



Fortunate Families: 2005 Annual Report

We are happy and proud to offer this first Annual Report of Fortunate Families, Inc. The year 2005 was exciting—filled with large amounts of paperwork as Fortunate Families became incorporated, filed for 501(c)(3) status,* and set up those many office related systems (mostly financial) that are essential to running a not-for-profit organization. However, the clerical work is not what made the year exciting. Here are some of the highlights.

- In April, 2005, New Ways Ministry presented us with the Bridge Building Award, which Casey & I accepted on behalf of Catholic Parents of LGBT daughters and sons everywhere, whose love for their LGBT children is a prophetic witness to the world and our Church.
- Throughout 2005, Fortunate Families was a presence at conferences across the U.S., notably: the Northwest Catholic Women's Convocation in Seattle; the Dignity/USA Convention in Philadelphia; Call to Action in Milwaukee; and the National Association of Catholic Diocesan Lesbian & Gay Ministries in San Jose. Locally (Rochester, NY) Fortunate Families continues to facilitate an annual day of reflection for parents as well as monthly parents meetings, and to speak at adult education forums at area churches—both Catholic and Protestant.
- In July 2005, the Fortunate Families website went on-line. Check it out at www.fortunatefamilies.com. There are resources and links galore. One highlight of the website is a Spanish Language page which features several resources and contact information for a bilingual priest for counseling needs.
- The *Fortunate Families Newsletter* (8 issues) was sent to approximately 1000 people (about 65% by email) in 39 states and the District of Columbia as well as six foreign countries. *Fortunate Families: Catholic Families with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons*, *Seeds of Hope*, and *More Seeds* continue to be distributed.

The board of directors is especially grateful to the 123 donors whose generosity made all these accomplishments possible. This support is a tangible sign that ministry with Catholic parents of LGBT daughters and sons is necessary, and it expresses confidence that Fortunate Families addresses that need.

2006 looks no less exciting. With the help of a generous grant from the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters, Fortunate Families will undertake a national survey of Catholic parents of LGBT daughters and sons. In addition to discerning the needs of Catholic parents, the goal of the survey is to develop a network of parents who are willing to use their time and talent to help meet those needs and to inspire parents to speak their love and their truth. We will continue to spread the message of Fortunate Families and reach out to parents wherever they are on this blessed journey

Reflecting on 2005, what comes most to mind are the stories. We especially remember Mary, who we met at the Dignity/USA convention. A young, professional women of middle eastern heritage, struggling to know if her father would reject her if he knew she is lesbian, Mary was thrilled to meet parents who she could speak to openly about her fears and her hopes of acceptance. She's now involved in a ministry group and keeps in touch with us by email. We also remember the *many* parents whose paths crossed ours. They are so eager to talk openly, to express their anger at the discrimination their children face from society and especially from their church, and, most importantly, to declare their love and admiration for their LGBT daughters and sons. They are the heart of Fortunate Families.

Always remember, "God sees with the heart."

Mary Ellen Lopata, President

*On February 1, 2006 501(c)(3) status was granted.

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(includes initial appeal in late 2004)

Gifts of \$500 or more

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*Len Szumiloski Memorial Resource Fund

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Wheaton Franciscan Sisters

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Harry Bronson, Esq.
Mary Ellen & Casey Lopata
Kristin Malone
Phoenix Graphics
Todd Rohnke

Volunteers:

Mary Ann & John O'Brien

Ann Rohnke

Len & Molly Szumiloski

2005 Income & Expense Report

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

41000 Contributions	11,001.28	
42000 Book Sales	2,428.95	
43000 Grants	1,000.00	
44000 Other		<u>54.00</u>

Total income **14,484.23**

Expense

52000 Cost of Books		1,033.17
53000 Administrative		1,695.83
54000 Postage/Shipping	1,662.03	
55000 Print Material		1,529.26
56000 General: fees, equipment, supplies, publications, et c.	2,061.78	
57000 Telephone/ Communications		20.00
58000 Conference/Travel	<u>3,644.60</u>	

Total Expense **11,646.67**

NET Income **2,837.56**

2005 Board of Directors

James Buckheit
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Casey Lopata
Rosalie Muschal Reinhardt
William Pickett

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