



# Colorado Influencers

**W**hen Katharine Lee Bates wrote “America the Beautiful” after an 1893 trip to Colorado, she could not have known that the “purple mountain majesties” she witnessed would accurately describe the state’s political backdrop entering the second decade of the 21st century.

Colorado has always prided itself on voting for the person before the party, simultaneously sending Republican majorities to the legislature while electing Democratic governors throughout the 1970s, ‘80s and ‘90s. But as the 20th century came to a close, Republicans solidified their hold, cornering all but a few elective offices. By 2008, though, the Democrats had turned the tables, achieving exactly the position Republicans had held just a couple years prior. Last November’s Republican tidal wave affected Colorado only moderately as the GOP took back one chamber of the legislature and two U.S. House seats, while Democrats kept control of the governor’s mansion and both U.S. Senate seats.

Here is our list of the top political players in this archetypal swing state, whose name is Spanish for red in color, but whose politics is decidedly purple.

