

**A LEGACY OF HEALTH LEADERSHIP**  
1902-2015

*published by*



**PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH**  
FOUNDATION

*20 years*

*in celebration of its 20th anniversary*

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**A LEGACY  
OF HEALTH LEADERSHIP**

1902–2015

*Providence Hospital, Providence Memorial Hospital,  
and the Paso del Norte Health Foundation*

## PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH FOUNDATION

October 2015

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Special thanks go to Dr. Stephen Schuster for providing photographs and information on Providence Hospital; Marta Estrada at Border Heritage Center of the El Paso Public Library for providing photographs and materials on Providence Hospital and Providence Memorial Hospital; Abbie Weiser and Claudia Rivers at the Special Collections Department of the University of Texas at El Paso Library for providing photographs; the El Paso County Historical Society for providing photographs; Patsy Slaughter at the El Paso County Medical Society for providing *The Caregivers: El Paso's Medical History*; Trish Long at the *El Paso Times* for providing a photograph; Bert Mijares for sharing copies of architecture magazines; The Hospitals of Providence for sharing the Providence Memorial Hospital Auxiliary scrapbook.

The section on Providence Hospital and Providence Memorial Hospital is adapted from an unpublished manuscript written by Merrell Gregory.

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The Hospitals of Providence contributed to the development and printing of this monograph.

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Book design by MaryAnne Talbott, Zepol Media Partners

*“A just return to the community that has given us  
our livelihood will be an investment in its health  
and that of generations to come.”*

**T**hese words of Sam D. Young, made in 1947 to encourage El Pasoans to support the creation of a community hospital, Providence Memorial Hospital, ring true today. For more than 100 years, community leaders met the health and medical needs of El Pasoans by establishing and supporting hospitals, namely Providence Hospital and Providence Memorial Hospital. Their investments ultimately resulted in a community asset, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation, which since 1995 has invested more than \$141 million in pursuit of its mission to promote health and prevent disease in this unique bi-national region. To commemorate its twentieth year of health leadership, the Foundation honors those leaders who had the vision to make this community asset flourish through the years.

## PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL

The history of hospitals in early El Paso follows a pattern—passionate and committed individuals raised funds in response to expanding medical needs of a growing city. This occurred in 1892, when civic leaders brought in the Sisters of Charity to establish Hotel Dieu. In 1902, a group of doctors and businessman formed the Providence Hospital Association to establish Providence Hospital, the city's first non-denominational hospital. This effort was led by Dr. Michael P. Schuster, a Vienna-born physician who came to El Paso in 1892 with his family to establish and operate a clinic for employees of the American Smelting and Refining Company.

In 1902, the Providence Hospital Association issued stock to twenty-five individuals, and with \$15,000 in hand, the group bought a two-story brick building built in 1881 at the corner of Santa Fe and Upson streets in the city's Sunset Heights residential section. Schuster and his colleagues oversaw renovations, including the addition of an elevator, a circular fire escape, a third story, and the extension of its southern wing to accommodate a total of forty hospital beds. In 1904, patients paid \$9 a week to stay in a ward and between \$15 and \$25 for one of ten private rooms. The hospital charged a \$5 fee for the use of the Operating Room. Providence started a highly-rated school of nursing, providing a supply of nurses.

Although the medical care provided at Providence was excellent for its time, within two years the hospital was in serious financial trouble. Dr. Schuster decided to buy out his shareholders and control the hospital himself. He enlisted his wife, Eugenia Schuster, to help him run the hospital.



Dr. Michael P. Schuster (Photo courtesy Dr. Stephen Schuster); Eugenia Schuster (Photo courtesy University of Texas at El Paso Library, Special Collections Department, Women's Club of El Paso Records, MS 576).



Stock issued by the Providence Hospital Association. (Courtesy Dr. Stephen Schuster)



Providence Hospital in 1907.  
Class of 1912,  
Providence School of Nursing.  
*(Photos courtesy Aultman  
Collection, El Paso Public Library)*



Dr. and Mrs. Schuster had four children: Regina, Stephen, Frank, and Margaret, who all grew up at home in the hospital. Sadly, Dr. Schuster died of throat cancer in November of 1918, and his sons, who both studied medicine at the University of Chicago, returned to El Paso to continue their parents' work. Regina and Margaret married and moved away, but returned to El Paso to help their mother manage the hospital.

Regina Schuster Rabb remembered:

*My father was a scholarly man. My mother had no training in medicine or administration. But mother took matters in her own hands. She said that she would move the family of six into the hospital so that she could take personal charge of the operation of the institution. Mother ran the hospital like a home. That is why people liked to come to Providence when they were sick. She used her own linens during those early days. She did everything from cooking to firing the boilers. She was a combination bookkeeper, receptionist, nurse, housekeeper, cook and janitor.*

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the Schusters managed to keep the small hospital and its equipment modernized and up to date. But in spite of their continuing efforts, by 1945 the building was old, outmoded, and unfit to house modern medical equipment. In addition, the hospital was close to being condemned by the Fire Department as a firetrap. Doctors and patients began to realize that the building was not safe, and the Schusters realized that it might be prudent to close the building and build a new hospital to take its place.

Many El Pasoans worried that a growing population after World War II would strain the existing hospitals, including: Southwestern General; Hotel Dieu; St. Joseph's Tuberculosis Sanitarium and Hospital; Masonic Hospital, operated as a public service by the local Masonic lodge; and the City-County Hospital. A survey by the Texas Department of Health indicated that a city the size of El Paso should have 1,500 hospital beds. In 1945, El Paso had fewer than half the recommended number of beds, based on population.

*“for the purpose of administering to the sick, to the infirm, to the helpless, to the maimed and to the afflicted of all creeds, colors and nationalities as may be brought to or presented at such hospital for treatment and nursing care.”*

—LANGUAGE FROM 1945 CHARTER

The Schusters contacted Phillip Overton, legal counsel of the Texas Hospital Association, to give them advice on their plan. Overton agreed that El Paso needed a new hospital with at least 100 beds. But with new governmental guidelines for hospitals and rising building costs, the Schusters would have to spend up to \$1 million, more than the family could obtain. Overton explained that the era of private hospitals like Providence was over and that it would have to be whole communities, not just a small number of investors, who would have to build hospitals. Further, the federal government, through the Hospital Survey and Construction Act (also known as the Hill-Burton Act), would provide funding and guidelines for new community facilities.

Other El Pasoans were also interested in organizing a new hospital. Dr. Paul N. Poling, Frank Schuster’s pastor at the First Presbyterian Church, and Dr. L.L. Evans, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church, led efforts with their congregants to discuss the development of a community hospital. Among them, Irene Wulfjen, executive secretary of the local American Red Cross, knew that the bed shortage was a dire situation and that the community needed to act. She caught a severe case of the flu in November 1944 and recuperated at Providence. While there, she had a conversation with Frank Schuster that ennobled efforts to spearhead a community campaign.

Schuster approached Dr. Poling and suggested that the group acquire Providence Hospital and build on its reputation, trained staff, existing procedures and records and the loyalty

of El Paso physicians. Irene Wulfgun and Dr. Poling recruited another parishioner, Fred Woodworth, to help them. This small group met with Phillip Overton around the Schusters' dining room table. Overton suggested that the group remain small and call on the city's financial leaders for help in fundraising at a later date. He agreed with the founders getting title to the old Providence Hospital and using it as a steppingstone for a new facility, helping to meet the requirements of the Hill-Burton Act. Dr. Poling, Mrs. Wulfgun and Mr. Woodworth worked throughout the spring of 1945 to discuss the operation of the hospital and their plan for raising funds for it.

On September 1, 1945, the State of Texas granted the three founders a corporate charter for the "acquisition, erection, maintenance and operation of a benevolent, charitable, scientific and educational hospital." Its name was to be Providence Memorial Hospital, paying tribute to the Schusters' efforts but promoting itself as a new institution—a community hospital.

## PROVIDENCE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**W**ith the hospital's charter in hand, Dr. Poling, Mrs. Wulfgén, and Mr. Woodworth realized that they needed wider community representation to help them make the decisions to be faced in the future. They asked Dr. L.L. Evans, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church and Wendell Phillips, rabbi of Temple Mount Sinai to join the effort, clearly establishing the ecumenical commitment of the hospital. They brought on other Board members, such as Charles Loomis, who had been on the Board of the nearly defunct Masonic Hospital and could provide his practical experience in hospital administration. They recruited other Board members who brought legal, financial, and fundraising expertise to the project. Among them was Sam D. Young, the president of El Paso National Bank, whom Dr. Poling encouraged to support this effort. These additions to the Board proved important, as Dr. Poling left El Paso in July 1946, and was replaced by Dr. Evans.

With a Board in place, the first priorities were purchasing Providence Hospital, finding an appropriate site for the new hospital, and raising the funds necessary to guarantee matching federal funds. After purchasing the hospital in March 1946, the Board realized that razing the old hospital and building on its site would limit the future physical growth of the hospital. In the summer of 1946, Robert E. McKee, a prominent El Paso contractor, provided the Board with an alternative—several blocks of land just south of El Paso High School. However, the site had its drawbacks; it was somewhat larger than the downtown site, but it would not allow for future growth. The Board postponed a final decision until it had its fundraising plan in place.

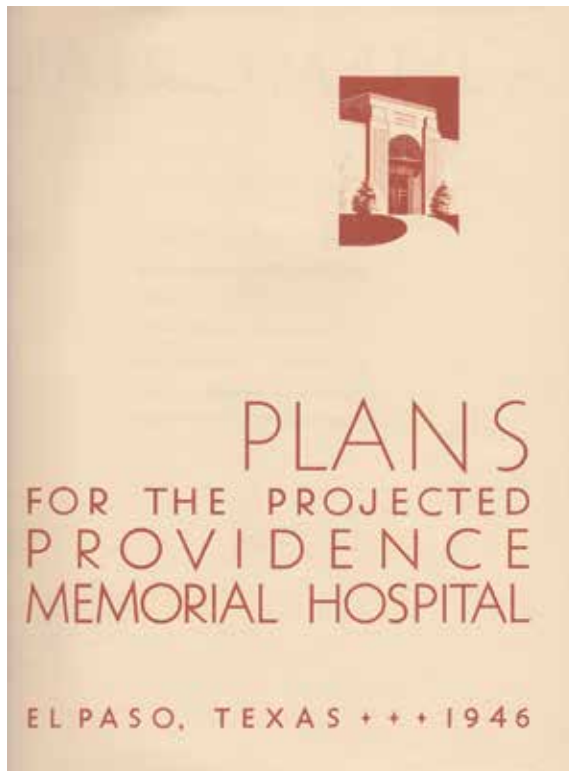
By the fall of 1946, Sam Young had joined the Board and shared his enthusiasm about the hospital with friends and colleagues. Serving as vice-president, Young put together a building campaign committee that included dedicated civic leaders whom he knew would be able to raise \$1 million towards an overall goal of \$1.8 million. Campaign committees included Publicity, Industrial, Women's Division, Public Utilities, Business and Commercial, Chain Store Division, and Rural Area. Young headed up the Special Gifts Committee, soliciting individuals who could make substantial contributions, providing an example for others in the community. "The idea was to start big and work down," Young explained later. "I wanted this to be a pace-setting group that would set the tone for the whole campaign."

Young decided that he would ask ten people to make a \$25,000 contribution, providing the campaign with a solid start of \$250,000. His first donor was Conrad Hilton, the hotel magnate who had started his career in El Paso. Young continued courting big donors at special luncheons and rallies, at church or at social functions. With these pledges made, other committee members went out into the community and had success in raising funds. Young put a paid advertisement in the El Paso Times and the El Paso Herald-Post asking for contributions, and citizens responded. They wanted to be part of the effort. One of the major benefits of the fundraising drive was the spirit of unity that it created among the people of El Paso. Rival banks and businesses came together to work for the hospital.

In 1946, the campaign committee prepared and disseminated an illustrated brochure that outlined its preliminary plans for the new hospital. The brochure described the care that a patient would get from the moment of his reception in the Admitting Room to being put in a room that would "offer an equally comforting welcome to the Patient and a sense of security to those concerned with his care." A two-way intercommunication system would "enable the Patient to call the nurse and inform her of his needs...the nurse will be enabled to listen in on her Patient without disturbing his rest or sleep." The brochure included an architect's concept of the hospital, as the final selection of architects had yet to

*“Providence Memorial Hospital will indeed be a memorial—a memorial of the generosity and humaneness of every member of the community in providing for many decades to come this beautiful and adequate institution for the care of the sick and the alleviation of pain.”*

—FROM 1946 CAMPAIGN BROCHURE



Campaign brochure, 1946.



Sam D. Young. (Photo courtesy University of Texas at El Paso Library, Special Collections Department, El Paso Herald-Post Records, MS 348)

be made. Memorial opportunities were listed in the brochure, providing potential donors with an idea of what their contribution would support.

By April 1947, the campaign was off to a great start, with \$825,000 in pledges raised. A few months later, the Board once again focused on choosing a site, and Dr. Evans appointed three Board members who, after conferring with contractors and realtors, found a nine-block parcel of land on North Oregon Street ideal in size but full of huge granite outcroppings. Architect E.W. Carroll remarked, “We drove in as close as we could and then got out and walked. What a shock it was! The most rugged site you ever hoped to see, nothing but sand and these great mountains of solid outcropping all over the place.” Undaunted, the Board believed that this was the best site, and on July 6, 1948, it purchased the land for \$30,000.

By early 1949, the Board had raised \$900,000, with an additional \$500,000 promised in federal funds. But because of rising building costs and the need for additional hospital beds, the Board decided to kick off another fundraising drive to raise \$1.1 million to meet the estimated \$2.5 million cost of the hospital. In a fundraising brochure entitled “You Can Live Longer,” prominent businessman and campaign chairman J.C. Peyton remarked, “Let’s resolve here and now to not only maintain our present momentum of growth, but to accelerate it. It can be done. We must be determined—we must have the will to go ahead.” At the groundbreaking ceremony on March 6, 1949, Sam Young stressed the urgent need for the hospital and urged all El Pasoans to give a gift. After Young’s remarks, Peyton piloted a shovel to rip the first bit of granite from the site.

Once again, the campaign proved successful, raising an additional \$700,000 for building equipment and operating funds. With \$1.8 million raised by El Pasoans and Southwesterners, \$1.6 million in federal funds would assure the completion of the finest medical facility between Los Angeles and Dallas. At the Board’s annual meeting in May 1950, Board members elected Sam Young chairman of the Board of Trustees by acclamation, a position he would hold until his death in 1987.



Pages from campaign brochure, 1949.



Providence Memorial Hospital groundbreaking ceremony at 2001 North Oregon Street, March 6, 1949.  
(Photo: *The Caregivers: El Paso's Medical History*)



Even before architects were hired to design the hospital, Dr. Evans suggested that the Board consider a cross-shaped hospital, which would enable power facilities and elevators to be located in the core intersection area and patient rooms in the four wings where they could receive the best possible light, air, and view. The Board commissioned an architect's drawing of the concept and it was used in the 1946 brochure. Local architects E.W. Carroll and Louis Dauble were selected as architects and incorporated and refined the cross shape, making the angle between the front wings wider. In their design, Carroll and Dauble incorporated polished limestone and granite, the same kind of stone being blasted from the site.

The design gave Providence 274 patient beds and room for thirty-six newborns. Most beds were in private or semi-private rooms, and the architects added four luxury suites for those who preferred a hotel atmosphere. The entire hospital would feature air-conditioning. Carroll and Dauble's innovative design plans were featured in *Hospitals: Journal of the American Hospital Association* in 1950 and *Architectural Record* in 1952.

The Board selected the R.E. McKee Construction Company to build the hospital, and construction work began in the summer of 1950. The construction schedule was hampered by the supply and equipment shortages resulting from the onset of the Korean War, and the

## **FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

PROVIDENCE MEMORIAL  
HOSPITAL, 1950

Sam D. Young, *Chairman*

L. R. Allison

Myra Bassett

Spearl Ellison

H.D. Fulwiler

Irene Wulfgen

Paul Harvey

Conrad N. Hilton

Robert T. Hoover

Jesse E. Metcalf

J.C. Peyton

Dorrance D. Roderick

Ervin H. Schwartz

Clifton G. Whyburn

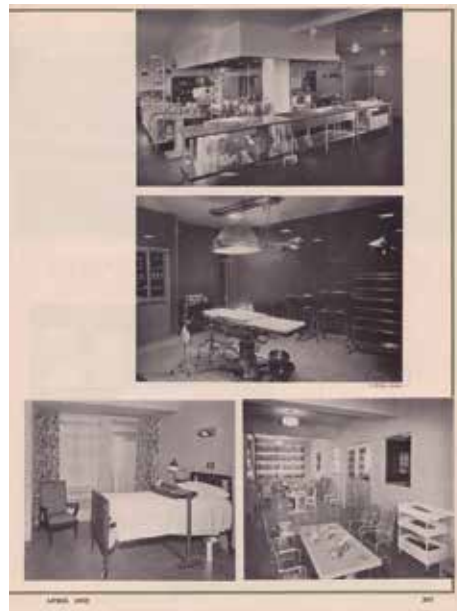
F. Carter Womack

## **HONORARY TRUSTEES**

Dr. L.L. Evans

Rabbi Wendell A. Phillips

Dr. Paul N. Poling



The state-of-the-art hospital was featured in *Hospitals, Journal of the American Hospital Association* (April 1950), left, and *Architectural Record* (1952). (Courtesy Bert Mijares)



Floor plan rendering from campaign brochure, 1946.



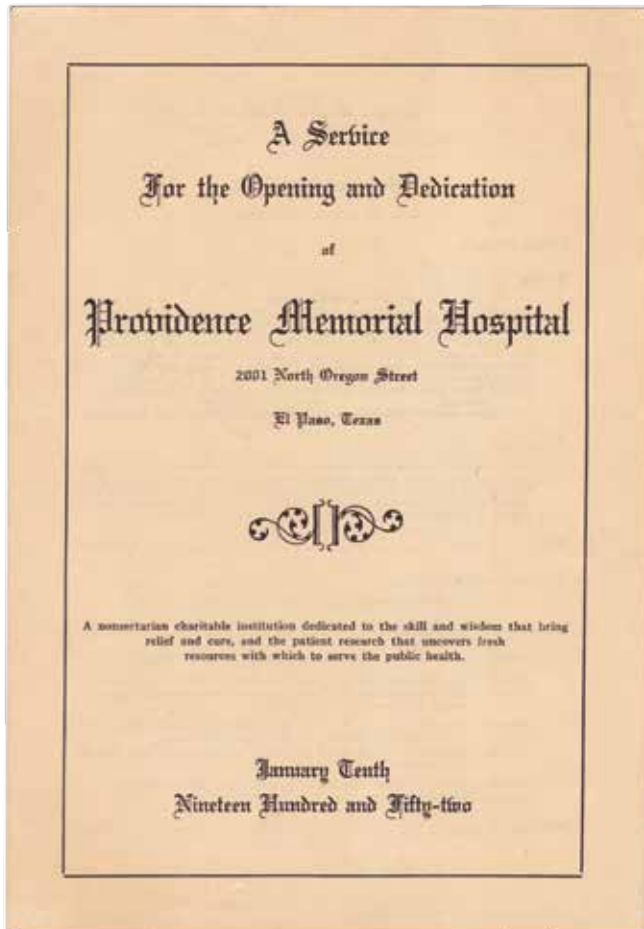
Construction of Providence in 1950 showing the core area and the wings. (Photo courtesy El Paso County Historical Society)

construction fell behind schedule. But Norman Roberts, a consultant-administrator hired by the Board to help plan the hospital, spent time making sure that all the details were attended to during the final stages of construction.

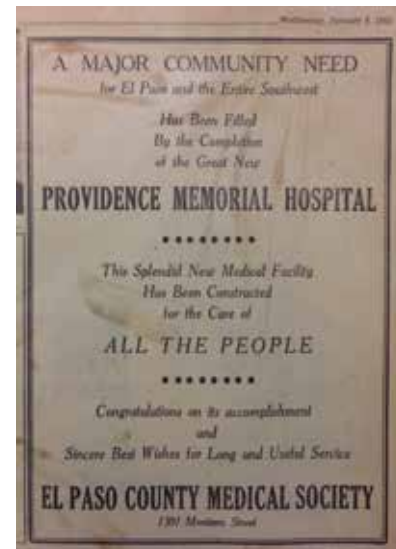
The Providence Board was very busy in the months leading to the hospital's grand opening in January 1952. Members were finishing the final fundraising campaign, organizing the Women's Auxiliary, and arranging for the grand opening events. With the help of Board members Irene Wulfgen and Myra Bassett, the Board organized the Women's Auxiliary of Providence Memorial Hospital, the first hospital auxiliary in the area. Auxiliary members would serve as hostesses for the grand opening then as volunteer workers wherever they could be of assistance in the new hospital. This small group of women grew into an auxiliary of nearly 500 members, and raised thousands of dollars in its gift shop to purchase much-needed equipment.

On December 27, 1951, the Board formally accepted the building from McKee and spent the next two weeks preparing for its grand opening. On January 10, 1952, hundreds of people gathered in the wide triangle in front of the hospital to participate in the dedication. Thousands more El Pasoans joined the ceremonies through live radio coverage. Dr. Poling traveled from Oregon to deliver the invocation. David McKee turned over the hospital keys to Board chairman Sam Young, and brief speeches were made by Mayor Fred Hervey, Dr. Wilcox, president of the El Paso County Medical Society, New Mexico governor Edwin Mechem, and by administrator Norman Roberts. After a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Board members followed Conrad Hilton to the dedication of the Mary Hilton Chapel of All Faiths, which he had donated in honor of his mother. Led by clergy of four different faiths, the ceremony was broadcast outside over loudspeakers so that others could join in the worship.

The hospital opened to the public for a three-day open house. Auxiliary members led tours of the hospital, pointing out important pieces of equipment and answering questions.



Program from dedication of the Hilton Chapel, January 10, 1952.



A newspaper tribute celebrating the new hospital.

Other members served tea and refreshments. The *El Paso Herald-Post* devoted an entire section of its January 9 issue to the opening of the hospital, including tributes from businesses and organizations. After three days of festivities, Providence Memorial Hospital opened its doors to patients on January 14, 1952.

Shortly after the hospital opened, Norman Roberts, who had worked on the funding and business plans for Providence, resigned as administrator, and the Board called upon Gus Bianche, a vice president at El Paso National Bank and a trusted colleague of Sam Young, to serve as administrator. Drawing upon his business expertise, Bianche improved the hospital's finances in its first year of operation. A generous bequest of \$100,000 from the estate of philanthropist Beulah Moor at the end of 1952 helped to strengthen the hospital's financial standing. Bianche spent time with patients and improved relationships with staff physicians, establishing a Joint Advisory Committee to foster communication between the physicians and the Board. As a result, the Board consulted with the physicians on administration and future plans for the hospital, winning respect of the local medical community. By December 1953, the Board hired Bob Byrne as the new administrator, but Bianche was named as executive vice president to act as Sam Young's liaison.

In the mid-1950s, the Providence Board took steps to provide physicians with the latest and best in medical equipment and services. It invested the hospital's income in capital improvements and organized a foundation to solicit contributions for equipment. With a \$73,000 grant promised from the Ford Foundation, the Board asked staff physicians how that money would best be used. The physicians suggested the following equipment: a cobalt "bomb" for the treatment of cancer, heart catheterization equipment, and an electroencephalogram (EEG) for studying brain waves. However, the Ford grant would not begin to cover the purchase, much less the installation of all of the equipment. Leo Schuster, Sr., a new Board member, quietly raised money for the cobalt equipment so that the Ford grant could cover the cost of the other two pieces of equipment. These pieces of equipment served as the foundation for several new departments. Dr. J. Edward Stern founded

the neurodiagnostic program in 1957, focused on the study of brain waves. The cardiac catheterization equipment enabled Dr. E.S. Crossett, a local surgeon, to perfect his open-heart surgery techniques; he had performed the first open-heart surgery at Providence in 1957. His work bore fruit when Providence was named the Congenital Heart Center for a five-state region in 1960.

By the late 1950s, the baby boom and changing health care needs forced the hospital to remodel and readapt spaces to meet the hospital's growing patient demand. The time was coming for Providence Memorial Hospital to begin thinking of expansion. In 1963, the



Expansion plans announced, 1963.

Board approached Carroll and Daueble to draft a plan, and they designed a rectangular addition that fit across the two back arms of the original building. After asking physicians and nurses what they wanted in the addition, Bryne worked with the architects on the design of the nursing units and rooms. The first decision was to make every room private with its own bath and add more suites. The hospital's surgical facilities would be relocated to the ground floor of the new tower.

On October 21, 1963, Sam Young announced the \$3.2 million hospital expansion following the approval of a \$1.5 million grant in Hill-Burton funds. The Board approved the letting of bids for construction a year later, and once again, R.E. McKee Construction Company prevailed. The Board held a simple groundbreaking ceremony on November 20, 1965. As the building project neared completion, Board members considered what to name what was being referred to as the West Tower. After careful plotting by Board members Clifton Wyburn and Dorrance Roderick, the Board unanimously decided to name the tower in



Sam D. Young, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Providence Memorial Hospital, turned the first shovel of earth for construction of the West Tower of the hospital. Taking turns at the shovel were from left, Dr. J. Edward Stern, president of the Providence medical and dental staff; Mavis Escobar, president of the Women's Auxiliary; Administrator Bob Byrne, who is holding Shelley Kidd, a lifelong patient; Young; Gus Bianche, executive vice president of Providence, and Dr. Paul Poling, hospital chaplain and director of public relations. (Photo courtesy *El Paso Times*)

Sam Young's honor. In the summer of 1967, departments began to move into their new space and the vacant space in the original building was renovated. The first patient was admitted to the new tower on September 25, 1967. Even with an additional 140 beds, Providence struggled to meet the growing number of patients and the new wing wasn't dedicated until June 30, 1968.

On May 15, 1975, members of the Providence Memorial Hospital Board honored Sam Young for twenty-five years of leadership at an anniversary banquet. Dr. Paul Poling, who had returned to El Paso in 1963 to serve as hospital chaplain and honorary Board member, gave the invocation, and Board secretary Jack Sargent read a proclamation on Young's work on behalf of the hospital. Young made comments about the hospital's growth, noting that the hospital had purchased equipment worth more than \$5 million without having to have another large fundraising campaign. He remarked, "While we are twenty-five years old, it is just the age for the beginning of a greater, broader and more specialized medical care for the people. And on behalf of the entire Board, I will say that we all have our hearts in the work and mean to go forward with the plan."

In the 1970s and 1980s, Providence Memorial Hospital met the health care needs of the community by updating and opening new facilities. In 1971, the new Cardiovascular Care Unit (CCU) opened and included an innovative patient monitoring system. In March 1972, the first cancer treatment center in west Texas opened at Providence with the installation of an electron linear accelerator, enabling doctors to treat deeper tumors. In 1977, the hospital inaugurated the use of a whole-body CAT scanner to give doctors a detailed cross-section image. That year, Providence opened its Physical Therapy Rehabilitation Department, providing physical therapy for patients recovering from surgery, accidents, and other physical problems. In 1982, the Roderick Perinatal Center opened with newly renovated labor and delivery rooms, an intensive-care nursery, and the Alternative Birthing Center. In 1986, Providence created the Border Children's Health Center for young patients with continuing illnesses. Once again, the hospital's footprint expanded



RESOLUTION  
*HONORING*  
**SAM D. YOUNG**  
*on his*  
*Twenty-Fifth Anniversary*  
*as*  
*Chairman of the Board of Directors*  
*of*  
**PROVIDENCE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**  
EL PASO, TEXAS

**Provision:** Providence Memorial Hospital has received the unanimous approval of its Board of Directors on January 1, 1975, for the immediate resignation of the directorship of SAM D. YOUNG, assuming the establishment of this hospital as an exempt, not-for-profit corporation, effective March 1, 1974 under the authority of a resolution of the Board, because a unique health-care center of the El Paso Metropolitan Area.

**Provision:** In the absence of his family and before he has fulfilled his last remaining corporate and public duties, special efforts to give dignity to their wishes and respect to parents of the donor in the handling of a plan of immediate burial care in Providence Memorial Hospital.

**Provision:** In further recognition and final public tribute Providence Memorial Hospital, a non-profit hospital, has received all former financial operating statements to comply corporate laws and regulations to bring about the final progress in medical services through the great kindness of doctors who have contributed to bring the doctor of the team advance in public health care to the community without adding any burden. These regulations include the:

Final resolution and charges of the Trustees, Chairman, Gary Cook, President, William, John Hendon, El Paso is a testament to the vision through leadership of Sam D. Young, Chairman, Board of Directors, El Paso Hospital, El Paso, Texas and the Board of Directors, El Paso Metropolitan Area, El Paso, Texas.

*Sam D. Young*  
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Resolution honoring Sam D. Young, 1975.

# 1952-1992

## PROVIDENCE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

281 N. Oregon • 915-542-6000



**40 Years Forward**




**On a hot, bright Sunday in 1952, the day after the first 400 beds opened in southeast suburban El Paso, Providence Memorial Hospital opened its doors to a new city. With a risk of disaster and a clean sheet, the first general of Providence Memorial Hospital in 1952, El Paso, Texas, was a hospital that gave patients the best medical care available - Providence Memorial Hospital.**

**On January 31 - my birthday and Providence's - in 1972, the people of El Paso gathered in celebration of the ribbon-cutting of a hospital so advanced for its time that it was the first of its kind in the region - paper space and many instances of order and efficiency. That was the day Providence Memorial Hospital opened its doors to its new patients - every man, woman and child who lived in El Paso.**

**Providence's growth has not changed, though nobody every expected that of this hospital here.**

an ad page.

Cover of Providence Memorial Hospital's 40th Anniversary supplement to the *El Paso Times*, Oct. 25, 1992.

with the opening of the Conrad Hilton Tower, named after one of the original donors to the 1947 campaign.

Before Sam Young died in April 1987, he picked Robert M. Young, D.D., his pastor at First Presbyterian and a member of the Board since 1980, to serve as the chairman of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Young knew that he did not have, as he mentioned, “the knowledge, expertise and experience to lead Providence in the manner and style of Mr. Sam D. Young,” and he asked Board members to assist him in the transition. During his seven years as chairman, Dr. Young oversaw the growing gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the Board, the imposition of term limits, and the election of physicians to the Board.

To celebrate the achievements of four decades of growth, Providence Memorial Hospital prepared a twenty-page 40th Anniversary supplement to the *El Paso Times* on October 25, 1992, entitled “40 Years Forward.” The insert included a comparison between health care in 1952 and 1992, noting the advances made by Providence in cancer treatment, cardiovascular care, and services for women and children. Testimonials from doctors, nurses, and patients hailed the work of the hospital in serving the needs of El Paso and surrounding communities.

In January 1994, the Providence Board approved the purchase of a 74-acre parcel in East El Paso and made plans to develop an ambulatory care center to serve the growing East Side. But later that year, the Board encountered a number of challenges that threatened the hospital’s long-term viability, even though the hospital was currently financially stable: increased hospital industry consolidation, uncertainty about health-care reform, and the improbability of access to long-term capital to expand and remain competitive. In addition, the hospital faced competition from Columbia East and Columbia West, and Sierra Hospital, local for-profit hospitals owned by Columbia Healthcare and Tenet Healthcare respectively.

At its meeting in June 1994, the Board decided to seek guidance from financial consultants to analyze Providence’s position, and it retained Chemical Securities, Inc. (CSI) to do so in



Headlines announcing the sale, May 18, 1995.

November 1994. Dr. Young appointed a Planning Group from the Board to interact with CSI staff to discuss and evaluate strategic alternatives. This group of nine Board members, tasked with maintaining confidentiality, met with CSI staff in the first half of 1995 to consider eight strategic alternatives, and agreed upon a sale strategy, where proceeds from the sale would create a new charitable trust to support the El Paso community. CSI prepared a marketing document and received indications of interest from several potential buyers who subsequently submitted bids. In early May, the Planning Group met to review the final bids and selected Tenet Healthcare Corporation's offer to acquire Providence Memorial Hospital.

On May 17, 1995, the Planning Group made its recommendations to the full Board. Planning Group member Bob Hoy stated that the recommendations were the result of many hours of careful, thoughtful and agonizing deliberations. "This will be the most important decision this Board will make and one that will allow the assets of the hospital to be put to the best use for the community," he stressed. Hoy explained that the sale had to be pursued by a smaller group to avoid information leaks that might possibly decrease the value of an offer. After much discussion, the Board approved a resolution to continue discussions with Tenet and that afternoon held a press conference to announce the negotiations with Tenet and the establishment of a charitable trust for the community. At a called meeting on May 26, the Board approved the sale of the hospital to Tenet for \$130 million.

On May 28, an editorial in the *El Paso Times* spoke to the emotional relationship El Pasoans had for Providence. "No one could have welcomed the news. The impending sale of Providence Memorial Hospital, an El Paso institution, is a loss, plain and simple. Born

of community funds, the hospital's contributors wrote their checks banking on perpetuity. But little is permanent, especially in a world in which health care is changing and the nation remains unable to confront real reforms. Sierra and Tenet won't just be acquiring one of the city's busiest hospitals and probably the most beloved. They will get a viable, progressive institution, a sacred trust."

During the summer of 1995, while the sale underwent due diligence and anti-trust review, the Board set up a Charitable Trust Committee of thirteen members to develop the structure and mission of the new organization so that it could be operational by the final date of the sale of the hospital. The committee, under the leadership of Woody Hunt, chairman, and Ed Archuleta, vice-chairman, met with consultants, investment managers and members of the community to get input on the purpose and goals of the grant-making organization to help improve the health of people in the El Paso region.

At its final meeting on September 27, 1995, the Board of Trustees approved the committee's recommendation to form a foundation. It would be named the Paso del Norte Health Foundation, and its mission would be "to effect long-term improvements in the health status of the population of the greater El Paso region through education and prevention." When the Tenet Healthcare Corporation took over the operations of Providence Memorial Hospital at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday, October 1, 1995, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation came into being with \$130 million in assets.

*“We’re looking 10, 15, 25 years out to really make a positive change for the better of the public’s health.”*

–LAURANCE N. NICKEY, M.D., FIRST PDNHF PRESIDENT AND CEO

## **PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH FOUNDATION**

**A**t its first meeting, on October 25, 1995, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation’s Board of Directors began its work to govern the new organization, the largest of its kind along the U.S./Mexico border. To maintain continuity, members of the final Board of Trustees of Providence Memorial Hospital became members of the Board of Directors of the Health Foundation. Led by chairman Bob Hoy, Board members began preliminary discussions on the Foundation’s mission, Board governance, grant guidelines, grant initiatives based on community needs, and procedures for community input. The Board hired Laurance N. Nickey, M.D., to serve as president and CEO, and Ann Pauli, former vice president and chief financial officer of Providence Memorial Hospital, to serve as executive vice president and chief operating officer.

In its first year of operation, the Foundation worked to identify the health needs of a region that included El Paso, Cd. Juárez, and southern New Mexico. It commissioned a Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey with the help of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Texas Department of Health to identify behavioral factors, such as physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use, and the prevalence of chronic diseases that adversely affect health in the community. Foundation leaders and staff visited the Kansas Health Foundation and the Colorado Trust to learn of these health foundations’ procedures, successes and failures, and their focus on prevention and health education. Foundation staff met with community representatives and potential community partners to get input on identifying practical solutions to regional health problems. Most important, the Board

created an Ad Hoc Committee for Strategic Plan Development to prepare a three-year plan for the Foundation to implement.

The Ad Hoc Committee, led by Adair Margo, presented a Strategic Plan to the Foundation Board, now led by Woody Hunt, for consideration in September 1996. The plan established health promotion as the Foundation's focus, and called for the development and implementation of a proactive grant-making program with focused direction through grant proposals solicited by the Foundation. Major goals in the plan included: investing and administering Foundation funds to provide for the growth of corpus, annual budgets, and operation of the Foundation; seeking partnerships and leveraging the Foundation's resources; informing the community about the Foundation's current status and its plans for the future; and ensuring that the Foundation meets the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan.

The mission and vision statements of the Strategic Plan provided a sense of how the Foundation would conduct its work:

- The mission of the Paso del Norte Health Foundation is to effect long-term improvements in the health status of the population in the Paso del Norte region through education and prevention.
- We envision a greater El Paso region where all people have the knowledge, resources and environment they need to live healthy lives; where health problems are prevented, and there is access to primary care; where people on both sides of the border live in clean safe environments with fresh air, potable water, and the proper disposal of waste.

The Foundation Board approved the Strategic Plan on September 18, and soon prepared an executive summary to share with the public. In a lengthy article in the *El Paso Herald-Post* on November 16, 1996, Vic Kolenc detailed reactions to the plan. "The board's decision to focus on 'promotion of good health'—largely by providing grants for disease-prevention and health-education programs aimed mostly at low-income residents of El Paso, Juárez and southern

New Mexico—gets cheers and jeers from El Paso leaders.” Pete Duarte, chief executive officer of the county-operated Thomason Hospital believed that a health-promotion strategy would have a productive outcome in the long-term, but he was concerned about pressing needs. “I’m not sure how we can mortgage immediate needs for a future down the road.” The Strategic Plan made it clear that the Foundation would not provide money for direct, public medical care and Dr. Nickey reinforced that. “Direct patient care would dry up the Foundation’s resources inordinately quickly. The Board isn’t looking for something immediate. We’d love things to be positive in one to two years. But it’s difficult to change (people’s health-related behaviors). We’re looking 10, 15, 25 years out to really make a positive change for the better of the public’s health.”

In November 1996, Dr. Nickey resigned as president and CEO of the Foundation and the Board named Ann Pauli as president. During her decade of leadership from 1996 to 2007, Ann Pauli, along with Foundation staff, oversaw the development of the Foundation’s first initiatives and programs, in response to the results of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, community input, and the Foundation’s mission. Grantmaking focused on nutrition, physical activity, tobacco control, teen pregnancy prevention, and healthy water. Three initiatives developed during this period deserve special mention, as they are examples of the positive outcomes that the founding board envisioned.

## **FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

PASO DEL NORTE  
HEALTH FOUNDATION,  
OCTOBER 1995

Robert H. Hoy, Jr., *Chairman*

Jesse Alvarez

Ed Archuleta

Hughes Butterworth

Victor Diaz, M.D.

George DiDonna, M.D.

Dionicio (Don) Flores

A.E. Hatch

Jacob Heydemann, M.D.

W.L. (Woody) Hunt

Steve Lauterbach

Scott McLean

Olga (Cookie) Mapula

Adair Margo

Joseph L. Motes, M.D.

Travis Petty

Robert Skov

Margarita (Margie) Velez

Jack Vowell

W. Burney Warren



**WALK EL PASO** was launched in 1998 to inspire and mobilize the El Paso population to begin a simple walking program. Through the development of educational materials, walking groups, events, and a media campaign that utilized the “Walk El Paso walk, 20 minutes a day, three times a week” jingle as the principal message, the program worked to increase physical activity.

It is estimated that more than 100,000 people participated in walking groups or events over a five-year period. Individuals who ordered a Walk El Paso walking kit were surveyed in 1999, and the survey report concluded that, on average, participants in Walk El Paso were walking at a moderate pace for 40 minutes a day, four times a week, exceeding the program’s goal of 20 minutes per day, three times a week. Three of every four respondents reported that the Walk El Paso campaign helped them to start or continue a regular walking program. The success of Walk El Paso led to the funding of Walk Doña Ana, Walk Otero and later Camina Juárez.

**CHILD AND ADOLESCENT TRIAL FOR CARDIO-VASCULAR HEALTH (CATCH)** was a school-based program that coordinated the efforts of classroom health instruction, physical education, the school cafeteria, and the family to develop healthy eating habits and attitudes in school-aged children. Through eight years of funding, the program curriculum





was implemented in more than 100 elementary schools reaching approximately 73,000 students.

Evaluation of the program found that there was an increase in the time spent in physical activity over one year, jumping from 30% to 52% for students in the CATCH program. Rates of aerobic fitness also increased for El Paso girls from 53% to 65%. Although these rates did not hit the national goal of 70%, progress was made. After eight years of implementation, the program contributed to a reduction in obesity in fourth and fifth grade students in El Paso County.

**A SMOKE FREE PASO DEL NORTE** was created in 1998 after input from several community groups on the best model for this major initiative with the goal of reducing the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. After seventeen years, Smoke Free continues to reduce tobacco use among youth, pregnant women, people with small children, and those who have limited financial resources. Over the years, partners of this initiative, including the Smoke Free Paso del Norte Coalition Network, took an aggressive approach to policy change by supporting the passage of El Paso's Clean Air Ordinance in 2001, which prohibited indoor smoking, including smoking in restaurants and bars. At the time, this ordinance was one of the first in Texas and one of the most comprehensive in



the nation to protect the public and employees from secondhand smoke. Socorro, Texas, passed a similar ordinance in 2006.

Since then, the Foundation's Smoke Free partners have implemented school-based prevention interventions, a regional quit line, research-based media campaigns, and an internet-based cessation service. Recent successes include the implementation of a tobacco-free policy at The University of Texas at El Paso in 2014 and the implementation of a smoke-free policy in all properties in the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso. A Smoke Free Paso del Norte is associated with the reduction in adult smoking from 21.5% of the population in 1996 to 11.6% in 2013. This level of reduction is significantly greater than the decrease in smoking in San Antonio and Austin during the same time period. Beyond the reduction in smoking, the incidence of lung cancer deaths also declined from 30.4 deaths per 100,000 in El Paso County (2004-2008) to 26.2 deaths per 100,000 (2007-2011).

The Foundation celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2005 and took the opportunity to reflect back on a decade of grantmaking. In its 2005 Annual Report, the Foundation acknowledged its partners and grantees. "The achievements in improving health and quality of life have come through unified focus and the dedication of hundreds of partnering regional non-profit organizations and institutions. Without their vision and

leadership, the health improvement successes that have been developed would never have been achieved.” While the Foundation’s initial focus was on changes in behavior, it realized that other health issues in the area—lack of water and wastewater hookups, pesticides in the home, and capacity building—needed attention. As a consequence, the Foundation modified its priority areas to include: encouraging physical activity and balanced nutrition; reducing risky behavior; promoting clean and safe environments; and building capacity of community-based organizations.

When Ann Pauli retired in 2007, the Board asked Myrna Deckert, former CEO of the YWCA Paso del Norte Region and COO/President of The Paso Del Norte Group, to serve as interim president and CEO. Among her first tasks in the fall of 2007 was the development of a new strategic plan for the Foundation. Deckert wrote of the Strategic Framework 2008, “It will push us to convene, lead, fund, provide research and improve the health of residents in the region... most particularly children and youth.” Deckert was named president and CEO in 2008.

The mission and fundamental premise of the Strategic Framework 2008 underscored a more robust role for the Foundation moving forward, holding itself accountable as a leader to improve the health of the region.

- The Paso del Norte Foundation promotes health and prevents disease in the region through leadership in health education, research, and advocacy.
- We are guided by a fundamental premise: All people deserve good health; the Foundation’s role is to lead, fund, promote, and leverage opportunities to ensure that all people in the Paso del Norte Region achieve good health.

In 2009, the Foundation quickly put the components of its strategic framework into action. That year, the Foundation funded programs focusing on: Physical Activity and Balanced Nutrition; Tobacco Control; Access to Health Care; and Healthy Family and Social Environments. The Foundation partnered with media outlets to promote health and prevent disease and Foundation staff and Board members made presentations to local,



regional, and national groups, clubs, and organizations. The Foundation was successful at leveraging with partners through key relationships. It partnered with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the City of El Paso to obtain an obesity grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for the El Paso Chamizal community. In addition, the Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak enabled the Foundation to take a proactive approach in communication, collaboration, and coordination of prevention interventions by partnering with the City of El Paso Public Health Department.

In 2011, the Foundation Board of Directors refined the organization's priority areas to include: Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL), Alcohol Prevention and Tobacco Control, Mental and Emotional Well-being, Healthy Relationships, and Health Leadership. The Foundation's emphasis on health leadership included two facets: developing health leaders in the region and asserting its own role as a health leader. Several initiatives emerged from these priorities:

**REALIZE** is an innovative leadership development program that fosters a network of transformational leaders who are committed to improving health for the benefit of future generations. From mid-sized health and human service agencies to large governmental entities to school districts and private clinical businesses, leaders are the key to improving



policy, providing services, and promoting wellness. Since its inception in 2011, fifty-nine leaders of organizations engaged in promoting health and social services within the region have participated in this program. In 2015, the Foundation launched a new REALIZE component. REALIZE Board is a comprehensive training program to prepare current and future board members to provide effective leadership to all non-profit organizations.

**HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING (HEAL)** is a coalition of individuals and partner organizations who have an interest in improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and addressing needs within the built environment to improve health in the Paso del Norte region. The Foundation's Institute for Healthy Living is a partnership between the Foundation, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso, The University of Texas at El Paso, and the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston that provides technical assistance and coordinates HEAL coalition activities.

In 2011, the Foundation and six other community partners formed the **PASO DEL NORTE HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE (HIE)**, a non-profit agency that will improve the exchange of clinical data between medical providers. HIE members include hospitals, physicians, health providers, and outpatient clinics. Once fully operational, HIE partners will be able to securely share privacy-protected health information about patients and share best practices for the improvement of care. The increased availability of relevant health information through the HIE eliminates redundant or unnecessary testing, improves public health reporting and monitoring, leading to a reduction in health-related costs. In 2015, the Paso

del Norte Health Information Exchange finalized its first master service agreement with The Hospitals of Providence, initiating the process of connecting all local medical providers to the data exchange.

In its twenty years of existence, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation has invested more than \$141 million in the pursuit of its mission, exceeding the \$130 that the Foundation initially received from the Providence Memorial sale. This investment includes grants to over 300 organizations across the Paso del Norte region. Many of the Foundation's senior staff have worked at the Foundation for over fifteen years and have participated in the transformation of the Foundation's mission and its expanded leadership role in the community. With assets exceeding \$220 million (as of July 2015), the Foundation is positioned to maintain its mission in perpetuity.

To help advance its mission and ensure the permanent sustainability of its work, in 2013 the Foundation established a new public charity called the Paso del Norte Foundation. Its mission is to increase the resources available to improve well-being in the Paso del Norte region. In 2014, the Paso del Norte Foundation launched the Challenge Fund to leverage and inspire charitable giving in partnership with non-profit organizations in the region. The Foundation established a variety of mechanisms for individuals and agencies to establish advised funds for increased charitable giving. Ultimately, the new Foundation will work to build and further leverage the Health Foundation's assets and grantmaking to improve health and quality of life in the region.

In 2015, the Foundation's board made the decision to incorporate the Fundación Paso del Norte para la Salud y Bienestar in Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua. The mission of the Fundación Paso del Norte is to improve health, education, economic opportunity and quality of life for the individuals, children and families of Cd. Juárez. With its own board and staff, the new *asociación civil* will work with key leaders in Cd. Juárez to expand services and financial resources available to further this mission.

The future of the Paso del Norte Health Foundation and its sister foundations is bright, due to the leadership of the boards of directors who have guided its development to become a leading health foundation. With continued focus on the Foundation's values—collaboration, dignity and respect, diversity, evidence, integrity and leadership—future impact is assured. Myrna Deckert, current CEO, envisions the direction and results of the next twenty years of the Foundation's work:

- The Health Foundation's corpus will grow to one-half billion dollars due to the efforts of the Paso del Norte Foundation.
- The new foundation in Cd. Juárez will work with the Health Foundation to develop and fund programs primarily for children and youth in Cd. Juárez.
- The Health Foundation will be involved in advocacy and bold leadership that will change systems to make health care more affordable and accessible.
- Individuals in this region will lead the nation in healthy lifestyles, particularly in healthy eating and active living.
- There will be a linear trail that goes from the west county line to the east county line—with leadership, construction, and partial funding from the Foundation.
- The Health Information Exchange will be the most successful exchange in Texas, saving millions of dollars to patients, caregivers and payers.
- New initiatives will improve health for low income children and youth.
- The Health Foundation and its sister organizations will will promote and implement economic development activities that benefit the health of people residing in the region—such as better housing, employment, and educational opportunities.

*“A just return to the community that has given us  
our livelihood will be an investment in its health  
and that of generations to come.”*

Since 1902, El Paso has witnessed a tradition of health leadership to respond to the needs of the region. Providence Hospital, a private hospital established and led by the M.P. Schuster family, evolved into Providence Memorial Hospital, a community hospital led by civic leaders. After forty-three years of service to the region, Providence Memorial Hospital was sold to Tenet Healthcare Corporation and the sale proceeds were used to create the Paso del Norte Health Foundation.

Providence Memorial Hospital and Sierra Medical Center, part of The Hospitals of Providence, continue to provide El Paso with a broad spectrum of modern health care programs and services in general medicine, surgery, pediatrics, and obstetrics. The Hospitals of Providence East Campus and The Hospitals of Providence Transmountain Campus, a new 108-bed, full service hospital being built on the West Side will serve growing markets on El Paso’s periphery.

The Paso del Norte Health Foundation, together with its sister foundations, the Paso del Norte Foundation and the Fundación Paso del Norte para la Salud y Bienestar, will continue to provide and promote health leadership for the next twenty years and beyond. Leadership, collaboration, and transparency are values that will guide their work.

These organizations are indeed “a just return to the community,” the product of “investments in its health and that of generations to come” that Sam Young spoke about in 1947.