

EQUALITY ILLINOIS SEPTEMBER 2009 E-NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

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1) FREEDOM ISN'T FREE – Equality Illinois Needs YOUR help

We need your support right now to advance and expand our assertive agenda for full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Illinois. **To build on our momentum, we need at least 10,000 new members this month!**

Educating our fellow Illinoisans and public officials about legislative issues important to the LGBT community, building a strong support network across faiths, sexual orientations, and gender identity, and maintaining a strong and effective team of lobbyists are all key to our future successes. But Equality Illinois cannot succeed in that without your participation.

Become a member for as little as \$35 – that's less than \$3 per month, about the cost of a latte. Join forces with 10,000 members, and together you can achieve **civil unions**, ensure **safe schools**, fight **hate crimes**, and so much more!

Become a member now and you may not even need to skip those lattes: we'll enter you in our weekly new member drawings for **dozens** of prizes.

We all have a stake and a role in advancing equality, and Equality Illinois cannot achieve this mission without your support.

We're counting on you. Please give at least \$35 now, and please forward this message to at least 5 of your friends or family members. For additional information on our many giving options, please contact Joey McDonald at (773) 477-7173 or Jmcdonald@eqil.org.

2) LEGAL UPDATE: White House clarifies its position on Defense of Marriage Act

Equality Illinois is pleased that the White House clarified its position on the so-called Defense of Marriage Act ("DOMA") in the wake of an earlier brief filed by the Justice Department, comparing same-sex unions to incestuous relationships.

In a short statement released on August 17, 2009, the White House announced:

“Today, the Department of Justice has filed a response to a legal challenge to the Defense of Marriage Act, as it traditionally does when acts of Congress are challenged. This brief makes clear, however, that my Administration believes that the Act is discriminatory and should be repealed by Congress. I have long held that DOMA prevents LGBT couples from being granted equal rights and benefits. While we work with Congress to repeal DOMA, my Administration will continue to examine and implement measures that will help extend rights and benefits to LGBT couples under existing law.”

The Administration’s original statement in the case, *Smelt v. United States*, fueled outrage within the LGBT community and among our allies. The case was dismissed from the federal court on technical grounds, and sent back to the state court, but is likely to make its way up again.

Visit www.EqualityIllinois.org to learn more about Equality Illinois’ agenda for full LGBT equality.

3) YOU HAD TO BE THERE: Celebrity Pie Toss update

You had to be there. Equality Illinois’ Celebrity Pie Toss was a complete success thanks to the participation (and sense of humor) of our 26 pie toss “victims,” generosity of our many bidders, endless efforts of our hosts – Sidetrack bar, - and commitment of our volunteers. If you missed it or if you want to relive the fun event, then get ready to view the photos, which will be posted shortly on our new Facebook page.

4) WHAT A SHOW! - The Addams Family musical – Benefit for Equality Illinois

Join us for a special showing of Addams Family the musical and benefit our mission of equality!

When you purchase your ticket through Equality Illinois and join us on December 8th, your purchase will benefit the Equality Illinois Education Project - to support our crucial work to secure, protect and defend equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in our State. A portion of the ticket price is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Premium VIP ticket holders are invited to a special Equality Illinois post-performance reception to which the cast of The Addams Family is also invited. We want you to enjoy The Addams Family with us!

The Addams Family, starring two-time Tony Award® winners Nathan Lane and Bebe Neuwirth, is opening in Chicago this Fall before it goes to Broadway. The weird and wonderful family created by New Yorker cartoonist Charles Addams comes to devilishly delightful life in a Broadway musical. Experience The Addams Family at the pre-Broadway showing and support Equality Illinois.

The Addams Family – A New Musical

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Ford Center for the Performing Arts, Oriental Theatre

24 West Randolph Street

Chicago, Illinois

To purchase your tickets, please go to:
http://eqfed.org/equality_illinois/events/addamsfamily/

5) DON'T MISS: September 4 – First Friday Networking Social

Join Equality Illinois supporters and friends for our monthly First Friday networking event, continuing our celebration of summer in Chicago! For a \$10 donation to the Equality Illinois PAC, you receive two-drink tickets and a ticket for a door prize drawing.

Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event
Friday, September 4, 2009
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Sidetrack – Glass Bar
3349 North Halsted Street
Chicago, Illinois
(21 and over, with I.D.)

Contributions support the Equality Illinois Political Action Committee. Contributions are not tax deductible. Paid for by Equality Illinois PAC. A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections and the Cook County Clerk is (or will be) available for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, IL, or the Cook County Clerk's Office, 69 W. Washington, Chicago, IL 60601. State law requires that we report the occupation and name of the employer of any individual who contributes over \$500.00

6) FAN BASE: Become a Fan of our NEW Facebook page

Please show that you support equality in Illinois by becoming a fan of Equality Illinois' **brand-new** Facebook page. Organizations that oppose marriage equality have thousands of "fans" for their cause. Let's show them how strong we are!
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Equality-Illinois/104000334423>

7) GET A JOB! ...at the White House

Equality Illinois is pleased to announce that applications for the 2010 Spring Internship are now available at whitehouse.gov/about/internships. Applications are due September 20, 2009. The application includes two essays, three letters of recommendation and a resume. Each applicant will be evaluated on three basic qualities: a commitment to public service, demonstration of leadership in the community and dedication to the mission of this Administration. The applicant's communication, writing and office skills will also be reviewed and considered. An applicant's GPA is not figured into the final score, and each application is reviewed on a semi-blind basis.

Please apply and reference our website at whitehouse.gov/about/internships.

8) ACLU Discrimination Study

Have You Been Fired or Refused a Job By a State or Local Government?

We have a very real chance of ending LGBT discrimination on the job. Congress is poised to pass and the President Obama has promised to sign a federal law that bars

workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. But your help is needed to persuade lawmakers in Washington that this is a problem that state and local government employees face, too. ACLU needs to hear from people who wanted to work for a state or local government but have been fired, refused a job or faced harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

ACLU is looking for people from all walks of life and who have held all kinds of jobs including faculty, teachers, and staff at colleges and schools, courts employees, law enforcement and correctional officers, prosecutors, bus drivers, and sanitation workers. If you can prove that you were fired, refused a job or harassed for being LGBT, that's great. But the proof doesn't have to be in writing. It could be something your boss or other employees said to you.

If you have faced this type of discrimination, please take just a few minutes to fill out the online survey at www.aclu.org/endasurvey. If you know someone who has faced this type of discrimination, please send them this e-mail and ask them to fill out the survey.

ACLU promises that your name and contact information will be kept safe, and may only be shared internally within a coalition of other LGBT and civil rights groups working on this project. ACLU will contact you first for permission if it is interested in using your story in the lobbying and media efforts.

9) UP NEXT: Calendar of Upcoming Events

September

September 3 – Equality Illinois' First Friday Networking Event
Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., Glass Bar; 6pm-8pm. \$10 door donation benefits the Equality Illinois PAC. 21 and over (with I.D.)

September 13 – Peoria Pride
The Landing on the Peoria Riverfront
Celebrating the diverse LGBT community in Central Illinois by both friends and allies.
Admission is \$5.00

October

Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event – October 2
National Equality March on Washington – October 10-11
2010 Justice for All Gala - Capitol Club Table Captain Reception - TBA
Night of 100 Drag Queens – October 27 & 28
Equality Illinois Family Halloween Party – October 31

November

Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event – November 6
Wine Tasting to benefit Equality Illinois PAC – November 13
2010 Justice for All Gala – Table Captain Reception – TBA

December

Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event – December 4
The Addams Family Theatre Event – December 8
Ultimate New Year's Eve Party – December 31

January

Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event – January 8
2010 Justice For All Gala – Premier Reception – January 22
2010 Justice for All Gala – Saturday, January 23

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