

dear friends,

2011 was a year of major change for the Alternatives to Marriage Project. In spring, Nicky Grist, AtMP’s Executive Director since 2005, was recruited by the National Urban League to serve as its Director of Evaluation. Nicky was instrumental in helping AtMP grow into an organization with paid staff and 10,000 members. She continued the media and advocacy work initiated by the Alternatives to Marriage Project’s founders. Nicky strengthened AtMP’s reputation as the best resource for issues concerning unmarried persons in the United States.

After Nicky’s departure, the AtMP Board of Directors divided up ongoing responsibilities and conducted a thorough search for our new leader. We found this leader in Cindy Butler, a nonprofit executive and coach. Cindy built her career around supporting underserved and underrepresented populations, both in the U.S. and internationally.

Cindy brings extensive entrepreneurial experience to AtMP. This will be valuable in directing the next growth phase of the Alternatives to Marriage Project. Cindy lives in Seattle, WA, and the Alternatives to Marriage Project headquarters has been moved there. The opportunity to tap into the resources of the West Coast, and Seattle in particular, is exciting.

In the spring of 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau released data collected during the 2010 Census. We now possess additional evidence that over the past 50 years, the U.S. has experienced a decline in the number of people entering into marriage. More people than ever live solo, as unmarried couples, or in unmarried families.

We will take advantage of opportunities for growth found in this moment in history. The extensive media coverage of the new Census data gave AtMP a platform from which to launch outreach and education campaigns. The upcoming elections also offer opportunities to share our view that discrimination based on marital status is not acceptable. What matters is relationship health, not the external form of relationships.

Our individual donors continue to be the lifeblood of the organization. Without your support, we would not be able to continue to work on your behalf. Thank you! We are deeply grateful for your commitment to our mission.

Ann Schranz
Chair, AtMP Board of Directors
While **many** of our constituents complete surveys when they join our email list, we wanted to get some specific feedback on priorities for 2012. The topics most on the minds of our readers were overwhelmingly the economics of being unmarried and health care. Advocacy on the national and local level remain the AtMP activities most desired, with the surprising addition of procuring discounts for unmarried persons on products and services that are generally marketed to married families.

We recived lots of helpful comments and personal viewpoints. Here are a few:

> With gay marriage victories, make sure that we retain a diversity of relationship recognition options like domestic partnerships and civil unions, and acknowledging the values of these unmarried families. Help explain people's individual stories of why they choose not to marry, which is hard for some to understand.”

> “Keep doing what you are doing. Marriage should simply not be a factor in government or corporate policy.”

**Survey continued on next page**

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**Hundreds of people support AtMP’s work—thank you all!**

**Supportive Community**


Special thanks to Rebecca Levine for providing design services for this Annual Report, and to Ulla Figwer, our book order fulfillment volunteer. We make every effort to record names and contributions accurately. Please contact us at atmp@unmarried.org to make any corrections!
Advocacy
- Promoted National Healthcare Decisions Day to encourage AtMP supporters to prepare legally binding documents for health and life care decisions.
- Led campaign to fight for rights of unmarried families in MI.
- Promoted National Adoption Month and petitioned Congress regarding child placement based on marital status.

Education
- Sponsored Singles Empowerment Workshop in San Francisco featuring singles advocate Rachel Buddeberg.
- Distributed monthly newsletter.
- Remained foremost resource for information about unmarried living.

Research
- Initiated studies on the effects of marital status discrimination on health and healthcare and to track the record of welfare-related marriage promotion programs.

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I want my daughters to have an educated choice (about marriage) but there’s so much focus on the fairy-tale wedding and very little education on the cons of marriage...There’s very little fine print on that marriage license and a lot of obligations.”

“The basic assumption that marriage is the normal and normative state of human existence and that there is something lacking or temporary about being unmarried is still being perpetuated. I do think stories and cultural and artistic efforts to depict a non-married life as a valid (and even interesting, worthwhile, etc.) life choice is important.”

I believe it’s important to frame many, if not most, of our concerns as civil rights issues. Singles of all stripes are deprived of benefits that are assumed to be “rights” for married people. Having a single frame could unify, if not simplify, our work.”
The Alternatives to Marriage Project (AtMP) advocates equality and fairness for all 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.

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