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VITA

Christine Marie Beier was born in Hammond, Indiana on September 1, 1966, the daughter of Margaret Minogue Beier (now Heyl) and William Earl Beier. After completing her work at Glenbard South High School, Glen Ellyn, Illinois, in 1984, she entered The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She received the Bachelor of Arts from University of Illinois in December, 1987. She worked in London from March until August, 1988 when she entered the Graduate School at The University of Washington in Seattle. She completed one year of study toward the Master of Arts in English Literature.

Between 1989 and 1995 Chris developed her commitment to social justice issues, working and volunteering in the non-profit sector in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. In 1996 she moved to Austin, Texas and founded Cabeceras Aid Project, a 501(c)(3) organization formed to assist isolated indigenous communities in the Amazon Basin in maintaining and improving their well-being in the face of rapid social change. Between 1997 and 1999, Chris spent 20 months doing independent research and humanitarian work in Peru. In September, 1999 she entered The Graduate School at The University of Texas.

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