

# preface

**STEPHANIE ROBINSON, ESQ.**

is President and CEO of The Jamestown Project, a national think tank focusing on democracy. She is a Lecturer on Law at Harvard Law School and former Chief Counsel to Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Robinson is a nationally recognized expert on issues relating to social policy, women, race, family, and electoral politics. She was featured as one of the 30 Young Leaders of the Future in *Ebony Magazine* and was profiled in the book *As I Am: Young African American Women in a Critical Age*.

**BARRY KENDALL, PH.D.**

is Executive Director of the Commonweal Institute, a think tank focused on building the progressive movement through effective idea marketing and coordinated action. Holding a doctorate from Stanford University, Dr. Kendall is an expert on the role of religion in American culture and politics. Dr. Kendall is a member of the Bay Area Advisory Board of the New Leaders Council, and an Advisor to Netroots Nation.

Ideas hold the unique potential to unify and empower today's progressive movement, bringing together our leaders, grassroots advocates, communications networks and supporters around shared values. Recognizing this, leaders of progressive think tanks and activist organizations from across the country convened in December 2007. We gathered to look beyond the short-term interests of our individual institutions in order to envision how, together, we could work more effectively on behalf of our common goals. We emerged with a commitment to form an alliance – the Progressive Ideas Network – that would provide opportunities for collaboration and coordinated action, offer service and training to its members, and create a forum for crafting long-term strategies and ideas.

The members of the Progressive Ideas Network believe in the possibilities for bold, transformational change in American society, and our business is to generate the ideas and policies needed to create that change. Our organizations contain hundreds of original thinkers in progressive politics, and our networks reach thousands of talented activists who fight every day for the rights and well-being of millions of Americans. We have come together at this auspicious moment to lay out a course for genuine progress in the government and governance of this country and all its people.

The essays in “New Progressive Voices: Values and Policy for the 21st Century” present three elements of change: long-term vision, fundamental values and prescriptions for immediate action. The nine leaders who authored these essays speak for and with the unheard voices in our society, and the ideas contained here are born out of service to them. We call for all Americans to build tomorrow's society together, with creativity, wisdom, morality, ethics, and love – and with no more hidden costs, to us or to our children.

We would like to thank all of the people who made this project possible. The steering committee members dedicated countless hours to creating a vision and direction for the project. Special thanks are owed to Deepak Bhargava, Jim Harkness, Larry Mishel, Miles Rapoport and Andrea Batista Schlesinger; Seth Borgos played an especially important role in this process. Our editor, Jim Lardner, worked with dedication, patience, and incredible editorial skill, complemented by our designer, Caitlin Howarth. Finally, Nate Loewentheil organized and coordinated the many people and elements involved in producing this work.

As we all look toward the November election, with its potential to mark the start of a new progressive era in the United States, we offer these ideas to you. We invite you to share your responses at [www.newprogressivevoices.com](http://www.newprogressivevoices.com), and to contribute your ideas for positive change. We're looking forward to the years of shared conversation, decision-making, hard work, and true progress that lie before us.

*Stephanie Robinson, Esq.*  
*President and CEO, The Jamestown Project*

*Co-Chairs, Progressive Ideas Network*

*Barry Kendall, Ph.D.*  
*Executive Director, Commonweal Institute*