

GLAD BRIEFS

WINTER '10

GAY & LESBIAN ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS

Stepping Up the Challenge to DOMA Section 3

Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com



GLAD's Legal Team Challenging Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act, Mary Bonauto, Gary Buseck, Janson Wu and Nima Eshghi.

When Nancy Gill, a postal employee for 22 years, was finally able to marry her partner of 24 years, Marcelle Letourneau, she found that she was unable to put Marcelle on her health insurance plan because of DOMA. This not only created a financial burden, it changed the way the couple cares for their two children. "At the time we married," Marcelle says, "we were planning for me to be a stay-at-home parent for several years – to give all of us, and especially our children, a break from the juggling of balancing their needs with our two jobs. We had no idea that I wouldn't be covered by Nancy's health plan. I have had to remain in the workforce in order to have access to health insurance."

Dean Hara, surviving spouse of late Congressman Gerry Studds, says he felt dishonest filing

"[W]e're asking a judge to say once and for all that the federal government must end its blatant double standard of providing rights and protections to all married couples except gay and lesbian married couples."

– Legal Director Gary Buseck



federal tax returns as "single" when he and Rep. Studds were in fact legally married. Hara says it was painful that the federal government – Rep. Studds' employer for 17 years – did not value their relationship.

These families – and the others like them that GLAD is representing in *Gill v. Office of Personnel Management* – should be treated as equals by the federal government. That's GLAD's position in a November 17 filing with the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, which both opposes the federal government's motion to dismiss *Gill*, and argues a motion for summary judgment in the plaintiffs' favor.

GLAD maintains that, under Equal Protection guarantees, there is no justification for splitting married people into two classes: those who are

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**Connecticut and Vermont Married Same-Sex Couples:
GLAD Wants to Hear About the Ways in Which DOMA is Affecting You.**

Please complete our survey at www.glad.org/doma/survey

From the Executive Director Lee Swislow



As with most non-profit organizations, 2009 was a challenging year for GLAD. I've heard from corporations whose charitable giving budgets have been slashed, and from donors who have reluctantly told me they are decreasing their gift because of their own uncertain economic situation.

But despite the challenges, we carry on, because the work is so important. GLAD is fortunate to have so many wonderful supporters who understand that the fight for the civil rights of LGBT people and

those living with HIV and AIDS is not a fight that can wait.

Through good planning and smart budget management, GLAD has protected our core work on a reduced budget. In January we made difficult decisions to freeze several positions and lay off one staff person. Throughout the year we have monitored our revenue and expenses, setting benchmarks to assess whether further cuts were necessary. And of course we have worked hard to reach out to you, our donors and supporters, and to bring new people into the fold. We have all made sacrifices this year and we are proud to have been able to continue the important work that GLAD does.

We've also witnessed remarkable generosity from those who are able – people who have stepped up and increased their giving, knowing that there are others who can't afford to give or must give less at this time.

People like Mainers Jane Begert and Karen Stray-Gundersen, our match donors at this year's Spirit of Justice Award Dinner. Inspired by Jane and Karen, attendees at this year's dinner participated in the match challenge at a higher percentage than in any of the previous three years, helping raise over \$130,000 to support GLAD's work. I was humbled to stand at the front of that room watching as so many people dug deep, understanding how important it is for each to give what he or she can now.

Thank you for your ongoing support of GLAD. If we continue to work together, I know we'll get through these challenging times and move closer to a day when there is equal justice under law for all.

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Staying the Course in Maine

by Mary L. Bonauto



Mary L. Bonauto speaks before a crowd on election night, November 3, in Maine.

I never would have guessed it, but it's true: you can lose a ballot measure on marriage and still have enormous momentum going forward to lay the ground work for the win next time.

Make no mistake. The very process of putting gay and lesbian people up for a vote, making our basic rights contingent on the approval of others, is deeply offensive. Equality supporters in Maine and around the country experienced a world of hurt and pain when we lost.

So as in any civil rights movement, in any justice struggle, we must stay the course. We never make progress any other way.

Maine is a small state, but we had 8,000 volunteers – gay and straight, young and old, secular and religious – who made this fight their own. Among them is Philip Spooner, an 87 year old World War II veteran, and a lifelong Republican and Mainer. His point: he fought in Europe for the principle that “we are all equal,” that we can “be different and equal” and that he didn’t fight for an America where 3 of his sons would be equal but his gay son wouldn’t.

What happened? Voter turnout in this off-year election was 60% – far exceeding even the 2006 election with contested governor and U.S. Senate races. We turned out an enormous number of voters – more pro-equality voters than we ever had

in previous non-discrimination law campaigns, including our winning 2005 campaign. But they simply turned out more. We lost by just over 32,000 votes.

Our challenge, a challenge we can meet, is turning out our supporters who did not vote this time and also engaging with those repeal voters who are ambivalent to switch their votes. Are there any ambivalent voters? Absolutely. The repeal side closed its campaign with ads and automated calls making the enormous concession that it had steadfastly refused in Maine: that the state could pass laws to provide for “civil rights,” such as by expanding Maine’s limited domestic partner registry, while at the same time protecting “traditional marriage.” Some people clearly bought that. For the next fight, we start with 47% of the vote – people who are discerning, passionate, and withstood the blizzard of fears and lies conjured up by the repeal side. For example, in contrast to California, we won the demographic of parents with children in school despite the other side’s campaign stirring up fears that their children would be exposed to inappropriate discussions about sex at young ages in schools.

The work of the next campaign has already begun. Part of that is defending the seat of every legislator who voted with us on marriage

against the threats already voiced by anti-equality organizations.

Going forward means we’ll need to make tough strategic choices and maintain our unity. We need to build on the parts of the campaign we know we did well. For example, our votes were best in the places where people know gay and lesbian people and same-sex couples. Between now and the next vote on this issue, we will make sure that many more people – in cities and rural areas alike – get the “personal touch.” That means engaging folks in direct conversations with gay and lesbian people and straight allies about why marriage equality matters – and getting them the information they need to vote with us.

Civil rights movements are hard, and they require planning, patience, and persistence. We’ve got all of that, as well as passion. Remember that Maine voters narrowly rejected non-discrimination laws passed by the legislature in 1998 and 2000, only to endorse non-discrimination statewide in 2005. We won’t let it take so long this time. ■

GLAD was part of the group that planned and executed the strategy leading to the legislative win in May, and Mary L. Bonauto and Lee Swislow participated in the Executive Committee of the ballot campaign.

Maine Transgender Woman Sues Denny's for Public Accommodation Discrimination

For Brianna Freeman of Lewiston, Maine, the Denny's in Auburn was a regular meeting place. She and a group of friends ate there a few times a week, until the day in 2007 that a manager told Brianna she could no longer use the restroom – because she is a transgender woman.

“Denny's is a family restaurant chain,” says Kevin LabBree of Realty Resources Hospitality, which owns and operates Denny's. “I am going to do what is in the best interest of my customers.”

Denny's argued that Brianna's presence in the women's room posed a danger to customers and staff, despite the fact that she had used the restroom peacefully and without incident for some time. And in reality, she knew that she would be the one endangered if forced to use the men's room.

Hurt and dismayed, Brianna filed a complaint with the Maine Human Rights Commission. The Commission concluded that Denny's had violated the Maine Human Rights Act because it had denied Brianna the use of a public accommodation for a discriminatory reason.

GLAD is now representing Brianna in her lawsuit against Denny's. GLAD filed suit on October 20, 2009 in Androscoggin Superior Court, seeking not only amends for Brianna's anguish and distress, but to prevent Denny's from continuing such discriminatory practices in the future. GLAD is working with local counsel Jeff Young of McTeague, Higbee, Case, Cohen, Whitney & Toker.

Maine's legislature only recently added sexual orientation and gender identity and expression as

“In order to participate fully in society – at work, at school, out in the world – transgender people need safe access to public facilities. Deciding who can use which restroom facility based on whether someone looks sufficiently female is wrong and threatens all of us.”

– *Transgender Rights Project Director*
Jennifer Levi

prohibited bases of discrimination in its Human Rights Act. The new law survived a “people's veto” in 2005. This case is among the first filed in Maine claiming discrimination based on a person's gender identity, as well as one of the first in the country.

“Denny's relied on ignorance and stereotypes in barring Brianna from the appropriate restroom,” says Jennifer Levi, GLAD's Transgender Rights Project Director. “In order to participate fully in society – at work, at school, out in the world – transgender people need safe access to public facilities. Deciding who can use which restroom facility based on whether someone looks sufficiently female is wrong and threatens all of us.”

“I've worked hard to come as far as I have,” says Brianna. “I just want to live the life I should be living. I'm fighting back.” ■

Survey: Transition-related Health Care and Insurance Coverage

GLAD is collecting stories from people in New England about their experiences with health insurance coverage related to gender transition.

If you have a story you'd like to share, please complete our survey online at www.glad.org/health

If you would rather not fill out the survey online but would like to tell us your story, you can call GLAD's Legal InfoLine at 617-426-1350, and talk to someone on the phone.

All information you provide to GLAD will be kept completely confidential.

Thank you for sharing your story. ■

Connect with GLAD

Follow GLAD online for the latest news and insights on the fight for equality for LGBT and HIV positive people.

Twitter: www.twitter.com/gladlaw

Facebook: www.facebook.com/GLADFans

And visit us at: www.glad.org

Have Questions? GLAD's Legal InfoLine Can Help

Do you have a legal problem or question? GLAD's Legal InfoLine can provide you with information on a variety of topics free of charge including:

- How to get married in MA, CT, VT and NH
- Military Legal Issues
- Immigration Issues
- Police Harassment
- Employment, Housing and Public Accommodations
- Discrimination
- Adoption
- Domestic Violence
- HIV Privacy & Confidentiality
- Criminal Issues
- Transgender Legal Issues
- Rights of Public School Students
- Hate Crimes
- Divorce
- Legal Planning Documents
- Child Custody
- *and many more*

Through over 70 publications, referrals to other agencies that can help and referrals to members of GLAD's Lawyer Referral Service if you need legal advice, the InfoLine can get you started on solving your problem or answering your question. One of our highly trained volunteers is waiting to assist you. The Legal InfoLine can be accessed by phone every weekday afternoon from 1:30-4:30 pm by calling 800-455-GLAD (4523), by emailing gladlaw@glad.org or at www.glad.org/infoline.

Docket Highlights

Adams v. Bureau of Prisons: GLAD, in conjunction with the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Florida Institutional Legal Services, and Bingham McCutchen LLP, is challenging a federal prison system policy that prohibits medical care for transgender inmates who came into the system without any treatment plan for transition. When the case began, our client, Vanessa Adams, was being denied medically necessary hormone therapy and prevented from otherwise expressing a female gender identity because she was diagnosed with GID post incarceration. In an initial victory, Vanessa has now been allowed to begin hormone therapy. GLAD and co-counsel have opposed the Bureau of Prison's motion to dismiss the case, however, in order to challenge the Bureau's other denials of transition-related medical care as well as the policy itself.

AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region v. Town of Gilsum:

A settlement was reached in this case in July 2009, and received final approval by the Gilsum Zoning Board in November. The settlement enables AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region to operate its group home in Gilsum, New Hampshire, for people with HIV without many of the illegal restrictions previously imposed by the town, including restrictions on residency for people with criminal convictions or histories of substance abuse.

Photo: Jess T. Dugan



Rhiannon O'Donnabhain

In re Rhiannon O'Donnabhain: GLAD continues to await a decision from the U.S. Tax Court on behalf of Rhiannon O'Donnabhain, who is challenging the Internal Revenue Service's denial of her deduction of medical costs related to her sex reassignment. Briefing in the case concluded in February 2008.

Miller Jenkins v Miller Jenkins: In an ongoing custody dispute, the Vermont Family Court issued an order finding that Lisa Miller's refusal to allow visitation between her former civil union spouse, Janet Jenkins, and their daughter constituted a change in circumstance that warranted a modification of parental rights and responsibilities. The newly issued order grants Janet responsibility for the day-to-day care of their daughter while granting Lisa liberal visitation rights. Lisa – the child's birth mother – was granted primary physical custody when the couple dissolved their

civil union in 2003, and subsequently moved from Vermont to Virginia with the child. Lisa has since consistently refused to comply with visitation orders that were part of the custody agreement, leading to the family judge's November 20, 2009 ruling based on what is in the child's best interest. Liberty Counsel, which represents Lisa both in Vermont and in pending actions in Virginia, has indicated they will seek a stay of the transfer and an appeal at the Vermont Supreme Court. GLAD will continue to represent Janet in the Vermont appeal.

AMICUS WORK

CHRO and Dana Peterson v. City of Hartford: GLAD submitted an *amicus* brief on behalf of a Connecticut police sergeant who was denied a position as a canine handler, a coveted and publicly visible position within the force, because she is transgender. The case was initially pursued at the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) and has now been appealed to Superior Court. The case may test the robustness of the CHRO's nearly decade-long understanding that existing Connecticut law protects transgender people against employment discrimination.

Immigration Appeal: GLAD submitted an *amicus* brief in a case pending at the Board of Immigration Appeals in support of a transgender woman's efforts to sponsor her legal spouse for US citizenship. Her petition had previously been denied by the government, which argued that DOMA prohibited the recognition of their marriage because they are a same-sex couple even though the citizen spouse transitioned after the couple entered into an otherwise lawful heterosexual marriage. GLAD's *amicus* brief argues that neither the language nor legislative history of DOMA supports an interpretation of it that invalidates a marriage which was lawful when entered into.



Spirit of Justice Award Dinner

October 23, 2009

GLAD's 10th annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner honored Vermont Freedom to Marry co-founder and chair, Beth Robinson, for her work winning marriage equality in the Green Mountain State.

Thanks to all who attended and helped make the evening such a success! ■

All photos: InfinityPortraitDesign.com



Honoree Beth Robinson with Legal Director Gary Buseck and Civil Rights Project Director Mary Bonauto.



Sharen Litwin, Bryan-Eric Simmons and Elena Fernandez.



Michelle Figueredo and Tim Laurin of State Street, and Wendell K. Chestnut of Bank of America.



Dane Chenery, David Brown, Ben Perkins, Tim Fitzgerald and Amit Dixit.



David Hayter and colleagues from Liberty Mutual.

Stepping Up the Challenge to DOMA Sec. 3

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Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com



“At the time we married, we had no idea that I wouldn’t be covered by Nancy’s health plan. I have had to remain in the workforce in order to have access to health insurance.”

– Gill Plaintiff Marcelle Letourneau

safety net the federal government provides for all other married couples, DOMA Section 3 unfairly burdens their ability to protect and care for their families; and 3) that DOMA discriminates explicitly on the basis of sexual orientation and such discrimination should be viewed with suspicion by the courts.

“Both sides in this case agree that our plaintiffs have taken on the commitments of marriage, played by the rules, paid into the system, and have been denied benefits because of DOMA” says Legal Director Gary Buseck. “Now we’re asking a judge to say once and for all that the federal government must end its blatant double standard of providing rights and protections to all married couples except gay and lesbian married couples.”

Complete information on GLAD’s response to the government’s motion to dismiss and GLAD’s motion for summary judgment, including affidavits from the plaintiffs and several experts, can be found at www.glad.org/doma/response.



Victory! GLAD won an initial victory in the challenge to Section 3 of DOMA in June when the U.S. State Department changed its policy regarding the issuance of new passports to people who have changed their name after marrying someone of the same sex. *Gill* plaintiff Keith Toney has now been able to receive a passport in his married name. Information about applying for a passport in a married name is available at www.glad.org/passport

Leave a Lasting Legacy for LGBT Equality Join GLAD’s Legacy Society

LGBT people face unique challenges in financial and estate planning. Without same-sex relationships being fully recognized, couples aren’t able to access myriad protections and provisions of the tax codes. Including a charitable contribution to GLAD in your estate planning can help reduce your taxes and help you provide for your loved ones.

Including GLAD in your estate planning goals can be as easy as naming GLAD a beneficiary in your will or retirement plan. More complex estate planning vehicles such as a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder or lead trust are also possible. GLAD has partnered with the Boston Foundation to make these and other options available to suit your needs.

In addition to the tax advantages, a planned gift to GLAD ensures that your goals for equality are carried out during your retirement years and even beyond your lifetime. That long-term stability for GLAD means we can stay focused on our work for equality.

Please contact Janet Lawn in the Development office, or just return the enclosed envelope for more information. (617) 426-1350 jlawn@glad.org



Have You Experienced Homophobia or Transphobia in Sports?

GLAD wants to hear from you!

Share Your Story

www.glad.org/sports

To determine how we can best address homophobia and transphobia in sports, GLAD is collecting stories about the ways in which anti-gay and anti-transgender attitudes affect LGBT people in sports – at the amateur/recreational, school/university, or professional level. This research will guide our future litigation and educational efforts.

Thank you for sharing your story!

An Ongoing Loyalty: Former Board Members Stay Connected to GLAD



Barbara Macy



Barry Field, Andrew Pang, and Barbara Macy have collectively given nearly thirty years of service on GLAD's board of directors. They also have a shared passion for the organization that has spanned well beyond their respective board tenures.

This fact became apparent to Barry and Andrew as they met over lunch last winter. "We both realized that we missed the depth of involvement we had with GLAD while we were on the board," says Andrew. "We continue to feel a strong commitment to the organization." That lunch became the inspiration for an initiative to encourage board alumni to reconnect with GLAD on a deeper level. They talked with Rick McCarthy, then just beginning his term as board president, and discovered he'd been thinking along similar lines. And Barry reached out to Barbara Macy, who'd been involved nearly since GLAD's beginnings.

An attorney in private practice in Boston as well a proprietor of two Gold's Gyms in Rhode Island, Barry Field served on GLAD's board from 1993-2005. His initial introduction to GLAD came through contacts he met while working on Bill Clinton's first presidential campaign. The experience of that campaign demonstrated for Barry the power the gay community could wield. "For the first time," he says, "we really had a seat at the table."

He channeled that energy into his work with GLAD, seeing the organization through major changes. "I remember the first meeting I attended, we sat in a second floor unmarked office—we still wouldn't put 'gay and lesbian' on the door — it was raining out, and we had a can on the table to collect the water leaking through the ceiling." Several years and two office moves later, Barry was GLAD's board president when the landmark *Goodridge* decision came down.

Barry sees the board alumni initiative as a way to reconnect with people who contributed in the organization's earlier years. "Many former board members have an ongoing loyalty to GLAD. We remember the days before some of these precedent-setting legal cases. We saw GLAD grow from a baby, we want to nourish it, and continue to be a part of it."

Andrew Pang has worked as an independent development consultant for the past thirteen years. But his true full time job, he says, is as caregiver to his two young sons — whom he is raising with his spouse, Samuel — and his elderly mother. "I love being a father," he says. "I feel really lucky that fatherhood was a possibility for me, and that I found the right person to raise children with."

Along with his clear devotion to his family, Andrew's passion also comes through when he describes his work in development. "It's very gratifying to help an organization achieve its mission to improve the world. I teach people to inspire support. When you ask someone to give money, you're not asking them to give up something; you're asking them to share in the joy of fulfilling that mission."

Andrew brought this passion and skill to GLAD's board of directors in 2001. When Gary Buseck stepped down as Executive Director in 2004, he served on the search committee for Gary's replacement, and also served as interim Executive Director. Andrew knew the organization well, and his consultant work gave him both the experience and the flexibility to take on the role.

Andrew says he has witnessed changes in GLAD over the years, most obviously a change in size — the organization's capacity has grown as



Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com

Andrew Pang with his husband Samuel at GLAD's Winter Party.



Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com

Barry Field with his partner Kurt Weidman at the Spirit of Justice Award Dinner.

the resources available to support the work have grown. "But more importantly," he points out, "the sophistication that has always been inherent in GLAD's legal strategy is now matched in other areas of the organization."

With around 100 members, many of those still very involved in LGBT work, Andrew sees GLAD's former board as an accessible group. He views the initiative as a chance for people who have been part of GLAD's inner core to remain close and continue to be a resource for the organization – as donors, consultants, and passionate spokespeople.

Barbara Macy's ties to GLAD reach back to the organization's earliest days. A private practice attorney in Boston for nearly twenty-five years, she first encountered GLAD through fellow law students at Northeastern University, including Kevin Cathcart (former GLAD Executive Director, now E.D. of Lambda Legal) and Urvashi Vaid (a GLAD intern, now E.D. of the Arcus Foundation). Barbara graduated in 1984, and a year later found herself at the GLAD office volunteering on a mailing. There she met Jan Platner (a future GLAD E.D.), a meeting that led to both a position working with Jan, David Lund and (GLAD founder) John Ward at their firm Ward and Lund, and to joining GLAD's litigation committee, which at the time acted as the organization's legal arm, deciding which cases GLAD would take on. After a four-year tenure on the committee, Barbara was recruited by then-president Cindy Rizzo to join the board of directors, where she served until December 2001.

Like Barry and Andrew, Barbara says she witnessed many changes in GLAD

in her more than ten years on the board, and has seen many more since, including increases in budget and capacity. "But what impresses me the most," she says, "is that the essential character of GLAD has stayed true. It's an organization built on the principles of intellectual and legal rigor, and the ideal of social justice." Barbara credits continuity among key staff members for helping the organization stay true to its mission, citing Mary Bonauto and Gary Buseck as "among the best attorneys in the world."

Barbara was one of the first people Barry and Andrew contacted to discuss the board alumni initiative. She quickly agreed to get involved. "I'm always happy to do anything I can for GLAD," she says. "The response to this initiative has been great so far. People have had really positive experiences on GLAD's board. They're pleased to be invited to reconnect."

The board alumni initiative is just beginning. Barry, Andrew, and Barbara are working with GLAD staff to enable former board members to stay informed about GLAD's work at a high level, and to reconnect with one another and the organization through opportunities such as the board alumni table at this year's Spirit of Justice Award Dinner. ■

Board Alumni: We Want to Hear From You!

If you are a former member of GLAD's board and would like to find out more, contact Barry Field at bf2860@aol.com.

Welcome New Board Members



Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com

Board Members Jo Davis and David Aldrich at the 10th annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner.

David J. Aldrich

David J. Aldrich is president and CEO for Skyworks Solutions, Inc, a \$1B company focused on analog semiconductors for mobile communications markets. Prior to assuming his role at Skyworks, David served as president and CEO of Alpha Industries since April 2000. He joined Alpha Industries in 1995 as vice president and CFO and held various management positions in the ensuing years, including president and COO. Prior to this, David held senior management positions at Adams-Russell and M/A-COM. He is a board member of Belden, a \$2B company focused on high speed cable and connectivity products for data networking applications, and a Business Advisory Council member of Providence College. He received a BA in political science from Providence College and an MBA from the University of Rhode Island. David lives in Andover with Janet, his wife of 24 years, and his three children.

Ken Hirschkind

Ken Hirschkind is the Senior Director of Worldwide Business Operations at Endeca Technologies, an enterprise search applications company. For nearly twenty years, Ken has held leadership positions focused on business process improvement and operational excellence within a number of high tech organizations. He received his bachelor's in business administration from New York Institute of Technology. For the past 15 years, Ken has been an active member of the local community, serving in various volunteer and board positions for organizations such as Fenway Community Health, SpeakEasy Stage Company, the Eight Streets Neighborhood Association and the Boston Gay Men's Chorus (BGMC). Ken has also served as a past co-chair of the BGMC's



Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com

Board Member Dana Zircher with Kate Clinton at the 2009 Summer Party.

Annual Fundraiser, Crescendo! (2005/2006) and GLAD's Spirit of Justice Award Dinner (2006/2007). He and his partner live in Boston's South End.

John M. Kelly

John M. Kelly has served as the President and CEO of Meeting Street since 1998 and as a member of its Board of Trustees from 1990 to 1997. Prior to accepting the position of president at Meeting Street, John was general counsel for Cornish Associates, L.P., a real estate development company headquartered in Providence, where he served as the lead staff person for the Coalition for Community Development. Before joining Cornish Associates in 1995, John was a partner with the Providence firm Tillinghast, Collins & Graham. He is chair of The Highlander Charter School, The Dunn Institute and The Providence Revolving Fund, and a former chair of the Providence Zoning Board of Review and The Genesis Center in Providence. He has served as a member of the Board of Park Commissioners for the City of Providence and as a Board member for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Providence. A Pittsfield, MA native, John received his law degree from Boston College Law School, his BA in government from Franklin and Marshall College and is a member of the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Bar Associations. He resides in Providence.

Dana Zircher

Dana Zircher is a senior software design engineer at Microsoft Corporation working in the MS Office product group. Dana has more than 15 years experience in the software industry and has worked on products such as FedEx Ship-It, Lotus Notes, Groove Workspace and MS Office. Dana transitioned from male to female on the job while working at Groove Networks in 2003.

Welcome New Staff

Samuel Bickett, Staff Attorney

Samuel Bickett joined GLAD in September 2009 through a fellowship program organized by Ropes & Gray, LLP. Samuel received his law degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law, where he served on the board of the Lambda Law Students Association and as President of the Innocence Project – an organization dedicated to assisting convicted inmates with claims of innocence. He has worked on both the North Carolina Law Review and the First Amendment Law Review, and has interned with the NC Center for Civil Rights and Ropes & Gray.

Alyson Lie, Public Affairs Assistant

Alyson Lie joined GLAD in October 2009. Prior to arriving at GLAD, she worked as a freelance writer and editor. Her work has appeared in such publications as *Peacework Magazine*, *Edge-Boston*, *Bay Windows* and *Gender Queer: Voices Beyond the Sexual Binary*. Alyson has an MA in English/Creative Writing from New York University.

Raymond Rodriguez, Legal Assistant

Raymond Rodriguez joined GLAD in September 2009, after receiving a BA in Sociology and Public Policy from Dartmouth College, where he was heavily involved with the LGBT and Latino communities. During the summer of 2008, Raymond interned on Capitol Hill for Congresswoman Kathy Castor (FL-11) where he worked on initiatives for affordable housing and environmental protection.

Joseph Wildey, Legal Assistant

Joseph Wildey joined GLAD in June 2009. In 2007, Joseph earned a BA in Liberal Studies from Endicott College, where he completed his senior thesis, *Transforming Treatment: Transgender Experiences and Access to Medical Services*. Following college, he joined AmeriCorps for one year and worked with the Washington Reading Corps to increase literacy among K-5 students in Bremerton, WA.

Rhode Island Governor Vetoes Domestic Partners Funeral Rights Bill



Mark Goldberg, whose story led to passage by the RI legislator of a funeral rights bill for domestic partners.

Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri vetoed a bill in November that would have provided same-sex couples – and unmarried different-sex domestic partners – a critical protection in a time of tragedy and vulnerability. The bill would have allowed a surviving “domestic partner” (as defined in Rhode Island law) the ability to claim the remains of his or her partner, and decide how he or she will be laid to rest.

The bill was introduced by Representative David Segal and Senator Rhoda Perry in response to the story of Rhode Island resident Mark Goldberg, who experienced the tragic loss of his partner of 17 years, Ron Hanby, and was unable to claim his body or make arrangements for him to be laid to rest. Mark’s agony was prolonged for months because he could not be considered next of kin despite having built a life with Ron.

“I’m extremely upset and concerned,” Mark says of the veto of a bill that would have protected people in his situation. “I had the opportunity to meet with the Governor two days after he vetoed the bill, and I realized that he just doesn’t understand. He told me he thought our wills would have been enough [for me to claim Ron’s body], but as I previously learned, it wasn’t. The medical examiner has no obligation to look at those documents. There was no law protecting me.”

Carcieri – a vocal opponent of marriage equality – cited among the reasons for his veto that the bill “represents a disturbing trend over the past few years of the incremental erosion of the principles surrounding traditional marriage.” But the bill, as GLAD Attorney Karen Loewy points out, sought only to remedy a discrete problem in Rhode Island law that leaves people in Mark’s situation vulnerable. “It shouldn’t be easy for opponents of equality to reject a protection like this for surviving partners even when it is discussed in the abstract,” she says, “but to do so when the discussion has been so publicly rooted in Mark’s tragedy is plainly callous.”

The legislature may reconvene in January on a vote to override the veto, and the bill’s sponsors remain committed. “I’m still fighting,” says Mark, who encourages Rhode Island residents to contact their Senator and Representative as he has to ensure focus stays on this important legislation. ■

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Transgender Rights Project Director Jennifer Levi Receives “Women of Justice” Award

Congratulations to Jennifer Levi, director of GLAD’s Transgender Rights Project, who received a 2009 Women of Justice Award from *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*, in partnership with the Women’s Bar Association, and Massachusetts Association of Women Lawyers. Along with judges, social activists, health care leaders, and professors, Jennifer was honored at a December 4 luncheon for her “meaningful and inspiring contributions in the fields of social justice and advocacy.” ■



Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com

UPCOMING EVENT

Winter Tea Dance

March 2010 • Boston, MA

The Winter Party is getting a makeover!

An afternoon dance with new fans of GLAD and long-time supporters. Check www.glad.org/events for updates