

Astraea LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

threads



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letter from the executive director

"Perhaps things will become worse, then better. Perhaps there is a small god up in heaven readying herself for us. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. Maybe many of us won't be here to greet her, but, on a quiet day, if I listen very carefully, I can hear her breathing."
~Arundhati Roy

Threads will reach you as we have breathlessly embarked on a new year. My reflections on the last twelve months—organizationally and politically—abound with distressing disappointment, evolving clarity, and informed determination. I believe that despite the setbacks of the LGBTI Movement (and other movements for human rights and justice), and perhaps in some ways *because* of them, we have been propelled into a re-examination of our vision, strategies, and core analysis. Another world is only possible if we have the will to challenge ourselves, our organizations, and each other to shift our actions and the assumptions on which they are based.

Our Movement urgently needs a thoughtful, inclusive plan (dare I say a strategic plan) if we are to transform rather than tweak the world in which we live. Though we've lost ground, we have toiled too hard and learned too much to resist the change needed in our movements and organizations to achieve our aspirations—"to win."

We must look ahead to not only next month or next year, but to years and even decades. Some may say this is too daunting or too idealistic. Although I have no illusions about the powerful forces we are up against in every sphere of life, cynicism will have to be left at the door. None of us—activists, advocates, donors or allied movements—can go it alone. Nor can any of us afford to exclude a global perspective in our approaches, regardless of whether our work is locally, regionally or nationally focused in the U.S.

As Astraea moves through its initial phase of reflection and assessment, we are recasting our programs—development, grants, communications, philanthropic partnerships—and the projects that fall within these areas. *This work is driven by our strategic priorities: increasing our impact on movement building, supporting grassroots leadership and expanding the capacity of lesbian and LGBTI organizations to engage in transformative social justice work.*

Examples of how Astraea is beginning to enact these "directions" include organizing and hosting retreats like *Women and LGBTI Philanthropy: Exploring the Issues/Supporting the Movement* (see article on page 4), and bringing international activists together at a convening in Thailand. Also, we have begun multiple-year funding, recognizing that movements need dependable resources in order to build structural and political capacity.

Astraea inhabits local, national and global spaces where our lesbian and LGBTI rights work intersects with women's rights, human rights, and other justice movements as well as with individual and institutional donors. Currently, we are partnering with Third Wave Foundation, Ms. Foundation for Women, and Ford Foundation/Women's Rights on an eighteen-month collaboration called *The New Women's Movement*. Together more than 60 national and local women's organization leaders and funders are actively engaged in a critical analysis and strategic revisioning of the Women's Movement.

These are only a few of the many movement-building efforts underway around the world. They are urgent and time-consuming efforts, but there are no shortcuts. We must revamp the conceptual frameworks that inform our strategies, build our base, support alliances, communicate our message, and organize necessary resources.

I may not personally be around to greet "another world." But, I know that the actions I take at this moment ensure that plenty of others will stand for me. Even now, like Arundhati, "I can hear her breathing." And she is not alone.

Katherine
Katherine T. Acey



Harold Levine

Cover Photo: Participants add to a "timeline" of feminist, lesbian and queer history at the *Women & LGBTI Philanthropy Retreat*, see article on page 4.





humor is their activism

by Candace Sala Hewitt, *Events Coordinator*

For the four comedians featured in the film *Laughing Matters*, humor is not only their livelihood, but a potent form of activism. With that in mind, last fall the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice celebrated the legacy of activist Lynn Campbell with a dose of laughter.

On September 27, 2004, at the **17th Annual Lynn Campbell Memorial Fund Benefit**, more than 200 people enjoyed a night energized by the vibrant humor of director Andrea Meyerson's hilarious and expertly crafted "docu-comedy." After the screening of *Laughing Matters*, Katherine Acey, Astraea's Executive Director, moderated a raucous Q & A with Meyerson and two of the film's featured comics, Marga Gomez and Karen Williams.

The annual event commemorates Lynn Campbell, one of Astraea's earliest supporters and a beloved activist. Acey credits Lynn with having an enduring influence on LGBTI philanthropy and as the person who introduced her to Astraea. "Though younger than I," remembers Acey, "Lynn was a mentor to me and an important pioneer, promoting the funding of LGBTI issues among institutional and individual donors."

By the young age of 26, Campbell had already left an indelible mark on the Women's and LGBTI Movements at large. As producer of the seminal documentary, *Rate It X*, Campbell helped establish a canon of criticism targeting pornography and the media's violence against women. Campbell broke ground as an organizer of the first *Take Back the Night* vigils opposing violence against women.

These empowering ceremonies have since taken root among college campuses and community groups across the nation. Lynn's political savvy spanned from labor rights to queer rights, and she was named by *Ms.* magazine as one of Eighty Women to Watch in the 80's along with Rosa Parks, Sister Theresa Kane and Gloria Steinem.

While *Laughing Matters* is undeniably entertaining, it is also quite poignant. According to Meyerson, the comics in her film use comedy as a transformative tool, challenging heterosexism and empowering the queer community. The film gets up close and personal with Kate Clinton, Marga Gomez, Karen Williams and Suzanne Westenhoefer, all renowned lesbian comedians who have been out and performing professionally since the early 1980s. Meyerson incorporates interviews with the comedians about their lives, careers, and the challenges and triumphs of being out in an industry dominated by heterosexual men.

Other highlights from the evening included live comedy from up-and-coming performer, Julie Goldman, whose no-holds-barred political commentary ripped the Bush Administration's conservative policies and solicited hoots and hollers from the audience. For the first time ever, Astraea conducted a raffle for a prize vacation to the Dinah Shore Weekend in Palm Springs sponsored by the Los Angeles social organization, Women On A Roll. Following the film and Q & A, everyone enjoyed delicious refreshments while mingling with the guest stars of the evening.

The Lynn Campbell Memorial Fund Benefit is one of Astraea's longest running traditions. Each year we feature a program that exemplifies Lynn Campbell's values for social justice. If you know of a new independent film that we should consider for a screening at the 18th Annual Lynn Campbell Memorial Fund Benefit, please contact us. Call Candace Hewitt, Events Coordinator, at 212.529.8021 or email her at candace@astraeafoundation.org.



◀ Comics Marga Gomez (left) and Karen Williams crack themselves up.

Julie Goldman gives a high energy ▶ performance.

Photos: Jennifer Einhorn



astraea launches philanthropy & activism retreat series

This past October, a group of women were asked to name things that kept them up nights. Responses ranged from thermostat wars and stolen covers to serious matters of injustice and poverty. While their answers varied, their reason for gathering in Santa Cruz, California for four days was one and the same. Each of these women—committed supporters of the LGBTI Movement in their own right—recognized the urgency surrounding the fiscal viability of the Movement’s future.

Women & LGBTI Philanthropy: Exploring the Issues and Supporting the Movement was the first in a series of gatherings designed to help women learn and strategize about money, philanthropy, and how to better support the work of LGBTI activists around the world. Conceived and hosted by Astraea, the Retreat was a component of the Foundation’s four-year strategic plan—a plan geared toward increasing Astraea’s impact on movement-building and expanding the capacity of lesbians working for social justice.

A diverse roster of women fueled four days of learning, celebration and hope. Each participant embodied a different kind of knowledge, experience and relationship to money, political activism and philanthropy. Many had been philanthropists for more than twenty years, while others were new to

targeted outreach brought together women who were not only economically diverse, but represented a cross section of age, race, sexual identity, and profession—including academics, organizational leaders, entrepreneurs, activists, artists, and others.

Helping to frame the issues discussed were some of our Movement’s critical thinkers, including Kimberly Aceves, Katherine Acey, Elizabeth Bremner, Cheryl Clarke, Trishala Deb, Mercedes Gibson, Ellen Gurzinsky, Joo-Hyun Kang, Mara Keisling, Kate Kendell, Kim Klein, Shad Reinstein, Graciela Sanchez, Sonya Shields, Carmen Vazquez, and Felice Yeskel. They shared strategies for strengthening the Movement and for working more effectively across class, race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual identity. Regardless of their area of expertise, each touched on the LGBTI Movement’s pressing need for increased funding.

Kim Klein, author and fundraising consultant, revealed the fiscal disparity between the LGBTI Movement and its foes. Participating in the *State of Philanthropy* panel, she contrasted our resources to that of the political and fiscal machinery of the Republican Party’s right wing. “To begin with,” she said, “we must rid ourselves of our uptightness in talking about money.” She then compared the small



Joo-Hyun Kang, Astraea’s Director of Programs moderates a panel.
Photo: Jennifer Einhorn

A diverse roster of women fueled four days of learning, celebration and hope.

“giving” and had, up until that point, never identified themselves as “donors.”

In an effort to create a more economically diverse group of participants, Astraea implemented a sliding fee structure. We took into account that those with a *combined* household after-tax income of \$88,000 or more are in the top 20% of wealth holders in the U.S. And we wanted to encourage this broader group of women to recognize the important role they can play as activists as well as philanthropists. This

percentage of progressive funding which goes to LGBTI philanthropy to the billions the right wing raises through grassroots fundraising: “We need to imitate that. Our community has access to people and money. And for some, the easiest and safest thing to do is to contribute money.”

Astraea’s Executive Director, Katherine Acey, elaborated further on the startling divide, noting that groups in opposition to same-sex marriage generated \$205 billion—ten times the revenues of the five



top LGBTI foundations *combined*. Such an enormous disparity mirrors the enormous amount of work that our community faces. And while we will never have the same resources as the right wing, it is critical that we strive to raise the bar in order to sustain our organizations and activists doing the hard work.

The reality of hard work was not relegated to activists alone. An additional highlight of the weekend was the panel *Donors, Activists and Organizations: Building Healthy and Productive Partnerships*. An intimate discussion on money and philanthropy ensued, which inspired people to disclose their personal giving patterns. Some recent inheritors discussed their resistance to “coming out” as women of wealth, and expressed gratitude for a space where they could connect with other women struggling with the same issue. Others talked about their fear of contributing a percentage of their annual salary during a time when the economy is so tenuous. Still others who have limited income and no savings discussed their commitment to giving ten percent of their income to charities annually. It was a moving conversation which empowered many women to examine their personal giving more strategically. On the spot, several women openly committed to making larger donations.

donors to view their giving as a “social investment”; and finally, the Movement must strengthen its relationships with progressive and intergenerational allies.

The Retreat was also an opportunity to have fun, reflect, and celebrate how far we’ve come as a Movement. Participants added their own personal milestones to a sixty-foot “timeline” of feminist, lesbian and queer historical events that spread across the entire conference room floor (see cover photo). In addition to connecting with other women in the glorious surroundings of the Chaminade Conference Center, participants were treated to the harmonies of Margie Adam and Melanie Demore, who wove music and song throughout the program and performed a special concert for the group. On the last day, Margie also arranged for the group to experience a labyrinth walk—allowing time to reflect on all that was shared.

The four-day gathering provoked smart thinking and substantial action. Since then, we’ve drafted a report summary of Retreat highlights which will be distributed mid-winter. In addition, several donors who attended the Retreat are working with Astraea to form a *Giving Circle*, which will explore opportunities



Panelists (left to right)—Kate Kendell, National Center for Lesbian Rights; Mara Keisling, National Center for Transgender Equality; and Mercedes Gibson, Oakland LGBTQ youth activist.

Photos: Jennifer Einhorn

As we progressed through the Retreat in small and large group discussions, the theme of inadequate resources recurred—as did possible remedies. The group reached consensus on three movement-building recommendations in particular: the LGBTI Movement must use the media more strategically by developing a clear and concise message that resonates with a broader audience and that communicates our vision for social and economic justice; the Movement must develop a new framework for looking at philanthropy, advocating for

to collaborate and strategize on ways to maximize financial support to groups. And mark your calendar for fall 2005, because we’ve already started planning for the *next* Retreat!

Astraea extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this Retreat such a groundbreaking success.

Stay tuned for more information on how you can be a part of the Philanthropy & Activism Retreat 2005!



2004 astraea visual arts fund awards

Astraea has named Chitra Ganesh of Brooklyn, New York and Alma Lopez of Eagle Rock, California as winners of the 2004 Astraea Visual Arts (AVA) Fund Awards. "Both of these artists," explains Joo-Hyun Kang, Astraea's Director of Programs, "challenge us to see links and tensions between the personal and political, the poignant and humorous."

Established in 2002, the Fund promotes the work of contemporary lesbian visual artists whose work reflects a commitment to Astraea's mission. Lesbian artists engaged in visual arts (including sculpture, painting, printmaking, mixed media, and works on paper) are eligible to apply.

This year, two awards of \$2,500 each were determined by a distinguished panel of artists and art professionals via a rigorous selection process. The 2004 AVA Fund Panel was composed of Nancy Azara, sculptor; Vanessa Haney, artist; Miriam Hernández, painter; Eve Sandler, visual artist; and Melissa Wolf, arts administrator. Astraea thanks each of them for their labor of love in reviewing this year's submissions and choosing the awardees.



Chitra Ganesh,
2004 AVA
Fund Awardee

Chitra Ganesh weaves themes of sexuality and mythology throughout her work. She blends drawing and sculpture, and draws from a broad range of sources including Greek and Hindu iconography, 19th century portraiture, lesbian pulp novels, Hollywood posters, and zines. By layering disparate images and materials, she aims to create a world where suppressed stories rise to the surface.

"My work explores how memories and their repression shape moments of personal and social crisis. In this process, I hope to illuminate intersections of race, and excavate untold histories (be it between lovers or empires) to articulate a broader understanding of the lesbian experience. This award is key to furthering my artistic practice and crucial to supporting the work of other emerging lesbian artists. Astraea's direct financial

support is especially important at a time when artists and arts organizations across the board struggle with limited resources and drastic cuts in funding."

Chitra's work has been exhibited in Toronto, Brazil, India, and an array of venues in New York, including the Queens Museum, The Bronx Museum, Momenta Art, and White Columns. Her honors include residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Henry Street Settlement Abrons Arts Center. Chitra served as a Board Member of the South Asian Women's Creative Collective (SAWCC) and was part of SLAAAP!, a queer Asian arts activist group in New York City. She has been featured in *Velvet Park* magazine and was named as one of *OUT* magazine's Top 100 People. A graduate of Brown University, Chitra earned an M.F.A. from Columbia University.



Resurrection by Chitra Ganesh, 2004,
C print, 20" x 24"



The Rani's Armor by Chitra Ganesh, 2004,
cardboard, tinfoil, duct tape, and soldering wire



(left) *Heaven* by Alma Lopez, 1999, digital print, 14" x 17"

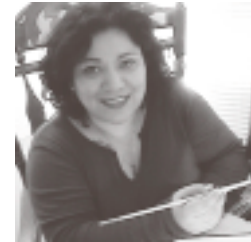
(right) *Ixta* by Alma Lopez, 1999, digital print, 14" x 17"

Alma Lopez's work investigates issues of race, gender and sexuality. Using an array of media including painting and photo-based digital collage, her surreal images recontextualize major icons found in Mexican and Chicano cultures. Her work explores the relationship between queer desire, nationalist myths, border issues, and popular culture.

"My visual work is about who I am, a queer woman of color. Therefore I am honored to have my work recognized and shared as an Astraea Visual Arts Fund award recipient. I plan to use this grant to continue the Sacred Heart painting series about love and spirituality, as well as the documentary video on Jarritos de Miel, an L.A.-based Latin alternative young queer women of color band who write and sing love songs to women."

Alma exhibits her work extensively and has received numerous awards, including a Brody Emerging Visual Artist Grant, the City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Grant, and the California Community Foundation Arts

Funding Initiative's Individual Artist Grant. Her work has been featured in several publications, including *Art in America*, *Flash Art International*, and *Ms.* magazine. Lopez is the co-founding member and art director of *Tongues: A Webzine for Black and Brown Womyn*. Currently she is working on a digital video about short hair. Alma holds a B.A. from the University of California Santa Barbara and an M.F.A. from the University of California Irvine.



Alma Lopez,
2004 AVA Fund Awardee

Certificate of Recognition

A Certificate of Recognition was awarded to **Donna Henes** of Brooklyn, New York. Donna's photographs and environmental sculptural installations have been created and shown in museums, schools, hospitals, universities, parks and plazas in more than 100 cities in nine countries since 1972.

The photos in this article were provided courtesy of Chitra Ganesh and Alma Lopez. To see more photos and learn more about the work of current and past AVA Fund awardees, visit Astraea's website at www.astraeafoundation.org. ■

"Astraea's direct financial support is especially important at a time when artists and arts organizations across the board struggle with limited resources and drastic cuts in funding."

~Chitra Ganesh
2004 AVA Fund Awardee



International Fund For Sexual Minorities: SOCIAL CHANGE OPPORTUNITY FUND

The Social Change Opportunity Fund (SCOF) is an initiative of Astraea's International Fund for Sexual Minorities that makes multi-year grants to LGBTI organizations with impressive track records in conducting timely social change work in their countries. Currently, applications are solicited from past recipients of Astraea's International Fund. SCOF supports organizations that build communities which actively pursue self-determination and secure human rights with regard to sexual expression and gender identity. This year, SCOF awarded a total of \$220,000 to nine organizations in eight countries.

Centro de Investigación y Promoción Para América Central de Derechos Humanos (CIPAC), San José, Costa Rica—addresses discriminatory legislation issued by federal agencies and conducts research on LGBT rights in Costa Rica. Prior research projects examined the issues of inadequate housing, suicide, and workplace discrimination and their effects on Costa Rica's LGBT population. This grant supports CIPAC's efforts to promote changes in national law and achieve legal acknowledgement of equal rights for LGBT people. **\$20,000**

Centro Para la Educación y Prevención del SIDA (CEPRESI), Managua, Nicaragua—launched *Democracy is Equality, Equality to Coexist*, a campaign seeking to secure human rights for LGBT people in Nicaragua. Central to the project are several television public service announcements and a radio advertisement which is airing in six regions of Nicaragua. CEPRESI works toward the decriminalization of homosexuality and coordinates a national campaign coalition promoting the human rights principles of citizen equality and anti-discrimination. **\$14,000**

Coletivo de Feministas Lésbicas, São Paulo, Brasil—builds leadership among lesbians working to secure human rights in Brasil. Through the creation of a Lesbian Action Cultural Center, they have proposed a host of legislative changes before the National Congress. This grant will support the training and leadership development of young and low-income lesbians of color. In addition, the group will launch a web-

site and conduct research on the experience of Black lesbians to inform policy changes. **\$30,000**

Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan (G/SRAT), Taipei, Taiwan—works to dismantle the discrimination of gender and sexual minorities in all areas of Taiwanese society. In an effort to repeal new discriminatory regulations in educational settings, G/SRAT has launched *Lesbian Cultural History versus Disciplining Girls' Bodies—Toward Non-Discriminatory Educational Policies*. Via this project, G/SRAT will mobilize lesbians and transgender people to lobby the Ministry of Education and will issue a *Gender Equality Education Manual* for teachers. They will also document sexual and gender discrimination by expanding their fieldwork and by collecting oral histories of women in T-bars. *T-bars originated in the '60s and flourished in the '80s, with "T" being shorthand for "tomboy" or butch women in Taiwan.* **\$31,000**

Grupo Lésbico Patlatonalli de Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico—works to enhance the recognition of LGBT individuals in legislation, university policies, and society at large. This grant will support the group's project, *All Families are Sacred...Pleasures in Politics*. Focusing specifically on improving the social representation of lesbian families, the project will mobilize activists to articulate their life stories, conduct research projects, and produce public education materials. **\$10,000**

Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals & Gays (J-FLAG), Kingston, Jamaica—is a political and legal advocacy group working for lesbian, all-sexual and gay human rights in Jamaica. Their *Caribbean Regional Movement-Building Initiative* will build and coordinate a network addressing human rights issues specific to LGBT communities in the Caribbean. This effort includes building capacity of LGBT organizations in eleven countries beyond Jamaica, including Surinam, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada, Barbados, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, Antigua, St. Maarten/St. Martin, and the Dominican Republic. In addition, J-FLAG plans to form a lobbying group that will urge regional and nation-specific bodies to adopt legal reforms promoting human rights of LGBT people. **\$50,000**

Lezbijaska Grupa Kontra, Zagreb, Croatia—is Croatia's preeminent lesbian advocacy organization, challenging homophobia since 1997. In 2003, Kontra was instrumental in pressuring the Parliament to pass legislation affirming gay partnerships by granting joint health coverage and recognizing shared assets. Their *LGBT Legal Perspectives in Croatia Project* analyzes and acts on existing legal conditions and strengthens cooperation amongst regional and international LGBT organizations. Through this project, Kontra also monitors media representation of LGBT issues and publishes a manual explaining the anti-discrimination provisions in the Croatia legal system. **\$25,000**



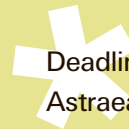
Gender/Sexuality Rights Association of Taiwan activists NI Chia-Chen, CHEN Yu-Rong, DING Naifei, WANG Ping (clockwise from back left) on a visit to Astraea in June.
Photo: Jennifer Einhorn

Prensa Editorial LeS Voz, Mexico City, Mexico

—publishes a national feminist lesbian cultural magazine and website, and organizes yearly literary conferences promoting lesbian literature. This grant will support their *Pro-Human Rights for Women & Lesbians Project*, an effort to document violence and human rights violations experienced by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women. LeS Voz will conduct trainings throughout the prison system, educating women on how to identify and report violent crimes. The trainings are also geared to protecting women from further human rights abuses once they are released from prison. **\$20,000**

Sangama, Karnataka, Bangalore, India—is a resource center focused on improving the rights of those discriminated against because of their sexuality. Their documentation center and library features an array of articles and clippings from print and electronic media—many of which are accessible in English, Kannada and Tamil. Sangama regularly hosts workshops, lectures, film screenings and symposiums. This grant is for a new human rights project working with lesbian and bi-sexual women living in impoverished conditions in the states of Karnataka and Kerala. **\$20,000**

upcoming astraea grant deadlines



Deadlines are for receipt of applications in the Astraea office. For more information, including criteria, guidelines and application forms, please visit www.astraeafoundation.org, or email grants@astraeafoundation.org.

DEADLINE:

15 March 2005

MAXIMUM GRANT:

\$10,000

International Fund for Sexual Minorities Panel Grants

This fund supports LGBTI social change and community-building efforts by organizations working to meet the needs of people oppressed or discriminated against because of their sexual identity or gender expression. The International Fund supports organizations based in the following regions: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, the Pacific Islands, and the former Soviet Republic. Priority is given to groups with the least access to traditional funding. Grants are determined by a panel of activists with expertise in specific regions eligible for funding, with input from an International Advisory Board.

DEADLINE:

1 April 2005

AWARDS:

Two \$2,500 awards

Astraea Visual Arts Fund Awards

The AVA Fund recognizes the work of contemporary lesbian visual artists within the U.S.

Grants are awarded to artists working in an array of media including sculpture, painting, prints, mixed media, and works on paper.



JOAN RUTH HELLER

1925 - 2004



Beloved philanthropist Joan Heller (left) with her partner Diane Bernard.
Photo courtesy of Diane Bernard

Astraea was saddened to learn of the passing of our friend and supporter, Joan Ruth Heller. Joan died at her home in Panama City, Florida on May 10, 2004 with her partner Dr. Diane Bernard at her side. A former advertising executive for prominent cosmetic firms in New York City, Joan was a thoughtful and active philanthropist until her death at age 78. A range of organizations and issues benefited from Joan’s generosity, wisdom, and longstanding commitment to social justice. Women and LGBTI organizations, cultural projects, health-care, and environmental issues were among her priorities.

Joan and Diane established the Heller-Bernard Fund, a donor-advised fund at Astraea, in 1996. Through the Fund, they have annually supported Community Panel grants from Astraea’s docket. A member of our *Women Will Circle*, Joan bequeathed a gift to Astraea that will sustain the Heller-Bernard Fund for years to come, with Diane continuing as advisor. The couple were also lead contributors to Astraea’s endowment campaign.

Astraea’s Executive Director, Katherine Acey, worked with Joan and Diane often. “Joan was not only a colleague and funder,” explained Acey, “but a dear and cherished friend. I always looked forward to visits with them because there was sure to be lively discussion, great stories and much laughter. Joan firmly believed that Astraea should be a ‘household name’ and never tired of making suggestions that would enhance the Foundation’s visibility. I will miss her, her directness, and her wit.” ■

women will circle

ASTRAEA HAS BEEN THE BENEFICIARY of gifts entrusted to us by generous donors who recognize the importance of supporting the Foundation for the benefit of generations to come. The *Women Will Circle* provides a way for Astraea to recognize and thank the women and men who have designated us as a beneficiary of their estate, and to involve them more intimately in the Foundation’s work during their lifetime.

If you have designated Astraea as a beneficiary in your will, insurance policy or retirement fund, please notify us so we can include you in our *Women Will Circle*. For more information on planned giving at Astraea, please contact Sonya Shields, Director of Development, at sshields@astraeafoundation.org or 212.529.8021, extension 17.

Women Will Circle Members

Circle Chair

Katherine Acey
Kimberly Aceves & Chris Lymbertos
Jomal Alcober
Mary Alford
Carol Alpert & Sarina Scialabba
Sara Berger
Diane Bernard & Joan Heller
Gail Bernstein
Melanie Berzon
Sylva Billue
Evelyn Blackwood
Stephanie Blackwood
Elissa Breitbard
Elizabeth Bremner
Denslow Brown
Pam Calvert

Mary Ellen Capek & Susan A. Hallgarth
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Jan Felshin & Edrie Ferdun
Lois Fink & Phyllis Steiner
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Ann Vittala
Alida Walsh
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Remsen Wolff
Karen Zelermyer
Jan Zobel



the launch of *threads*

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Astraea's newly designed newsletter. Thanks to designer Diane Bonder, who worked with me, Shaya Mercer, and Sonya Shields to create a publication that we hope you'll find easier to navigate and more engaging to read.

Thanks also to Astraea Board Member, Marion Banzhaf, for coming up with the perfect title. *threads* not only describes the purpose of this publication—keeping you connected to our work and mission—but it also describes the essence of what we do. Connecting communities and cultivating leadership lies at the heart of Astraea's work. Whether it be convening activists from around the world this spring in Thailand or hosting a group of committed LGBTI funders in Santa Cruz this fall, Astraea serves as a *thread* bringing people and issues together.

With the introduction of our new logo, our new website, and now *threads*, we look forward to forging an even stronger connection with you as well. ■

~Jennifer Einhorn, *Director of Communications*

Gifts In Honor & In Memory Of

Gifts In Honor Of

Issa Acey
Katherine Acey
Carol Alpert
Sarah L. Barber
Jennie Brier
Arlene Bronstein
Susan Cohen
Juanita Deans &
Sandra Robinson
Roz Dutton
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Kathy Okay &
Kelsie Marea
Cheri Pies
Nusrat Rabbee
Sonya Shields
Ann Tobin
Dian Wagner
Léonie Walker &
Kate O'Hanlan

Gifts In Memory Of

Jennifer Chatfield
Fanny Ann Eddy
Betty Furdon
Craig Harris
Shevy Healey
Margaret McAllister
Elke Mueller
Arminta "Skip" Neal
Edith Rosenthal
Evelyn Schroeder
Benjamin Howard
Stansbury III
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 our Membership Coordinator, Monique George at monique@astraeafoundation.org or 212.529.8021, extension 18.

double your money with a **matching gift**



Did you know that it's possible to double or even triple your donation to Astraea by asking for a matching gift from your employer? Many companies sponsor matching gift programs that will match charitable contributions made by their employees.

Ask your employer if they have a matching gift program, and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to increase your support of Astraea!

Astraea *threads* Winter 05

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THREADS TEAM

Managing Editor Shaya Mercer
Writers Katherine Acey, Jennifer Einhorn,
Candace Sala Hewitt, Joo-Hyun Kang,
Shaya Mercer, Sonya Shields
Designer Diane Bonder
Printer Polyprint

Newsletter comment?

Email: shaya@astraeafoundation.org

CONTACT ASTRAEA

Write us:
116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003
Call us: 212.529.8021
Fax us: 212.982.3321
Email us: info@astraeafoundation.org
Visit us: www.astraeafoundation.org

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.

WHO IS ASTRAEA?

Astraea or "Starry One" was the Roman title of the Goddess of Holy Law or Libra, and was also known as the Goddess of Justice. In most ancient writings, Astraea is associated with natural law, matriarchal justice, and the personification of truth and justice.

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Jennifer Einhorn

Astraera Program Associate, Lorraine Ramirez presents her group's vision during a political education session at Astraera's **October board meeting**.



Jennifer Einhorn

Katherine Acey, Astraera ED, gets her hoola hoop on at Astraera's **Women & LGBTI Philanthropy Retreat**.



Courtesy of Funders for Gay and Lesbian Issues

Astraera Events Coordinator, Candace Hewitt with Jennifer Gryniewicz, ED of Cream City Foundation, Milwaukee and Beth Jordan, board member of Lesbian and Gay Community Appeal Foundation, Toronto (left to right) at the **Funders for Gay and Lesbian Issues** conference in Madison, Wisconsin.



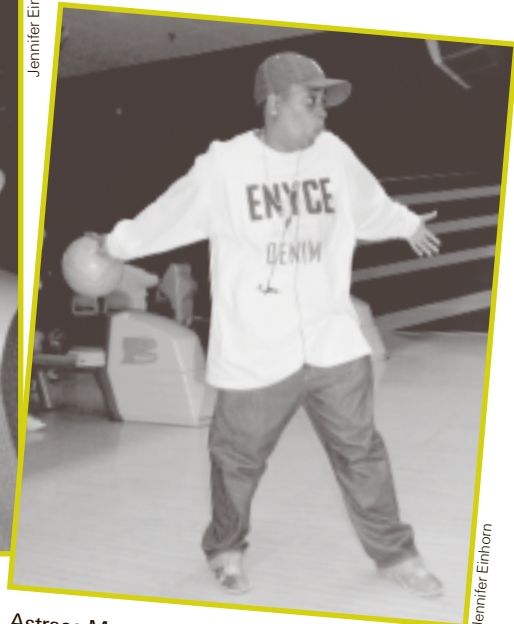
Jennifer Einhorn

Jules and Katrina from Dyke TV, a non-profit sponsor of the **Lynn Campbell Benefit**.



Jennifer Einhorn

Astraera members, Javonna Armstrong and Cheryl Barclay at the **Lynn Campbell Benefit** reception.



Jennifer Einhorn

Astraera Membership Coordinator, Mo George shows her stuff at the **Astraera staff retreat** bowling party.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Astraera events happen year round, coast to coast. From house parties and donor briefings to joint events with other LGBTI organizations, there are many ways to participate in Astraera events. For upcoming Astraera events in your area, be sure to check our website:

www.astraerafoundation.org

Host a House Party for Astraera

This spring, House Parties hosted by member volunteers are scheduled in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Fe, Boston, and Chevy Chase, MD.

House Parties are a great way to introduce Astraera to your community of friends, and to help us connect with local organizations that deserve our support.

If you'd like to host a House Party for Astraera, please call Candace Sala Hewitt, Events Coordinator, at 212.529.8021, extension 14, or email candace@astraerafoundation.org.