

## Lambda Announces Marriage Project

**L**ambda is proud to announce the formation of the Lambda Marriage Project. This project will continue to litigate our marriage cases, most notably *Baehr v. Lewin*, and work to alert our movement and allies to the urgency of this issue and the historic turning point we are reaching in the *Baehr* case. Senior Staff Attorney Evan Wolfson will direct the project as it identifies the tasks that need to be done, distributes and compiles endorsements of our Marriage Resolution, and seeks to enlist the work of others to join in this state-by-state national effort to win and keep our right to marry. As other organizations and individuals bring their particular skills to bear, for example, in developing "messages" and public education campaigns, grassroots organizing, or collecting stories and scholarly information regarding the rights and responsibilities of marriage and its importance for same-sex couples, the Marriage Project will continue to serve as a resource and coordinator of the work.

Throughout the fall, Kevin Cathcart, Beatrice Dohrn, and Evan Wolfson convened a series of meetings with national organizations to brief them on the progress

in *Baehr v. Lewin*, and the need for all of us to work now to lay the political as well as legal groundwork for preserving marriage rights once we win them in Hawaii. Those attending include representatives of Human Rights Campaign Fund, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, Black Lesbian & Gay Leadership Forum, National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization, Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays, Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International, Gay & Lesbian Americans, Hetrick-Martin Institute, and the lesbian and gay community centers in Los Angeles and New York. Other briefings and meetings will occur, nationally and regionally, over the coming months as part of the "wake-up call" and coalition building process.

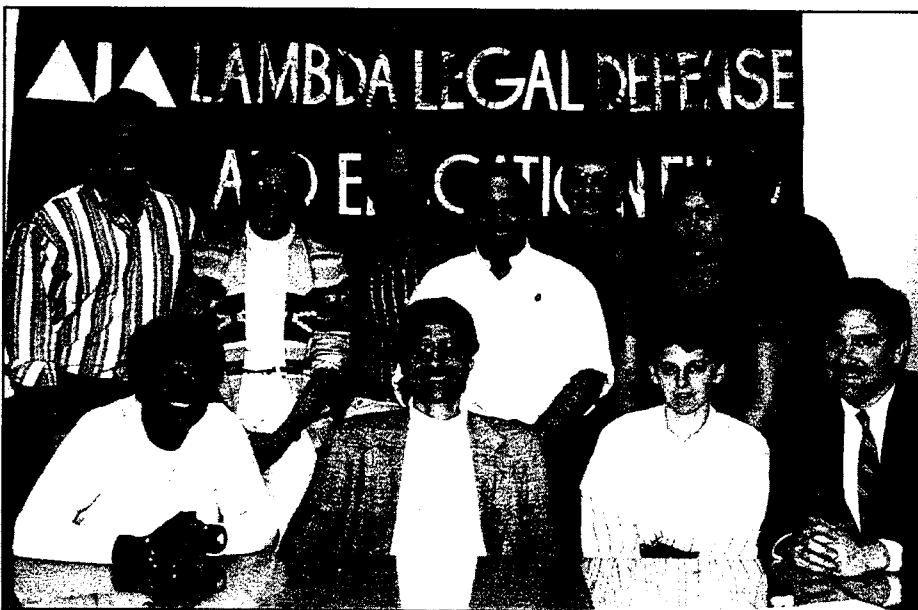
Evan Wolfson continued to travel the country, speaking to community activists and allies about the forthcoming battles for the right to marry. In addition, Evan has also met with academics and select congressional staffers, and sent briefing materials to conferences of lesbian and gay elected officials, pride parade coordinators,

journalists, attorneys and activists.

With the assistance of Jeff Gibson of the ABA, Mary Bonauto of New England's Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, California Western School of Law Professor Barbara Cox and others, Evan is also developing and coordinating a nationwide network of attorneys, academics, and law students to prepare for the litigation that may arise once lesbians and gay men seek recognition from other states or the federal government for marriages contracted in Hawaii. Professor Cox has agreed to help coordinate the Marriage Project's legal clearinghouse, which will maintain, compile and circulate the materials developed through these legal volunteers' efforts. Professor Cox and Evan have prepared a checklist of research questions to be answered on a state-by-state basis, along with some start-up background materials, which will be distributed to our teams in early 1995. Volunteer attorneys, law students and academics are invited to join by contacting the Marriage Project!

The Marriage Project also maintains a variety of resources and materials for activists ready to begin organizing political and legal efforts in their communities and states. These include the Marriage Resolution (which every group should endorse and which can serve as an organizing tool for approaching potential allies) with an accompanying brochure, a short briefing paper on the tasks to be undertaken, a bibliography of marriage materials, a summary of legal issues, newspaper clippings on marriage and same-sex couples, articles presenting the "conservative" case for same-sex couples' right to marry, and a law review article analyzing the "debate" over equal marriage rights.

The formation of the Marriage Project attests to the urgency and significance of this issue. As Lambda devotes more resources to this effort to win and keep equal marriage rights, we hope that the entire community stands behind this movement and is prepared to defend this most basic civil right. ▼



Marriage Project Briefing participants include: (standing) Tim Miller, GLPC; Jan Platner, GLAD; Kevin Cathcart; Evan Wolfson; Jean Gerasci, PFLAG; Cathay Che and Donald Suggs, GLAAD; (seated) Mandy Carter, BGLF; David Sobelsohn, HRCF; Beatrice Dohrn; Andy Humm, Hetrick-Martin Institute.