



Out & Equal National Celebration: Save the date for annual awards dinner

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates will honor businesses that supported marriage equality by opposing California's Proposition 8 at its second annual National Celebration of Workplace Equality Dinner & Awards set for June 11 in San Francisco.

Out & Equal will present the Signs of Courage Advocacy Awards – “The Addies” – to top corporations and will honor several others.

Tickets and event sponsorships will be available [online](#) next week.

National Celebration of Workplace Equality Awards Dinner

Thursday, June 11

Reception at 5:30 p.m.; Dinner and program 7 to 9:30 p.m.

San Francisco Marriott, 55 Fourth Street, San Francisco

Summit: Registration open for 2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit

[Registration](#) is open for the [2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit](#), set for Oct. 6-9 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, FL.

The world's premier conference on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workplace equality, the Summit focuses on educational and networking opportunities for nearly 2,500 LGBT employees and the allies who support them.

This year's event— “Signs of Equality: The Time is Now!”—will include plenary sessions showcasing well-known, highly respected speakers, expert panels discussing emerging issues and trends, and over 80 workshops designed to challenge and empower Employee Resource Group leaders, human resources and diversity professionals, senior executives and anyone interested in advancing LGBT workplace equality.

The Summit will offer interest-specific receptions and luncheons, full- and half-day training seminars, and the presentation of the Out & Equal Workplace Awards – the “Outies” – during the Thursday evening Gala.

Don't forget to submit your applications and proposals for the Outies and for Summit workshops. Applications for both are available [online](#). Deadline for the award nominations is May 22; deadline for workshop proposals is May 1.

2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit

[Register](#) before July 31 and lock in low rates for the 2009 Out & Equal Workplace Summit, set for Oct. 6-9 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, FL.

[Book housing now.](#)

Allies at Work: Preorder new book presented by Out & Equal

Out & Equal has partnered with author David M. Hall to present the book, *Allies at Work: Creating a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Inclusive Work Environment*, which details the importance of LGBT allies in shaping workplace climates and the business case for developing a strong ally program.

Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry says *Allies at Work* serves an important mission by establishing an open dialogue to engage new and existing allies to support equitable workplaces, contributing and reinforcing equality for everyone.

The book is a valuable resource not only for allies, but for the LGBT workforce, encouraging all members to become actively involved in their companies' Employee Resource Groups and by joining or starting Out & Equal affiliates, she says.

It is for anyone who cares about diversity in the workplace.

Allies at Work

The hardcover book is \$28.95 and can be ordered [online](#). Preorder it now for \$23.95, saving more than 17 percent off the cover price.

Town Call: Building a Spirit of "We" in Workplace

[RSVP for this month's Out & Equal Town Call](#), which will explore faith, sexuality and gender identity at work and how employees with diverse perspectives can find common ground to build team spirit, boost productivity and increase Employee Resource Group participation.

Experts in issues of faith and work will discuss:

- How issues of faith, sexuality and gender identity intersect
- How to harness the power of these three, intersecting identities for the benefit of building team spirit in the workplace
- Ways in which this particular spirit of camaraderie can produce unexpected partnerships that boost production and revitalize ERGs, especially in difficult times

This webinar will provide great guidance on an often challenging topic, and is open to all. It is recommended for people and organizations with a record of support for LGBT workplace equality.

Town Call

April 30

Pacific: 12 p.m. | Mountain: 1 p.m. | Central: 2 p.m. | Eastern: 3 p.m.

In the News

Vermont and Iowa to support marriage equality

In a historic move, the Vermont Legislature today overturned Gov. Jim Douglas's veto of a bill, allowing LGBT couples to marry.

The decision makes Vermont the first state to support marriage equality – effective on Sept. 1 – through legislative action instead of a court ruling.

The decision comes days after the Iowa Supreme Court overturned a 1998 law banning LGBT couples to marry, calling the ban unconstitutional. The Supreme Court ruled that the 1998 law violated the equal protection clause in the state's constitution, systematically making Iowa the third state in the country to legalize LGBT marriages.

Proponents expect challenges to the Iowa ruling, which would likely result in the issue resurfacing as a potential constitutional amendment. The constitutional amendment process takes three-steps: approval from two consecutive legislative sessions and then a public vote. At this point, the earliest an amendment could be on the ballot would be in 2012.

"These are incredible and historic decisions," says Out & Equal Workplace Advocate Executive Director Selisse Berry. "I applaud lawmakers for taking positions for progress and equality. This is a sign of change that will eventually be experienced in every state, with LGBT couples no longer treated as second-class citizens."

Vermont and Iowa are now the third and fourth states to allow marriage equality. Massachusetts and Connecticut are the others.

Sweeping federal hate crimes bill re-introduced in House

Michigan Representative John Conyers has introduced the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act in the House, the first federal law that would make it illegal to inflict harm on anyone based on disability, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.

If passed, it would be the first law that specifically includes protections for transgender people, wording that transgender advocates and the transgender community have sought for several years.

In Conyers' blog, he says he is hopeful that the bill – which is similar to a bill vetoed by President Bush – will be passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama.

Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry says: "Now is the time for positive changes, and the introduction of the proposed law is a sign that equality for everyone is in our near future."

Under the proposed law, federal authorities could assist in investigations and prosecution of hate crimes committed against LGBT people that resulted in serious injury or death.

The federal government could also lend its assistance to local authorities or take the lead in cases if local officials are unwilling or unable to prosecute the cases.

[Out & Equal™ Workplace Advocates](#) is a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization headquartered in San Francisco, California. Out & Equal champions safe and equitable workplaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. The organization advocates building and strengthening successful organizations that value all employees, customers, and communities.