

## **LGBTQ Organizations Unite to Combat Racial Violence**

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” Those words, written over 30 years ago by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, remind us that indifference can never bridge the divide of hate. And, today, they should serve as a call to action to all of us, and to the Movement for LGBTQ equality.

This spring has been a stark and stinging reminder that racism, and its strategic objective, white supremacy, is as defining a characteristic of the American experience as those ideals upon which we claim to hold our democracy — justice, equality, liberty.

- We listened to the haunting pleas of George Floyd for the most basic of human needs — simply, breath — as a Minneapolis police officer kneeled with cruel indifference on his neck.
- We felt the pain of Breonna Taylor’s boyfriend as he called 9-1-1 after plainclothes Louisville police kicked down the door of their home and shot her eight times as she slept in her bed.
- We watched the shooting death of Ahmaud Arbery by white vigilantes in Brunswick, GA, aware that they evaded the consequence of their actions until the video surfaced and sparked national outrage.
- We saw the weaponizing of race by a white woman who pantomimed fear in calling the police on Christian Cooper, a Black gay man bird-watching in Central Park.
- We have heard and read about the killings of transgender people -- Black transgender women in particular — with such regularity, it is no exaggeration to describe it as an epidemic of violence. This year alone, we have lost at least 12 members of our community: Dustin Parker, Neulisa Luciano Ruiz, Yampi Méndez Arocho, Monika Diamond, Lexi, Johanna Metzger, Serena Angelique Velázquez Ramos, Layla Pelaez Sánchez, Penélope Díaz Ramírez, Nina Pop, Helle Jae O’Regan, and Tony McDade.

All of these incidents are stark reminders of why we must speak out when hate, violence, and systemic racism claim — too often with impunity — Black Lives.

The LGBTQ Movement’s work has earned significant victories in expanding the civil rights of LGBTQ people. But what good are civil rights without the freedom to enjoy them?

Many of our organizations have made progress in adopting intersectionality as a core value and have committed to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. But this moment requires that we go further — that we make explicit commitments to embrace anti-racism and end white supremacy, not as necessary corollaries to our mission, but as integral to the objective of full equality for LGBTQ people.

We, the undersigned, recognize we cannot remain neutral, nor will awareness substitute for action. The LGBTQ community knows about the work of resisting police brutality and violence.

We celebrate June as Pride Month, because it commemorates, in part, our resisting police harassment and brutality at Stonewall in New York City, and earlier in California, when such violence was common and expected. We remember it as a breakthrough moment when we refused to accept humiliation and fear as the price of living fully, freely, and authentically.

We understand what it means to rise up and push back against a culture that tells us we are less than, that our lives don't matter. Today, we join together again to say [#BlackLivesMatter](#) and commit ourselves to the action those words require.

Affirmations, Dave Garcia, Executive Director  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Aisha N. Davis, Director of Policy  
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Anthony D. Romero, Executive Director  
Arkansas Transgender Equity Collaborative, Tonya Estell, Board of Directors  
BAGLY, Inc. (Boston Alliance of LGBTQ Youth), Grace Sterling Stowell, Executive Director  
Basic Rights Oregon, Nancy Haque, Executive Director  
Bi Women Quarterly, Robyn Ochs, Editor  
Campaign for Southern Equality, Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Executive Director  
Campus Pride, Shane Windmeyer, Executive Director  
Cathedral Of Hope UCC, Rev. Dr. Neil G Thomas, Senior Pastor  
Center on Halsted, Modesto Valle, CEO  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers, Denise Spivak, CEO  
Community Education Group, A.Toni Young, Executive Director  
Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, Sharon Kleinbaum, Senior Rabbi  
Curve Magazine, Merryn Johns, Editor-in-Chief  
Equality Arizona, Michael Soto, Executive Director  
Equality California, Rick Chavez Zbur, Executive Director  
Equality Delaware, Mark Purpura and Lisa Goodman, Board Chairs  
Equality Federation, Rebecca Isaacs, Executive Director  
Equality Florida, Nadine Smith, Executive Director  
Equality Illinois, Brian Johnson, CEO  
Equality New Mexico, Adrian N. Carver, Executive Director  
Equality New York, Amanda Babine, Executive Director  
Equality North Carolina, Kendra R Johnson, Executive Director  
Equality Ohio, Alana Jochum, Executive Director  
Equality Texas, Ricardo Martinez, CEO  
Equality Virginia, Vee Lamneck, Executive Director  
Fair Wisconsin, Megin McDonell, Executive Director  
Fairness Campaign, Tamara Russell, Board Member  
Family Equality, Denise Brogan-Kator, Chief Policy Officer  
Freedom for All Americans, Kasey Suffredini, CEO & National Campaign Director  
Freedom Oklahoma, Allie Shinn, Executive Director  
FreeState Justice, Mark Procopio, Executive Director  
Garden State Equality, Christian Fuscarino, Executive Director  
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center, Fred Swanson, Executive Director  
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), Kelsey Louie, CEO

Gender Rights Maryland, Sharon Brackett, Board Chair  
Gender Spectrum, Joel Baum, Senior Director  
Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network (GSA Network), Geoffrey Winder & Ginna Brelsford, Co-Executive Directors  
Georgia Equality, Jeff Graham, Executive Director  
GLAAD, Sarah Kate Ellis, President and CEO  
GLBT Alliance of Santa Cruz, Gloria Nieto, Board Member  
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), Janson Wu, Executive Director  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality, Hector Vargas, Executive Director  
GLSEN, Eliza Byard, Executive Director  
GSAFE, Brian Juchems, Co-Director  
Human Rights Campaign, Alphonso David, President  
Immigration Equality, Aaron C. Morris, Executive Director  
Ingersoll Gender Center, Karter Booher, Executive Director  
Lambda Legal, Kevin Jennings, CEO  
Lesbians of Color Symposium Collective, Inc., Shaunya Thomas, Co - Founder / President  
LGBT Community Center of the Desert, Mike Thompson, CEO  
LGBT Life Center, Stacie Walls, CEO  
LGBTQ Center OC, Peg Corley, Executive Director  
LGBTQ Victory Fund & LGBTQ Victory Institute, Mayor Annise Parker, President & CEO  
Louisiana Trans Advocates, Peyton Rose Michelle, Director of Operations  
Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, Tre'Andre Valentine, Executive Director  
MassEquality, Tanya V. Neslusan, Executive Director  
Matthew Shepard Foundation, Jason Marsden, Executive Vice President  
Movement Advancement Project, Ineke Mushovic, Executive Director  
National Black Justice Coalition, David Johns, Executive Director  
National Center for Lesbian Rights, Imani Rupert-Gordon, Executive Director  
National Center for Transgender Equality, Mara Keisling, Executive Director  
National Equality Action Team (NEAT), Brian Silva, Founder & Executive Director  
National LGBTQ Task Force, Rea Carey, Executive Director  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA), Glenn D. Magpantay, Executive Director  
New York City Anti-Violence Project, Beverly Tillery, Executive Director  
NMAC, Paul Kawata, Executive Director  
Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, Joe Hawkins, CEO  
Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, Erin Uritus, CEO  
One Colorado, Daniel Ramos, Executive Director  
One Iowa, Courtney Reyes, Executive Director  
One Orlando Alliance, Jennifer Foster, Executive Director  
Our Family Coalition, Sam Ames, Interim Executive Director  
Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, Erin Uritus, CEO  
OutFront Minnesota, Monica Meyer, Executive Director  
OutNebraska, Abbi Swatsworth, Executive Director  
Pacific Center for Human Growth, Michelle Gonzalez, Executive Director  
PFLAG National, Brian K. Bond, Executive Director

PRC, Brett Andrews, CEO  
Pride at Work, Jerame Davis, Executive Director  
PROMO, Stephen Eisele, Executive Director  
Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County, Kiku Johnson, Executive Director  
Resource Center, Cece Cox, CEO  
Sacramento LGBT Community Center, David Heitstuman, CEO  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Joe Hollendonner, CEO  
San Francisco Community Health Center, Lance Toma, CEO  
SF LGBT Center, Rebecca Rolfe, Executive Director  
SAGE, Michael Adams, CEO  
San Diego LGBT Community Center, Cara Dessert, CEO  
Sero Project, Sean Strub, Executive Director  
Silver State Equality, André C. Wade, State Director  
Tennessee Equality Project, Chris Sanders, Executive Director  
The Diversity Center, Sharon E Papo, Executive Director  
The Gala Pride and Diversity Center, Michelle Call, Executive Director  
The Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender Community Center, Glenda Testone,  
Executive Director  
The LGBTQ Center, Long Beach, Porter Gilberg, Executive Director  
The LGBTQ Center, NYC, Reg Calcagno, Senior Director of Government Affairs  
The Pride Center of Maryland, Mimi Demissew, Executive Director  
The Source LGBT+ Center, Brian Poth, Executive Director  
The Trevor Project, Amit Paley, CEO  
Transgender Education Network of Texas (TENT), Emmett Schelling, Executive Director  
Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (TLDEF), Andy Marra, Executive Director  
TransOhio, James Knapp, Chair & Executive Director  
Truth Wins Out, Wayne Besen, Executive Director  
Uptown Gay & Lesbian Alliance (UGLA), Carl Matthes, President  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation, Ricci Levy, President & CEO  
Wyoming Equality, Sara Burlingame, Executive Director

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