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Africatown International and Building Changes Receive \$5 Million Bezos Day 1 Families Fund Grant to Help End Homelessness for Families in King County, Washington *Day 1 Families Fund grants \$96.2 million to 32 nonprofits across the country to provide shelter for children and families in need*

SEATTLE – (November 17, 2021): Africatown International and Building Changes, partners in the Centralized Diversion Fund (CDF), today announced that they have been selected to receive a \$5 million grant from the Bezos Day 1 Families Fund. Launched in 2018 by Amazon founder and executive chair Jeff Bezos, the Day 1 Families Fund issues annual leadership awards to organizations and civic groups doing compassionate, needle-moving work to provide shelter and hunger support to address the immediate needs of young families.

“This is an investment in a proven, community-based solution to our region’s homeless crisis,” said Yalonda Sinde, Finance and Development Director at Africatown International, a local black-led, grassroots organization that administers the CDF. “Support for the Centralized Diversion Fund will ensure people move quickly from homelessness into housing.”

The Centralized Diversion Fund is a common-sense, cost-effective solution to homelessness that has transformed hundreds of lives and strengthened communities in King County since 2018. The CDF helps families get housed quickly by providing them with the funds needed to cover move-in costs, application fees, past due eviction debt and other expenses so that they can secure a safe and stable place to live. This one-time grant from the Day 1 Families Fund will allow CDF partners to help an additional 500 families exit homelessness. This grant will also support infrastructure needs and capacity building, including training practitioners and providers, as sustainable public funding paths are established for the CDF. The CDF is meant to be a public-private partnership.

Africatown International and Building Changes were selected as Day 1 Families Fund grant recipients by an independent advisory board comprised of homelessness experts with experience in policy, advocacy, racial equity, child welfare and housing and service delivery, as well as firsthand experience in homelessness.

This year, the Day 1 Families Fund issued a total of \$96.2 million in grants to 32 organizations across the country. The 2021 Day 1 Families Fund grant recipients are: ACLAMO; Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches; Alabama Rural Coalition for the Homeless, Inc.; All Chicago Making Homelessness History; AACI (Asian Americans for Community Involvement); Africatown International and Building Changes; Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa; Colorado Coalition for the Homeless; Covenant House Alaska; Destination: Home; Doorways; Family Life Center; Family Service League; Friends of the Family; Homeless Action Network of Detroit; Homeward; LifeMoves; Lubbock Open Door; Mesilla Valley Community of Hope; Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter & Services; Mississippi United to End Homelessness; Newcap, Inc.; Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA); Portland Homeless Family Solutions; Project Community Connections, Inc.; Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP); Sacramento Steps Forward; SHELTER, Inc.; Texas Homeless Network; The Link; Tri-County Community Action Agency, Inc.; and Union Station Homeless Services.

“This gift will renew and cement the Centralized Diversion Fund for the coming years,” said Daniel Zavala, Executive Director at Building Changes. “It will allow us to focus on long-term sustainability of public funding, while also meeting the current and impending needs of families experiencing homelessness in our community.”

The Bezos Day One Fund made a \$2 billion commitment to focus on making meaningful and lasting impacts in two areas: funding existing non-profits that help families experiencing homelessness, and creating a network of new, non-profit tier-one preschools in low-income communities. The Day 1 Families Fund issues annual leadership awards to organizations and civic groups doing compassionate, needle-moving work to provide shelter and hunger support to address the immediate needs of young families. Since 2018, the Day 1 Families Fund has issued 130 grants totaling more than \$398 million to organizations around the country working to combat homelessness and help families gain housing support and stability. The vision statement comes from the inspiring Mary’s Place in Seattle: no child sleeps outside. For more information, visit www.BezosDayOneFund.org/Day1FamiliesFund.

About Africatown International

Africatown International (AI) is a community-based, black led organization formed in 2016. AI’s mission is to alleviate poverty through education, employment and by addressing basic human needs. AI focuses on providing culturally based solutions to poverty. Its primary objective is to help households address root causes and create a roadmap to prosperity. AI has developed a concerted effort to change the trajectory of the poorest of the poor by providing culturally responsive interventions that foster hope, resilience, and success.

About Building Changes

Building Changes pushes for equitable, holistic responses in and across the housing, education, and health systems so that all children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness get the support they need. We believe communities thrive when people have safe and stable housing and can equitably access and use services.

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