



ATHEIST
ALLIANCE
INTERNATIONAL

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2014

Actions, Activities and Accomplishments of the Organisation in 2014

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TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

To Our Stakeholders

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

Policy & Strategy Goals

In 2014, AAI continued its international political outreach to aid in its pursuit of its mission of defending and promoting atheism around the world.

- We coordinated a team of volunteers, led by Rustam Singh, to enact our UN Special Consultative Status. Mr. Singh monitors invitations to determine their relevance to AAI's mission, attends to administrative duties pertaining to volunteer attendance, and crafts written and oral statements based on research from UN-endorsed sources and protocol.
- In conjunction with Mr. Singh, Ahura, our Social Media Coordinator, continued efforts to develop communication channels with other stakeholder groups to lobby the EU Parliament. Ahura attended several meetings in Brussels, Belgium, with representatives and lobbyists from organisations whose missions are similar to AAI.
- Consultative status with the Council of Europe is pending.
- NGO consultative status with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (AHCPR) is pending.

Investigative Research

- We supported the work of graduate student Michael Doane. A summary of his research appeared in Secular World magazine (Q1-2015), and the full research paper, entitled, "Perceptions of Discrimination among Atheists: Consequences for Atheist Identification, Psychological and Physical Well-Being," will be posted to our website.
- We continue to work with the IHEU and Center for Inquiry – Transnational to gather and submit cases of non-theist discrimination by promoting the 2014 Freedom of Thought Report and the reporting website, www.freethoughtreport.org.

Public Profile / Conferences and Events

In 2014, AAI supported the following conferences:

- July 17, 2014: First Secular Humanist Conference, hosted by the Asociación Guatemalteca de Humanistas Seculares, in Guatemala City, Guatemala.
- October 11-12: International Conference on the Religious Right, Secularism and Civil Rights, hosted by the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, in London England.
- November 1: The Non-Conference, organized by Spencer Lucas, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- November 7-9: International Freethought Film Festival, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Communications Channels

- *Secular World* magazine remains under the editorship of Rustom Singh. Although the production schedule remained an issue, improvements on delivery to members were realized in 2014.
- After sporadic production, *Secular World* podcast was taken over by the Calgary-based Legion of Reason podcast. Former host Jake Farr-Wharton remains as a co-host when available. One episode was produced featuring an interview with Michael Nugent of Atheist Ireland in late October. Technical issues prevented the episode from upload.
- At year end no Board member was assigned the role of *Secular World* Representative. This vacancy has had an impact on production turnaround (magazine proofing) and scheduling (podcast).
- In September, one issue of the member newsletter Imagine! was distributed in English and Spanish.
- The AAI News Team was restored, initially under the direction of Melita Granger. The News Team was taken over by volunteers Elizabeth Emery (News Team Manager), and Christine Jaurigue (News Team Editor).
- In September, AAI undertook a website upgrade to include multi-language and mobile device access. Unfortunately the process was plagued with issues, which remained ongoing at year-end, affecting all communication roles except social media.
- In 2014, AAI hired a Social Media Administrator to manage communications including social media, news articles, and campaigns.
- AAI's social media efforts have yet again been a bright spot. Over the year, "Likes" increased from 30,000 to over 58,000.
- The campaign management service adopted in late 2013 streamlines membership and provides mechanisms to track and reach out to our supporter base. The migration of data from our previous system proved challenging.
- Although no campaigns were launched in 2014, plans for several campaigns are under development for 2015.
- There were no member contributions to expand the AAI Freethought Audio Library in 2014.

Organisational Membership

- Sharply reversing a gradual rise in Society Memberships, the number of AAI Organisational Members dropped by half at the start of 2015 to 18 Affiliate and 10 Associate groups due to the lack of renewal confirmations received from existing Society Members. So we don't have any direct feedback as to why the loss of interest, whether it was due to a changeover in Society leadership, change of organisational focus, the dissolution of the organisation, the change of email addresses, a conclusion that the benefit of AAI membership wasn't sufficient, etc. It does seem that AAI needs to do better at regular communication with our Organisational Member base so we know of Society Member changes and they are reminded of our existence and work and how it fits in with their own purpose.

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

- AAI relaunched our AAI Exchange organisational member discussion group to Facebook at the end of 2014 in the hopes of reactivating the group. Initial response seemed positive, as many of our member group leaders joined the Facebook list and made initial posts. However, activity has since slowed down. We will continue to monitor and analyze the group list to understand how it can provide the most value to our Organisational members.
- The AAI Spanish discussion listserve, Grupo del Trabajo del Español, has become inactive. As the purpose of the listserve was in part to advise the AAI Board how to improve our Latino / Spanish outreach, we are unsure what next steps, if any, to take on this issue.

Individual Membership

- Individual Membership levels have continued a two-year trend of gradually dropping, from a high of 367 IMs in 2013 to 288 IMs in 2014 and 210 IMs as of the July 2015 AGM. New memberships have dropped to below 10 per month, and renewal rates hover between 30% and 50%. We have not seen surges in membership in recent years since the opportunities to speak at large atheist conferences in the first few years of the current decade have dissipated. Speaking and tabling at regional conferences have not noticeably impacted our membership trends.
- On the other hand, the number of members who are providing significant financial support for AAI through monthly contributions continues to buck the general membership trend, increasing from 59 monthly contributors contributing approx. \$700 total per month in 2013 to 77 in 2014 contributing \$900 to 80 in 2015 contributing over \$1,100 total per month to AAI general operations. While most of these contributors have subscribed at the \$5/month level, we have eight "super-supporters" who are subscribed at the \$30-\$100/month level. We have acknowledged the financial support of all of our monthly supporters through private thank-you messages this year and inviting their additional input on AAI activities and focus.
- We have been sporadic in sending out our membership newsletter, Imagine!, sending out only two issues since the last AGM. This needs to be improved upon to keep AAI regularly in the forefront of our supporters and informing them of our activities and projects.

Campaigns and Projects

AAI identified two new member organisation funding projects, to be launched in 2015. We continue to raise funds for our ongoing member organisation projects, our newly-launched atheist asylum project, and our general activities. The continued absence of a Campaigns & Projects Committee will add to the challenges of meeting this Strategic Goal in 2015.

- AAI will launch a fundraising campaign to support the Humanist Association for Equity, Leadership and Accountability's (HALEA) "Stand Up for Reason" project. This project challenges superstitious beliefs in "witchcraft," which results in the violent persecution, maiming, and deaths of thousands of innocent children and elderly each year.

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

- AAI will launch a fundraising campaign to support the Asociación Guatemalteca de Humanistas Seculares to develop a library/community centre. Over its three-phase implementation, the library will acquire textbooks, introduce cultural, social and scientific activities, and implement a reading program.
- The Escuela Moderna Kerewan Kindergarten appears to be no longer in operation after an attempt to raise funds to meet health and safety codes did not yield sufficient funds to complete the work. While details are scarce, the President/Executive Director of the Gambia Secular Society, who initiated the project, has fled the country due to religious persecution.
- AAI continues to assist with fundraising support for the Kasese Humanist Primary School in Uganda, raising over \$7,000 in 2014
- AAI also promoted the Center for Civil Courage's fundraiser for the publication of *Humanism for Children*, a book that introduces children to humanistic thought, to be offered in Croatian, Bosnian, English, and German.
- Additionally, the AAI Foundation contributed \$1,000 contribution to help HALEA recoup their losses, after their office was broken into, resulting in a loss of \$12,000 in vital office equipment.
- The Atheist Census project launched by AAI in late 2012 continues to operate.
- The funds collected to assist Alexander Aan with his legal fees and education will be redirected toward our atheist asylum project. In 2014, Aan was freed from prison and found permanent employment, and generously agreed to this arrangement.

Volunteer Development

In 2013, AAI considered hiring a professional consultant to assist and advise AAI in establishing an effective Volunteer Development Program, but budgetary constraints inhibited our ability to do so. As Past President Stuart Bechman predicted in the 2013 Annual Report, "the stagnation and neglect of most of these goals will continue for at least the coming year." Efforts to recruit, field, and coordinate volunteers need to be a top priority for 2015.

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

2014, like 2013, was a struggle for AAI to keep its projects and activities going.

- Although AAI hired the editor for *Secular World* magazine in 2013, and improvements on delivery to our members were realized, the production schedule remains an issue. The role of the editor involves many tasks, including managing submissions and advertising deadlines, and in the absence of a *Secular World* Representative, he has received little support from the Board. And although efforts were made to restructure and restore the support system to maintain the podcast, tasks like recruiting guests and coordinating schedules have proven challenging. Without a *Secular World* Representative, it is anticipated that these issues will continue. Additionally, technical issues pertaining to the website have prevented the upload of both past and current digital magazines and podcasts.

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

- After sporadic production, *Secular World* podcast was taken over by the Calgary-based Legion of Reason podcast. Former host Jake Farr-Wharton remains as a co-host when available. One episode was produced featuring an interview with Michael Nugent of Atheist Ireland in late October. Technical issues prevented the episode from upload.
- Board members completing their term in 2014 included Richard Morris and Neil Ross. Resignations include Victor Franco and Michael Aristodou. AAI thanks them for their service.
- New additions welcomed to the Board include Gail Miller (elected), Karol Sofia Tapia (now resigned), Melita Granger, Christine Jaurigue (now resigned), Andrew Rawlings, and Kato Mukasa (appointed).
- Following the 2014 AGM, the Board elected a new set of Officers: Christine Shellska became President, Carlos Diaz remains Vice President, Karol Sofia Tapia (resigned) became Secretary, Gail Miller became Treasurer, and Past President Stuart Bechman became Membership Director. Additionally, Richard Honess serves as Volunteer Coordinator, Rene Hartmann as Website Coordinator, and Christine Jaurigue (resigned) as News Team Manager.
- Critical Officer positions that remained unfilled at the end of 2015 included *Secular World* Representative and Secretary.

LOOKING AHEAD

AAI relies on the volunteer efforts of the Board of Directors and its membership to facilitate its projects, and both financial and human resources were scarce over 2014. Consequently, AAI will postpone its efforts to expand the organisation, and will focus instead on maintaining its current projects and activities, and prioritizing key projects in 2015.

Internal

- Although AAI successfully implemented and transitioned to a new campaign and membership management system in early 2014, the new platform is being underutilized. This was in large part due to the extensive learning curve, as well as ongoing issues pertaining to the website upgrade during the last quarter of 2014, affecting all communication roles except social media. In 2015, AAI will re-evaluate the costs versus benefits of the current platform. In addition, AAI will focus on developing a robust web support team with clearly-defined roles.
- Although AAI hired a Social Media Coordinator, AAI did not secure the services of a Development Director, and Volunteer Management Advisor, as planned for 2014, due to budgetary constraints.

International

- Key projects to be prioritized for 2015 include exercising our UN Special Consultative Status, continuing our work with our atheist asylum project, and focusing on international education projects.

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

- Where opportunities present, AAI will strategically align with international organisations who share our mission and vision, to maximize our outreach and visibility, while leveraging the collective human and financial resources of both AAI and those organisations.

Prepared by:

Christine Shellska, President

Stuart Bechman, Past President and Membership Director

Gail Miller, Treasurer

COMPARATIVE FINANCIAL SUMMARY, 2012/2013

Comparative Financial Summary, 2012/2013

Revenues	2014	2013
Membership Dues	22,373	24,844
Print Premiums		300
Secular World Adv.		1,394
General Donations	3,818	2,774
Affiliate Contributions	2,114	3,674
AAI Merchandise Sales		1,163
Other	2,341	
Total	30,646	34,149

Expenses		
On-line Payment Processing		1,274
Operational (mail, website, ofc. Supplies)	16,934	1,839
Promotional Advertising		3,000
Affiliate Project Outlays	1,000	8,882
Atheist Census Project		492
Secular World Publishing	20,101	12,482
Conference Expenses	2,768	10,870
Other	508	
Total	41,311	38,839

AAI Foundation Project Funds Raised/Disbursed		
Kasese Humanist School		22,258
GSA EMKK School		1,800
PATAS Typhoon Disaster Relief		3,650
Cambodia Children Trust School		2,188
Undesignated Contributions		1,285
Total		31,181

EOY Cash Balances		
AAI Bank	4,416	3,602
Paypal (USD)	35,671	41,565
Paypal (EUR)		2,864
Total	40,087	48,031
AAI Foundation Unrestricted Cash	2,848	2,435
Directed Donations – KPHS	7,027	2,197
Directed Donations – Alex Aan	3,022	2,173
Directed Donations – Student Schlsphs		409
GSA EMKK		580
AAI Unrestricted Cash		40,237
Total	12,897	48,031

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Information

AAI Officers / Directors:

President	Christine Shellska	Canada	president@atheistalliance.org
Vice-President	Carlos Alfredo Diaz	Argentina	vicepresident@atheistalliance.org
Treasurer	Gail Miller	Canada	treasurer@atheistalliance.org
Secretary (interim)	Melita Granger	Australia	secretary@atheistalliance.org
Membership Director	Stuart Bechman	United States	membership@atheistalliance.org
Director	Rene Hartmann	Germany	
Director	Richard Honess	United Kingdom	
Director	Karl Karnadi	Indonesia	
Director	Kato Mukasa	Uganda	
Director	Elida Radig	Australia	
Director	Andrew Rawlings	Australia	

Organisation Information

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