

## **UNIQUE FUNDRAISER BRINGS AWARENESS AND FUNDS TO CENTER'S AIDS/HIV PROGRAMS**

### **Braking the Cycle Rider and Mayor Performs Civil Unions To Help Reach Financial Goal**

In February 2007, New Jersey passed the Civil Union Act granting substantially all of the rights and benefits of marriages to same sex couples. Braking the Cycle rider, Mayor Joseph DeIorio of Roselle Park NJ, the first Mayor to perform civil unions in his community, is taking the opportunity to raise money for the Center and awareness of HIV/AIDS.

Each wedding or civil union he performs, couples are asked for a donation of \$200 towards his Braking The Cycle (BTC) goal. The Mayor said, "Regardless of sexual orientation, couples have eagerly donated in support of this worthwhile cause." New Jersey requires Mayor to perform ceremonies in the State, regardless where the couple resides. "Last year I performed a civil union in Lambertville NJ for a couple living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and they graciously donated to the BTC ride."

At another civil union the Mayor presided, the couple had asked all guests to donate to his ride for Braking the Cycle in lieu of a wedding gift.

"It was amazing to see the overwhelming financial support by just asking. Once people learned it was for a good cause, they open their hearts and their wallets." DeIorio noted.

This will be Joe's second year riding in the Braking the Cycle event. Last year he raised over \$6,500 but this year he is setting his goals higher to a whopping \$15,000.

In New Jersey, not all Mayors perform civil unions. Once the Civil Union Act became law, these same officials had the choice to perform both marriages and civil unions or none at all. The State of New York and New York City does not offer full marital rights to same sex couples.

Braking the Cycle event not only raises awareness about AIDS and HIV, but it is the Center's largest fundraiser to help provide programs for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The 3 day 275 mile ride from Gettysburg PA to NYC has raised over \$1,300,000 million since its inception.

If you are interested in Mayor DeIorio conducting your civil union or would like to donate, please contact him at [jdeiorio@aol.com](mailto:jdeiorio@aol.com).

For more information on Braking the Cycle, please visit [www.brakingthecycle.org](http://www.brakingthecycle.org).

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