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American Association for Single People

415 East Harvard Street,
Suite 204
Glendale, California 91205
(818) 242-5100
(818) 242- 5103 fax
unmarried@earthlink.net
www.unmarriedamerica.com

Together We Stand. Vision into Reality



Candace Kavanagh
Development Director

Having worked as a Development Officer in non-profit agencies for over 10 years, I have enjoyed the opportunity of bringing good things to life. When you work full time for a non-profit agency, the reward of your work is in that fact that someone is going to receive something that will help them experience a healthier and more fulfilled existence.

When a foundation grant arrives, or a major donor jumps on board – all of a sudden, as if out of the blue – you have the opportunity to change real-life circumstances for the better. With a steady effort, men and women can break an unhealthy or unfair status quo and bring about positive and lasting change. I call this process vision into reality.

When most Americans look into the corners of their own existence, we see some areas where we would like to bring about change. Unmarried Americans today face challenges we did not have decades ago. Whoever considered that the unmarried heads of households would outnumber the married heads of households?

The dividing line between being single and being married is slim and subject to change. Your status changes when you choose to marry, or when you divorce or your spouse dies. In 2002, family diversity is the norm and the sit-com of the Golden Girls' way of life represents a new type of extended family that also represents reality for many American families.

Whether we are single by choice or circumstances, as Americans, unmarried men and women are entitled to

and should expect equal treatment at home, at work and under the law.

To turn our vision into reality, my work at AASP will focus on our 2002 priority areas of growth: Health Care, Employee Benefits and Taxes.

I already have begun conversations with different insurance carriers to design a health care plan that will allow AASP to offer an affordable group health insurance program to our members.

Development efforts will also focus on building relationships with corporations, especially among the human resources officers. Readers may be surprised to learn that many of our Fortune 500 companies have hired Diversity Officers to study demographics and understand the needs of all employees. Many major corporations are breaking the status quo and stereotypes to attract and keep the caliber of employee that they are seeking.

Executive Director and attorney Thomas Coleman spearheads our legislative watch and leads the way for you in establishing more equal taxation and a fairer social security benefit plan for singles. I will support his efforts with public relations and communications to help knit together the diversified group of 82,000,000 unmarried Americans in the eyes of our elected officials and public policy makers.

Not expressed in AASP's 2002 priorities is an important issue that is on-going within AASP: that is the social and economic bias against single men and women in the marketplace, that is to say, how we are perceived. Hey, it's okay to be single. We make good customers, reliable tenants and home owners, and responsible parents. Companies with products to sell should single us out!

One of the effective ways the AASP works to lift the veil of bias about unmarried men and women is through on-going bona fide studies which will be augmented through our newly established Academic Advisory Board (See page 7).

As we begin 2002, let's get our report cards ready for 2003 to see how many of these visions have become realities. ▲▲▲