

# FUELING THE CAREERS OF FUTURE TECHNICIANS

The Piston Foundation Mission Book







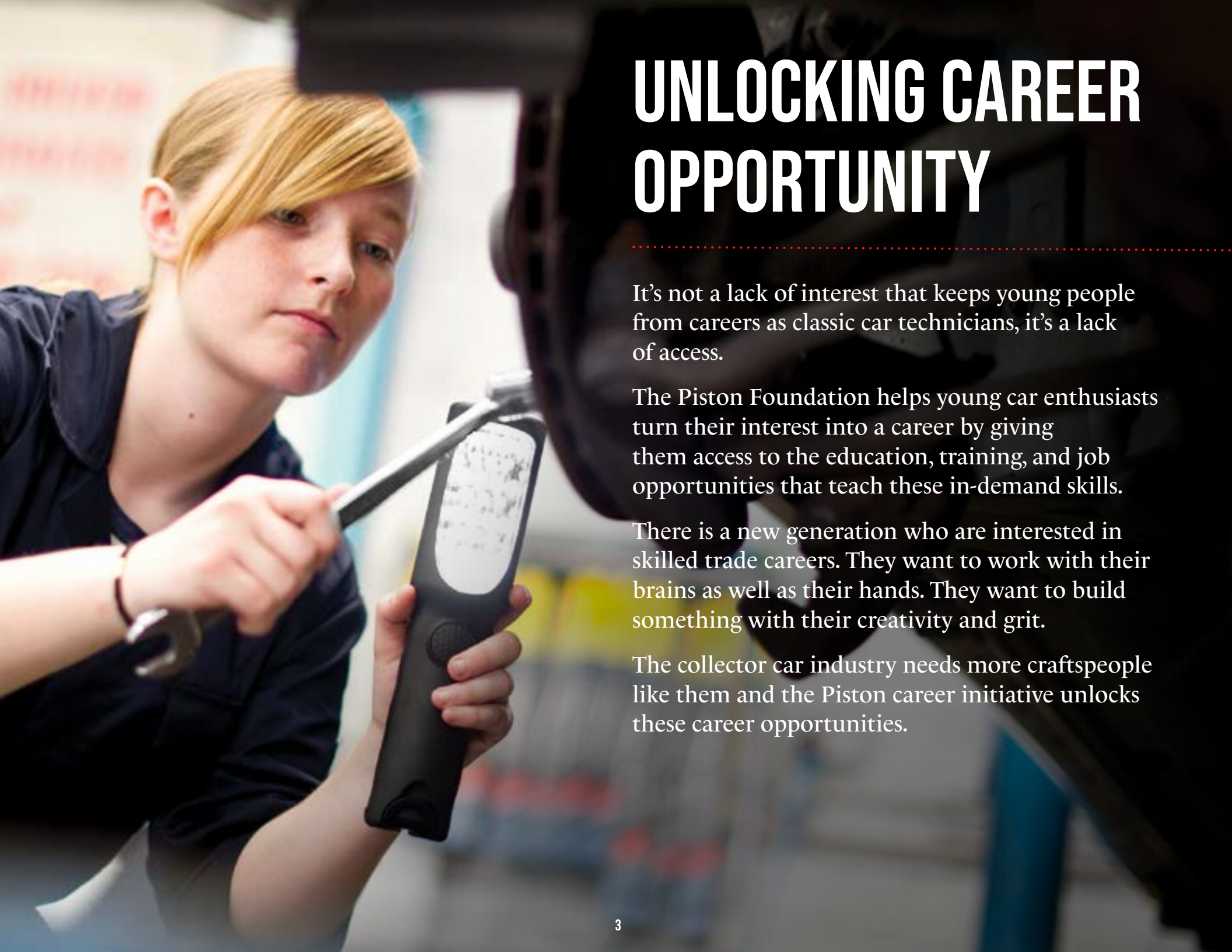
# THE PISTON FOUNDATION MISSION

As car enthusiasts, we asked ourselves, “Who will replace the skilled automotive craftspeople retiring today and tomorrow?” The answer was, “No one knows.”

So, we created a 501(c)(3) public charity to recruit, train, and support the next generation of craftspeople and unlock these career opportunities for everyone.

Piston helps young people jumpstart a career as a collector car technician. We award tech-school scholarships, connect aspiring technicians with jobs, and champion skilled trade careers in automotive restoration.

Piston is nurturing the passion and talent of the next generation, working to ensure car-craft skills are passed on, and helping to create a diverse workforce with opportunity for everyone.



# UNLOCKING CAREER OPPORTUNITY

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It's not a lack of interest that keeps young people from careers as classic car technicians, it's a lack of access.

The Piston Foundation helps young car enthusiasts turn their interest into a career by giving them access to the education, training, and job opportunities that teach these in-demand skills.

There is a new generation who are interested in skilled trade careers. They want to work with their brains as well as their hands. They want to build something with their creativity and grit.

The collector car industry needs more craftspeople like them and the Piston career initiative unlocks these career opportunities.



# THE NUMBERS

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Retiring craftspeople  
are leaving a skills gap

**52%**  
of automotive technicians are  
over the age of 40<sup>1</sup>

**By 2030**  
Baby Boomers will be out  
of the workforce<sup>2</sup>

**95%**  
of auto tech demand is for  
replacement positions<sup>3</sup>

**2 to 1**  
2 techs are needed  
for every auto  
program graduate<sup>3</sup>

Young people are looking  
for better career  
opportunities

**53%**  
of teens are open to something  
other than four-year college<sup>4</sup>

**74%**  
of teens think a career-based  
education makes  
sense today<sup>4</sup>

**38%**  
more active apprentices now  
than the previous 10-years<sup>8</sup>

Tuition costs and student  
debt are big hurdles

**\$36,700**  
average yearly cost of a four-  
year private non-profit school<sup>5</sup>

**\$18,600**  
average yearly cost of a two-  
year private non-profit school<sup>5</sup>

**\$28,950**  
average student loan debt  
of private non-profit school  
graduates<sup>6</sup>

**\$1.75 trillion**  
total amount of U.S.  
student loan debt<sup>7</sup>

# THE WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

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In the U.S. today, there is a need for skilled trade workforce development organizations like Piston. Across all trades, retirements are driving an acute need for new skilled workers and threatening the loss of craft skills. Car community investment in skilled trade education has to increase to solve the shortage of workers.

**406,000 new auto techs will be needed by 2027 to replace retiring workers. Only 60,000 will come from industry growth.**

**Graduates from auto-tech programs will need to increase 250% to meet the demand.**

**Only \$4 million of the \$100 billion U.S. automotive market is given to support skilled trade education each year.**

# OUR SOLUTION

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Launched in January 2021, the Piston Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity that helps young car enthusiasts turn their interest into a career.

Piston provides tech-school scholarships, connects aspiring technicians with jobs, and champions skilled trade careers in automotive restoration.

Piston offers every car enthusiast a way to support youth education, job opportunities, and help build a sustainable future the car community.

## Who does the Piston Foundation serve?



**Students seeking to learn a skilled-trade as an alternative to the college-at-all-costs approach and a path to rewarding careers.**



**Working auto technicians seeking experience and a career path in automotive craft, restoration specialties, and service.**



**Restoration shops and auto industry businesses who need skilled technicians and specialists ready to learn the craft and trade.**



**Car enthusiasts who want to continue to enjoy their hobby, share their passion, and keep their beloved cars on the road.**



# OUR HISTORY



The Piston Foundation was founded in Greenwich, Connecticut in January 2021 by Robert P. Minnick, a life-long car enthusiast and entrepreneur with a heartfelt mission to give back to the car community.

The Foundation's staff, board of directors, advisors, and volunteers are passionate car enthusiasts who share Robert's vision and are committed to supporting education and job opportunities for aspiring technicians. The car community embraced the Piston mission and their generous support has allowed the Foundation to quickly make an impact.

Piston awarded its first tech-school scholarships in 2022 and makes yearly awards to students who are pursuing careers as collector car technicians. Piston has provided 53 scholarships to students at colleges and trade-schools across the country. So far, ten Piston participants have graduated from their auto-tech programs and are now working in the industry.

Piston is a careful steward of donor gifts. Its staff and board maintain focus on operational efficiency and community impact. As a reflection of this, Piston has earned a Platinum rating from Candid/Guidestar.

As a public charity, our stakeholder is the car community we serve. We will continue to build partnerships with schools, shops, and industry organizations to create career opportunities for young people and shift the collector car workforce from graying into growing.

# OUR PROGRAMS

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## Piston Scholarships

Tuition assistance for students pursuing a career in classic cars.

- ❑ Auto-tech education
- ❑ Collector car focus
- ❑ Accredited 2- and 4-year schools
- ❑ Job networking assistance
- ❑ Certificate of achievement



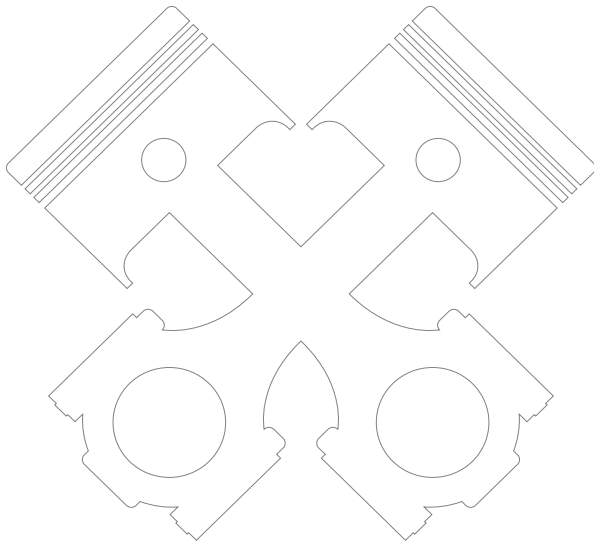
## Piston Jobs\*

Job networking assistance for Piston Scholarship recipients.

- ❑ A job board for the industry
- ❑ Job listings for new technicians
- ❑ Internships, apprenticeships, and training opportunities

*\*This program is currently being developed.*





# THE NEED

Students enrolled in automotive schools can face daunting education costs. Aspiring classic car technicians without experience struggle to get hired.

Piston scholarship and jobs programs remove barriers and provide guidance to make classic car careers accessible for young car enthusiasts.

## What do students need to make auto-tech education accessible?



**Scholarships up to \$5,000 create accessibility.** In our research, we found that scholarships near \$5,000 are the right amount to ensure students can complete their technical education program and be ready to move into the workforce.

**Guidance and Networking** Students need real career guidance and a chance to network with their peers. Piston has created a forum to help our Piston Scholars network with each other as colleagues, gain valuable industry connections, and attend exclusive events with leading restoration professionals who share their experience and advice.

## What do aspiring technicians need to make jobs accessible?



**An industry job board for new talent.** It is difficult for aspiring technicians to find job opportunities. Generalist recruiting sites don't list these skilled trade jobs. Many give up and find work in other industries. Piston Jobs will connect Piston Scholars with employers looking for new talent so they can begin their careers.

**Professional networking with shops** It is difficult for collector car shops to find skilled workers to hire. Piston Jobs will be a pipeline of new talent for the industry that connects employers with students they can nurture and train through internship and apprenticeship opportunities that lead to full time employment.

# OUR IMPACT SO FAR

## Piston Scholars

In Fall 2022 Piston began awarding scholarships to students in accredited auto-tech programs.

- ❑ 53 scholarships awarded
- ❑ Students from 20 states
- ❑ Classic car focus
- ❑ Technician career path

## Auto-Tech Schools

Piston has supported students at these leading auto-tech programs.

- ❑ Indian River State College
- ❑ Lanier Technical College
- ❑ McPherson College
- ❑ North Palm Beach State College
- ❑ Pennsylvania College of Technology
- ❑ University of Northwestern Ohio
- ❑ Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- ❑ WyoTech

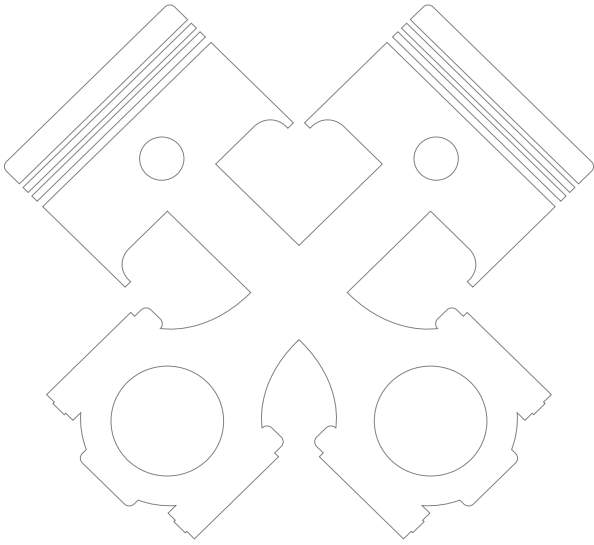


## New Technician Pipeline

Each year more Piston Scholars complete their auto-tech programs and start careers in the industry.

- ❑ 10 Piston Scholars now working in the industry





# WAYS TO GIVE

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There are several ways to support our mission. Every gift helps another aspiring technician get the education and training they need to start a career in classic car restoration.

You may choose to make a gift of general support or give a restricted gift to our scholarship and jobs program.

A tax deductible donation to The Piston Foundation is the way all of us who share a passion for cars support the future of our car community.

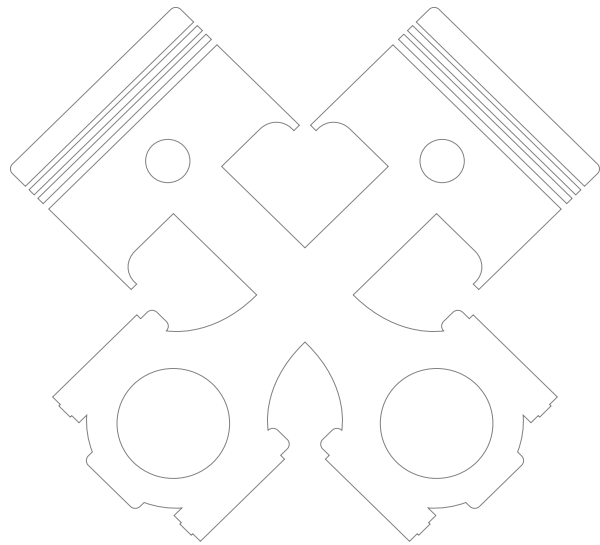
**Individual Giving**

**Sponsor a Scholarship**

**Cars for Piston Scholars**

# WAYS TO GIVE

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## Individual Giving General Operating Support

Give to what you love by making a gift of general operating support that helps the next generation access the education and training they need to begin a career as a classic car technician.

Gifts of any size are appreciated and will be used to meet the greatest organizational need.

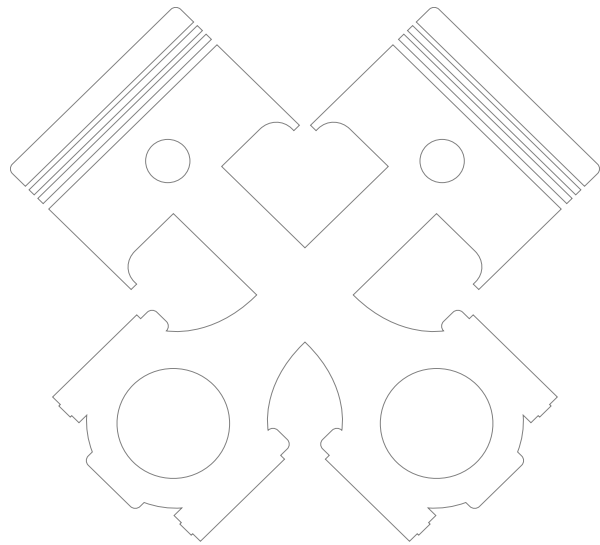
Together, we can make a difference.





# WAYS TO GIVE

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## Sponsor a Piston Scholar

Give \$5,000 to our scholarship and jobs program

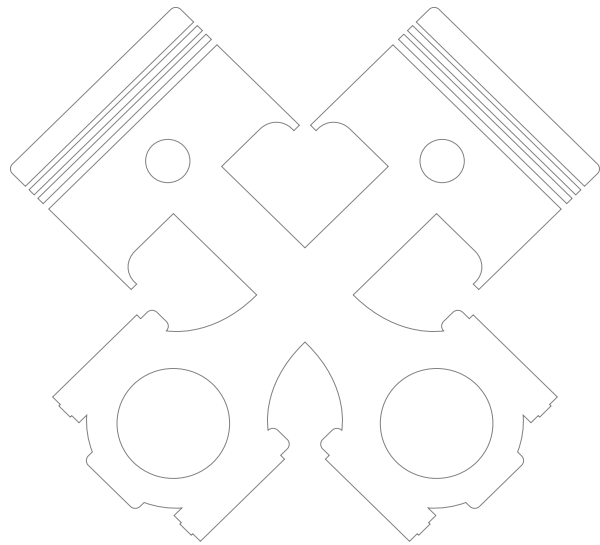
As an individual, a private foundation, or a business, you can give back to the car community by making a gift that provides a tech-school scholarship and job networking to a future classic car technician.

Help a car enthusiast student get the education they need to pursue a rewarding career in auto restoration. Your gift can make a career and change a life.



# WAYS TO GIVE

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## Cars for Piston Scholars

**Donate a collector car to support education and training for aspiring technicians.**

We maximize the potential of your car by selling it through our charity auction partners. As a gift to a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your car donation may be tax deductible.

By donating your collector car to the Piston Foundation, you can create a lasting impact in the car community.





# WAYS TO GIVE

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## Past Cars for Piston Scholars Charity Auctions



1960 Willys Wagon – \$31,500 donated



1973 Datsun 240Z "Gimlet Z" – \$135,713 donated



67 MGB GT – \$54,670 donated

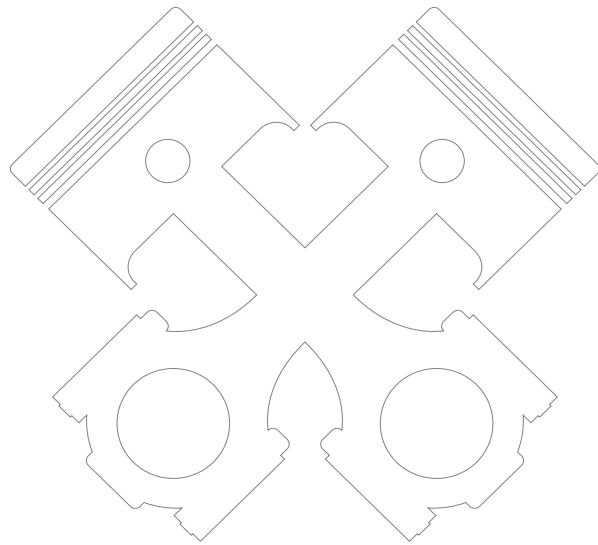


1999 Mazda Miata Bonneville Racer – \$26,250 donated

# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP



We are proud to have received a Platinum Transparency seal from Candid.



Annual reports and IRS 990 filings can be found on our website.

[www.pistonfoundation.org/financials/](http://www.pistonfoundation.org/financials/)

## Unlocking Job Opportunity

The Piston Foundation is building a workforce development program that directly supports education, hands-on training, and job acquisition. Our goal is to unlock job opportunities for future automotive technicians by building a career path into the skilled trades of the collector car industry and shift the workforce from graying into growing.

## Using Best Practices

To achieve our goal we are working to build a business which is both efficient and sustainable. As a non-profit and a public charity, we understand and embrace our responsibility to steward the gifts of our donors for the greatest possible impact.

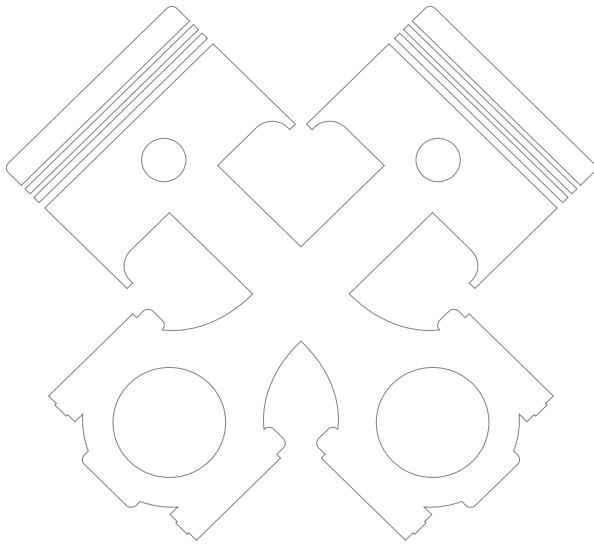
We strive to operate within best practices for accountability, finance, measurement, and impact for non-profit businesses at our early stage of growth.

## Donors Lead Growth and Impact

Donors may choose to make a gift of general support to be used for the greatest organizational need, or they may give a restricted gift to our scholarship and jobs program to be used for scholarship awards and program operations. Gifts may also be divided between these two options to support both the growth of the Piston organization and its program's impact.

# PISTON PEOPLE

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## **Board of Directors**

Robert P. Minnick  
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Jerry Charlup  
*Treasurer*

Jeff Mason  
*Secretary*

Mayo T. Smith  
*Director*

Clifton Fink  
*Director*

Alexander Greene  
*Director*

Matt Peckham  
*Director*

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Jerry Charlup  
*CFO*

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Mayo T. Smith  
*Donor Relations*

Karl Maruyama  
*Creative Director*

Judy Stropus  
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Chuck Queener

Harvey Siegel

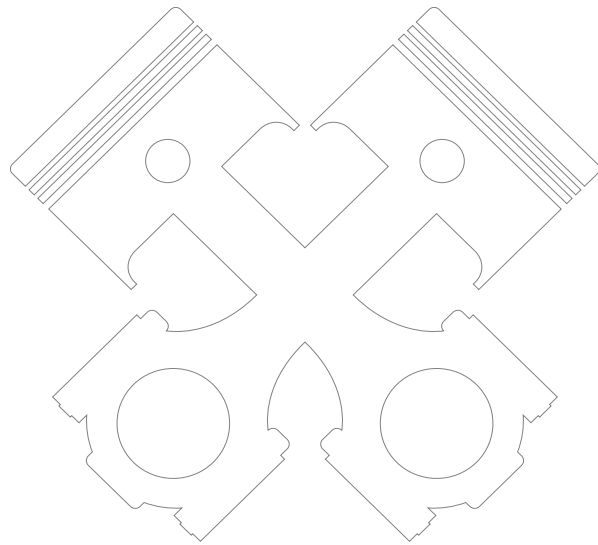
Murray Smith

Roger Werner



# FOUNDERS & MAJOR DONORS

Our donors are car enthusiasts who want to make a positive impact in the car community they love by supporting Piston with their expertise, time, and resources. They help connect us with the industry, guide our executive board, and shape our mission.



Harvey Siegel  
Pen Pendleton  
David Porter  
Adam Pitale  
Ellison Foundation  
Monette Robinson Foundation  
Larry Auriana  
Peter G. Sachs  
Brett Hershey  
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Mayo T. Smith  
Todd Morici  
Ann Smith Finn  
Peter Greenfield  
Chris Mason  
Robert P. Minnick  
Randy Nonnenberg

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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Our partners are industry leaders who are helping Piston create a career path for future technicians and supporting the car enthusiast community. We thank them for their generous support.

Visit our website to learn how your organization can become a Piston Community Partner.





# JOIN US

Rarely is there such a clear and focused path to ensuring the future of a cultural touchstone. Our mission is simple and our vision is bold: To get more young people involved in the classic car industry. *Because no one gets to the finish line alone.* Join us.



# CONTACT

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We would love to hear from you!



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[info@pistonfoundation.org](mailto:info@pistonfoundation.org)

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475.619.395

The Piston Foundation is a registered  
501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

EIN 85-4373512



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