

The Piton Foundation's Vision and Mission

The Piton Foundation is a private, operating foundation established in 1976 by Denver oil man Sam Gary. The foundation is supported principally by the Gary-Williams Energy Corporation.

Our Vision

A better future for the low-income children of Denver.

Our Mission

To provide opportunities for children and their families to move from poverty and dependence to self-reliance.

Our Strategy

To develop and implement programs to improve public education, create economic opportunity for families and strengthen neighborhood leadership.

This Report Upon the Occasion of The Piton Foundation's 20th Anniversary

Through this report, we invite you to learn more about The Piton Foundation, past and present. The more the community understands the foundation, the greater our mutual opportunity to foster collaborative partnerships. Our philosophy is described in the Letter from the Founder and Chairman. The President's Message and the section on Program Activities outline our initiatives and goals. We also have included profiles of four partners in community work, people with enormous energy, creativity and selfless commitment to others. The aspirations of these people constantly challenge us and their wisdom constantly enlightens us.

The Piton Foundation
370 17th Street, Suite 5300
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 825-6246
(303) 628-3839 (fax)

Visit The Piton Foundation web site
www.piton.org

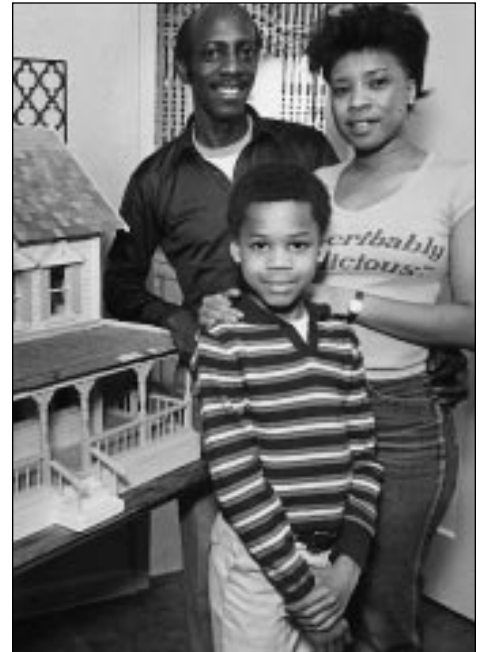


History of The Piton Foundation 1977-1997

The Piton Foundation was incorporated in Colorado in September 1976 and began awarding grants in February 1977. The founder, Denver oil man Sam Gary, determined Piton's mission would be to improve conditions and opportunities for persons inadequately served by institutions in our society. The foundation, like the mountain climbing tool for which it was named, attempts to provide timely and needed support where none existed previously.



In its very early years, the foundation made grants in three main areas: children, youth and families; education; and general community support. One of Piton's major grantees in those early years was Brothers Redevelopment, Inc., a housing rehabilitation program designed to strengthen inner-city neighborhoods.



As a "pass through" foundation, Piton's grants varied from year-to-year depending on contributions from its donor and his privately-held company, Gary-Williams Energy Corporation. From 1977 through 1991, the foundation awarded grants totalling more than \$28 million. Organizations like The Kempe Center, Boy's Club, The Colorado Children's Campaign and Partners were among the more than 300 grant recipients.

In addition to grants, between 1981 and 1992, The Piton Foundation made \$4.5 million in Program Related Investments (PRIs), or recoverable grants, to projects like Denver Family Housing Corporation (now Colorado Housing Assistance Corporation), which used diverse public and private funding to build and finance affordable housing in Denver. Piton's PRIs took the form of loans and equity investments.

Over the years, Piton's investments helped produce more than 2,200 housing units, rehabilitate 5,500 units and create 330,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space.



In 1992, The Piton Foundation changed from a grantmaking foundation to an operating foundation. As an operating foundation, Piton develops, manages, and/or incubates programs to carry out its mission.



The Five Points Media Center was one of Piton's first major initiatives as an operating foundation. The media center, which houses a public television station, a public radio station and a public access station, was developed to create access and diversity in telecommunications through the participation of women and people of color. In addition to providing the staff to develop the media center concept, Piton made \$842,000 in grants to the project.



The Piton Foundation has a long history of acting as the intermediary for national foundations. Over the years, Piton has worked in long-term partnerships with The Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to address urban poverty and channel millions of private dollars into housing, community and economic development projects in Denver.

In 1993, The Piton Foundation moved its operations to the Gary-Williams corporate headquarters. Together, the foundation and corporation are exploring a future of collaborating to be more effective agents of social change.



In 1997, upon the occasion of its 20-year anniversary, The Piton Foundation renewed its commitment to the low-income children of Denver and revamped its program areas to include improving public education, strengthening neighborhood leadership and creating economic opportunities for families. One of the foundation's major, new efforts is the Denver Workforce Initiative, which is working to create a labor force in metro Denver that meets employer needs, supports economic growth and broadens work opportunities to residents of the city's low-income neighborhoods.



As we embark upon the foundation's next decade, the challenge before us is to work neighborhood by neighborhood, school by school, church by church and business by business to create a community of caring citizens who share common values and a commitment to all our children and families. Piton's new logo, designed by Denver artist, Edward Marecak, symbolizes this type of community.

THE PITON FOUNDATION



THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION OF
GARY-WILLIAMS ENERGY CORPORATION

Letter from the Founder and Chairman, Sam Gary

I recently turned 70. Not long before that, The Piton Foundation turned 20. These milestones have prompted me to look back over what we have accomplished since 1977. In what ways have we made real differences in people's lives? What lessons have we learned? Where do we go from here?

I'm pleased with the work we've done. Our most successful efforts have changed lives.

Still, I'm keenly aware that, despite our best efforts, many of Denver's most vexing problems have grown steadily worse over the 20 years of Piton's existence. People feel trapped in distressed neighborhoods, with limited prospects for gainful employment to help them better their lives. A greater percentage of our children are poorly educated and neglected, raised in an environment that all but dooms them to failure from an early age.

Unfortunately, some of the institutions originally designed to assist poor families have become part of the problem. And they are particularly resistant to change. Government agencies, school and health-care systems and even churches have built up bureaucracies that often stymie the people they're supposed to serve. So the people who most need these services find themselves in a double bind. Not only are the problems that hinder them pervasive and intractable, but the systems designed to attack these issues are unresponsive, even counter-productive.

I've come to the conclusion that Piton must focus its efforts on improving conditions for Denver's next generation of children. Each new generation has to be prepared to carry on, and leave to future generations a healthy legacy. But this preparation can only take place in a safe, nurturing environment. Creating a healthy community for our youngest children is a long-term commitment, but one with the proper focus to make a real difference.

Focusing on the next generation of children means developing schools that challenge and nurture them. It means ensuring that they have access to quality health care from infancy. It means nurturing grass-roots leadership in their neighborhoods, stabilizing their families and providing meaningful job opportunities for them and their parents. And it means making sure their parents have access to good, affordable day care.

We've also learned that a small core of dedicated people can make a real difference. I sense in Denver a growing awareness of these challenges, and a new commitment to meeting them. This makes me hopeful. One of the joys of philanthropy comes in connecting with like-minded people who sense the pressing need to commit themselves, and are willing to respond. These people believe that persevering over the long haul ultimately makes real change possible. One continuing challenge is to find ways for these potential leaders to connect with each other. Connections create new energy, and bring some real excitement to the work.

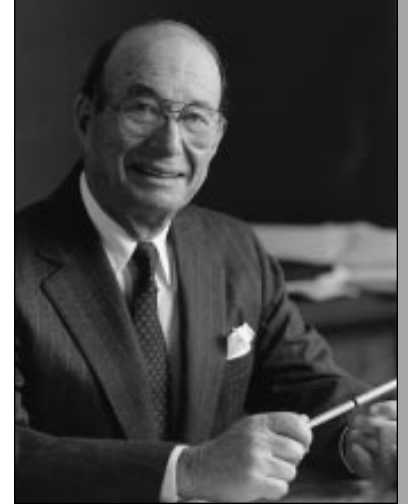
People from all walks of life are ready to pitch in and work hard on these issues. But they need assurance that their efforts will do more than make them feel good. They need to see their contributions in a larger context. They need to feel connected to some greater effort. So it's important to have definable, measurable goals against which people can chart progress.

Traditionally, foundations also haven't used this outcome-based approach. But we are rethinking the focus of The Piton Foundation's initiatives. Do our efforts move us toward our long-term goals?

It's this kind of goal-oriented thinking that makes a business successful. Philanthropic foundations can flourish using these strategies. In fact, a more business-like approach enhances a foundation's credibility. When businesspeople learn that philanthropists aren't simply do-gooders, but appreciate effective solutions to difficult social problems, they begin to take their efforts more seriously.

By being more goal-oriented, those of us involved in philanthropy can foster understanding among businesspeople that it's in everyone's self-interest to tackle the problems of inner-city blight and hopelessness. This can be a tough sell in prosperous times. But after all, a business can thrive only in a healthy community, a place where people want to live and work.

At Gary-Williams Energy Corporation, we have the freedom and flexibility to support the foundation's efforts in different ways. We're a successful, profit-driven private company. We aren't inhibited by some aspects of the





corporate culture. Piton isn't a money-maker for us, but we still consider it a vital aspect of our business. We now call Piton the community investment division of Gary-Williams. Piton cannot, of course, bring in revenue or meet financial goals. But as we invest resources in programs, we expect measurable and meaningful results.

It's my hope that the developing relationship between Piton and Gary-Williams can serve as an example to other businesses that may now wish to avail themselves of a new opportunity — making effective

investments in the future of our society.

Denver is an ideal place to put many of our beliefs into practice. It is a young, vibrant city. There's not the sense of utter hopelessness here one often gets from the older cities of the East and Midwest. We still have it within our power to control our future.

Denver has a legacy of large parcels of as-yet uncommitted land. We have a rare opportunity to creatively redevelop these lands at the old Stapleton Airport, the former Lowry Air Force Base and the Platte Valley. By building mixed housing anchored by innovative day care, good health care, high-quality schools and linking open space, we can change the pattern of urban sprawl that has scarred so many of the nation's cities, and threatens metro Denver as well.

As you'll see from some of the stories in this report, Piton has made a significant difference in people's lives in its first 20 years. It's my hope, and my belief, that 20 years from now, our efforts will have helped produce a new generation of healthy, well-rounded young people, optimistic about the future and ready to carry on.

Sam Gary

President's Message

Twenty years have passed since The Piton Foundation began its work in 1977. In that time, Denver has gone from boom to bust and back to boom. But poverty seems immune to business cycles. Clearly, working to mitigate the effects of poverty requires a long-term commitment. With this in mind, we release this special report on the occasion of The Piton Foundation's 20th anniversary, marking two decades of work in the Denver community, and laying out our plans for the next several years.

Over the past two decades, Piton has worked to strengthen Denver's low-income neighborhoods and families, initially through grant-making, and, since 1992, as an operating foundation. This means that Piton develops, administers and funds programs with a variety of local and national partners. These programs are designed to achieve our vision — a better future for the low-income children of Denver.

As an operating foundation, Piton does not fund unsolicited grant proposals. We do, however, provide support to community partners with whom we work collaboratively to achieve common goals.

Our status as an operating foundation is unusual in Denver's philanthropic community. And our working relationship with Gary-Williams Energy Corp., which funds the foundation, is also uncommon. The Gary-Williams chairman of the board, Sam Gary, chief executive officer, Ron Williams, and chief financial officer, Dave Younggren, meet with Piton staff weekly, not only to share information about the corporation's activities, but also to offer advice and actively participate in Piton's work.

This close working relationship creates a synergy that brings to Piton the business acumen and high expectations of a successful enterprise, while simultaneously building community awareness and fostering participation within the corporation. The collaboration, we believe, makes all of us better at what we do.

The entrepreneurial spirit of our corporate leadership also has helped Piton attract a staff of individuals who are dedicated to developing effective and creative strategies to carry out the foundation's mission. They bring a variety of skills and talents to our work, and perhaps

most importantly, the resilience to acknowledge and learn from failure as well as success. It is indeed a privilege to work with each of them.

As the staff planned early in 1997 for Piton's next decade, our research continued to show Denver's children slipping deeper into poverty. Over the years, studies have shown that children are most likely to be poor if born to mothers younger than 20, mothers who have less than a twelfth-grade education, or unwed mothers. Between 1990 and 1995, the percentage of Denver children who fall under one or more of those categories jumped dramatically. In 1990, 23 percent of all children born in Denver met one or more of these risk factors. By 1995, that number had jumped to 34 percent.

This evidence as well as other indicators of the status of children, resulted in the foundation's decision to intensify its focus on the next generation of children and develop a vision for our community's children.

Based on this vision, the foundation is concentrating its efforts on the three program areas described later in this report — Improving Public Education, Creating Economic Opportunity and Strengthening Neighborhood Leadership. To increase our accountability, we now use an outcome-based planning process to help us assess our effectiveness both short- and long-term.

We have learned, during the past 20 years, that Piton's success will ultimately be measured by the impact our programs have had on the neighborhoods in which we work. Therefore, everything we do is guided by our relationships and partnerships within those communities. In this report, we highlight some of the remarkable men and women who embody the spirit of civic entrepreneurship that we believe will sustain Piton's investments for many decades to come.



Mary Gittings Cronin



Piton's Vision for Denver's Children

All children need:

- *to live in a safe and protective home with stable caretaking from consistent adults who make them an absolute priority;*
- *the basic character traits of honesty, respect, responsibility, tolerance, compassion, self-discipline and civic-mindedness;*
- *a challenging academic environment that promotes a love of learning;*
- *meaningful relationships with other adults and peers who model positive character traits;*
- *economic support and opportunities that provide pathways to productive work and lives;*
- *to live in a home that promotes healthy living and a community that provides access to quality and affordable health care;*
- *to live in a neighborhood where they feel safe and a sense of belonging;*
- *knowledge of and a connection to their history and cultural traditions; an appreciation of the history and traditions of others; and the collective culture of Americans.*

Mary Anne Guillot



Warren Village
Founded in 1974 and supported by The Piton Foundation, Warren Village was the nation's first transitional housing program for single-parent families. The mission of Warren Village is to empower single-parent families by promoting personal and economic self-sufficiency through model programs in transitional family support services, affordable housing and quality child care.

You could call her "Ms. Fix-It." "Fixing it" is what Mary Anne Guillot does best. Whether "it" is a troubled friend her daughter brings home or a nonprofit fighting to stay alive, Mary Anne steps in like a master mechanic to diagnose and repair the problem.

"The bigger the challenge, the messier it is, the more I like it," says Guillot. "I like to untie chains that are all in knots."

She's had some knotty situations of her own. At age 2, she contracted polio and was left unable to walk. Growing up poor in Louisiana's Cajun country, living in a wheelchair and raising a child alone, she first honed her "fix-it" skills on herself.

Guillot, now 50, moved to Colorado 20 years ago with her infant daughter, Sarah. No job. No husband. No home. She moved into Warren Village, a transitional housing program supported by The Piton Foundation. Guillot credits Warren Village with giving her a

chance to "equalize the playing field." She lived and worked there for several years and earned a degree at the University of Colorado at Denver, all the while nurturing Sarah.

Guillot doesn't buy the notion that children in single-parent households are doomed to fail.

"That's B.S.," she says flatly. Good parents, she adds, can give their children values, ethics and standards of behavior regardless of family structure. She's done so: Her daughter, Sarah, now 20, is an accomplished dancer, singer and athlete. Sarah graduated third in her class from Denver's West High School and is a communications major at Metropolitan State College.

Guillot works as the Community Resource Center's director of consulting. Her 20 years of nonprofit work experience — for Mile High United Way, the Center for Independent Living and Warren Village — help her guide grassroots organizations in serving constituents and fostering beneficial social change. Just as Tim Allen's character on the TV hit "Home Improvement" shares build-it-yourself tips, Guillot passes on her organizational "fix it" skills.

In 1991, she joined the board of the Colorado Association of Nonprofit Organizations, and, in 1994, served as president of the Women's Foundation of Colorado. Her board leadership activities also include the Denver Private Industry Council, Equality Colorado and groups advocating for people with disabilities. Recently, she was presented with The Hunt Alternatives Fund Individual Leadership Award.

Always seeking new ways to help others excel, Guillot has begun mentoring girls with disabilities. The impetus was a research project by a friend in New York. The researcher asked young girls with disabilities what they thought their lives would be like in 10 years. Most of them replied they'd be dead before then. They had never seen, in the work place or the media, grown women with disabilities. Guillot wants disabled youngsters to see themselves in a new light.

"The way I see it," she says, "it's the best players in golf who get the handicaps. It equalizes the playing field." When it comes to helping people and organizations live up to their full potential, that may be the best "fix" of all.

Ray Stranske

Ray Stranske glanced out his window one day in 1978 to see Margaret, a fellow church member, and her two children struggling along behind a grocery cart piled high with their belongings.

She had been unable to meet a rent hike on her apartment and was moving back to the housing projects. The shopping cart was the only “moving van” she could afford.

Stranske, then a young seminary graduate and active member of a small Denver church, helped Margaret move — and vowed to do something to help others like her. Stranske and his wife, Marilyn, quit their jobs and went to work full-time on developing better ways to provide low-income housing.

They brainstormed first with a volunteer committee, which later evolved into Hope Communities, a non-profit that organizers hoped could help transform Denver’s Five Points neighborhood. Ray became the organization’s executive director, while Marilyn took on the critically important fund raising role.

Stranske, the son of missionaries, had grown up believing that people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds could work together for the common good. Africa’s Sudan, where he’d spent much of his childhood, was a prime example.

“In a primitive, agrarian society, everyone has a role to play,” he says. “Villagers are supportive of each other.”

Initially, the Stranskes’ housing group received grants from The Piton Foundation to purchase and renovate a dilapidated, three-story, 38-unit complex called the Booker T. Washington Apartments. Grants kept rents low, but it was clear to Stranske that a better long-term approach was needed.

Hope Communities and The Piton Foundation came up with an innovative concept known as benevolent investment. Instead of foundations or wealthy individuals simply donating funds, they *invest* in housing projects as limited partners in return for tax benefits. The investments are made out of compassion for the needy, as well as for financial gain. The first property financed this way, the New Orlando apartments, became a national alternative model for financing low-income housing.



“It’s like the Old Testament concept of leaving some grain standing in the corners of your field when you harvest so people can come after you and glean,” says Stranske. “I want to help people help themselves, not just give them a handout.”

To date, Hope Communities has developed almost 500 low-to moderate-cost housing units. It’s also working to create job and education opportunities for Five Points residents.

“Our vision is a neighborhood that works, filled with people from all backgrounds who are thriving economically, emotionally and spiritually,” says Stranske. At New Orlando apartments and elsewhere, it’s a vision made possible by Hope.

Hope Communities
Hope Communities, founded in 1980 and supported by The Piton Foundation, promotes progress toward a diverse, healthy community that generates affordable housing, economic opportunity, personal empowerment and spiritual wholeness.

Pastor Tastonga Gay



**Metro Denver
Black Church Initiative**
The Metro Denver Black Church Initiative began in 1992 as a program operated by The Piton Foundation. The Initiative offers Denver black churches grants and technical assistance to provide community outreach services focused on building strong communities. In the fall of 1997, the initiative became an independent church association for community service.

Doors have a way of opening for Pastor Tastonga Gay. And it's all the Lord's doing, she believes unwaveringly.

God opened a door to education when she was a high school drop-out and a teen mother. A program in her hometown of Portland, Ore., paid her \$50 a week to earn her general equivalency degree (GED) at the local community college.

God opened a door to faith after she lost a loved one through a tragic death. She realized then that God alone had power over life and death. The church helped her and instilled in her a belief in God.

God opened a door to the ministry when she took over the nearly-bankrupt Grace and Truth Full Gospel Pentecostal Church in 1988. God steered her to the right people, she says,

to refinance the mortgage and keep the church alive.

"The Scriptures say, 'A man can receive nothing except as it has been granted to him from heaven.' That's the way God operates," she says.

Grace and Truth, a small congregation in northeast Denver, has reduced its mortgage significantly. And, through Pastor Gay's leadership, it has begun opening doors for others, especially young girls who remind Pastor Gay of herself.

"God never puts you into something you don't have a passion for," she says. "This is where the church needs to be — in the center of His will."

The church's Positive Connection program began as a counseling service for girls being held at the Gilliam Detention Center. It has expanded to try to intercept girls *before* they're in trouble. Three days a week after school, the program works with about 50 middle-school girls. The Metro Denver Black Church Initiative, supported by The Piton Foundation, provides most of the funding for the program. Girls are offered academic counseling, lessons in personal grooming and home economics, and a chance to join a drill team. The program works: Participants' grades and school attendance have improved.

Positive Connection also reaches out to young women — some who are teen mothers and school drop-outs as Pastor Gay was. Using the church's five computers, participants study two days a week for their GEDs, hold monthly baby showers for each other and even go out for an overnight stay at a hotel.

"If it weren't for God working through the Black Church Initiative, I would still be stuck within the walls of the church," Pastor Gay says. "The Initiative opened doors for me." She, in turn, is opening doors for many young women from some of Denver's poorest neighborhoods.

Jenny Benavidez McNicholas

Jenny Benavidez McNicholas, the daughter of migrant farm workers, knows the helpless feeling of not understanding or being understood.

It makes her a particularly *simpatico* person in her job as liaison to bilingual parents in the Denver Public Schools (DPS).

"I know what people are going through because I have had a language barrier, too," says McNicholas. Born in Scottsbluff, Neb., in 1950, she had to learn English in kindergarten — there were no bilingual classes.

McNicholas eventually overcame the language barrier, but struggled longer with her low self-confidence. "I was always the worker bee, but I didn't feel I had the skills to make decisions," she says.

Then in 1991, a colleague at Baker Middle School, where McNicholas worked as the Title I reading tutor, told her about a new Neighborhood Leadership class beginning on Denver's West Side. McNicholas signed on blindly. "I didn't know where the steps were leading me," she says.

They led her right into a challenging job of bilingual parent liaison. She hesitated at first. "But as I read the job description, I became aware that the leadership program had prepared me for this position," McNicholas says. Meeting management, team building, public speaking — all the skills she practiced in class were a perfect fit with this job.

Today, she is a parent specialist with the Title I Department of Early Childhood Education in DPS. Prior to this, as liaison, she established a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee at each bilingual middle school. In monthly meetings, each committee discusses educational issues and concerns. "I have tried to empower bilingual parents by giving them knowledge of their rights within the school system," McNicholas explains. "Instilling self-esteem and helping them have a positive experience in the Denver Public Schools are important goals for me."

McNicholas, married 20 years to a DPS teacher and the mother of two, also shares her leadership skills with a variety of other organizations. She has served as a board member of the Adult Learning Service and Mennonite Urban Ministry. She has been a member of the La Alma Park Neighborhood Association, Westside Urban Neighborhood Group and Operation Crackdown, which works to close



crack-cocaine houses in the neighborhood.

"I like sharing information with the community that helps them realize that they have choices and alternatives for a better life. My goal is to share the tools that will serve as a road map for them," McNicholas says.

McNicholas's own journey has led to additional training, provided by the leadership program and other organizations, in communications, management, community organizing and facilitation training. She is extremely proud of graduating from Vision Hispanica, a leadership program of the Colorado Institute for Hispanic Education and Economic Development.

"One person *can* make a difference within a family, a school and in our community," McNicholas says. And she is proof of that, indeed.

The Neighborhood Leadership Program

The Neighborhood Leadership Program was established by The Piton Foundation and its neighborhood advisory groups to nurture and develop local citizen leaders who will help their communities address the difficult issues facing inner-city neighborhoods. Since 1990, the leadership training program has operated in several low-income neighborhoods across Denver, graduating more than 100 people.

Operating Activities — 3-Year Goals and Outcomes



Beacon Neighborhood Centers are a new partnership between school and community, which offer programs and activities in schools for youth, families and community members during evenings, weekends and summers. Each center serves as a guide — a beacon — directing resources into the community to provide families with opportunities offered right in their own neighborhood. The Piton Foundation, one of the local funders, also is providing technical assistance to the centers, which are located in three schools in the Denver Public Schools: Lake Middle School, Rishel Middle School and Cole Middle School. Pictured here are youth from the targeted neighborhoods who were hired last summer to “map” the neighborhoods, block-by-block, in search of programs, services and opportunities available to youth.

The Piton Foundation's program areas focus on **Improving Public Education, Creating Economic Opportunity and Strengthening Neighborhood Leadership**. Piton operates several initiatives under each of these broad areas.

The overarching aim of all the foundation's programs is to ensure a better future for the low-income children of Denver. To measure success, Piton staff recently developed short- and long-term goals for each program area. While the goals are broadly stated, the foundation holds itself accountable by laying out measurable outcomes to be achieved by 2000. These will act as a yardstick against which staff, and the community at large, can measure gains. Future Piton Foundation reports will track progress toward achieving these results, and will share with the community both successes and failures.

The foundation supplements and, in some cases, formulates its programs with extensive, in-house demographic research. This information also is made available to non-profit agencies and the public at large. The enclosed map, illustrating Piton's multi-faceted involvement in its targeted neighborhoods, is an example of the foundation's research capabilities.

Piton also has devised a comprehensive communications strategy to expand the impact of its program investments and contribute to informed debate.

In addition to its operating activities, the foundation occasionally awards grants to its community partners, to achieve the goals of its three program areas.

Improving Public Education

Piton's work on **Improving Public Education** aims at helping low-income communities develop schools that best meet their needs. The foundation advocates

for the decentralization of decision-making authority, and supports a number of systemic reform initiatives. Programs supported by Piton strive to provide parents with skills to advocate effectively for their children and to help further their children's education. Piton's programs include the following initiatives:

- Acting as the technical assistance agency for **Beacon Neighborhood Centers**, a new project funded in part by the DeWitt Wallace Foundation and in part by local grants. The project will feature programs for youth designed by youth. It will operate out of three Denver middle schools, under the auspices of local community-based organizations, overseen by members of the community.

Results expected by 2000:

The three projects will be successfully up and running, planned and implemented predominantly by youth, and meeting the identified needs of the community. The projects will have secured stable sources of funding, ensuring their long-term survival. And Beacon projects will be integrated with other neighborhood centers.

- Working with the **Manual High School** community to assist in its transition from a school racially and socioeconomically integrated by busing to one that serves neighborhood children, most of whom are of color and low-income. Piton staff is working intensively with the Manual community to define and implement a new instructional plan, and to provide ongoing training for the school's teaching staff. Piton also is helping raise money to fully implement its new plan.

Results expected by 2000:

The new Manual plan will be fully implemented. A majority of the school's students will be showing steady gains in achievement based on school-designed standards for evaluating student performance.

- Supporting and helping expand Denver Public School's **School-to-Career Program** at Lincoln, Manual, Montbello and North high schools. The program's goal is to create systemic change within high schools by developing new curriculum and providing workplace experiences for students that connect skills needed in the workplace with those taught in the classroom. It helps high school students prepare for transition to high-skill, high-wage career opportunities, and/or post-secondary education.

Results expected by 2000:

School-to-Career programs will have launched at the four schools. Teaching staffs will have been trained extensively in this new approach, and upperclassmen will be involved in meaningful workplace experiences.

- Strengthening and supporting DPS' **Family Resource Schools**. The district's 14 designated resource schools were created to strengthen families and communities, thereby removing non-academic barriers to learning. The resource schools provide before- and after-school programs for children and parents in low-income neighborhoods.

Results expected by 2000:

All 14 Family Resource Schools will be offering an array of programs for students and their families, with stable funding. The programs will have a demonstrable, direct impact on improved student achievement.

- Increasing school choice for parents in low-income neighborhoods by assisting in the start-up of innovative **charter schools**. These schools must be developed at the request of the community and be strongly supported by a large number of committed community residents.

Results expected by 2000:

Two charter schools will be up and running. One will be a school operated by the for-profit Edison Project out of the landmark Wyatt School building in the Cole neighborhood.

- Increase and improve the **private sector's commitment to improving public education** in the Denver metropolitan area.

Results expected by 2000:

Increase the number of foundations, corporations and individuals that provide money to support quality public education programs.

Create Economic Opportunity

The primary focus of Piton's efforts to *Create Economic Opportunity* for families is the **Denver Workforce Initiative**. Launched in 1996, the initiative aims to create a labor force in metro Denver that meets employer needs, supports economic growth and broadens work opportunities for residents of the city's low-income neighborhoods. It has targeted three growing industries and is developing new products to eliminate barriers between job-seekers and companies squeezed by labor shortages.

Two strategies form the core of the initiative's approach to workforce issues: recruiting the right person for the right job opportunity and improving the practices of businesses to help entry-level workers succeed. New products currently being designed and tested include Community Coaches™, neighborhood residents who are trained to recruit people for jobs and help support entry-level workers once they are working; Workin' It Out, a curriculum to teach entry-level workers problem-solving skills for use in the workplace; and a similar curriculum for training the supervisors of entry-level workers. Other products being developed include a tool to measure the job-seeker's overall work readiness and an employee



assistance hotline for resolving common problems experienced by entry-level workers.

Results expected by 2000:

- Place 850 residents from the targeted neighborhoods in a variety of jobs in the three targeted industries — manufacturing, health care and teleservice; 40% of placements will remain in the labor force for at least two years; and 140 will have moved up the career ladder.

Family Resource Schools are a unique partnership of the Denver Public Schools, the city of Denver, businesses, community organizations and foundations. Begun in 1989, with leadership from The Piton Foundation, 14 Family Resource Schools now provide before- and after-school programs like the neighborhood garden pictured here, for children and parents in low-income neighborhoods.



The Denver Workforce Initiative was formed in 1996 to create a labor force in metro Denver that meets employer needs, supports economic growth and broadens work opportunities to residents of the city's low-income neighborhoods. It is seven-year partnership between the Denver community — spearheaded by Piton — and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to develop new products to improve the economic success of both companies squeezed by labor shortages and low-income residents.

The Piton Foundation's **Neighborhood Leadership Program** operates from the premise that leadership skills can and should be developed among those who have traditionally been the least involved in shaping the future of their communities — the residents of low-income neighborhoods.



- 1000 additional residents from the targeted neighborhoods will increase their length of stay in their existing jobs.
- At least 20 companies that have worked with the initiative will offer workplace learning opportunities, supervisory training and changed management practices that have improved their hiring and retention of entry-level workers.
- Information about the initiative's employment opportunities will be readily available in the targeted neighborhoods.

Strengthening Neighborhood Leadership

Strengthening Neighborhood Leadership consists primarily of two major initiatives, the Neighborhood Leadership Program and the Metro Denver Black Church Initiative.

- Currently, four **Neighborhood Leadership Programs** assist residents of eight low-income Denver neighborhoods become effective advocates for change. Participants, recruited by members of the community, learn about communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution, managing meetings and public speaking. The six-month programs consist of learning experiences

ranging from lectures and discussions to structured activities, experiential learning and role playing.

Results expected by 2000:

Three more neighborhood leadership programs will be operating. (By 2007, the leadership program programs will have graduated 800 low-income residents.)

- The black church, long a pillar of the nation's African-American community, is being called on now more than ever to serve the secular needs of distressed communities, and to confront the growing challenges posed by changing social, political, economic and neighborhood conditions.

Since 1992, the **Metro Denver Black Church Initiative** has provided funding and technical assistance aimed at building the capacity of black churches in their outreach activities. Grants are made to build collaboration among the city's black churches, and between the churches and other community organizations, including schools, recreation departments and health and human services

agencies. The initiative has awarded more than \$500,000 in grants to promising projects whose aim is to better link neighborhood residents to services they need. In addition to making grants, the initiative provides training and technical assistance to area black churches related to enhancing organizational capacity, building collaborations, strategic planning and financial management.

The initiative is now poised to expand its horizons and to become its own independent, non-profit agency. As a church association for community service, the initiative will promote cooperative leadership and provide nonsectarian community programs by black churches.

Results expected by 2000:

The initiative will have become its own, independent entity, fully capable of setting its own goals and objectives.

Policy, Research and Technical Assistance Activities

In addition to running initiatives under its program areas, Piton monitors public policy issues centered on support systems for poor children, the foundation's major focus. Staff members serve on committees, task forces and ad hoc groups concerned with these issues.

In the coming years, Piton will continue to monitor public policy on issues that affect low-income children. Staff also will conduct research and publish reports to put those issues in a proper context, and provide technical assistance to organizations involved in efforts relevant to Piton's mission. The foundation will be involved in many Policy, Research and Technical Assistance efforts, including:

- Democratizing information. Piton is 1) developing a "neighborhood facts" site on the World Wide Web in partnership with the Denver Planning Office; 2) operating its data initiative by collecting, updating and disseminating detailed information about Denver neighborhoods; 3) providing technical assistance and support to communities and organizations that wish to use information to effect change in local conditions, programs and policies; 4) participating in the National Neighborhood indicators Project with six other cities and the Urban Institute.
- Specific research projects in 1998 include an update on the status of Denver neighborhoods and a Juvenile Violence Prevention research project in partnership with the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice.
- Helping metropolitan counties cope with welfare reform by providing research and technical assistance as officials strive to implement new block grant programs. Portions of this effort will run in conjunction with various partners, among them the Rose Community Foundation and the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado at Denver.

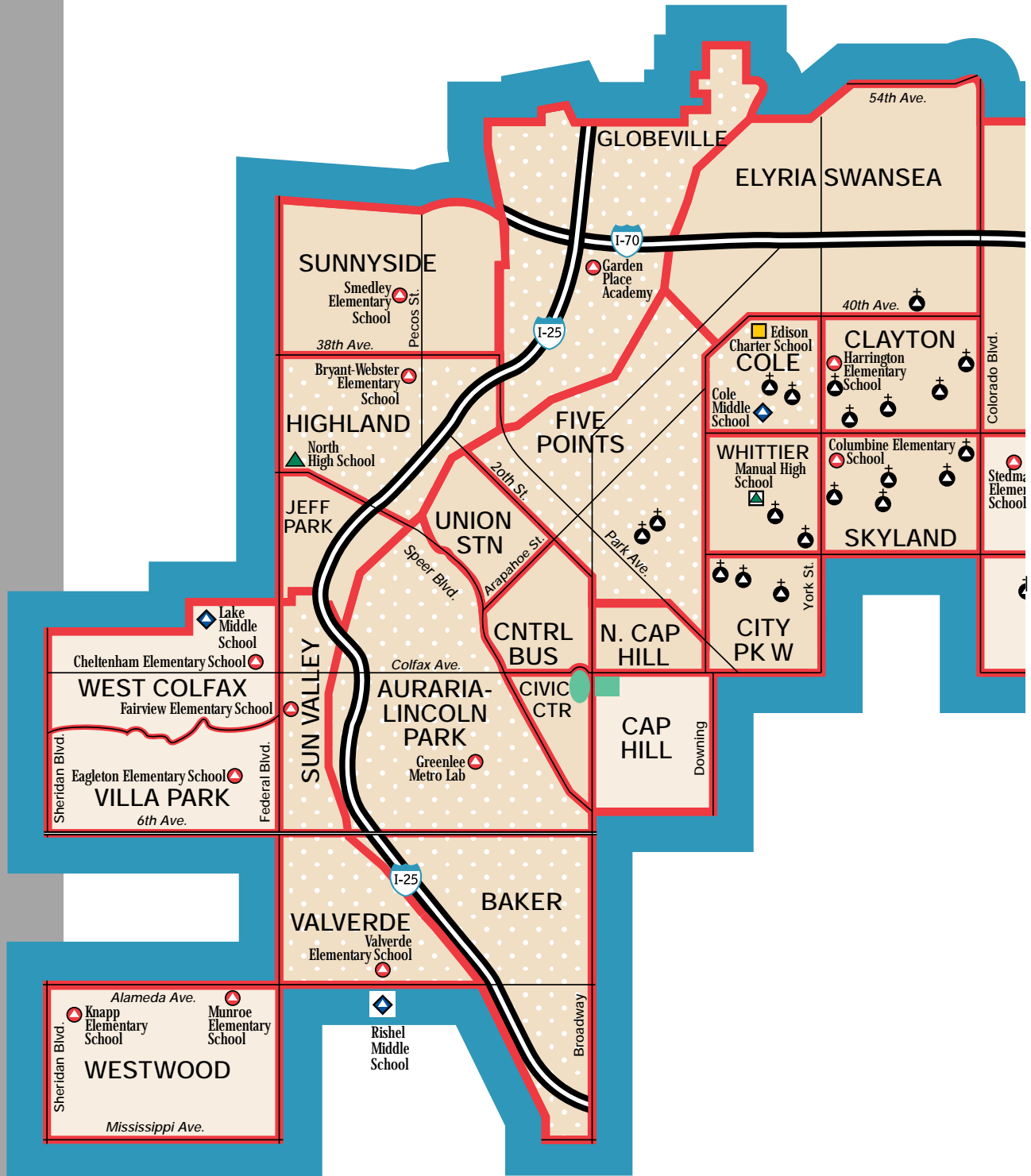


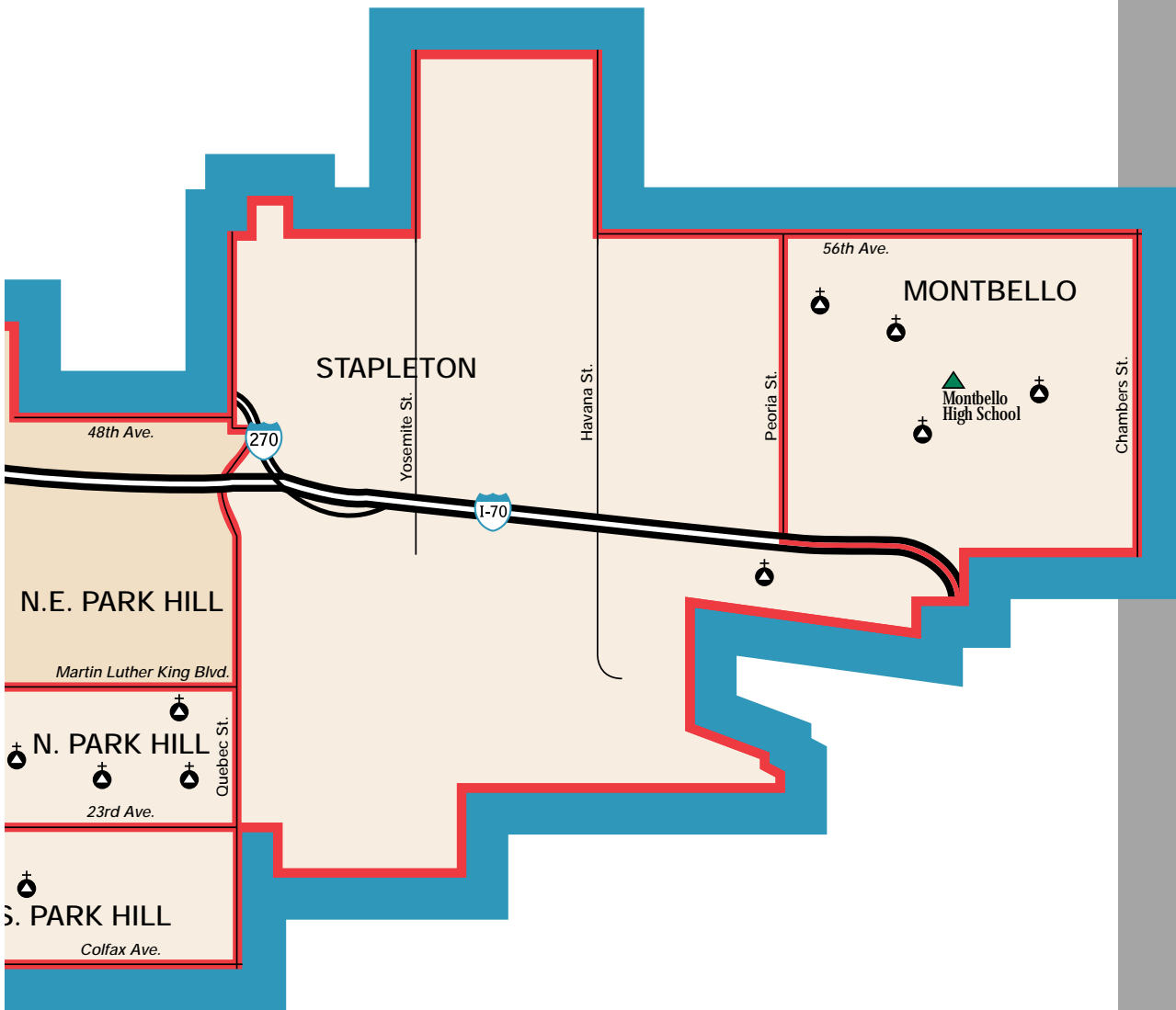
Other Related Activities

- Providing accounting and administrative functions for the Community Child Health Foundation to help it in its mission of ensuring that all low-income children have access to quality health care.
- Publishing the *Colorado Guide to Free and Low-Cost Health Care for Pregnant Women and Children* and other information to help low-income children gain access to health care.
- Conducting an annual public information campaign about the Earned Income Tax Credit targeted to low-income working families.









The Metro Denver Black Church Initiative was launched by The Piton Foundation and community leaders in 1992 with a clear and compelling vision of the role black churches should and could play in helping strengthen low-income communities and families. Since that time, more than 1,000 children from Denver's poorest neighborhoods have been the beneficiaries of tutoring, mentoring, counseling and after-school activities provided by black churches through 41 grants totalling more than \$500,000 awarded by the Metro Denver Black Church Initiative.

Piton's Targeted Neighborhoods and Program Activities





** The Piton Foundation's activities are focused primarily on Denver neighborhoods, outlined here in blue, where more than one in four residents live in poverty, based on the most recent poverty data available.*

Denver Workforce Initiative	
Neighborhood Leadership Initiative	
Black Church Initiative Funded Church	
Family Resource School	
Beacon Neighborhood Center	
School-to-Career Pilot Site	
Manual Restructuring Project	
Charter School	

Piton Board of Directors

Samuel Gary
Chairman of the Board

Ronald Williams
Vice Chairman of the Board

Mary Gittings Cronin
President and Executive Director

James Bye
Secretary and Treasurer

Kathryn Gary

Nancy Gary

Thomas Gougeon
W. M. B. Berger Foundation

Jack A. MacAllister
U.S. West, Inc.

Terry Minger
Center for Resource Management

Adele Phelan
The Clayton Foundation

Reverend Robert Woolfolk
Agape Christian Church

David Younggren
Gary-Williams Company

Staff

Mary Gittings Cronin
President and Executive Director

Terri Bailey
Research Officer

Pedro Bajaras
Receptionist

Elaine Gantz Berman
Program Officer

Carol Bush
Controller

Lynn Cornwell
Program Associate

Alan Gottlieb
Program Officer

Grant Jones
Program Officer

Judith Kaufmann
Program Officer

Cindy Kennedy
Program Administrator

Jeanette Montoya
Program Secretary

Stephanie Nelson
Research Associate

Diane DiGiacomo Peck
Communications Officer

Richard Rainaldi
Program Officer

CREDITS

Design: Studio 2 Graphic Arts, Ltd. Photographs: Page 1: Jay Dickman Page 2: Piton, Jay Simon; Brothers Redevelopment, Brent Temmer; Boy's Club, Jay Dickman. Page 3: Housing, Jay Dickman; Agape Christian Church Tutoring Program, Barry Staver; Five Points Media Center, William K. Swartz. Page 4: Careers in Health Care Collaborative, William K. Swartz; Denver Workforce Initiative, William Thach; Curtis Park neighborhood, Jay Dickman. Page 5: Jere Lord. Page 6: The Denver Post file photo. Page 7: DeCroe Photography. Page 8 - 11: David Cornwell. Page 12: Chris Takagi. Page 13: William K. Swartz. Page 14: Denver Workforce Initiative, Todd Schafer; Northside Leadership Class, Rich Carlson. Page 15: Metro Denver Black Church Initiative, William K. Swartz. Printed on recycled paper.