

NEWS RELEASE - July 1, 2013

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Illinois Equal Marriage Advocates Announce More Details for Oct. 22 “March on Springfield for Marriage Equality”

ILLINOIS – A day after more than one million gathered to celebrate Pride in Chicago at a parade dominated by calls for equal marriage, marriage advocates in Illinois have announced further details for the March on Springfield for Marriage Equality on Oct. 22.

The march will be organized by a group of co-chairs drawn from a diverse cross-section of Illinois’ lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities. Among the 13 statewide co-chairs announced today are 6 women and 7 men with diverse ethnic, racial, religious, and professional backgrounds. The March on Springfield, set for the first scheduled day of the legislature’s fall veto session, will operate separately and alongside efforts by Illinois Unites, the broad coalition of more than 50 organizations working to pass equal marriage in Illinois, as well as with grassroots activist groups.

“Marriage equality is supported by a majority of Illinoisans and has new urgency given actions by the U.S. Supreme Court last week,” the new group of co-chairs said in a joint statement. “When the Supreme Court struck down DOMA, married couples in 13 states and the District of Columbia gained benefits that are denied to people in Illinois. On Oct. 22, we call on Illinoisans from every walk of life and from every district to come to Springfield and demand full equality for everyone in our State.”

The group also announced early details on how corporations, small businesses, and volunteers can get involved in the effort to get people to Springfield. These include crowd sourced funding through an IndieGogo campaign to be launched next week, specially priced bus rentals, and a business partnership campaign to facilitate broad-based participation by companies and their employees in the March. To learn how your organization or company can get involved, visit the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MarchOnSpringfieldForMarriageEquality>, email <mailto:mtracy@windycitymediagroup.com> or call (773) 387-2394.

March on Springfield co-chairs include:

- Solomon Arnold: College student, media personality, and HIV/AIDS educator in the African American house ball community.
- Tracy Baim: Journalist, filmmaker, author, Co-vice chair of the Chicago Gay Games and publisher is publisher of Windy City Times newspaper.
- Kevin Boyer: Marketing professional, community organizer, former Co-vice chair of the Chicago Gay Games, and co-chair of GLAAD Chicago’s Leadership Council.
- Buff Carmichael: Longtime media professional, former publisher of the Prairie Flame, and activist in Springfield.
- Brandy Donaldson: Rock Island-based media professional and activist within the African American lesbian community.
- Emmanuel Garcia: Latino youth activist working with Association of Latin Men for Action, Crossroads Fund, Chicago’s largest queer youth prom and Cicero’s LGBT community.
- Brent Holman-Gomez: Activist working within the welcoming church movement, immigration equality, and international LGBTQI organizations.
- Kim Hunt: Executive Director of Affinity, an African American LBT women’s group, who was also an organizer of the Chicago Gay Games.
- Naomi Lahiri: Queer feminist with expertise in Asian issues, outreach for trans* people of Asian descent, immigrant issues, and domestic violence outreach.

- Alexis Martinez: Transgender activist working on cross-generation work, the Dyke March plus Latino, living wage, education and healthcare issues.
- Chris Mullins: Activist and LGBT rights advocate and Chair of Lambda Legal's Chicago Leadership Council
- Edith Nieves: Long-time activist on union, lesbian, sports and Latina issues; runs Sisters 4LGBTQ Community, a lesbian social network.
- Max Smith: Activist for four decades especially focused on African American men and religious issues, and as a member of Adodi, an African-American men's organization.

About the March

The March on Springfield for Marriage Equality will take place on Oct. 22, 2013, the scheduled first day of the fall veto session of the Illinois state legislature. The "March on Springfield" is part of a broad grassroots strategy to secure final passage of Senate Bill 10, the "Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act," already approved by the Illinois Senate. Once adopted, Illinois will become the 14th state plus the District of Columbia, to treat all of its citizens equally under state marriage laws. More details are available on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MarchOnSpringfieldForMarriageEquality> and on Twitter at [@IllinoisMarches](#).