

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Lynne Wallace, VP of Operations at Dietz & Company Architects,
Named Chair of Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness**

Springfield, Mass. – The Leadership Council of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (WMNEH) named Lynne Wallace its new Chair during a recent Leadership Council meeting. Wallace, Vice President of Operations at Dietz & Company Architects, served as the Leadership Council's Vice Chair prior to this appointment.

Since its creation last year, the WMNEH has focused on initiatives to find new alternatives to long-term shelter housing throughout the region. One of 10 regional networks across the state that is funded by the Commonwealth's Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, the network offers a regional approach to ending homelessness, focusing on the "right resources to the right people at the right time".

This mission is supported by a commitment to systems change within the region by adopting a housing first approach. This collaboration of service providers, civic, faith-based, educational and business leaders was awarded its \$1.1 million grant to coordinate, integrate and implement innovative services focused on securing permanent housing options for homeless individuals and families, and ultimately lessen the need for long-term residence in shelters.

"WMNEH is seeking this change by focusing on prevention, diversion and rapid re-housing. Adopting a housing first approach, with supportive services if needed, has been proven to save money in the long-term," says Wallace. "We believe spending millions of dollars each month temporarily housing families in hotels and motels is short-sighted. The Commonwealth can save money with housing first.; other communities have proven it; and our regional networks will show the same results. We will create innovations to overcome this crisis," she adds.

More information on the WMNEH can be found on the network's blog at <http://westernmasshousingfirst.org/>.

Dietz & Company Architects

Dietz & Company Architects, Inc., one of the largest full-service firms in Western Massachusetts, is a woman-owned business that opened its doors in 1985. Areas of practice include large-scale housing, education and healthcare institutions, commercial projects, historic preservation, LEED design services and high-performance buildings.

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