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Building Changes Announces New Executive Director to Lead Statewide Effort to End Homelessness

Founding Executive Director Betsy Lieberman concludes 24 years of visionary leadership and paves the way for her successor.

SEATTLE, WA, January 4, 2012— Building Changes' Board of Directors announced today that Deputy Director Alice Shobe will become the agency's new executive director as of April 2, 2012.

Acknowledging Ms. Lieberman's desire for a thoughtful transition, the Board of Directors appointed an Executive Director Transition Committee to explore all avenues for identifying a new leader for the organization. After conducting a rigorous hiring process, the committee selected Ms. Shobe based on her knowledge and experience with complex homelessness and housing issues and her 15 years in leadership positions.

"We are delighted to bring Alice to the helm of Building Changes," says Barbara Herr, President of Building Changes' Board of Directors and co-chair of the Board Executive Director Transition Committee. "She has been a great fit for the organization all along and is clearly poised to preserve the legacy of innovation built on Betsy's leadership and to position Building Changes for the challenging work ahead."

Shobe brought a wealth of forward thinking and practical experience to Building Changes. In her role as Deputy Director, she developed a solid grasp of the day-to-day activities of the organization and systematically grew its programs and its leadership team. As a member of the executive team, Shobe guided the organization's strategic planning efforts and worked to align staff and programs around results-based accountability. She also led efforts to secure significant public and private funding for the organization's key grantmaking program, the Washington Families Fund. Shobe has been instrumental in working with state government, the housing and homelessness sectors and the legislature to push forward significant changes in how our communities across Washington State are addressing homelessness.

"What Alice and Building Changes do really well," says Dan McConnon, Deputy Director of Community Services and Housing for the WA State Department of Commerce, "is bridge the different entities engaged in ending homelessness. Building Changes finds common ground among the differing values and priorities and identifies opportunities we can all rally around. They bring credibility and continuity, keeping homelessness issues on the front burner in this state."

Prior to joining Building Changes, Shobe held leadership positions in government, nonprofit, and philanthropy sectors. As the Director of Sound Families, she led efforts to create more than 1,400 units of service-based housing for vulnerable families. As the CEO of Philanthropy Northwest, she managed the operations of a 180-plus membership organization and strategic efforts to launch The Giving Practice consultancy. Shobe also served as the Deputy Director of Impact Capital, formerly known as the Washington Community Development Loan Fund. In 2007, Ms. Shobe was one of 16 recipients in the nation to be awarded an Annie E. Casey Foundation Children and Family Foundation fellowship.

“The Annie E. Casey Foundation is delighted to see Alice Shobe take the helm of Building Changes,” says Patrick McCarthy, CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. “We know she has the passion and drive to carry Building Changes’ mission forward and to impact the field at a national level.”

Using her broad perspective on homelessness and deep experience leading collaborative efforts to address complex social issues, Shobe vows to take the organization to the next level.

“Building Changes shapes and helps to deploy some of the most promising strategies to date,” says Shobe. “We know that children and adults who have difficulty remaining stable and safe in homes interact with a lot of organizations and systems in our state. Despite these tough economic times, we’re promoting the collaboration and the changes needed to prevent and end homelessness.”

Shobe will follow in the footsteps of Lieberman’s long-term leadership and commitment to working on behalf of our most vulnerable populations. Lieberman leaves a nearly 24-year legacy of creating housing and social service programs for chronically ill and disenfranchised people for Building Changes. Throughout her career, she has consistently focused on promoting the dignity, health, safety, and prosperity of people with the greatest need: from creating service-enriched housing for people living with HIV/AIDS to consulting with government agencies, philanthropy, and housing and service providers in all 50 states as well as the U.S. territories; to successfully securing homes and services for high-risk families in Washington State and coordinating access to a network of workforce services that move the homeless toward economic security.

“Betsy Lieberman’s decades of innovation and leadership in addressing our communities’ most difficult issues has changed our region and our way of thinking about how we help those most in need. We are grateful for the solid foundation she established for Building Changes’ important work in the future,” said Former Mayor Norman Rice, President and CEO, The Seattle Foundation.

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About Building Changes

Based in Seattle, Washington, Building Changes is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness across Washington State, because we feel everyone deserves an opportunity for a home, a healthy life, and a good job. Through our grantmaking and capacity building, we improve the coordination of services and enhance providers’ and government’s ability to effectively assist people experiencing homelessness. Through our advocacy and policy work, we identify and promote state and local policy changes to assure the best use of our public resources to prevent and end homelessness. For more information, visit: www.buildingchanges.org.