

Freedom to Marry E-Update
Issue #28 | December 20, 2006

To view the online HTML version of the E-Update, click here -
http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/eupdate/eupdate_issue26.html

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1) A Note from Evan Wolfson

Dear friends –

As 2006 winds down, it's a good time to take a look back, rest and recharge, and get ready to return in January for what already is shaping up to be a historic and potentially transformative year.

It's dawned on me in the past few weeks that 2006 was actually a pretty hard year, but, at the same time, a year in which supporters of the freedom to marry clearly made deep progress.

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Crucial battles loom in 2007 – including the Gettysburg that is California. As I wrote in *Why Marriage Matters*, the key to winning is conversation: Gay people talking to non-gay people about our lives, our love, and our commitment, and why marriage matters, and non-gay people speaking out for fairness and equality and treating people the way you'd want to be treated. Everyone can be a part of this conversation, and Freedom to Marry's team, including you, is committed to redoubling our work to bringing more people in and helping each of us make sure our voice is heard in 2007. Together, we are the ones making the "inevitable" happen. Someone's got to do it.

Happy New Year!

LINKS:

- * The rest of Evan's note - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=5238>
- * Stay the Fight - <http://www.thestranger.com/seattle/Content?oid=44821>
- * The Freedom to Marry: Keep Dancing - <http://www.thestranger.com/seattle/Content?oid=44821>
- * The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force - <http://www.thetaskforce.org/>
- * Absorbing Gay Pain & Praise, Clinton Says She's Evolved - http://www.gaycitynews.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=17379741&BRD=2729&PAG=461&dept_id=568864&rfi=6

- * NJ Legislators on Marriage - <http://www.bluejersey.com/showDiary.do?diaryId=3440>
- * Why Marriage Matters - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3470>

2) Freedom to Marry Launches Contest and Mini-Grant Drive

Every year, right around President Lincoln's Birthday and Valentine's Day, gay and non-gay people around the country gather in living rooms, rectories, parks and civic halls to celebrate our lives, our loves, our families and the victories of our movement from the year before. The 10th Annual Observance of Freedom to Marry Week, from February 11-18, 2007 is a time to celebrate and share our stories, reflect on the values of equality and love, while also engaging our neighbors in the movement for equality and fairness.

In honor of the 10th annual observance, Freedom to Marry is sponsoring three special funding opportunities: A Photo Contest, a Video contest and special Freedom to Marry Week Mini-Grants.

For the contests, we're looking for documentation of creative ideas in action, in high-quality photos or videos that tell the story of how you community prepared for and/or celebrated Freedom to Marry Week. We'd love to see images of in what kind of spaces our Freedom to Marry Week poster found itself placed. Did you see the poster at your local dry cleaners? Take a photo! Did you find the poster in your favorite eatery? Show us a picture! Did you participate in a conversation about the Freedom to Marry in your local church, synagogue, community group, or living room? Perhaps you went to a local rally, bake sale, picnic or community meeting about ending discrimination in marriage? Send us a photo or a video of the event! You could win money for your favorite local organization working on marriage equality.

The one-time-only Freedom to Marry Week Mini-Grants are aimed toward programs associated with Freedom to Marry week that educate the public on marriage equality.

Click on the links below for the latest information on these and other Freedom to Marry Week events. Together, we'll make this the best Freedom to Marry Week yet.

LINKS:

- * Freedom to Marry Week - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3605>
- * The Photo/Video Contest - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3712>
- * Mini-Grants - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3713>
- * Register your Freedom to Marry Week Event - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3710>
- * Download the Resource Guide - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3714>

3) Resolution passed by NJ Civil Rights Commission

The New Jersey Commission on Civil Rights unanimously passed a resolution in support of marriage equality.

LINK:

* The text of the resolution - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=5237>

4) 10th Anniversary of Freedom to Marry Day & Evan Wolfson's Birthday

This is a rare opportunity to help raise funds for Freedom to Marry, so what better occasion than to help celebrate Freedom to Marry Day's 10 Year Anniversary coupled with Evan's milestone birthday! All proceeds will go directly to our partner organizations on the frontlines at the national, state, and local level.

LINK:

* The Invitation - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3711>

5) Wanna Learn to win?

The Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute's renowned Candidate & Campaign Training is coming to Philadelphia this February 22 to 25. National political experts will teach you how winning campaigns work and help you decide whether a run for elective office is for you. Openly LGBT candidates are running and winning in record numbers. Join us in Philadelphia to see how they're doing it. The Philadelphia training will be held in partnership with Liberty PA, OutFront! Philadelphia, and Log Cabin Republicans of Pennsylvania. Go to www.victoryinstitute.org/training to learn more and apply today.

LINK:

* Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund and Leadership Institute - <http://www.victoryinstitute.org/index.php?src=forms&id=Candidate%20and%20Campaign%20Training%20Application%20Form>

6) PODCAST: Next Steps Towards Marriage Equality

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders attorney Ben Klein discussed GLAD's lawsuit for equal marriage in Connecticut on a conference call. GLAD filed briefs at the Connecticut Supreme Court just before Thanksgiving and they expect oral arguments in the spring. You can also listen to Ben's analysis by accessing the audio file on their website.

LINKS:

- * The Podcast - <http://www.glad.org/podcast/bk2.mp3>
- * GLAD - <http://www.glad.org/>

QUOTE:

"I would expect that our legislature would move forward with the courage to pass [marriage equality]... Because it's sort of like a charade... we're going to give you everything but we're not going to give you the name."

- NJ State Senator Nia Gill

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

Most visited pages last week:

- Rise to Fairness - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4861>
- E-Update Issue #27 Online - http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/eupdate/eupdate_issue27.html
- Sharing Our Stories - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4863>

Listen to Evan Wolfson's debate with VA anti-gay amendment sponsor

Evan Wolfson's October 5, 2006, debate with VA Delegate Bob Marshall, co-sponsor of a proposed amendment to the VA Constitution to prohibit legal recognition or benefits for same-sex relationships.

LINK:

- * http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/rss/evan_wolfson_debate100506.mp3

Subscribe to our podcast here: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/FreedomToMarryPodcast>

Do you want the latest marriage equality news from Freedom to Marry in your news feed? Get it here: <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3619>

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.

