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**October 3, 2011**

**For Immediate Release**

### **Roehlkepartain Named Acting President and CEO**

**Minneapolis, Minn.**—Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Executive Vice President of Search Institute, has been named Acting President and CEO of the Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization, following the October 2 death of Peter L. Benson, who had served as President and CEO since 1985.

“Losing a visionary leader such as Peter Benson can be challenging for a nonprofit organization,” said Morris Goodwin, Chairman of Search Institute’s Board of Directors. “Fortunately, Peter was a collaborative leader who built a strong leadership team under Gene’s guidance. The Board of Directors is confident in Gene’s ability to guide the organization into a new phase of work.”

“It is a great honor to lead Search Institute during this transition,” Roehlkepartain said. “I look forward to working with the Board of Directors and the Executive Leadership Team to continue implementing our strategic plan and continuing the important legacy that is left behind following the death of my friend and mentor, Peter Benson.”

Roehlkepartain worked closely with the late Dr. Peter L. Benson for 20 years in guiding the Institute’s work on Developmental Assets, the growth of its community transformation approach, and, most recently, the introduction of the theory and research on youth thriving, with the central idea of the power of young people’s “sparks” or passions. In addition to sharing overall leadership for the organization over the last three years of Dr. Benson’s life, Benson and Roehlkepartain collaborated on numerous projects and publications on youth, family, and community development.

Roehlkepartain combines a background in communication with scholarly interests in education and human development to articulate and promote practical strategies and resources to strengthen families, schools, and communities for and with young people. He has written or edited more than 30 books and research reports, and hundreds of articles and chapters.

Since joining Search Institute in 1991, Roehlkepartain has helped to expand the nonprofit organization and its reach through establishing a publishing program and developing the links between the Institute’s scientific research and its community engagement strategies, tools, and services.

In addition to providing overall leadership of the organization with Dr. Benson, Roehlkepartain has led the organization's research department, its work with families, and its recent global expansion through partnerships with international relief and development organizations.

Roehlkepartain joined the staff of Search Institute in 1991, serving first as its director of publications. He served in a variety of other leadership roles prior to becoming Vice President in 2008 and Executive Vice President in January 2011. He has a bachelor's degree from Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and is currently completing his doctorate at the University of Minnesota.

Search Institute is an independent nonprofit organization with a mission to provide catalytic leadership, breakthrough knowledge, and innovative resources to advance the health of children, youth, families, and communities. Drawing on extensive research, Search Institute brings innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in the lives of young people and their communities. The premier example of this work is the framework of Developmental Assets, the most widely recognized approach to positive youth development in North America and, increasingly, around the world. The institute was founded in 1958 by Merton P. Strommen. For more information, visit [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org).