

OUT FOR JUSTICE

The Backlash Against Transgender Youth

The seeds of the current backlash against the LGBT movement were sown long before we won marriage at the U.S. Supreme Court last June.

As the movement was pushing towards marriage equality, NCLR saw anti-LGBT groups pivoting from targeting kids of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents to LGBT kids themselves, particularly transgender kids. As a leader at the intersection of these various areas of law, we could not stay silent. Building on NCLR's pioneering work on youth issues and transgender rights, NCLR officially launched the Transgender Youth Project in February 2016.

Our vision is simple: create a world where all kids can live in their affirmed gender. This work has already taken us all across the country from representing a mom in the rural Midwest whose kids were taken away because she affirmed her child's gender identity, to working with families to obtain insurance coverage for life-saving, transition-related care. We are on the front lines of pushing back against the deluge of anti-trans bills sweeping through state legislatures and providing much needed support and hope to families in states where fear and hatred have prevailed. We are the resource that school districts and government agencies look to for guidance in developing policies that ensure transgender kids are supported, affirmed, and welcome.

Our victories along the way have given us glimpses of what the future can be. But for now we continue to vigorously resist attempts to suppress a child's gender exploration, threaten the lives of transgender people, and deny transgender youth the opportunity to thrive just because of who they are. Over the past 20 years, NCLR has been cultivating the building blocks to ensure a much better future for transgender people of all ages, and through this project we intend to finish the job.

Learn more at:
www.NCLRrights.org/TransYouthProject



(#BornPerfect)

Governor Andrew Cuomo announced a series of groundbreaking regulations to protect LGBTQ youth and adults from conversion therapy.



Ashton Lee was influential in California's Assembly Bill 1266, which allows transgender youth to use the bathroom consistent with their affirmed identity.

Letter from the Executive Director

This year marks my 20th anniversary as NCLR's Executive Director. Every year has been filled with joy, heartbreak, elation, passion, and resolve. Every year, I have spent almost every day grateful that this is my job. Honestly, it feels like I give thanks every day, but I know some have been harder than others. Every year, I have been surrounded by the most talented and committed staff, board, and donors. And every year, I have been reminded how important and critical NCLR is in the lives of so many. As we wind down the first half of 2016, I've never been more convinced of how needed our work is than this year.



Kate Kendell, Esq.

As you all know, our community is under attack. So far, more than 100 bills have been introduced to roll back, degrade, stigmatize, harm, and target lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender folks in dozens of states. The worst of those bills have become law in North Carolina and Mississippi.

We are in the middle of a ferocious backlash. But what is also true is that our community and those who value equity, fairness, and justice have shown up in numbers I could have never imagined. We have allies who are CEOs, friends who are Hollywood stars, friends who are sports icons, and friends who are The Boss. And we are all coming together for one simple message: We are never going back.

It has been an honor for NCLR to work closely with so many others in our community—and it has really felt like a community—to help coordinate a response to the cynical and toxic effort to deny our humanity and our progress in winning greater security and belonging in this country. We know we will yet see more efforts to do damage to us, especially to gender non-conforming and transgender folks. But we are up for the challenge. And we know how this story ends!

For 39 years, NCLR has been here precisely for moments like these. We are here for the long haul and we are here for everyone who is still terrified or targeted because of who they are or who they love. I've seen a lot in 20 years, and I marvel at how much we have accomplished. While I recognize that there is more to do, I am reminded that time after time our community has met each challenge we have faced and moved closer to that horizon of justice. Stay with us. We only got here because of you and this work will not be finished without you by our side.

Onward,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate Kendell'.

Kate Kendell, Esq.
NCLR Executive Director

Fighting for LGBT Families

LGBT families have more protections today than ever before, but we still have a long way to go before we have full equality for our families. For this reason, NCLR continues to strongly recommend that all non-birth parents get an adoption or other court judgment recognizing them as a parent—even if they are on their children’s birth certificate. Most people don’t realize that being named on a birth certificate doesn’t necessarily mean that you will be recognized as a parent if you end up in court for some reason.

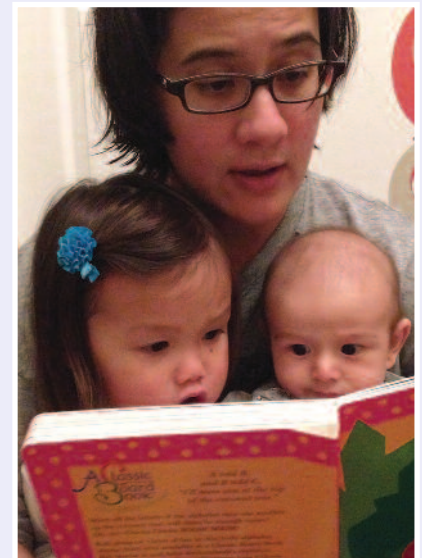
A recent NCLR case reaffirmed how important these adoptions are to protecting our families. In March, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Alabama must recognize NCLR client V.L.’s adoption from Georgia and respect her relationship with her three children. If V.L. did not have this adoption, it’s not clear that her parental rights would have been respected.

With this ruling, the nation’s highest court reaffirmed that our families are entitled to the same constitutional protections as other families. But until every state fully protects LGBT parents and their children, only an adoption or other court judgment can ensure that your parental rights will be respected in your home state and no matter where you move or travel in the U.S. NCLR was founded to ensure that our families are fully protected and we will not rest until that vision is fully realized.



Georgia isn’t the only state refusing to acknowledge the parental rights of same-sex couples. Debbi and Kari Chin are fighting to put both of their names on their child’s birth certificate in Florida.

Debbie Chin and her wife Kari have been married since 2013. When Kari gave birth to their second child in 2015, the state of Florida refused their request to include Debbie on the birth certificate. NCLR is representing them both in their case.



Help is Just a Phone Call Away

NCLR receives thousands of calls each year, hundreds of them from people who have faced discrimination at work or as customers in restaurants, stores, hotels, or other businesses. Thomas, a gay, HIV-positive man who lives in a West Coast state, was a recent caller who needed help after dealing with

horrific discrimination and losing his job.

Thomas shared his painful story with us. A few months before being fired, he attended a company party where a colleague made a homophobic comment. Thomas bravely came out as gay at the party, hoping this would be

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Celebrating Equality

NCLR's legendary Anniversary Celebration Dinner and Party were held on May 7th at the Marriott Marquis and City View at Metreon in San Francisco. More than 2,000 friends and supporters helped honor heroes in our community with three awards: the Courage Award to deaf transgender child Ryland Whittington and family; the Justice Award to Black Lives Matter co-founders, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Kahn-Cullors and Opal Tometi; and the Liberty Award to NCLR family law client Tiara Yates and family. Afterwards at the party, we danced the night away with the Shake Your Booty Band and DJ Rockaway. As we look towards NCLR's 40th anniversary next year, we are

honored to all who joined us and the countless more who make our work possible.

For more information on the event, including videos and photo highlights from the evening, please visit www.NCLRrights.org/2016Anniversary.

Courage Award recipients Ryland Whittington and his family. Ryland's parents—Jeff and Hillary—showed unconditional love and support during Ryland's transition, and shared their journey on YouTube and in their upcoming book.



Justice Award recipients and Black Lives Matter co-founders, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Kahn-Cullors and Opal Tometi.



Liberty Award recipients Tiara Yates and family. Tiara and her partner Sheena had to fight for legal recognition as parents when their sperm donor sued for custody and visitation.

Help is Just a Phone Call Away

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a learning moment for his colleagues. That moment of bravery unfortunately turned into ridicule as colleagues instead began to harass him, referring to him as a “fairy” and a “fag.”

Before being fired, Thomas continued to face harassment from his supervisor and others about his sexual orientation and HIV status. His supervisor even accused Thomas of trying to spread HIV and attempted to deny him time off to drive his husband to the hospital. Thomas filed a formal complaint about what was happening and was fired shortly after.

When Thomas reached out to NCLR's Helpline, we were able to inform him of his rights under federal and state law to take time off to care for a sick relative, including a same-sex spouse, as well as laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and disability (including HIV status), and prohibiting employers from retaliating against workers who complain of legal violations. We also provided names of LGBT-friendly attorneys in his area who could assist him in protecting his rights under those laws. Thomas connected with one of the local attorneys we recommended to explore his options.



THE NATIONAL CENTER
FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS
NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2016

NCLR is a national legal organization committed to advancing the human and civil rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education.

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870 Market Street
Suite 370
San Francisco, CA 94102
Tel 415.392.6257
Development@NCLRrights.org

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