



a *catalyst*  
for ending homelessness

December 2008

## Dear Friends,

I am delighted to be able to connect with you before the year closes. 2008 was filled with intense emotion—real highs and lows. It forced all of us to think about the world in a different way. Last month while in Spokane, I visited the Salvation Army and Spokane Neighborhood Action Programs (SNAP). [Families were lined up out the door waiting to pick up food.](#) Supply could not keep up with demand: more than 300 new families needed food last month. I was reminded that in times of increased demand, broken systems make it even harder to meet basic needs.



**Building Changes strives to make our essential social systems work better. Every dollar invested in our state must have real impact and must target the sources of the problem. Our 20 years of experience supporting collaborations and uniting public and private partners and resources creates lasting change.**

### **2008 Highlights**

This year we launched the [Community Employment Pathways program](#). Helping people who are experiencing homelessness obtain and maintain employment is financially sound. It is also respectful. People want to work and care for themselves and their children. We provide training and tools to workforce development and services providers to help link jobs and housing.

Homeless children, in particular, experience significant trauma: more than 40 percent change schools at least once a year, half are failing academically, and only one-third are learning at grade level. In our fourth year as administrator of the [Washington Families Fund](#), Building Changes continues to produce results. We allocated more than \$3.5 million this year to organizations serving homeless families throughout the state. Sixty-three percent of families obtained housing they could afford, and 76 percent of children stayed stable in one school. Washington Families Fund is the only public-private partnership of its type in the country; it is supported by the State of Washington and 18 private [funding partners](#).

The opening of [Kenyon House](#), which provides 18 units of service-enriched permanent housing for people living with HIV/AIDS who have histories of mental illness and chemical dependency, marked another milestone. It is our final collaborative housing project, and we are grateful to our partners—Housing Resource Group and Sound Mental Health.

### **On the Horizon**

Building Changes has completed two years of planned transition: we launched a new name, mission, and [web site](#), and are updating our strategic business plan to further focus our work and plan for long-term organizational strength and stability. The plan will be completed by mid-2009.

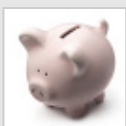
Early next year, we will announce an exciting expansion to the Washington Families Fund that will broaden our efforts to help local communities improve the systems serving homeless families. We look forward to sharing the details with you soon.

While 2009 will likely be a very difficult year for many Washingtonians, I can honestly say that I feel a sense of calm and optimism about the future. We continue to help our partners address immediate needs while working on the long-term solutions. Thank you for your continued partnership and support. We know that you join us in believing that everyone deserves the opportunity for a home, healthy life and a good job.

Warmly,

Betsy Lieberman  
Executive Director

### **[Support the Movement](#)**



**Double your investment to end homelessness today!** 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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### **[Hear Danny Glover Speak](#)**



Please join us on **May 5, 2009** for Building Changes' Annual Luncheon to End Homelessness. **Danny Glover**, renowned actor and humanitarian, will be our keynote speaker.

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