

## President's Message



It is difficult to express fully what an honor and a privilege it has been to serve as president of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for the past 12-and-a-half years. This experience has been the highlight of my professional life, one that I will look back on with tremendous satisfaction. I will wear with pride the badge of RWJF for the rest of my days. In this, my last President's Message, I want simply to close with thanks.

Thanks to the Trustees in 1989 for having the courage to select a relatively unknown Californian to be their third president and to the subsequent Trustees for their unfailing support of the Foundation's mission and of me personally.

Thanks to spectacular staff members, who come to work every day with energy, passion and an unquenchable will to fulfill our mission. They know all too well one of the lessons I have learned, that social change comes hard, but they never seem to lose their enthusiasm.

Thanks to our grantees, who work so diligently to help us fulfill the Foundation's mission. Not surprisingly, given our eclectic set of grantmaking strategies, our grantees come in all sorts of packages. What they share is a devotion to their work.

It is not easy for me to leave The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Our work here is truly precious. The work is a lot harder than many on the outside probably suspect, but the cause is glorious and the rewards are great. I depart with the mixed sense of loss of such a wonderful job and pride that the institution is stronger now than when I arrived in July 1990. My personal pride is tempered by the realization that at the end of her tenure, my successor, Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, will undoubtedly make the same statement.

Thanks to all of you for all that you have given to the Foundation, to our mission and to me. I am excited to see what paths Risa takes the Foundation down, and I will be cheering all of you on loudly, from afar.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven A. Schroeder". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Steven A. Schroeder, M.D.  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*  
*December 2002*