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# FIRST-EVER INTERNATIONAL LAUNCH OF HRC'S CORPORATE EQUALITY INDEX

## THE CORPORATE EQUALITY INDEX

The Corporate Equality Index (CEI), a flagship product of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation, the educational arm of the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) civil rights organization, is America's premier benchmarking tool for LGBT workplace equality. Since its inception in 2002, the CEI has ranked America's largest employers as more and more major businesses continue to embrace LGBT-inclusion as a best business practice and protections for employees on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation as non-negotiable. This year, for the first time in its 14 year history, the CEI will include global criteria: companies seeking a perfect score are required to have a global non-discrimination policy, or code of conduct, specifically prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

To coincide with this groundbreaking effort, HRC is launching the CEI internationally for the first time ever. This week in Mexico City, in partnership with the U.S. Embassy and Pride Connection\*, at an event hosted by Dow Chemical Company, HRC will celebrate the remarkable fact that this year, even with the more demanding global criteria, a record 400-plus businesses have earned the CEI's top score of 100.

For many years, HRC's Workplace Equality Program, which authors the CEI, has cultivated relationships and made the business case for equality in meetings with the American Chamber of Commerce, civil society groups and corporations based in Mexico City.

## BUSINESSES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Mexico City, which has a population roughly the size of New York state, became the first jurisdiction or state in any Latin American country, to pass legislation legalizing same-sex marriage in 2009. In 2010, a Mexican Supreme Court ruling ensured that same-sex marriages registered in Mexico City were recognized throughout the country. Mexico City continues to be a beacon of support for LGBT Mexicans throughout the country. It's at the forefront of the state-by-state battle to expand same-sex marriage, transgender rights, and more than a decade ago passed legislation allowing its residents to change the sex and name recorded on their birth certificates.

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Major global businesses that have operations in Mexico City and throughout Mexico have played an active role in elevating LGBT visibility and inclusion. Each year, many of their LGBT employees display their company logos while marching in the annual Gay Pride March, and promote visibility and inclusion in the workforce and beyond. As with U.S. businesses, companies in Mexico continue to share the business case for LGBT inclusion, and adopting strong LGBT-inclusive policies. With the growth of Pride Connection\*, an ever-expanding consortium of 17 global businesses supporting LGBT equality, HRC expects to see greater coordination, sharing of best practises, and visibility across LGBT groups in Mexico City and throughout Mexico.

An increasing number of companies doing business in Mexico have adopted policies to promote LGBT equality and inclusion in the workplace. In a significant step forward in 2003, Mexico adopted the “Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination.” This law helps to protect people from being denied property rights, medical care, or employment on the basis of sexual orientation. There are still no specific protections offered for transgender Mexicans, however, who can legally be discriminated against simply for being who they are.

As is the case in the U.S., Mexico has seen tremendous progress towards equality, yet in many places LGBT people continue to suffer from unacceptable discrimination and even violence. In June, Mexico's Supreme Court ruled that state bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional. Even though this ruling set a legal precedent, it did not invalidate any of the state laws. While marriage equality is the law of the land in Quintana Roo, Coahuila, Chihuahua, Guerrero, the city of Santiago de Querétaro and the Federal District of Mexico City, marriage equality continues to be denied to same-sex couples in 27 of Mexico's states. This means that same-sex couples living in states without marriage equality still need to each seek legal recourse. Advocates are currently advancing a fast-track, court-based legal strategy, to compel the remaining states without marriage equality to clear the way for same-sex marriages to begin.

## LAUNCH EVENT

This year's CEI launch event will be held on November 19 at Dow Chemical Company's main office on Reforma. Dow Chemical Company has a strong history of advocating for LGBT equality. It was the first business to endorse the landmark Equality Act currently before the U.S. Congress, and was among the first companies to sign on to the inaugural HRC Global Corporate Coalition for Equality.

## \*PRIDE CONNECTION INCLUDES:

Accenture

American Express Co.

AT&T Global Network  
Services Mexico

Banamex Citi

The Dow Chemical Co.

Ford Motor Co.

General Electric Co.

Google Inc.

IBM

JPMorgan Chase  
& Co.

JW Marriott Polanco

Kellogg Co.

Microsoft Corp.

Procter & Gamble Co.

Pfizer Inc.

Scotiabank.