

December 19, 2011



Dear CAN partners and friends:

Congratulations to the Central East Austin Weed & Seed Initiative on being named the winner of the Butler Spirit of Collaboration Award by the Community Action Network (CAN). The Weed & Seed initiative brought together public, private and nonprofit organizations along with individual citizens to weed out crime and seed in social service programs and neighborhood restoration. Their collaborative efforts have brought about positive and visible changes to the Central East Austin area.

I want to give a special thanks to Sarah Eckhardt, the immediate past-chair of CAN. Under Sarah's leadership, direction, vision and passion CAN accomplished a great deal this past year. She set a high bar, and I hope that I can measure up to it as the 2012 Chair.

I'd also like to congratulate Ashton Cumberbatch as CAN's new Vice Chair and Chair-Elect for 2013.

A community is only as strong as the sum of all of its parts. Unfortunately, there are parts of our community that are not doing as well as others. There are growing gaps and disparities in educational attainment, employment, health, justice, etc. These gaps and disparities affect all of us in one way or another. As a community, we need to work on addressing these challenges – not just the symptoms, but the root causes. Band aid approaches just aren't good enough, nor is trying to pretend that real problems don't exist.

I encourage everyone to find new ways in which to collaborate, develop innovative solutions and work to make our community a healthy, safe and prosperous place for all its citizens.

I look forward to serving CAN and the community in 2012. Please join me in working to make Austin/Travis County a great place for everyone to live and work.

Alan Miller  
CAN Chair, 2012