Individuals and organizations working to ensure boys and young men of color in Denver are able to reach their full potential.

**BENZEL JIMMERSON** is currently the program coordinator of the Denver Five Points Family Leadership Training Institute. His team develops both adults and youth in a two-generation model of leadership and civic engagement. He is also the principal owner of Diversity Dynamics, a company that facilitates and consults families on community engagement, economic development and fatherhood specific innovation. In his spare time, Benzel serves several community boards, including Denver African-American Commission.

**BRIAN TARVER** is a native of Denver, Colorado and a product of Denver Public Schools. He currently serves as the Dean of Students at High Tech Early College High School. He is the founder of the BROS and GEMS Foundation, Chairman of the Board of Directors for The Manny Foundation and serves as a Youth Pastor and Youth Choir Director for King Baptist Church Young People's Ministry. Brian is known for his strong ability to mentor and reach youth.

**BROTHER JEFF FARD**, known has “Brother Jeff,” is a native of Northeast Denver. He is a multimedia journalist, historian and community organizer. As a national lecturer, he speaks to youth, social organizations and professionals about cultural identity and history, diversity, self-empowerment, community building, economic development, health disparities and the uniting power of art. In 1994, he founded Brother Jeff’s Cultural Center, which is located in the historic Five Points District, a space committed to fostering growth, strength, and community voice.

**DELTA ETA BOULE** was chartered in 1991 in Denver, Colorado. Also referred as the boule - they facilitate opportunities for youth and elevate the quality of life in the Denver Metro Area. In 1998, this organization established Delta Eta Boulé Foundation, which provides college scholarships, mentorships, and internships to African-American males who demonstrate academic success and leadership potential.

**DEXTER KORTO** is currently teaching 9th grade at the Denver School of Science and Technology: Cole High School. He is the son of two immigrant parents who taught him the values of hard work and dedication at a very young age. Attending Miami University on an athletic scholarship, he became interested in education and gave a year of service through City Year Denver in which he coached, mentored and tutored young men and women at Montbello High School. Since then, he has fought relentlessly to ensure that all students throughout Denver receive an equitable education.
**FRIENDS FIRST** is a recognized leader in peer mentoring and youth development. Their STARS program inspires and educates teens to make positive life choices and develop healthy relationships. FRIENDS FIRST hosts regular “Engaging Boys of Color” community trainings and is a key partner of the My Brother’s Keeper initiative in Denver. Executive Director, Elycia Cook, is a dedicated advocate for boys of color and was a 2014 recipient of the Women Making History award from CBWPA.

**GEORGE NELSON** has a passion for working with youth. He currently works with Impact Empowerment Group as a youth outreach and resource coordinator located in the Park Hill neighborhood in Northeast Denver. His experience working with youth includes promoting healthy lifestyles, providing employment opportunities and college preparation, as well as coordinating programs targeting personal, educational, behavioral and emotional growth. He embraces the opportunity each day to work with Denver youth and feels fortunate to work in an environment he loves.

**JASON SHANKLE** is from Denver and grew up in Park Hill. He is a second-year doctoral student attending the University of Denver and known for coordinating the annual Black Male Initiative Summit. This event provides 8th and 9th grade black, male students an opportunity to participate in a program promoting leadership and academic achievement. The summit encourages youth to graduate from both high school and post-secondary institutions, while developing their black, male identity. Jason is the founder of Kings Over Pawn Mindset, designed to awake the consciousness of young black males and social movements.

**JIM CHAVEZ** is the Executive Director of the Latin-American Educational Foundation (LAEF), a Colorado-based, nonprofit, providing college assistance and guidance to Colorado’s Latino students and their families, including direct scholarship support. As a board and staff member of the Colorado Student Obligation Bond Authority, Jim was instrumental in creating Colorado’s first prepaid college tuition program, known as CollegeInvest. He has worked across the country to develop and implement numerous state college savings programs or Section 529 plans.

**JONATHAN Mc MILLAN** grew up in Denver and experienced challenges with gang and crime involvement, yet overcame his challenges. He is now a mentor, author, journalist, activist and advocate for causes that empower young people of color, and has a particular interest in reforming the juvenile justice system. The founder and director of Be Better Than Average, a nonprofit that provides success skills and personal development training through mentoring and life coaching, Jonathan has demonstrated a lifetime of commitment to the success of young people.

**KENNETH CROWLEY** is a first-generation graduate of Langston University. While pursuing his undergraduate degree, he had a vision for the Crowley Foundation (founded in 2009). Their mission is to provide educational opportunities to Colorado youth through academic instruction, life skills, college preparatory programs and scholarships. They foster learning and empowerment by providing leadership development programs and promoting education as a requisite component of success.
LEALON SHERROD is a Denver native and graduate of East High School. He has worked for Denver Public Schools since 2011 and is presently the Dean of Students at Denver Center for 21st Century Learning. Not only is he the Dean of Students, but Lealon also serves as the Athletic Director and head coach of the boys’ basketball team. He believes education is the key to success and his role is to equip scholars with the weapons and armor needed for the upcoming battle ... LIFE!

REVEREND LEON KELLY serves as the Executive Director for Open Door Youth Gang Alternatives. He is the founder and driving force behind this ministry. Founded in 1986, Open Door is a nonprofit and the oldest anti-gang program in the Denver metro area. Its mission is to curb gang violence and reduce street gang violence without involving law enforcement. Reverend Kelly’s experience, dedication and personal faith have made him a true agent of change in our community.

MADELINE VELEZ is a professional school counselor at Denver Center for 21st Century Learning. She received a BA in Psychology, MA in Educational School Counseling and an Ed.S in Administrative Leadership. Her belief and passion is having students gain emotional intelligence in order for them to be academically successful. She welcomes the challenges Denver Center for 21st Century Learning brings and works to support the success of students and families in her school community.

MICHAEL ACUNA (ILL SEVEN) is an award-winning, hip-hop artist and activist who has traveled internationally utilizing his life story and art to transform the minds of the future. As a community leader and youth mentor, he speaks to the social ills that plague the urban spectrum. He currently works with Youth On Record as a partner artist, is building restorative justice programs with the Office of the Independent Monitor and serves as a facilitator for the My Brother’s Keeper initiative.

NARCY JACKSON is the co-founder and Executive Director of Athletics & Beyond, which focuses on four programming areas; educational success, life skill building, athletic development and career options. Over the past three years, A&B has developed programs to help young athletes prepare for success on and off the field. Narcy continues to be deeply involved within the Denver community and serves on numerous boards and committees throughout the city.

NICK DAWKINS has fifteen years of experience working for Denver Public Schools. As an educator and school leader, he has tirelessly worked to close achievement gaps and increase access and equity to experiences that create significant impacts in the lives of students from various cultures throughout the city. As the Principal for Manual High School, he is committed to building positive relationships that connect and motivate great people, engage families and communities and effectively manage resources to increase student achievement.
DR. RYAN ROSS has been awarded the 2016 9News leader of the year! Currently serving as the President and CEO of the Urban Leadership Foundation of Colorado, he has focused his efforts on ensuring a counter narrative is told for males of color and all students have an equitable, educational experience. His work has led to innovative programming at the Community College of Denver, within Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, and most recently within the Urban Leadership Foundation of Colorado with a focus on emerging leaders of color.

SEAN WHITE founded Paramount Sports in 2010, an organization that focuses on the management and marketing aspects of less profiled student athletes. He attended and played football at the University of Tennessee, pursuing degrees in finance, sports management, exercise science and economics. Sean serves as the coordinator for speed and agility for the Chauncey Billups Basketball School and the Dan Graham Elite and Fundamentals Football Camp. His heart and determination to develop every player into a professional adult is what makes Paramount a family.

SHELLI BROWN has been working with and for youth and families in a variety of settings for twenty years. She currently serves as the Community Site Manager for Steps to Success, a collaborative youth violence prevention initiative focused in Denver’s Montbello neighborhood. Her work in the Montbello community has strengthened families, provided elementary and middle school students with social emotional competencies and increased academic achievement and engagement.

STREET FRATERNITY is a place of brotherhood and personal growth for urban young men, ages 14 - 25. It seeks Generational Change. Young men become safe, independent and connected to their communities. In turn, they will provide influence and support to their own children, so they, too, will achieve these benchmarks and have greater opportunity for personal growth. With the assistance of the young men and volunteers, Street Fraternity offers a communal nightly dinner during which young men visit with each other and other staff and volunteers.

WENDELL SMITH is a lifelong resident of Denver and has been a community leader for many years. He has over 17 years of coaching experience with numerous youth sports groups and teams including, Thomas Jefferson High School, the Blackhawks Youth Organization, Street Kidz and many others. Wendell is lovingly known as “Coach” to the hundreds of kids and their parents to whom he has taken under his wing and provided guidance and instruction both on and off the field.

YESSIONSTITUTE stands for Youth Empowerment Support Services. The YESS Institute offers training, peer mentoring and school engagement programs in Denver Public High Schools. They also offer emotional intelligence and leadership trainings for staff at nonprofit agencies. Their mission is to build EmoSmart Leadership™ within youth, their role models and organizations that support them. The YESS Institute has developed an inclusive, comprehensive, wrap-around student engagement peer mentoring model focusing on turning failing freshmen into successful high school graduates.
**YOUNG MEN OF ALPHA** is a community service project under the umbrella of an Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, a national program titled, Go to High School Go to College, established in 1922. It concentrates on the importance of completing secondary and collegiate education as a road to advancement. Given that the best single indicator for future economic success for young men of color is educational attainment, we focus on ensuring young men receive information and learn strategies that facilitate success.

**YOUTH ON RECORD** is committed to ensuring that the youth they serve graduate from high school, are ready to enter the workforce, and are prepared to transition to college or enter advanced technical training. This model partnership brings together the music community, public schools, the nation’s leading housing authority, and the philanthropic sector. Youth on Record is a powerful example of what’s possible when musicians and nonprofit/public sector leaders embrace an entrepreneurial spirit.