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a catalyst
for ending homelessness

July 7, 2010

Join Us on September 23rd!



Please join us on September 23rd for **Building Changes 2010 Luncheon: Honoring Our Partners**. We will be honoring three of our key partners in ending homelessness:

- **Stephen Norman**, Executive Director of the King County Housing Authority and Co-Chair of the Interagency Council for the Committee to End Homelessness in King County
- **Housing Hope**, Building Changes Grantee in Snohomish County
- **Pat McCarthy**, Pierce County Executive and Washington Families Fund Leadership Committee Member

Ron Sims, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, will be our special guest.

[Learn more and register online >>](#)

Volunteers Needed



Interested in getting involved? Volunteer at Building Changes' fundraising luncheon on September 23rd! We need volunteers to greet guests, help with set up and take down, and

generally keep things running smoothly. Help out for a couple of hours, or the day. Interested? Contact [Christena Coutsoubos](#), (206) 805-6119, to learn more.

Building Changes Welcomes New Director of Development



Building Changes is pleased to welcome Christena Coutsoubos as our new Director of Development. Christena brings ten years of experience leading fundraising efforts for nonprofit human services and education organizations.

As a long-time crisis hotline volunteer, she regularly speaks with individuals who lack the housing, education, and support they need to thrive. Working for Building Changes gives her another opportunity to help. "It's wonderful to be part of an organization that's committed to creating solutions," she said.

Christena also brings a passion for connecting individuals with important work for social change. "One of the things I love about fundraising is being out in the community talking with people who don't have to do anything at all, but who choose to step up and support this work," she said. "To be around people who want to help is truly inspiring. It just makes you feel better about the world."

To contact Christena, e-mail her at

Christena@BuildingChanges.org, or phone 206.805.6119.

Family Helped by Washington Families Fund Highlighted at White House

On June 22nd, the White House announced its first-ever federal plan to end homelessness and highlighted a local family, who has been helped by the Washington Families Fund and Building Changes' partner grantee, Hopelink. Natalie from Issaquah, WA, was flown to D.C. with her two young sons to meet with key Cabinet members and representatives from our delegation, including Senator Patty Murray.

Home Is Where We Start From



Home Is Where We Grow: Our Families, Our Communities, Our Futures.

Help us grow the future by ending homelessness today! Your contribution will support smart solutions that help us reach more families in need.

Thanks to a generous challenge grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, your gift to Building Changes will be matched — **dollar for dollar!**

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Natalie and her sons pictured with HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan (far left) and Barbara Poppe, Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (far right). Photo credit: David Valdez, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Natalie, a former member of the Navy, and her sons were homeless three years ago. [Hopelink](#), one of the model programs supported by grants from Building Changes, provided Natalie and her sons with affordable housing and support services, including employment training. Today she has a good full-time job, is paying off debt, and plans to complete her college education.

“Natalie’s story is a perfect example of the need for us to move forward with a comprehensive strategic plan to end homelessness in America,” said Senator Patty Murray. “I am proud to support the Washington Families Fund, Building Changes, and Hopelink, and I am committed to continuing to work with them and so many others to make sure that no family finds itself living on the streets in Washington state or anywhere else.”

Training Kicks Off Building Changes' Economic Opportunities Initiative

Building Changes recently held the first quarterly training for nonprofits participating in our Economic Opportunities Initiative, a new program that seeks to strengthen agency capacity in the areas of employment services and access to public benefits.

On June 3rd, staff from [25 agencies in 19 counties across the state](#) gathered at Green River Community College in Kent to learn more about program objectives and to begin developing their agency work plans. These work plans will inform the ongoing training and technical and financial assistance that Building Changes provides to participants throughout the rest of the year as part of the Initiative.



Annette Rodriguez and Shelly Gilmour of Yakima Neighborhood

Health at Building Changes' Economic Opportunities Initiative training

Leadership Committee Provides Input into Evaluation of Homeless Service System

The Washington Families Fund Leadership Committee, which includes key representatives from Washington State agencies, the Governor's Office, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties, and private funders, met for the second time in April. The Committee provided input into a new evaluation supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This multi-year evaluation will assess the effectiveness of efforts to reduce family homelessness in the three counties through systems-level change.

Staff Participate in Annual State Conference on Ending Homelessness

Building Changes played an active role in the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless (WSCH) 20th Annual Conference, which took place in May in Spokane. Several staff co-presented on a variety of topics, including: accessing employment resources, vocational assessment and career pathway planning, collaborating with public housing authorities, values-based communications, and county-level systems change.



Building Changes staff, Mark Putnam and Nick Codd, at the Annual Conference on Ending Homelessness

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Building Changes
Building Changes, 2014 East Madison, Suite
200, Seattle, WA 98122-2965
(206) 805-6100 | info@buildingchanges.org