

# Network for Reproductive Options

## The March for Women's Lives

NNAF Annual Conference 2004

### Board of Coordinators:

Amy Bruninga

Kate Ojerio

Marti Black

Rachel Bonvillain

Jennifer Webster

Christine Mosbaugh

Kristen Curtis

This year's National Network of Abortion Funds conference was held in Adelphi MD, with the intention of drawing more abortion funds to the East coast to participate in the March for Women's Lives and capitalizing on the energy and enthusiasm of the most diverse gathering of the reproductive rights movement to date. NRO was able to send, with the generous help of NNAF, three Coordinators to the conference to participate and learn more about what it means to be an abortion fund and function in a country that has legal abortion but also where women face many and increasing barriers to reproductive health care and abortion access.

NRO Coordinators attended over half of the 26 workshops gaining insight about, client intake, NNAF technology assistance, access issues for minors, organizing and invigorating funds, violence against women, impacts of religious

restrictions, legislative updates, reproductive rights internationally and domestically, abortion funds and diversity work, lobbying and voter education, creative fundraising and how to evaluate goals.

Other highlights included, plenary sessions on research on young women's attitudes and activism around abortion, speaker Rebecca Gomperts, founder of Women on Waves, and keynote speaker for the banquet Byllye Avery, founder of the National Black Women's Health Project.

Coming home thoroughly invigorated and affirmed, NRO is excited to integrate and pass on much of what was learned into our daily operations and overall mission for the organization. Only by continuing to develop will we stand a chance of overcoming difficult obstacles, moving forward with exciting projects, and serving all women.

### Hotline and Education Information

Since August 2002, NRO has received over 135 hotline phonecalls and has donated a total of \$9735 which has helped fund 31 women in accessing abortion procedures and transportation. We have helped fund women from Lane, Clackamas, Douglas, Crook, Kalamath, Polk, Washington, Linn, Benton, Multnomah, Marion, Clatsop, Yamhill, Sherman, Jackson and Union counties.

In other news, NRO's slideshow has been viewed by over 150 community members! If you would like to schedule a showing, please contact us at: (541) 345 5702



Empowering communities  
with abortion access,  
grassroots health education  
and reproductive options.

## The Wonderful World of Your Cervix!

Being a fairly self-aware feminist, it's kind of amazing that I only met my cervix for the first time about two weeks ago. After all, I chart my cycle, I long ago explored the outer workings of my clitoris and vulva. But it wasn't until I saw NRO's slide-show that I bought my first speculum and decided to get to know my cervix better.

That night, armed with speculum, flashlight, and mirror, I went to my bedroom, turned up the lights, lit a candle (because even in daylight candles help create a mood) and put on some music (Ani DiFranco of course). I was all set to start. But it wasn't my time of the month to be lubing well, so I had to interrupt my first attempt to borrow some lube from my housemate (who is always more prepared than I am). Back to my room, propped up on pillows, lubed up the speculum and HERE WE GO!

But no cervix. I had been warned that it's sometimes hard to find on the first try. So, I started again. Half an hour later, I still hadn't spotted good ol' Ms. C and I was starting to get discouraged. I consulted my little brochure on self-exams. Perhaps I should wait a few days and try again, my cervix might have shifted into a difficult to spot position.

It was a week before I managed to find the quiet time to make my acquaintance with my cervix. Still couldn't find her. At this point I probably would have worried about the existence of my cervix (could I

have been born without one!?), but a friendly nurse practitioner had let me take a peek during my annual exam last year, so I knew she existed. I even knew that she had a cute little pink spot right around the os. So, I waited another week before trying again.

This time, on a whim, I invited a friend to come exploring with me. She'd just acquired her first speculum. It wasn't the intimate first encounter that I'd counted on, but I needed the moral support by this point. No cervixes made an appearance that evening. Apparently this elusiveness was contagious!

By this time I was getting concerned. My cervix just didn't want to be found. I was desperate. I asked everyone I could think of for advice. I lamented my missing cervix until my friends tired of hearing about it. I began contemplating a larger speculum.

I decided on more try. By now I had gone through a complete cycle, it was now or never. This time I didn't make a big production with the lights and music, I just lubed up, took a deep breath and...nothing. But something warned me that I was close, maybe if I just shift the speculum a little to the right and ease out a bit here and..omigod! There she is! Just sliding right into view! My beautiful wonderful cervix! with a slightly open os and a sqamocolumnar junction just below it! I found my cervix at last!

March for Women's Lives and Eugene Rally  
 NRO joined the Oregon delegation and NNAF's Access and Equality contingent for the most broad based reproductive rights event in the history of the United States. Over 1.15 million people gathered, in Washington DC, to voice their collective support for women's right to choose abortion, frustration over systematic barriers to access and information about reproductive health, and determination to continue to push for reproductive rights and justice. Fifty speakers and performers gave words of hope, caution, and urgency before and after the march, a one mile loop that took at least two hours to complete.

For those supporters who could not make it to the march in Washington DC but wanted to show their support for women, NRO held an impromptu rally at the federal building in Eugene at noon on the same day. About 20 community members came to share their passion for safe reproductive health care and social justice. Thank you for coming!

Other Bits of Information

- \* Website coming soon! NROptions.org Keep looking for it.
- \* New donor database software to better serve our wonderful donors!
- \* Working with NNAF to design a specific database to track clients and keep statistics.
- \* Letters to county health departments are going out with brochures to all Oregon counties.
- \* New toll free phone number: 1-866-355-9100 and will be placed in all Qwest Dex phonebooks.

Oregon Midwifery Council

The Oregon Midwifery Council is holding a fundraiser with a silent auction, wine tasting, food, music and activities for kids. The event will be held at the Secret House Winery, June 6, 2004 from 1 to 5 pm. Questions? Contact Colleen Forbes (541) 302 8008



PO Box 10894 Eugene, OR 97440  
 Hotline: (541) 513 6607 - Office: (541) 345 5702  
 Email: nro@efn.org

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark the type of information/help you would like to give NRO:

I am interested in becoming a NRO volunteer!  
 I am available approx.                      0-5 hours/month                      5-10 hours/month                      10+ hours/month  
 I am interested in:                      Education                      Fundraising                      Translation                      Board Member                      Other  
 Special skills or experience \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to NRO to help build the WIN fund and assist with operating expenses to increase abortion access throughout Oregon. (NRO is a 501C3 non profit org.) All donations are tax deductible.

I am currently unable to volunteer or donate money to NRO; however, I care about abortion issues. Please keep me on your mailing list!

The best way to contact me is:                      Mail                      E-mail                      Phone

I can think of the following people who would be interested in learning about the work NRO is doing:  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Options

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We thank you for supporting a  
women's right to choose!



Empowering communities with abortion  
access, grassroots health education and  
reproductive options.