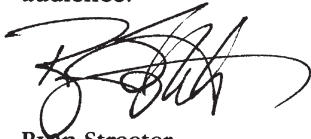# FOREWORD

Faith-based and community organizations have accomplished a great deal in building affordable housing, expanding economic opportunity, and revitalizing their communities—but we know remarkably little about how these organizations grow, become more effective, and reach the point of long-term viability. This lack of knowledge became evident as we sought to identify effective, workable models for building the capacity of faith-based and community organizations.

To address this knowledge gap, in June 2003 HUD's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and Office of Policy Development and Research jointly convened a landmark symposium: the *Building the Capacity of Faith- and Community-Based Organizations Summit*. We invited practitioners and academics in the grassroots community development sector to share experiences, exchange knowledge, and shed light on the complex issues involved in building the organizational capacity of community development organizations. Invited panelists presented important information and engaged in lively discussion with summit participants on the evolution of faith-based and community development.

This volume presents the papers commissioned for the summit. In many ways, these papers are at once seminal and state of the art: they document current practices, and they ask questions. They also acknowledge that we have much more to learn about what it takes to effectively undertake faith-based and community development. As such they represent a solid basis for growing our knowledge about how best to support community development organizations.

I know that those who attended the summit came away with new perspectives on issues relating to supporting faith-based and community organizations. My hope is that this collection of papers will help us extend these perspectives to a wider audience.

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