

OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS

established in 1986

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of *Out in the Mountains* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people, and our supporters in Vermont. We wish the newspaper to be a source of information, insight, and affirmation. We also see OITM as a vehicle for the celebration of the culture and diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities here in Vermont and elsewhere.

EDITORIAL POLICY

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and of each other. Views and opinions appearing in the paper do not necessarily represent those of *Out in the Mountains*. This paper cannot and will not endorse any candidates or actions of public officials on issues of importance to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered persons. We reserve the right not to publish any material deemed to be overtly racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, ageist, classist, xenophobic, or homophobic. Writers' guidelines are available on request. All materials submitted must include a name and a contact number. However, within the pages of the newspaper, articles may appear anonymously upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed.

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Samara Foundation of Vermont Announces Grants and Scholarships Totaling \$34,000

BURLINGTON — Samara Foundation of Vermont has awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$34,000 to fifteen organizations serving the Vermont gay community and four high school seniors.

Four Vermont high school seniors will be receiving \$1,000 scholarships for 2001. The Samara Scholarship was established in 2000 as an investment in the future of Vermont students who oppose discrimination and prejudice and who stand for the elimination of homophobia in our society.

Organizations funded in Samara Foundation's Year 2001 granting cycle benefit the Vermont gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities in a wide range of areas that include HIV prevention, youth services, education, media development, social service and initiatives to address same-sex domestic violence.

HIV prevention outreach to men in Bennington County and technological upgrading were the focus of two AIDS service organization grants. AIDS Project of Southern New England and Vermont CARES each were awarded \$2,000.

Expanded youth services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth throughout Vermont are supported by four grants. The UVM Department of Theatre received \$1,125 to underwrite the cost of tickets to be distributed to LGBT youth for the fall production of *The Laramie Project*, a highly personal and moving account of how a town is affected when a young gay man is the victim of a hate crime. Outright

Vermont was awarded \$6,250 to be used as a leveraging tool to match gifts in their 2001 major donor campaign. The Lyndon State College Gay / Straight Alliance received \$625 for project support for the second annual CHANGE Conference. A \$1,500 grant was awarded to The Vermont Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights to coordinate discussion groups in local communities to ensure that schools continue to teach tolerance and diversity in the schools.

A \$500 grant to the Vermont Chapter of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalist Association and a \$4,000 grant to Mountain Pride Media aim to support fair media coverage and enhance communication for the gay community of Vermont.

The Same-Sex Domestic and Sexual Violence Subcommittee in Chittenden County received \$2,000 to implement a support and referral phone service. Created in 1995, the SSDSVS examines and responds to the unique needs of survivors of same-sex domestic and sexual violence.

A \$2,000 grant was awarded to The Vermont Chapter of the National Organization for Women to help fund a three-day summit to acknowledge the gains made in Vermont with the passage of the civil union law and to strategize about how to extend similar rights throughout New England. The Women's Small Business Program received \$1,500 to award scholarships for low and moderate-income lesbians, bisexual women and transgender people for Start-Up.

The R.U.1.2? Community Center received \$1,500 to support the mounting of an exhibition of materials from the collections of the Vermont Queer Archives. The exhibition will be presented in October 2001 to mark National Coming Out Week.

This celebration of our community's achievements was supported by grants to Pride Vermont and the Green Mountain Freedom Band. Each organization was awarded \$500.

The Vermont Freedom to Marry Task Force received \$4,000 to assist in their mission of educating Vermonters about the injustice of excluding same-sex couples and the families they form from the status of civil marriage, and the myriad legal protections, supports and obligations that accompany that status.

The Samara Foundation, with offices in Burlington, is one of a network of gay and lesbian community foundations across the county. Samara Foundation is a charitable foundation whose mission is to support and strengthen Vermont's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities today and build an endowment for tomorrow.

Samara first awarded grants in 1998 and now has awarded over \$92,000 throughout the state.

For further information about giving or granting opportunities contact Bill Lippert, Executive Director, Samara Foundation of Vermont, P.O. Box 1263, Burlington, Vermont 05402. Call 802-860-6236 or email at bill@samarafoundation.org.

Census continued from page one

happen with that information."

Goslant also said that he felt the government didn't try to get an accurate count of gay and lesbian households. "I don't think the government really had an investment in trying to identify us," he said. "We felt we were going to be underrepresented because there really wasn't going to be a mechanism to adequately identify who we were as couples. The census form didn't ask the relationship between the two people."

Like Goslant, *Dykes to Watch Out For* cartoonist Alison Bechdel questions the accuracy of the census data. "Press articles have not

addressed the possibility that a census could be inaccurate in any way especially when there is a stigma attached to what you might check," she said.

Bechdel and her partner, who checked "unmarried partner," live in Bolton, Vt., a town the census identified as having the highest number of same-sex partner households in Chittenden County, the state's largest county that includes Burlington. "Bolton is a small town and coincidentally there is a number of gay people there," she said. "So it's easy to skew the statistics." Ten out of Bolton's 386 households were identified as same-sex.

While many people believe

the census figures regarding the number of same-sex partner households in Vermont are low, Beth Robinson, an attorney who successfully sued the state in the landmark Baker vs. Vermont gay marriage lawsuit, had a slightly different view of data. "The figures were low but the reality is it doesn't matter whether there are 1,900 or 19,000 same-sex couples in Vermont. What matters is that we are part of this community. We work hard, pay our taxes, contribute to the community, and deserve to be treated equally. That's true regardless of how many of us there are."