

THE Agenda

16 West 22nd Street New York, NY 10010

T: (212) 627-0305 F: (212) 627-4136 www.prideagenda.org

Equality & Justice Day

Not since 1971 has our community showed Albany such strength in numbers as it did at this year's Equality & Justice Day (E&J Day) on May 1. More than 1,100 New Yorkers traveled to the capitol to lobby their elected officials on important LGBT issues.

This year also saw a record number of legislative visits — 177 Assemblymembers and State Senators out of a total of 212 met with our community and our allies. This was up from last year's 105 visits.

The message everyone delivered to their legislators was "It's time to act" on marriage equality, the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) and the Dignity for All Students Act (Dignity).

Our noontime rally reinforced this message as over 1,300 LGBT New Yorkers, clergy, labor leaders, business executives, students, families, friends and neighbors came out to West Capitol Park to publicly call for legislative progress on our issues.

Alan Lubin, Executive Vice President of the powerful New York State United Teachers union, told everyone present, "I am here representing Denis Hughes, President of the New York State AFL-CIO, and I'm here to tell you that the New York State labor movement is behind you in this struggle for civil rights and human rights!"

(continued on page 2)



Transgender activist Melissa Sklarz speaking at the Equality & Justice Day rally

New York State Assembly Passes Landmark Marriage Equality Bill

A MESSAGE FROM ALAN VAN CAPELLE



What a difference a year can make!

On June 19, the New York State Assembly voted 85-61 to pass Governor Spitzer's marriage equality bill — less than one year after our high court failed to do its job to provide our families with access to marriage.

This historic vote in the Assembly puts New York and all of you at the vanguard, leading the way on the nation-wide fight to win marriage equality for same-sex couples and our families.

New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn said, "All conventional wisdom in New York State on gay marriage is out the window. I think we are really doing better than anyone would ever have thought we could be doing on this."

Evan Wolfson, the Executive Director of the national group Freedom to Marry said, "the Pride Agenda and other voices for equality are not taking no for an answer. The milestone Assembly vote shows the power of spiraling expectations up, and then working to rise to them, rather than

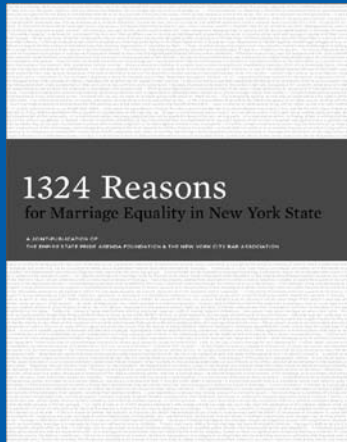
taking the invitation to give up and go away."

I want to take this moment to say to all of you that this incredible accomplishment belongs to you. Whether you've given your time, your energy or your money to the Pride Agenda, this victory is yours. If you're one of the more than 320 Marriage Ambassadors we've trained in cities and towns across the state, this victory belongs to you. If you're one of the 1,100 people who took part in the 177 legislative meetings at Equality & Justice Day in Albany, this victory is yours. If you are a Pride Agenda donor, large or small, or you are one of the many labor, religious or business leaders that made marriage equality your issue, you made this victory happen.

You never gave up, even when the naysayers told us we couldn't win. I remember when they downplayed Governor Spitzer's promise to introduce a marriage bill. And when he did, during his first 120 days in office, they said it didn't mean much because he didn't hold a press

(continued on page 2)

RESOURCES



Go to www.prideagenda.org to read a joint Pride Agenda Foundation / New York City Bar Association publication that catalogs all 1,324 benefits and responsibilities that New York State provides through marriage.

THE AGENDA

Get daily news, features and behind-the-scenes info on New York politics and the LGBT community at the Pride Agenda's blog, The Agenda. <http://prideagenda.blogspot.com>

You can subscribe to The Agenda by going to the site and entering your email address in the field on the left hand column of the page. Once you've subscribed, you'll get the latest blog entries emailed to you every day.

ACTIVIST PROFILE

PRIDE AGENDA ACTIVISTS

are critical to our successes across the state. We reached out to two of our most committed activists, Louie Garay and his mother Carmen Robello, who live in Brooklyn, to learn more about what drives their dedication.

CARMEN, WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO BE AN ACTIVIST FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY?

I have always gone above and beyond for my son. I taught him that when you commit to doing something, do it right. When I came back from the first Equality and Justice Day with Louie, I wasn't the same person. There was a reason for us to be there and be heard. Even on that day of fighting for justice, there was injustice — the bus full of students that my son had planned was not approved by the school.

The fight is never over and that is why I have dedicated so much of my time to winning equality and justice for my son.

LOUIE, WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR ACTIVISM?

[Laughs] I came out when I was 12 and my mom told me to never use it as a crutch. What else would I be doing?

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE PRIDE AGENDA?

Both Louie and Carmen answered in unison that the Pride Agenda gives them the opportunity to take action.

Activists like Carmen and Louie are what make the Pride Agenda strong. From attending Equality & Justice Day in Albany to writing their elected officials about important legislation when they receive our action alerts, Carmen and Louie are able to join with others from all over the state to make their voices heard in a loud and powerful way.

Louie and Carmen are receiving the first ever mother/son activists of the year award from the Puerto Rican Initiative to Develop Empowerment.

For more information about volunteer and activism opportunities, sign up to receive our action alerts at www.prideagenda.org.

Equality & Justice Day (continued from page 1)

Another rally speaker, Reverend Norm Kansfield of the Reformed Church in America, said, "We are here to make it clear once and for all that LGBT equality and justice is a matter of faith. We are here to make sure that the New York State Legislature hears our voices shouting for justice, and demanding more for our LGBT brothers and sisters, daughters and sons, and all loved ones."

By the end of the day, it was clear that E&J Day was getting results. We had our first Republican State Senators say they would support GENDA

and Dignity. Overall support for GENDA in the Assembly had grown to 95 out of a total of 150 Assemblymembers and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver said publicly he would be conferencing the marriage bill for the first time ever with his Democratic Majority.

All this happened because our community showed up and demonstrated its power.

All this made for one of our most successful E&J Day's ever in Albany!

A Message from Alan Van Capelle (continued from page 1)

conference to talk it up. I remember when they said the Assembly would never pass the bill this year and when it did they said it didn't mean anything because it was just a one-house bill.

I'm glad we never listened to the naysayers. We'd never win anything if we did. And I'm telling you right now we're winning this fight. We're two-thirds of the way to having the ability to marry. The Governor has done his part. The Assembly has done its part. And now, working with you, we'll make sure the Senate does its part.

This is an exciting time to be part of the movement to win equality and justice for LGBT New Yorkers. I hope you take pride in this

moment and make it yours.

Yes, there is hard work ahead. But when has there ever not been hard work ahead on marriage equality and on all the other issues that are important to LGBT New Yorkers, like passing the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act and the Dignity for All Students Act?

Together, we will continue to surprise the naysayers. We will win equality and justice for our families and ourselves and we will leave New York a better place than we found it.

So stick with us. The journey is not over and I want you there with us all the way.

Equality@Work Awards



The recipients of this year's Equality@Work awards from left to right: Richard Bowen of Ernst & Young, Scott Friedheim from Lehman Brothers, and William A. Steenburgh from Xerox.

The Pride Agenda honored two outstanding companies and an exceptional individual at the fourth Equality@Work Awards

Luncheon on June 6 – Lehman Brothers, Xerox and Richard Bowen of Ernst & Young.

In accepting the award for Lehman Brothers, Managing Director and Co-Chief Administrative Officer Scott Friedheim highlighted how diversity, including LGBT diversity, has become completely integrated into the company's business culture and business strategy. Senior VP for Xerox Services William A. Steenburgh recounted how far Xerox has come over the years in the area of LGBT diversity. He expressed how glad he was that Xerox now has comprehensive transgender guidelines as he remembered how much he struggled as a manager to formulate an appropriate policy more than a decade ago when a transgender employee transitioned in his department.

Richard Bowen of Ernst & Young recalled how his involvement began when he advocated for comprehensive equal benefits for a gay employee who was adopting a child. After realizing that domestic partner health benefits was just the starting point for family equality and inclusion, Bowen went on to found bEYond, the LGBT group at the firm.

Luncheon attendees were given a copy of the *Pride in My Workplace 2006-2007 Accomplishments Report*. This brochure describes the program's workplace presentations over the past year, the industry sector roundtable initiative and outreach using the *Best Practices Guide* that has occurred to a range of employers in New York State. The *Accomplishments Report* can be viewed and downloaded by going to the Pride in My Workplace section of our homepage at www.prideagenda.org or by emailing us at workplace@prideagenda.org.

2007 Legislative Wrap-up

Through the state budget process, the LGBT Health and Human Services Network (Network), whose work with the government is coordinated by the Pride Agenda, won \$8.0 million in funding. This figure is more than 60% higher than the Network has ever received in a single budget year. Of this amount, \$6.75 million came from Governor Spitzer's Executive Budget and \$1.25 million from the Assembly Majority. These dollars go to Network members who provide vital services to our community all across New York State.

On the legislative front, the historic passage of marriage equality legislation in the Assembly by a vote of 85-61 showed the nation that momentum is growing to provide our families with access to marriage.

While no new laws were enacted this year, the marriage vote and those highlighted below are building the foundation we need to achieve our goal of equality and justice for LGBT New Yorkers and our families. While we are not satisfied with the pace of progress in getting the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) enacted into law, we are confident that, with continued work, we will see movement on this bill in future legislative sessions.

There is much to be done and the Pride Agenda welcomes your help in making these bills law in New York State.

The following LGBT bills received committee and/or floor votes in the 2007 legislative session:

THE FOLLOWING LGBT BILLS RECEIVED COMMITTEE AND/OR FLOOR VOTES IN THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

MARRIAGE EQUALITY BILL – A.8590 (O'Donnell) / S.5884 (Rules)

Allows for marriage between any two persons regardless of the sex or gender of the persons. (Passed Assembly)

“GENDER EXPRESSION NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT” (GENDA)

– A.6584 (Gottfried) / S.3753 (Duane)

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression in employment, housing, credit, education and public accommodations. (Passed Assembly Government Ops committee)

“DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT” (DIGNITY)

– A.3496 (O'Donnell) / S.1571 (Duane)

Prohibits and prevents bias-based harassment, bullying and discrimination in public schools. (Passed Assembly)

“SAFE AND FAIR TREATMENT FOR YOUTH ACT” (SAFETY)

– A.1613 (Scarborough)

Prohibits bias-based harassment, bullying and discrimination in juvenile justice and other facilities operated by the Office of Children and Family Services. (Passed Assembly)

“HEALTHY TEENS ACT” – A.2856 (Gottfried) / S.1342 (Winner)

Creates a grant program to provide age-appropriate, medically accurate, LGBT culturally competent sex education in New York public schools. (Passed Assembly)

AVAILABILITY OF DOMESTIC PARTNER INSURANCE

– A.3251 (O'Donnell) / S.3873 (C. Johnson)

Requires insurance companies to sell domestic partner insurance policies on the same basis as spousal insurance coverage. (Passed Assembly)

PROHIBITING SEXUAL ORIENTATION DISCRIMINATION IN INSURANCE

– A.3483 (Gottfried)

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in insurance underwriting. (Passed Assembly)

FALL DINNER

OCTOBER 11, 2007

The sixteenth annual Fall Dinner will be held on Thursday, October 11 at the Sheraton Hotel & Towers in Manhattan. The Fall Dinner is a celebration of our recent victories, and we will be joined by LGBT leaders, straight allies, elected officials, and other public figures who stand up for the rights of LGBT New Yorkers.

Sponsorships are on sale now. Visit www.prideagenda.org or call 212-627-0305 to guarantee your seat at one of the largest LGBT dinners in the country.



The Fall Dinner Kick-off reception was held on July 18 at the rooftop terrace of Mario D'Andrea and Pride Agenda Board Member, Samuel W. Rosenblatt.

Pictured left to right are Mario D'Andrea, special guest Lt. Governor David Patterson, Sam Rosenblatt, and State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins

EVENTS PHOTO ALBUM



The Rochester Spring Dinner was held on May 19 and honored former Pride Agenda Board Co-Chair, Duffy Palmer (r) with the Community Service Award. Also pictured here are Duffy's partner, Mark Siwec (l) and Bob Duffy (c), the Mayor of Rochester.



The Pride Agenda was in the Hamptons on July 14 for our annual Tea Dance. Shown here are Pride Agenda Executive Director, Alan Van Capelle (r) with his partner, Matthew Morningstar (l) and Tea Dance sponsor, Anthony Collerton (c).



off-Sprung! brought the next generation of LGBT leaders to the Armani Exchange store in Soho, NYC for an evening of activism and revelry. Pictured left to right are Francisco Ruiz, Erica Gaeta, and Erin Drinkwater.



Elizabeth MacDonald and Louise Bylicki joined other Pride Agenda Empire Club members as they were treated to a private reception at Christie's New York Auction House in May.