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LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS ASKS THEM TO DO THEIR HOMEWORK

We've had complaints from all across the state for several years about guest speakers invited into public schools for a chance to deliver religious messages to a captive audience of children.

"With each of these complaints, we heard about the problem after the fact," explained ACLU Nebraska Legal Director Amy Miller. "So we were reacting after the damage had been done, which was frustrating for parents who were afraid to speak out because of the risk of alienation in their communities."

That's when the ACLU decided to try a more novel approach: we wrote a letter to every single public school Superintendent in Nebraska, warning them that guest speakers are obliged to obey the First Amendment. "We've asked school administrators to do homework before putting someone in front of the students," said Miller. "The clear and stated mission of some of these entities is to convert children to Christianity. If a school knows that, then the school is participating in an illegal endorsement of one religious viewpoint."

The ACLU letters singled out two particular home grown proselytizing speakers: Ron Brown and Keith Becker. Brown, a Husker coach, has long been speaking in public schools, and the ACLU has had complaints about his misconduct for over a decade. Reports indicate his presentations rail against homosexuality, urge children to pray and read the Bible, and explicitly exhort belief in his personal version of Christianity. Becker is a newer speaker on the school scene who uses Biblical verses and imagery to encourage children to "take the narrow path." Becker's religious-laden presentations all conclude with an "altar call," where he invites the students to come down to him on the stage if they agree to live by his precepts. "This leaves dissenting students alone on the bleachers with a spotlight on them," pointed out Miller. "That sort of peer pressure is the exact reason the US Supreme Court has forbidden religious exercises in the school."

This proactive approach had two purposes: first, to alert unwary administrators to the true goal of these presenters and second, to put all administrators on notice about their obligation to do some research before giving an outside speaker access to the students. "We continue to stand available



(Continued on page 3)

FOCUS GROUPS GIVE FEEDBACK TO ACLU NEBRASKA BOARD

Board members of ACLU Nebraska have conducted two in person focus groups to determine community needs and perceptions of ACLU in the last year. Groups of ACLU members and non-member community leaders were brought together in North Omaha and Fremont. In each meeting, board members listened to what ACLU Nebraska could do to improve service to unmet civil liberties needs.

More focus groups will be held in early 2011, in Kearney, South Omaha and other cities to be announced. The board and staff will then compile all responses in order to shape the organization's strategic plan.

Your feedback and thoughts are always appreciated: if you have concerns or questions you'd like shared with the board of directors, feel free to write or email us at info@aclunebbraska.org or ACLU Nebraska, Attn: Laurel Marsh, 941 O Street, #706, Lincoln NE

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Are you a current member of ACLU Nebraska?

Do you have an interest in helping chart the course for protecting civil liberties in Nebraska?

If your answer is "Yes," then consider nominating yourself for the Board of Directors. Our 18 member Board sets our priorities, aids in fundraising for our projects, and provides the vision for where ACLU Nebraska will be heading.

The candidates will be then voted upon by the ACLU membership (ballots are mailed in the spring).

Submit your statement of interest to Nominations Chair Brenda Ealey: info@aclunebbraska.org or Brenda Ealey, 941 O Street, #706, Lincoln Nebraska 68508. You will then be contacted by a member of the committee with more information. Nominations must be received by February 1, 2011.



DANGEROUS SONGS, BANNED BOOKS & CENSORED MOVIES

In October, approximately 65 people crowded into Duffy's Tavern in Lincoln to celebrate the right to enjoy uncensored art. We heard songs that have been censored performed by live bands from the Academy of Rock (see above). A display of frequently banned children's picture books and clips from famous controversial movies rounded out the message: if we don't protect your freedom to have access to art, someone will try to take it away. Thanks to the Nebraska Library Association Committee on Intellectual Freedom and AFCON for their help in this event.

FIGHTING FOR GLBT EQUALITY IN OMAHA

The Omaha City Council considered a proposal to make it illegal to discriminate against employees on the basis of sexual orientation earlier this fall. While the effort was unsuccessful, ACLU joined the efforts to encourage city lawmakers to pass the law.



“Surveys indicate most Americans already believe it’s illegal to discriminate on the basis of one’s sexual orientation, so this is hardly controversial,” pointed out ACLU Nebraska Executive Director Laurel Marsh. “No one should face job discrimination for their orientation—that’s exactly the sort of UNEQUAL treatment under the law that the Constitution sought to prevent.”

ACLU Nebraska has been a strong supporter of similar statewide efforts to amend Nebraska law on this issue. “We will keep fighting this battle,” Marsh promised, “both in the cities considering the issue and at the State Legislature.”

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS cont.

(Continued from page 1)

for any parent who wants to complain to us,” said Miller, “but since we fear it may be too unpopular for a family to come forward, we wanted to try to stop this problem without needing a lawsuit.”

Since our letter, we know of at least 5 schools that decided to pull the plug on religious presentations. “Several principals and superintendents thanked the ACLU,” noted Miller. “They honestly had no idea what the guest speaker’s plans were prior to hearing from us.”

We put the final touch on our effort to educate the educators by presenting a live seminar with questions and answers at the Nebraska Council of School Administrators in November. Approximately 65 school officials attended to hear Miller and two other attorneys discuss a public school’s legal obligations to remain neutral towards religion.

Here’s hoping this is one lesson that’s been fully learned.

JOIN ACLU NATIONAL PRESIDENT SUSAN HERMAN AT 2011 ANNUAL DINNER ON APRIL 1

Herman holds a chair as Centennial Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School, where she currently teaches courses in Constitutional Law and Criminal Procedure, and seminars on Law and Literature, and Terrorism and Civil Liberties. She writes extensively on constitutional and criminal procedure topics for scholarly and other publications, ranging from law reviews and books to periodicals and on-line publications.

Ticket information on page 4.





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Journeys of **JUSTICE**

2011 Annual Dinner
Evening of Friday, April 1
Grand Manse in Lincoln

Celebrate an incredible year in civil liberties and those who defend our constitution and struggle for justice.

Special Guest and Speaker: Susan N. Herman was elected President of the American Civil Liberties Union in October 2008, after having served on the ACLU National Board of Directors for twenty years and as General Counsel for ten years.

Learn about ACLU National President Susan Herman on page 3.

2011 Annual Dinner
Evening of Friday, April 1
Jasmine Room, Grand Manse
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Tickets are \$45
Purchase Tickets Online Today!
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2009-2010 Annual Report



Board member and 2010 award recipient Leslie Seymore (center) with her family at the 2010 Annual Dinner. The spring dinner was held at Cascios Steakhouse in Omaha and featured Ellery Schempp, Champion for the Separation of Church and State.

Margaux Towne-Colley & Donna Colley were plaintiffs in ACLU's challenge to Nebraska's Defense of Marriage Act. They are currently raising a family in Omaha and here they are enjoying a free evening at the Jackson Artworks Fundraiser.

Doing What's Right — Not What's Popular



*Eric Evans
President, ACLU Nebraska*

This year has seen some controversial undertakings by ACLU in the state of Nebraska. Our lawsuit against the city of Fremont for their anti-immigrant ordinance is the tip of an iceberg that promises even more work to fight back anti-immigrant efforts at the legislature and in the court of public opinion. We laid down the gauntlet with school administrators statewide: they must provide a public education without religious proselytizing by outside speakers, and we will take action if they continue to put children in mandatory assemblies hosted by religious organizations. With funding from the national ACLU Racial Justice Project, we staffed a satellite Omaha office to collect examples of police abuse of power. Our cooperative lawsuit with Planned

Parenthood resulted in the striking down of the so called "informed consent" law that put unreasonable obstacles in the path of women seeking abortions.

These hot button issues aren't just fodder for the headlines: they are fundamental threats to the basic constitutional rights all of us enjoy, and they're what we do. We can't do this work without your help. In this annual report, you'll see a summary of how we use the resources available to us and a discussion of the focus groups we're conducting around the state to ensure we're meeting as many members' needs as possible. Please use the envelope included here and continue your support for the Constitution.

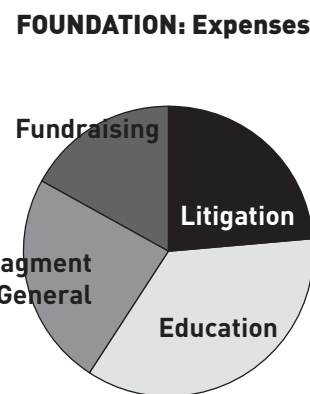
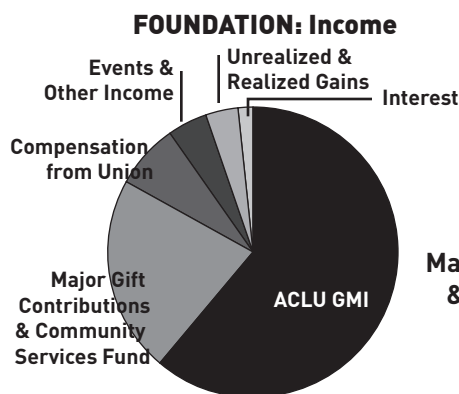
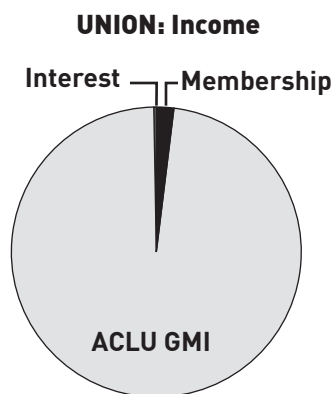
Financial Report — ACLU Nebraska

The Board of Directors of ACLU Nebraska takes its stewardship responsibilities seriously. Neither ACLU Nebraska nor the ACLU Nebraska Foundation receives any government funding. We never charge our clients for legal representation. The ACLU Nebraska Foundation conducts legal advocacy, litigation and public education programs in support of civil liberties. The foundation is a 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt organization. Contributions to it are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. ACLU Nebraska conducts membership outreach and organizing and legislative advocacy. As a 501 (c) 4 organization, contributions are not tax-deductible.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year ended March 31, 2010

	Union	Foundation	Eliminations	Total
CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS				
Revenue and support				
Membership	\$ 745	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 745
ACLU GMI*	32,904	152,100	-	185,004
Shared revenue*	-	10,337	-	10,337
Contributions	-	43,879	-	43,879
Community Services Fund	-	10,703	-	10,703
Compensation from Union	-	17,832	(17,832)	-
Unrealized gain on investments	-	8,697	-	8,697
Interest income	27	3,660	-	3,687
Realized gains	-	124	-	124
Events income	-	8,274	-	8,274
Other income	-	3,240	-	3,240
Total revenue and support	33,676	258,846	(17,832)	274,690
Net assets released from restrictions (Grant)	-	19,375	-	19,375
Total unrestricted revenue and support	33,676	278,221	(17,832)	294,065
Expenses				
Program services	16,618	163,834	(12,482)	167,970
Support services	6,936	112,622	(5,350)	114,208
Total expenses	23,554	276,456	(17,832)	282,178
Increase in unrestricted net assets	10,122	1,765	-	11,887
CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS				
Temporarily restricted grant income	-	10,000	-	10,000
Satisfaction of restrictions	-	(19,375)	-	(19,375)
Decrease in temporarily restricted net assets	-	(9,375)	-	(9,375)
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	10,122	(7,610)	-	2,512
Net assets at beginning of year	19,774	272,042	-	291,816
Net assets at end of year	\$ 29,896	\$ 264,432	\$ -	\$ 294,328



* Sharing: All gifts and membership dues are shared by ACLU Nebraska and the national ACLU so that smaller affiliate offices around the country can address the serious civil liberties issues in their states. Both ACLU Nebraska and ACLU Nebraska Foundation are funded in substantial part by gifts from the national ACLU.

Thanks to you civil liberties will be defended.

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributors who gave during our fiscal year, April 1, 2009-March 31, 2010. It is because of the generous financial support of civil liberties champions like these that those who have had their rights violated have a place to call. Thank you.

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The coming year will continue to have racial justice and immigration at the forefront of our work. As seen by the over 4000 people that attended the Concert for Equality, the support needed to stop discriminatory laws from passing in Nebraska is there.



Friend [gifts up to \$199]

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If your name has been listed incorrectly or omitted, please accept our apology. Please contact Tyler Richard at (402) 476-8091 to let us know how you would like your name to appear in future acknowledgements or if you would prefer to be listed anonymously.

ACLU Nebraska would also like to thank the individuals who contribute anonymously or through worksite giving campaigns that may not be included in the above list.