

Plaintiffs in the New Jersey Marriage Lawsuit: *Lewis v. Harris*

March 9, 2010



MARK LEWIS, 50, AND DENNIS WINSLOW, 60, of Union City, are Episcopalian pastors and have been a couple for 18 years. Mark and Dennis entered into a civil union in May 2007. In seeking medical care, they found that respect for their relationship and civil union is arbitrary and unpredictable and they cannot rely on it.



SUYIN AND SARAH LAEL, 50, AND 47, of Dayton, have been together for 19 years and are raising three daughters: 12 year-old Zenzali, 11-year-old Tenaj and nine-year-old Danica. Sarah and Suyin entered into a civil union in March 2007 for the protections they were promised it would provide their family only to learn through experience that it falls far short.



SAUNDRA TOBY-HEATH, 56, AND ALICIA HEATH-TOBY, 47, of Newark, have been together for 21 years and are leaders in Newark's Liberation In Truth Unity Fellowship church, to which they devote much of their time. Saundra and Alicia entered into a civil union in March 2007, and in addition to barriers to health insurance reserved for married couples they face the constant questioning from people who don't know what a civil union is.



CRAIG HUTCHISON, 59, AND CHRIS LODEWYKS, 60, of Pompton Lakes, have been a couple for 39 years. Chris and Craig entered into a civil union in November 2007 and continue to be frustrated that their relationship remains as unequal in the eyes of others as it was before their civil union.



DIANE MARINI, 57, OF COLLINGSWOOD, AND THE LATE MARILYN MANEELY, were together for 14 years before Marilyn died tragically in the fall of 2005. In times of illness, both women experienced disrespect from healthcare providers and difficulty with visitation because they were not married. Even after Marilyn's death, Diane has vowed to continue the fight for marriage equality.



KAREN AND MARCYE NICHOLSON-MCFADDEN, 43 AND 46, of Aberdeen, have been together 20 years and are raising a 10 year-old son, Kasey, and a seven-year-old daughter, Maya. Marcye and Karen entered into a civil union in April 2007 and still deal with the daily burden of confusion that their civil union creates.



MAUREEN KILIAN, 52, AND CINDY MENEKHIN, 52, of Butler, have been together 35 years and are raising a 17-year-old son, Josh, and a 15-year-old daughter, Sarah. Maureen and Cindy had a civil union ceremony in February 2007 and since then have continued to struggle with disrespect for their legal relationship—particularly in health care settings.