

the Federal Government nor the State of New York has made a commitment to universal healthcare, let alone, prioritizing women's reproductive health.

Looking ahead, the primary challenge we face in 2009 is the up-tick in requests for funding from clinics and individuals. More women need more money to obtain safe and legal abortion services. **Your continued support is desperately needed so that we do not have to turn away any women in need.**

The continued generosity of donors across the country ensures that women have a choice.

Ways to Get Involved

- Attend a NYAAF event or host one in your home.
- Volunteer with us. If you live in the New York area and would like to volunteer or join the Board of Directors, please e-mail Constance DeCherney at nyaaf@nnaf.org.
- Donate to NYAAF online at www.nyaaf.org, via Facebook Causes or send a check to our address below.
- If you have free office space and/or an extra printer, please consider making an in-kind donation to NYAAF. We are hoping to secure a color printer and access to free office space this year.

On behalf of the women we serve and the members of the NYAAF Board of Directors, thank you.

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New York Abortion Access Fund 2008 Annual Report

Who We Are

Founded in 2001, the New York Abortion Access Fund (NYAAF) is an all volunteer-run, 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides financial assistance to low-income women in New York State who cannot afford to pay for an abortion. NYAAF believes that abortion services should be available to all women regardless of their ability to pay. Abortion procedures can be prohibitively expensive with the average cost ranging from \$523 at 10 weeks gestation, to \$1,339 at 20 weeks. Without insurance coverage or funding assistance, many women do not have a real choice.

Abortion funds, such as NYAAF, are local grassroots organizations dedicated to ensuring that all women have access to funding for abortion services. The need for abortion funding is so great that there are more than 100 abortion funds across the country. NYAAF is an affiliate of the National Network of Abortion Funds.

NYAAF is run by a board of committed volunteers. Our newly elected Board Chair for 2009 is Constance DeCherney. Constance has spent the last decade dedicated to social justice. In New York, Constance has organized around abortion rights through coordinating book readings, film screenings, and speaking engagements of prominent women's rights activists. She also started an abortion fund while a student at the University of Delaware. The NYAAF Board of Directors is thrilled to have her leadership this year.

The Women We Serve

The women that NYAAF funds are often too poor to pay for abortion procedures, but not poor enough to obtain public health insurance coverage, such as Medicaid. In addition to helping local women, NYAAF also assists women from other states who need help covering the costs of their procedures in New York. Some women find that the cost of an abortion is more affordable in New York than in their home states, others come from areas where there are no abortion providers at all, and others must travel to obtain a second trimester procedure. NYAAF has made grants to women from many other states including New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Virginia, and Maryland. We have also helped women from as far away as Texas, Utah, and Bermuda to access safe, legal abortion in New York.

In 2008 our clients ranged from a 15-year-old from Maryland to a Pennsylvania mother in her late forties. Most of our clients are in their twenties—the average age is 23 years old. The majority of them are already mothers and do not wish to have more children at the time for a variety of reasons. Most of our clients state that they cannot afford to have another child. Others feel that they are too young or not prepared to have a child yet. Still others are victims of domestic violence. Finally, a small number of our clients plan to have a child and learn of fetal anomalies or health reasons that require them to terminate the pregnancy. No matter why our clients decide to seek an abortion, we believe that abortion should be safe, legal, accessible and funded.

Abortion Funding

NYAAF provides funding directly to reproductive health clinics on behalf of the women we serve. Clinics call NYAAF to help close the gap between the cost of an abortion and what the client can pay. In 2008, NYAAF pledged over \$48,000

to 71 women who needed help paying for their abortions. This represents a 400% increase from 2007 when we pledged just under \$11,000 to 58 women. The amount of money pledged per woman more than tripled from 2007 to 2008. NYAAF grants have ranged in size from \$50 to \$6,000. This dramatic increase in NYAAF's pledging is due in large part to the NYAAF Board's tremendous success in both grassroots fundraising and in raising awareness of our funding among abortion providers and advocates which allows us to ensure access to abortion for more women in need.

While we have long-standing relationships with several well-respected clinics in New York City, we conducted clinic outreach this year to expand the number of clinics we work with in New York State. When contacting clinics we provide stickers with the NYAAF phone number to display in the clinic reminding staff that NYAAF is here to help. In 2008 we developed partnerships with several new clinics, including clinics in upstate New York. Expanding clinic partnerships increases the chances that women in need will be connected to NYAAF.

Fundraising

NYAAF's operating costs are paid for by board member contributions. 100% of your tax-deductible contribution goes directly to assisting women. Donations from committed individuals help to keep choice a reality for women in New York State. Even small amounts can make an enormous difference in the lives of the women we help.

In 2008, NYAAF raised over \$17,000. We rely heavily on individual donations. Other funding sources include local foundations, events and sponsorships. In 2008, author Jennifer Baumgardner and Akashic Books committed to donating 10% of all proceeds from sales of Jennifer's book *Abortion & Life* to NYAAF.

NYAAF added online donation services to our website's fundraising capabilities through Groundspring.org. NYAAF is also a newly certified "cause" on Facebook.com, which allows Facebook members both donate to NYAAF and receive urgent alerts about our work.

As women across the country face restrictions on reproductive health care and economic challenges, we will continue to count on generous donations from our supporters to make reproductive choice a reality for the women we serve.

Through community events, NYAAF raises both money and public support for the fund's work. In 2008, NYAAF hosted three major events. In May 2008, authors Katha Pollitt and Steven Lukes hosted 100 guests for a fundraising reception that inspired over \$5000 in donations.

In July, NYAAF supporters Beth Fredrick and Don Palmer held a Bastille Day-themed party in Brooklyn that drew in over \$3000 in support.

In September, Merle Hoffman, Katha Pollitt, Akashic Books and NYAAF hosted a book party and cupcake reception for the release of *Abortion & Life*. Held at McNally & Jackson Books in Manhattan, the event drew a crowd of 150 and included a reading from author Jennifer Baumgardner.

Looking Ahead

Looking back, we feel proud of the work we accomplished in 2008—the women we have served, working with new clinics, and a staff of 10 committed volunteers who make up our largest board of directors to date. Unfortunately, our growth also reflects a growing need for financial assistance to obtain abortion services.

As we all know, the current financial crisis will affect the women who need NYAAF the most for years to come. In the last 12 months, thousands of women have lost their jobs, and in many instances, their health insurance. To date, neither