



2006  
 (Holiday Greetings

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Dear Friends:  
 We hope this year's holiday greeting finds you well and enjoying the season.

We might as well confess that our holiday greeting this year is a solicitation. But don't worry - we are **NOT** going to ask for money! What we **do** want is your ideas and your passion, as we continue to aim every corner of the Community Benefit sector at our potential for creating a healthy, peaceful, vibrant world.

Our colleagues around the globe have made this an incredible year for developing the Community-Driven Institute, which is why we are flat out asking for more of the same! We have cherished the ability to tap on your wisdom, your experience, your points of view. No matter where we've been, the energy we have encountered has been palpable - a sense we can only describe as "possibility."

Our questions keep generating new answers:  
 How can this whole sector re-think its everyday work - governance, resource development, planning, "marketing" - to make sure that work is aligned behind the end results we seek?

How can we stop doing things that go counter to creating significant community impact?

How can we best leverage our ability to convene and engage our communities, in addition to leveraging our dollars?

**Summing Up 2006**

Towards that end, our work in 2006 was amazing. At the invitation of Foundations and Nonprofit Resource Centers, we presented workshops and convened community conversations in 15 states across the US this year. We presented at conferences for the Alliance for Nonprofit Management and the Council on Foundations Conference for Community Foundations. And of course, we kept writing books and articles!

Everything we did in 2006 focused on sharing approaches that aim not only the sector's program work, but also its internally focused work, at creating a better community.

But the focus of our efforts has not just been those who are on the ground, providing direct service to our communities. On the contrary, we see more clearly than ever the potential in every corner of the sector - the potential to create more significant end results for our communities. Nonprofit Resource Centers, Academic Institutions and Consultants have been excited to discuss the opportunity they have for re-thinking their own work, to see how that work can create more impact.

And the response among Funders has been equally enthusiastic. Funders have been so frustrated for so long, that learning new approaches to granting funds - approaches that can provide more impact for the same dollar investment - that is as exciting to them as it is for us.

To that end, we have been talking with people from New Zealand to Palestine, from Ireland to South America, and all in between. Wherever in the world they are, everyone we have spoken with wants to learn ways to build a better future. And that is a big part of what 2007 will be about for us.

**Heading Into 2007**

In 2007, we will begin providing workshops and longer-term developmental programs for Consultants and for Foundation leaders. These programs will help both groups learn how they can align their work behind a vision for creating a better future.

In 2007 we will also be working with a major university, to change their Graduate Program in Nonprofit Management into a **Graduate Degree Program in Changing the World**. Can you

imagine anything more exciting than that?

And in 2007, we will be focusing inward, building the infrastructure for the Community-Driven Institute. We'll be building a board and establishing the Institute's exempt status. We'll be building curriculum. We'll be writing. And of course, we will be continuing to teach and convene and engage this sector in an ongoing conversation about our potential to create significant impact in our communities.

As we have gotten a start on all this work in 2006, it has been exciting to see so many people coming aboard. The more folks from around the world continue to contribute their own wisdom and experience, the energy sparking between those ideas creates something far stronger than any of those individual parts could be on its own. We really are building an army for consciously creating the future of our world. And that makes every day exciting.

That is why 2007 will be all about **you**. The only way the sector can reach for its potential is if we pool our collective wisdom towards that task. And so we will be building the Institute as a place to convene the most forward-thinking, passionate minds in the sector, to finally do what we all got into this work to do in the first place: **Make the world a better place to live.**

So please - call us, write to us, keep us in the loop. And don't be surprised if we ask to pick your brain as we continue to assemble the pieces that are becoming the Community-Driven Institute.

Thank you for being with us on this incredible journey. As always, we wish you a New Year filled with life's possibilities, and, more importantly, the willingness to embrace them when they show up at your door!

Fondly,

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