

CIVIL MARRIAGE COLLABORATIVE

a proteus fund initiative

Enacting Marriage Equality in New York State: *A three-month campaign that took years to build*

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Prepared by Barbara Masters

MastersPolicyConsulting
Barbara@Masterspolicy.com

INTRODUCTION

On June 24, 2011, the New York State Senate approved the Marriage Equality Act—legislation legalizing same sex marriage—by a vote of 33-29. With Governor Andrew Cuomo’s subsequent signing, New York became the sixth state to enact marriage equality, in addition to the District of Columbia. Coming just two years after a stinging defeat of similar legislation, the reversal was striking. What accounted for this dramatic swing, especially given that the state senate had switched from Democratic control to Republican during the intervening two years?

To better understand what transpired and how, the Civil Marriage Collaborative (CMC)—a major public education funder of marriage equality since 2004—commissioned this Issue Brief to extract lessons that could inform other state-based efforts across the country. Most media accounts of the victory focused on the twists and turns of the “end game” campaign. But, that campaign did not occur in a vacuum or happen overnight. It was built on a foundation of public education and outreach, infrastructure and capacity development—the result of \$1.25 million invested by the CMC over the prior seven years and other resources.

Without a doubt, there were aspects of the campaign unique to New York, just as there are for every state—the political dynamics, media markets, and the particular policy opportunity all influence the strategy that must be implemented. Nevertheless, strategies and tactics did emerge—for both funders and advocates to consider—which could increase the likelihood of success in other states, as momentum for marriage equality spreads across the country.

Methods

Three primary and secondary data sources were used in the development of this Issue Brief:

- > Telephone interviews with advocates and stakeholders (N=6), lobbyists and political consultants (N=4), academics (N=1), foundations (N=1), decision-makers (N=3)
- > Documents review and media coverage from the New York Times, New York Post, Gay City News, Politico and others.
- > Two “debriefs” sponsored by New Organizing Institute (October 6, 2011) and CMC (October 27, 2011)

SETTING THE STAGE

The 2011 legislative success followed a major defeat just two years earlier. Even though the Democrats controlled the Senate in 2009, a bill to provide marriage equality failed by a margin of 38 to 24, with all Republicans and several Democrats voting against it. The loss was instructive. It exposed the weaknesses in the LGBT organizational and advocacy infrastructure in the state and identified which legislators were supportive and which weren’t. In particular, competition between the advocates resulted in the lack of an agreed-upon strategy, and the leadership of the LGBT community, while effective in many aspects of field-building and advocacy, was thought to be not as politically astute as it could be. These perceptions provided fodder for marriage equality opponents.

A new political strategy for the 2010 elections emerged as a result. The Gill Action Fund spearheaded, with other donors, an effort to target three Senators who had voted against

marriage equality and expended significant resources in political campaigns against those incumbents. What made this effort different from traditional candidate donations was that Fight Back New York targeted a limited number of elected officials and invested a significant amount toward their defeat by exposing whatever vulnerabilities they had.

In addition, more than any other single event, the election of Andrew Cuomo as governor changed the dynamic and put marriage equality on the agenda again. Then-Governor David A. Paterson was well meaning and supportive of marriage equality, but was unable to marshal the necessary legislative support. As a candidate, Andrew Cuomo campaigned on marriage as one of his top five priorities, and he decided to move the legislation soon after the budget was resolved.

PUTTING THE COALITION TOGETHER

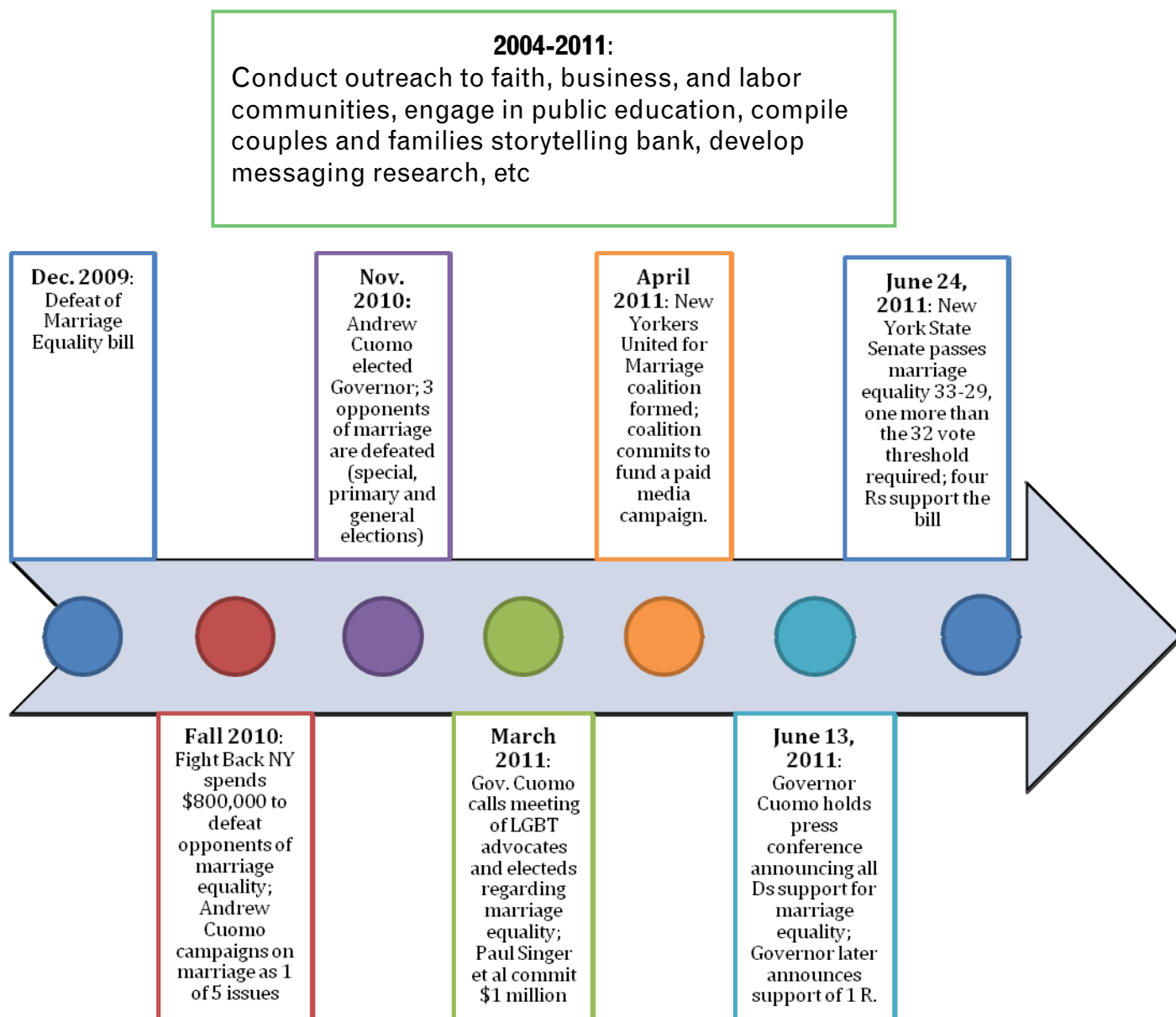
From the early spring of 2011, as discussions of a renewed effort began, the various advocacy groups talked about working collaboratively; however, they weren't, in fact, collaborating much. They were developing their own strategies and hiring their own lobbyists. By all accounts, the groups didn't come together in any meaningful way until the Governor called a meeting in the Capitol's Red Room in early March 2011, a date considered to be an important turning point in the effort to win marriage equality. (See Figure 1 for a complete timeline of the critical milestones in the campaign for marriage equality in New York State.)

Although there are differing perceptions about how directive the Governor was, he made clear at the meeting that the groups can "either focus on the goal, or spend a lot of time competing and destroying ourselves."

In order to keep the coalition size manageable so that it could remain agile and flexible, coalition membership was limited to state or national LGBT organizations that put resources into New York on a statewide basis. Two national organizations—Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRC) and Freedom to Marry (FtM)—along with the leading state-based advocate, Empire State Pride Agenda (ESPA) formed the leadership team of the coalition. Each contributed funding as a demonstration of their commitment. Two other state-based organizations, Marriage Equality New York (MENY), which maintains a large volunteer base of activists, and Log Cabin Republicans of NY (LCRNY), the only overtly political organization included, were also part of the coalition. Gill Action Fund, while deeply involved with the coalition's efforts (including funding many of the c(4) activities) was not a formal member of the coalition. The leadership style and skills of the head of ESPA was critical to the development of trust and the ultimate success of the coalition. As one person observed, he deserved enormous credit "for his demeanor in managing the dynamics. He understood the different roles for political and advocacy activities."

To demonstrate publicly that the groups were united, it was decided to brand the coalition as something new—New Yorkers United for Marriage (NYUM). What was most critical was that the coalition jointly hired an outside consultant—SKDKnickerbocker—to manage the operation, develop a plan for the campaign and oversee the political strategy. The leadership team of the coalition approved the paid media campaign, coordinated the inside strategy with the field, and served as the hub for lobbying and fundraising. The coordinating structure of the coalition, including daily calls, enabled each group to do what it could do best, while minimizing and mitigating duplication and conflict.

Figure 1: Timeline of Key Milestones in the Campaign to Enact Marriage Equality in New York State



THE STRATEGY

With knowledge about the positions of legislators in hand (one of the benefits resulting from the 2009 vote), the Governor and the coalition mapped out a game plan, which utilized “outside” and “inside” tactics that were highly coordinated and integrated. The “outside” activities helped lay the foundation for the political appeal, which is what the “inside” activities, primarily undertaken during the end-game, were all about. Figure 2 provides a snapshot of the various activities undertaken by the different organizations as well as the coalition.

To be clear, this very intense, multi-faceted three-month campaign was only possible because of the tremendous groundwork that had been laid over the previous several years through public education, grassroots and grass-tops organizing, as well as extensive alliance-building efforts. As one participant observed, “You can’t just focus on the end stage strategy. All of the heart tugging moments – people telling their stories – is a very big c(3) lesson that has to be done earlier.”

Figure 2: Overview of the Strategy

	ESPA	HRC	FtM	MENY	LCR	NYUM	Labor*
COALITION							
Coalition Participant	X	X	X	X	X		
Coordination						X	
Coalition administrator	X						
OUTSIDE TACTICS							
Field mobilization	X	X (lead)		X			X (lead)
Paid Media (TV, mail, web)						X	
Earned media (daily media events, editorial boards, etc)						X	
Communications and messaging research			X			X	
Storytelling by couples and families	X		X	X			
Celebrity Videos		X					
Stakeholder engagement with faith, business, and labor	X					X	
INSIDE TACTICS							
Polling			X				
Lobbying (hired lobbyists)	X	X					
Lobbying (directly)			X	X	X		X

*Although labor was not a formal member of the coalition, it played a significant role in the campaign

A. Outside Tactics

“Outside” activities are those designed to communicate with and organize the public, community leaders and others who can then influence the public policy debate.

Field Operation: The campaign mounted a very targeted and sophisticated field operation, led primarily by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). With just eight weeks to carry out the field operation, it focused primarily on those Senators whose votes were key. What made the field operation successful—particularly given the very short period of time to plan and implement it—was the network of individuals and community leaders that had been developed over the prior several years, primarily through ESPA’s education and outreach programs, door-to-door canvassing and list-building efforts. That network of contacts was made available to the HRC-led

field operation—an important indication of the type of cooperation that existed during this campaign. Complementing the field operation, 1199SEIU provided a phone center that operated every day for about two months.

The field operation was highly coordinated with the overall strategy. It was not simply about ratcheting up the volume, but rather about understanding what influenced each individual lawmaker. For some legislators, in fact, it was important to turn *down* the volume if it was determined that more noise would harden a “no” position.

HRC field organizers also sought to engage and connect volunteers from Marriage Equality New York, as well as other organizations with the field campaign. Not only would it ensure alignment with the strategy, the volunteers also provided important intelligence regarding activities happening outside of the coalition’s direction—especially if they had potential to negatively affect the campaign.

So, what was the impact of the field operation? In one case, a senator stated that he would vote the way his district wanted—and did—after an outpouring of postcards and calls. In most cases, however, legislators don’t vote strictly on that basis. The purpose of the field operation is to provide justification for legislators who want to vote for the issue, but are concerned about potential backlash. As one person said, “the field game is the least effective for the dollar—but you have to have it.”

Paid Media: One of the first activities undertaken by the newly-formed New Yorkers United for Marriage coalition was a high profile media campaign—consisting of television (2) and print advertisements along with direct mail—managed by the consultant, SKDKnickerbocker.

Although the paid media campaign was critical to the campaign’s success, that assessment was not based on whether it actually changed legislators’ minds or even increased public support for marriage in any measurable and meaningful way. In fact, the television ads were not based on research aimed at moving specific constituencies to support marriage. Rather it was the implicit message that the media campaign conveyed to friends and foes alike: The LGBT community was united and, with its allies, had the resources to fund an expensive, well-coordinated and high-profile campaign. Coming off the heels of a successful election cycle in 2010, it reinforced the political muscle of the LGBT community.

In addition, the Governor believed such a campaign was necessary in order for the key groups to demonstrate that they were serious and committed to working together. Finally, a big paid media campaign kept the issue in the public eye to maintain momentum and create a “sense of inevitability” around the bill, especially as the legislature was entering its final two months.

Earned Media: Under the leadership of the consultant, the coalition developed an aggressive earned media strategy designed to keep the drumbeat going every day and the issue in front of legislators both in Albany and their home districts. This was a critical part of maintaining momentum—particularly during the last few weeks of the legislative session—and the sense of inevitability for passage.

Key components of the earned media strategy included:

- > A media event every day for 62 days in either the Capitol or in target districts
- > Rapid response to opposition actions

- > Editorial Board meetings, which produced endorsements from eight newspapers
- > Outreach to weekly and other small community newspapers
- > Local marriage roundtables with community leaders and media
- > Training couples and families to tell their stories to the media

It should be pointed out that, as with many of the other activities, the effort to obtain positive editorials built on ESPA's outreach with editorial boards over the last several years, many of which had previously published editorials endorsing marriage.

Messaging: The media campaign relied on the research that had been done over the last several years. All aspects of the campaign—from calling the legislation a “marriage equality” bill to the advertisements—were focused on one simple message: people should be allowed to marry the person they love. This was a departure from many previous efforts, whose communications were based on a civil rights frame and focused on the various rights and benefits that come from being married. The latest research conducted by Freedom to Marry, as well as other leading marriage groups in other states, was especially useful to the messaging of the campaign.

Proponents were also very careful not to “vilify the other side.”ⁱⁱⁱ By sticking to their message and not “taking the bait when goaded”—coupled with the dozens and dozens of stories from same-sex couples and their families—proponents were able to position themselves and the issue as mainstream, reasonable, and positive, while the opponents looked more and more marginalized, negative and extreme in their views and actions.

The campaign sought to generate an overarching narrative that marriage had broad-based support among a wide range of New Yorkers, rather than it being an issue of “special interest” to one population group. This type of narrative would be very difficult to create during a short three-month legislative campaign; rather it was the cumulative result of years' worth of activities.

Storytelling: One of the most effective strategies was the involvement of gay and lesbian couples, along with their parents and their children, telling their own stories directly to legislators and local media outlets about why they wanted to get married. It put a human face on marriage and the impact that the inability to marry has on couples and their families. Parents of gay and lesbian children, for examples, talked movingly about wanting to “dance at their children's weddings”.

Several of the groups—ESPA, FtM, and MENY—had been collecting stories of couples for years and developed extensive banks to draw upon. FtM, ESPAF (through its Marriage Ambassadors program over the course of several years) as well as the communications consultant, provided training to the couples on the core messaging and how to talk to the media and legislators. As media requests came, the groups were able to quickly provide names of couples and families.

Celebrity Videos: The HRC engaged 50 high-profile New Yorkers—mostly celebrity straight allies, like Barbara Bush (the former President's daughter), NY Ranger Sean Avery, and Russell Simmons—to film videos for a web-based New Yorkers for Marriage Equality video campaign. Like the paid media campaign, it is not likely that these videos influenced public opinion or any particular legislator's vote. Rather, they did serve to get the base excited and, as one person said, were targeted to the “intelligentsia”—both important to creating so-called “buzz”. It should be noted that when asked what strategies might be effective for increasing support for marriage equality among people of color, one interviewee commented that videos with popular African

American or Hispanic celebrities, like Marc Anthony or Denzel Washington, might be a way of reaching ethnic populations.

Engagement with the Faith, Business and Labor Communities: For many years prior to the 2011 campaign, ESPA had been methodically conducting outreach and education efforts with a variety of constituencies. In particular, it targeted alliance building with the faith, business and labor communities.

Faith. As with many other issues, the conservative religious organizations that oppose marriage equality have become synonymous with the position of the faith community writ large. Many progressive religious institutions have simply not been as active or vocal in the public policy arena on LGBT issues.

To address this imbalance, ESPA began its outreach to the faith community in 2006 with the Pride in the Pulpit program (funded, in part, by the CMC). Pride in the Pulpit was ultimately able to secure the public support of over 700 faith leaders and 150 congregations. They included a range of religious denominations, including Reform Judaism, Unitarian Universalist, Presbyterian, Methodist and United Church of Christ, among others.

As strategies for organizing the religious community are expanded, it's also important to consider, as one interviewee noted, the distinction between clergy and *faithful* people. He believed that although there was a lot of outreach to leaders of faith, "messaging to faithful people," particularly in the African American and Latino communities, still needs more development.

Business. Of all of the various activities carried out during the campaign, engagement with business was considered to have had the least impact. Like ESPA's years of outreach with labor and the faith community, it developed a Pride in My Workplace program and a New York Business for Marriage effort to identify business leaders willing to speak out in support of marriage, highlighting the economic impact of marriage for the state. Through these efforts, a total of 250 businesses expressed support for marriage equality.

Surprisingly, the economic argument did not appear to be persuasive per se. Rather, business support was helpful as one part of the narrative that marriage has widespread and diverse support throughout the state.

Labor. For seven years, ESPA's Pride in Our Union program had sought to build bridges with and garner support from labor for marriage, resulting in resolutions of support by New York State AFL-CIO and a host of other labor unions in the state, including "non-stereotypical gay-friendly unions" such as building and machine trades.ⁱⁱⁱ Although not an explicit part of the labor outreach strategy, it should be noted that labor unions in NY have large numbers of people of color as members; like Pride in the Pulpit, Pride in Our Union was an important avenue for engaging people of color.

One of the most influential, yet unrecognized, players in the marriage campaign was 1199SEIU, United Health Care Workers East, which serves several states on the east coast. The union not only provided and staffed a call center, but it also threw its political clout behind marriage equality. The union's support was the result of early outreach by ESPA, but also the strong leadership of its president, George Gresham. An African American, he saw marriage as a civil

rights issue. Members of the union, largely African Americans, had some resistance initially, but ultimately the rank and file supported the effort.

B. Inside Tactics

“Inside”-oriented activities are those that are designed to directly reach legislators. When Governor Cuomo held the meeting with key advocates and elected officials in March, he set in motion a sophisticated and highly coordinated “inside” strategy that could reach both Democrats and Republicans.

Lobbying: First and foremost, the LGBT community sought to retain the best lobbyists, with deep ties to both Democrats and Republicans. Unlike 2009, when Democrats controlled both houses, in 2011, the Republicans were in charge of the Senate. Several of the groups hired lobbyists (using c(4) dollars), although the coalition itself did not, so it became crucial to coordinate their efforts, which occurred through a daily strategy call.

Polling: There is a general rule of thumb in New York that to get any high profile issue passed in Albany, you need public opinion to be in the high 50s. In 2009, support for marriage equality was just above 50 percent. During the intervening two years, however, that number had climbed to 56 percent.

Although public opinion alone is generally not considered to be determinative of a legislator’s vote, it contributes to the overall narrative that there is widespread mainstream support for marriage equality. Nevertheless, additional polling was conducted during the course of the campaign in each of the targeted Republican districts by a pollster who was trusted by the Republican caucus. These polls were intended to help convince Republican Senators that if they voted for marriage, they would not suffer negative political consequences.

The Religious Exemption: Ensuring adequate protections for religious institutions became an important hurdle to overcome, particularly to garner the needed Republican votes. The main concern—shared by many in the progressive faith community as well—is that no religious institution should be required to perform a same sex marriage. In addition to exempting broad classes of religious institutions and other organizations from hosting or recognizing same-sex ceremonies, the religious exemption, crafted by Governor Cuomo and three Republican Senators (including one who ultimately voted for the marriage equality bill) also contained an inseverability clause such that if part of the law were challenged and found to be unconstitutional, then the whole law would fall. The New York Civil Liberties Union, among others, indicated that it had no concerns about the exemption.

Building Political Support: All of the educational, paid and earned media, and field activities laid the groundwork for a handful of legislators to be able to change their votes. That’s where the Governor, the political power flexed by the LGBT community in the 2010 state elections, and the involvement of several wealthy Wall Street Republicans who supported marriage came in. Legislators—especially the Republicans—were looking for assurances from key players that they would not be abandoned if they voted for the marriage bill, knowing that opponents of marriage equality would mount campaigns against them.

Each of the four Republicans who ultimately voted for marriage did so for a different set of reasons—a combination of the political, the personal and a sense of what was right— including:

- > Level of district support
- > Effectiveness of messaging that focused on equality and love
- > Adequacy of the religious exemption amendment
- > Labor support
- > Influence of family members or people close to them who are LGBT

But the common denominator for all of them was a real effort by the Governor and advocates to reach out and engage Republicans, coupled with some old-fashioned deal making by the Governor and—most importantly—the political support and reassurance offered to them.

FUNDING

The three-month campaign for marriage equality was well financed. Altogether, more than \$3 million was raised for the final campaign—virtually all of it c(4) funds. What made this effort unique is the large amount of funding raised from Wall Street. Clearly, the most expensive element of this campaign, especially given the New York media market, was TV (more than half of the overall budget), while the field operations—ground and phone—were the next largest expenditure. What was the biggest bang for the buck? Hiring the very top Democratic and Republican lobbyists.

It’s important to point out that, although the specific funding raised was primarily for c(4) activities, c(3) dollars continued to play an important role during the end game, as well during the prior years. For example, ESPAF worked with faith leaders to generate materials in support of marriage during the campaign phase. Funded by the CMC grant to ESPAF, these activities did not specify the pending legislation, but rather spoke to the faith leaders’ general support of marriage equality; therefore, they were educational activities and could be paid for with c(3) dollars.

Funding Advocacy

Although a significant portion of the end-game lobbying activities was funded with c(4) resources raised for this purpose, foundations are able to support a wide range of advocacy activities with their c(3) funds. In particular, philanthropic funds were used almost exclusively to support the “laying-the-foundation stage” such as public education, outreach, alliance building, and media advocacy. Nevertheless, prior to funding advocacy-related activities, it is advised to consult with legal counsel. For more information, the Alliance for Justice www.afj.org is an excellent resource.

THE AFTERMATH

A year following enactment of the marriage bill, there is strong consensus about the impact of the campaign. On the one hand, the new law remains popular. A recent poll found the state’s voters support marriage equality 54-37 percent. And, it enhanced the political capital of the Governor and the clout of the gay community.^{iv} It is worth noting that the LGBT community and the Wall Street Republicans are making good on their pledge to support key legislators who voted in favor of marriage, helping key Republican legislators raise funds for their re-elections.^v At the same time, the National Organization for Marriage, is funneling money to oust the same legislators who voted for the marriage bill, leading one member to decide not to seek reelection.

On the other hand, though, there doesn’t appear to be much spillover or transference of the successful coalition effort to other issues, like gender identity. Although some relationships

between the organizations were strengthened through the campaign, the coalition was short-lived and has largely disbanded.

CONCLUSION

The years of hard work paid off when the window of opportunity opened in 2011, resulting in the successful enactment of marriage equality. Even so, it was touch-and-go until the very end. By analyzing how the different strategies came together, as well as comparing them to the circumstances associated with the loss in 2009, a picture of the most important aspects of the *end game* emerges:

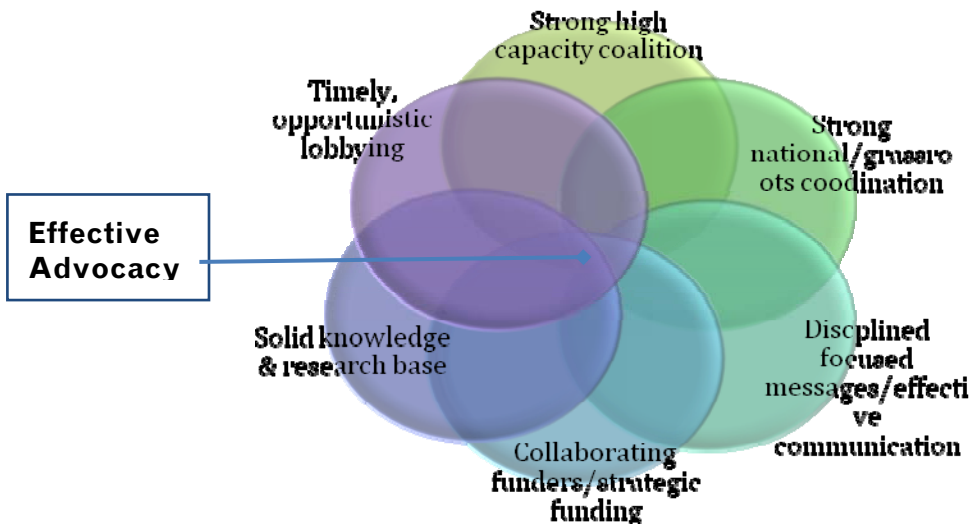
- > A highly-disciplined campaign that integrated “inside” and “outside” strategies and was led by an experienced political strategist
- > A sophisticated lobbying team, with close relationships to the Governor
- > Sufficient funding to carry out c(4) activities
- > A “roadmap” that identified the specific legislators to target, which was created as a result of the loss in 2009
- > A champion—in this case, the Governor—who provided leadership and was willing to exert his powers of influence and persuasion
- > A network of allies in the faith, business, and labor constituencies generated by years of outreach and education
- > A commitment by the state and national advocates to coordinate their strategy
- > Visible engagement and storytelling by LGBT couples and their families
- > Disciplined communications and messaging that created a constant drumbeat and increased pressure

At the same time, an *end game-only* focus ignores the foundation laid during the prior five to eight years. Without question, the investment in ESPA built the capacity and infrastructure necessary to mobilize the various constituencies and put the other tactical activities into action during the end game. In particular, during this infrastructure-building phase, the following groundwork was laid, which formed the backbone of an effective advocacy strategy:

- > Communications and message development that, by the end, focused on love and family, and could speak to both Republicans and Democrats (earlier messaging had emphasized rights and benefits)
- > Outreach, education and alliance building with a variety of key constituencies, especially faith leaders and labor
- > Development of a bank of trained grassroots spokespeople who could be mobilized

Taken together, these end-game tactics and advocacy capacities match up well with the framework for effective advocacy developed by noted evaluation expert, Michael Quinn Patton^{vi}, depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Framework for Effective Advocacy: Six Interconnected Factors That Dynamically Interact to Strengthen Advocacy



The one exception is the lack of a “strong high-capacity coalition.” Although the various state and national organizations did *coordinate* their activities, it was not without challenge or tensions, and there wasn’t a real coalition in the traditional sense of the word. The interest of the Governor in having groups coordinate their strategy and the presence of an independent political strategist to facilitate the coordination were critical for the five groups to come together during the three-month campaign and overcome the turf issues. But, as one observer noted, “the big question is, can you create a group of people with the authority to win without an 800 pound gorilla [referring to Governor Cuomo] saying that if you don’t do it, you’re out?”

A second shortcoming of the New York effort concerned communities of color. Because of the nature of the campaign in New York—a focus on key Republicans from primarily suburban districts—there wasn’t a well-developed strategy with regard to people of color. To the extent one existed, it was implemented primarily through the faith and labor programs. However, building support with communities of color does become important in states where there is a ballot measure under consideration, especially if there are significant numbers of people of color in that state.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS AND ADVOCATES

The CMC’s investment in ESPAFAF over the previous seven years enabled the group to build critical infrastructure, conduct education and outreach, and carry out a range of advocacy activities. During those years, ESPAFAF, along with other organizations, sought to increase public support and inform legislators about why marriage equality was important and how the inability to marry affected gay and lesbian couples and their families. It was a long process, but it laid the groundwork for an intense campaign to be waged when a champion of marriage emerged in the election of Governor Cuomo. As one observer noted, “New York is an example of systematic long-term c3 and c4 advocacy work.”

Recognizing that every state and every situation will be different—and that there isn't a one-size-fits-all strategy—what can be learned from New York that could be helpful to other states? Other states may not have a Governor as skillful and engaged as Governor Cuomo was, nor the level of c(4) funding made possible by Wall Street donors. Moreover, other states may be faced with ballot measures rather than legislation, which will require campaigns where all voters are the target rather than a limited number of legislators and, potentially different sets of strategies and tactics.

The goals of the New York campaign, however, may be applicable elsewhere. It sought to create a sense of inevitability for passage by demonstrating that:

- > The LGBT community was united and could wield political muscle—whereas it had previously been viewed as fractured
- > Marriage equality was about a universal, human issue, not a technical, legal one
- > There was widespread mainstream support in New York for marriage equality, rather than the issue being a concern of only the LGBT community

With that in mind, the following lessons can serve as a guide to other states' strategies, irrespective of what combination of inside and outside tactics are determined to be needed to meet the political dynamics of the state, as well as the available resources. Specifically:

- > ***Understand the different phases of advocacy.*** As the effort to achieve marriage equality in New York State demonstrates, the ability to conduct a successful end-game campaign is highly dependent on having successfully put the building blocks in place. Therefore, it is important to distinguish the two major time periods described throughout this issue brief: the “laying the foundation” phase and the “end game” phase. Funders and advocates must commit to building the infrastructure that will be needed for the end game, during which c(4) activities, in particular, come into play. As one person noted, “A strong c(3) makes for a stronger c(4) and PAC.”
- > ***Invest in outreach and alliance building.*** Building alliances takes time. Outreach to faith, business, and labor leaders is a labor-intensive activity that can't be accomplished during the short window of an advocacy campaign. Moreover, although support for marriage has increased significantly in the African American community since President Obama and the NAACP have come out in support, much more needs to be done to reach out to and educate various racial and ethnic communities, particularly in states with large populations of color and where a ballot measure may be considered.
- > ***Develop a real coalition.*** Although the leading state and national groups came together for the campaign, it took the Governor's intervention to make that happen and the collaboration hasn't sustained. Developing a real coalition ahead of time is the best way to bridge the gap between state, local and national groups and resolve tensions and competition prior to the end-game campaign. Funders can play a critical role in supporting the development of a meaningful structure to coordinate and, if necessary, an independent party to oversee it, while advocates will need to make a real commitment to collaboration.
- > ***Assess the political dynamics and readiness for the end game.*** The success of the campaign depended on *both* a well-functioning advocacy infrastructure and favorable external political factors. With that in mind, it's important for funders and advocates to assess the political

dynamics of the state as well as the advocacy capacity prior to moving to an end-game campaign. For example, is there one or more champions who has real political influence and are sufficient number of the elements of an effective advocacy infrastructure, as depicted in Figure 3, present?

- > *Develop a strategy and prioritize the resources to carry it out.* The strategy undertaken in New York State combined a variety of outside activities with a shrewd inside lobbying effort. However, the full range of activities may not be necessary or possible in other states. What's most important is that there is an overarching strategy, that it incorporates and prioritizes the elements in a way that matches up with the political dynamics, and that it can be adequately resourced and operationalized.

ⁱ Barbaro, M. "Behind NY Gay Marriage, an Unlikely Mix of Forces." New York Times. June 25, 2011

ⁱⁱ Cunningham, J. "In the News". SDKnickerbocker August 12, 2011

ⁱⁱⁱ Sivan, Yoav. "Labor Gets Vocal on Marriage Equality". Gay City News. June 7, 2011.

^{iv} Campbell, C. "Poll: Andrew Cuomo's support remains unshakeable." Politicker. January 16, 2012

^v Hakim, D. "Money Flows to Republican Backers of Gay Marriage." New York Times. January 17, 2012

^{vi} Patton, Michael Quinn. Evaluating the Complex: Getting to Maybe. Power Point presentation. Oslo, Norway. May 2008