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EQUALITY

ANNUAL
REPORT

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2020 will go down in history as a year of significant sacrifice, loss, fear, isolation, and uncertainty. The emotional labor that it has taken for our community to remain at “good” is remarkable, and the anguish we will endure as we unpack the trauma we have collectively experienced will linger with us for some time.

And yet, we persevere.

Perhaps it’s because our existence is anchored in adversity and adversity, has a way of bringing out the best in us. It has been my experience that moments of hardship coincide with moments of hard truth that reveal/make clear what direction or decision we need to make to live out our fullest potential.

For Equality Texas, 2020 was a year of reflection. We asked ourselves tough questions about how we have or have not worked to advance the rights of historically marginalized communities. How have we invested in the leadership of LGBTQ+ people across Texas? How have we brought our community along to understand our work at the Capitol? How have we used our platform and power to uplift voices that are often ignored or overlooked? What do we say we do ... and are we doing it?

We want to build the foundation that allows for intersectional pride, but that cannot occur unless we all show up and bring attention to the state of emergency Black, Indigenous, and People-of-Color are in. We want to champion comprehensive nondiscrimination protections for all LGBTQ+ people in employment, housing, and public accommodations, but that cannot occur unless we build a movement of advocates who can work to elect pro-equality lawmakers. And then we need to go further and ensure that we are actively anti-racist and model that behavior for our community.

For over 30 years, Equality Texas has been in communities across the state and at the Texas Capitol, fighting against discrimination. We will continue the critical engagement, education, mobilization, and leadership programs Equality Texas has developed to build a statewide movement to protect the rights afforded to LGBTQ+ people today.

We will continue to build nonpartisan support for equality and respond aggressively to the expected and unexpected attacks on the LGBTQ+ community. We have worked for three decades in a challenging, often-hostile political climate, and because of you — Equality Texans — we have achieved victories in the face of strong opposition.

Thank you for being a part of Equality Texas’ legacy.



A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Ric. Martinez".

Ricardo Martinez
Chief Executive Officer



STRATEGY TO WIN LGBTQ+ EQUALITY IN TEXAS

Texas is one of 27 states without LGBTQ+ inclusive comprehensive nondiscrimination protections.

LGBTQ+ Texans lack basic legal protections that leave us vulnerable to discrimination in employment, public accommodations, education, credit, and housing. Equality Texas works to secure full and lived equality for LGBTQ+ Texans in the hearts and minds of all Texans.

Our programs are designed to meet individuals where they're at in their advocacy journey, providing the issue education and skill-building trainings necessary to confidently exercise activists' individual and collective power to advance LGBTQ+ rights and fight anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in Texas.

We work closely with elected officials — especially during the Legislative Session — to educate them about LGBTQ+ issues, connect them directly with their constituents, strategize on how to defeat proposed anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, and prioritize the passage of a statewide comprehensive nondiscrimination law to fully protect LGBTQ+ Texans.

A welcoming state, open to all people ...

is a key economic strategy to achieving LGBTQ+ equality in Texas. Through education and research, we help business leaders understand the importance of a Texas that is economically vibrant. Our state is at a disadvantage when it cannot attract and keep a talented workforce that believes in diversity and equality. Texas will be at its strongest when discrimination is prohibited and Texans in the workforce are treated fairly and equally.

FEDERAL SOLUTIONS PROJECT

Enacting nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ Texans is one of our top goals. At the federal level, Equality Texas has joined in the Federal Solutions Project, funded by the Evelyn & Walter Hass Jr. Fund, to stress the urgent need for federal nondiscrimination protections. In 2020, we facilitated meetings between federal Texas Representatives and Senators and their constituents and elevated awareness of our community's need for federal protections by placing op-eds in every major media market in the state.

A highlight of the Federal Solutions Project was an informational event in coordination with PFLAG. This event featured Congresswoman Veronica Escobar, State Senator José Rodríguez, and a panel of impassioned parent activists speaking about what LGBTQ+ youth in Texas face and what we can do to help.

THE ADVOCACY JOURNEY

PROGRAMS BUILT TO EXPAND LEADERSHIP DENSITY

In a state as large as Texas, we cannot do this work alone. By investing in enhancing the skills and knowledge of advocates, we create a strong foundation for the grassroots equality movement through these programs.



Equality Texas **ENGAGES** stakeholders (including individuals, businesses & elected officials) in the Equality Texans program, a multi-channel awareness campaign.



Equality Texas **EDUCATES** Equality Texans in the E² (E-Squared) program, which provides issue and skill-building education opportunities.



Equality Texans are called upon to **MOBILIZE** in the Equality Forward program, which is people-powered advocacy, civic engagement, and volunteerism.



Equality Texans can apply for our **LEADERSHIP** program, Equality Fellows; an in-depth training program cultivating confidence to lead advocacy efforts to champion LGBTQ+ equality across the state.

ENGAGED
OUR GROWING
MEMBERSHIP OF
66,000+
EQUALITY TEXANS

MOBILIZED
2,000+
EQUALITY TEXANS IN
20 EMERGENT
SITUATIONS
TO PUSH EQUALITY
FORWARD

EDUCATED
700+
ATTENDEES IN
30 EQUALITY
EDUCATION
WEBINARS

TRAINED **23**
LEADERS FROM
15 CITIES IN THE
INAUGURAL
EQUALITY FELLOWS
LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM

**IMPACT
THROUGH
NUMBERS
IN 2020**

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

EQUALITY FELLOWS

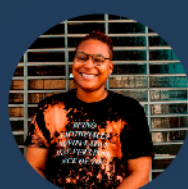
Progress requires leaders. Equality Fellows, our leadership development program, is a multi-unit intensive training course aimed at providing individuals with the education and skills necessary to confidently exercise their individual and collective power in support of LGBTQ rights in Texas. In 2020, two dozen leaders graduated from the program, individuals like . . .



Candice Berrier



Karri Bertrand



KB Brookins



Griffin Butler



Gordy Carmona



Mia Croll



Sarah DeMerchant



Sarah Emich



Ayianna Franklin



Nick Harpster



Annie Hsu



Brady James



Isaac James



Laura Kanter



Claire Levinson



Theresa Lim



Omar Lopez



Ayushi Mehta



Nancy Novak



Seth Phillips



Fiona Rivera



Jean Sano Santana



Shelly Skeen



Maria Aurora Yanez

The inaugural cohort of Fellows met throughout the fall of 2020, covering topics like understanding power, heart-centered leadership, and a preview to the 2021 Legislative Session. No matter where you are on your advocacy journey, this curriculum will help prepare you to champion meaningful change in Texas and take action on critical issues facing our community.

COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT

WIMBERLEY ISD AND A RAINBOW

Lori Olson, a Wimberley ISD school board trustee, received staggering backlash from conservative groups and the Wimberley Board of Trustees for wearing a Pride shirt.

To show support of Wimberley's first Pride parade, Lori posted a photo wearing a shirt – gifted to her by a student – incorporating the rainbow flag into the Wimberley ISD Texans logo.

In response to this solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, a Wimberley local filed a grievance against Lori and a special board meeting was scheduled to hear the grievances against her. Equality Texas sent an action alert to the 5,000 constituents in the surrounding area to encourage their participation through in-person testimony or emails to the board. Equality Texas staff and board members, alongside Wimberley advocates, packed the room in support of Lori's actions.

Because of the significant public support, a multi-organizational letter of support drafted by Equality Texas, and a formal grievance filed by the ACLU, the Wimberley ISD Board of Trustees ceased legal action against those who display the rainbow Wimberley ISD Texans logo in support of LGBTQ+ students.

Thank you, Lori, for standing up for the LGBTQ+ students you were elected to protect.



QUEER TEXAS CRISIS FUND



In response to the COVID-19 crisis, Equality Texas created the Queer Texas Crisis Fund – raising more than \$50,000 – in partnership with

Texas Pride Impact Funds. The fund supported local organizations serving those in the LGBTQ+ community who had been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, focusing on organization providing assistance like outreach to LGBTQ+ homeless youth and legal and financial assistance for people facing housing instability.

Upon closure of the campaign, the following organizations received grants from the QTCF:

AIDS Outreach Center,
Fort Worth

AIDS Walk South Dallas,
Inc., Dallas

allgo, Austin

BEAT AIDS Coalition
Trust, San Antonio

Borderland Rainbow
Center, El Paso

East Lubbock Art
House, Lubbock

Embrace, Austin

Institute for Chicana
Psychology, Austin

Organización Latina de
Trans in Texas, Houston

Panhandle AIDS Support
Organization, Amarillo

Save Our Sisters United,
Inc, Houston

South Texas Equality
Project, Harlingen

The Mahogany Project,
Houston

Transforming Texas,
San Antonio

Transfronterizxs, El Paso

WhatsintheMirror, Austin

OUR SUPPORTERS

EQUALITY TEXAS IS GRATEFUL TO OUR CAPITOL CLUB DONORS:



Lew Aldridge Robert J. Bohner Jo & Jon Ivester The Perryman Group Steve & Lisa Rudner

John Bergner & Charles Stewart Sam & Lisa Hildebrand Mitra & Josh Woody

Dick & Julie Abrams John & Sunny Ackerman Cordell Adams & Gene Danser Mayor Steve Adler & Diane T. Land Tim Allen J.D. Angle & Joel Burns Mike Anglin
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 Jason Berns Brian Bristow & Malcolm Gage, Jr. Tom Seymour & Dr. Bob Burrell David W. Carlson & Steve Smith Marie Chatfield David Counce Cece Cox & Shelly Skeen
 Morgan Cox & Derrall Hill Alyson Dixon John Erler in honor of the Fancakes Marta Fonseca Alison Frost Deena & Brian Graham John & Anne Griggs Angela Hale
 Harold Hardaway Richard Hartgrove & Gary Cooper Bill Hoelscher Clay Holcomb & Nelson Williams Earl Hoover Susan Hutchinson Dr. Mark Parker & Eric Johnson
 Hon. Julie Johnson & Dr. Sue Moster Michael Kaufman & Durward Watson Whitney Kelly & Jim Kemp Eric Khozindar Emilie Kopp & Deirdre Walsh Holt Lackey
 Noel Landuyt & Gary Schumann John C.B. LaRue & R. Hunter Middleton Paul Hemmer & Jim Lewis Thom Maciula & Fish Greenfield Tina Toal Maness & Michael Maness
 Jack McBride & Thain Allen Trey McCampbell & Dr. James Goral John McDowell in honor of Dr. Michal McDowell & Dr. Alex McDowell H. Joe Nelson III
 Enrique MacGregor & Mark Niermann Brad Nitschke Pinthouse Jay W. Oppenheimer Dr. Steven Pounders & James O'Reilly Lucilo Pena & Lee Cobb
 Mark Phariss & Vic Holmes Forrest Preece & Linda Ball Jennifer Rector Jonas Rios Worth W. Ross & Jason M. Mitchell Charles Rannels
 Mark Sadlek & Steve Habgood David Silva & Brian Higginbotham Jodi Simons John Stephen Skaggs & Jay Kleine Danielle Skidmore
 Matt Smith & Jason Berkowitz St. John's United Methodist Church Greg Swalwell & Terry Connor Leslie Thorne Patricia Villareal & Tom Leatherbury
 Joyce & Mark Wagner Jamie Walsh Chuck & Lori Whitten Karen Wilkerson & Jolie Smith Penny Youngblood & Nancy Pearce

BOARD & STAFF

EQUALITY TEXAS BOARD, 2020

Holt Lackey, Chair
Karen Wilkerson, Vice-Chair
Trey McCampbell, Treasurer
Kim Biffle
Lydia Clay
Katie Coyne
Jennifer Guyot-Wallace
Harold Hardaway
Jess Herbst
John C. B. LaRue
Kike Lobo
Tina Maness
Jack McBride
Jonathan Nelson
Eli Olivarez
Mark Phariss
Danielle Skidmore
Mitra Woody
Jennifer Wright

EQUALITY TEXAS FOUNDATION BOARD, 2020

Steve Atkinson, Chair
Nicole DeLeon, Vice-Chair
Trey McCampbell, Treasurer
Sam Hildebrand
Jo Ivester
Emilie Kopp
Elizabeth Myers
Mark Niermann
Jonas Rios
Steve Rudner
Mark Sadlek

EQUALITY TEXAS TEAM, 2020

TOP ROW L-R:

Robert Salcido,
Community Outreach &
Engagement Manager

Jessica Shortall,
Managing Director,
Texas Competes

Angela Hale,
Senior Advisor

Javier Osorio,
Comptroller

BOTTOM ROW L-R:

Sarah Lynn Chavez,
Development Director

Ricardo Martinez,
Chief Executive
Officer

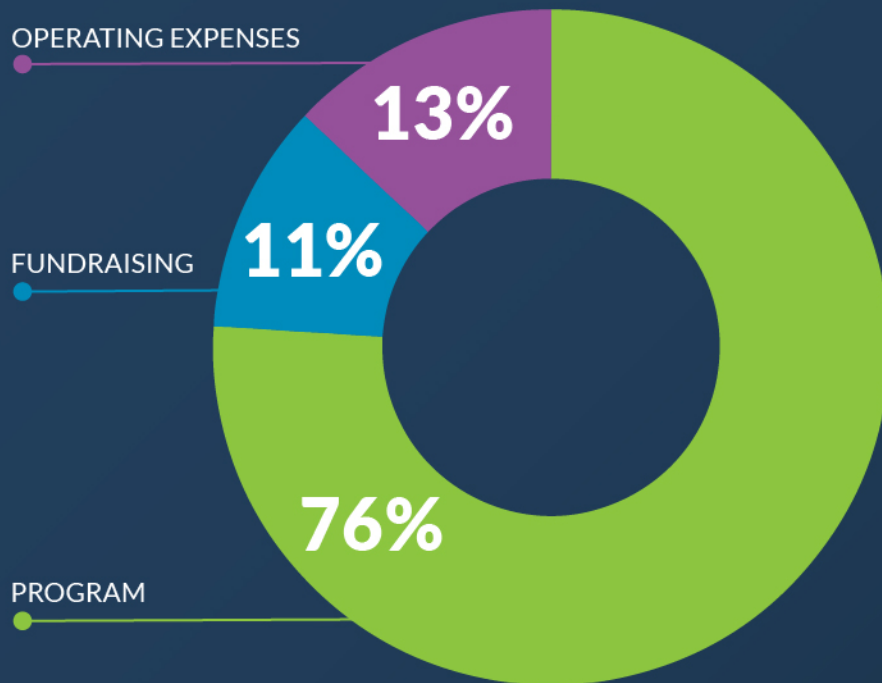
Debi Jackson,
Digital Communications
Manager

Rachel Hill,
Community Outreach &
Engagement Manager

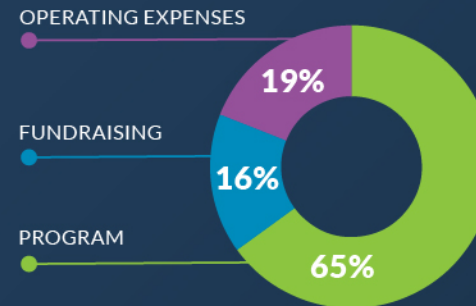


2020 EXPENSES

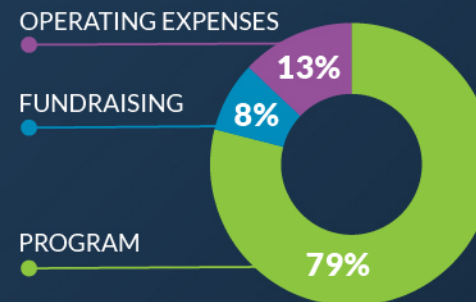
2020 COMBINED EXPENSES



EQUALITY TEXAS 501(c)(4)



EQUALITY TEXAS FOUNDATION 501(c)(3)



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Equality Texas is able to continue our critical work because of supporters like you.



2020 marked the second annual canning of co-branded Fanny Pack Kolsch from Circle Brewing in Austin, Texas.

“We support Equality Texas, not only because the people in the organization are amazing and phenomenal to work with, but because they fight for an undeniably just cause. We couldn't be prouder to stand with Equality Texas in supporting equal rights for all Texans and opposing prejudice and bigotry.”

– Ben Sabel, Brewer

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 16, 2021

Join Equality Texas for our 3rd Annual Gala! Your sponsorship of this event will support our community programs, which meet activists on their advocacy journey.

This hybrid event will honor the advocacy stars from the 2021 Legislative Sessions. To learn more, visit www.equalitytexas.org/annual-gala.

EQUALITY TEXAS PRESENTS:

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

A Night of Advocacy Stars

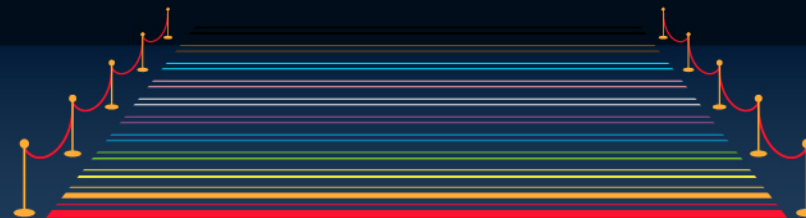
SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

- VISIONARY \$30,000+
- ADVOCATE \$20,000
- CHAMPION \$10,000
- DEFENDER \$ 5,000
- ACTIVIST \$ 2,500
- SUPPORTER \$ 1,000

@EqualityTexas



Equality Texas
PO Box 2340
Austin, Texas 78768-2340



OCT 16, 2021



AUSTIN, TEXAS