

Equality News

Equality Florida is building a state of equal rights for all Floridians inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

"Welcome to

Equality News,

our redesigned

membership

update on the

work your support

makes possible,

Thank You!"

Florida's LGBT Community Can Determine Election's Outcome.

TurnOutSM Florida

Equality Florida is proud to sponsor TurnOut Florida, our massive effort to mobilize 350,000 LGBT supportive voters in Florida. This campaign represents the largest coalition ever formed to educate and move the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and allied community to the polls.

The Human Rights Campaign, Florida Consumer Action Network, SAVE DADE and more than 35 other local, state and national organizations have combined efforts with Equality Florida to make TurnOut Florida a success. This high-tech, high-touch campaign will serve as a model for future campaigns across the country.

TurnOut Florida is a multi-faceted program through which the voices of Florida's LGBT supportive voters will be heard. We are publishing a comprehensive Voter Guide, coordinating a statewide canvass with local partners, and launching a sophisticated direct mail, phone bank and vote by mail program to turn out the LGBT supportive vote.

9 City Canvass

On September 18th, hundreds of volunteers will be knocking on doors in 9 cities and counties across the state. We'll target LGBT neighborhoods and register voters, provide vote-by-mail information, and encourage frequent voters to reach out to their friends and family and get them to the polls as well.

This one-day canvass will include a morning training session,

several hours of door-to-door and LGBT business canvasses, and an evening celebration for the volunteers that will include food, music, and testimonials from the field, and possible **celebrity appearances**.

Voter Guides

Over 2,000 candidates for legislative, judicial, municipal, county and constitutional (such as sheriff) offices have been polled and questioned about a variety of issues of particular concern to LGBT people and our allies. Sign up at www.TurnOutFlorida.org, and we will mail you a handy Voter Guide that you can bring to the polls. We will also be distributing this valuable information through our Web sites and in the pages of our LGBT press partners across the state. We can also send you information on how to register to vote (deadline: October 4th) and how to vote by mail with an absentee ballot. Your vote has never meant more than it will on November 2, so tell your friends to sign up too!

Equality Florida is spearheading this historic effort because Florida's LGBT community has a unique opportunity to be the deciding factor in Florida. Experts of all political persuasions call Florida the largest swing state in the upcoming election. A strong TurnOut on the part of the LGBT community and our allies will have a major impact not only on our future, but also the future of our nation and our world.

Cities & Counties

- Tallahassee
- Jacksonville
- Orlando
- Tampa
- St. Petersburg
- Palm Beach
- Broward
- Miami-Dade
- Key West

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Letter from the Chair

Great News For Everyone!

Jon Stryker has made a fantastic commitment of **\$100,000 to Equality Florida, our largest single-year gift ever.** We are ecstatic at Jon's faith in us, his belief in the importance of our work, and the unusual flexibility we will have since Jon made his contribution to our (c)(4) political work. Read about Jon's gift later in this newsletter.

What a boost to our Turnout Florida voter mobilization campaign! **We are just \$100,000 away from our September 30th goal of \$500,000.**

We want to move 350,000 fair-minded voters to the polls and that will cost \$500,000... that's a bargain for those of you who don't spend a lot of time thinking about this stuff. Our nationally-recognized, high-tech/high-touch method is the most effective and cost efficient campaign being used in any state this year.

We are closing in on our goal of \$500,000 for TurnOut Florida thanks to generous gifts from some of you – our members. But we are not there yet!

While our goals may seem ambitious, they are achievable. It is because of the proven effectiveness of our program that we can move 350,000 voters for the bargain price of \$500,000. Already, well over half has been contributed from leadership and organizational donors.

We still must raise \$100,000 before our September 30th deadline. That's why I'm asking you to host a **"Party with a Purpose."** While your participation is critical, it can also be fun. We're want to have 50 house parties around the state on September 18th, the same day as our super-canvass.

In addition to having a great time at your party, we have some serious business to take care of - that's the "Purpose" part. So there are three things your guests can do at your party. Consider these the goals of your event.

3 Things Every Guest Can Do:

1) Register to Vote!

Be a supportive environment where your guests register to vote or update their registration if they haven't recently. Or, if registered, they can sign up to Vote by Mail.

2) Get Ready to Vote!

Our Equality Florida Voters Guides are the must have for this year's conscientious voter. Your guests will get info on candidates from school boards to the presidency.

3) Contribute to TurnOut Florida!

Help TurnOut Florida reach its goal with a contribution of \$50, \$250, \$1,000 or more.

Florida Council Members In Action

■ Kathy Richter & Lisa Gladstone made a generous contribution of \$5,500. Cathy was one of the filmmakers of the Equality Florida's award winning short documentary *Losing Lois*, which can be viewed at www.EQFL.org.

■ Our Ft. Lauderdale Leadership Council, including new board member De Palazzo raised \$15,000 two weeks ago at a reception that included gifts from several new Florida Council members along with several generous renewals and special gift increases.

■ Over \$6,000 came from one of our anonymous national donors.

■ Jim Peebles made a personal contribution of \$2,500 towards TurnOut. Jim is a Board Member of the Scott Opler Foundation that awarded EQFL a \$300,000, 5-year grant.

■ Tom Dyer, publisher of *Watermark* magazine not only joined our Florida Council, but also committed to helping Equality Florida get the word out as the election approaches.

■ Robert Sanderson made a very generous commitment to match, dollar for dollar, every contribution that comes in from Central Florida's Florida Council members, up to \$10,000. That's in addition to Bob's \$10,000 gift earlier this year.

■ Jim Peebles, Amy Mandel, Michael Brill, and George Kessinger will be hosting donor briefings in Tampa and /or St. Pete to make sure we meet Bob's matching gift challenge.

The election is coming right up so you have to kick into action. Try to have your party before September 30th to have the greatest impact. TurnOut Florida statewide super-canvass day will be September 18, 2004. Join thousands of canvassers and other **"Party with Purpose"** people across the state by having your party on that day.

Contact Nadine, Stratton, Vonn or me if you have any questions or comments. We are here for you and we need your help.

Thanks for helping us TurnOut Florida in this critical year.

Mickey MacIntyre

Equality Florida Board Co-Chair
Florida Council Member



Board Member Spotlight:

De Palazzo

De Palazzo is a conflict resolution specialist with an interest in opening up dialogue between and among people with diverse backgrounds, interests and needs. She has designed and facilitated curricula related to diversity and intercultural awareness skillbuilding and the constructive engagement of conflict in schools, communities and businesses. De's strong academic background and practical experience in mediating conflict enable her to elicit empowerment among both youth and adult participants.

De has worked in schools as an educator, curriculum specialist and project manager and for the National Conference for Community and Justice as program director. She chaired GLSEN Greater Ft. Lauderdale and recently retired from GLSEN's National Board of Directors. De lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

...Florida Elections

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Get Involved

We need you to be one of the 500 volunteers across Florida to ensure the September 18th canvass is a success. When you sign up at www.TurnOutFlorida.org, there are so many ways you can help make this project a success.

Some of our needs are:

- 20 Volunteer Coordinators
- 10 post-canvass party planners
- 50 TurnOut Florida House Party Hosts
- 20 Volunteer Recruiters
- 10 Media Coordinators
- 500 Canvassers

Help Us Reach The Final \$100,000 of Our \$500,000 Goal

- **Make A Contribution -**
Visit our Web site and give \$35, \$50 \$100 or more.
- **Host A House Party -** We will hold house parties across the state the afternoon of September 18th to help raise the funds to distribute hundreds of thousands of Voter Guides.

Every contribution matters. Every contribution will allow us to deliver another voter guide or register another voter and show our community's strength in one more precinct.

We're making history! Many support our efforts but many others hope we fail. Our success is only possible with your help and support. Please join us. Participate any way you can and make this the year that the voice of Florida's LGBT and allied voting block is heard from not only from Pensacola to Key West, but also across the nation.

2004 Florida Council

The Governor's Club (\$10,000 +)

Ron Ansin
Tom Blount
Jack Campbell and Pablo Andres
Gill Foundation
Human Rights Campaign
George Kessinger - Georgie's Alibi
Mickey Macintyre and Scollay Petry
Rudy Marn and Winston Machado
Scott Opler Foundation
Timothy Priano
Robert Sanderson and Dyce Craig
Jon Stryker
Andrew Tobias and Charles Nolan

Florida Cabinet (\$5000 - \$9999)

Jon Allen and Martin Kay
Doug Mayberry and Michael Philip
Nadine Smith and Karen Ingram
Robert Swartz and Rob Hancock
Kathy Richter and Lisa Gladstone
Coyote Phoenix

Florida Senate (\$2500 - \$4999)

Jamie Griffin and John Crossley
Harold L. Harkins, Jr.
Leslie Leonelli and Heather Carruthers
James Peebles
Stratton Pollitzer and Christopher Boykin
Peter Simon and Ken Colbert
PFLAG Sarasota
John Ross
Wendy Reiner

Florida House (\$1000 - \$2499)

Steve Adkins
Mark Adler
Lisa Coons-Anderson
Ray Baker and Joseph Viana
Frederick B. Bertron and Tim Creagan
Mabry Binnicker
Michael Brill
Paul Chan
Ross Claiborne
David Da Silva Cornell
Michael Dively
Eunice Fisher
Scott Fraser

GLSEN Greater Ft Lauderdale
Vicki Gordon
Andrea Graham and Geoffrey Simon
Harold Harkins
James Harper
Naïla and Michael Hess
H. Scott Huizenga
Island House
Michael Kenny and Beau Baker
Adam Kratochwill and William Thornton
Lambda Democrats
John Labus
Linda and Phillip Lerner
Brian Longstreth
Bill Peters
Pearl's Rainbow
Mark B. Queen and Harry R. Hall
Martha Robinson
Frank Romano and Joe Liszka
Roger and Mary Ann Westerlund
Bert Whitt and Dennis Beaver
Planned Parenthood of South Palm Beach & Broward Counties

2003 Florida Council

The Governor's Club (\$10,000 +)

Jack Campbell and Pablo Andres
Mickey Macintyre and Scollay Petry
Jon Stryker
Andrew Tobias and Charles Nolan
Scott Opler Foundation
Gill Foundation

Florida Cabinet (\$5000 - \$9999)

Ronald Ansin
Rudy Marn and Winston Machado
Nadine Smith and Karen Ingram
Robert Swartz and Rob Hancock
Human Rights Campaign
Coyote Phoenix

Florida Senate (\$2500 - \$4999)

Phillip Clark
George Kessinger
Jud Laird and George Lindeman
Doug Mayberry and Michael Philip
Dana Philip and Jan Rubel
Stratton Pollitzer and Christopher Boykin
Wendy Reiner

Florida House (\$1000 - \$2499)

William Adams and David Alt

Jon R. Allen and Martin R. Kay
Anonymous
Robert Avian
Josh Baker and Terry Council
Frederick B. Bertron and Tim Creagan
Russell Blain and Jeff Otterman
Michael Brill
Brian Cadigan and David Sisk
Renee Celli
Paul Chan
Ross Claiborne
Lisa K. Coons and Carol Womack
Kenneth Cooper
David Da Silva Cornell
Jack Crepeau
Yebrail Diaz
Phil Dinkins and Ed Lally
Michael Dively
Ronald S. English and Theron Streeter
Luigi Ferrer
Lawrence A. Fischer, CPA
Leslie Ford and Spero Krevatos
James Gleaton
Ian Gordon
Bryan Green and Tony Konrath
Monte Guthrie
Thomas Hall
Harold Harkins
James Harper
Naïla and Michael Hess
Hilda Hidalgo
The Law and Mediation Office of Rand Hoch

Mary Ann Horton
Ted Howard
Stephen Huntley-Robertson
Stephen Koch
John Labus
Ellen Levett
St Pete Pride
Amy Mandel
Samuel Mathis
Alfred May
Darrell Murray and John Super
Robert Pope and Lawrence Konrad
Mark B. Queen and Harry R. Hall
Dan Rainey and Aurelio Tine
Frank Romano and Joe Liszka
John Ross
Peter Simon and Ken Colbert
William S. Thornton and Adam Kratschwill
Russell Vance and Edward Schwartz
Jim Varrone and Greg Wilcox
Rose A. Walton and Marge Sherwin
Charles and Steven Wilde
Richard Zingale
West Florida Growlers
Fort Lauderdale Business Network, Inc
Dade Human Rights Foundation

An Open Letter To All Who Care About Florida's Children.

Dear Friends,

My name is Curtis and my partner's name is Scott. We live in St. Petersburg with our two daughters, who are now 5 and 6. You probably know Florida will not allow us to adopt our children. However, a state judge, having heard all the evidence on what a close family we are, granted us "long-term, non-relative custody," this past March. We all thought we would never have to worry about anyone trying to separate us again.

Now, Governor Bush has stepped in and is trying to take our children away.

You see, two years ago our two little girls were, for all intents and purposes, lost to society. Before we got them, they displayed extremely violent acts against animals, they beat up on other children, and acted out in many terrible ways. The worst behaving child was passed through 17 foster homes within 2 months, but no one could control her behavior. Word got out and no foster parent would take her.

As a last hope, their caseworker begged Scott and I to take her for a weekend. We agreed and became the first people EVER to control her behavior. Those few days turned into weeks, and eventually we had controlled the behavior enough to take in her sister as well. This is why the case-workers, the state attorney's office, and a judge finally gave us long-term legal custody. For the first time in their lives our little girls were thriving, and everyone who looked at our case recognized we were the best family for these girls.

The day the judge granted us long-term custody was one of the happiest days of our lives. We thought we would be a family forever. Now Governor Bush is trying to tear our girls away and give them to a straight couple who saw them on 'Wednesday's Child,' a news segment on adoptive children. What the couple didn't know is that it took 2 hours to tape that 2 minute segment. At first, the state recognized that this couple did not have adequate experience or training with severely emotionally disturbed children and turn down their request. Then the couple complained to Jeb Bush. Believing he knows better than all the judges and case-workers who have spent hundreds of hours studying our case, the Governor has made it his mission to rip our family apart. The best interest of our girls is about to be sacrificed for political gain. This can't happen.

If we had been allowed to adopt our girls, this would not be happening to us.

You can help!

You can go to Equality's Web site and send a letter to Governor Bush, your state lawmakers, and your local (and national) newspapers. Tell them all that the best interest of a child must be the



only basis to grant or deny an adoption, not bigotry. Tell them that this anti-gay adoption ban is only hurting children by denying them the security a family deserves. And then ask them to help us keep our little girls.

Thank you for doing what you can.
Sincerely,

Curtis Watson

Tax deductible donations to help with legal costs can be made out to 'Chapel On the Hill - Let Her Stay Fund' and mailed to Equality Florida, 1302 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., PMB 652 Tampa, FL 33629

Volunteers are also needed to help repeal Florida's anti-gay adoption ban, call (813) 870-3735 or visit eqfl@eqfl.org

Florida Council member Kathy Richter is in production on a film documenting the family life of Curtis, Scott and their two daughters, as well as the impending tragedy brought about by Governor Bush.

Kathy was a co-director, co-producer on Equality Florida's award winning short documentary 'Losing Lois'. This 18 minute film documents the life and death of police detective Lois Marrero, who was killed in the line of duty. The film also documents the legal battle Lois' life partner Mickey Mashburn had to endure while mourning the loss of her beloved Lois. To date, 'Losing Lois' has traveled the world; being screened at LGBT film festivals all over Europe, Canada, the US and even Australia. You can view the short film in it's entirety at www.EQFL.org

Equality Florida Meets with Nation's Political Leadership

Senator John Kerry met with Equality Florida in Washington DC this past June. Senator Kerry asked for advice on how he could best reach out to the LGBT community. Senator Kerry went on to relate a story in which his two daughters are behind-the-scenes-advocates for same-sex marriage.

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Senate Democratic Steering Committee met with Equality Florida during the same trip. That meeting focused on the then upcoming Senate vote on the Federal Marriage Amendment to the Constitution. The leadership expressed complete confidence



that they had the votes to defeat such a measure.

Senator Clinton and her colleagues were interested in hearing about the ongoing battle at the state level. She went on to express concern that the state constitutional battles would be more difficult to win and deserved much more attention. The meeting went on to discuss other issues of concern to our community, including:

- The Employment Non-discrimination Act (ENDA)
- HIV and AIDS
- Hate crimes legislation
- And federal benefits for same-sex partners.

Equality Florida Staff Expansion

David Costa has been brought on as Operations Coordinator for Equality Florida's Headquarters in Tampa. David has responsibility for the organization's human resources, project management, and office operations.

David has worked in the human resource industry for many years and has been a tireless contributor to our work. In just a few short months, David has become an invaluable member of the Equality Florida team.

Vicki Hyatt joined the team earlier this year and has taken on responsibility for Equality Florida's database management in the Tampa office. As our organization grows, the challenge of accurately and efficiently managing information grows as well. Vicki meets that challenge head on. In addition to the typical duties of this position, Vicki provides assistance wherever needed and is an excellent proof reader.

Celina Knudsen began working at Equality Florida as a Leadership Intern and has recently stepped up to the position of Central Florida Field Organizer. During her two year tenure, which

began as a volunteer, Celina has worn many hats and has been instrumental in organizing a number of Equality Florida's statewide events. In addition to Equality Florida, Celina has worked for NCLR and assisted in maintaining an invaluable discrimination database and lawyer referral service.

Terry DeCarlo has recently joined our team as South Florida Administrator. Terry helped to produce Equality Florida's wildly successful "Meet the State" event in 2002. Among the many notables in attendance were Congressman Barney Frank, Presidential Candidate Gov. Howard Dean, and former Attorney General Janet Reno.

Terry will be responsible for all aspects of the South Florida office, as well as, regional programs and events. With an attention to detail and a strong background in non-profit organizing and event promotion, Terry brings enormous potential to Equality Florida's new decentralized structure.

Please join us in welcoming these new staff members to the Equality Florida family.

Fundraising Spotlight:

Jon Stryker Commits \$100,000 to Equality Florida

Largest Single-Year Gift Ever

Equality Florida is proud to announce that Florida Council Member Jon Stryker has committed \$100,000 to our TurnOut Florida election campaign. Jon's contribution was directed to Equality Florida Action Network, our 501(c)(4), to support our political work.

Last year, Jon's Arcus Foundation contributed \$10,000 to our Education Fund.

"We are ecstatic at Jon's faith in us, belief in the importance of our work, and the unusual flexibility we will have with the (c)(4) contribution," said Mickey MacIntyre, Equality Florida's Board Co-Chair. "We had a fantastic 5 hour meeting with Jon and look forward to a long partnership with him. We're already making plans for a fundraiser at his home."

Jon's generous contribution has moved us within striking distance of our goal; **We are just \$100,000 away from our September 30th goal of \$500,000.**



EQFL's Nadine Smith Steps Down as Co-Chair of National Coalition Maintains Leadership Role In Newly Named "Equality Federation"

This past August, Nadine Smith stepped down after four years as the Co-Chair of Equality Federation, formerly known as the Federation of Statewide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Advocacy Organizations. The Federation is a coalition of over 25 statewide organizations from across the country committed to securing full civil rights for LGBT Americans.

"The overwhelming majority of legal protections achieved by LGBT Americans has occurred and will continue to occur at the state level," said Ian Palmquist, Co-Director of Equality North Carolina and newly elected Federation Co-Chair. "The mandate of the Equality Federation is to ensure that the national movement for LGBT equality is strengthened by the expertise of state organizations and leaders."

Both Nadine and Stratton Pollitzer, South Florida Director for Equality Florida, attended the coalition's summer conference, during which Equality Federation announced the launch of an aggressive new action plan to boost statewide organizing efforts across the country. The organization will hire an executive director and begin implementing programs that build the capacity of its member organizations. Nadine also agreed to maintain a leadership position with the organization as a board director.

Nadine served the longest term of any co-chair and oversaw the transition from a project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to an autonomous organization.

For more information on Equality Federation, go to www.FederationLGBT.org.

Upcoming Events

Call Equality Florida if you would like more information or to volunteer for any of the following events; (813) 870-3735. Visit Equality Florida's website for events in your region www.EQFL.org.

KEY DATES:

September 18: Launch of TurnOut Florida Canvass & House Party

September 19: Florida Council Donor Briefing in Tampa

October 4: Deadline to Register to Vote

October 15: Deadline to request your EQFL Voter Guide

November 2: General Election - **VOTE!**

Miami Beach A Model City For Welcoming Diversity

Commission Creates DP Registry and Transgender Protections Domestic Partner Registry

On July 28, the Miami Beach City Commission passed a domestic partnership ordinance that is now the strongest and most expansive in Florida. The new ordinance created a Domestic Partnership Registry that is open to any two people, regardless of where they live.

In addition to the registry, the ordinance creates specific benefits and protections that apply to registered domestic partners while they are within city limits, including:

- Health Care Visitation at hospitals and other health care facilities
- Health Care Decisions with the same authority as a spouse
- Funeral/Burial Decisions

The new domestic partnership ordinance follows on the heels of a 2001 policy granting healthcare and other benefits to city employees. That policy overwhelmingly passed by public referendum. Today's expanded ordinance also provides reciprocal benefits. Under the new policy, anyone legally partnered elsewhere will automatically have their partnership, civil union, or marriage recognized in Miami Beach.

"What sets the Miami Beach registry apart is that it is open to any two people wishing to register their relationship regardless of where they live in Florida or in the country," said Stratton Pollitzer, Equality Florida's

South Florida Director. "This policy is a reflection of the welcoming atmosphere that has long been a part of Miami Beach."

SAVE Dade led a coalition in partnership with Equality Florida to support passage of today's ordinance. The National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) provided legal expertise, as well as background and technical information to the coalition and City Commission.

Transgender Protections

Earlier in the month, on July 7th, The Miami Beach City Commission unanimously voted to expand its nondiscrimination law to provide protections to transgender people. Equality Florida, SAVE Dade, the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), and the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce (NGLTF) spent several months working with the transgender community, local groups, and the City Commission in support of expanding Miami Beach's human rights ordinance.

Miami Beach joined Key West and Monroe County in prohibiting discrimination against transgender people in employment, housing, public accommodations and lending. The move represents a growing trend in Florida toward the realization that transgender people are part of our communities and must be included in basic human rights laws.



Equality Florida Human Rights Education Network Inc.
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Equality
is
Closer
than you think

Party with a Purpose

Want to spread the word
about Equality Florida?
Enjoy throwing parties?
Why not party with a purpose?
Hold an EQFL House Party!

House parties are the single most effective means we have of doing outreach to our community and our allies.

More than half of our volunteer leaders and major donors have come to us through House Parties held by supporters like you.

Go to www.EQFL.org to
download a House Party Host
Guide Today!

Have you checked out our
totally new Web site?

Check out these useful tools:

- ✓ Register to Vote
- ✓ Report Discrimination
- ✓ Sign Our Marriage Petition
- ✓ Get a House Party Host Guide
- ✓ Get a Name Change Kit

www.EQFL.org