

Donation Ideas for Supporting RIRTL

United Way Workplace Giving – Many employers enable workplace giving through the United Way. You can donate to Right to Life Services and the RI Right to Life Education Fund through United Way, and many employers will match your contribution. Simply designate our name and address on the United Way form from your employer.

Enclosed Envelope – We've included a donation envelope inside this issue of the Right to Life News. Will you consider a generous donation today? Your gifts help us save lives. 🌹

Stay in Touch with Pro-Life News

Sign Up for Email Legislative Alerts – Stay up-to-date on important life-issue legislation – sign up to receive our E-mail Legislative Alerts through our website, www.rirtl.org. On our site, click Legislation, then Legislative Action, then Legislative Alerts, and enter your email address in the box. 🌹

Impact Your Group with a Pro-Life 101 Course

One of RIRTL's goals is to offer presentations about the life issues to the Rhode Island community. Becky Miller, our new Education Coordinator, is creating Pro-Life 101 educational seminars that will help your school class, church group, or organization learn about important issues like stem cell research and abortion. Schedule an interactive multimedia presentation with your group by calling the Right to Life office at 521-1860. 🌹

Fall 2007



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Endowed by our Creator with the inalienable right to life...
We hold these truths to be self-evident. But not everyone does.



Right to Life News

Fall 2007

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Pro-Life Laws Make a Real Difference Examining Rhode Island's Pro-Life Legislation

Rita Parquette, Executive Director

Pro-lifers have heroically fought in court to overturn Roe v. Wade for over 30 years. While court battles get the glitzy media attention, it's easy to overlook the day-to-day work of slowing abortion-on-demand and saving lives that is done more quietly in state legislatures.

Michael J. New, a post-doctoral fellow at the Harvard-MIT data center, is the author of the Heritage Foundation study "Analyzing the Effects of State Legislation on the Incidence of Abortion During the 1990s." While studying data from all 50 states, Dr. New investigated the positive impact that passing protective laws had in reducing the number of abortions. When comparing the number of abortions in 1990 with the number in 1999, New concluded that these laws helped account for a drop of 17 percent in abortions in the 46 states that reported data for both years.

Let me quote the basic outline of what Dr. New did in his thoughtful profile of state legislation. "Examining state abortion data for every year from 1985 to 1999, and holding a variety of economic and demographic factors constant, the Heritage study examines the impact of four common types of pro-life legislation: parental-involvement laws, Medicaid funding restrictions, informed-consent laws and partial-birth-abortion bans," he wrote. In a summary of his study written for National Review online, New also attributes the reduction in the number of abortions to "the fact that pro-life legislators made considerable and lasting gains at the state level during the 1990s." Dr. New found that while all four types of pro-life legislation helped reduce the number of abortions, "restrictions on the Medicaid funding of abortions had the largest and most statistically significant impact." In addition, "The enactment of informed-consent laws resulted in statistically significant reductions as well."

Story continues on page 2

RIRTL Creating Local Chapters

In order to facilitate passing pro-life legislation and to identify and support pro-life candidates during elections, it is imperative that we look for ways to increase our grassroots membership. To this end, RI Right to Life would like to establish at least five chapters, in the northern, central, and southern regions of Rhode Island as well as one on Aquidneck Island.

Two important pro-life candidates in the last election fell short of winning by only a handful of votes. A local chapter that could mobilize volunteers could have made a difference in these elections. Getting pro-life candidates in office will change public policy and increase the number of pro-life laws in Rhode Island and ultimately protect the weak and vulnerable in the state.

Anyone who is interested in helping establish a RI Right to Life Chapter should contact Rita Parquette at the RIRTL office at 521-1860. Those interested will be notified by mail about an informational meeting in October. 🌹

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Three New England states--Rhode Island, Maine, and New Hampshire--have limits on Medicaid funding for abortions with exceptions for the life of the mother, rape, and incest. This regulation was put into place in Rhode Island by Governor Garrahy in 1995 and has saved the lives of hundreds of babies over the years. Rhode Island and Massachusetts both have one parental consent law for women under 18 years old. Of the six New England states, only Rhode Island has passed a partial-birth abortion ban, though the law is not in effect. Rhode Island joins Maine, Connecticut, and New Hampshire in a ban on assisted suicide.

We should be proud of our state's pro-life laws. At the same time, we must not rest on our laurels. Rather, we must continue to promote other legislation like enhanced consent laws that would increase our ability to protect the innocent lives of the unborn. ☸

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- Becky Miller, Education Coordinator
- Terri Sylvestre, Accountant
- Alison Corcoran, Executive Assistant

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Stem Cell Research 101

Becky Miller, Education Coordinator

Stem cell research is probably the most misunderstood issue in the pro-life platform. A refresher about the basic facts of this issue can help life advocates dispel the myths and inaccuracies commonly repeated about this topic.

Stem cells are cells that can differentiate into other types of body cells. Scientists are using stem cells in research projects, hoping that such flexible cells will be the source of cures for debilitating illnesses and diseases. Because stem cells can form many different components of the human body, such as blood, tissue, and nerves, these newly created building blocks could be used to replace dying or diseased parts of a patient's body.

The two types of stem cell research are named after the sources of the cells. Embryonic stem cell research (ESCR) uses cells from embryos created through in vitro fertilization. Adult stem cell research (ASCR) uses cells obtained from plentiful non-embryonic sources such as bone marrow, fat, the placenta, and amniotic fluid.

This is a pro-life issue because the ESCR process of extracting the stem cells from the human embryo destroys the newly formed life. ASCR does not pose the same moral dilemma because adult stem cells can be removed without harming the donor.

Even though ESCR kills human embryos, some scientists claim the research should continue because ESCs have the potential to become all the different types of body cells. ASCs reproduce in kind, forming more specialized types of body cells.

As both forms of stem cell research continue, it is becoming evident that the original high hopes for ESCR were misplaced. To date, ESCR has not produced a single cure. ESCs cannot even be used in human trials because of the many problems revealed in mouse trials, including rejection by the recipient's immune system and the cells growing tumors.

ASCs, on the other hand, have successfully treated patients with autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis as well as patients with damage to the spinal cord, cornea, cardiac tissue, and more – ASCs have been successfully used in treating over 70 medical conditions.

Rhode Island Right to Life opposes life-destroying embryonic stem cell research, but supports and promotes the exciting advances of adult stem cell research. ☸

Save the Date!

October 20, 2007, 6 p.m.

Annual Awards Banquet, Providence Marriott

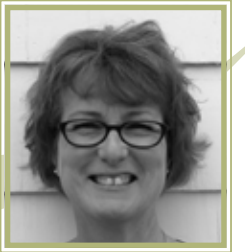
Awarding: Fr. Marcel Taillon and the Bishop Hendricken High School Pro-Life Club; Christine Athaide
Featured Speaker: Pro-life bioethicist Wesley J. Smith, who was named one of the nation's top expert thinkers in bioengineering by the National Journal.

Call the Right to Life office at 521-1860 for tickets, which are \$50 for adults and \$25 for students.

Services Report

Peg Lavallee, Services Coordinator

Between June and Aug. 2007, Right to Life Services has supplied 25 newborn packages, 94 bags of clothes for toddlers, 88 packages of diapers, 36 boxes of wipes, and 51 assorted baby toiletries. ☸

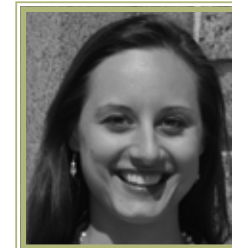


Meet RI Right to Life's Most Recent Employees



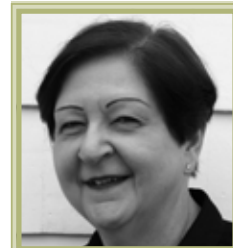
Alison Corcoran, Executive Assistant, joined us in Oct. 2006. She has worked as

an office assistant for a dentist and at New Life Worship Center in Smithfield. She has been a field hockey coach and enjoys working with young people. She volunteers her time as a youth minister at New Life. She remembers her mother instilling in her a pro-life outlook. She was very interested in working for RI Right to Life in order to be involved with this movement and make a difference in its goal of protecting the lives of the weak and innocent among us. She has been married to her husband, Jason, for three years.



Becky Miller, Education Coordinator, came on staff in June 2007. Previously, she worked for

RTP Advertising, the company that created RIRTL's website. She has also worked in marketing and magazine editing. She has a B.A. in writing. She works part time from home educating Rhode Islanders about life issues through website content, media communications, print materials, and public pro-life presentations (read more about these on page 4). Becky and her husband of four years, Matthew, are the proud parents of one-year-old Katherine and hope to have many more children. She is a member of Cranston Christian Fellowship.



Therese Sylvestre, Accountant, began working for RIRTL in 2005. She is a Certified Public Accountant and has a B.S. from

Central Connecticut State College. She has worked in both private and public industry during her many years of accounting, and now that she is semi-retired, she is excited to use her accounting skills in support of the pro-life movement. She works one day a week making the deposits, paying the bills, calling in the payroll, and generating monthly financial statements. Terri and her husband, Russell, have been married for 21 years. She is a member of St. Patrick's Church in Providence.

Legislative Updates and Action Alerts

Federal Update

• **U.S. Funding for International Abortion Providers Passed in Senate** - On Sept. 6, the Senate voted to overturn the "Mexico City policy" that prevents international organizations providing abortions from receiving American aid. The Boxer Amendment overturning the pro-life policy was added to a State Department/Foreign Operations appropriations bill by Sen. Barbara Boxer from California. RI Senators Whitehouse and Reed voted in favor of the anti-life amendment. President Bush has promised to veto the bill, as he is faithful to do with all anti-life legislation. Contact Senators Whitehouse and Reed to express your displeasure with their stance in promoting abortion around the world.