Annual Report for 2005

As a grassroots organization funded entirely by people who value our mission, our challenge is to transform society: individual experiences, cultural beliefs, and institutional behaviors. Social change takes time and hard work, so we must also build sustainable capacity. This year our donors, volunteers and advisors can take pride in AtMP’s accomplishments on all counts.

Transforming Society:
- Our website (www.unmarried.org) makes people feel visible and validated, as evidenced by hundreds of visitor comments like this one: “My partner and I are boycotting legal marriage until access to marriage is recognized as an issue of human rights, and access ... is provided to all. Our 10th anniversary is June 3, 2005, and we are having a family-recognized commitment ceremony.... Thank you for helping us understand that we are not alone, that our choices are part of something much bigger than ourselves that has the potential power to change the idiosyncratic laws of this nation.”
- By appearing in hundreds of media outlets each year, AtMP shapes the public conversation about marital status as a social justice issue. For example, when Voice of America broadcast a report on “America’s Changing Family” in December 2005, an estimated worldwide audience of more than 100 million people heard an AtMP board member argue that there is no direct correlation between parents’ marital status and children’s overall success in life.
- AtMP sent scores of letters to Congress advocating against the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito and against the use of federal anti-poverty money to promote marriage. AtMP’s advocacy follows the guidelines of, and is duly reported to, federal and state regulators.

Building Capacity:
- Our active mailing list grew by 27% to over 8,000. Over 1,000 of the new subscribers were members of Unmarried America (formerly a division of the American Association for Single People). Our organizations have a long history of collaboration, and we were honored when Tom Coleman passed the torch of advocacy to AtMP in April 2005.
- Founders Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot had announced their intentions to move on in late 2004. From January - March 2005, dozens of people from around the country and world advised AtMP’s board of directors on critical issues and actions. These powerful conversations among stakeholders resulted in a careful transition process, clear recruiting criteria, and an optimistic vision of AtMP’s future.

Mission Statement:
The Alternatives to Marriage Project (AtMP) advocates for equality and fairness for unmarried people, including people who are single, 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.
AtMP’s national search committee used a rigorous screening process to select a new Executive Director from a large, strong pool of candidates. Since prudent hiring is best followed by thorough coaching, the board of directors (now including both founders) remains intensely involved in transferring ATMP’s knowledge and operations.

During this successful transition, it was gratifying to receive IRS confirmation of its advance ruling: based on our record of public support, ATMP is officially a public charity. The organization and donations it receives are still exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3).

Goals for 2006:

In November 2005, ATMP’s annual planning retreat adopted the following goals and objectives.

- Transforming the experience of being unmarried: We will convene a network of legal and financial professionals, produce our newsletter quarterly, and maintain our popular website.
- Transforming cultural beliefs: We will work proactively with media through press releases and letters to editors.
- Transforming public policy: We will highlight the unfair role of marital status in access to health insurance, monitor federal spending on marriage promotion, and explore other topics where ATMP’s national perspective and grassroots volunteers can add value.
- Building capacity: We will add more board members and raise $43,000 (20% more than ever before) to support an effective infrastructure of staff and technology.

Many thanks to our 2005 donors!

We have made every effort to report gifts from donors accurately. Thank you for contacting us if you discover an error or omission.

Benefactors ($1,000 - $4,999): Alexandra Chasin, Martha Ehrenfeld, Gerard Palmieri, Catherine E. Reuben, Spectrum Institute.

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