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Contact: Greg Propper
(323) 937-5356
gpropper@bethechangeinc.org

Mark Edwards
(617) 252-2646
medwards@bethechangeinc.org

Be the Change Announces New President and CEO

Assistant Deputy Secretary of Education Kevin Jennings
to Succeed Be the Change Founder Alan Khazei

BOSTON – May 19, 2011 - Be the Change announced today that, following a national search, Kevin Jennings will succeed Alan Khazei as President and CEO. Mr. Jennings will officially begin his new role on July 25, 2011.

“We are delighted to draw a leader of Kevin’s caliber to succeed Alan,” said Be the Change board chair Josh Bekenstein of Bain Capital. “His experience both leading a national nonprofit as well as working in the federal government makes him the ideal leader to take the reins as Alan takes on new challenges.”

Be the Change was founded by Alan Khazei in 2007. Prior to founding Be the Change, Mr. Khazei co-founded City Year (www.CityYear.org), a national nonprofit that unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service, giving them the skills and opportunities to change the world.

“I’m deeply grateful to everyone – board, staff and supporters – who has made Be the Change possible and been critical to our success. I’m excited to turn over the leadership of Be the Change to Kevin,” said Alan Khazei. “Given the extraordinary depth and breadth of success he has had in his previous roles, I am confident Kevin will lead Be the Change and our programs to new heights.”

Mr. Jennings currently serves as Assistant Deputy Secretary in the U.S. Department of Education, where he heads the department’s Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, a position to which he was appointed by President Obama in 2009. In this role he has led the department’s efforts to create safe and supportive learning environments in schools, most notably through the creation of the new Safe and Supportive Schools grant program in 2010 and an extended national campaign against bullying, culminating in the White House Conference on Bullying on March 10, 2011, keynoted by President Obama.

“Since 2009, Kevin Jennings has served with distinction, leading our efforts to make our schools safe places where every child can focus on learning,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. “We are proud of his dedicated service to the Administration and wish him all the best in his new role at Be the Change.”

“It has been an honor to serve in the Obama Administration and specifically on Secretary Duncan’s leadership team at the Department of Education,” said Jennings. “I am incredibly excited to return to the nonprofit sector by joining the Be the Change team and working on issues like promoting public service and increasing economic opportunity, the kinds of critical challenges we must solve if America is to continue to thrive in the 21st century.”

Prior to his time in the Administration, Mr. Jennings founded and led the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, or GLSEN, the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. During his 14 year tenure as GLSEN’s founding Executive Director, GLSEN put the issue of safe schools at the forefront of the national education agenda, increased the number of students protected by inclusive anti-bullying legislation by more than 600 percent, and grew the number of school-based and student-led clubs, such as Gay-Straight Alliances, from under 50 in 1995 to over 4,300 when he stepped down in 2008. Under Jennings’ leadership, GLSEN signature programs like No Name-Calling Week, the National Day of Silence and the Ad Council’s Teach Respect campaign became commonplace in America’s schools.

Prior to his time at GLSEN, Mr. Jennings taught high school history in Providence, Rhode Island and Concord, Massachusetts and served as faculty advisor to the nation’s first Gay-Straight Alliance student club. He holds a B.A. magna cum laude in History from Harvard College, an M.A. in education from Columbia University’s Teachers College, and an M.B.A. from New York University’s Stern School of Business. Among his other honors, Mr. Jennings has received the Human and Civil Rights Award of the National Education Association, the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Diversity Leadership Award of the National Association of Independent Schools.

About Be the Change

Be the Change is a nonprofit that creates national issue based campaigns by organizing coalitions of non-profits, social entrepreneurs, policymakers, private sector and civic leaders, academics, and citizens. Vibrant coalitions, collaborative policymaking, bipartisan advocacy, galvanizing events and online outreach are hallmarks of Be the Change campaigns. Our combined grassroots and grassroots approach engages well-known voices in entertainment, retail, government, and philanthropy -- and, through their megaphones, Americans of all ages and backgrounds. [ServiceNation](#), the first campaign launched from Be the Change's platform with over 270 organizations in its coalition, helped to achieve the strongly bi-partisan Kennedy Serve America Act -- the greatest expansion of national service in our country in 60 years. ServiceNation also helped to inspire new service commitments from the entertainment industry, Mayors through Cities of Service, and a breakthrough partnership between the military and civilian service communities called Mission Serve. [OpportunityNation](#), our second campaign, launching in 2011, will promote thoughtful, practical and bi-partisan solutions to increase opportunity and economic mobility in America.

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