

EQUALITY

e-newsletter

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March 11, 2010

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[Ask your friends](#) to join the EQTX Action Center and Make Equality Happen.

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From Interim Executive Director Chuck Smith

Dear Equality Texas Member,

While most of our members are familiar with the lobbying and advocacy work of **Equality Texas** during legislative sessions, many people are less familiar with the public education programs of **Equality Texas Foundation** that lend support to our legislative efforts.

In the short period of time since being named Interim Executive Director, I've had the opportunity to participate in a seminar on access to justice for LGBT Texans at UT-Pan American in Edinburg as part of our Foundation's **Outreach** program, and speak at the Austin March Against Hate for the Foundation's **Hate Crimes Project**.

Members of our staff and boards of directors have also taken our programmatic efforts to North Texas, West Texas and the Gulf Coast. **And our 2010 Work Plan doesn't allow for any slowdowns in our work!**

Read on to learn how you can get involved.

Whether it's through our **Pride in Faith** program, the **Equality Project**, **Outreach** efforts like our **State of the State Policy Conference**, or our **Workplace** program, YOU can help advance the movement for equality right here in Texas.

There is much work to be done - either as an advocate, an educator, or a donor. **Please join us in the effort.**

Best personal regards,



Chuck Smith
Interim Executive Director

P.S. Please consider supporting our programmatic efforts with a monthly, tax-deductible [contribution](#) to Equality Texas Foundation.

EQTX: Making Equality Happen in Texas

Bishop Gene Robinson at the State Capitol

MyOutSpirit-Austin Magazine & Equality Texas Foundation present:

Take Action

[Equality Texas Action Center](#)

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"Connect: Four Short Plays" by Allan Baker



"Connect: Four Short Plays," by Austin playwright and former Equality Texas board member Allan Baker, will open for a three-week run at the Off Center. The play opens on Thursday, April 1st, and runs through Saturday, April 17th.

All ticket sales benefit the Equality Texas Foundation, AIDS Services of Austin, and OutYouth Austin.

To find out more information, visit AbbyProductions.com.



The Right Reverend V. Gene Robinson Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire Sunday, March 21, 2010 Rotunda of the Texas Capitol Building Austin, TX

[MyOutSpirit-Austin Magazine](#) and the Equality Texas Foundation's *Pride in Faith* program, which provides a forum for open discussions about the intersection of faith and sexual identity, are honored to bring The Right Rev. V. Gene Robinson to Austin for an inspirational message to be delivered in the Rotunda of the Texas Capitol.

Get more information [here](#).

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U.S. Census & LGBT Texans



It's almost time for the 2010 U.S. Census, and your participation is critically important!

While the Census does not ask anyone for their sexual orientation, it is important to note that knowing which boxes to check on the Census form will directly affect the counting of LGBT households.

You can learn more about how the 2010 Census affects LGBT Americans by visiting the Equality Texas [FAQ/Quick Facts](#) page and [Resource Links](#). You can also take action by signing a [Pledge to be Counted](#).

If you live in the Austin area, attend the **Austin LGBT Town Hall** on **March 23rd, 2010**, where representatives from Equality Texas and the U.S. Census will discuss the importance of the 2010 U.S. Census for LGBT citizens. Find out more about this event [here](#).

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Equality Project in San Antonio

The [Equality Project](#) is Equality Texas Foundation's public education program on policy issues and their effect on Texas citizens. The Project trains participants to establish relationships with their state representatives and senators, and to advocate for policy changes with their elected officials.

Our 2010 Work Plan is to conduct 15 trainings across Texas, including San Antonio, Houston, North Texas/Mid-Cities, El Paso, Corpus Christi, Abilene, Lubbock, Amarillo, Rio Grande Valley, Fort Worth, and Bryan/College Station.

The next training will be held in **San Antonio** on **March 27, 2010**. Click [here](#) to find out more information and to register for this event.

We are not only seeking participants for the **Equality Project**, but also looking for "train-the-trainer" candidates who will conduct additional **Equality Project** trainings in their local community. If you are interested in organizing an **Equality Project** training in your community, please contact Field Organizer [Lindsay Marsh](#) or Field Intern [Darcy Kues](#).

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State of the State Public Policy Conference



Equality Texas Foundation's biennial **State of the State Public Policy Conference** will be held on **Saturday, April 17th** at the Legislative Conference Center in the Texas Capitol.

Make plans now to attend this full day of panel discussions and plenary sessions on public policy in Texas. **Go [here](#) to register** and find out more information about the **State of the State Public Policy Conference**. The Conference is free of charge, but advanced registration is required.

Equality Texas Foundation and Anita Tschurr will also host a **State of the State Pre-Conference Reception** where attendees can meet and mingle with conference participants, speakers, and elected state officials. Tickets to the Reception are \$100 per person; proceeds help to underwrite the costs of the Policy Conference.

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Equality Texas Joins with Resource Center Dallas and Dallas Transgender Advocates and Allies in Calling for DART to Amend its Nondiscrimination Policy to Include Gender Identity/Expression

Discrimination, harassment, and violence against people with nonconforming gender identities/expressions must be prohibited.

Classrooms, communities, and workplaces should be safe for every person, regardless of whether or not the person fits expectations for masculinity or femininity. From workplaces to homes, to just walking on the streets, people who do not conform to stereotypical gender identities/expressions face widespread discrimination, harassment, and even violence.

While DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) has long been recognized for having a diverse workforce, its internal Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity (DEEO) policy does not currently include **gender identity/expression** in its nondiscrimination language.

Adding gender identity/expression to DART's nondiscrimination language would remedy this inequity.

Equality Texas Foundation's **Workplace Project**, a public education program on the economic and social benefits of comprehensive workplace non-discrimination policy, joins with **Resource Center Dallas (RCD)** and **Dallas Transgender Advocates and Allies** in asking DART to amend its DEEO Nondiscrimination Policy to add the words **gender identity/expression** so that it has a fully inclusive diversity strategy.

RCD is to be commended for their exemplary efforts, which will result in discussions with DART human resources and diversity staff on this issue. You will be called upon in the next ten days to two weeks to assist in this effort with a coordinated and targeted advocacy campaign. Please join in this effort.

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Austin's Wright Family to Attend the White House Easter Egg Roll



The President and First Lady have announced that this year's White House Easter Egg Roll will be held on Monday, April 5, 2010 with the theme of "Ready, Set, Go!" promoting health and wellness.

To help ensure that LGBT families from across the country have the opportunity to experience this event, **Equality Texas Foundation** and **Equality Federation** have secured tickets for the Wright family of Austin to attend the White House Easter Egg Roll.

John and Stephen Wright, and their children Eli and Simon, have been active supporters of the Foundation's **Family Project**, which seeks to promote strong Texas families, including those with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender family members.

Congratulations to the Wright family, and have a great time!

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Equality Texas Continues Search for Executive Director

The Equality Texas Transition Team is continuing its national search for an executive director. The Transition Team's purpose is to plan and oversee the entire executive transition process, including the search for the new executive director, installation of the new executive director and completion of his/her six month performance review.

It is the goal of the Transition Team and the boards of directors to have a new executive director in place by May 15, 2010, if not sooner. Interested persons should review the [application requirements and process here](#).

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