

Astraea LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

# threads



## Special Report: Astraea's 2nd Giving and Activism Retreat

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Katherine with Ella (top) and Julia

## letter from the executive director

This past winter I attended two Elmo-themed birthday parties within weeks of one another. (Elmo is the beloved red, furry character featured on the children’s television show, *Sesame Street*.) So, there I was wearing an Elmo hat with Ella in Chicago, and eating Elmo cake with Julia in Brooklyn.

Both one-year-olds are radiant, hilarious and increasingly willful little people. They love the slide, their books and their moms — all four of whom work in the social change field. Blessed and privileged, they are each surrounded by a loving community of family and friends.

As we sang and made birthday wishes, I thought not just of Ella and Julia’s future, but of our collective future. I envisioned the kind of world that we as progressive people are working toward. And as often happens during moments of joy and gratitude, I was reminded of why I — and all of us — do this work.

The parties came on the heels of another — very different — event which also celebrated community and looked toward the future. At *Astraea’s 2nd Giving and Activism Retreat*, we not only envisioned a better world, but laid the groundwork to create one.

For four electric days, activists from around the world shared stories of how their work, supported by Astraea, is changing the landscape for queer people.

We were introduced to the groundbreaking success of the *lala* (loosely translated: lesbian) community in China and the *travesti* (trans) community in Buenos Aires; and were inspired by New York City activists working to keep public space safe and accessible to queer and LGBTI youth. There was a provocative analysis of the religious right in the United States, and strategies for progressive organizing moving forward. And riveting accounts were given of brave LGBTI activism in Zimbabwe, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Texas.

I had the opportunity to speak on behalf of Astraea’s *Philanthropy of Inclusion* practices — our belief that everyone, regardless of income or giving amounts, can participate in philanthropy. And I was delighted to sit alongside several women’s foundation colleagues who delved into strategies designed to expand the pool of funding for women and the LGBTI community.

Speaker after speaker underscored the reality that the future is not just about the LGBTI or progressive movement. Nor is it about a single set of issues, whether gender justice or racial equality. *Our work*, if we are to survive, *must incorporate all issues, all communities and all movements*.

Some might say it’s an overused term, but I use it quite deliberately here: it’s about the *intersections*. It’s about the individual threads of our world connecting and supporting one another. It’s about people and everyday lived experiences. It’s why we titled Astraea’s newsletter — which includes a feature on the Retreat — *threads*.

For me, the birthdays and the Retreat are closely linked. They remind me that amidst the daily struggle for a better world, there has to be community and joy. And celebration is an important part of our work, too. It doesn’t diminish the daily grappling with the small and large issues. It just sweetens the process.

In peace,

*Katherine*

Katherine T. Acey

FRONT COVER:  
Counterclockwise from top left:  
Alex Lee, Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersex (TGI) Justice Project, San Francisco, CA, USA; WANG Ping, Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan, Taipei; Brenda Funches, Astraea Board Chair, Santa Fe, NM, USA; Katrina Franklin and Felicia Miller, Donors, Dallas, TX, USA; Zawadi Nyong’o, Urgent Action Fund, Nairobi, Kenya; shash yázhí, Astraea Board, Oakland, CA, USA; Alice Y. Hom, Astraea Board, Los Angeles, CA, USA

## Astraea’s 2nd giving and activism retreat: funding change and strengthening communities around the world

It was the opening of Astraea’s overwhelmingly successful Giving & Activism Retreat, and eighty-five people from around the world were engrossed in conversation. They sat knee to knee, shoulder to shoulder. For four dynamic days in November, activists and donors shared stories, strategies and transformative moments. Many of them met as strangers, but by the time they returned to homes in Zimbabwe, China, Chicago and New Mexico, they had become friends and allies.

Conceived and hosted by Astraea, the Retreat was the second in a series for women and trans people committed to supporting global LGBTI social justice organizations. This year’s theme of global activism mirrors Astraea’s grantmaking focus — just this year, grants totaled \$1.3 million to 168 organizations in 93 cities and 42 countries. As the world’s only lesbian-led, feminist foundation focused on both U.S. and international LGBTI human rights, the Retreat series is an organic component of Astraea’s mission.

“We wanted to give donors and activists the opportunity to connect in a unique and visceral way,” said Katherine Acey, Astraea’s Executive Director. “And by all



“At the Retreat, rather than seeing obstruction in difference, we rejoiced in our mutual inspirations and encouragements.” CHEN Yurong, Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan

Spirited dialogue filled the day sessions, and celebration and culture filled the evenings. The Dallas Women’s Foundation co-sponsored a special opening reception with Astraea; and there was a surprise recognition of colleague, friend and founding donor of Astraea’s International Fund which was celebrating its tenth anniversary. Participants enjoyed an array of film screenings by Astraea grantees, and a powerful performance from poet Sharon Bridgforth. So moved were participants by the Retreat that they organized a surprise tribute (see page 8) to Astraea, speaking from the heart and publicly pledging to support Astraea — for some, indefinitely.



“The Retreat challenged me to reconsider myself as a philanthropist, to see philanthropy as a form of activism.” Tucker Farley, Donor

accounts, we succeeded. People left Dallas infused with new ideas and energy, feeling invigorated and inspired. They also came away with the critical understanding that philanthropy is not a goal, but rather a *tool* of social justice — something they can participate in fully.”

With plenaries (see pages 4-7) and workshops ranging from *Countering the Right: Mobilizing Our Communities* to *Socially Responsible Giving*, participants explored that powerful tool by sharing personal and collective giving practices, and examining the state of LGBTI activism worldwide.



“No one else is doing the work that Astraea does in the way that it does it: directing financial resources where they are needed most and where they will be used to affect real change in queer people’s lives.” Kris Hermanns, Donor

Retreat photos: Jennifer Einhorn





PLENARY 1

## countering the right: mobilizing our communities

Jean Hardisty and Alejandra Sardá opened the Retreat with a provocative analysis of how to mobilize our communities and counter tactics launched by the religious and political right. A well funded and highly organized machine, the right's success at framing and shaping national and international policy continues to consume valuable time and resources from the LGBTI community.

Jean Hardisty, founder of Political Research Associates, in Boston, Massachusetts, has studied the religious and political right in the United States for thirty years. She shared a four prong strategy designed to keep activists educated and buoyant during a time she described as the worst political climate since the Vietnam War.

"Do your homework," she urged. "If we don't understand why there is a resurgence of the right wing in this country, and we don't have a complex analysis of that resurgence, we will fight with simplistic slogans and apply pressure in the wrong places."

She also counseled against caricaturing the right using demonizing language — a tactic often used against the LGBTI community, and one which ultimately precludes all possibility of dialogue. "The right are not uneducated rednecks and fools," Hardisty reiterated. "They are middleclass believers who often feel they are looked down upon and shut out in society. And we share many of their concerns about materialism, consumerism, TV culture and violence."



Jean Hardisty, Author & Commentator

Hardisty advised activists to resist compromising in order to make political headway. "Racism, torture, the distribution of wealth, religious intolerance, victimization of those who are marginalized — we know where we stand on these issues," she declared. "There is no room for compromise here."

Alejandra Sardá, Coordinator of Mulabi — Latin American Space for Sexualities and Rights, in Buenos Aires, Argentina noted the insidious and prominent role fear plays in the Argentinean religious and political right. "Fear," she warned, "immobilizes us. And unless we overcome that, we will always be at a disadvantage."

Slowly but surely, many citizens are bravely transcending that very real fear. Sardá spoke of women marching in the streets and demanding safe and legal access to abortion; this, despite the certainty that their President, fearing reprisals from the powerful Church, is set to block any such legislation. She shared stories of citizens accessing power in new ways: workers occupying vacated

factories and transforming them into successful cooperatives; and citizens, without becoming a formal part of government, participating in municipal decision making.

Sardá also imparted a message of hope, solidarity and resistance to progressives living in the United States. "Having grown up under a dictatorship," she said, "I know how it is to live in a country where your civil liberties are restricted, where your government is torturing people and killing people, and there is nothing you can do. The best thing you can do for yourselves and if you want to make a contribution to the world at large, is to work locally to confront your government. It is very hard on the outside of the U.S. to hear the resistance, to see the resistance. I know that

everybody in this room is part of that, but we don't hear you enough...Be more vocal. Keep resisting."



"To me, power is the ability to transform oneself and to transform the world we all live in." Alejandra Sardá, Mulabi — Latin American Space for Sexualities and Rights

PLENARY 2

## spanning the globe

This panel featured six activists whose work and commitment to LGBTI justice have transformed the way that people live in their communities and regions. Each shared political conditions and key trends that inform their work, and highlighted pivotal success stories and strategies. The following is a mere glimpse of the session, which provided an in-depth and detailed account of global activism.

**TAIPEI, TAIWAN** WANG Ping, Secretary General of Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan (G/SRAT) knows a good news story when she sees it. So, last year when the mayor refused an invitation to attend a rainbow flag-raising ceremony, G/SRAT alerted the media to his pattern of hypocritical behavior toward the *tongzhi* (LGBT) community. While publicly professing support for *tongzhi*, he would rescind it amidst any hint of controversy. Taiwan remains beleaguered by the prevalent belief that *tongzhi* are a family shame. G/SRAT works to dismantle discrimination resulting from such prejudice, challenging government hypocrisy and insuring that *tongzhi* are visible and embraced. "We must always persevere until we get what we want," declared WANG. And in this instance, they did. Not only did the Mayor attend the event, but he presented the rainbow flag.

**HAIFA, ISRAEL** Amidst a climate of violence, homophobia and occupation, many members of **Aswat — Palestinian Gay Women** consider the organization a life-line. Begun in 2002 as an online discussion board, Aswat ("voices" in Arabic) has since launched a state-of-the-art website, an array of support groups and several educational projects. They work strategically, networking with other organizations in the region to discard a mantle of invisibility and combat the prevalent and multi-layered



"As a member of the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, we had several meetings with the Minister of Youth, Gender, and Employment to discuss how possible it would be to include same-sex relations within the domestic violence bill." Fadzai Muparutsa, Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe

discrimination that Palestinian gay women face on a daily basis. "Our power," their representative declared, "is not in choosing one identity over another, but insisting that there is a way to create space for all."

In **BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA**, *travestis* (loosely: trans people) suffer from widespread harassment and oppression. Cut off from conventional family, some 80% work as sex workers. In 2001, after learning that a program created as a result of a national food shortage was available only to those with children, **Lohana Berkins** took action. Founder and director of **ALITT (Asociación Lucha por la Identidad Travesti y Transexual)**, she and 100 activists successfully challenged the unjust city policy. "This is our family," they said. "We live 20 or 30 of us together, and we need food." The new policy provided access to not only the *travesti* community, but to all kinship groups in Buenos Aires — a small but critical step recognizing all families.

\*Alejandra Sardá spoke on behalf of Lohana Berkins, who was unable to attend.

**SAN ANTONIO, UNITED STATES** Graciela Sánchez works to build bridges — one person, and one campaign at a time. As the Executive Director of the **Esperanza Peace and Justice Center**, she believes that, "All of our work aims to cross borders



Svetlana Durkovic, Organization Q

and tear down walls." San Antonio, she explained, is home to Clear Channel, NAFTA's North American Development Bank and five military bases. Seventy percent people of color, the city boasts the highest number of gated communities per capita. "Our organizing," she continued, "must address multiple issues, for multiple systems and conditions divide us." Organizing around the Texas constitutional marriage amendment in 2005, the **Esperanza** convened over 100 diverse, progressive activists and formed roaming think tanks. They didn't succeed in defeating the amendment, but they overwhelmingly succeeded in serving as a catalyst for an unprecedented movement-building effort.

**HARARE, ZIMBABWE** In 1995, Zimbabwe's president declared that, "Gays and lesbians are worse than dogs and pigs and don't deserve any human rights." In the years that followed, freedom of assembly and freedom of the press were harshly curtailed, forcing most progressive organizing underground. Instead of succumbing to fear and pressure to disband, **Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)** grew their mission and membership, attracting more young, black, working-class activists — and creating a new Gender Department. Under the leadership of **Fadzai Muparutsa**, the department's Program Manager, the membership of lesbians has rapidly increased. In order to further counter the government-espoused notion that lesbians do not exist in African cultures, GALZ helped launch

the Coalition of African Lesbians. A body that today represents organizations from twelve countries, the Coalition works to increase lesbian and bisexual women's visibility throughout the African continent.

**SARAJEVO, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA** In 2006, Sarajevo streets were bursting with colorful rainbow ribbons. Made from swaths of t-shirts and sheets, the ribbons were the vehicle for Arts for Rights — a monthly event sponsored by the LGBTI group, **Organization Q**. In a region still scarred by the ravages of war, Organization Q champions the rights of all. It was the first LGBTI group in the region to actively incorporate trans and intersex issues into its work. Executive Director **Svetlana Durkovic** reported that while homosexuality is decriminalized in most of Eastern Europe, LGBTI activists still face continual "social discrimination, social exclusion, invisibility, violence, nationalism, racism and fascism." Organization Q is working to change that. After posting the rainbow ribbon photos online, they were flooded with anonymous requests. "We want to do the same thing," people wrote. "Just tell us how to make them."



Graciela Sánchez, Esperanza Peace and Justice Center



PLENARY 3

# living and working on the intersections

For many activists around the world doing the brave and nuanced work of social change, the term *intersections* characterizes their lives, their constituents, and their mission for a just future. The four activists on this panel work extensively across the boundaries of race, class, gender, sexual orientation and the many other obstacles that divide us from one another. **Suzanne Pharr, the renowned and accomplished organizer and author**, moderated the session and recalled her early introduction to intersectional work. Pharr acknowledged the women of the Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press —



"I cannot emphasize how important healthcare is...If you want to grow a trans community, start a health program." Alex Lee, Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersex (TGI) Justice Project

Audre Lorde, Barbara Smith, Cherríe Moraga, and Gloria Anzaldúa — citing their groundbreaking books about "living on the margins, on the edge and speaking truth from a place never spoken or published before." Vigorously rejecting the isolation of single issue politics, Pharr pointed to working across the intersections as the only strategy that will sustain and strengthen not just the LGBTI movement, but all change we seek.

According to Alex Lee, more than half of the transgender and gender variant community of the San Francisco area have been imprisoned at some point in their lives. Lee is an attorney and the Executive Director of the Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersex (TGI) Justice

Project, the only organization in the country dedicated to challenging and ending human rights abuses committed against transgender, gender variant/genderqueer and intersex people in California prisons and beyond. Utilizing a *trickle-up* theory of social change, TGIJP provides direct services and organizing support to those most marginalized — often low income trans women of color incarcerated in male prisons. They also build alliances outside of the LGBTI arena with women's coalitions and prisoners' rights groups. "People don't lead segmented lives," Lee explained. "And for an organization like ours that puts a lot of emphasis on organizing mass movements, we have to be able to engage mass numbers of people."

In 2001 state security police infiltrated and violently disbanded a Beijing *lala* (lesbian and bi women) cultural festival. **Jin Wu** reported that activists were detained, some fled the country, and many of those who remained communicated extensively online. Wu is a supporter of **Common Language**, the organization which in 2005 revitalized a *lala* community eager to mobilize and become visible. They issue the only lesbian print magazine in China, operate a 20 hour per week phone hotline, and have co-sponsored the 2nd



Bran Ali Fenner, FIERCE! (Fabulous, Independent, Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment)

Beijing Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Working with and on behalf of the entire LGBTI population — not just *lalas* — they've flown Rainbow kites over the Great Wall and organized a same-sex marriage street action featured in the *Beijing News*. "We hope," said Wu, "that our efforts will inspire support and participa-



Suzanne Pharr, Organizer, Strategist & Author

tion from all around us; thus propelling the entire society towards a direction of equality, tolerance, and openness."

"Public space in New York City," declared **Bran Ali Fenner**, "is increasingly becoming an added luxury, only for those who can afford it, criminalizing those who have nowhere else to go." Fenner is co-founder and co-director of **FIERCE! (Fabulous, Independent, Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment)**, the organization that gives voice and visibility to the lives, struggles and accomplishments of trans and queer youth of color in New York City. In recent years, many have been denied access to public spaces, former safe havens where they once accessed critical resources and created community. Forced to gather in unsafe areas and in smaller numbers, they have since endured an increase in harassment and physical violence. FIERCE! conducts outreach and organizing on the streets, in the shelters and in transitional programs to build community power. Their education programs, media advocacy work and meetings with city officials provide members with first-hand experience of activism and change in the making. In turn, youth become empowered, experiencing their struggle as inseparable from a larger historical and social movement.

PLENARY 4

# philanthropy: giving that sustains social change

Many human rights activists around the world derive core funding from progressive foundations — which are also operating in a heightened conservative political climate. Faced with an increase in funding restrictions and regulations, these progressive funders are observing change, but not necessarily transformation; and progress, but not always inclusion. In order to ensure that fundraising dollars reach the types of activists who so electrified the Retreat, many funding leaders are shifting course.

Each of the five leading feminist funders on this panel have created new grantmaking strategies, formed new networks, and helped reframe the business of social change philanthropy as we know it. They are thinking broadly, building relationships with new allies, and moving resources to those living in the margins of society. In a dynamic session, each shared how she is supporting the work of women of color, trans people and lesbians by using a social justice feminism framework and movement-building strategies.

**Katherine Acey**, Astraea's Executive Director noted the importance of naming these strategies: "We've always used the terms *feminist, social justice, intersections* and *connections*. Finding the language and being able to articulate these strategies more clearly, has been an evolution." The strategies, as recounted by the panelists, are working.

**Monique Mehta**, Executive Director of the **Third Wave Foundation**, referenced a grantmaking strategy which in one instance connected a group of unrelated activists around a core issue of reproductive rights. Immigrant rights and prison



Katherine Acey, Astraea Foundation

reform activists who had previously worked in isolation from one another, gained a unique opportunity to work across issues and communities.

**Sara Gould**, President and CEO of the **Ms. Foundation for Women**, cited a strategy connecting movements and issues. The New Women's Movement, a groundbreaking initiative begun by the Ford Foundation included Astraea, Third Wave, the Ms. Foundation and the Center for the Advancement of Women as founding members. Over the course of two years, this multi-racial/generational think tank convened 60 women leaders from U.S. national organizations. Together, they created new conversations, new alliances and new strategies to better connect the U.S. and global women's movements. The Ms. Foundation has embarked upon a strategic grantmaking initiative based on the outcomes of the New Women's Movement. Astraea is serving on the advisory board.

Building and sustaining such critical connections between U.S. and international funders were recurring themes throughout the Retreat, particularly with the funders on this panel. The founding representative of

the German foundation, **filia.die frauenstiftung**, highlighted its support for women outside Germany. And **Ana Criquillion**, chair of the **International Network of Women's Funds** and Executive Director of the **Central American Women's Foundation**, announced that the twenty women's funds that comprise the Network last year issued \$15 million to grassroots organizations around the world. Most of the grants, she reported, fund highly charged issues: "In Africa or in India, or in Latin America...even to say that you are working towards the right to get an abortion, or for lesbian groups is a risk for your life."



"The Retreat inspired me to believe that my philanthropy truly makes a difference, for individuals and for world-wide progressive social change." Susan Gore, Donor

As the only foundation in the world that funds LGBTI organizations operating both in the U.S. and internationally, Astraea acknowledged the high stakes for those activists and funders working on the front lines. "In order to create tangible and safe social change," urged Acey, "we must aggressively and strategically fund activists living in the margins and working at the intersections."

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|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>THANK YOU</b></p> <p>to the following for providing funding support:</p> | <p>The Strategic Giving Circle:</p> <p>Katherine Acey, Carol Alpert, Chela Blitt, Tucker Farley, Mai Kiang, Kathleen Russell, Karen Zelermyer</p> | <p>Ford Foundation</p> <p>Gill Foundation</p> <p>Merrill Lynch</p> <p>Dallas Women's Foundation</p> | <p>SPECIAL THANKS · Kerry Lobel, Retreat Coordinator · Filmmakers Tami Gold, Jody Laine and Shad Reinstein for documenting the Retreat · Heidi K. Murray, Director of Catering &amp; Conference Planning, Omni Mandalay Hotel · Becky Sykes, Executive Director, Dallas Women's Foundation</p> |
|--|---|---|--|

RETREAT  
HIGHLIGHTDiane  
Sabin

Diane Sabin, DC, has been a community activist since 1973. Currently she serves as the Executive Director of the Lesbian Health and Research Center at the University of California, San Francisco. Diane has a long history with Astraea. She served on the Board of Directors, co-hosted the launch of the Justice Social Program, and was the recipient of the Astraea Philanthropic Activism Award in 2001. Diane lives in San Francisco with her partner, the writer and activist Jewelle Gomez.

On the last morning of Astraea's 2006 Giving and Activism Retreat, there was barely a dry eye in the house. Streaming to the microphone to address the Astraea staff, members

and grantees alike spoke from the heart about Astraea's work, each committing a multi-year pledge to the Foundation. While Diane is reluctant to claim this idea as her own, ("I saw an opening, and then the idea became ours.") she is happy to reflect on her dedication to Astraea, and what led her to organize such a riveting act of collective support:

*"I love Astraea because of the connections you help forge; because you fund activists in parts of the world that I can't find on a map; and because there's a sense of family that extends from your New York City office to everyone who comes into contact with you.*

*The Retreat was extraordinary. The wisdom and multiple identities of the people gathered in that room was awe-inspiring. You harnessed that energy and created a space which helped break the taboo of talking*

*about money and class. You enabled people to deal with the complexity of that reality individually and collectively.*

*The Retreat also echoed Astraea's work by setting a tone of engagement and conversation. Whether you were standing in the buffet line or asking a question in a plenary, there was an overarching sense of linking activism on a global and local scale.*

*People were looking to thank Astraea in an active way. We asked the Astraea staff to sit at the front of the room in order to take in this love, acknowledgement and validation — that you give to others every day. Without a doubt, everyone left that Retreat a stronger person — hopefully empowered to initiate actions like this again. If we could add more zeros to the amount of our giving, we'd see a faster revolution toward a world where social justice, peace and passion prevail."*

## U.S. and International Grants Announcements

Astraea announces International Fund Panel Grants for Cycle One, the Margo Karle Scholarship and the Lesbian Writers Fund awards. Astraea will issue the following grants before the end of its fiscal year on June 30: Cycle Two of the International Fund, Social Change Opportunity Fund, U.S. Fund and the Astraea Visual Arts Awards. Total grants for all programs are projected at more than \$1.8 million for Fiscal Year 06-07.

## International Fund Panel, Cycle One

In the past decade, Astraea's International Fund for Sexual Minorities has invested over \$3.25 million in innovative LGBTI human rights and social change organizations based in the Global South and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States. International Fund Panel Grants are determined by a panel of activists with expertise in the specific regions eligible for funding, with input from an International Advisory Board. International Fund Panelists were Marta Drury, Lisbeth Melendez, Javid Syed and Wei-ting Wu. Twenty-seven grants were issued, totaling \$139,000.

## AFRICA

Centre for Popular Education and Human Rights Ghana (**Accra, Ghana**) to support office expenses and volunteer stipends for human rights work in Ghana. \$7,000 [www.geocities.com/popeducation](http://www.geocities.com/popeducation)

Collectif Arc-En-Ciel (**Quatre Bornes, Republic of Mauritius**) to support Mauritius' first LGBT drop-in center, providing legal and community support. \$3,000

Dignity Association (**Freetown, Sierra Leone**) to support the only LGBT national organization in Sierra Leone — formerly known as the Sierra Leone Lesbian and Gay Association. \$7,000

Engender (**Mowbray, Cape Town, South Africa**) for an intersex advocacy project, in collaboration with Intersex Society of South Africa, to educate medical professionals and community members about human rights issues faced by intersex people. \$4,000 [www.engender.org.za](http://www.engender.org.za)

Freedom and Roam Uganda (**Kampala, Uganda**) to secure office space that will provide a safe place to conduct education and organizing work for same-gender loving people in Uganda, particularly lesbians. \$5,000 [www.faruganda.4t.com](http://www.faruganda.4t.com)

Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (**Harare, Zimbabwe**) for their women's program, including development of publications focused on sexual rights and sexual health. \$6,000 [www.galz.co.zw](http://www.galz.co.zw)

Gender DynamiX (**Cape Town, South Africa**) to support the first (and currently only) transgender organization in the African region. \$3,000 [www.genderdynamix.org.za](http://www.genderdynamix.org.za)

Sexual Minorities Uganda (**Kampala, Uganda**) to secure office space for this coalition of Ugandan organizations working to challenge discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. \$3,000 [www.smug.4t.com](http://www.smug.4t.com)

## AMERICAS

Aireana — Grupo por los Derechos de las Lesbianas (**Asunción, Paraguay**) to support organizing for lesbian rights in Paraguay. \$9,000

Associação Lésbica de Minas (**Belo Horizonte, Brazil**) to support leadership development and organizing of Afro-descendant working class lesbians in the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. \$6,000 [www.alem.org.br](http://www.alem.org.br)

Centro de Documentação e Informação Coisa De Mulher/CEDOICOM (**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**) to support Colectivo de Lesbicas de Rio de Janeiro, a Black lesbian project that coordinates lesbian political efforts in Rio de Janeiro and throughout Brazil. \$4,000 [www.coisademulher.org.br](http://www.coisademulher.org.br)

Corporación Triángulo Negro (**Bogotá, Colombia**) to support organizing for lesbian and bisexual women's sexual and reproductive rights in Colombia. \$4,000 [www.triangulonegro.org](http://www.triangulonegro.org)

Desalambrando Buenos Aires (**Buenos Aires, Argentina**) to support a program for prevention and research on domestic violence amongst lesbians in Argentina. \$5,000

DIVAS — Instituto em Defesa da Diversidade Afetivo-Sexual (**Recife, Brazil**) to support lesbian sexual rights and racial justice work in Brazil's northeast region. \$5,000

Fundación de Desarrollo Humano Integral CAUSANA (**Quito, Ecuador**) for a lesbian human rights project to train government agencies on LGBT human rights issues, develop lesbian leadership and mobilize communities to challenge human rights violations, including the forced hospitalization of lesbians in "rehabilitation" clinics. \$3,000

Las Otras Familias (**Santiago, Chile**) for website development and staffing to increase effectiveness of advocacy for lesbian mothers in Chile. \$5,000 [www.lasotrasfamilias.cl](http://www.lasotrasfamilias.cl)

Mulabi — Espacio Latinoamericano de Sexualidades y Derechos (**Buenos Aires, Argentina**) for development of materials on intersexuality, to be used for sexual rights advocacy within the Latin America region. \$5,000

Organización de Transexuales por la Dignidad de la Diversidad (**Rancagua, Chile**) to support this FTM transgender organization's work to secure social and legal rights for transgender people in Chile. \$5,000 [www.hombrestransdechile.cl](http://www.hombrestransdechile.cl)

## Giving &amp; Activism Retreat Pledges

We would like to extend a warm thank you to all of the individuals listed below who verbally pledged to Astraea at our Giving and Activism Retreat.

Cynthia Alvarado  
Marion Banzhaf & Eve Rosahn  
Courtney Bell  
Stephanie Blackwood  
Norma J. Burton  
Connie Chan  
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Paula Ettlbrick  
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Tami Gold & Karen Zelermyer  
Susan Gore & Ann Wigodsky  
Jessica Halem  
Jean Hardisty  
Julie Hash  
Kris Hermanns  
Margaret Hickman  
Marjorie Hill  
Alice Y. Horn  
Patricia W. Houck & Lyssa Jenkins  
Christine Jarosz  
Ileana Jimenez

Mai Kiang  
Jody Laine & Shad Reinstein  
Alexander L. Lee  
Amber Love  
Carol Meyer  
Fadzai Muparutsa  
Jezzika Lee Perez  
Ute Angelika Pfeifer  
Suzanne Pharr  
Amy Posner  
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Ther Prado  
Susan Raffo  
Barbara Riley  
Rebecca Rolfe  
Robin Rosenbluth & Tracy Scott  
Diane Sabin & Jewelle Gomez  
Mary Beth Salerno & Denise Kleis  
shash yázhí  
Graciela Sánchez  
Glenna T. Shepherd  
Maryann Simpson & Cynthia T. Asproditas  
Irene Tung  
Léonie Walker & Kate O'Hanlan  
WANG Ping  
Jin Wu

Gifts In Honor  
and In Memory Of

## Gifts In Honor Of

Katherine Acey  
Carol Alpert  
Arlene Bronstein  
Charlotte Bunch  
& Roxanna Carillo  
Jill Campbell  
Juanita Davis  
& Sandy Robinson  
Jinky De Rivera  
Christine Dinsmore  
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Elke Mueller  
Jenny Pizer  
Sue Roche  
Martha Shultz  
& Cheryl Reeve  
Sharon Stonekey  
Alexandra Teixeira  
& the Astraea  
Programs Team  
Su Ming Yeh

## Gifts In Memory Of

Mary & Monsour Acey  
Stacey Aspey  
Diane Bonder  
Alexis Bowlds  
Yu-Ling Chien  
Tee A. Corinne  
Marsha Day  
Belle Baron Dominian  
Betty Dutton  
Beth Ferdan  
Jan Holden  
Mary-Helen Mautner  
Arminta Neal  
Edith Rosenthal  
Stelyan Sandris  
Jane Schliessman  
Ilana Weinstock  
Mickey Zacuto

To give a **GIFT IN HONOR** or **IN MEMORY OF** someone, please fill in the gift recognition section of Astraea's pledge envelope or contact Alexandra Teixeira, Philanthropic Partnerships Officer, at 212.529.8021, ext. 13 or [ateixeira@astraeafoundation.org](mailto:ateixeira@astraeafoundation.org)



Red de Respuesta Lesbica "Cattrachas" (Tegucigalpa, Honduras) for this lesbian network to mobilize for sexual diversity and human rights in Honduras and throughout the Central America region. \$5,000

ASIA

Arus Pelangi (Jakarta, Indonesia) for a counseling program specifically tailored to the needs of gender and sexual minorities in Indonesia. \$4,000 www.aruspelangi.com

Pratyay Gender Trust (Kolkata, India) for an oral history project (showcasing the stories of kothis and hijras), to combat violence and secure sexual rights for gender non-conforming communities in West Bengal, India. \$4,000

Sappho for Equality (Kolkata, India) to support organizing for equal rights of lesbians, bisexual women and trans people in India. \$5,000

Women's Support Group (Nawala, Sri Lanka) for a drop-in center, organized by Sri Lanka's first LBT organization, serving lesbians, bisexual women and transgender people. \$5,000 www.wsglanka.org

EASTERN EUROPE/COMMON-WEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

Kampania Przeciw Homofobii (KPH) (Warsaw, Poland) for Poland's national LGBT organization to provide professional counseling support to lesbian and bisexual women. \$4,000 www.kampania.org.pl

Lezbijaska Grupa KONTRA (Zagreb, Croatia) to support legal, media and other types of advocacy to defend and secure human rights for LGBT people in Croatia. \$8,000 www.kontra.hr

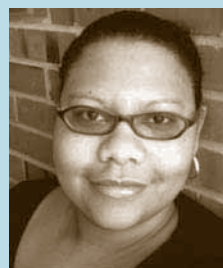
SKUC-LL (Ljubljana, Slovenia) for their LGBT library and archive project, serving as a critical activist and academic resource for organizations and activists based throughout Eastern Europe. \$5,000 www.ljudmila.org/lesbo

MIDDLE EAST

Aswat - Palestinian Gay Women (Haifa, Israel) to support development of materials, education and organizing focused on gender, gender identity and sexuality from a Palestinian feminist perspective. \$10,000 www.aswatgroup.org

2006 Margo Karle and Lesbian Writers Fund Awardees

The Astraea Margo Karle Scholarship is issued, in memory of the human rights activist, to a full time undergraduate female student attending a City University of New York (CUNY) school who embodies Margo's quest for justice.



Collette Carter is a Black Queer Woman pursuing her second BA at Brooklyn College in Film Production. (She earned her first degree at Spelman

College). She plans to use film to celebrate the lives of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans and Gender Non-Conforming (LGBTSTGNC) People of Color communities. An avid volunteer, she is a former board member of African Ancestral Lesbians United for Societal Change and a former editorial board member and contributor to SABLE Magazine, a Lesbian of Color bi-monthly online publication. Collette is currently the coordinator of the Audre Lorde Project's People of Color Leaders Roundtable. \$1,000



Shormin Hussain is pursuing a BA in Political Science at Queens College. A first generation immigrant from Bangladesh, she is passionate about

social justice and community organizing. She served as the Youth Media Organizer at DRUM-Desis Rising Up and Moving, and was influential in the creation of their Education Not Deportation campaign for immigrant students' rights. She also coordinated DRUM's Desi Reel Newz Project which trains low income South Asian youth in grassroots organizing for immigrants' rights and racial justice through community video and documentation. Shormin hopes to attend law school and become an immigration lawyer. \$1,000

The Lesbian Writers Fund awards are issued to emerging writers showing extraordinary promise in the arenas of fiction and poetry. Elena Georgiou (1998 Awardee in Poetry) and Janice Gould (1992 Awardee in Poetry) served as Poetry judges, and Nina Revoyr (1998 Awardee in Fiction) and Sheila Ortiz-Taylor judged the Fiction contest. This year, the Fund awarded a total of \$26,000 to twelve individuals.



Chelsea Jennings' poetry has appeared in Poet Lore and the GW Review. She is currently earning an MFA at the University of Washington, where she also teaches

composition. A former middle school teacher, ESL instructor, editor, grantwriter, and intern at the Lambda Literary Foundation, Chelsea lived for several months in Dakar, Senegal. This award will enable Chelsea to spend this summer working full-time on her first book of poems. \$10,000



Dorothy Allison describes Leslie Larson's novel, Slipstream (Crown Books, 2006) as "a genuinely startling novel that caught me

up in the lives of people used to being looked past, over, or beyond." Leslie's work has appeared in publications including Faultline, the East Bay Express, and the Women's Review of Books. She is a former instructor at Macondo, the master writers' workshop led by Sandra Cisneros. Leslie received a degree in English/American Literature from the University of California, San Diego. \$10,000 www.leslielarson.com

Finalists: Marybeth Caschetta, of Northampton, MA; Lilah Hegnauer, of Charlottesville, VA; Kate Lynn Hibbard, of St. Paul, MN; and Barbara Johnson, of New Orleans, LA. \$1,500 each

Honorable Mentions: Rebecca Chekouras, El Cerrito, CA; Sharon Wachslar, Shelbourne Falls, MA; Nona Caspers, San Francisco, CA; Mariel Masque, Tucson, AZ; Mary Meriam, Eagle Rock, MO; and Melanie Hope, Brooklyn, NY. \$100 each

new faces at astraea



ASTRAEA STAFF

1 Miles Goff, Executive Assistant is a queer transman born and raised in rural Vermont. Prior to Astraea, he worked for Americans for Safe Access and currently volunteers for Jews for Racial and Economic Justice and the Audre Lorde Project. He received a BA in Critical Social Thought from Mount Holyoke College in 2004.

2 Shaheen Nazerali, Development Associate holds a BS from Bates College in Women and Gender Studies. Prior to Astraea, Shaheen worked in special events for the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Association and served as Program Intern at DRUM-Desis Rising Up and Moving. Currently, she is a member of FIERCE! (Fabulous, Independent, Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment).

3 Alexandra Teixeira, Philanthropic Partnerships Officer has worked extensively with the United Nations and served as a program fellow at the Global Fund

for Women and Resource Generation. Alexandra currently sits on the Board of the Third Wave Foundation. She holds an MA in International Affairs from Columbia University.

4 ASTRAEA BOARD Courtney Bell, Oak Park, IL, is the Executive Director of the Bottomless Closet. A founding board member of the Midwest Access Project, she is the Board Chair of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health. She has also served as a researcher and service provider for child welfare and homeless organizations.

5 Cindy Laughlin, San Francisco, CA, is the Director of Human Resources for Business for Social Responsibility. She received her Senior Professional HR Certification (SPHR) in 2002 and is currently working on her Global Professional HR Certification. Cindy holds an MA in sports psychology and motor learning.

6 Eleanor Palacios, San Francisco, CA, is the Events

Manager at the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR). Eleanor is the Principal at Lady Iguana Productions and a founding member of The San Francisco LGBT Community Center's Latino Forum.

7 Jezzika Lee Perez, Silver Spring, MD, is the founder of Intelligent Accounting and Tax Solutions, a firm focused on woman-owned businesses and women's initiative-focused non-profits. An ally and mentor to Hispanic youth, she speaks regularly on personal finances, small business planning and self-empowerment.

8 shash yázhí, Oakland, CA, is the co-founder and director of the Movement Strategy Center's Spirit in Motion program. Raised by her grandparents on the Diné (Navajo) Reservation, shash yázhí implements traditional practices, fusing spirit work with organizing work for activists and individuals wishing to create internal healing and balance in their lives.

Astraea threads Spring 07

STAFF

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You may obtain the latest financial audit from Astraea or the Office of Charities Registration, Department of State, Albany, NY 12231

OUR MISSION

The Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice works for social, racial, and economic justice in the U.S. and internationally. Our grantmaking and philanthropic advocacy programs help lesbians and allied communities challenge oppression and claim their human rights.

This newsletter was printed with vegetable based ink on 100% recycled paper at a union print shop.

AmericanAirlines

The official airline of the Astraea Foundation

Astraea received the highest rating of four stars from Charity Navigator - an honor given to less than a quarter of America's nonprofits. For more information, visit www.charitynavigator.org.

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



1

1 **JANUARY 2007** Astraea co-sponsored the very first Joint Affinity Groups Unity Summit — a gathering of progressive funders, committed to strategic and creative grantmaking. Prior to the Summit, Katherine Acey, Astraea’s Executive Director (far left), spoke at the opening plenary of a one day meeting convened by Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues of 58 LGBTQ foundations. l to r: Jewelle Gomez (Horizons Foundation), Andrew Park (IHRFG), Patricia Tumang (Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy)

ZAGREB, CROATIA



2

2 **SEPTEMBER 2006** Astraea co-sponsored (with Mama Cash and the Global Fund for Women), a regional meeting of the Southeastern European Queer Network of LGBTIQ Organizations. Top row: Esther Vonk (Mama Cash, Netherlands), Sever Dzigurski (Center for Production of Equality, Serbia), Marko Jurčić (KUGA, Croatia); Astraea grantees Arina Balenovic (LORI, Croatia) and Jelena Postic (Women’s Room, Croatia); Dulce Reyes (Astraea Program Officer) Bottom Row: Svetlana Durkovic (Organization Q, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Angelika Arutyunova (Global Fund for Women, United States) and Danijela Almesberger (LORI).

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



3

3 **NOVEMBER 2006** Astraea and the Chicago Foundation for Women’s Lesbian Leadership Council held a joint house party at the home of Esther S. Sacks featuring fabulous music by the Lucy Smith String Quartet. Pictured: Dr. Beth E. Richie, CFW board member (left) and CFW Associate Director Mary Morten.

SANTIAGO, CHILE



4

4 **FEBRUARY 2007** Astraea helped fund the 7th Encuentro of Latin American and Caribbean Lesbian Feminists which attracted over 200 participants from around the region. Program Officer, Dulce Reyes, attended and Astraea subsidized travel and registration for grantee partners from Corporación Triángulo Negro, Colombia: (back row, l to r) Alexandra Pinzón, Ana Maria Verano and Nury Elena Garcia. Also pictured are Astraea grantee partners (front row, l to r): Yarman Jiménez (Radio Internacional Feminista, Costa Rica) and Marina Araya (Encuentro, Chile).

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



5

5 **NOVEMBER 2006** Astraea organized and sponsored the Advancing Racial, Economic and Gender Justice panel at NGLTF’s Creating Change Conference, featuring Astraea grantee partners: (back left) Paulina Hernández (Southerners on New Ground), Alex Lee, Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersex (TGI) Justice Project. Grantees not pictured: Bran Ali Fenner (FIERCE! Fabulous, Independent, Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment) and Mónica Velásquez (Esperanza Peace and Justice Center). Front: (left) Caitlin Breedlove (Southerners on New Ground), Lorraine Ramirez (Astraea Program Assistant).

WASHINGTON, DC



6

6 **SEPTEMBER 2006** Astraea Director of Development Wendy Sealey accepted the Organization Excellence Award on behalf of Astraea at the 16th Annual Gala of the Mautner Project, the nation’s only national lesbian health organization.

AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND



7

7 **MARCH 2007** Esther Vonk (left) and Naima H. el Moussati (center) of Mama Cash met with Katherine Acey and Joo-Hyun Kang, Astraea’s Director of Programs (right) after the first Funding for Global LGBTI Rights meeting and discussion of research convened by Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues.