created a training center for people seeking the opportunity to expand their work skills, a school for children with special needs and housing for people in need of a home. The Calabrese’s knew that when provided with the proper education, training and support, people with disabilities could realize their full potential, contribute to the community and become valued members of society. That vision still exists today. It is manifested in Laradon’s culture and operating philosophy; it is embodied in its mission statement and is seen on the faces of the children and adults who are experiencing a life of inclusion, independence and success.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Laradon.