

Freedom to Marry E-Update
Issue #17 | May 10, 2006

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1) A Note from Evan Wolfson

Dear Friend --

As we celebrate both Mother's Day and Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we are reminded that wherever the fight for marriage equality leads us, we find women, mothers and Asian Pacific American trailblazers at the vanguard of the movement. These women, mothers, and leaders have taken up the challenge against sexism, while working on every level to stabilize families and to achieve greater freedom for us all.

Freedom to Marry acknowledges and honors the involvement of these women who have helped lead the movement or have been instrumental in shepherding us to a next step, from couples like Ninia Baehr and Genora Dancel who rejected the mantle of second class citizenship with their landmark case that led to the first, historic ruling for marriage equality by Hawaii's pioneering Judge Kevin Chang; and leaders like Mary Bonauto, lead counsel in the Massachusetts case that brought equal marriage rights to gay couples and their families in Massachusetts.

The work of attorneys like Bonauto, Civil Rights Project Director of New England's Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders' and a mother of two, is joined by allies such as New York Supreme Court Judge Doris Ling-Cohen; and organizations like the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), a primarily non-gay organization, which took a stand for marriage equality last year, making clear that the freedom to marry is a question of civil rights as well as fairness.

To paraphrase John Quincy Adams, these women inspire us to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more. Their contribution to the advancement of marriage equality is immeasurable.

-- Evan Wolfson

Follow developments in the movement for marriage equality on our website (www.freedomtomarry.org), and in future issues of Freedom to Marry's bi-monthly E-Update.

LINKS:

- * Ninia Baehr and Genora Dancel - <http://andrejkoymasky.com/liv/fam/biod1/danc1.html>
- * Judge Kevin Chang - http://pview.fndlaw.com/vi ew/1156917_1?noconfirm=0
- * Judge Doris Ling-Cohen - <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/02/06/national/mai n671958.shtml>
- * Mary Bonauto - http://www.glad.org/About_GLAD/staff.shtml
- * NAPAWF - <http://www.napawf.org/>

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2) Celebrating APA Voices during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month  
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- by Andy Wong, Coalition Manager, Asian Equality

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the many contributions of Asian Pacific Americans (APA) that have helped to enrich this country. This year, I would like to honor the APA individuals and organizations that are advancing the struggle for marriage equality. Indeed, when it comes to marriage equality, APAs are not simply standing on the sidelines; many are spearheading the struggle nationwide.

READ THE FULL ESSAY, by Andy Wong, on our website.

LINKS:

- * The rest of the essay - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4334>
- * ACLU's Lesbian and Gay Rights Project - <http://www.aclu.org/lgbt/index.html>

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3) Mother's Day postcards from PFLAG  
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PFLAG is urging people to join their month-long "Dear Senator" campaign by sending senators postcards, with the theme: "Dear Senator: All I want for Mother's Day is for you to vote NO on the Federal Marriage Amendment ..."

"A no vote on the Federal Marriage Amendment would be the best gift any parent could get this year for Mother's Day or Father's Day," said Samuel Thoron, National President of PFLAG, in a press release. "This is literally giving the gift of fighting discrimination against our children – and there's nothing a parent could want more."

LINKS:

- * More information - http://www.pflag.org/FMA_postcards.html
- * PFLAG - <http://www.pflag.org/>

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GET ENGAGED: Freedom to Marry Seeks Program Director  
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Freedom to Marry is seeking strong non-gay or gay candidates to fill our Program Director position, as Rodney McKenzie leaves us in a few weeks for a return to direct grassroots organizing.

This exciting position is based in New York. Read the full job description on our website.

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QUOTE:

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"If they were so concerned with marriage, why aren't they promoting a constitutional ban on divorce? Divorce is a threat to heterosexual marriage. Gay people are not."

– Rick Garcia, political director for Equality Illinois, responding to right-wing effort to put anti-gay measure on ballot

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OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

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Most visited pages last week:

- * WEDrock - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3623>
- * Freedom to Marry Abroad - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3482>
- * LGBT Parents: Building Blocks of the Marriage Movement by Jennifer Chrysler, Executive Director of Family Pride - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4108>
- * Pedro Julio Serrano - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=2876&page=2>

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The WEDrock cd will be available in stores soon, but you can get it now with a donation! - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3623>

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Lambda Legal, National Black Justice Coalition, Asian Equality, National Latina/o Coalition for Justice, and Freedom to Marry have teamed up to spearhead a campaign featuring a diverse array of people of color depicting the wide-ranging support marriage equality has across the country. To view the banner ad and mini poster, visit Lambda Legal.

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GET ENGAGED: Write to friends and family and help them understand why marriage matters to you

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There are many ways you can get involved by helping win and defend marriage equality nationwide.

To read a sample letter you can write and send to family and friends, visit: <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=3171&view=page=280>

