



iowa medical aid fund

P. O. Pox 721 Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-0721

WINTER 2006

In the four weeks from November to December of this year, IMAF received nearly 70 requests for financial assistance. We were able to provide loans to each woman, totaling \$13,000

IMAF is the second oldest loan fund in the nation, and the only independent fund to assist women in financial need throughout Iowa.

Restrictions on Abortion in Iowa: As of December 2005 the parent of a minor must be notified before an abortion is provided. Public funding is available for abortion only in cases of life endangerment, rape, incest or fetal abnormality.

Now is the time to double your donation dollars: make a contribution to the IMAF Matching Fund!

The IMAF Mission

The mission of IMAF is to raise funds for loans to Iowa women in need of an abortion. IMAF is the only independent abortion fund provider not associated with a clinic in the state of Iowa, and we provide loans to women across the state.

Founded in 1978, IMAF is the second oldest abortion loan fund in the United States. The Cedar Rapids Medical Aid Fund, as it was then known, began as a small circle of people answering a telephone. These founding members include Polly and John Ely, Toni McGraw, Frank Young and Tom Moss, Cindy Dvorak, Ortha Harstad and others from the Cedar Rapids area.

Every year across the U.S., tens of thousands of poor women and teens are forced to carry a pregnancy to term because they cannot afford to pay for an abortion. Many thousands more would be denied this fundamental right if not for community-based funds like IMAF that help women pay for abortions.

Abortion access is a matter of justice. The Hyde Amendment and governmental limits to Medicaid funding deny abortion rights and reproductive freedom to the most disadvantaged women in society – those who must depend on the government for their health care. Other obstacles to abortion access that burden women include mandatory waiting periods, mandatory parental involvement laws, and the shortage of abortion providers. Because it can take so long to find the money for an abortion, women with limited resources tend to have later and more costly abortions. (NNAF 2006)

For many years, IMAF has relied on supporters largely in east central Iowa, although it provides loans to women throughout the state and 28% of the requests come from central Iowa. In 2006, IMAF was forced to refuse requests for help for three months this year because of funding shortfalls. Please consider an additional contribution – to take advantage of our double-your-money matching fund – and please, ask others who support reproductive rights to help.

A Choice Event

IMAF held its annual fund-raising auction at Temple Judah on Saturday, October 21. A resounding and heartfelt thank you to all who helped raise over \$12,000 for the loan fund! Many supporters sent in contributions before the auction, while others made additional donations to take advantage of a matching grant, or donated to the IMAF endowment. The matching grant is still open for those still interested in doubling their gift amount to IMAF.

It was an evening of choices for the crowd: a variety of tapas; a selection of fine wines from the First Avenue Wine House; and many auction options including meals, artwork, an airplane ride and an evening of live jazz. About ninety supporters browsed among several tables of auction items while conversing with friends and sampling the food, and the incomparable Libby Slappey served as auctioneer for a marvelous event

SPONSORS*Johanna Abernathy, M.D.**Rev. Anne W. Baker**Lynda Bordwell**Rev. Jeremy Brigham**Charles deProsse, M.D.**MPH**Kevin Eck, M.D.**W. Dow Edgerton, M.D.**Bev Hannon**Robert M. Kretzschmar, M.D.**D. W. Laube, M.D.**Marilyn Magid**Anne G. Rapp, R.N.**H. J. Roddy, M.D.**Ann and Henry Royer**Libby Slappey**Sashi Solomon, A.R.N.P.**John Ware, M.D.**Hanna Weston***BOARD MEMBERS***Anne Busha**John Chaimov**Kris Davis**Wendee Deal**Gary Goldstein**Amber Fricke**Fran Hansen**Ortha Harstad**Gina Hausknecht**John Karn**M. Finnegan Klein**Kathy Kilbourn**Marcy Mattison**Julie McPartland**Pat Nielsen**Muriel J. Rogers**Sashi Solomon**Sally Stephenson**Gretchen Wright**Nancy York*

We are pro-life and pro-choice.

This is not a contradiction, but a reclaiming of the phrase “pro-life” to represent the broader scope of life: quality of life, and the right of women to make reproductive choices that protect that quality.

Consider the life of an unwanted, neglected child; consider the life of the woman in an abusive relationship, or the woman working two jobs who is still financially unable to provide. Above all, consider the wisdom of a woman to know what is best for her in the life she is living right now.

We who value women, children and families now reclaim the word PRO-LIFE. It expresses respect for life in all its stages and an understanding of life’s hard choices. The wristbands have the words IMAF: pro-choice, pro-life, pro-family on a purple band, and are available for \$5 from any IMAF member.

Our Voice

Many supporters may not know that IMAF has one – yes, ONE – employee: a part-time phone counselor who has been IMAF’s primary voice since the late 1980s.

Cindy Buntmeyer was attending graduate school in Iowa City and volunteering at the Emma Goldman Clinic when the Day Foundation in the Quad Cities awarded IMAF funding to could pay a part-time phone counselor. Cindy was hired, and worked from the Emma Goldman Clinic until she married Lowell Corkery and moved to Waterloo. At that time she began answering the IMAF phone line from home.

Cindy answers IMAF’s phone in addition to her work as a rehabilitation counselor. She collects limited demographic information from callers to help develop a general profile of IMAF clients, gently asks about their situations and resources. Since IMAF cannot provide the full amount, she often suggests additional financial options. After 18 years Cindy remains committed to this difficult job, because she believes in its importance and knows she can make a difference to women in crisis.”

President’s Report

In November our intake worker, Cindy Corkery, became ill and I began to answer the IMAF help line. To date, loans have been approved to 70 women needing the funds for an abortion. Here are a few of the stories I heard:

- A 30-year-old disabled women was raped and required an IMAF loan to obtain an abortion. She lives on government assistance and has no other resources.
- The mother of a frightened 15-year-old called IMAF for help. “After I spoke to the daughter the thankful mother tearfully came back on the phone and said the pregnancy was the result of a ‘smooth talking teenager.’”
- A social worker phoned seeking assistance for a 19-year-old woman on Title XIX. Pregnant because of a rape, she has been placed in a shelter and is in treatment for drug abuse. The social worker reports that the IMAF loan, together with other funds, will make an abortion procedure possible. The woman has agreed to repay the loan as soon as possible.

Because of your generosity IMAF was able to approve assistance to these women. Thank you for making a very real difference.

Sincerely,

Muriel Rogers, IMAF president

***Now is the time to double
your donation dollars: make a
contribution to the
IMAF Matching Fund!***

***ELECTIONS 2006
Cause for Optimism***

***Three new pro-choice sena -
tors were elected, and we
gained more than 20 pro-
choice members of the
House.
In addition to these congres -
sional victories, voters in
South Dakota repealed an
abortion ban that didn't
include exceptions for rape,
incest or the health of the
pregnant woman.***

Who We Help:

***. . . A 28-year-old woman with
four kids, whose husband left
on learning that she was
pregnant.
"It was an abusive relation -
ship," and she knew she must
terminate
her pregnancy, but had
very little money.***

***Ms. Magazine this month
presents compelling personal
stories of abortions:
<[msmagazine.com/fall2006
/abortionmg.asp](http://msmagazine.com/fall2006/abortionmg.asp)>***

Matching Fund Opportunity

At our annual dinner Auction on October 21, we announced a wonderful anonymous gift: a matching fund for all contributions made before January 31, 2007. To date, over \$4,000 has been donated to this new effort. Now is the time to double your donation: make an extra contribution to the Iowa Medical Aid Fund matching fund!

The Unrelenting Need

In only four weeks – from this November to December -- IMAF met 70 requests for loans, averaging \$200 and totaling roughly \$13,000! In 2005, IMAF paid \$56,410 to area clinics to assist more than 300 women, and had to turn off the telephone several times for lack of funds. On average, IMAF contributes about \$200 per client toward the cost of the procedure, which generally ranges from \$400 to \$600.

More than onethird of our clients are from the Quad Cities area. IMAF receives generous support from the Doris and Victor Day Foundation, which covers the expenses for women from that area. Because of a shortage of funding for the rest of Iowa, we were unable to provide loans to women from late May through July of this year. We estimate that this represents approximately 80 women we were unable to help.

The IMAF provided loans to 140 women from July through September. Of those clients, 13% reported pregnancy as a result of an abusive relationship. Ages ranged from 13 to 44, with the majority between ages 18 and 28, much like the overall Iowa Department of Health statistics. 5% of our clients were married, compared with 20.2 % for the overall Iowa figures. This may represent the fact that married women may have more financial support available.

From the Women You Have Helped

As treasurer of the IMAF, I receive the repayments from women who have received loans from our organization. The repayments may come months later in various ways and sometimes include notes of gratitude for the assistance IMAF provides. Here are some excerpts from recent letters:

Dear Iowa Medical Aid Fund,

This . . . check is paying off half of the amount borrowed by -- for her appointments at the Elysa Goldman Clinic on (dates). I will try to have the other half . . . when my next paycheck comes. Thank you for your help. I wish I had known about you sooner.

Dear Iowa Medical Aid Fund,

Thank you for contributing . . . to my medical abortion procedure. I am a (30+)-yr old woman residing in a residential care facility. I am ill, unemployed, and receive SSDI. I do not have the means or the funds to have this unexpected/unplanned pregnancy. With your help, I am able to have this abortion. I am greatly appreciative of your supports for women's rights and for assisting women who are in need of such finances. Along with your help and my mother's, I am able to have this abortion. Thank you for your help.

The Iowa Medical Aid Fund is able to help women in need because of your support. I pass along their thanks to you for making it possible.

John Karn, IMAF Treasurer

**Visit the IMAF web site for
info and easy giving:
www.imafund.org**

**Among the 50 states and
the District of Columbia,
here is where Iowa ranked:
service availability: 48th
laws and policies: 10th
public funding: 39th
overall: 36th**

**Because women who receive
IMAF loans are asked
to repay them,
each dollar has the power
to help many women.
Your money does not go
away,
but continues to provide help.**

Report from South Dakota

An abortion ban was passed by the South Dakota state legislature this past spring. It made illegal all abortions only allowing an exception to “prevent the death of the woman.” It did not even allow an exception for victims of rape or incest and was intended to be a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion in 1973. However, South Dakotans did not passively let their rights be taken away; the ban was referred to the citizens to decide in the general election in November.

On November 8th, the citizens of South Dakota woke up with their rights intact, and the whole country was able to breathe a sigh of relief. The voters of South Dakota had rejected the ban 56% to 44%.

Although we have triumphed for the moment, anti-choice leaders and legislators are steadily eroding our reproductive options by restricting abortion and attacking emergency contraception and hormonal birth control. We maintain respect for women and families by giving them choices and allowing them to decide what is right for their lives and their circumstances. Medical decisions, including all aspects of reproductive health, should be made by a woman in consultation with her doctor and whomever else she chooses, not by the government. Submitted by Amber Fricke, a college student, an intern with Planned Parenthood in South Dakota, and IMAF board member.

IMAF Is Coming to Des Moines

IMAF helps women across Iowa but most of our donations come from the eastern part of the state – but that may change! We will be holding an informational meeting in Des Moines in January '07 at DMACC with pro-choice women to expand our circle of supporters. If you have pro-choice friends, family, or co-workers in the Des Moines area please let them know about this opportunity to speak to IMAF Board members and to learn more about how IMAF helps women in Iowa. For more information or to be contacted with details about this special event, contact Fran Hansen at rb12fh1@msn.com. This is a shared email address so replies from Fran will have the name Richard Bleakley on them.

The Threat Continues

ERIC KEROACK is the medical director of an antiabortion “pregnancy counseling” center, called “A Woman’s Concern,” that refuses to distribute contraceptives or encourage their use — even by married couples. The organization says it is “persuaded that the . . . and distribution of birth control is demeaning to women, degrading of human sexuality, and adverse to human health and happiness.” It believes . . . that making birth control available, “especially among adolescents, actually increases (rather than decreases) out-of-wedlock pregnancy and abortion.”

These views would be merely bizarre were it not for this additional disturbing fact: Dr. Keroack, an obstetrician-gynecologist, is about to head up the Department of Health and Human Services, overseeing federally funded family planning programs. To put it simply, the Bush administration’s choice to direct the federal effort to make contraceptives available to low-income women works for a group that doesn’t support using contraception. What comes next — a science adviser who doesn’t believe in evolution?

Source: editorial, The Washington Post, 11.19.06

imaf iowa medical aid fund

P. O. Pox 721 Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-0721

Making a difference in women's lives.

I want to help!

Please use the enclosed envelope for your donation and this response form:

I'm enclosing a donation to the IMAF matching grant.

I'd like to contribute to the Ely Endowment to ensure future funding.

I know another person or group that would like to hear about IMAF:

Name of person/group _____

Email _____

Address _____

I would like to receive the IMAF newsletter via e-mail.

Please remove me from your list

Please note my change of address:

Name _____

Address _____

Email: (optional) _____

Telephone (optional) _____