



a tradition of
boldness

PACIFIC SCHOOL of RELIGION

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September 27, 2013

Peggy Gillespie
Family Diversity Projects
PO Box 1246
Amherst, MA 01004-1246

Dear Peggy,

Thank you and all staff and volunteers for the incredible work of Family Diversity Projects. With the support of the Arcus Foundation and the E.Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, we were able to show your exhibits to a multitude of clergy and students. We hope foundations and donors will continue to support Family Diversity Projects so that your exhibits can continue to travel and be used by schools, colleges, seminaries, and houses of worship. The photos and personal stories you have documented are treasures to all who see them.


Here at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, we just reluctantly returned the *In Our Family* and *We Have Faith* exhibits. We mounted these diverse family stories in conjunction with a conference on faith and family, and kept them on display long afterwards. Exhibits in the conference hall, chapel, and administrative buildings were viewed by all of our students, faculty, board, and staff as well as by many visitors to campus.

The impact of these exhibits is clear. I witnessed many people pausing to consider these stories of everyday families. Families that are not unusual, but rarely acknowledged in public. I saw people smiling, talking, laughing, and even crying about the strangers in the pictures. PSR now considers those strangers our friends.

Family Diversity Projects' exhibits reach us in a place that other experiences do not. We all struggle with our individual relationships with difference. Most of us like to think that we are accepting of others. Most of us have been to diversity trainings and encountered difference at school and work. What Family Diversity Projects' exhibits bring is the opportunity for a personal experience of difference that is safe and at the same time presses us to think beyond our own limited definitions of "normal." The medium allows for a differently paced and deeper experience of loving difference.

I would encourage houses of worship of any religion or denomination to consider mounting one of your exhibits. Seminaries too. Because we are all in the business of love. The featured families remind us that every person and every family is holy. That *everyone* loves and is worthy of receiving love. Integrated with a program or just on its own, the photos and stories are truly inspiring.

Sincerely,



Laurie Isenberg
Director of Community and Continuing Education
Pacific School of Religion