

Freedom to Marry E-Update
Issue #29 | January 17, 2006

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http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/eupdate/eupdate_issue29.html

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1) A Note from Evan Wolfson

Dear friends -

As the new year dawns, we begin building on the foundation won in 2006 and the increasing receptivity to marriage equality. We must coax people past complacency or false comfort in the idea that justice is "inevitable" and therefore can wait. The right way to end discrimination in marriage is, of course, to end discrimination in marriage, not repackage it, whether as civil union or any other mandatory other status.

Under American law, marriage, of course, is a civil union (a legal status created by government license) - but civil union is not marriage, and pointedly so. There are a million songs about love and marriage, but civil union and domestic partnership are words without the music. We must explain why separate and unequal status is insufficient and unnecessary, and ultimately demeaning when offered in order to perpetuate couples' exclusion from marriage itself.

Person by person, month by month, let's describe how marriage - and only marriage - offers a comprehensive array of protections and responsibilities under state, federal, and international law. As I relate in my book, *Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality, and Gay People's Right to Marry*, this safety net affects every area of life from birth to death, with taxes in between. The rules relating to marriage (not civil union or domestic partnership) have been worked out through courts and legislatures to cover a multitude of contingencies, and cannot be replicated by any other contract, statute, or new invention by the state. No separate status provides that security and economic justice, not to mention the dignity of full inclusion and cultural meaning, to same-sex couples and their kids. Around the world, everyone knows what marriage entails. No newly invented status brings what comes, tangibly and intangibly, with a legal marriage license and the two words, "I do."

So here's a New Year's Resolution for all of us. Join with state and national gay and non-gay groups dedicated to this just cause. Seize the opportunity to make a difference. We can win the freedom to marry, if we do our part. People are ready to rise to fairness. Use the resources available on our website to make the up-coming 10th Annual Observance of Freedom to Marry Week 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.

LINKS:

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- * Why Marriage Matters - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3470>
- * Freedom to Marry Week resources - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3605>

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## 2) Show the Love!

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Freedom to Marry Week posters are popping up all over the country! Help spread the word. Ask your local businesses (cafés, restaurants, dry cleaners, gyms, schools, etc.) to share the love and put a poster in the window. Snap a picture and send it in – it could win you \$500.00! *

*Enter the Freedom to Marry Week Photo / Video Contest!

Also, because of popular demand, we have extended the mini-grant deadline to February 2. Keep the great ideas coming!

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>

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## 3) Mombian Hosts a Blog Carnival for Freedom to Marry Week

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Freedom to Marry Week Blogging Event: Are you a blogger? Want to support Freedom to Marry? LGBT-parenting blog Mombian will be hosting a "Freedom to Marry Blog Carnival" on February 14. Any blogger who writes in support of marriage equality between now and then is invited to submit a post by leaving a comment at: <http://mombian.com/2007/01/04/freedom-to-marry-week-and-blog-carnival/> or sending e-mail to freedomtomarry@mombian.com. Entries will be compiled and showcased at <http://www.mombian.com> on February 14.

LINK:

- * Mombian - <http://www.mombian.com/>
- * Freedom to Marry Week Blog Carnival notification page - <http://mombian.com/2007/01/04/freedom-to-marry-week-and-blog-carnival/>

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

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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/images/eMail\\_Promos/invite.html](http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/eMail_Promos/invite.html)

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5) CA NAACP To Be Honored With Marriage Equality Award

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The California State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), whose president is Freedom to Marry Voice of Equality Alice Huffman, will receive the Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Marriage Equality Award at Equality California's (EQCA) 2007 San Francisco Equality Awards event on February 10.

LINK:

\* CA NAACP - <http://californiaaapc.org/>

\* Alice Huffman - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4035>

\* Equality California's press release -  
<http://www.outinfresno.com/home/news.asp?articleid=30890>

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6) Freedom to Marry Welcomes New Steering Committee Member

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Sam Thoron has been actively involved in PFLAG, Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, since 1990, recently serving as National Board Chair. He also sits on the Board of Directors of Marriage Equality USA. Sam and his wife Julia have been married for over 43 years, live in San Francisco where they raised their two sons and daughter, and are now the proud grandparents of five.

LINKS:

\* Sam Thoron - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=5214>

\* PFLAG - <http://www.pflag.org/>

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QUOTE:

"[Marriage equality] is so obviously going to be something that's going to happen eventually. These people who are against it are just wasting their time. I just think it's preposterous that any two people who love each other can't get married."

– Zach Braff (from the Advocate, 1/30/07)

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OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:  
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Most visited pages last week:

- Freedom to Marry Week 2007 start page - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3605>
- The Mini-grant application - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3713>
- Sharing Our Stories - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4863>

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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](http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/rss/evan_wolfson_debate100506.mp3)

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

