

# EQUALITY ILLINOIS MARCH 2010 E-NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

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## 1) **JOIN US: March 5 – First Friday Networking Social**

Join Equality Illinois supporters and friends at our monthly First Friday Networking event on Friday, March 5. 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, March 5, 2010  
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Sidetrack – Glass Bar  
3349 North Halsted Street  
Chicago, Illinois  
(21 and over, with I.D.)

For a \$10 donation to the Equality Illinois PAC,  
you receive two-drink tickets and a ticket for a door prize drawing.

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

## 2) **HUMAN RIGHTS IN ILLINOIS: Illinois Non-discrimination law in Danger**

The State Senate is considering a bill (SB3447) to roll back some protections of the Illinois Human Rights Act, which currently prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The bill would carve out exceptions to the Act, allowing certain employers and tax-exempt organizations to discriminate against Illinoisans on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

The bill was authored by State Senator Bill Brady, Republican gubernatorial hopeful, though the chief sponsorship has since changed to State Sen. John O. Jones.

The bill has been assigned to the Judiciary Committee and a hearing on the bill is scheduled for Tuesday, March 2.

Here's what you can do NOW to save Illinois Human Rights Act:

Learn more about the proposed bill and then

1. Contact a State Senator on the Judiciary Committee, especially if this is your State Senator. Go to: [https://secure.ga4.org/01/c4\\_stop\\_Brady](https://secure.ga4.org/01/c4_stop_Brady)
2. Help Equality Illinois launch a forceful defense of the Human Rights Act in Springfield, by donating to our advocacy efforts today. We need to have a full advocacy team in Springfield to derail these angry, ill-willed attacks. We cannot do this work without your help. Go to: [https://secure.ga4.org/01/c4\\_stop\\_Brady](https://secure.ga4.org/01/c4_stop_Brady)

Thank you for your help!

### **3) FACE TIME: Planning has begun for the 2010 Springfield Lobby Day**

Equality Illinois will be hosting its annual Lobby Day in Springfield in April of 2010. We are currently looking at dates that will give our participants maximum exposure and contact with state legislators. Buses of Equality Illinois members, as well as fair-minded people from all across the state will converge on the Illinois State Capitol to lobby legislators and push for passage of the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act – SB1716.

While we continue to work towards full marriage equality in Illinois, SB1716 will convey many of the rights and responsibilities to couples that cannot presently have a civil marriage. Among those rights are the ability to participate in healthcare visitation and decision making for one's partner, survivor benefits and the right to make disposition decisions about deceased partner's remains. This legislation is important to gay and lesbian couples, and also to seniors. Too often these relationships are not recognized in crisis situations, and partners are treated as 'strangers in the eyes of the law'. This is your opportunity to put a face to the cause!

Targeted arrival time in Springfield is 11am. After a lunch and an informational meeting, participants will head over to the State House to meet with legislators. After our lobbying session, Equality Illinois will host a reception and dinner at the Station House. Buses will depart Springfield around 5:30pm, arriving back at our starting places at approximately 9:00pm.

Supporter from the entire state are welcome and encouraged to join us in Springfield.

Additional information and reservation details will be sent out to our members once the date has been confirmed.

### **4) IT'S A RESPONSIBILITY: Getting out the Vote**

Voting in any type of election provides an important way to voice our opinions regarding our leaders and policies. Voting is how we determine our political future. The ability to vote exists as one of the most cherished constitutional rights that many people have fought for, marched for, and died for.

At Equality Illinois, we honor that right and responsibility by registering voter and getting out the vote. We are currently working on a plan for registration throughout the entire state -- not only the street fairs in Chicago but also at the Pride festivals in Carbondale, Belleville, Quad Cities and Peoria as well as other districts.

Please check the Equality Illinois website ([www.equalityillinois.org](http://www.equalityillinois.org)) to learn more about voter registration or to learn when our team is coming near you.

### **5) MARRIAGE EQUALITY: Prop 8 Trial Transcripts Available Online**

The American Foundation for Equal Rights, which is supporting the current legal effort to overturn California's Proposition 8, has posted transcripts from Day 1 thru Day 12 of the Perry v. Schwarzenegger case on its website at <http://www.equalrightsfoundation.org/our-work/hearing-transcripts/>. Transcripts from each day of the trial may be read, linked to and quoted from, but not reposted or sold in any way.

In addition, gay filmmakers John Ireland and John Ainsworth joined together to create their own production: "The Perry vs. Schwarzenegger Trial Re-enactment." Using court transcripts and a cast of 40 professional actors, they have re-enacted every moment of the trial proceedings. The re-enactment is available at <http://www.marriagetrial.com/> and on YouTube at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDmA\\_n5ygS4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDmA_n5ygS4)

## **6) VACATION FOR EQUALITY: Book through Orbitz & Support Equality Illinois**

Select Equality Illinois in Orbitz' LGBT and HIV/AIDS charity promotion and we'll receive a donation every time you book a hotel or vacation package for two or more nights **through March 31, 2010**. Click here to help support Equality Illinois today!

We all love a win-win situation, and supporting Equality Illinois has never been more fun! The more Equality Illinois' supporters book on Orbitz, the more contributions we will receive.

[http://www.orbitz.com/App/PerformMDLPDealsContent?deal\\_id=gay-charity-promotion&cnt=PRO](http://www.orbitz.com/App/PerformMDLPDealsContent?deal_id=gay-charity-promotion&cnt=PRO)

## **7) HIGHER EDUCATION: PFLAG National Scholarships available for 2010**

*PFLAG National* (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) has announced the availability of their 2010 Scholarships. PFLAG National awards \$5,000, \$2,500 and \$1,000 scholarships annually to first-time college/university bound students.

Eligibility requirements:

1. You are a graduating senior entering higher education for the first time in 2010. If you graduated in 2009 and took a year off you are still eligible to apply;
2. You self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) or as a straight ally;
3. You demonstrate an interest in service to the LGBT community;
4. You have applied to an accredited higher education institution.

In order to be considered for a scholarship, you will need to submit:

1. A complete application form;
2. A one-page essay;
3. A high-school transcript;
4. One letter of reference
5. A release form

Send your high school transcript, letter of reference and the release form in one packet to PFLAG National at the address below:

PFLAG National  
1726 M St. NW  
Suite 400  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Submit your application and essay online (if you prefer, you may submit a hard-copy of your application and essay). For online submissions, you will be assigned a reference number; this number needs to appear on the cover of your packet containing the reference, transcripts and

release form that you send to PFLAG National. The deadline to apply for the PFLAG National Scholarship is March 12, 2010.

LAGBAC Foundation Scholarship program. The LAGBAC Foundation, in conjunction with LAGBAC (Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago), will award scholarship grants to support full-time employment at a qualified LGBT/civil rights organization during the 2010 Summer.

First, Second and Third year law students are encouraged to apply. The scholarship grants range in amount from \$3,000 to \$4,000 depending on a variety of factors.

Applications are due by March 12th, 2010. The application can be found at [www.lagbac.org](http://www.lagbac.org).

### **8) FAN BASE: Become a Fan of our NEW Facebook page**

Join nearly 2,000 fans of Equality Illinois' **Facebook** page and show your support for equality in Illinois! It's the easiest way to keep abreast of what is happening in the LGBT community all across the state. Become a fan by going to:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Equality-Illinois/104000334423>

### **9) UP NEXT: Calendar of Upcoming Events**

#### **March**

March 5: Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event

Friday, March 5

Sidetrack

3347 N. Halsted Street

Chicago

\$10 – Supports Equality Illinois PAC

#### **April**

April 2: Equality Illinois First Friday Networking Event

Friday, April 2

Sidetrack

3347 N. Halsted Street

Chicago

\$10 – Supports Equality Illinois PAC

Lobby Day for Civil Unions and Marriage Equality Illinois

Date to be advised

Illinois State House

Springfield

### **10) JOIN THE CAUSE! – 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.

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!

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](mailto:JMcDonald@eqil.org).