

Transitioning Law and Policy in California and Beyond

Transgender Law Center Annual Report

2008



www.transgenderlawcenter.org

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A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It's easy in these challenging times to be so focused on the mountains ahead of us that we forget to put them in perspective compared to the mountains we have already climbed. So it is with great pleasure that I share with you some of the peaks from TLC's work in the past year. We have reached thousands of people with our information and legal services, won significant cases, undertaken much-needed research, and advanced institutional and policy changes. As a small organization, we are able to climb so high and do so much because of two core strategies – building powerful partnerships with allies so that we can leverage our expertise and work, and supporting the development of leaders within transgender communities across the state. The fruits of these partnerships and of our leadership development efforts can be seen throughout this report.

We are therefore especially grateful to the volunteers, allies, partners, and community activists who have kept their commitment to the struggle for transgender equality in the face of the myriad pressures that the current economic challenges place on us all, and also to the individuals, corporations, and foundations that have been able to sustain support for our work.

In the midst of the current recession we all need to find opportunities for hope and for positive change. Out of the difficulties our state and our country are facing, we have an opportunity to build a vision and a future that will be more



inclusive and more just for everyone. Health care reform efforts are moving forward at the state and federal levels – and we are working to ensure that transgender people are at the table in these conversations. New resources are being put into getting people back to work – and we are reaching out to state officials about the need for transgender workforce development.

I look forward to climbing this year's mountains together with our supporters and allies.

Masen Davis
Executive Director

The Transgender Law Center (TLC) is a civil rights organization advocating for transgender communities. Every day we connect transgender people and their families to technically sound and culturally competent legal services, increase acceptance and enforcement of laws and policies that support California's transgender communities, and work to change laws and systems that fail to incorporate the needs and experiences of transgender people.

With offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles, TLC utilizes direct legal services, public policy advocacy, and educational opportunities to advance the rights and safety of diverse transgender communities. TLC uses the term "transgender" to represent all of the innumerable genders and forms of gender expression that fall within and outside of stereotypical gender norms. TLC also understands, acknowledges, and resists non-gender based oppressions which limit people's ability to live in peace.



Photo By Allison Palitz

Brazilian Torture Survivor Secures Right to Remain in U.S.

Born in Brazil, Leah (not her real name) transitioned to live full time as a woman in the 1990s. In her home country, she was beaten and tortured by police officers and incarcerated in a police-run house of prostitution in Rio de Janeiro. Leah finally escaped and fled to San Francisco. Beginning in January 2008, Leah was held in custody by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in a local men's jail.

TLC represented Leah at a "reasonable fear" interview and asked the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Asylum Program for help in securing pro bono legal counsel. Kyra Sanin and Dan Komarek of Kirkland & Ellis LLP served as lead counsel with Beth Feinberg of Van Der Hout Brigagliano & Nightingale, LLP providing expert assistance. On April 8, 2008, Sanin, Kimarek and TLC presented Leah's case. She was granted withholding of removal and relief under the Convention Against Torture.

"I had nearly given up hope when I was detained. I am so thankful for all the work everyone did on the case. Now that I am legally in the United States, I can stop living in fear." – Leah

Statewide Leadership Council Takes on Sacramento

TLC has established a statewide Leadership Council to engage in advocacy at the state level, particularly regarding transgender workforce development and health care access. The Council convened in Sacramento in December 2008 for trainings on policy advocacy, workforce development systems, and budget advocacy, and met with Herb Schultz, Senior Advisor to Governor Schwarzenegger, about transgender economic justice issues. TLC appreciates the deep commitment of our seven Leadership Council members:

Karin Fresnel, Far Northern California
Cecilia Chung, Bay Area
Doug Heumann, Central Coast
Diana Oliva, Central Valley
Drian Juarez, Los Angeles Area
Elizabeth Mediano, Orange County
Vicki Estrada, Far Southern California



Empowering Youth to Implement State Non-Discrimination Laws

TLC is collaborating with Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network) on a multi-year youth advocacy effort to ensure implementation of the gender identity components of The California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 and the Student Civil Rights Act of 2007. TLC helped to lead trainings for a core group of youth leaders from across the state in May and October, and co-sponsored GSA Network's annual Queer Youth Advocacy Day in Sacramento. The trainings empowered youth to understand and address gender identity issues in their individual schools and to participate in multiple strategies for shifting state policies. As part of this collaboration, TLC staff and GSA Network youth presented to the California School Boards Association (CSBA) in December, and advocated with officials from the California Department of Education.

"The most powerful part of the training was learning that I have the legal power to be treated in a way that is in accord with my gender identity, and having the skills to talk to my administrators about this." – GSA Youth



Other Accomplishments

- TLC organized workshops reaching over 1,300 community members, legal professionals, and social service providers.
- TLC provided individualized legal services to over 1,200 community members and/or their families.
- TLC conducted the 2008 CA Transgender Economic Health Survey, a groundbreaking study on the economic well-being of transgender communities in California.

Senate Public Safety Committee Hears Concerns Facing LGBT People in California's Prisons

TLC, along with partner organizations Transgender Gender Variant Intersex Justice Project, National Center for Lesbian Rights, Equality California and Just Detention International, organized an official California Senate Committee on Public Safety meeting to examine issues facing LGBT people in California's prison system. Chaired by Senator Gloria Romero, and attended by Assembly Member Tom Ammiano, the December meeting focused on the LGBT population in prison and the unique issues LGBT inmates face while incarcerated, including harassment and abuse, prisoner classification systems, unequal access to healthcare, and difficulties faced when re-entering into society.

Speakers at the meeting included our own Masen Davis, Miss Major and Alexander Lee of TGIJP, Bamby Salcedo of Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles, Professor Valerie Jenness of UC Irvine, Dr. Lori Kohler of UCSF, and Linda McFarlane of JDI. The witnesses discussed problems with the current classification system, which harms LGBT people by putting them at increased risk of violence and harassment, and suggested policy changes that would improve safety without costing the corrections system additional money. One such policy recommendation spurred Assembly Member Ammiano to author a bill, AB 382, which would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to take gender identity and sexual orientation into account when making decisions about where to house prisoners. Following the meeting, the San Francisco Bay Guardian published an important article drawing attention to the human rights crisis faced by LGBT people in California Prisons.

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. - Anne Frank

- The annual Transgender Leadership Summit, held in Berkeley in 2008, drew nearly 300 participants for 3 days of training and discussion.
- TLC joined other public interest legal organizations and bar associations in submitting an amicus brief in *Strauss v Horton*, the case challenging the validity of Proposition 8.
- TLC launched its first strategic planning effort, and invested in mission-critical infrastructure.

Building a Statewide Movement for Transgender Health



TLC has launched several programs to increase access to quality healthcare for transgender people. We organized transgender health law workshops to teach community members about their rights and ways to negotiate with their own providers for better care. We encouraged community organizing with local clinics and other providers for expanded or improved services – and in the last year clinics in Alameda, Los Angeles, and Santa Clara Counties expanded their trans-specific services, while community members in San Bernardino began providing cultural competency training to local mental health providers. Increasing numbers of community members who had nowhere to go for health care, or who were relying on unregulated “street” hormones, can now receive full health services and hormone support at community clinics. To further improve access to primary and transition-related care, we launched Project H.E.A.L.T.H (Harnessing Education, Advocacy and Leadership for Transgender Health) in partnership with Lyon-Martin Health Services (LMHS), a community clinic with a history of providing trans-inclusive services. LMHS doctors can now provide peer-to-peer training and guidance to clinic staff in various regions of the state while TLC staff and volunteers mobilize providers and community members to advocate for transgender-specific care and insurance coverage.

We also organized a pre-conference institute on insurance discrimination at the Task Force’s Creating Change conference, and provided conference scholarships for two community organizers from L.A.’s Community Clinics Campaign (a TLC/ FTM Alliance of LA partnership) to present a workshop on their efforts. Since funding often limits clinics’ ability to expand

services, we also began offering training on budget advocacy to local community members.

In 2008, we provided health-related individualized legal assistance to hundreds of community members. We won a case in which Medi-Cal had initially denied the costs of replacing a defective breast implant that burst, even though the replacement implant itself was covered by warranty. We also secured an independent medical review on behalf of a client in a state mental facility who was abruptly taken off his hormones, with serious adverse results. The client’s hormone therapy was reinstated, and we are working with the state Department of Mental Health to develop policies for the care of transgender patients in state mental facilities. Because we continue to see numerous cases in which patients are denied appropriate coverage for care, despite California’s Insurance Gender Non-Discrimination Act, we collaborated with the National Center for Lesbian Rights to research the best fact pattern for future litigation. We also provided training to more than 100 employers about negotiating transgender-inclusive health insurance policies, and are supporting employees in advocating with their employers for improved coverage

TLC also helped launch California’s LGBT Health and Human Services Network, which advocates for increased support and funding for LGBT health programs throughout the state. Executive Director Masen Davis serves on the Network’s Executive Committee, and represented the coalition on a 10-member delegation of U.S. LGBT health advocates who met with members of the Obama transition team to identify LGBT health reform priorities in December.

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Folsom Street Events
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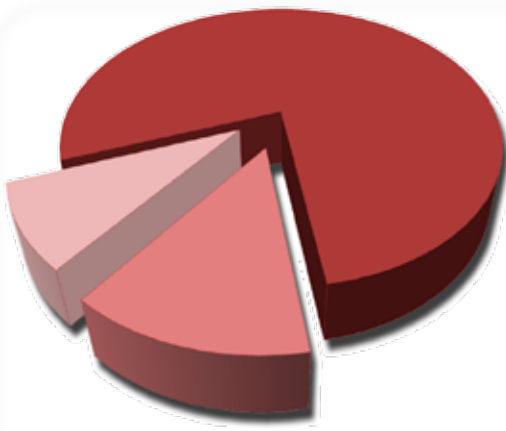
Law Offices of Fellom & Solorio
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Out & Equal Workplace Advocates
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Remberock Foundation
Williams Institute
Women's Foundation of California

Our family of donors is the beating heart of our cause.



78% Programs

13% Administration

9% Fundraising

Financials

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Public Support and Revenue			
Individual Support	\$38,434		\$38,434
Corporate Support	\$35,831		\$35,831
Foundation Grants	\$132,602	\$205,050	\$337,652
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$195,570	\$(195,570)	-
Total Public Support:	\$402,437	\$9,480	\$411,917
Event Income	\$43,642		\$43,642
Program Service Income	\$32,183		\$32,183
Interest Income	\$4,936		\$4,936
Total Revenue	\$80,761	-	\$80,761
Total Public Support and Revenue	\$483,198	\$9,480	\$492,678
Expenses			
Program	\$382,259		\$382,259
Management and General	\$62,625		\$62,625
Fundraising	\$45,776		\$45,776
Total Expenses	\$490,660	-	\$490,660
Change in Net Assets	\$(7,462)	\$9,480	\$2,018
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$168,684	\$277,274	\$445,958
Net Assets at End of Year	\$161,222	\$286,754	\$447,976



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