



NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS

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NCLR Names Imani Rupert-Gordon as LGBTQ Legal Organization's New Executive Director

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA — Today, the National Center for Lesbian Rights announced that Imani Rupert-Gordon will be its new Executive Director. Rupert-Gordon is a long-time movement leader and advocate for LGBTQ people of color. Rupert-Gordon will lead the 42-year old feminist LGBTQ legal organization, which is known for tackling the most pressing issues of race, gender, and economic inequality facing LGBTQ people.

"Imani is the perfect fit for NCLR's mission, culture, and commitment to bold leadership," said NCLR Co-Chair Emily Duskow. "She is a dynamic leader with a wealth of experience and a strong vision for the organization's future. We could not be more fortunate to have her joining NCLR."

"We were blown away by Imani's passion and results-oriented leadership," added NCLR Board Co-Chair Felicia Medina. "NCLR and our country will benefit greatly from Imani's experience in building community-based movements to address racism, sexism, transphobia, and white supremacy. She knows how to call in and call out, and will fight every moment of her tenure to ensure that all of us, particularly the most vulnerable in our community, are legally protected and can live their truth."

"I'm thrilled to join the team at NCLR and to help expand their incredible work," said Imani Rupert-Gordon. "As we continue the fight for legal protections to achieve LGBTQ equality, I'm excited to be part of creating a more inclusive LGBTQ movement that centers racial, economic, and political justice. There has never been a more important time for NCLR's approach to advancing LGBTQ equality and liberation, and I am grateful to be a part of the team as we meet this challenge."

Rupert-Gordon currently serves as the Executive Director of Affinity Community Services, the nation's oldest social justice organization serving the needs of Black LGBTQ people with a particular focus on Black women.

Rupert-Gordon previously served as the Director of the Broadway Youth Center, a division of Howard Brown Health in Chicago, which has served more than 1,500 LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

Rupert-Gordon has been widely recognized for her visionary leadership in the LGBTQ community. Most recently, the Illinois Human Rights Commission presented her with its 2019 Activism Award.

Throughout her career, Rupert-Gordon has been a leader in many nonprofit and community organizations, including serving as a founding board member of the Point the Way in Chicago, and as a board member and lead grant writer for the Billy DeFrank LGBT Center in San Jose, CA. She has also served as a committee member for the Chicago LGBT Aging Networks, an

executive committee member for United Pride (United Way of Metropolitan Chicago's LGBTQ group), and as a member of the Illinois State Treasurer Office's LGBT Advisory Council.

Rupert-Gordon received a Master's degree from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Imani also worked for eight years as a lecturer and developed campus-wide programming at UC Santa Cruz where she co-founded the Social Fiction Conference, a co-curricular program at the university's Crown College which helped students dismantle biases and examine issues of social justice through science fiction, gaming, and fantasy. Rupert-Gordon also completed a fellowship at the Rockwood Leadership Institute in Oakland, CA.

Rupert-Gordon will assume leadership of NCLR on March 16, 2020. Cindy L. Myers, Ph.D. has been serving as NCLR's Interim Executive Director since long-time Executive Director Kate Kendell stepped down from the role last year after 22 years.

NCLR Legal Director Shannon Minter said: "NCLR could not ask for a stronger leader to take the helm at this critical moment in our movement's history. I have known and admired Imani for many years. I am thrilled to have this chance to work directly with such a brilliant and compassionate advocate who understands the complexity of the issues facing LGBTQ people and the need for creative and sophisticated new strategies to address them."

Former NCLR Executive Director Kate Kendell said: "I've known Imani for many years and am honored to call her a friend and colleague. I am thrilled that she will now lead NCLR, which remains a part of my heart and soul. I would be hard pressed to name a better choice for assuring the ongoing success and deepening the impact of NCLR than Imani. I cannot wait to witness and support Imani's leadership of our beloved NCLR. She is, quite literally, perfect for the job."

NCLR Founder Donna Hitchens said: "When I founded NCLR in 1977, I never could have imagined the leadership it would have. I cannot wait to see what Imani Rupert-Gordon does for the organization. She has my full support and I know she will likewise take NCLR to new heights with ever greater relevance, impact, and consequence."

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The National Center for Lesbian Rights (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. Founded in 1977 by Donna Hitchens, NCLR was the first LGBTQ legal organization founded by women. Since its founding, NCLR has maintained a longstanding commitment to racial and economic justice and our community's most vulnerable. www.NCLRrights.org