

Summer 2009

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## 2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit to highlight amazing year for LGBT equality



The year has been amazing and incredible here at Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, and the next few months will be even more exciting.

Our second-annual National Celebration of Workplace Equality Dinner & Awards, held on June 11 in San Francisco, was an enormous success, attracting nearly 300 people from across the country to honor workplace courage and leadership in supporting workplace and marriage equality.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who attended the celebration, our many sponsors, hosts, volunteers, and partners, including those who generously made contributions and donated to our silent auction.

I was encouraged to see the introduction in June of an inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would be the first federal law to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees from workplace discrimination.

Known as ENDA, this bill will add sexual orientation and gender identity to existing federal employment non-discrimination laws, making it illegal to treat LGBT people unfairly.

This is definitely welcome news, as Out & Equal has worked tirelessly for more than a decade to assure that the nation's leading corporations provide policies and protections for its LGBT employees.

We all know that not every workplace is an out and equal workplace, and not everyone feels comfortable coming out at work. One reason for that is the lack of legal protections.

I am optimistic that a fully inclusive ENDA will soon be signed into law, providing a legal framework that will protect all of us, making it possible to bring our whole selves to work each day.

We have an extraordinary few months ahead of us, highlighted, of course, by the [2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit](#), set for Oct. 6-9 in Florida.

The Summit, which this year will be at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort near Orlando, will feature some of the world's most highly-sought and inspirational speakers on business and LGBT issues.

[Register](#) before the end of the month to take advantage of special rates, and assure yourself a seat to see [John Berry](#), the highest-ranking openly gay person in President Barack Obama's

**EARLY SPONSORS FOR  
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WORKPLACE SUMMIT**

*Out & Equal Workplace Advocates would like to thank its early sponsors. They make important events, such as the Out & Equal Workplace Summit, possible.*

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administration discuss the future of LGBT workplace equality from a federal perspective.

John Berry was the driving force behind President Obama's decision to extend limited domestic partnership benefits to LGBT federal employees, a move he calls "the first step, not the final step" in the federal government's stride toward workplace equality.

You also will not want to miss one of the most influential business women in the world—[Sharon L. Allen](#), chairman of Deloitte LLP—deliver her speech. This is an incredible opportunity to learn from one of the most highly respected and brilliant business professionals in the world, known for her leadership throughout her career.

I'm sure you'll agree that this continues to be an exciting year full of anticipation as well as inspiration. Over the next few months, we will continue to provide you with regular updates on registration, keynotes, workshops, and all aspects of the Summit.

I look forward to seeing you in Orlando in October!

Sincerely,



Selisse Berry  
Executive Director

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**National Celebration attracts hundreds,  
honors business supporters of equality and  
LGBT marriage during June event**

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*Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry congratulates Robert Hanson, president of the Americas for Levi Strauss & Co., after he accepts a 2009 Addies award.*

**By J. Erik Olvera, Inside Out staff**

The Out & Equal National Celebration of Workplace Equality Dinner & Awards drew nearly 300 people to the San Francisco Marriott on June 11.

The second annual event celebrated courage and leadership in supporting workplace equality and the fundamental civil rights of marriage through exemplary opposition to Proposition 8 in California.

Out & Equal presented its Signs of Courage Advocacy Awards—"The Addies"—to Levi Strauss & Co., PG&E, the PG&E Pride Network and AT&T for their involvement in moving equality forward.

"It was a phenomenal night," said Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry. "Marriage equality is important to all of us, and especially to me and my wife, Cynthia (Martin), who are among the 18,000 couples legally married."

The California Supreme Court Justices' decision to uphold

**Pat Baillie**

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**Morgan Falkenrath Green**

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Proposition 8 did little to hurt the dedication to equality of most of those who attended the event, and, if anything, helped rally them.

“Being in collaboration with such great organizations as PG&E and AT&T is what leads to lasting social change,” said Robert Hanson, president of the Americas for Levi Strauss & Co. “Though we are disappointed in the court ruling, the goal is to be undaunted, because, in the end, history has shown the only thing that prevails is true social justice and equality.”

Out & Equal also honored several other businesses and workplace organizations for their active participation in marriage equality. The honorees were Google, the California Teachers Association, the California State Services Employees International Union, H5, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and the Valley Industry and Commerce Association of San Fernando Valley.

In addition to the awards ceremony, the event included internationally acclaimed comedienne Karen Williams, of LOGO's “I Need a Snack,” who served as both emcee of the night's program and entertainment. The evening also featured a fashion show in which the men of the San Francisco Rockdogs basketball team and the women of the Bay Area Slackjaw Ultimate Frisbee Team modeled.

*J. Erik Olvera is Out & Equal's communications manager.*

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## **LGBT group provides direction for workplaces to begin voluntary self-identification surveys**

**By J. Erik Olvera, Inside Out staff**

After three years of development, the LGBT Self-Identification Community of Practice has released its best practices [document](#) for voluntary self-identification of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees.

The document is designed to help workplaces count their LGBT employees by asking them to provide basic but crucial information that could be used to enhance vital policies and benefits, such as domestic partnership benefits and other services.

Over the years, employers have relied on anecdotal data to improve their employment policies and benefits for the LGBT community, but have never been able to determine if their efforts were able to retain employees because they were not asked to self-identify.

The LGBT Self-Identification Community of Practice—80 participating professionals from 35 American and Canadian employers and nonprofit organizations, including Out & Equal and the HRC Foundation—formed a few years ago to analyze this issue.

The group drew from its own expertise and ultimately interviewed eight major U.S. employers to prepare recommendations for businesses seeking to implement self-identification programs. These recommendations are presented in the full report, including specific examples from the employers interviewed.

“When I am teaching, groups want to know the facts and best practices to advance workplace equality,” said Out & Equal’s Associate Director of Training & Professional Development Pat Baillie. “The Self-ID report provides a thorough discussion of alternatives and the issues that provide guidance for companies looking to reach the next level.”

Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry applauded the group’s efforts, saying that it is long overdue and “it continues the work that Out & Equal began years ago as part of our early self-identification project.”

“If we’re not being counted, we’re not being included,” she said. “Out & Equal was among the first to recognize the need for self-identification data to advance workplace equality, starting our Metric Project to help business leaders track their LGBT workforce and then teaming up with the LGBT Self-Identification Community of Practice to further the work. I am happy to see that the work we have been committed to—the work that will ultimately help us achieve workplace equality—is now fully available to all business leaders.”

Howard Solomon of Sun Microsystems, chair & founder of the voluntary LGBT Self-Identification Community of Practice said the group began with the “simple thought that LGBT workplace equality cannot be attained in the abstract.”

“Our report demonstrates that voluntary Self-Identification, particularly through HR systems tracking and utilization, is a key stepping stone to full LGBT workplace equality. Our workplaces do this for other groups so why not for GLBT employees?”

*J. Erik Olvera is Out & Equal’s communications manager.*

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## **LGBTCareerLink refines job-hunting services and tools for employees and employers**

**By J. Erik Olvera, Inside Out staff**

Out & Equal continues to introduce new features to its unique career development and social networking website, [LGBTCareerLink](#)—increasingly attracting job seekers posting profiles, recruiters uploading jobs and corporations that want to be part of the site’s founding.

The site, which launched six months ago, now has more than 2,000 active profiles of people who are seeking to enhance their careers—roughly 700 more people than two months ago, web site statistics show.

Similar growth is seen across the website, which has had more than 43,000 jobs—that range from entry- to executive-level

positions—that have been posted by companies like Aramark, BP, Deloitte, Dow, eBay, Ernst & Young, Kimpton Hotel & Restaurants, National Grid and Sears Holdings.

“Our goal has always been to provide the online service where everyone who values equality and fairness in the workplace will turn for all their career development needs,” said Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry. “The numbers show we’re achieving that goal.”

The site blends concepts behind popular professional networking and social networking sites into one location, where the LGBT community, along with its allies, can help one another in their career development.

“LGBTCareerLink supports the most current, effective ways to land a great new job,” said Out & Equal’s Associate Director of Career Development Julie Beach, who oversees the career website. “From creating your own professional profile and resume... to researching diversity-friendly companies and improving job search strategies in the site’s career resource center, job-hunters can press the latest job hunting tactics into service.”

LGBTCareerlink allows users to engage human resource professionals who are combing through user profiles to find people to recruit and who are looking for qualified diverse candidates to fill positions.

The site also offers career resources to help job seekers. There currently are 75 career resources posted, which include everything from job search inspiration to how to handle your job after you have landed one.

Berry said, “we’re working on creating more robust search features and regularly checking in with recruiters to make sure all the features on LGBTCareerLink are exactly what they seek.”

*J. Erik Olvera is Out & Equal’s communications manager.*

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## **Out & Equal launches roundtable series for employee resource group leaders**

### **By Inside Out staff**

Out & Equal has launched its employee resource group roundtable series, which is designed for ERG leaders to share best practices on a wide range of issues.

This first event, held on June 11 in San Francisco, focused on the lessons learned and outcomes from California’s Proposition 8, banning marriage equality, as it is related to ERG and corporate efforts to protect employees’ civil rights.

One panel featured three leaders representing ERGs from Sun Microsystems, Google and Barclay’s Global Investors, as they discussed the efforts that resulted in either successful advocacy for LGBT equality or new avenues in the future.

Google leaders discussed how they were able to leverage informal networks to have the company sign an amicus brief in support of marriage equality. Meanwhile, Sun Microsystems leaders discussed how new formal processes were put in place to allow for approvals of legislative advocacy.

In a second panel, government affairs and diversity experts from Levi Strauss & Co., and Pacific Gas & Electric gave advice to ERG leaders on how and why companies should lead the way on key LGBT human rights issues such as marriage equality.

The next San Francisco Bay Area Roundtable is scheduled for Aug. 27.

Read the [full report](#) from the June 11 roundtable. To learn more about the August 27th roundtable, contact [Stephen Gould](#), Out & Equal's associate director of NETWORKS!

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## **Top corporate sponsors remain committed to LGBT diversity despite economic challenges**

### **By Inside Out staff**

Despite an 8 percent decrease in business contributions last year, most Out & Equal Workplace Summit sponsors are committed to shaping the future of LGBT workplace equality by supporting the upcoming conference Oct. 6-9 in Florida.

PricewaterhouseCoopers was the first sponsor to sign up, choosing the top-tier titanium sponsorship level and sponsoring the highly anticipated plenary in which John Berry, the highest ranking LGBT person in President Barack Obama's administration, will deliver his keynote speech.

Deloitte LLP is the other Titanium level sponsor, sponsoring a plenary in which its Chairman, Sharon Allen, who is considered one of the most influential businesswomen in the world, will deliver her keynote, addressing the executive perspective on leveraging the workplace to effectively educate.

Deloitte also provided leadership as the presenting sponsor for Out & Equal's second annual Executive Forum, which was held in San Francisco in March and attracted top executives from across the country to share best practices.

Disney, Hewlett-Packard and Visa have joined together to sponsor the Summit Awards Dinner, where the Out & Equal Workplace Awards—known as the “The Outies”—will be presented to individuals and organizations that are innovative and successful leaders in the workplace equality movement. Lots of fun will also be in store for Workplace Awards Dinner attendees since well-known comedienne Kate Clinton will serve as emcee and entertainment.

Citi, Dell, Ernst & Young, Genentech, IBM and Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker are other higher level sponsors, each at the Gold level and sponsoring a specific Summit event or educational session.

Companies that partner with Out & Equal report that diversity strengthens their business, through employee retention, advancement or recruitment; customer loyalty and community engagement.

Right now, there are very few top sponsor positions still available for this year's Summit. Sponsor benefits and sign up forms are available [online](#) or by contacting [Sherrie Holmes](#), Out & Equal's director of development.

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## OUT TAKES: Briefs & Events

### **Announcing Out & Equal's newest Regional Affiliate**

Out & Equal is pleased to announce the founding of its newest regional affiliate, Out & Equal St. Louis, which is currently forming its Leadership Council and getting underway. This marks the 17th regional affiliate for Out & Equal. If interested in getting more involved in St. Louis, contact [Laura Morrison](#).

### **Out & Equal Tampa Bay**

Out & Equal Tampa Bay will host its kickoff meeting and mixer on August 7. [Join](#) the online network for more info and to RSVP.

### **Out & Equal New York Finger Lakes**

Join Out & Equal NY Finger Lakes for its annual Pride cruise on August 21st. Tickets can be purchased [online](#).

This year, the cruise will be aboard the Colonial Belle in Fairport, New York. The \$30 registration fee includes a two hour Erie Canal cruise, a BBQ chicken buffet dinner, music, and networking. There will also be a cash bar and great prizes to be raffled off aboard the Belle! Register online now or buy your ticket in person at Equal Grounds Coffee House.

### **More Information**

Learn the latest from [Out & Equal's regional affiliates](#) and join the community nearest to you.

### **Town Call: ERGs: Beyond Social Networks**

[RSVP for the July 30 Out & Equal Town Call](#), presented by PG&E. Employee resource groups were created to bring people together in the workplace. They have always relied on their networks to keep membership together, and increase visibility and identity. The norm has been to do this with face to face meetings, but now, with the increased globalization of the workplace and fast paced communication, it is getting harder and harder to fit in one more meeting.

With the advent of social networking online sites, such as Facebook, more and more ERGs are becoming aware of the power of online networks to stay connected and promote themselves.

This Town Call will examine the how and the why of online social networks that can enhance your ERG, what types of networks can be useful, and some of the challenges of these networks. Whether your ERG is online or not, this is a must-do Town Call for the 21st century of workplace.

Check our [website](#) monthly for upcoming Town Calls.

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**Out & Equal Workplace Advocates**

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