



Theta Nu Xi

Multicultural Sorority, Inc.

NORTHEAST REGION

Regional Leadership

Jennis Watson
Regional Director

Danielle Smith-Scott
*Regional Officer of
Intake and Expansion*

Regional Chapters

Nu Chapter
University of Pittsburgh

Rho Chapter
Muhlenberg College

Sigma Chapter
Syracuse University

Chi Chapter
Columbia University

Alpha Gamma Chapter
The College of NJ

Alpha Theta Chapter
Ramapo College of NJ

Alpha Iota Chapter
SUNY Plattsburgh

Alpha Lambda Chapter
*Worcester Polytechnic
Institute*

Xi Alpha Chapter
New York City

Xi Xi Chapter
Mahwah, NJ

SPECIAL REPORT

June 26, 2011

Marriage Equality Prevails in New York State



Late into the evening on June 24, 2011, the New York Senate legalized marriage for gay and lesbian couples by a 33-29 margin. The New York State assembly—the lower house of the New York Legislature—had passed the bill a week earlier for the fourth time in four years.

Following the vote, Governor Cuomo, who had pressed for its passage, signed the bill just five minutes before midnight. This landmark action is a tremendous victory in the fight for LGBT rights. Though still denied benefit eligibility at the federal level, same-sex couples who become married in New York State will now enjoy more than 1,300 benefits that were previously available only to heterosexual couples.

New York joins only six other U.S. states and jurisdictions that recognize same-sex marriage, including Connecticut, District of Columbia, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

A Life-Changing Event

Members of Theta Nu Xi across the country cried out in celebration of this momentous victory for equal rights, but for Sorors in New York State, the news was particularly sweet. Carina Diaz and Dana Sporbart share their thoughts on marriage equality in New York.

Dana: At 11:55pm, as Cuomo places his "John Hancock" on the bill that will change our lives forever, a widespread pandemonium falls over New York. I am with some of the members of the Alpha Iota Chapter when I burst out screaming and clapping my hands after reading a Facebook post sharing the joyous and overwhelming news. The first person I text is not my lesbian biological sister, but rather my line sister. In my excitement, I make a Facebook post, saying, "Hey Carina Diaz, wanna get married? ;)." We both know that it's not about two women getting married and defying the realms of society, but about love and support.

Carina: While riding on the greyhound bus to visit family with my girlfriend, I receive Dana's text, "It passed! It passed!!!!" I immediately Google *same sex marriage*, and find the confirmation I am looking for. It takes every bone in my body not to jump up and down on my chair. Something clicks. It is a sense of calmness. I am happy to know that my conversations with my partner, my sisters and my friends about my future are a little clearer. It is unbelievable that I will be able to plan a wedding, where family and friends can surround me. The next day, my phone is swarmed with texts from loved ones, heterosexual and not, about how they better be invited when I get married. It is comforting to know that I am not alone and that people are honored to witness such a union as I would theirs.



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The Struggle Continues

We all come from different backgrounds that shape the people we become. We learn from those around us, whether it be through their struggles or triumphs. However, it is when you see those you love struggle to obtain happiness that you fight in their honor.

Some of our loved ones moved away, some went to Vermont and some waited. It seems like years of hard work and perseverance have finally paid off and we can stand strong together at ease. But, we must remember that New York has taken just one small step in the right direction.

We have both spent time talking to many people and exchanging thoughts about how legislation plays a vital role in society's progression. With the triumph of this bill's passage also comes negativity, however, and that is why advocates for social justice and social reform have to stand our ground.

We can pause only for a moment of celebration, because we know our work is never done. Those individuals that are ignorant to the struggles of minorities will constantly challenge us. As Americans, we are taught to push forward regardless and that is what the LGBTQ community will do until victory is accomplished.

Being dedicated sisters of Theta Nu Xi Multicultural Sorority, Inc. truly means facing that ignorance head on. We stand as proud women at the forefront of a movement, humbled that this memorable event marks the continuation of change we desire. We can never erase what we went through or the tears we cried, but we now can move forward and continue to strive for equality.

Our loved ones may move back to New York, some may simply support us in Vermont, and yet others can finally stop waiting. We can share the feeling of being comfortable with the people we are, loving who we love and hoping that other states, and maybe ONE day soon the rest of the world, will follow in New York's footsteps.

Carina Diaz & Dana Sporbert
#1 Premiere & #6 Kaeru
Spring 2010- Dramatic Effect
Founders of the Illustrious Alpha Iota Chapter
Theta Nu Xi Multicultural Sorority, Inc.