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# Alternatives to Marriage PROJECT

## Annual Report for 2006

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### *Why and how AtMP works for justice:*

Unmarried people are one of America's fastest-growing demographic groups. Over 50% of American households are unmarried; over 43% of adults (all races, both sexes, over age 18) are unmarried; over 31% of children (under 18) live in unmarried households; almost 40% of new parents are unmarried. It is in our nation's best interest to deal with these facts realistically and positively.

Marital status discrimination is both social and institutional. Society's excessive focus on marriage generates shared interests among a wide variety of people: it affects all ages, races, orientations, beliefs. All unmarried individuals and families are excluded from social, legal and economic benefits that could help them thrive.

Issues of marriage and family are at the forefront of politics and the media. Rather than assume that all people should marry, or would want to if they could, AtMP honors the dynamic, successful individuals and relationships that already exist. Our newsletter, listserv and website are mirrors in which unmarried people see themselves. Our policy reports, press releases, and media appearances are windows through which students, legislators, parents and pundits see unmarried people woven vibrantly through the social fabric.

AtMP has a unique perspective and an impressive track record. AtMP's work is transformative, reshaping society to match our vision in three ways. First, we improve the experience of being unmarried by providing visibility, validation and tools for personal problem solving. Second, we convert public beliefs about unmarried people by accurately presenting reality. Third, we influence governments and corporations to bring their policies up to date by identifying problems, recommending solutions, and engaging the public to press for change.

AtMP's leaders are optimistic and down-to-earth. We have an ambitious five-year plan to increase AtMP's impact by increasing its capacity; we are proceeding methodically toward our goals by setting practical work plans and budgets. The board of directors emphasizes accountability and self-assessment, while the executive director evaluates the success of each project; this discipline ensures that unmarried people will win results through AtMP.

### *Special accomplishments in 2006:*

- ❑ AtMP's campaign against marriage discrimination educated and energized hundreds of voters to oppose amendments to their state constitutions. This campaign involved 30 AtMP members in Arizona, Wisconsin and Virginia, supported by eight volunteers in New York. Our efforts succeeded: Arizona voters rejected the proposed amendment. This victory demonstrates a number of important points: marital status discrimination is unjust; the marriage movement has over-reached itself; and unmarried people have shared interests that make them politically powerful.
- ❑ Our membership base grew to over 9,100 subscribers, including over 1,600 people who joined this year. Over 100 people attended membership events in Boston, New York, San Francisco and Washington DC.
- ❑ AtMP released more public statements than ever, sending the unmarried point of view to over 1,100 reporters and editors nationwide. Titles of our 2006 statements included:
  - Federal Grants to Promote Marriage Are Bad Public Policy
  - Housing Laws Must Prohibit Marital Status Discrimination: Black Jack, MO City Council is Anti-Family
  - Vote No on Marriage Amendment: All Families Deserve Equal Protection, Benefits and Respect
  - AtMP Calls for Social & Political Respect for the Unmarried Majority
  - Defeat of AZ Prop 107 Proves that Unmarried Concerns Resonate for Majority of Voters
  - AtMP Offers Talking Points to Laura Bush, Condoleezza Rice, and All Friends of Unmarried People

(continued on page 2)

**2006 Income & Expenses**

Donations	35,258
Net sales	<u>1,431</u>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$36,689</b>
Personnel	27,600
Professional fees	60
Postage & delivery	2,002
Office supplies & equipment	1,171
Printing & reproduction	2,232
Travel, training & conferences	1,135
Credit card processing	993
Telephone	724
Dues & subscriptions	<u>254</u>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$36,171</b>
<b>Net income</b>	<b>\$518</b>
<b>Net assets at 12/31/06</b>	<b>\$28,752</b>

You can view AtMP's annual financial report to the IRS at [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org), or receive a copy by calling 718-788-1911.

- ❑ We answered legal and financial questions for 89 people who contacted AtMP about common law marriage or unmarried rights and responsibilities. In 23 cases, we obtained detailed responses from professionals.
- ❑ AtMP and its members made hundreds of media appearances, including: *TV*: MSNBC, WABC TV local San Francisco, WNBC TV local NYC, New England Cable News; *Radio*: CNN, NPR's Justice Talking & Weekend America, Fox's WKBN Ohio, Air America's KOPT Washington, CBS's WPHT Philadelphia, Satellite's XM 169 "The Power" and Sirius "Wake Up with Cosmo"; *Print*: Washington Post and its syndication affiliates, Boston Globe Magazine, Philadelphia Inquirer, USA Today, Newsweek, Time Out NY, Washington Times, Pittsburgh Tribune, Sacramento Bee, Roanoke Times, Salt Lake Tribune, Baltimore Sun, Bay Area Reporter, National Catholic Register, Columbia Journalism Service; *Online*: salon.com, womenwallstreet.com, reason.com, planetwaves.net, marketwatch.com, moneycentral.msn.com, csindy.com.
- ❑ AtMP protested the Boston Globe's withdrawal of domestic partnership benefits from its Massachusetts-based employees, explaining that it is not fair to cover only the families of married employees, even where same-sex marriage is allowed. Globe employees were compelled to marry to keep their partners covered.

- ❑ We expanded our coverage of politics and public policy in print and online, with new articles and web pages on topics such as immigration, housing, health care, and welfare-funded marriage programs. AtMP's newsletter and website encourage readers to take action on issues that affect unmarried people, through new "What You Can Do" features in most policy-oriented articles.

*Objectives in 2007:*

- ❑ Publish a fully updated edition of *Let Them Eat Wedding Rings*, offering guidelines for the critical evaluation of government-funded marriage programs.
- ❑ Work with health care reform organizations to ensure that their platforms explicitly critique marital status discrimination.
- ❑ Address more of the issues that affect singles - as well as cohabiting couples and diverse families - in our membership newsletter, *Alternatives to Marriage Update*.
- ❑ Continue to expand the politics and public policy section of [www.unmarried.org](http://www.unmarried.org). Add new topics such as federal income taxes and health insurance. Add more resources and action alerts to help web visitors and members take action locally.
- ❑ Mobilize AtMP members to fight ballot measures proposing marriage discrimination amendments to their state constitutions.
- ❑ Make [www.unmarried.org](http://www.unmarried.org) more interactive, and easier to maintain, by implementing a new content management system.



*2006 Board of Directors*  
 Standing, left to right:  
 Martha Ehrenfeld,  
 Executive Director Nicky  
 Grist, Julie Bluhm, Jennifer  
 Gaboury, Mark Neil,  
 Meaghan Lamarre, Jo  
 VanEvery, Marshall Miller.  
 Seated: Dorian Solot, with  
 Charlie the cat.

*Many thanks to our 2006 donors!*

*Benefactors \$1000 and more...* Alexandra Chasin, Martha Ehrenfeld, Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot, Gerard Palmieri, Nancy Polikoff, Catherine E. Reuben. *Sustainers \$500-999...* Ashton Applewhite and Bob Stein, C.T. Butler, Ulla Figwer and Dave Goss, Jennifer Gaboury and Jay Goldfinger, Woody Glenn, Alan Hamilton, Pepper Greene, and Pete Chvany, Frederick Hertz, Robert M. Jackson, John Kilguss, Mark Neil, Mark Schubin and Karen McLaughlin, Jo VanEvery, Peter Voit, Sarah Wright. *Leaders \$250-499...* Abe Doherty and John Osborne, John Gillis, Suzanne Miller and Walter vom Saal, Susan and Charles McLean, Roger Lake, Anita Bernstein, Deborah Dillon, Jaye Fox, Deva Kyle and Daniel Periera, Meaghan Lamarre, Ann Schranz, Will Marcotte, Tom Amoroso, Amy S. Glesius and Roger Buelow, Jeremy Pittman, John Reuben, Amber Settle and André Berthiaume, Richard Sposato and Claia Bryja. *Friends \$100-249...* Julie Bluhm and Stephen Gumnit, Virginia Brock, Melinda Brown and Lou Sortman, Michael Cammer and Dianne Cox, Deborah Chalfie, Randall Chamberlain, Katie Chang, Janna Cordeiro and Sebastian Toomey, Sandra C. Cunha, Ralph & Sally Donofrio, Lisa Duggan, Paula Ettelbrick and Suzanne Goldberg, Janie Fronek and Ken Heskestad, Diana Gabriel, Rajiv Garg, David Glassman, Roland and Carol Glenn, Elaine Grist and Bill Tuohy, Ray Grist, Reri Grist, Lisa Healey, April Herms and Lexi Adams, Alison Johnson, Brad Johnson and Russ Luke, Gretchen Kehde and Jon Soroko, Gloria Kiestler, Roger Kohn, Mike Leibensperger, Alice Leibowitz, Bethany Letiecq, Zoe Mizuho, Emil E. Parker and Anne C. Pfitzer, Dante Picchioni,



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*And many thanks to our 2006 volunteers, activists, advisors & media voices!*

*Arizona ...* Marty Kay Grant, Joan Grussing, James LionHeart, Brent McAlister, Stuart Platt, Jennifer Reid, Monique Sidy, Amber Stanley, Kristi Swisher. *California ...* Blythe Collier & Bob Simpson, Janna Cordeiro & Sebastian Toomey, Bella DePaulo, Martha Ehrenfeld, John Gillis, Frederick Hertz, Roger Lake, Susan MacCulloch & Steven White, Gerard Palmieri, Kay Trimberger. *Connecticut ...* Jaclyn Geller. *Cyberspace...* Aja Bain, Natasha Harris, Hector Zarate. *Washington, DC ...* Yvonne Farrell, Nancy Polikoff, Dennis J. Ventry, Jr. *Florida...* David Hirsch, Diana Leigh Waldron. *Georgia...* David Tallman. *Illinois...* Julie Lambert, Mark Neil, Amber Settle.

*Kentucky...* Josh Blair, Deborah Dillon, Dr. Karen Gail Lewis. *Massachusetts...* Thomas A. Amoroso, John L. Bell, Ulla Figwer & Dave Goss, Brian Flaherty, Woody Glenn, Mary Gniadek, Sheeri Kritzer, Linda Lee, Dana Levit, Susan Moore, Jeremy Pittman, Catherine E. Reuben, Sarah Rowley, Sarah Wright. *Maryland...* C.T. Butler, Barry Hale, Loraine Hutchins, Meaghan Lamarre, George Petersen. *Minnesota...* Julie Bluhm, James A. Larson, Brett Hudoba. *Missouri...* Billie Jo Stoddard. *Mississippi...* Roger Brokaw. *New Jersey...* Alan Gross & Skip Drumm. *Nevada...* Monita Boesewetter & Frank Ambler. *New York...* Ashton Applewhite & Bob Stein, Michael Cammer & Dianne Cox, Lisa Duggan, Leah Foster, Lara Funderburk, Jennifer Gaboury, Diana Gabriel, David Glassman, April Herms, Michele Hirsch, Paul Jean, Will Marcotte, Beth Mirarchi, Meghan Peer, Margaret Prime, Diana Sarhan, Andrew Semegram, Richard Semegram, Dorian Solot & Marshall Miller, Ana Weibgen.



*Ohio...* Amy Glesius. *Oklahoma...* Joy Whitman & Don Sullivan. *Ontario...* Jo VanEvery. *Pennsylvania...* Robert P. Gasparro, 'Becca Stallings. *Rhode Island...* Janie Fronek, John Kilguss. *Texas...* Mary M. Hearnes, B. J. Tucker & Tom Clark. *Virginia...* Michael Blankenship, Paul Byrtus, Karen Carter, Becky Clark, Laura Crepeau, Alana Groshong, Joann Havach, Kathleen Hoyt, Don Krapf, Deva Kyle, Jonathan Krall, Ann Lane, Mark R. Letzkus, Shari Motro, Madeline Roberts. Bernadette Wright. *Washington...* Stephanie Coontz, Victoria Miller. *Wisconsin...* Mary Klehr, Lisa McAdams Taylor, Lorri Nandrea, Antonia Oelke, Ann Porter, Rudy Senarighi.

*We make every effort to report your contributions accurately. Thank you for contacting us if you discover an error or omission.*



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*Real things that real people have really written to us:*

- ❖ I finally found people who UNDERSTAND!!!
- ❖ Joining this group has given me a huge psychological boost, and strengthened my non-married relationship. After years of having family, friends and strangers give me negative feedback about my choice to remain unmarried, it is nice to finally get some positive feedback!
- ❖ I think your site is a breath of fresh air and FINALLY somebody is speaking out about us single-by-choice people! I'm not a lemming! I think for myself and I think you are doing the public a great service by speaking out on our behalf and soliciting input from various groups. Good show and I'll support you!
- ❖ I just feel that marriage is a highly personal choice, and that people shouldn't be "forced" into it to obtain health coverage, pension benefits, etc for their partners. I'm very happy to finally find an organization devoted to this point of view.
- ❖ Thanks for all the work you guys are doing.
- ❖ With the myriad of articles stating the destiny of children born out of wedlock to be that of poverty and pain, it is nice to finally have a place to go that is supportive of committed relationships without being legally bound.
- ❖ I just feel so relieved to know that you are out there. I knew there were others like my partner and me, but until I heard about you, I felt so alone.
- ❖ Mike and I really want to figure out something that works for us, while at the same time supporting our friends and the ideas that we feel are really important. Your helping us find a way to do that is really special. I'm so glad that you are out there!
- ❖ I'm so glad you exist.

*Our 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.