

# Alternatives to Marriage Project Announces New Executive Director

August 2005

The Alternatives to Marriage Project (AtMP) is thrilled to announce that Lisa-Nicolle (Nicky) Grist has been selected as AtMP's new executive director. Nicky comes to AtMP with extensive experience managing and growing non-profit organizations. For the past eight years, she's served as the executive director of Neighbors Helping Neighbors, a Brooklyn, New York-based housing counseling organization. Like AtMP, Neighbors Helping Neighbors hired Nicky to take the reins from the organization's founder, and during her tenure she more than doubled the budget to over \$600,000, grew the organization to 10 full-time staff people plus consultants and volunteers, greatly diversified its financial support, and strengthened its board of directors. Previously, she worked as the Project Manager of New Destiny Housing Corp, an agency that builds housing for low-income survivors of domestic violence.

"Nicky was chosen from a highly competitive pool of applicants," said AtMP's co-founder Marshall Miller. "She brings an incredible combination of experience, skills, and passion to this new position. She is exactly the type of person we hoped would lead this organization through its next stage." AtMP was founded in 1998 by Miller and his partner, Dorian Solot, With this hiring, AtMP will move its headquarters from Albany, NY to New York City, where Nicky is currently based.

Nicky graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Yale University. She holds a masters degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and an Executive Program certificate from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

"For Marshall and me, this transition is a little like watching our baby grow up," said Solot, AtMP's current executive director. "I'm delighted to know AtMP will be in such good hands as it continues to grow under Nicky's leadership. I think AtMP's supporters around the country and the world are going to be impressed by what's ahead."

Nicky has worked in community development since 1987, in local and federal government, foundations, research institutions and community-based non-profit organizations in New York City and Nairobi, Kenya. She lives in New York with her life partner, Doyle, tending their roof-garden and their collections of teapots, LPs, Navajo rugs, and bronze gorillas.

Nicky said she was drawn to AtMP's mission, particularly its blend of practical advice with policy advocacy and its ability to bridge the straight and GLBT communities. "I look forward to learning from Dorian and the wise and brave volunteers who have already put AtMP on the map," she said.

"Although we are sad to see Dorian leave after all she has done for AtMP, we are absolutely delighted to have Nicky on board," said Meaghan Lamarre, chair of the board of directors. "With her extraordinary qualifications and passion for our issues, we are confident that she is the right person to take AtMP to the next level."

Nicky's tenure as Executive Director will formally begin on November 1, 2005. Co-founders Miller and Solot will continue to be involved with the organization during the transition period and beyond.

#### About the Alternatives to Marriage Project:

The Alternatives to Marriage Project advocates for equality and fairness for unmarried people, including people who choose not to marry, cannot marry, or live together before marriage. We provide support and information for this fast-growing constituency, fight discrimination on the basis of marital status, and educate the public and policymakers about relevant social and economic issues. We believe that marriage is only one of many acceptable family forms, and that society should recognize and support healthy relationships in all their diversity. AtMP is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.