



July 15, 2016

Dear Friends of New Beginnings:

As you know, over the past year our leadership transition committee and Board have been conducting a very thorough assessment and executive search.

**I am so excited to be able to share with you that New Beginnings' Board of Directors has selected Chris Bicknell to serve as New Beginnings' next Executive Director.** Chris will begin his tenure at New Beginnings the second week of August. In the coming weeks, the Board and I will be inviting you join us in welcoming Chris to New Beginnings and Lewiston-Auburn at an open house event this September at the Ann Geiger Center.

Chris Bicknell comes to New Beginnings from the Opportunity Alliance in Portland, where he most recently served as the Director of Access and Intake. Chris brings extensive nonprofit management experience to our agency, and I especially value that he has focused his career on our core population of youth at-risk of homelessness.

Chris has more than 25 years' experience in the field of human services, including as a consultant, presenter, and trainer about working with high-risk youth, restorative justice, youth employment, harm reduction, and trauma-informed care. A founding member of the Maine Homeless Youth Provider's Network, Chris coordinated Preble Street Teen Services in Portland for more than 9 years, and was instrumental in the design and opening of their \$4.5 million Joe Kreisler Teen Shelter in 2012. A passionate advocate for youth and creativity, Chris has a Master's degree in Art Therapy and has served as volunteer with the Telling Room in Portland.

During the interview process, Chris Bicknell told our management team that becoming the Executive Director of New Beginnings would be his "dream job." Chris says, *"I am looking forward to bringing my enthusiasm, fresh perspective, and experience to the dedicated team of staff and volunteers at New Beginnings. Together, we will continue and build upon New Beginnings' successful history focused on improving the lives of vulnerable young people in Maine."*

I'm grateful to our transition committee, Acting Executive Director Mary Ruchinkas, and all of New Beginnings' Board members and staff who contributed to the search and have kept our critical services for youth running smoothly during this leadership transition.

Thank you also to each and every one of you for supporting New Beginnings and making a difference for homeless youth in Maine.

Warmly,

Christopher Ferguson, President  
Board of Directors