

REAL CHANGE IS MOVING May 24th  
Pioneer Square

2009  
ANNUAL REPORT

# REAL CHANGE

Thank you for a great 2009, 2010 will be even better with your help.

## Transforming lives, taking risks, telling the truth

By Timothy Harris,  
Executive Director

2009 was the year Real Change hit the wall, and years of running beyond our capacity turned into a crisis that could not be ignored. To those outside, the news was always a surprise. "You look like you're doing great," they'd often say. In some ways we were.

For three years straight, circulation rose 17-18% annually. Over those years, the numbers of vendors served doubled. During this time, we embraced a more grassroots, direct-action style of activism, with sleep-outs and civil disobedience at City Hall and a ballot initiative to stop a new jail.

We were on fire, and, we were falling apart.

The vendor numbers went up and the organizing became more ambitious. But the stuff that once got done when there was time — the grant writing and reporting, the long-term planning and evaluation, the general administration — got pushed aside.

**Grassroots support of our work in 2009 came to 63% of total income. Nearly all our other income was from newspaper sales.**

**867,000 papers were sold, putting over a million bucks back into mostly empty pockets.**

There was more. We outgrew our office. Our technology infrastructure got older and crankier. Staff burnout became a serious issue. The bumps along our road became more frequent and harder to handle. We had no cushion. The word crisis started coming up.

Over the year, we wrestled with the change that was needed. We hired an Operations Director to strengthen internal management. We brought on a book keeper. We strengthened fundraising, cut expenses, paid off debt, and made critical investments in staffing and infrastructure. We created systems and found stuff we didn't need to be doing. Grassroots support of our work, because we asked, grew by 39%.

At fifteen years, we are a community institution. The resources we need to operate reasonably are there to support our good work. And we have recommitted to using those resources as effectively as possible by investing in their proper administration.

Circulation grew in 2009 by 19%. We won prestigious journalism awards. We changed the landscape on the jail issue with a grassroots campaign that took on race, class, and inequality.

As we enter 2010, Real Change is out of crisis and operating with a very different sense of the possible. We are changing fast as well.

We're moving. Our new location in Pioneer Square will offer more space to vendor operations while moving the newspaper and administration upstairs.

We're organizing on the criminalization of poverty, and rebuilding the work of bringing vendors and other supporters together in action.

As our vendor numbers continue to rise, we will create transformational community throughout the organization

and beyond. The change we need arises from community in action. Real Change aspires to be that community.

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867,000 papers were sold, putting over a million bucks back into mostly empty pockets.

The resources for our work are out there, and the impact we have is huge.

We transform lives, we take risks, and we tell the truth. We are becoming what we need to be.

Thank you for being there with us. 2010 is going to rock. ■



Michael Garcia Photo by Real Change News

## Celebrating Michael

Sadly 2009 brought the death of a Real Change friend, Michael Garcia. A vendor, an activist, a Real Change staff member; Michael was a man who tragically died suddenly just as all the pieces of his life came together and he was finally doing what he was born to do.

As a young teen in foster care, a fire-works accident blew off several of his fingertips. There were surgeries. Painkillers led to heroin, years on the street, and eventually, prison. While incarcerated, Michael decided to make something of himself and sought education. His dream, he told me, was to work in the field of waste water management and he was certified to do so while in prison.

There were, however, barriers after his release from prison. His poverty. His battle with Hepatitis C. His felony record. Michael was engaged in an epic struggle toward what, for many of us, would seem a humble goal.

He was deeply compassionate, quietly brilliant, and utterly committed to improving the lives of others. Michael was an amazing staff member, doing the work

from a place of passion and understanding. "For most of my life, I was a fuck-up," he said. "Now I'm making up for lost time."

The Real Change movie, *Turning Points* closes with his powerful life story and is dedicated to his memory.

Michael drives it all home in his own words:

"I want to see some justice done to these people out here, not only because I'm one of them, but because we're all together in this thing called life and we have to look out for each other."

We are excited that as Real Change moves onto the next phase of our life and growth, that we have the opportunity to honor Michael Garcia with a lasting tribute. Our new Vendor Learning Center in Pioneer Square opens on May 24th and we are naming it after Michael. He would be thrilled. Please donate now to help fund this new resource for vendors and be part of a community tribute to a great man. And take a few minutes to think about the fragility of life and how we all need to, like Michael, do what we can, while we can. ■



Photo by Sherry Loesser

Rosette Royale, Assistant Editor, won the prestigious Sigma Delta Chi award for best feature reporting nationwide (papers under 100,000 circulation) from the Society of Professional Journalists.

**Real Change** exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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2009 Annual Report

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Vendor Brenda Duckworth Photo By Jane Austin

Schwesinger, Gail Scott, Joy Scott, Seattle Academy of Arts & Sciences, The Seattle Foundation, Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Jobs Initiative, Seattle Office for Civil Rights, Leopoldo Seguel, Stephen Sehlin, SEI Giving Fund, Alan & Leigh Shalloway, Julie Shapiro & Shelley Cohen, Vivien Sharpies, Lisa J Shawver, Alan & Susan Sherbrooke, Jane Sheridan, G.B. & Janice Sherwood, Teresa & Travis Sherwood, Mas & Shirley Shimada, Bonnie Shipman, Shoreline Community College Library, Julia Shozen, Sheila Siden, Mark & Lara Simmons, M C Simon, Fred F. Simons, Rick Simonson, Sara Singer, The Rabbis Johnathan & Beth Singer, Carol Singler, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Jennifer Slack, E. M. Slivka, Erin Ratz & Slobhan Rory, Dee Smiley & Tonya Gisselberg, Kathleen Smith-Dijulio & Donald Dijulio, Helena Smith, J.B. Smith & Ian Hegwood, Jack Smith, Pam Smith, Susanna Smith, Social Justice Fund Northwest, Jennifer A Soethe, James M Solaegui, Maureen Solemslie Bo, Solid Ground Washington, Jerry Sommerseth, Robert Sorensen, Dean Spade, Marie Ann Spaugy, Sunny Speidel, Patricia Spencer, Catherine Clemens & John Speth, David Spiekerman, Zeke Spier, Spine & Crown Books, Norman Stamper, Elaine Stannard, Burke Stansbury & Krista Lee Hanson, Jay Stansell, Christi Stapleton, Diane L Ste Marie, Diane & Eugene Stein, Dick & Carolyn Stein, Peter Stekel, Amy J Stephson, Robby Stern, Hilary Stern, Lauren Stern, Robert Stern & Dina Burstein, Robin Stern, Steven & Fredrica Rice, James Stewart, Sally Stewart, Diane Stielstra, Brian Stillman, Faye Stillwell, Tony Stipanovich, Paulette Stochel, Peter H Stoeckle, Julie M. Stohlman, Steven Stolder, Christine Stoll, Phil & Susie Stoller, Linda Straley, Naomi Strand, Jane Strohecker, Lisa C Stuebing, Gail Stygall & George Dillon, Laila Suidan, Kathleen Sullivan, Jean Sundborg, Herbert & Mitsu Sundvall, Sunset Tavern, Donna Swain, Jennifer Swann, Karen Swanson, Robert C Swanson, Dorothy Swarts, Kay & Troy Swartwood, Selina Sweet, Sharon Swift, N.L. Swigger, Rhonda Syphax, Thalia Syracopoulos, Vincent Szopa, Joe Szwaja

**T** Joseph Taccogna, James Tai, Timothy Tajchman, Gary Takacs, Frieda Takamura, Colette Kostelec & Richard Talbot, Katie & Thomas Talbot, Devi Tandavan, Rose Tatlow, James &

Patricia Taylor, Nancy & James Taylor, Masako Tebbetts, Patrick Tefft, Scott Patrick Tennican, William & Marion Terkuile, Allan Terry, Alan Thal, MD, Becky Sukovaty & Toby Thaler, Brian Thane, Erin Thatcher, Gillian Theobald, Jim Theofelis, Lois Thetford, Thirteenth Church of Christ, Scientist, Kathleen Thode, Michelle & Thomas Bice, Alison Thomas, James & Janice Thomas, Jan & Jim Thomas, Joan Thomas, Shannon Thomas, Brooke Thompson, Gayle & John Thompson, Lynn Thompson, Tom Thompson, Amy Thomson, Bill Thorness, Steve Thornton, Glenn & Anne Thureson, Tricia Tiano, Tibbetts United Methodist, Jeremy Tibbs & Chad Justice, Glen Tibbs, Tides Foundation, William Tipton, Judy Tobin & Michael Baker, Susan Todd, Kathleen S. Toguchi, Charlotte E Tollefson Gaddis, Mary Ann Tollefson, Joan K Tomas, Top Ten Toys, Jessica Towns, Lauren Tozzi, Cal Treger, Victoria Trimble-Lowe, Trinity United Methodist Church, Carol Troup & Peter Johnson, Joan & Lou Truskoff, Sojourner Truth, Henry E Turner

**U** Union Street Farm, United Way of King County, Universal Life Church Monastery, University Friends Meeting, University of Washington, University Prep, Lois Unruh, Michiko Uto

**V** E. Valenzuela, Elizabeth Valenzuela & Phillip Caballero, Tiffany Vance, Chris Vandusen, Ann & Douglas Vanfleet, Shirley S. Vaughn, Cherie Vedal, Christophe LMJ Verlinde, Karin Vial, Christine & Oscar Vilches, J. L. Viniko, Chris Vodyk, Ned Voelker, Christine Vogeler, Richard & Constance Voget, William Voinot-Baron, Jan von Lehe, Marjon Riekerk & Alexander Voorhoeve, Jolene Vrchota, Julian Vrieslander & Cindy Fuller

**W** C.S. Walden, Bonnie Walker, Caroline Walker, Maggie Walker, Carolyn Wallace, Taylor Wallace, Mary Tone Wallon, Cecilia E. Walsh, David Ward, Keith Ward, Barbara Warren, The Washington Post Company, Washington Women in Trades Association, Theresa Wasson, Mary Waters, Patricia & Robert Waterston, Marilyn Watkins, John A Watson, Web Collective, Inc, Howard & Laurie Webb, Kristin Weber, John M Webster, Laurie Weckel & Kirby Dahman, James D. & Bertie J. Weddell, Tom Weeks & Deb Oyer, John Weeks, Pam Weeks & Pamm Hanson, David Jones & Vicki Weeks, Nancy Goodno Weinstein, Joan Weiss, Cynthia Schu & Joe Weiss, Robert Welden, Robert & Barbara Welsh, Ann Wessel & Robert Barnard, David & Doris Westberg, Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation, Katherine Weybright, Terrence & Sandra Whaley, Peter & Constance Wheeler, Laura & David White, Emily Whitman, Robert & Sara Wicklein, Ann Widditsch, Donald & Mary Wieckowicz, Pamela Wiesenbach, David Streatfield & Madeline Wilde, Thomas Wilkenson, Lori Williams & Gary Yngve, Imogene Williams, April J Williamson, Daniel K Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Korine Wimbles, Edgar & Janet Winans, Gail Winberg, Joy Winberg, Madeline Winfield & Eric Nygren, Jennifer Winkler, Jane & Peter Winn, Bruce Wirth, Wisconsin Historical Society, Carl Westwin, Joanne Woiak, Timothy Wold, Esther B Wolf, Barbara Wool, Wright Brothers Cycle Works, Tanafriti Wright, Wu Hsing Tao School, Virginia Wyman, Wyman Interiors LLC, Wyman Youth Trust

**Y** Keiko Yamada, Jon Yamato & Mary Kuhner, Heather Yancey Pens, David Yao, Bryan & Sarah Yates, Kathleen Yoerg Nelson, Dorothy Young Sale, Edward Young & C.E. Litsey, Virginia Younger, YWCA of Seattle King County & Snohomish County

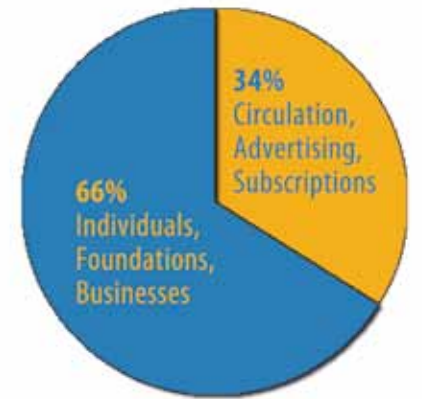
**Z** Monica Zucker, Leonard & Gitte Zweig, Nancy Zwieback ■



Vendor Services Director Tara Moss coordinates the 2009 Surviving the Streets Homeless Gear Giveaway at City Hall. Photo by Revel Smith

# 2009 Financial Report

| REVENUE (\$ USD)           |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Individuals and Businesses | 475,634        |
| Grants                     | 15,943         |
| Ads/Subscriptions          | 29,161         |
| Circulation                | 222,793        |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>       | <b>743,531</b> |



REAL CHANGE REVENUE

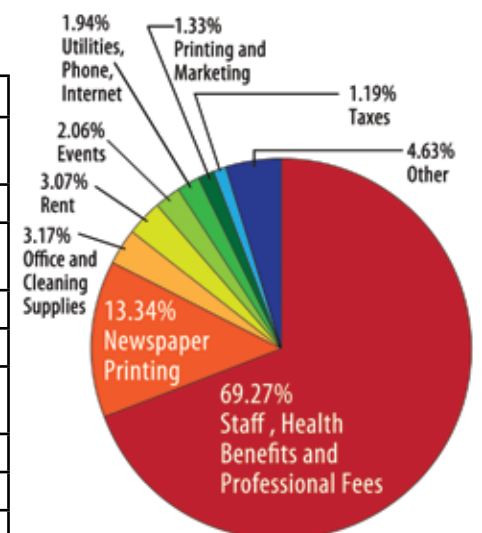
## Surviving the Streets and 15 Forwards annual breakfast a success

### Good deeds acknowledged

Real Change thanks Michael Grabham and Patti Dunn for chairing 2009's Surviving the Streets survival gear giveaway in November and December. Over 100 people, businesses and churches donated coats, camping gear, socks, gloves and funds to ensure that hundreds of vendors and other homeless people received cold weather gear. To volunteer for the 2010 event, please contact: [volunteer@realchangenews.org](mailto:volunteer@realchangenews.org).

The 2009 Breakfast, 15 Forwards, was a big hit, raising over \$60,000 for Real Change. The keynote speaker was travel writer and television personality Rick Steves and the 2009 Change Agent of the Year award was presented to Roberto Maestas by King County Councilmember Larry Gossett. Save the date for the 2010 Breakfast at 7:30AM on September 30th, at the Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion. For more information or to sign up to be a Table Captain or Sponsor, please contact: [development@realchangenews.org](mailto:development@realchangenews.org).

| EXPENSES (\$ USD)                            |                |
|--|----------------|
| Staff, Health Benefits and Professional Fees | 527,827        |
| Newspaper Printing                           | 101,649        |
| Office and Cleaning Supplies                 | 24,132         |
| Rent   | 23,411         |
| Events                                       | 15,723         |
| Utilities, Phone and Internet                | 14,794         |
| Printing and Marketing                       | 10,136         |
| Taxes  | 9,085          |
| Other  | 35,277         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                        | <b>762,034</b> |



REAL CHANGE EXPENSES

## Vendor Profile

### Gender:

Male: 75%  
Female: 24%  
Transgender: 1%

### Age:

18-29: 3.5%  
30-39: 7.5%  
40-49: 35%  
50-59: 48%  
60+: 11%

### Race/Ethnicity:

American Indian or Alaskan Native: 7.0%  
Asian, Asian-American: 2.6%  
Black or African American: 24.6%  
Latino or Hispanic: 4.4%  
Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native: 0.9%  
White/Caucasian (non-Hispanic): 59.2%  
Other: 3.5%

### Housing Status:

Currently Homeless: 58.8%  
Previously Homeless: 35.5%  
Never Homeless: 4.8%

### Current Sleeping Situation:

Sleeping outside: 28.5%  
Sleeping in a shelter: 12.7%  
Sleeping in a car: 8.3%  
In transitional housing: 7.5%  
In subsidized housing: 17.5%  
Staying with friends/family: 7.9%  
In market-rate housing (no subsidy): 3.9%  
Prefer not to share: 3.1%  
Other: 10.1%

### Physical or Mental Disability:

Physical Disability only: 30.7%  
Mental Disability only: 16.2%  
Both Physical and Mental Disabilities: 25.9%

## The vendor who sold you this paper works. So does Real Change.

Real Change is a quality newspaper, organizing project and low barrier economic opportunity. Real Change works.

Every month, more than 350 homeless and vulnerably housed people earn money and build confidence by selling Real Change. We bring you community voices you won't hear elsewhere and quality in-depth reporting on stories often left out of other papers.

Real Change is reader supported in the same way that Public Radio and TV are listener and viewer supported. Last year more than 1300 people helped make Real Change work even better by being donors and volunteers.

**Please join them and help us in the fight against poverty and homelessness.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact me about volunteering

\$50  \$150  \$250  \$500  \$1000  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **Real Change** and mail to: 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121, or use our secure online giving option at [realchangenews.org](http://realchangenews.org). Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.