

A Place at the Table

Some snapshots of the Oregon LGBTQ movement's history

By George T. Nicola

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By the LGBTQ movement, we mean the movement that advocates that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) persons be treated equally and with the same dignity as heterosexual and cisgender people. This includes non-discrimination and non-bias based on sexual orientation and gender identity.





**Darcelle XV Showplace in
downtown Northwest
Portland**



**Walter Cole on the right, with
his life partner, the late Roxy
Neuhart**



Walter as Darcelle

By the mid 1960s, the City of Portland had abandoned its efforts to close all the gay bars in the city limits. The bars were not well identified, but gay men and lesbians who could locate them felt relatively secure within their walls.

Still, given the hostility of the city government, those who opened gay bars were very courageous. One of those people, Walter Cole, bought a bar in Old Town, Northwest Downtown in 1967 and welcomed a mixed but primarily lesbian clientele. The bar was originally named Demas Tavern, but changed its name to Darcelle XV Showplace for Walter's drag persona. It became famous for its elaborate drag shows and remains open today as Oregon's oldest gay bar.

In addition to being iconic, the club has raised large amounts of money for local LGBTQ causes. In 2016, Guinness World Records listed Darcelle as the "oldest drag queen performer".



Dave Davenport and John
Wilkinson in 1979

Oregon's LGBTQ movement began with a few local politically oriented gay groups. The first was the Portland Gay Liberation Front (GLF) which was cofounded in early 1970 by a young gay man named John Wilkinson. He was joined in his GLF organizing by his eventual husband Dave Davenport who he met in the process. The two later moved to Seattle, where they cofounded Washington State's successful freedom to marry movement in their living room.

The Eugene Gay People's Alliance was also founded in 1970.



Holly Hart

Holly Hart, a young lesbian who joined John Wilkinson and Dave Davenport in cofounding the Portland Gay Liberation Front in 1970, had already been a pioneer in the Oregon's modern feminist movement. She later attended law school out of state, coming back to Oregon afterwards to provide legal support for Oregon LGBTQ equality.

In 1977, Holly chaired Governor Robert Straub's Task Force on Sexual Preference. From its recommendations came PFLAG Portland.



Cindy Cumfer

Portland lesbian activist and attorney Cindy Cumfer provided some of the earliest legal support for families headed by same-gender couples. She advised LGBTQ clients on numerous legal matters, including custody, visitation, domestic partnership agreements, donor insemination agreements, medical authorizations, and estate planning. Cindy won several lesbian custody cases. In 1985, she handled the first adoption by same-gender parents in the United States. That served as a prototype for future adoptions around the U.S.

Cindy wrote *Living Our Lives*, a do-it-yourself book for couples wanting domestic partner agreements, and *The Legal Guide for Unmarried Couples in Oregon*, which she explains “covered all aspects of gay family life.”

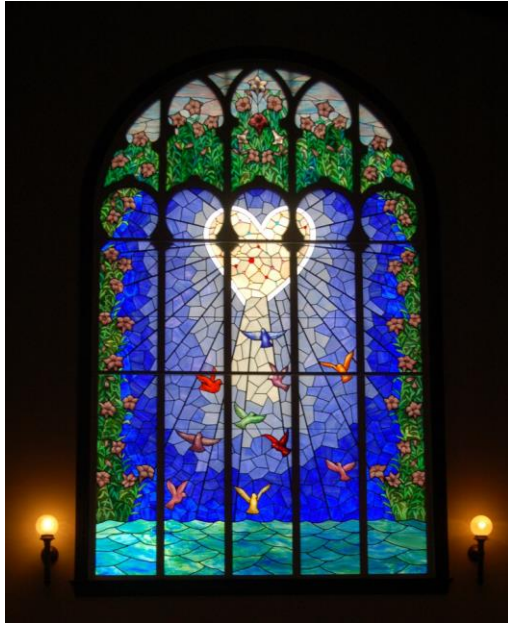
Cindy also recalls that the most visible part of the gay movement in the early 1970s was the largely lesbian Portland women’s community, “organized around collective households, social events, athletic activities, and non-profits it created.”



Governor Tom McCall

In 1971, Oregon became the third state to permanently abolish its law that had essentially made all homosexual conduct illegal.

The reform was part of a criminal code revision enacted in 1971, effective in 1972. It was signed into law by Governor Tom McCall. Under the new statute, generally no sexual conduct is illegal as long as it is noncommercial, private, and among consenting adults.



Portland's Metropolitan Community Church is one of Oregon's oldest LGBTQ related organizations. It held its first worship service in 1971 and was formally founded in 1976. MCC Portland benefited from the early leadership of Rev. Austin Amerine.

The church purchased its current building in 1977. It became the most visible piece of gay-owned real estate in Portland, and effectively became the community center for the remainder of the century.



Austin Amerine

The Imperial Sovereign Courts are an appealing social outlet for those interested in various forms of costuming and who are willing to lend their enthusiasm to the courts' culture of charitable fund-raising. There are three of these organizations in Oregon:



- Portland: The Imperial Sovereign Rose Court of Oregon (ISRC), the oldest, which traces its founding to 1958



- Salem: The Imperial Sovereign Court of the Willamette Empire (ISCWE)



- Eugene: The Imperial Sovereign Court of the Emerald Empire (ISCEE)

These groups raise large amounts of money for numerous charities, many of which primarily serve the LGBTQ community.



Peggy Burton

The 1973 decision *Burton v. Cascade School District* was a historic case won by Peggy Burton, who had been dismissed from her public school teaching position in 1971 when the principal heard she was a lesbian. It was the first lawsuit in the nation filed by a public school teacher successfully claiming discrimination based on sexual orientation. It was also the first legal victory in Oregon regarding non-discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The U.S District Court ordered the school district to pay her \$10,000, but refused to order reinstatement. Peggy went on to realign her career which she eventually carried to the Midwest.



Charlie Hinkle

Charles “Charlie” Hinkle was the gay attorney in the landmark case *Burton v. Cascade School District*, which ruled that an Oregon public school teacher could not be fired for her lesbianism. Charlie went on to become one of our state’s great LGBTQ equality advocates, as well as a defender of all human rights.

“There’s no practicing lawyer who has had a greater impact on civil liberties in this state over the past 40 years than Charlie,” said Oregon Supreme Court Justice [later Chief Justice] Thomas Balmer, “and no one who’s worked harder and thought more deeply about free speech and religious liberty.”

Charlie later provided much of the legal work to fight most of Oregon’s 35 anti-gay ballot measures.

In 2011, the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon created the Charles F. Hinkle Distinguished Service Award.



Gretchen Kafoury

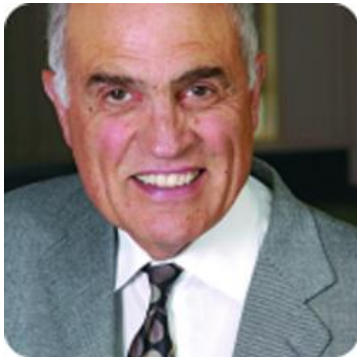
In 1973, straight ally Gretchen Kafoury mentored gay activist George T. Nicola (the author of this presentation) on lobbying for House Bill 2930, Oregon's first bill that would have banned sexual orientation discrimination.

Gretchen was also a founding mother of the state's modern feminist movement, cofounding both Oregon National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1970 and the Oregon Women's Political Caucus in 1971.



Vera Katz

HB 2930, Oregon's first bill that would have banned discrimination based on sexual orientation, was sponsored by straight ally Representative Vera Katz, a Jewish woman who as a child fled the Holocaust by walking over the Pyrenees. After leaving the Oregon House, Katz was elected Portland Mayor, where she mentored her gay chief of staff Sam Adams, who would later become Portland Mayor.



Stephen Kafoury

Vera Katz's major cosponsor of HB 2930 was an Arab American, straight ally Representative Stephen Kafoury.

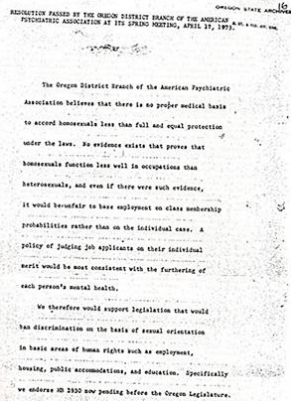
Gladys and Bill McCoy were two of our earliest straight allies. In 1970, Gladys had become the first African American to be elected to public office in Oregon. When in 1972, she began to openly advocate for us, she was berated by others. She replied that she could not ask for equality for herself as an African American if she did not support equality for gay people.

Her husband Bill became the first African American to be elected to the Oregon Legislative Assembly. In 1973, he cosponsored HB 2930, Oregon's first sexual orientation non-discrimination bill. That same year, Bill convinced the Oregon Legislative Assembly to reratify the U.S. Constitution's 14th Amendment, one of the cornerstones of human rights. Oregon had ratified the amendment in 1866, but rescinded it two years later.

In 1996, the Oregon Legislature designated Gladys and Bill McCoy the "first African-American political family of Oregon." The resolution called them "the modern-day pioneers who blazed the trail for members of the State's African-American community" through their efforts in the struggle for equal protection and opportunity.



Gladys and Bill McCoy



**The Oregon District
Branch of the
American
Psychiatric
Association's 1973
statement in
support of gay civil
rights**

In April of 1973, the Oregon District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association issued a statement saying that “there is no proper medical basis to accord homosexuals less than full and equal protection. No evidence exists that proves that homosexuals function less well in occupations than heterosexuals.” Thus, “A policy of judging job applicants on their individual merit would be most consistent with the furthering of each person’s mental health.” The statement concluded: “We therefore would support legislation that would ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in basic areas of human rights such as employment, housing, public accommodation, and education. Specifically, we endorse HB 2930 now pending before the Oregon Legislature.” This amazingly supportive statement was issued eight months before the national board of the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-1) in which it had designated homosexuality a "sociopathic personality disturbance."

Oregon's first Pride celebration was an indoor Portland event held in 1971. The first outdoor celebration was in 1975, the first march in 1977. Today, there are many regional annual Pride events throughout the state. Portland's is the most diverse and largest. Other 2017 Oregon regional Prides included Eugene/Springfield; Capital (Salem); Oregon Coast (Lincoln City); Southern Oregon (Ashland); Central Oregon (Bend), Hood River; Wallowa County; Astoria; and Southern Oregon Coast (Coos Bay). Saturday in the Park is the annual Pride celebration in Vancouver, Washington.

The celebration was originally called Gay Pride. Today it is usually referred to only as Pride and is inclusive of the entire LGBTQ spectrum.

Events are also usually held by Portland Black Pride, PDX Latinx Pride, and Portland Asian Pacific Islander (API) Pride.



Portland Pride Waterfront Festival



Larry Copeland,
organizer of
Portland Town
Council

Early gay activist took the helm of Portland Town Council in 1975 and turned it into an effective advocacy group. PTC lobbied for non-discrimination legislation and won straight allies.

Larry was PTC office coordinator from until 1976, working full time with no pay. He helped conduct small fund raisers, and even ran a thrift shop whose proceeds went to support PTC's efforts. Larry often slept all night on the floor of the PTC office, so that he would not miss a single call from a suicidal gay person. In 1982, Larry became the first openly gay person to seek public office when he ran for Portland City Council to raise awareness of gay issues.



Susie Shepherd

In 1975-1976, PTC published a booklet called *A Legislative Guide to Gay Rights*. Its writing was spearheaded by Susie Shepherd, a pioneering gay woman PTC member. The booklet was aimed at educating policy makers on the gay issue. It was 76 pages and won rave reviews in the national LGBTQ press. It was sold in our community's bookstores across the U.S. and from England to Australia. Susie continues her advocacy for Oregon LGBTQ equality today.

Two of Oregon's early gay activists, Terry Bean and Jerry Weller, were cofounders of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), today the country's largest LGBTQ advocacy group. Terry Bean also cofounded the national Victory Fund, which seeks to help qualified LGBTQ candidates get elected to public office.



Left to right Jerry Weller and Terry Bean



**PFLAG Portland
cofounders Rita and
Charles Knapp with
their lesbian activist
daughter Kristan
Knapp**

Oregon's PFLAGs (originally an acronym for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) evolved from a group called POG (Parents of Gays). The founders were Charles and Rita Knapp, parents of lesbian activist Kristan Knapp; and Bill and Ann Shepherd, parents of lesbian activist Susie Shepherd. Today, PFLAG is fully supportive of the entire LGBTQ spectrum.



**PFLAG Portland
cofounders Bill and
Ann Shepherd**

There are currently about 13 PFLAG chapters in Oregon, many of them in small towns and rural areas. Often, they are the only advocates for LGBTQ equality in their areas.

About half of the participants are LGBTQ, while the other half are straight cisgender allies.

Audria M. Edwards had six children, four of whom were LGBTQ: a gay son, a transgender daughter, a bisexual daughter, a lesbian daughter. Audria was the second president of the PFLAG Portland, and the first African American in the country to head a PFLAG chapter. She was a second mother to numerous kids who were distanced from their families because they were LGBTQ. Audria's legacy lives on through the work of the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship which was founded after her death by her trans daughter and her gay son. The first scholarships were granted at the Peacock in the Park show in 1989. Since then, hundreds of thousands have been granted to LGBTQ students and the children of LGBTQ parents living in Oregon or Southwest Washington. The Fund and Peacock Productions, Inc., whose shows support it, are currently being administered by Peacock Productions, Inc. under the leadership of long-time LGBTQ community activists Maria Council and Kimberlee Van Patten.



Audria M. Edwards above inset. Maria Council and Kimberlee Van Patten below



Audria's late son Elwood "Woody" Johnson, in his drag persona Lady Elaine Peacock. Woody was a cofounder of the scholarship named for his mother.



Barbara Roberts

Straight ally Barbara Roberts served as a board member of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBTQ equality organization, while she was Oregon governor. In fact, Barbara has been a stalwart ally since 1973.



Kathleen Saadat

Trailblazing African American lesbian activist Kathleen D. Gunnell Saadat has long worked for the equality of women, people of color, and LGBTQ people. She has accumulated numerous awards, some of them for lifetime achievement. One award was presented to her by PFLAG Portland Black Chapter (now called Sankofa Collective Northwest) in early 2014. That award is now named for Kathleen.



The Bill and Ann Shepherd Legal Scholarship Fund, named for the cofounders of PFLAG Portland, benefits third and fourth year law students interested in the field of LGBTQ civil rights. Shepherd Scholars have made impressive professional contributions to LGBTQ equality. The program is now administered by OGALLA: The LGBTQ Bar Association of Oregon.



Founded in 1989, Equity Foundation funded programs that advanced equality for LGBTQ Oregonians. In 2016, it closed its doors and transferred its programs to Pride Foundation.



Pride Foundation is a regional community foundation that inspires giving to expand opportunities and advance full equality for LGBTQ people across the Northwest



One of the many programs Pride Foundation now manages is the Pride of the Rose Scholarship which has granted over a half million dollars since its inception. It is financed through fundraising done by a special scholarship leadership group, many of whom have also been involved in Portland's Imperial Sovereign Rose Court.

Our state is blessed with many excellent choral groups that are LGBTQ identified. The members of these groups serve as ambassadors to the general community by creating works of art that can enrich the lives of every Oregonian.



Founded in 1986, the Portland Lesbian Choir was the first choral group in the nation to be exclusively lesbian identified in name.



The Portland Gay Men's Chorus offers "performances that honor and uplift the gay community and affirm the worth of all people."



The Soromundi Lesbian Choir of Eugene states "Our mission is to come together in song to celebrate ourselves and our community as a visible expression of lesbian pride."



Members of the Salem based Confluence Willamette Valley LGBT Chorus "sing music which celebrates and affirms the lives" of LGBT people.



Bridging Voices, the Portland GSA Youth Chorus is a "safe and welcoming place for all youth ages 13-22 to unite for the love of music." It is "open to all LGBTQ and straight allied youth in the area."

Founded in early 2009, PFLAG Portland Black Chapter (PPBC) was the first PFLAG group in the nation to be created by and for the African American community. It has recently changed its name to Sankofa Collective Northwest, but it remains a home for Portland's Black LGBTQ community. Its mission is to bring together communities so that people living at the intersections of these important identities are free to be their full selves. Participation is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Sankofa's work has contributed to equality for all LGBTQ people.



Gay activist Khalil Edwards between his ally parents Keith and Antoinette. Antoinette is a cofounder of Sankofa, Khalil is the former coordinator (but has since moved out of state), and Keith is a strong supporter.



Sankofa members receiving a 2017 award from Pride Foundation



Some participants at the Portland API Pride celebration of API Heritage Month at Q Center in May 2017



Manumalo “Malo” Ala’ilima and Justin Pabalate



Panel discussion at API Heritage Month event

Portland Asian Pacific Islander (API) Pride was founded in the 1992 by lesbian activist attorney Lynn Nakamoto. Her purpose was to organize the API community to counter the anti-gay Ballot Measure 9.

Today, Lynn sits on the Oregon Supreme Court, the first woman of color ever in that position.

API Pride has continued its work. In 2017, it held a special exhibit and reception at Q Center to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The event’s main organizers were the API Pride’s then Co-Chair Manumalo “Malo” Ala’ilimaand and Q Center Executive Co-Director at that time Justin Pabalate. GLAPN provide most of the community bios that were part of the display



Christian Baeff, PDX
Latinx Pride
President in 2017

There are an estimated 500,000 Latinos in Oregon, and many are active in the LGBTQ movement.

PDX Latinx Pride was founded in 2006 by David Martinez and Melanie Davis. Its mission is to “bring our community together to share and celebrate our diverse and evolving Latina, Latino, and Latinx cultures, experiences and identities by creating safe events for our queer and LGBTQ family.” The organization holds large inclusive events each summer.

Edna Vazquez and Joaquin Lopez are two celebrated Latino performers and songwriters whose presence grace numerous LGBTQ community stages and events. Bicultural and bilingual, both are bridges uniting the Latino, LGBTQ, and broader Portland communities through song.



Edna Vazquez and Joaquin Lopez



Asa Wright

Many Native American cultures revered their LGBTQ people, calling them “Two Spirits” because they embodied both masculine and feminine energies.



Lorne James

As a member of the Klamath Tribe, Asa Wright is the founder of the Portland Two-Spirit Society (PTSS). PTSS was formed in May 2010 as a social group for Two Spirits, but later took on a cultural and educational role. The group has since inspired and supported the formation of other local Two Spirit groups, events, and tribal resolutions.

Today, PTSS defines itself as “a social group for LGBTQI Indigenous and Native American/Alaska Natives and their families and allies to come together and share, connect, reclaim and restore culture, community and the traditional roles of Two Spirit people.”

Lorne James, a member of the Diné Nation, is currently Interim Director of PTSS.



**Native prayer to open
Portland Pride 2016**

The AIDS crisis was devastating to gay and bisexual men in Oregon. It would have been much worse if it were not for the efforts of Cascade AIDS Project in the Portland metro and HIV Alliance in southwest Oregon. By helping those already infected, while at the same time educating people to stop the spread of HIV, these two organizations have saved the lives of and made life better for countless Oregonians.

Founded in 1988, Our House of Portland provides healthcare, housing, and other vital services to low-income people living with HIV.

Cascade AIDS Project
cascadeaids.org



Over the years, a number of organizations and individuals have offered physical and mental health care specifically for LGBTQ people. Trans related healthcare was pioneered nationally by straight cis ally Dr. Ira Pauly at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) beginning in 1965. Today, the OHSU Transgender Health Program provides safe, comprehensive, affirming health care for the transgender and gender nonconforming communities

Portland's Counselling Center for Sexual Minorities was founded in Portland by gay psychologist Tom Cherry. It operated from late 1974 to the early 1980s.

In 1979, gay advocacy group PTC formed Town Council Foundation for which it received tax exempt status from IRS. The foundation eventually became Phoenix Rising, a counselling center for gay men and lesbians. It operated into the late 1990s when it merged into Cascadia Behavior Healthcare.

Portland based Equi Institute works "to improve the physical, mental and emotional health of the greater LGBTQI2S community."

In 2017, Cascade AIDS Project founded Prism Health which serves the full spectrum of Portland's LGBTQ+ community.



Tom Cherry

Direct democracy instruments, including the initiative, referendum, and recall, were originally considered progressive and called “the Oregon System”. But they often ended up being fearsome tools used against gay men and lesbians through anti-gay ballot measures and the recall of officials who opposed them.

Oregon Measure 9 in 1992 was described by civil rights attorney Charlie Hinkle as “the most vicious anti-gay and lesbian ballot measure that has ever existed in the United States.” It was only one of about 35 anti-gay ballot measures Oregonians have experienced, almost certainly more than in any other state in the nation.

However, our resistance and our response to those challenges have strengthened our community and gained us countless straight allies. As of May 19, 2014, all Oregon anti-ballot measures that had passed were overridden or declared invalid by state law or court rulings.



A rally against Measure 9 in 1992



The first Oregon LGBTQ newspaper, the *Fountain*, was founded in 1971. Since then, we have had many publications, but only for brief periods have we ever been without at least one.



After the *Fountain*, newspapers have included the *Northwest Gay Review*, the *Oregon Gay Rights Report*, the *Northwest Fountain*, *Cascade Voice*, *Just Out*, *Lavender Network*, and most recently *PQ Monthly*. In addition to its paper edition, *PQ Monthly* offers an online version, a regularly updated blog, and an informative Facebook page.



Community electronic communications have included various KBOO radio programs; the LGBTQ focused Wild Planet Radio; and Internet blogs such as Facebook group LGBTQ Portland.



Being LGBTQ outside Portland metro has had its challenges, but they have often been met courageously and creatively.

Rural Organizing Project was founded in 1991 to counter anti-gay ballot measures. Today, it advocates for a broader progressive agenda which includes LGBTQ equality.

In Medford, Lotus Rising Project provides training for social justice and safe school environments. They support existing Gay Straight Alliances in the region, and assist in starting new ones.

In the Central Oregon city of Bend, Human Dignity Coalition provides ongoing support to local high school and college Gay Straight Alliances, and works with other agencies to see that equality moves forward.

In Wallowa County, Safe Harbors developed an extensive program for the local LGBTQ community. The organization started an LGBTQ Facebook group that builds connection, gets word out about events, and provides a safe community forum through monthly meetings and events outside of the local area. The organization helps also helps LGBTQ youth.



Oregon has had four statewide elected officials who are openly LGBTQ.

Kate Brown, who identifies as bisexual, was elected Secretary of State in 2008, and reelected in 2012. In February 2015, John Kitzhaber resigned as Oregon Governor. In accordance with the state constitution, Kate became governor. In 2016, she was voted to retain that position, the first openly LGBTQ governor elected in that nation. The other three openly LGBTQ current or former statewide elected officials identify as gay or lesbian. They are Oregon Supreme Court Justices Rives Kistler and Lynn Nakamoto. and former Oregon Supreme Court Justice Virginia Linder.



Four openly LGBTQ Oregonians have held statewide elected public office. They are left to right Governor Kate Brown; Oregon Supreme Court Justices Rives Kistler, Virginia Linder (retired), and Lynn Nakamoto.

Oregon has had one or more openly gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people elected to public office; and one or more openly gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people appointed to public office.



Left to right some LGBTQ people who have been elected to Oregon public office and the positions they have held: Governor Kate Brown (bisexual); transgender former Silverton Mayor Stu Rasmussen; Lake Oswego City Councilman Jon Gustafson; Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Beth Allen



Left to right some LGBTQ people who have been appointed to Oregon public office and the positions they have held: U.S. District Court Judge Michael McShane; former member of the Trustees of the State Library Ismoon Maria Hunter-Morton (bisexual); transgender member of the State Construction Contractors Board Simone Neall; Portland Mayor Charlie Hales' former Chief of Staff (and former elected State Representative) Gail Shibley



Lynnette McFadzen

Bisexuals have always been active in the LGBTQ Movement. In recent years, they have become more visible.

Lynnette McFadzen is President, Board of Directors for BiNet USA, the national non-profit advocacy organization for the bisexual+ community since 1990. She is also Co-Host/Producer at BiCast.



**Rabbi Debra
Kolodny**

Portland is home to national bisexual activist Rabbi Debra Kolodny.

Bi Brigade is working to strengthen and support Portland's bi+ community. Oregon bi+ people.



**Panel at Bisexual
Awareness Week
celebration in 2017**

In September 2017, Bi Brigade and BiNet USA invited the entire LGBTQIA community to celebrate the end of Bisexual Awareness week with an event at Q Center.

Basic Rights Oregon (BRO) has been our state's primary advocate organization for LGBTQ equality since 1996. In 2007, its efforts helped lead to the passage of the Oregon Equality Act to protect LGBTQ people from discrimination. BRO was also instrumental in getting passage of the Oregon Family Fairness Act which created one of the nation's most comprehensive domestic partner systems.

Realizing that domestic partnerships are not equal to marriage, BRO launched a campaign to educate the public on the importance of the freedom to marry. This strategy has been adopted in other states, and was a foundation of election year 2012 victories for marriage equality. In 2014, Basic Rights Education Fund became a plaintiff in one of the two federal lawsuits seeking to overturn Oregon's ban on same-gender marriage. On May 19, 2014, a federal judge ruled Oregon's same-gender marriage ban unconstitutional. Weddings started the same day.

BRO also puts a strong emphasis on racial and transgender equality.





Jenn Burleton

As founder and Executive Director of TransActive Gender Center, Jenn Burleton leads a team that provides services focused on the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming children, youth, and their families. She is recognized nationally for the work that she and TransActive are doing.



Reid Vanderburgh

After his own transition, Reid Vanderburgh became a therapist to support the transitions of others in the LGBTQ community. He began his counseling practice in 2001, and retired from private practice in 2010 to focus on writing and teaching. In 2006, Reid published the first edition of his book, *Transition and Beyond: Observations on Gender Identity*.



Northwest Gender Alliance, founded in 1980, is one of the oldest transgender organization in the nation. Over half its current members have served in the U.S. military.



Brave Space, LLC is a collective of independent providers committed to creating a welcome and positive space for transgender and non-binary people and their families.



Sam Adams

When he was elected Portland Mayor in 2008, Sam Adams became the first openly gay mayor of one of the country's 30 largest cities.



Tina Kotek

When she was selected to become Oregon's House Speaker for the 2013 legislative session, Representative Tina Kotek became the nation's first openly lesbian leader of a state legislative chamber. She has been selected to retain that position for every session since then.



Cecil Prescod

In 1992, openly bisexual minister Cecil Prescod helped organize People of Faith Against Bigotry (PFAB), an interfaith organization that opposed anti-gay ballot measures. PFAB did some unique outreach including monthly gathering of opposing religious voices in 1993. The organization laid the foundation for subsequent LGBTQ related work in religious communities in Oregon.

Openly lesbian minister Tara Wilkins serves as Executive Director of Community of Welcoming Congregations (CWC). She has expanded the organization to be interfaith and inclusive of congregations throughout Oregon and southwest Washington.

Through her work with CWC and in the community Rev. Wilkins has tirelessly fought for LGBTQ rights on state, local and religious fronts. She has been instrumental in engaging communities across the theological spectrum on LGBTQ issues, working for inclusion and equality for LGBTQ people.



Tara Wilkins



Kendall Clawson

In 2008, Kendall Clawson came to Oregon to serve as Portland's Q Center Executive Director. She left that position in 2011 to become a member of Governor John Kitzhaber's Senior Staff. As Director of Executive Appointments, Kendall became responsible for working with the Governor to recruit and make appointments to 312 boards, commissions, task forces, and work groups.

In this position, Kendall worked to make boards, commissions, task forces, and work groups more representative of communities that were underrepresented in the past -- namely women, people of color, and LGBTQ people. As an African American lesbian, Kendall applied her understanding of this need to the task of fulfilling it. When Kendall took the position, only 6% of the people in those appointments were people of color. Now, that percentage is 22%. During that time, the percentage of women in these positions rose from 17% to 48%. Numerous LGBTQ people have also been appointed, giving our community a voice it had not had in the past. On August 19, 2014, Governor Kitzhaber announced that he had promoted Kendall to his deputy chief of staff for community engagement. Kendall left state government in 2015.



Dom Vetri

Openly gay University of Oregon law professor Dominick “Dom” Vetri began teaching an LGBTQ Legal Issues course at the Law School in 1981, at a time when only about a handful of law schools around the country were doing so. He also joined with a small group of law school teachers to persuade the American Association of Law Schools to permit a Gay and Lesbian Law Section of law teachers to be formed which would meet annually and discuss legal and policy issues. Several years later they were able to add sexual orientation to their non-discrimination policy for all law schools in the U.S.



In 1991, a group of community attorneys founded OGALLA: The LGBT Bar Association of Oregon. OGALLA works to “promote the fair and just treatment of all people under the law regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity”. OGALLA is a member of the Oregon Judicial Diversity Coalition (OJDC). The OJDC interviews and chooses to endorse select members of the bar for appointment to the bench. OGALLA endorses candidates based on their contributions to the LGTBQ legal community.



**Bonnie Tinker and
Sara Graham**

Always advocating for her multi-racial, non-traditional family, Bonnie Tinker founded Love Makes a Family in 1992 as an offshoot of PFLAG Portland. Love Makes a Family is a non-profit supporting parents and children in LGBTQ families. Bonnie told her story through writing, speeches, workshops, and talk radio. She was active in the early 1990s, countering anti-gay ballot measures while welcoming interactions with the opposition.

Bonnie and her partner Sara Graham raised four kids together, and were some of the earliest advocates of Oregon marriage equality. In 2004, they were wed during the brief window when Multnomah County was issuing licenses to same-gender couples. Five years later, Bonnie was killed when a large truck hit her bicycle while she was attending a conference on nonviolence. Her work lives on through the spirit of LGBTQ families she helped promote.

<http://glapn.org/6323BonnieTinker.html>

Geiger v. Kitzhaber and *Rummell v. Kitzhaber* were two consolidated federal lawsuits that overturned Oregon's ban on same-gender marriage on May 19, 2014. They were the first two cases that were won in a U.S. District Court that were not appealed.

Geiger v. Kitzhaber plaintiff attorneys were openly gay Lake James Perriguey (a Shepherd Scholar) and openly lesbian Lea Ann Easton. The core plaintiff litigation team for *Rummell v. Kitzhaber* were openly gay Misha Isaak, openly lesbian Jennifer Middleton, and straight allies Kevin Diaz and Tom Johnson. The cases were heard by and decided by Judge Michael McShane, who is also openly gay.



From oregonlive.com, front left to right *Geiger v. Kitzhaber* attorneys Lea Ann Easton and Lake Perriguey; *Rummell v. Kitzhaber* attorneys Misha Isaak, Jennifer Middleton, and Tom Johnson; ACLU's David Fidanque; Basic Rights Oregon's Jeana Frazzini.



Judge Michael McShane

A huge advance for Portland’s LGBTQ community was the founding of Q Center in 2004. Located at 4115 N. Mississippi Avenue, Q Center “provides a safe space to support and celebrate LGBTQ diversity, visibility, and community building.” It also “builds public awareness and support, and celebrates LGBTQ diversity through art, culture, and collaborative community programming.”



More recently, Lower Columbia Q Center was founded in Astoria “to be a safe and welcoming resource and support service to the LGBTIQ+ community, friends, families, and allies” in that region.



Many organizations have been founded to help Oregon LGBTQ youth.

Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition (OSSCC) works to support community efforts to reduce youth suicide and other risk behaviors in the often hidden and historically underserved LGBTQ youth population.

(<http://www.oregonsafeschools.org/about/>)

The Sexual & Gender Minority Youth Resource Center (SMYRC) “has created safety and support for LGBTQ youth in Oregon, through youth empowerment, community building, education and direct services.” It is currently under the direction of Q Center.

(<http://www.pdxqcenter.org/programs/youth-programs/smyrc/>)

Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) are found at numerous Oregon high schools. Oregon Gay-Straight Alliance Connect is a youth-led organization that connects school-based GSAs around the state to each other and community resources.



The Gay & Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest (GLAPN), the publisher of this presentation, is the major LGBTQ history organization covering Oregon. However, it has also documented some history of other parts of the Northwest.

GLAPN is a community based group with no paid staff. It is also an affiliate of the Oregon Historical Society. Research by GLAPN has been recognized by the mainstream press and has been used extensively in Oregon LGBTQ equality efforts. For instance, GLAPN's research was used and even cited in the law suits that brought marriage equality to Oregon.

GLAPN has worked in joint projects with the Oregon State Bar, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and Oregon Health & Science University.

To give feedback or to donate, please contact GLAPN at info@glapn.org.

