

Project description and related information prepared by Sammy Lee

Bolt Down: our narrative of food insecurity, 2022

203 W x 116 H x 3 D, inches

Paper-skin (felted mulberry fiber paper), thermo formed styrene, stain, acrylic varnish

Project assistant: Gabriel Hutchings

Bolt down, v. *Eat a large amount of food quickly. synonyms: garbage down, gobble up, shovel in.*

“In 2019, one in 10 Coloradans (9.6%) experienced food insecurity, defined as eating less than they felt they should in the past year because there was not enough money for food.

Putting food on the table was not the only challenge for Coloradans who struggled with food insecurity. They were also more likely to report unstable housing and difficulties paying their medical bills. And they were more likely to be in poor health than those who could always afford enough food.

Some Coloradans were more likely to experience food insecurity than others. A quarter of young adults in rural areas (25.4%), urban areas (15%) and a fifth of black Coloradans (22.5%) experienced food insecurity in 2019. People with lower incomes, Hispanic/Latino Coloradans (15%), and women were also disproportionately affected.” - From 2019 Colorado Health Access Survey

	2021	
	Number	Percent
Colorado	455,782	8.1%
Race/ethnicity*		
American Indian/Alaska Native	5,708	23.3%
Asian	NA	NA
Black or African American	23,881	14.3%
Hispanic/Latino	157,619	13.4%
Multiracial	17,570	9.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	NA	NA
Some Other Race	6,041	9.5%
White	222,845	5.9%
Age		
Ages 0 to 18	41,853	3.1%
Ages 19 to 29	115,270	14.5%
Ages 30 to 49	175,605	12.3%
Ages 50 to 64	100,682	8.3%
Ages 65+	22,372	2.7%
*Totals for race/ethnicity will not add to the Colorado total because not all survey respondents provided a race/ethnicity identity.		

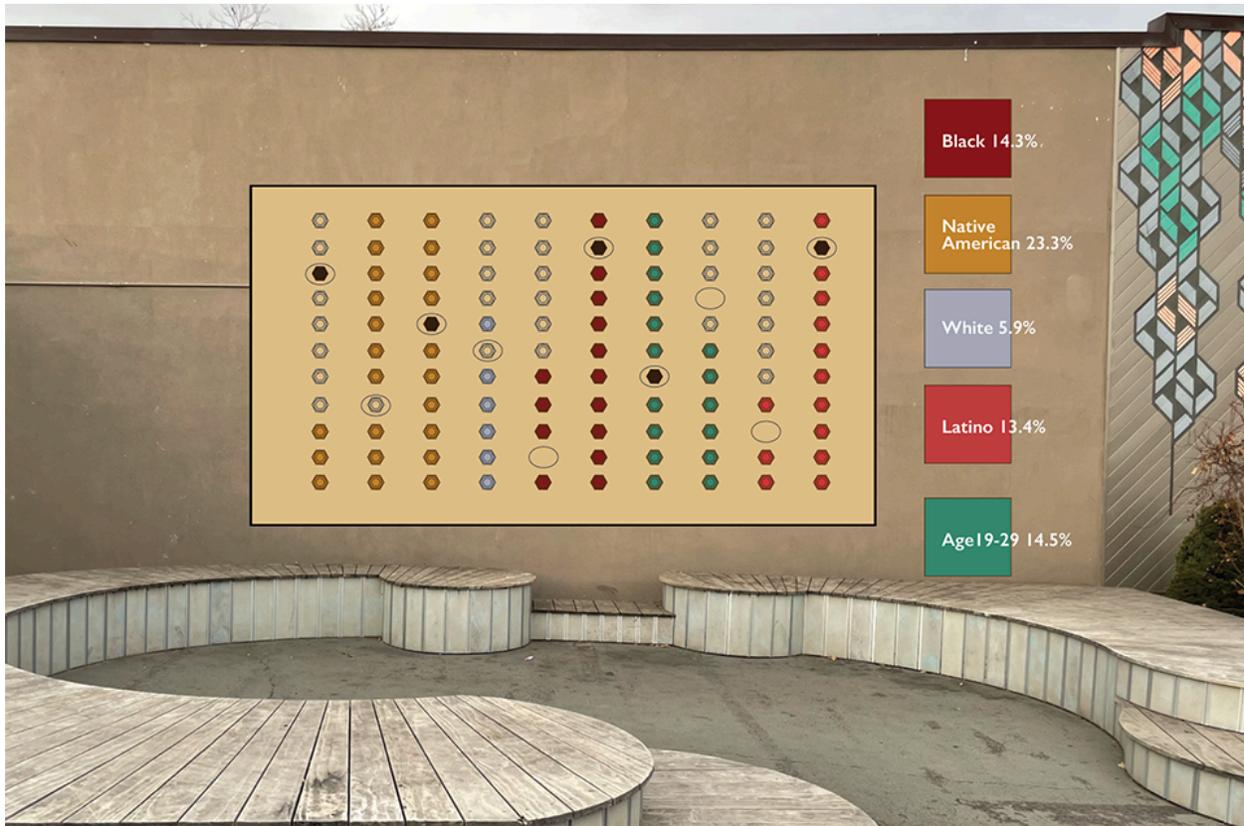


Image 1: Color coding and statistic

Bolt Down: our narrative of food insecurity is a temporary mural project on food insecurity in Colorado. It works with statistics from the [Food insecurity](#) issue highlighted by the updated 2021 [Colorado Health Access Survey](#). The project introduces the inequality and injustice issue relating to our access to food. Aside from the more apparent income factor resulting in access to food, I was surprised to learn a considerable discrepancy based on race and age. Non-white Coloradans faced more food insecurity issues than White Coloradans; the facts follow; American Indian has 23.3%, Black 14.3%, Hispanic 13.4% in comparison to White 5.9%. Also, young adults from ages 19-29 have 14.5%.

(Note: Race/ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive. Those who identified as Hispanic/Latino ethnicity were removed from the racial categorizations and treated as a separate group. This data is from the 2021 Colorado Health Access Survey on food insecurity. Food insecurity was defined as those who reported they ate less than they thought they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the last 12 months. Data were described by both race/ethnicity and age groups at the state level. Data that are not reportable due to sample size are denoted as "NA" in the tables).

The artwork has one hundred bolts, and they represent the unit of each group. The colored bolts represent affected numbers out of 100 of the race/ethnicity for all reportable groups. The ten various-sized plates (some with a bolt, empty, or a cut out) represent the pre-existing condition of inequality. The bolt was cast from an actual sample on a bank vault, and tightly fastened bolt suggests barriers to hard-to-attain resources through a failed system, yet undoable and possible action and solution. I use paper-skin (felted paper) in many earlier projects to often achieve a community quilt-like symbolism. I was pleased to evolve this meaning and create more effective dialogue at a large scale through community dining table-cloth-like texture alluding to a community fabric of Colorado.

By promoting equitable access to affordable, nutritious food, policymakers and community members have the power not only to fight hunger but to advance health equity in Colorado. We hope that you will feel empowered to learn about our region and take action to help more people access their food. Here are area's organizations working on from farming to distributing food to those in need.

<https://denverfoodrescue.org/>

<https://www.msudenver.edu/student-care-center/roadrunner-food-pantry/>

<https://www.frontlinefarming.org/>

<https://hungerfreecolorado.org/>

The 2021 survey and detail were provided by Lindsey Whittington, Policy Analyst at the Colorado Health Institute, and Julia Char Gilbert from Colorado Center on Law and Policy, a leading researcher of 2020's report, generously advised. This project was commissioned by Cecily Cullen, director, and curator of the Center for the Visual Art.

Artist bio:

Sammy Lee (b.1975, Seoul, Korea) is an artist based in Denver, Colorado. Lee was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea, and moved to Southern California at the age of sixteen. Lee studied fine art and media art at UCLA and architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her work has been exhibited internationally and can be found in collections at the Getty Research Institute, Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Spencer Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum, and the Spanish National Library in Madrid and Lee also had a fantastic performative collaboration with Yo-Yo Ma during the Bach project tour in 2018. Lee is recently a resident artist at Redline, serves as an ambassador for Asian Art at Denver Art Museum, and operates a contemporary art project and residency space, called Collective SML | k in Santa Fe Art District, Denver.