

As Always, On the Forefront of Civil Liberties In Iowa

The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Iowa
2011

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Iowa supporters of the ACLU Foundation of Iowa are the single largest source of funding for our efforts. We rely on your generosity to maintain current staffing levels and programming.

You can make your tax-deductible gift to the ACLU Foundation (ACLUF) of Iowa in one of two ways:
v Mail your donation to ACLUF of Iowa, 505 Fifth Ave., #901, Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

v Visit us at www.aclu-ia.org and click on "Donate Now."

All gifts support the ongoing work of both the affiliate and national ACLU foundations, with three out of four dollars going to Iowa efforts.

Questions? Call us at 515-243-3576, ext. 13.

I've always been a little puzzled when an Iowa journalist refers to "Iowa civil liberties groups."



But don't get me wrong. During my 15 years as executive director, if I saw other groups in Iowa dedicated solely to preserving the freedoms found in the Bill of Rights, we would welcome the help. But honestly, that just isn't the case.

For more than 75 years, the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa has been the lone voice for the comprehensive advocacy of our liberties as Iowans.

No other organization confronts ongoing threats to a wider range of freedoms. From free speech and privacy, to religious freedom, reproductive autonomy, and the rights of the accused, the ACLU of Iowa continues to fight on all fronts against those who would erode or take away our freedoms.

In the past year—thanks largely to the amazing dedication of our Iowa supporters—we added two terrific staff members.

With what seems to be an unending flood of intolerant—even vicious—proposals being made at all levels of government, our invigorated staff has much to do.

On the next few pages, we highlight our accomplishments and outline ambitious goals. We have already launched two essential new initiatives—a student rights handbook and the Open Government Project.

We know you understand that there's simply no other organization out there pushing for the constitutional rights of all. That makes us feel all the more privileged to do this work, and we hope it makes you all the more willing to help achieve our goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Ben Stone".

R. Ben Stone
Executive Director

Above: Ben Stone speaks at the Capitol at a February rally to show support for Wisconsin union workers and to oppose similar anti-labor legislation in Iowa.
Photo: Thomas Stone.

What Your Support Enables Us To Do

From battling to protect marriage equality to launching a student rights handbook and Open Records Project, the ACLU of Iowa is proud to review the highlights of what we've accomplished over the last year.

Hiring a Staff Lobbyist/Lawyer

After experimenting with a contract lobbyist last year, we found that the best legislative watchdog for civil liberties is a full-time staff lobbyist who can monitor all legislation through a civil liberties prism.

Anna Dey, a Des Moines lawyer and Iowa native, formerly advocated for prisoners for the Special Litigation Section of the Civil Rights Division in the U.S. Department of Justice.

She also worked in the Consumer Protection Division of the Iowa Attorney General, drafting and editing legislation.

Anna came on staff in February, well after the session started. It was a true baptism by fire, and she immediately delved into a session rife with some of the worst anti-choice legislation and assaults on free speech in years. She worked effectively with legislators and other advocacy groups to block these attacks.

Anna also will serve as a staff attorney to our litigation program, improving our ability to take on more cases.

Hiring a Communications Specialist

In this world of rapidly changing media and communications, it's more important than ever to get our message out through all the new electronic venues.

Veronica Lorson Fowler, a former Des Moines Register reporter and Meredith editor, was hired last August. As a freelancer, she worked for a number of Fortune 500 companies on print and electronic projects.

Since her arrival a little

over a year ago, she has organized improved communications by launching e-newsletters, tapping into social media, expanding press coverage and contacts, and issuing more press releases. She's also working on revamping our web site.

If you've been reading and hearing more about the ACLU of Iowa and civil liberties in the media, now you know why.

Protecting Marriage Equality and Judicial Independence In Iowa

The right of all Iowans to marry, regardless of sexual preference, has been under assault at both state and national levels.

Those opposing same-sex marriage tried to undermine this constitutional right by waging a successful campaign, fueled with money from out of state, to oust three Iowa Supreme Court justices who were part of the unanimous *Varnum v. Brien* decision that granted marriage equality to all.

The ACLU of Iowa worked with a number



State Senator Herman Quirnbach confers with ACLU lobbyist Anna Dey on pending abortion legislation near the end of the 2011 session.

Politics, a coalition to gather funding and conduct public education on the complex issue of judicial independence and the rights of all Iowans to marry who they love.

We also continue to work with the media and put out the word to members to oppose attempts to dismantle the judiciary and marriage equality.

Protecting Reproductive Choice In Iowa

Last session the Legislature saw several attempts to diminish the right of a woman (and her doctor) to make critical decisions about her reproduction.

Our lobbyist was able to help fight the “personhood bill” that would deem all fetuses full persons. We also battled attempts to reduce the window for abortions to just 20 weeks and attempts to change Medicaid rules so that poor women—even young victims of rape and incest—would not be able to get abortions. Both at the Capitol and in the media, and by mobilizing membership to contact legislators, the ACLU of Iowa was a strong voice supporting a woman’s right to choose.

Even now, we are gearing up for a similar battle next session.

Protecting the Rights of Immigrants And Others In Iowa

ACLU of Iowa Board member Alex Orozco happened to be present when federal officials and local police in June descended on the Des Moines bus station. Officials began a general questioning of Latinos with no arrests being made. The ACLU of Iowa contacted the media, and several stories of this unfair racial profiling made state newspapers and Des Moines television stations.

In the Legislature, we have also successfully fought “voter ID” laws in Iowa. Last session various bills were introduced that would require Iowans to produce a photo ID before casting their votes.

Since 11 percent of all Americans do not have a government-issued photo ID, the bill would profoundly affect the voting rights primarily of minorities, low-income Iowans, older Iowans and persons with disabilities.

Now that we have increased staff, the ACLU



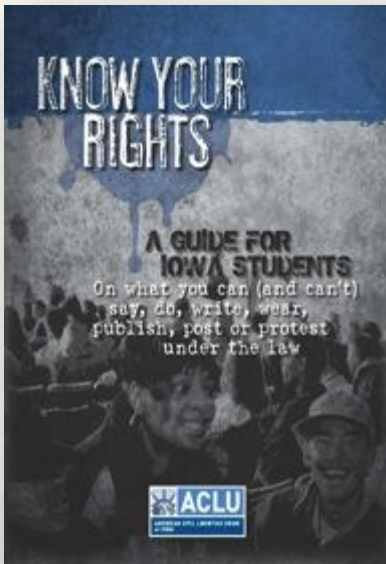
Last October the ACLU of Iowa participated in a rally to protest FBI monitoring of Iowa peace activists. This demonstrator carried a particularly relevant sign.

of Iowa can more actively advocate for immigrants, including a planned “Know Your Rights” brochure, both in English and Spanish, targeted at immigrant populations.

Fighting For Freedom of Speech

How bizarre would it be for an agricultural facility worker to witness severe violations of health or cruelty standards and yet be prohibited from documenting it? That was just one potential scenario under the “ag gag” bill that the ACLU of Iowa fought.

So restrictive that it gained national attention, this bill was designed to prevent food and animal cruelty groups from “infiltrating” ag facilities. Again, the ACLU lobbied against this bill, voiced opposition in the media, and mobilized membership.



REACHING OUT TO STUDENTS

Increases in staff have enabled us to create a 28-page "Know Your Rights: A Guide for Iowa Students." It's designed to inform young people about their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and expression, as well as religion.

It also details their medical and reproductive rights, with a special section for immigrant students and another section on how to deal with law enforcement.

The back cover features a punch-out "bust card," a wallet-sized guide on what to do if stopped or arrested.

For your free copy, please email us at editor@aclu-ia.org or call 515-243-3576, ext. 12. We are happy to mail multiples to schools and other groups.

We expect more such assaults on free speech next session, and plan to fight those also.

Winning the Davenport "Parental Responsibility" Case

In November the Iowa Supreme Court ruled in the ACLU's favor on this lawsuit, ruling that the City of Davenport had unconstitutionally fined parents when their children were stopped by police.

The case involved a Davenport mother who was cited for parental neglect when her 6-foot 2-inch teenage son began running with a troubled group of teenagers. She did everything she felt she could to control him, but still could have been fined up to \$750 per day or more by the city.

Advocating For Marriage Equality

Prison guard Teresa Heck of Iowa City knew it was wrong when her employer, the Iowa Department of Corrections, denied her family medical leave to care for her legal spouse, Rebecca Andrews, who was battling life-threatening ovarian cancer. Heck was denied because her spouse is of the same gender.

Heck contacted the ACLU, who advocated for her at the Iowa Attorney General's office. The decision was reversed, setting a precedent for other state agencies, making it clear that discrimination based on employee sexual orientation is not acceptable.

Battling the Presence of Big Brother

Every day it seems the government adds more cameras to



With the help of the ACLU, state employee Teresa Heck, left, won family medical leave to care for her spouse, Rebecca Andrews, when Andrews was diagnosed with cancer. Heck originally was denied leave by the Iowa Department of Corrections because she's in a same-sex marriage.

monitor citizens. As more cities add traffic cameras, the ACLU of Iowa has been fighting every step of the way.

Executive Director Ben Stone has been an outspoken critic in the media and Legal Director Randall Wilson wrote an excellent opinion piece in The Des Moines Register on how government continues to monitor our every movement.

We have also filed a Freedom of Information Act request to get details on Cedar Rapids camera data from police.



As we move forward into the next year, we have important work to do. Those who would like to strip Iowa's most vulnerable of their civil liberties are vigorously at work. The usual assaults on privacy, free speech, and religious freedom continue apace.

Please do your part to make sure our state motto rings true: "Our Liberties We Prize and Our Rights We Will Maintain."



Open Government Project

WORKING FOR MORE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

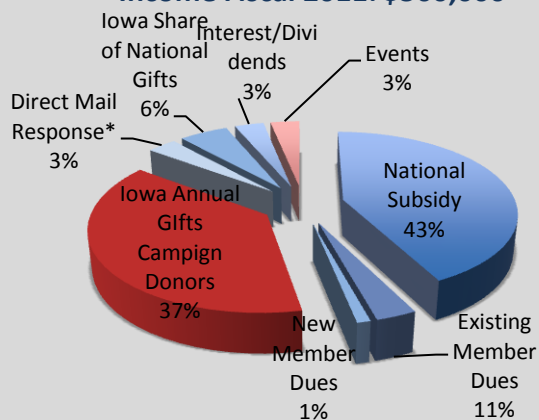
The ACLU of Iowa's Open Government Project launched in August. It's a new site and web-based initiative that serves as a clearinghouse of information and a source of help to anyone wanting to navigate Iowa's complicated open meeting and records law.

It's ideal for figuring out a Freedom of Information Act request, requesting government data and records, or requesting open meetings of government agencies. We encourage you to take a look at www.aclu-ia.org.

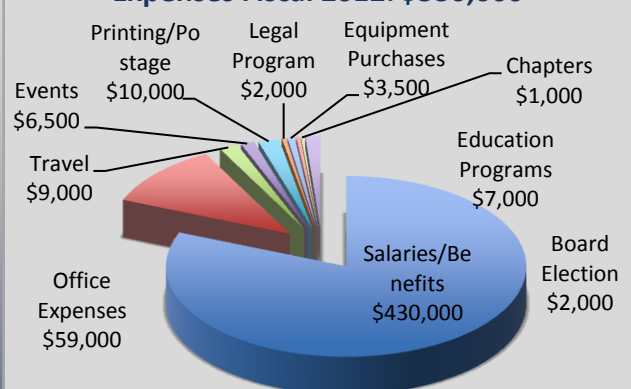
Financial Information

Given Iowa's strong civil libertarian tradition, it's amazing that only 3,000 Iowans are members and only 300 Iowans support this organization with annual gifts. We are working to expand our group of most committed givers. Last year, we had five people give \$10,000 or more and four gave at least \$5,000. Please consider stepping up your own giving to keep our excellent staff and efforts going strong.

How Much We Earned Last Year Income Fiscal 2011: \$500,000



How Much We'll Spend This Year Expenses Fiscal 2012: \$530,000



* Iowa share of direct mail solicitations by national ACLU. All income figures are for affiliate net amounts after sharing with the national ACLU. Amounts shown are for combined budgets of the ACLU of Iowa and ACLU Foundation of Iowa. The subject of this document is the program activity of the ACLU Foundation of Iowa. References to "the Iowa affiliate" and "the ACLU of Iowa" are for stylistic purposes only. Legislative advocacy at both the state and national level is primarily the responsibility of the ACLU of Iowa and the national ACLU. However gifts to the ACLU Foundation of Iowa support a small amount of legislative work because we are careful to ensure that such lobbying does not represent a substantial portion of the overall program of the ACLU Foundation of Iowa.