

**A FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM
FORMER ACTING DIRECTOR MARY BETH BUCHANAN**

Dear Colleagues,

Since my appointment by the President in November 2006, I have had the honor and privilege to serve as the Acting Director for the United States Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). During this time, I have met many dedicated and committed individuals who have shared with me their challenges, experiences, knowledge and expertise. Through our partnerships we have been able to serve women who are victims of violence, strengthen families, and positively impact communities. We continue to increase public awareness and education about the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Great strides have been made this past year in outreach campaigns and I encourage each of you to continue this important task.

A culmination of the Family Justice Center concept, which provides comprehensive victims services, came into full view in August 2007 with the grand opening of the New Orleans Family Justice Center. What I witnessed in New Orleans and what I leave with each of you is the powerful impact of community partnerships, bringing together resources and talents, and dedication to helping those in need of immediate attention and care.

I thank you for allowing me to be a voice of leadership for OVW and look forward to continued friendships and partnerships. Together we have positively impacted the lives of victims of violence and I am proud to have been part of it.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Buchanan