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# PROGRESS

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The Newsletter of the **Philanthropic Ventures Foundation**

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## Walking Where Angels Fear To Tread

The Philanthropic Ventures Foundation has initiated a program to serve McClymonds High School in Oakland. The school, located in a poverty area, ranks near the bottom state percentile in student performance and at a given time has almost 1/3 of its students truant.

The Foundation staff searched out a handful of outstanding teachers at the school, convened them to hear what is needed, and is proceeding to try out new ideas one at a time.

The school has no yearbook or school newspaper; both are projects that can be achieved with minimal expense. The school newspaper is an especially effective way to work with youth who are poor readers. The yearbook is important as an avenue to developing a sense of community at the school.

Three graduate students from the University of California Graduate School of Public Policy are working with the Foundation to develop ways and means to approach the problems presented by McClymonds High School. Professor Eugene Bardach approached the Foundation and asked if his students could help (work for which they would get academic credit).

If donors would like to be involved in this project, the Foundation would be delighted to hear. There are eight possible programs with the school each of which can be undertaken with modest funding. ❖



## New Staff Member At Philanthropic Ventures

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Moira Walsh has joined the staff of the Foundation to expand its services to donors. Ms. Walsh comes to us from the legal community, a partner in a law firm, having practiced law in San Francisco for 11 years.

Having grown up in San Francisco, she attended the University of California at Santa Barbara and obtained her law degree at The George Washington University, National Law Center in Washington, D.C. where she graduated in 1987.

Ms. Walsh will direct the development effort of the Foundation and be available to meet with donors to offer the customized giving for which the Foundation is noted. She will also direct the Foundation Assistance Program which makes experts in 12 fields available to non-profit agencies.

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation now has a staff of four persons and in 1998 gave out \$2.7 million. ❖

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## *The Foundation As News*

The San Francisco Chronicle, The Oakland Tribune, and The San Mateo Times all featured the Philanthropic Ventures Foundation in front page articles in the month of February. The papers featured the Foundation's educational grantmaking in particular. Quoting various authorities in the philanthropic field, the Foundation was recognized for its fast-tracking of grants at critical moments to meet social issues. ❖

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### **TAKING THE INITIATIVE**

The donor said "Guns". That was our marching order – to look at the issue of youth violence and see if we could come up with ideas. In response, we convened a group of 34 high school students in Daly City and for two hours listened to them tell about violence in their lives.

We found that students wouldn't "snitch" on others who they knew carried a gun to school. Consequently, nothing would get better if students didn't accept responsibility for reporting guns. This was our critical intervention point.

As a result, we negotiated with a teacher and a film producer to make a 10 minute video for teachers and students to use to provoke discussion about guns, violence, and responsibility. Total cost, \$7,500.

The donor also approved three \$25,000 grants for three outstanding grass roots professionals to use the money as they saw fit to decrease violence with youth.

The Foundation staff will continue to develop ideas to relate to youth violence. ❖

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