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## 08/07 eNews: Four Summer Victories!

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### In Brief

by Kevin Cathcart  
 Lambda Legal  
 Executive Director

What a great summer this has been at Lambda Legal! We have had a string of victories

across the country, touching the lives of many LGBT people, people with HIV and their families.

As you will read in this eNews, our work has led to the extension of equal benefits to police officers and other public employees in a city in Washington; the protection of parents and their adopted children in Oklahoma; the extension of health coverage to the civil union partners and families of LGBT UPS employees in New Jersey; and the protection of victims of domestic violence in Ohio, whether or not they are legally married.

These victories change people's lives: For example, hundreds of same-sex couples and families are now eligible for health insurance they could not get before. Parents who legally adopted children in states across the country

### [Lambda Legal Pride Central](#)



Lambda Legal has created Pride Central to provide you with all the information you'll need for a summer of fun. Check out our events listing to see if Lambda Legal is coming to a Pride near you!



### **Breaking News\*\***

#### **Big Win in Oklahoma!**

In a [significant victory for same-sex couples and their families](#), a federal appeals court upheld a lower court's ruling striking down

an Oklahoma law so extreme it threatened to make children adopted by same-sex couples in other states legal orphans when the families are in Oklahoma. [Lambda Legal sought to overturn the law](#) on behalf of three families, including two women who will finally be able to amend their daughter's birth certificate to accurately list both of their names. This decision makes clear that same-sex couples must be protected when they adopt and are entitled under the U.S. Constitution to have their relationships with their children respected in every state.

### **UPS Delivers Victory for Lambda Legal Clients**

When [UPS denied health insurance](#) to the same-sex partners of its employees, saying, "New Jersey law does not treat civil unions the same as marriages," Lambda Legal jumped in to represent the families. We quickly filed a demand letter and [achieved victory](#). UPS eventually did the right thing, but other employers should do the right thing first, instead of putting couples like our clients through terrible worry and expense. The legislature should fix the problem it created with the unworkable civil union law by enacting



can now live or travel in Oklahoma without fear that their children will be considered strangers to them in the eyes of the law.

But these victories also change laws and the legal climate: Our victory in Ohio means that the state's antigay amendment cannot be used to invalidate other laws that protect the safety of unmarried couples. And our victory in Oklahoma means that the extreme anti-adoption law enacted by the state legislature has been ruled unconstitutional. Antigay extremists have repeatedly attempted to use unfair laws to harm LGBT families, but we won't let them succeed.

At Lambda Legal, we've been hard at work, making this the summer of equality.

### Help Desk Q&A

**Q:** I just got offered a new job and the company requires me to get a physical and a blood test before I start work. I am HIV positive and worried the test will reveal my HIV status to my boss. Will the results be confidential?

**A:** State laws related to these matters vary, but most employers are required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Under the ADA, an employer may require entering employees to get a medical exam so long as the requirement is applied to everyone. But the information obtained about your medical condition and medical history must be collected and kept on separate forms and must be treated as a confidential medical record. In limited situations, first aid and safety personnel or government officials investigating compliance with the law may acquire access to the medical information. But your supervisor or manager can only access the medical information if it relates to legitimate, necessary restrictions on your work or job duties or necessary accommodations of those restrictions.

### Events Around the Country

marriage, so couples all over the state will not have to go through the same thing.



### Unmarried but *Not* Unworthy of Protection

Last month, the Ohio Supreme Court had its first opportunity to interpret the reach of the state's antigay amendment banning marriage for same-sex couples, as it applies to unmarried victims of domestic violence. It rightly decided that [unmarried people need and require protection when they are abused](#). After the amendment passed in 2004, criminal defendants argued that they could not be prosecuted for domestic violence because they were not married to the person they were accused of abusing. Lambda Legal stepped in and [submitted friend-of-the-court briefs in seven of these cases](#), including the case the Ohio Supreme Court decided. The case sends a strong message to those who would attempt to twist the amendment to cover rights other than marriage itself: You can't get away with this.

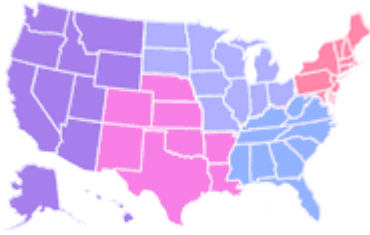
### More Equality for Your Buck

When a call for help comes into Lambda Legal's offices, we can't scramble for funds before springing into action. We must act fast — confident that the financial resources we need will be there. By committing to support our work on a monthly basis, members of the [Justice Fund](#) provide vital financial security. And because Justice Fund gifts arrive without the expenses involved in other fundraising efforts, more of the contribution goes directly into making the case for equality. [Become a member of the Justice Fund today](#), and let us stretch your dollar even further!



**Save the Date: August 14, 2007**  
**And the Winner is...**

The votes are in. The winner for the 2007 "Life Without Fair Courts" Illustration Contest is...someone that will be revealed in next week's [Advocate](#). Make sure to pick up a copy on August 14, and check [Lambda Legal's website](#) for an exclusive on the three finalists and what fair and impartial courts mean to them.



## Lambda Legal Newsroom

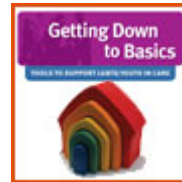
Lambda Legal Senior Counsel [Jenny Pizer](#) debates an alimony dispute stemming from a domestic partnership in California, and New Jersey's governor argues for civil union spousal health benefits. [Read these stories and more in Lambda Legal's "In the News."](#)

### Benefits Win in Washington

In response to a [strongly worded letter threatening legal action from Lambda Legal](#), the city of [Redmond](#) voted to extend family [benefits](#) to city employees with



same-sex partners. Lambda Legal represented two longtime police officers, both with a combined law enforcement background of 43 years, and called on city leaders to heed years of requests from employees and several unions to grant equal benefits to all employees. The city council is expected to finalize the plan this month.



### A Shout Out for LGBTQ Youth in Out-of-Home Care

[LGBTQ young people](#) are in America's foster care, juvenile justice and homeless systems in disproportionate numbers. Their needs and concerns are often overlooked or ignored. Lambda Legal Senior Counsel [Susan Sommer](#) addressed this issue and more at last week's 21st annual Treatment Foster Care conference in Florida. Sommer led a workshop on how better to protect and support LGBTQ youth, discussed basic vocabulary and practice tips and handed out the "[Getting Down to Basics](#)" tool kit that offers practical guidance to adults and organizations that provide youth with out-of-home care.

**Choose your size**  
(So we'll never have to *shrink* from a challenge)  
**MAKE A GIFT NOW!**



### Support Lambda Legal today.

[Make a donation](#) and support Lambda Legal's groundbreaking impact litigation, public education and advocacy work.

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