



## Anna Reistad

**Teacher** Christopher Cavanaugh      **School** Plainfield High School | Plainfield, IN

**Issue** Same-sex marriage is only legal in 19 states and Washington, D.C., meaning that there are same-sex couples in 31 states that are being denied equal protection of their state's laws.

**Project Description** When I decided to make my project about marriage equality, I didn't know a lot about the subject. My first step was to research same-sex marriage and find out specifics regarding its status not only in my home state of Indiana but in every state. I took a look at different court cases relating to same-sex marriage and miscegenation cases from the 60's. Then I began to make a website that presented the information I found and made an argument as to why the audience should support marriage equality. I showed the website to friends and family and asked them to take a look and give me feedback, and then share it with others. A problem I encountered was how to get my audience involved with the issue. To help with this, I provided a link to a list of each state's representatives' contact information, so if the audience wanted to voice their opinion they could do so easily.

**Project Outcome** By doing this project I've learned there is an imbalance when it comes to the rights of heterosexuals versus those of the LGBT community. There are over 1000 federal rights and benefits connected to marital status that same-sex couples are deprived of in states where same-sex marriage isn't legal. Those rights and benefits vary from tax breaks to being able to visit their partner in the hospital.

**Request** I am asking my governmental representatives to remember all of the people they represent in government. If we legislate to benefit only the majority, we turn "we the people" into "us" and "them". Simply because the majority may desire the traditional idea of marriage, doesn't mean it is right.

**Project Link** [www.marriageequalityawareness.weebly.com](http://www.marriageequalityawareness.weebly.com)