

Freedom to Marry E-Update
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1) A Note from Evan Wolfson

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Dear friends –

This year, September is particularly bittersweet as we mark anniversaries of two of the most devastating events in our country's history – the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the Hurricane Katrina natural and man-made disasters in 2005. Both underscored our national and personal vulnerability, and showed the importance of protections for families, including those of us who are gay and those who love us.

September also marks the fifth anniversary of the "blueprint" article I wrote laying out a vision of a sustained and affirmative campaign to win the freedom to marry. [Click here to read the 9/11/01 article, All Together Now (A Blueprint for the Movement)]

In the face of much that has gone wrong for America over the past five years, we have made undeniable progress in explaining why marriage matters to gay Americans. With the blueprint still before us, let's renew and redouble our work for social justice and reap the harvest we've sown.

LINKS:

- * THE REST OF EVAN’S NOTE - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4804>
- * All Together Now (A Blueprint for the Movement) - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=1002>

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2) Program Director Roey Thorpe Writes A Labor Day Look at Marriage Equality

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There’s no question that there is a growing embrace of marriage equality in the workplace! Two conferences held this month make that crystal clear: the Pride at Work national conference and the annual Out and Equal conference.

Pride at work is the voice in the labor movement for equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers, and Out and Equal brings together employees of major corporations who are pushing for fairness in the workplace.

The Pride at work conference was held this past weekend, and I had the opportunity to be part of a day-long institute on marriage equality as part of the conference.

It was a lively and informative day, organized by Pride at Work founder Desma Holcomb and Pride at Work marriage organizer Sandra Telep.

The highlight of the day was a panel of three non-gay allies, each talking about the personal journey that had made them a public advocate for marriage equality...

LINKS:

- * The rest of Roey Thorpe's report - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4802>
- * Freedom to Marry's Roey Thorpe page - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4546>
- * Pride at Work - <http://prideatwork.org>
- * Out and Equal - <http://www.outandequal.org/>
- * Labor Council for Latin American Advancement - <http://www.lclaa.org/>
- * United Church of Christ - <http://www.ucc.org/>
- * American Federation of Teachers - <http://www.aft.org/>

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3) Sharing Our Stories

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Terri Miller, Ed.D., a high school administrator, and Cindy Simms, a ceramic artist, make up one of many longtime gay and lesbian couples who offer a shining example of love and commitment as we fight for marriage equality. The couple has designated a durable power of attorney for health care and a living trust to afford each other some protection to their joint assets and properties as they approach their golden years. Without the protection that marriage affords, couples can be left to face the possibility that, in the unfortunate case of a tragedy, their loved one will be seen as complete strangers in the eyes of the law.

LINKS:

- * Sharing Our Stories - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3612>
- * Share your story - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=2043>

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4) Freedom to Marry Voice of Equality Rocky Anderson called 'America's Mayor'

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On the anniversary of 9/11, a Salt Lake Tribune columnist suggests the "America's Mayor" torch should now go Rocky Anderson, "a forward-thinker with his priorities straight who represents the best of this country, yet like no other, can articulate how we have been led to embrace the worst."

LINK:

- * Rocky Anderson - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=3320>

* Salt Lake Tribune article - http://www.sltrib.com/opinion/ci_4317195

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### 5) This Month in History

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- September 29, 2005 California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoes historic bill to end discrimination in California marriage law.
- September 6, 2005 the California Assembly passes first-ever state-wide bill to end the exclusion of lesbian and gay couples from marriage.
- September 30, 2004 U.S. House of Representatives rejected writing marriage discrimination into the Constitution.
- September 21, 1996 then-President Bill Clinton disappointed millions of families by signing the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

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### 6) Speaking the Language of Marriage

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- Refusing to legally recognize same-sex relationships deprives thousands of families of the most important attributes of their labor; the ability to take care of and provide for their family members.
- Opponents of working people's interests use marriage as a wedge issue to divide our strength.
- Same-sex couples are devoted to each other, they love each other, they have kids and they love their families. Since marriage is the way the government provides protection, support, and respect for families, it's only fair that these families get those things too.

LINK:

* Read the rest of Pride at Work's Speaking the Language of Marriage: A Labor Perspective - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3487>

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#### QUOTE:

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"We fought racial apartheid, and we will fight efforts at reintroducing marital apartheid... It is homophobia, not homosexuality, that is un-African."

– Fikile Vilakazi, editorial: "Protect SA from Sexual Apartheid" in Business Day, South Africa, September 7, 2006

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