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May 6, 2008

Dear Next Door Friends,

After eight years, Executive Director Sharon Schulz has decided to leave Next Door. We are saddened by the news of Sharon's decision to leave Next Door, but respect her desire to take on new challenges in her professional career. We are grateful for Sharon's steady and accomplished leadership of Next Door and for her friendship, and wish her continued success as she focuses on the next chapter in her career.

**Sharon's many achievements have touched the lives of thousands of children and families, all for the better.** Her work has helped make Milwaukee, especially the Metcalfe Park neighborhood, a better place. She has and will continue to focus the public's attention on poverty and issues surrounding it.

Sharon's departure, which will be effective May 15, will require that her position is filled on an interim basis while the Board conducts a search for the next Executive Director.

Patricia Flowers, former vice president and director of annual giving at Children's Hospital and Health System Foundation, will take on the role of Interim Executive Director. Patty, who will join Next Door May 12, and Sharon will work together to help make the transition as seamless as possible. This will allow the organization to continue to focus on serving the community.

**Sharon can take pride in knowing that she accomplished much at Next Door since she joined us in 2000.** Reflecting on her many accomplishments, Sharon has much of which she can be proud, including:

- Leading our \$9.2 million capital campaign and simultaneously establishing and formalizing the endowment fund. She will leave our organization in sound financial condition.
- Helping launch the Educare Center of Milwaukee, in collaboration with the Buffet Early Childhood Fund, to provide services unequalled in our city to preschool children. Sharon helped establish this national model for early childhood education.
- Forming the Next Door Charter School for K-4 and K-5 students, which strengthens student preparedness for elementary education. By working with Milwaukee Public Schools, Sharon helped open the new school.
- Overseeing the remodeling of the Helwig Family Community Center so Next Door could better serve families. The Next Door Pediatrics Clinic, with our partners at Children's Health System, has tripled in size and doubled patient capacity under Sharon's watch.
- Becoming an important statewide and community leader for children. Sharon has established herself as an expert and Next Door as a solid model of the importance of investing in early childhood education.

Sharon's most important legacy is not bricks and mortar nor the dollars she helped raise, but the many lives she has touched and those she has inspired during her tenure. **We will miss Sharon and hope she will stay connected to this organization that is so dear to her heart. We wish her all the best and are thankful for her dedication.**

There is a wealth of talent at Next Door to help guide us through this transition. Our dedicated faculty, staff and volunteers, under the leadership and guidance of Interim Executive Director Patty Flowers and the Board, will continue our important mission of supporting the intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional development of children so they become self-sufficient, contributing members of the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Romoser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "R".

W. David Romoser  
Board President