

# Los Angeles Family Diversity Project

## Peter Scott Founder's Award

**T**his year, MECLA's Board of Directors and Governors established a Founder's Award in memory of Peter Scott. Peter was a Founder and first Chair of MECLA in 1977. He also helped create AIDS Project Los Angeles and the American Foundation for AIDS Research. Peter was a visionary leader. Because of his skill and hard work there is an enduring legacy in these institutions, as well as our memory of this great man.

For this reason, we are extremely honored to present the first Peter Scott Founder's Award to the Family Diversity Project.

In 1986, Councilman Michael Woo established an advisory task force of 37 citizens to review the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary family life in Los Angeles, and document ways public policy is not consistent with the reality of how families live.

Two years later, the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity, under the leadership of Co-Chairs Christopher McCauley and Nora Baladerian and Principal Consultant Thomas F. Coleman completed its authoritative report "Strengthening Families: A Model for Community Action."

It is also appropriate to recognize this work, since MECLA Foundation made its first major grant, of \$5,000, to complete this study. The report found that most people in Los Angeles have a living arrangement that is other than the traditional married couple with children, which accounts for only one of five "families" here in Los Angeles.

Working with the Task Force and Councilman Woo, MECLA lobbied the City Council aggressively and helped win recognition of domestic partners for the purpose of sick and bereavement leave by city employees. On October 5, 1988, the Council voted 11-2, making Los Angeles the largest city in America to recognize the rights of domestic partners.

Since then, the Family Diversity Project has evolved from the Task Force and has shaped the national debate about families.

As lesbians, gay men, and unmarried couples seek to end marital status discrimination, the Family Diversity Project provides research and advocacy which powerfully support our Choices in the 90's.