

GLAD BRIEFS WINTER '13

GAY & LESBIAN ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS

We Are New Hampshire: Stories of Transgender Lives in the Granite State

We know that one of the most important steps we can take toward passing legal protections against gender identity discrimination is to educate legislators and the public about transgender people's lives.

As we step up our work this year to ensure New Hampshire joins the rest of New England in putting such protections in place, GLAD and TransGender New Hampshire are doing that education with *We Are New Hampshire: Transgender Lives in the Granite State*.

The online and print storybook shares ten stories of transgender Granite Staters and their families, including Gerri Cannon, whose story is excerpted below.

To read more and share these stories, visit www.glad.org/nh-stories

Being Transgender Is Just Living My Life: Gerri Cannon

"Driving a tractor trailer is a lifestyle," says Gerri Cannon. "Being transgender is just living my life."

Gerri knows of what she speaks, since she spends more time behind the wheel of her Kenworth than she does at home in Merrimack. "It's a gorgeous truck," she says of her 70-foot 18-wheeler. "It's a lot of truck."

She's logged about 210,000 miles over the past 18 months for Con-Way Truckload, a multi-billion dollar freight transportation company headquartered in Missouri. Gerri drives up to 11 hours a day, takes a 10 hour break, then repeats the process for a 70-hour work week. "I'm on the road four to six weeks at a time," she says. "That's an over the road truck driver's life."

As a transgender woman, she's grateful to be driving cross-country for a company she says



Gerri Cannon with GLAD Staff Attorney Janson Wu.

is committed to diversity. There's a "good mix of folks" among her friendly fellow drivers, says Gerri, including many other women and husband/wife teams. Con-Way provides workplace protections, including for transgender people. "That's the way the world is supposed to be," she says of her work environment.

It's dramatically different from her first trucking job, with a Phoenix-based company, a few years ago. After first telling Gerri that being transgender wasn't an issue, the man assigned to train her later called and said, "I'm not sure I can train a transgender." Rather than addressing the

discriminatory behavior, the company instead connected Gerri with a driver who was a cross-dresser, even though his training certification had lapsed, meaning Gerri would have to wait until he was re-certified. Meanwhile, she recalls, "I'm sitting here in Merrimack, with no job, not making any money and not on the road." Taking matters into her own hands, she emailed a corporate officer to explain the situation and within days she was being trained by a driver who later told Gerri she was one of his best students.

When she's not on the road, Gerri, 59, visits with her two adult daughters and attends Pilgrim Congregational Church in Nashua, where she found a supportive community after she started her transition. Returning after long stretches on the road, Gerri says, "everyone is all over me: 'Oh Gerri, we missed you!' It's great."

Gerri also volunteers doing educational and advocacy work on behalf of New Hampshire's transgender and LGB community. "In being more comfortable out in the public eye I've established more friendships and more connections than I've ever experienced in my life," she says.

After sharing her story in a local newspaper about five years ago, Gerri attended a meeting of her congregation's over-50 group. Some congregants didn't know until then that Gerri is transgender, and were a little taken aback and initially standoffish. She says they quickly warmed up again after realizing that Gerri is the same person they have always known.

"It was just something they learned about me that was new," she says. "And it became no big deal. I ended up with a lot more supporters in my church." ■

From the Executive Director Lee Swislow

Photo: InfinityPortraitDesign.com



I've been in the ballroom of the Portland, Maine Holiday Inn twice in my life. Once was in 2009, when Mainers voted to rescind the marriage equality bill that had been signed into law. The second time was November 6, 2012, when Mainers affirmed, through the ballot, that all adult citizens should have the freedom to marry. What a difference three years makes!

The ballot is no one's first choice — it is a costly and arduous way to go and we don't like voting on people's rights — but if we have no choice, we will go there. Whether we get to marriage — or to any equality goal — by litigation, legislation, or by ballot — the key is to have honest and respectful conversations with our neighbors, friends, and fellow citizens about our lives.

This has been the way we have passed legislation for transgender rights, have protected our family relationships, and promoted protections for HIV positive people and LGBTQ youth. The truth has power, and in all cases will ultimately overcome the fear and deception our opponents peddle.

We have a lot of work ahead of us in 2013 — working to pass gender identity nondiscrimination protections in New Hampshire and completing our work on the transgender rights law in Massachusetts, overturning DOMA, working for full marriage equality in Rhode Island, and litigating on behalf of LGBT and HIV+ people in all six New England states. After this inspiring election season, we are ready to go. ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Swislow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Rhode Island Tax Ruling Eases the Way for Widowed Spouses



Photo: Chris Riley

Lise Iwon and Peg Laurence

After meeting as law students in 1980, Lise Iwon and Peg Laurence shared a life filled with love, family and friends, and civic engagement. The Rhode Island couple built a successful legal practice together, Laurence & Iwon, Attorneys at Law, and were married in Massachusetts five years ago.

When Peg fell ill and passed away unexpectedly in March, Lise was devastated. In the midst of grieving the loss, she was socked by the news that the Rhode Island Division of Taxation could refuse to recognize their marriage, forcing her to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in estate taxes to inherit the assets Peg had left her through her will.

That their 32-year commitment and legal marriage could be disrespected heaped insult upon injury. "It was a really difficult thing to have to go through," says Lise, "to lose my life partner so suddenly and then be told my marriage wasn't going to be recognized."

Though Rhode Island has a longstanding rule of recognizing marriages validly performed in other jurisdictions, whether any property that Lise inherited would be exempt from Rhode Island's estate tax was an open question, as was whether any joint property that passed to Lise would be treated as owned one-half by Peg for tax purposes.

Lise decided to be proactive about having her marriage to Peg respected and recognized. With the help of GLAD and Hardy, Tabor & Chudacoff, she sought and won a declaratory ruling from the Division of Taxation that same-sex couples in Rhode Island who are married or joined in civil union are allowed to take the same marital deductions for purposes of estate taxes as married different-sex couples.

Thus, Lise and other surviving spouses in Rhode Island will be treated the same as their non-gay peers when inheriting a deceased spouse's estate. Prior to the ruling, same-sex couples in a marriage or a civil union were

forced to pay taxes on an estate worth more than \$893,000, though their non-gay counterparts were not.

"Spouses who build a life and assets together should not be penalized when one of them dies," says Nancy Fisher Chudacoff. "In all my years of practice, this is one of the achievements of which I am most proud."

GLAD Attorney Janson Wu says the ruling, which was issued on Sept. 21, is in line with the Chafee administration's record of aspiring to fairness for LGBT citizens, adding that the ruling "is extremely meaningful for gay and lesbian families."

Lise is relieved by the ruling, and also, "happy for everyone else who doesn't have to go through what I went through." She adds that Peg, long a champion for the disenfranchised, would be proud of what she accomplished. "I think if I didn't fight for it," she says, "she would have sent me bad omens." ■

Despite this meaningful progress for married same-sex couples in Rhode Island, please be aware that because the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prohibits federal recognition of the marriages of same-sex couples, as long as DOMA remains in effect, a surviving spouse would still be responsible for paying any federal estate taxes owed on their deceased spouse's estate.

Rhode Islanders with questions about the ruling can contact GLAD's Legal InfoLine at 1-800-455-GLAD, or gladlaw@glad.org.

GLAD Launches Board of Ambassadors

GLAD is pleased to announce the formation of our Board of Ambassadors, an exciting new venture that will help us connect to and engage more deeply with a variety of communities and constituents. Our Board of Ambassadors is comprised of a group of enthusiastic GLAD supporters from around the country. The Ambassadors share GLAD news and resources with their unique networks, while introducing GLAD to communities who are unfamiliar with our work. With this stellar group, we can mobilize our diverse grassroots networks to further promote GLAD's mission.

The inaugural Board of Ambassadors consists of 29 individuals and two co-chairs, Liz Monnin-Browder and Rick McCarthy.

The 2012 Board of Ambassadors:

John Affuso, Boston MA
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Ready to Knock Out DOMA

As we went to press with this issue of the *GLAD Briefs*, we were still waiting to hear which of the four pending challenges to the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), including GLAD's two cases *Gill v. OPM* and *Pedersen v. OPM*, the U.S. Supreme Court will take up this term.

GLAD's cases are extremely well-positioned – having developed the legal foundation for the constitutional challenge to DOMA and, in *Gill*, having received the first unanimous ruling against the law by a federal appellate court.

Regardless of which case is heard, GLAD will be involved at every step – including continuing our work coordinating the *amicus* strategy at the Supreme Court – until we see a final end to DOMA's discrimination.



Board of Ambassadors members Michelle Rediker, Richard McCarthy, Barry Field, Gary Bailey and Peter Epstein at the 2012 Spirit of Justice Award Dinner.

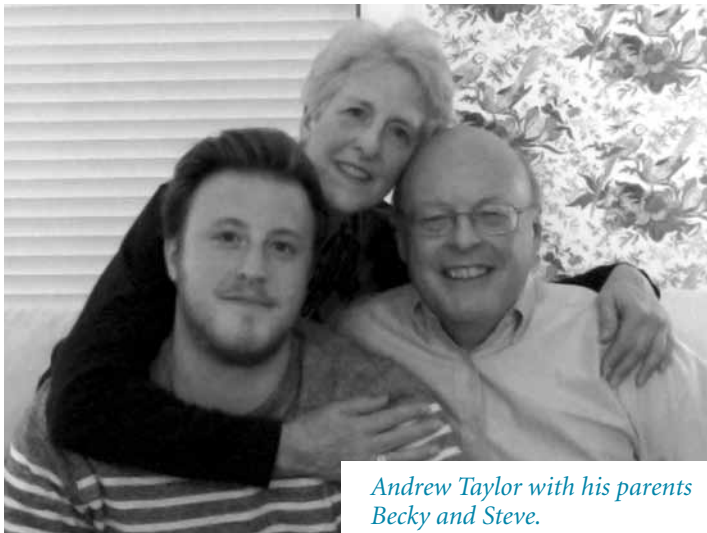
Got Questions? GLAD's Got Answers

**Legal InfoLine for
LGBT and HIV
Legal Questions & Concerns**

Free & Confidential
800-455-GLAD
Mon-Fri 1:30-4:30 p.m. EST

www.glad.org/rights
Know Your Rights!

Pay it Forward: A Supportive Family Empowers a Young Man to Help Others



Andrew Taylor with his parents Becky and Steve.

For Andrew Taylor, coming out as transgender had an immensely positive impact on his life, and not just for the reason you might think. It's the love and affirmation he's received along the way from his parents, Becky and Steve Taylor, that has made the biggest difference for Andrew.

"My parents' support was really transformative," says the 26-year-old Wellesley native. "You hear stories of transgender youth who don't have that support and it's terrible. My parents just had a real sense of duty not to give up on our family. I'm really proud of them; they've really stepped up."

In a video interview with the Gill Foundation last year, Becky elaborated on why it was important to support the younger of her two children through his transition.

"He said to me, 'Do you think I would go through this whole process if I didn't know it was the right thing for me?'" she explained. "There's a lot of pain and a lot of struggle along the way, and if you're willing to go through that, because you know that the end point is what you want... At that point as a parent you just step in and just walk the walk with them, so that they know they're not alone."

She added, "I guess that's the hope I have, is that eventually we can all be in that place that it's not about what you are, it's about who you are."

Having benefited from the support of his family, Andrew has been empowered to help other young LGBT people. Though the Wheaton College grad majored in art with a focus on photography, he's now applying to nursing schools. "I have a very specific goal: to be a part of a new kind of clinic to work with queer youth and families," says Andrew. "My plan is to get a psychiatric- or mental health- focused pediatric degree to work with and support pre-pubescent kids."

"I'm excited to work on what I think is a cutting edge social issue, and to work in a capacity where I can really be helpful, in the interpersonal health field," he adds.

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We're So Honored!



Community Engagement Coordinator Maryse Pearce (right) joined other emerging LGBT leaders for a reception with Vice President Biden in September.

What's GLAD's secret to winning so many advancements in the legal rights of LGBT and HIV+ people for nearly 35 years? It's our people of course, and we're proud and humbled to have had so many of our staff members recognized recently for their incredible work:

In June, [Staff Attorney Janson Wu](#) was named the 2012 recipient of the American Constitution Society's David Carliner Public Interest Award, and former GLAD [Senior Staff Attorney Karen Loewy](#) was Grand Marshal of the Rhode Island Pride Parade. In August, [Transgender Rights Project Director Jennifer Levi](#) received the National LGBT Bar's highest honor, the Dan Bradley award.

[AIDS Law Project Director Ben Klein](#) was honored in October by Worcester Pride with a special Red Ribbon Award for his advocacy and support for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and [Vickie Henry, Leader of GLAD's Youth Initiative](#), was named one of MA Lawyers Weekly's Top Women of Law.

In September, [Staff Attorney Allison Wright](#) and [Community Engagement Coordinator Maryse Pearce](#) were among a select group of "emerging LGBT leaders" who traveled to Washington, D.C. for a policy roundtable and special reception with Vice President Joe and Dr. Jill Biden.

In November, GLAD was honored to receive the Boston Bar Association Beacon Award for Diversity + Inclusion in the company of the Attorney General's Office of Massachusetts; and the American Bar Association announced that [Civil Rights Project Director Mary Bonauto](#) will be one of the 2013 recipients of their Stonewall Award. ■

Congratulations to all our honorees, and thank you for all you do for GLAD and for our community!

Family Matters

LGBT Legal Relationships Recognized in Massachusetts

Photo: Infinity Portrait Design.com



Family Law Attorney Patience Crozier, right, with her spouse Jessica Keimowitz.

GLAD won important victories for LGBT family fairness with two recent Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) rulings: *In Elia-Warnken v. Elia* the SJC said the state must recognize civil unions as equivalent to marriage; *A.E.H. v. M.R.* requires the state to recognize parallel spousal statuses like California domestic partnerships as equivalent to marriage. These decisions ensure that same-sex couples who have entered into such relationships — and any children born into them — will have critical marital responsibilities and protections for their families. [If you have questions about these rulings, call our Legal InfoLine: 1-800-455-GLAD, Monday – Friday 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.](#)

A.E.H. v. M.R.: LGBT Legal Relationships Recognized as Marriage in Massachusetts

It was another example of a bad breakup between a same-sex couple where one spouse attempted to rewrite their family history in order to cut her estranged partner out of their child's life. A.E.H. and M.R. entered into a Registered Domestic Partnership in California and subsequently decided together to create a family. They later moved to Massachusetts, where M.R. birthed their eldest daughter, J. A.E.H. later became pregnant with their second daughter, M., but their relationship ended before A.E.H. gave birth. M.R. took J. and left Massachusetts, severing contact between A.E.H. and J. M.R. then contended that because they were not married, A.E.H. wasn't a legal parent to J. and also disavowed parental responsibility for M. But A.E.H. refused to let her parentage be challenged, or her family torn apart, seeking the expertise of family law attorney Patience Crozier of Kauffman Crozier LLP. Crozier successfully argued at trial that A.E.H. must be recognized as a full legal parent to J. When M.R. appealed to the SJC, GLAD served as appellate counsel, winning a unanimous ruling for A.E.H. that affirmed her legal and custodial parental rights to both of her children.

The ruling clarifies that children born into legal spousal relationships — no matter where they are born and into what type of relationship — are protected in Massachusetts. "There may be a patchwork of protections across the country: civil unions, registered domestic partnerships, marriage," says Crozier, "but Massachusetts treats all of these families equally."

A.E.H. Spoke With Us About the Impact of the Court Case and the Ruling on Her Family.

How did you feel when you learned about the ruling?

AEH: I felt a tremendous sense of relief. The ruling brought a certain amount of closure to an incredibly challenging chapter for my family. Prior to the SJC decision, I had read the amazing briefs filed on our behalf and had the benefit of seeing Karen Loewy of GLAD argue so skillfully before the Court. So, I should have anticipated a unanimous ruling but, even though chances of a loss were minuscule, just the slightest risk of being alienated from my daughter was very real to me. Relief was quickly followed by gratitude towards those who had poured so much into this effort to make it a success for my family and the LGBT community — from the great foundation attorney Patience Crozier built at the trial level through to GLAD's excellent work on appeal.

What was it like to learn that your ex was challenging your parentage of J. and that you could potentially lose your relationship with her?

AEH: It was heartbreaking and terrifying. I had learned of such horrific scenarios but I never dreamed I would be part of one. The breakdown of a relationship is sad in itself, and this coupled with the possibility of being cut off from my daughter was devastating.

What does this ruling mean for you and your family?

AEH: Having a recognized relationship with my older daughter means everything to my family. She now has the support of both her parents and gets to grow up with her sister. Among many things, I get to support her emotionally, socially and academically; and ensure that she has a safe, loving and supportive home as she navigates life. Having lived with the possibility of losing her and knowing of so many other LGBT parents who have experienced alienation from their children, I will never take the opportunity to parent my daughters for granted.

After your experience, do you have any advice for LGBT people who are planning families, or have children already with partners or spouses?

Whatever your circumstances, plan for the worst-case scenario by doing whatever you can to protect your relationships with your children foremost. And, honestly, support the work of GLAD, which is making our families more secure. Without the accomplishments of GLAD and plaintiffs who came before me, I would have never made it through the courtroom door.

Fighting for Fairness for LGBT Parents

GLAD put our LGBT family law expertise to work this year for other clients fighting attacks on their parentage:

- In Connecticut, the man alleging to be the biological parent of a child born to a married lesbian couple petitioned for parental standing, though he had previously stated he wanted nothing to do with the child and had no contact with the child since the birth. GLAD worked with Connecticut counsel to ensure exclusive parentage rights for the two

women parenting the child. In September, the court dismissed the pending action.

- Attorney Janson Wu argued before the New Hampshire Supreme Court in November on behalf of a parent who entered into a co-guardianship with her partner when their child was born so both could declare themselves his parents (at the time, second-parent adoption, civil union, and marriage were all unavailable to them). When the couple split, the birth mother sought to terminate our client's guardianship, thus severing her relationship with their child. We are awaiting a decision.
- In Western Mass. GLAD is working with local counsel to establish full parentage rights for a non-birth mother who, along with the birth mother, jointly raised their child until the couple split up. Although the couple did not do a second-parent adoption and was not married at the time the child was born, GLAD is working to ensure that, in this and similar cases, family law protections reflect children's lived experiences.
- In another New Hampshire case, GLAD assisted an attorney representing a non-birth mother in a divorce proceeding whose wife tried to deny any visitation with their son. GLAD provided legal arguments ensuring that the laws of marriage are applied equally to same-sex couples, i.e. that the child born to a marriage is presumed to be the legal child of both spouses. ■

More Good News

For Massachusetts Residents in a Civil Union or Domestic Partnership

GLAD's recent victories at the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court make it clear that Massachusetts recognizes civil unions and comprehensive domestic partnerships as being equivalent to marriage (currently in California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington, a comprehensive domestic partnership provides access to all laws which pertain to marriage).

In particular, if you are already in one of these relationships, you cannot marry a different person in Massachusetts until that civil union or comprehensive domestic partnership is dissolved—however, you can enter into a marriage with the same person with whom you have a civil union or comprehensive domestic partnership. Secondly; provided you meet the Massachusetts residency requirement for divorce, you can dissolve a civil union or comprehensive domestic partnership in Massachusetts. ■

If you have questions or if you encounter disrespect for your civil union or comprehensive domestic partnership, please contact GLAD's Legal InfoLine at 800-455-GLAD (4523) or www.glad.org/rights/info-line-contact

Pay it Forward:

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In the meantime, Andrew gives back to the community by giving to GLAD. He has been a GLAD donor and supporter since 2008. In 2009, Andrew's photographs were featured at "An Evening of Trans Art and Activism," a community event in Northampton that GLAD's Transgender Rights Project (TRP) hosted with the Mass. Transgender Political Coalition and MassEquality. He is now a monthly donor to the TRP, in accordance with his family's practice of tithing. "I was always taught about a tithe – 10 percent of what you have goes to something that you care about, something that isn't you, that needs work," Andrew explains. "If you have, you give away."

Given what he learned at home about giving, it's not surprising that Andrew's parents have stepped up to become leadership donors of the Transgender Rights Project, joining the Founders Circle with a multi-year pledge. And the Taylors attend GLAD's annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner together as a family.

Andrew first became aware of GLAD as a youngster, when he was a member of BAGLY and participated in other LGBT youth groups. "I just always heard about GLAD," he recalls. "As I got older, I realized what a great and effective force GLAD is. It's a really beneficial organization and I'm proud to be a part of it."

"When I give money to something, I want to feel like it's going to a good cause, that the resources are being used well," he adds. "[I feel like] the people at GLAD really have their heads on right. They genuinely meet the concerns of the people the organization supports." ■

Share Your Story:

What More Needs to be Done to Bring About Full Lived Equality for Our Community?

In our nearly 35 year history, GLAD has won many advances in formal equality for HIV+ and LGBT people, from protections against discrimination to parental rights and marriage equality.

While we now have many good laws in place across New England, we know that discrimination lives on, often in subtle ways. As we continue with our partners to expand our success in the area of formal equality, we also want to address the real lived experiences of LGBT and HIV+ people.

If you have a story of discrimination you've faced, or have heard stories from friends or family members, please share them with us at www.glad.org/lived-equality.

Victory! Love and Marriage Win At the Ballot



GLAD Executive Director Lee Swislow and Civil Rights Project Director Mary Bonauto celebrate in Portland with Campaign Executive Committee Co-chair Patricia Peard and her partner Alice Brock.

What a night it was.

History was made November 6 as for the first time voters in three states said “yes” when asked whether they wanted their state to allow same-sex couples to marry – and voters in a fourth, Minnesota, said no to banning such marriages in their constitution.

The night was a huge victory for same-sex couples in Maine, Maryland and Washington, who will now be able to express their love and commitment to one another through marriage, and to give their families the protections that only marriage provides.

GLAD is proud to be a part of the coalition that has worked for six years to bring full marriage

equality to Maine, initially through legislation and then through a public education and eventual ballot campaign that involved thousands of conversations with Mainers about the meaning of marriage.

Several GLAD staff members were in the hotel ballroom in Portland as the results of the Maine vote came in, and the joy in the room was palpable. “Tonight we are thrilled, grateful, and humbled,” said Executive Director Lee Swislow moments after victory was declared. “We give our heartfelt congratulations and thanks to the people of Maine for listening with open hearts and minds, and embracing equality for gay and lesbian citizens.”

Key to the win was the strategic and heartfelt campaign run by Mainers United for Marriage, under the leadership of Campaign Director Matt

McTighe. Matt and his team reached out to Mainers in every part of the state to talk about real values. “I can’t praise all of the campaign staff and volunteers enough,” says Swislow.

“Winning marriage in Maine is profoundly important to those of us living here, including me and my family,” says Mainer and GLAD’s Civil Rights Project Director Mary Bonauto, who was also in the room as election results came in. “Now we can expect to see an outbreak of happiness, as couples — whether together for months or decades — can finally make that commitment to one another. I am very proud of Mainers for sharing their concerns, hearing our stories and finding the common ground to vote yes.”

In addition to the Mainers United for Marriage team, GLAD salutes coalition partners EqualityMaine, Maine Women’s Lobby, the American Civil Liberties Union of Maine, and EngageMaine, as well as national partner organizations Freedom to Marry, the Human Rights Campaign, and the Task Force.

We expect same-sex couples to be able to begin applying for marriage licenses in Maine by early January 2013. Mainers who have questions about when and how they can marry, can contact GLAD’s Legal InfoLine at 1-800-455-GLAD or www.glad.org/rights for details. ■

Full and Equal Inclusion: GLAD to Appeal Ruling in Case of Transgender Girl Discriminated Against at School

A world in which transgender people can live consistent with their gender identity in every sphere of society. That’s the vision of GLAD’s Transgender Rights Project (TRP). And that includes one of the most basic yet essential rights for every person to function in daily life: access to a restroom that matches a person’s gender identity.

GLAD is appealing to Maine’s highest court a decision denying a fifth grade transgender girl access to the girls’ restroom. The case, *Doe v. Glenchy*, seeks to establish this important legal precedent under Maine’s statute prohibiting discrimination based on a person’s gender identity and expression in employment, housing, education and public businesses. Our client is Susan Doe (a pseudonym), who

attended elementary and middle school in Orono, Maine. Susan is the quintessential person whom the legislature intended to protect. School personnel testified that Susan was “living full-time as a female” in the school environment and determined that it was “best practice” for her to use the girls’ room. In fact, they acknowledged it would have been impossible for her to use the boys’ bathroom. And they understood that it was critical for a transgender girl’s psychological health and educational success to live consistent with her female gender identity.

But after initially agreeing to Susan’s use of the girls’ room, the school did an about face and forced her to use the staff bathroom after a male student entered the girls’ bathroom and harassed her. *continued on page 10*

Taking Initiative: GLAD Makes Its Presence Felt in the LGBTQ Youth Community

- A New Hampshire teacher concerned that his administration wasn't treating the Gay / Straight Alliance (GSA) the same as other school clubs.
- A mother and son in Connecticut who were mistreated by police while reporting multiple death threats the son had received online and through the mail.
- A transgender grade-schooler in Connecticut who is suffering because she faces daily harassment from students to which school administrators have not effectively responded.
- A homeless transgender young woman being forced to sleep on a mat in a storage room at a housing shelter because the facility will not house her with the other homeless women.

These are just a sampling of the calls GLAD has fielded since launching our LGBTQ Youth Initiative, which aims to ensure that LGBTQ youth and the children of LGBT parents are safe, welcomed, and treated equally and with respect in every facet of life. In the past year, we've spoken with hundreds of youth across New England, educating them about their legal rights with our "Got Rights?" workshops at GSA meetings, youth conferences and social service agencies.

The workshops are an opportunity for GLAD to learn, as well as to educate others. "It is through our consistent presence in the LGBTQ youth community in New England that I have gained most of my knowledge of the legal issues that impact youth," says Staff Attorney Allison Wright, who conducts Got Rights? workshops.

Our outreach has brought an increase in youth-related calls to our Legal InfoLine — a goal of the Youth Initiative — giving GLAD a broader snapshot of the legal needs of LGBTQ youth region-wide and allowing us to intervene on behalf of several youth to improve their lives now. Calls from Massachusetts, for instance, increased by 33 percent over the last year; from Connecticut and Maine we saw increases of 60 percent and 55 percent respectively.

Beyond conducting workshops and advocacy for InfoLine callers, GLAD is working for systemic change by working with schools and youth service providers to enact policies that support LGBTQ youth.

For instance, we worked hard as part of a coalition in Maine to enact a strong anti-bullying law, bringing the state in line with the rest of New England in protecting youth from bullying or harassment under state law. The challenge that remains, notes Youth Initiative leader Vickie Henry, is putting teeth into such laws by getting schools to enforce anti-bullying plans, as we continue to hear that there is a gap between what the law requires and what schools are doing to stop bullying.

So, while we're educating LGBTQ youth about their legal rights, we're also helping schools become more proactive in supporting them. In Connecticut for example, GLAD was part of a coalition that created guidelines — now in effect and available at www.ct.gov/chro — to ensure Connecticut schools comply with the state's new transgender non-discrimination law. The guidelines set forth the law's requirements and provide best practices to make schools safe and welcoming for transgender students. In Massachusetts, GLAD asked the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to revise the state education regulations to reflect that transgender youth must be allowed to participate in school athletics consistent with their gender identity pursuant to the newly adopted law.

The Youth Initiative also aims to reach the most vulnerable LGBTQ young people, which is why we're networking with organizations that work in the areas of child welfare and juvenile justice. LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented in both the homeless population and in the population of court-involved youth. We're strategizing about how best to improve the lives of these youth, and this will be a high priority area for our work.

GLAD is proud to be bringing a consistent presence and focus to youth needs across New England through our LGBTQ Youth Initiative. "The most rewarding moments," says Allison, "involve youth commenting that they feel like they have someone in their corner if or when they face discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression." ■



Community Engagement Coordinator Maryse Pearce and Staff Attorney Allison Wright staff a table with Hope Freeman from Boston GLASS at the Hispanic Black Gay Coalition (HBGC)'s Youth Empowerment Conference.

Photo: HBGC

Welcome New Staff

Kemi Alabi, Development Assistant Kemi joined GLAD in October 2012, bringing her experience in political and non-profit fundraising to the Development team. Pursuing a BA in Philosophy & Political Science, she currently organizes civil rights and economic justice public education efforts as a Boston University Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholar. Kemi is also a strong believer in the arts as a vehicle for change. As a writer and touring spoken word performer, she facilitates workshops, leads writers groups, and produces events that encourage social examination and empowerment through culture.

Scott Krave, Development Assistant Scott joined GLAD in January 2012 as an events intern, before being hired as a Development Assistant in July. He received a bachelor's degree from Aurora University, where he majored in Political Science and minored in International Studies, Sociology and Spanish. Scott is also an active writer and has been featured in a number of online and print publications.

Katie Shen, Ropes & Gray LLP Fellow Katie Shen joined GLAD in September 2012 after graduating from the University of Virginia School of Law. In addition to volunteering for organizations such as the ACLU Women's Rights Project and Rhode Island Legal Services, Katie was the president of the Feminist Legal Forum and a member of the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic during law school. She received her B.A., *summa cum laude*, from Washington University in St. Louis, where she studied English.

Anthony Toppi, Legal Assistant Anthony began working at GLAD in August of 2012, after graduating from Stonehill College with a B.A. in Public Administration. While at Stonehill, Anthony led the Student Government Association and the Peer Mentor Team in many diversity initiatives. He gained hands on experience working as an intern for Congressman Stephen Lynch and the government relations firm O'Neil and Associates, and he was a member of the UK House of Commons.

Gypsy Vidal, Legal Assistant Gypsy joined GLAD in June of 2012. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Brown University, where she studied global security, U.S. civilization, and queer and feminist theory. Currently, she volunteers with The Center for Sexual Pleasure and Health, a sexual health education and advocacy organization. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, reading dystopian literature, and learning to become a better advocate of anti-oppression, specifically regarding issues relating to the intersectional nature of race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality.

Michelle Weiser, Public Affairs Assistant Michelle joined GLAD in June 2012. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations from Boston University, where she focused on the intersection of communication, gender, sexuality and anti-oppression activism. Michelle was the founder and President of Boston University's Queer Activist Collective, and was the Public Relations Coordinator of BU's Center for Gender, Sexuality and Activism. Michelle is a native Southern California resident and has lived abroad in Belgium and Australia.

Full & Equal Inclusion:

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The school took this action rather than immediately addressing the harassing behavior of Susan's classmate, effectively punishing her instead of her bully.

Singling Susan out for exclusion from the girls' room also sent a message to other classmates that she was different from them, an "other" to be ridiculed and picked on. For two years, Susan was subjected to ongoing harassment at school simply because of who she is.

At the September 19th hearing before Judge William Anderson in Penobscot Superior Court, GLAD Senior Attorney Ben Klein argued the provisions of Maine law are clear: denying a transgender girl access to the girls' restroom is the denial of equal access to a school's facilities because of her gender identity. The school's exclusion of Susan meant that all girls can use the girls' room except transgender girls. To defend against this otherwise cut and dry case of discrimination, the school pointed to a regulation of the Maine Human Rights Commission that permits schools to have separate restrooms for boys and girls, a regulation it interprets to mean it can ignore a student's gender identity when bathrooms are at issue. Klein countered that the school's arguments did not answer the central issue in the case: If a school can have separate restrooms based on sex, which bathroom does a transgender girl go to? That answer comes from the gender identity nondiscrimination law, which mandates access consistent with one's gender identity and prohibits a school from segregating a student into a restroom used by no other students.

When the judge ruled against our client on November 20th, GLAD immediately announced it will appeal the decision to the Maine Law Court. "Our client is a transgender girl who was made an outcast by school officials and was subjected to severe bullying over the course of two years simply because of who she is, in violation of Maine anti-discrimination law," says Klein. "The judge is wrong on the law and ignored critical facts in making his decision."

According to Jennifer Levi, TRP Director and co-counsel in the case with Klein and Jodi Nofsinger of Berman & Simmons, P.A., "We always knew that the trial court was just the first step and that this lawsuit would ultimately be decided by Maine's highest court. Under Maine law, a transgender girl – whom the school acknowledged is a girl – needs to be able to live consistent with her gender. The school acknowledged that Susan could not otherwise progress in her academic development."

No state supreme court has yet ruled that gender identity nondiscrimination laws mean that transgender people must be able to use restrooms consistent with their gender identity. That's an essential step for the full and equal inclusion of transgender people in society and one that GLAD will continue to fight for in this and other cases. ■

13th Annual Spirit of Justice Award Dinner

October 26, 2012

GLAD was proud to honor Reverend Irene Monroe for her contributions to the advancement of equality for LGBT people. Thanks to all who sponsored, attended, volunteered and otherwise made the event such a big success.

Photos: *InfinityPortraitDesign.com*



GLAD AIDS Law Project Director Ben Klein, Jeff Mostade, Herb Burtis (plaintiff in GLAD's Gill v. OPM DOMA challenge), and Eric Nilson.



Ty Stone-Adams and Ed Goldberg of Macy's, with Judi Goldberg.



Samuel Pang of Reproductive Science Center with Janet Lawn, GLAD Director of Major Gifts.



Jeremy Neuringer, Wendell Chestnut and Dr. Jeremy Abramson.



Mitchell Gold, of Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, with Reverend Irene Monroe.



GLAD Civil Rights Project Director Mary L. Bonauto with her parents, Jean and Al.



The State Street table.



Judy Mencher, Nicole Polaski, Andrea Still Gray and Julie Gray.

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