

 HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

# EQUALITY

SPRING 2020

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EQUALITY.  
LIKE  
NEVER  
BEFORE.**

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**Why We All  
Must Combat  
Racial Violence**

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**Why We Must  
Elect Joe Biden  
for President**

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**Why We Must Fight  
for Systemic Change  
to Achieve Equality**

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\*as of May 2020

**DEAR FRIENDS,**

Pride started with protest. LGBTQ people — led in large part by transgender women of color — resisted police brutality and violence at flashpoints like Stonewall, the Black Cat, and Compton's Cafeteria. We as a community refused to accept humiliation and fear as the price of living as our true selves. Our community understands 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.

All these years later, Black people and the most marginalized across our nation are facing this same brutality, injustice and indifference. Yes, we have won major victories in expanding the civil rights of LGBTQ people. But what good are civil rights without the freedom to enjoy them?

At the same time, we are all grappling with the reality of COVID-19 and what it means for our daily lives. We have all been personally affected by this national crisis, and we are all trying to cope and embrace a new, yet undefined, future.

During these most extraordinary days, it is important we lean upon each other, our HRC family, for support and community. The LGBTQ community has known adversity. In fact, we have drawn much of our strength and power from times of great uncertainty. As we reflect on our history, this moment also requires 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.

It is imperative that we rise to this occasion when our community needs us

and when the impact of our mission is more critical now than ever. The Human Rights Campaign is a leader in the community, and members of our community are looking to us for guidance. We must help define this moment, not only by advocating for policies that will protect the most vulnerable among us, but by actively looking out for one another.

It is on us to help bring about change — both in November and beyond. For 40 years, the Human Rights Campaign has served as a beacon of hope to LGBTQ people everywhere. You have built this organization into the powerhouse it is today.

As we confront these crises our nation faces today, we cannot lose sight of our long-term goals. We remain focused on advancing the rights of LGBTQ people around the world. And we remain focused on defeating Donald Trump and Mike Pence and electing Joe Biden the next president of the United States. We will continue to work toward these goals, and weather this crisis as we have weathered crises before — by uniting as a community.

And for us to be successful in any of this work, we need your continued commitment to this effort. For 40 years, it is our resilience that has made us stronger. And it is that same resilience which will carry us through this moment and ever closer to the dream of full equality.

We can get through this. I know, because we have gotten through crises before. But we cannot do it alone; we have to stand together. Thank you for your commitment to the Human Rights Campaign. We look forward to continuing to partner with you in the months and years ahead to ensure the promise of the Human Rights Campaign continues to deliver for our community. And with your continued support, we can and we will win this fight for full equality.

In Unity,

**Alphonso David**

President, Human Rights Campaign

He/Him/His

Follow me on Twitter: @AlphonsoDavid



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**BLACK, LGBTQ  
AND PROUD**

“For my transgender son and for each of us, coming out and living our full identities is a process that can’t be measured,” said HRC Foundation Board Chair Jodie Patterson in HRC Foundation’s “Coming Out: Living Authentically as Black LGBTQ People” resource. “I thought being Black and trans was a super wicked problem. Now I understand it to be powerful. This is the exact guide I would write — years later with all the love and experience I’ve earned.”

As we honored Black History Month this year, HRC Foundation released the guide to help Black LGBTQ people navigate their identity, recognize the barriers of racial and anti-LGBTQ discrimination and understand that coming out is a personal choice and the lifelong coming out experience is different for everyone.

Read the full report at [hrc.org/BlackLGBTQComingOut](https://hrc.org/BlackLGBTQComingOut).



**A WIN FOR LGBTQ VIRGINIANS**

Ensuring Virginia is for lovers of equality, the state General Assembly passed and Gov. Ralph Northam signed into law the Virginia Values Act, which guarantees non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ folks and other marginalized communities across the state.

Virginia is the first state in the South to explicitly protect LGBTQ people.

“We have arrived at this moment today because of years and years of tireless work from advocates across the commonwealth, and the

Virginia voters that filled the halls of the General Assembly with pro-equality champions who fulfilled their promises to their constituents,” said HRC President Alphonso David.

HRC was proud to be a member of the Virginia Values Coalition, where we worked together with partnered organizations to advance landmark, comprehensive legislation to protect all LGBTQ Virginians and others from discrimination.

Keep up with our work pushing equality forward in Virginia at [hrc.org/Virginia](https://hrc.org/Virginia).

**THANK YOU TO HEALTH CARE HEROES**

Now more than ever, health care workers and support staff at hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and more need to know we are grateful for their sacrifices and that we will do our part to help stop this devastating pandemic however we can.

The HRC community commends these heroes among us — who put their lives on the line every day to protect ours — and want to remind them that we are by their side as they fight for our lives. Join HRC in thanking them and add your name to our letter of support at [hrc.org/ThanksHealthCareWorkers](https://hrc.org/ThanksHealthCareWorkers).



**STAND UP  
STAND PROUD**



Nordstrom is proud to partner with the Human Rights Campaign in our celebration of the LGBTQIA community and commitment to securing equal rights for all.

Whoever you are and whoever you love, we see you, we support you and we stand with you.

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**MEET MX STEEL**

“WHEN I CAME OUT, MY PRINCIPAL SOUGHT ME OUT TO PERSONALLY TELL ME I HAD EVERY PIECE OF HER SUPPORT AND LOVE,”

Vica Steel, a transgender teacher at one of the schools that is part of HRC Foundation’s Welcoming Schools program, in speaking about what it means to have an affirming environment.

In a touching op-ed about what her coming out meant to her and her students, Steel talked about the importance of accepting one another. One of her students told her that her name sounded like a superhero name, while another said they were teaching their parents about transgender inclusion. The value in the Welcoming Schools program is that it truly changes the hearts and minds of our youth to embrace and affirm all people. This is a great example of Welcoming Schools in action.

Steel also encourages others to live their truth.

“If you are young, I hope that you can see there is hope and beauty in this world,” she said. “And you will see so much more love than you could ever have imagined.”

Learn more about how HRC Foundation works to make schools inclusive for all at [welcomingschools.org](http://welcomingschools.org).

**INTRODUCING NEW PARENTS FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY**

HRC Foundation is pleased to welcome new members of our family to the Parents for Transgender Equality National Council — a coalition of some of the nation’s leading parent-advocates working for equality and fairness for transgender people.

New members include Mehereen Baig, Stephen Chukumba, Luchina Fisher and David J. Parr, Yma Johnson, Kim Leshner, Jennifer Solomon and Adamalis Vigil.

“There is no advocacy voice more powerful than that of parents who are fighting for the rights and dignity of their children,” said HRC Foundation Senior Director of Programs and Partnerships Ellen Kahn.

The PTEC continues to play a powerful role in amplifying the voices of advocates around the importance of transgender inclusion. Learn more about how they’re changing hearts and minds at [hrc.im/parents](http://hrc.im/parents).



**SHAME ON IDAHO GOV. BRAD LITTLE**

Amid a global pandemic and on the eve of Transgender Day of Visibility, Republican Idaho Gov. Brad Little prioritized anti-transgender legislation by signing two anti-transgender bills into law — HB 500 and HB 509.

HB 500 will bar transgender women and girls from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity. HB 509 prevents transgender and nonbinary Idahoans from changing their gender marker on their birth certificates despite a recent court decision that allowed them to do so.

Little signed this shameful

legislation despite opposition from Idahoans, medical professionals and more. The bills’ passage means Idaho became the first state in the country this year to enact discriminatory legislation that specifically targets the transgender community. Both laws are unconstitutional and are now in court, with Idaho taxpayers on the hook for litigation costs — which is particularly appalling given the current economic impact the state is under as it recovers from COVID.

Keep up to date with developments at [hrc.org/Idaho](http://hrc.org/Idaho).



# 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.

**\*AT PRESS TIME, MORE THAN 450 ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SIGNED THE LETTER. CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL LIST.**



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# GETTING THROUGH THIS TOGETHER

## AMID A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, HRC IS WORKING TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

**W**ith the COVID-19 public health crisis changing life as we know it, the LGBTQ community is in the midst of another milestone in our history of survival and resilience.

"The LGBTQ community has known adversity. In fact, we have drawn much of our strength and power from times of great uncertainty," said HRC President Alphonso David. "But in each of these struggles, we have banded together to overcome challenges that seemed insurmountable. With your help, we have harnessed our fear and our anger and turned them into strength."

Both health-wise and economically, this crisis disproportionately affects the LGBTQ community. As COVID-19 first reached the United States in early 2020, the HRC Foundation published a research brief showing the unique health and economic impacts being

experienced by the LGBTQ community during this crisis.

"When you think about LGBTQ people and COVID-19, you really have to look at some of the ways our community is uniquely at risk and layer that with the other disparities many of us face," said Jay Brown, senior vice president of the HRC Foundation.

"Think about what this might mean to the young Black queer man with asthma or the older gay man in a nursing home in Kentucky, the undocumented transgender Latina woman who gets sick or the restaurant worker who is worried she'll be laid off first because her boss is biphobic. As a community, we not only lack explicit non-discrimination protections, but we have higher health disparities and are more apt to be living in poverty than our non-LGBTQ peers."

This becomes starkly evident when looking at the numbers in the brief. According to the research, 40% of all industries in which LGBTQ people work — which is 5 million LGBTQ people — are likely to be impacted by COVID-19. In terms of health care, 17% of LGBTQ people compared to 12% of non-LGBTQ people do not have health insurance — and that number rises to 23% for LGBTQ adults of color and 32% for transgender adults of color.

That's why HRC is using this research — and highlighting the need for more inclusive data collection — to educate policymakers and community advocates about what our community needs in this crisis in order to address it effectively.

We won't stop there. HRC knows that in order to address and serve our

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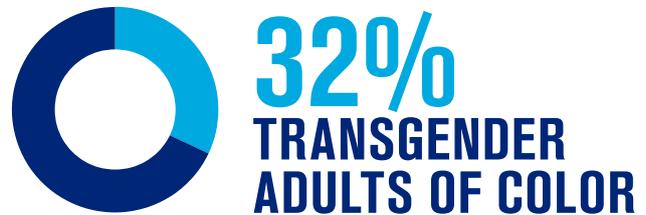
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## HEALTH CARE: PEOPLE WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE



*cont'd from p. 11*

community effectively during this crisis, we must also tackle the many issues that uniquely affect LGBTQ people.

From our efforts to keep LGBTQ people and those serving them informed through our series of webinars, to media outreach, to letters to lawmakers and more — HRC is utilizing various mediums to advocate for LGBTQ community needs.

And we have made sure those efforts are accessible virtually — through webcasts of interfaith services, online community briefings about COVID's impact on seniors, people living with HIV, and transgender people and more. Since many LGBTQ people may not have supportive social structures around them during this time, and could even be socially isolated with families who may not affirm their LGBTQ identity, these resources can also provide a sense of community during this crisis.

Mobilizing online is also a key aspect of how HRC is ensuring we don't lose sight of the critical nature of the upcoming 2020 elections. The

anti-equality Trump-Pence administration has proven they will stop at nothing to discriminate against the LGBTQ community. The administration's incompetent handling of the COVID-19 pandemic further raises the urgency to ensure Trump is a one-term president, and exposes how unfit he is to lead the country during a crisis.

**THE STAKES ARE HIGHER THAN EVER WITH THIS ELECTION: THE VERY FUTURE OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY AND OUR NATION HANG IN THE BALANCE.**

This pandemic has only crystallized why it is so important that we defeat Donald Trump and Mike Pence and elect competent, pro-equality leaders in November. Lives are quite literally at

risk and this administration has shown us time and again that they are asleep at the wheel.

Our rights, our democracy and the future of the U.S. Supreme Court are on the line, and we need your help.

HRC is committed to using our political power, working in tandem alongside our coalition partners, to move legislative and policy changes that are inclusive of the LGBTQ community forward. We will work to ensure that aid packages do not forget our community, including those of us who hold multiple marginalized identities, and we will push lawmakers to ensure any legislation and funding includes LGBTQ people — especially knowing that our community is disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

But we can't do this alone — we need each and every one of you in the HRC family to support our efforts, and we promise you that we won't rest until we are on the other side of this crisis.

Stay strong, stay resilient and remember that we will be working with you every step of the way to get through this together. Stay informed at [hrc.im/COVID19Resources](https://hrc.im/COVID19Resources). 🇺🇸



# Many voices. One shared purpose.

**We don't look the same, act the same or think the same, but we're united by a shared purpose – to help people realize life's potential.**

We believe that real breakthroughs come from teams that think big, encourage all voices to be heard and respect each other's differences – different ideas, different perspectives, and different experiences. That's why we're working hard to build an organization that celebrates difference, learns from diverse perspectives and values inclusion as a core foundation of our company culture. Working at Danaher means thinking big, winning together and always bringing your true self to work.

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# WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITY STRONG

HRC TEAMS WITH COALITION PARTNERS TO SUPPORT LGBTQ PEOPLE DURING THE PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS



To Lynn Faria, the ongoing public health crisis continues to show how resilient the LGBTQ community is, especially our elder community.

“One thing that is really important is the resilience of the LGBTQ elder community,” Faria, SAGE executive vice president, told *Equality*. “These are the folks who have been at the frontline of our movement. I think for younger folks, it’s incumbent on us to make sure the trailblazers of our movement are doing OK.”

Adversity isn’t new to the LGBTQ community, and we have learned that — by coming together — we can be a powerful force to uplift and assist others. So when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, HRC and HRC Foundation joined our coalition allies to work toward how to best serve our communities.

This crisis impacts the most vulnerable among us and underscores the inequities that put LGBTQ people at greater risk. Both health-wise and economically, this crisis disproportionately affects the LGBTQ community.

That’s why HRC is working with an intersectional lens to tackle this crisis with our partner organizations.

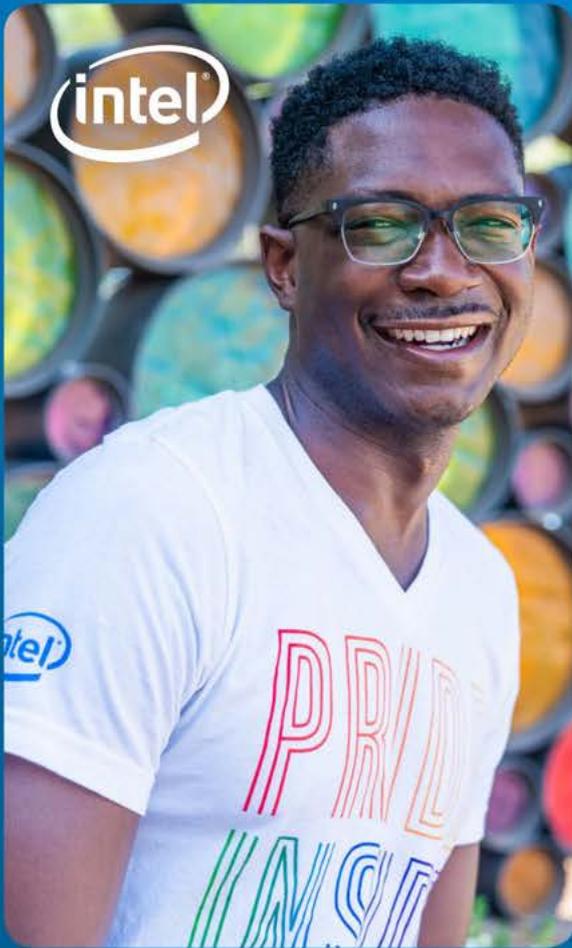
SAGE and HRC Foundation have been working together to ensure that the 3 million LGBTQ older people in the U.S. have physical and social support through the coronavirus outbreak.

“LGBTQ elders are literally at the epicenter of this pandemic. LGBTQ older folks are more likely to experience high blood pressure or HIV, and have a lower instance of access in care,” Faria said. “It also further contributes to LGBTQ folks’ social isolation, and LGBTQ elders are more likely to be socially disconnected. In this time of social disconnection for so many, it just makes this experience of being isolated that much more huge.”

Since LGBTQ older people are less likely to be partnered or have children, Faria’s point about social isolation is especially acute with social distancing measures in place. An earlier AARP survey of older LGBTQ people revealed that three in four respondents were concerned about not having enough support from family and friends as they age, and 60% of LGBTQ older people worried about discrimination in long-term care facilities they rely on, while 40% are fearful of coming out to their provider.

We’re working to help them get through this. HRC Foundation and SAGE created an issue brief highlighting the vulnerabilities of older LGBTQ adults to COVID-19, and how they can be supported through this crisis. In addition, we partnered with SAGE and Lambda Legal on an educational presentation to provide tools, support and solutions for navigating the pandemic for LGBTQ elders, policymakers and elder-care professionals.

*continued on p. 17*



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**H**RC Foundation has also ensured we shine a light on how the pandemic is impacting LGBTQ youth and the child welfare organizations serving them.

In a virtual discussion with Alison Delpercio, the director of HRC Foundation's All Children - All Families program, HRC Foundation Youth Ambassador Nakiya Lynch spoke about why it's important for child welfare agencies and staff to utilize an LGBTQ-inclusive lens when dealing with LGBTQ youth who are even more vulnerable now, especially due to lack of access, depending on their area.

"Usually during times like this, I think it's important to show that you are as attentive and inclusive as possible," Lynch said. "LGBTQ communities [are] disproportionately affected by the virus because marginalized people tend not to have as equal opportunity to health care, and when you show that you are looking and paying attention it's important ... because in these trying times, it's good to feel like you're cared for."

With our most vulnerable communities in mind, HRC is working with our coalition partners to ensure we take care of our community with public education, policy, advocacy and more.

In partnership with groups including AIDS United; Anti-Defamation League; American Association of People with Disabilities; Leadership Conference; The Arc; National Women's Law Center; and National Center for Transgender Equality, HRC signed onto several open letters to the media, Congress and more to educate and advocate for policies that will help LGBTQ people to get through the COVID-19 crisis.

These letters called for a range of actions, from ensuring that the media highlights LGBTQ community

members' increased vulnerability to coronavirus, to urging elected officials to ensure that voting is accessible to everyone, to funding long-term public health infrastructure and more.

To provide guidance for communities most impacted by the virus, HRC also developed a series of webinars with partner organizations to discuss the unique challenges and lasting effects of COVID-19 on the LGBTQ community.

As in all emergencies, the most marginalized are often the most at risk. In this case, LGBTQ people are at more risk of the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Those living with HIV, particularly Black and Latinx gay and bisexual men, are particularly

vulnerable. In a webinar on the crossroads of HIV and COVID-19, HRC and health experts discussed the impact and challenges COVID-19 has created for HIV prevention and care. And in partnership with Native Son and TheBody.com, HRC Foundation hosted 'CommUNITY Voices' a panel discussion focused on gay and bi+ Black men navigating HIV and COVID-19.

According to the CDC, one in two Black cisgender men who have sex with men, and one in four cisgender Latinx men who have sex with men will be diagnosed with HIV in their lifetimes. One in two Black transgender women, and one in four transgender Latinx women live with HIV. In a webinar with health experts, we discussed what this means for LGBTQ people navigating the COVID crisis while living with HIV.

For people living with HIV, taking

care of oneself is now more important than ever.

"Regardless of one's HIV status, we all play a part in ensuring that we remain healthy," said J. Maurice McCants-Pearsall, HRC Foundation's director of HIV & Health Equity. "It's also more important than ever to stick to your treatment schedule and do your best to keep stress from impacting your mental and physical health."

We also are working with our partners to use different platforms in order to reach vulnerable communities. We hosted an Instagram Live in partnership with Mental Health America specifically to support youth who are in isolation with non-affirming caretak-

**"WHAT REMAINS CLEAR IS THAT FOR US TO GET THROUGH THIS CRISIS, WE MUST DO IT TOGETHER, JUST LIKE WE'VE DONE BEFORE WHEN WE'VE FACED OTHER CRISES." — HRC PRESIDENT ALPHONSO DAVID**

ers/family members at this time.

Through these initiatives, and so many more, HRC and HRC Foundation are working tirelessly with our partners and allies to provide our community with the tools and resources we need to persevere in the face of this global pandemic.

"What remains clear is that for us to get through this crisis, we must do it together, just like we've done before when we've faced other crises," said HRC President Alphonso David. "At the Human Rights Campaign, our top priority is the well-being of the LGBTQ community. As we have navigated an ever-changing landscape, we have and will continue to take steps to inform our communities and advance our work."

We're thinking of you during this difficult time. Learn more and get resources you need at [hrc.im/COVID19Resources](https://hrc.im/COVID19Resources). 🇺🇸



# SHOWING UP FOR OUR FAMILY

**By Matilda Young**  
*she/her pronouns*

**We are no doubt living in unprecedented times, where the resilience of our community and communities around the world will be deeply tested.**

But in the face of these new hardships and ongoing challenges, the Human Rights Campaign is not slowing down in our fight to ensure that LGBTQ people have the resources, the protections and the support they need.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation conducts research and creates programs that have been key in addressing the inequities and inequalities that LGBTQ people face. During the COVID-19 crisis, our programs have been engaging in significant public education efforts to [meet the needs of our community](#). Here are just a few examples of our work.

## Educating Policy Makers and the Public

In the early days of the pandemic, the HRC Foundation [published a research brief](#) outlining unique health and economic risks faced by the LGBTQ community during the COVID-19 public health crisis. Many in the LGBTQ community lack the resources necessary to combat COVID-19, lacking access to paid sick leave or living without health coverage, and are more likely to work in an industry that has been most affected by the pandemic, putting them in greater economic jeopardy or increasing their exposure to the virus. And as data emerged showing that Black communities are contracting and dying from the virus at particularly high rates, [we issued a statement on this health injustice and called on state and federal officials](#) to shape public policy efforts accordingly, including by implementing inclusive data collection. It is important to know and understand the unique impact of the virus on our communities so we can help those in greatest need.

## Caring For Our LGBTQ Elders

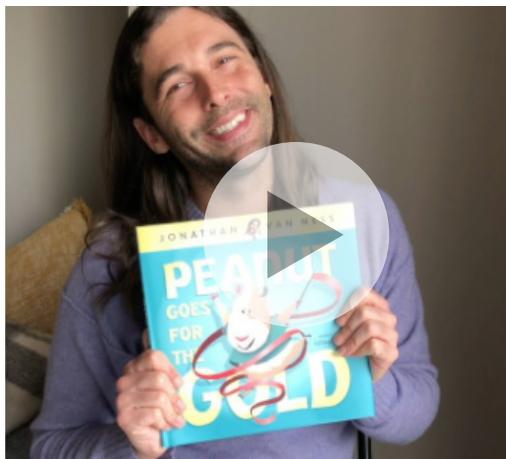
Supporting those in our communities who are the most at risk has never been more important. That includes older adults — especially LGBTQ older adults. With that in mind, the HRC Foundation and SAGE released [a new resource](#) that explains the reasons why LGBTQ older adults are particularly vulnerable during the COVID-19 health crisis, and helps to ensure they are getting the care they need. HRC Foundation also partnered with SAGE and Lambda Legal on a [webinar](#) to share resources for elder care professionals and LGBTQ seniors.

## Supporting Our LGBTQ Youth and Young Adults

LGBTQ young people face a number of obstacles, and COVID-19 has caused unprecedented disruption for students across the U.S. As schools and universities shut down, HRC [provided resources](#) for LGBTQ students who may lack family support or a home to return



## HRC FOUNDATION PROVIDES NEW RESOURCES DURING COVID-19 CRISIS



to. We also hosted a discussion on Instagram with our Youth Ambassadors who [shared self-care advice](#) for young people and for all community members. And to celebrate LGBTQ college and high school seniors all across the country, HRC hosted a virtual commencement ceremony featuring high-profile commencement speakers and other VIPs, including HRC President Alphonso David, to offer words of wisdom and support to these students, many of whom pushed against the odds to reach this important milestone (see *p. 31 for more*). In the coming months, we will continue to work with our partners to let our LGBTQ young people know that they are seen, they are valued, and their community supports them.

### Helping LGBTQ Families

Each week, while most students are out of school due to COVID-19, HRC Foundation's Welcoming Schools is offering a creative tool for parents and caregivers who are home with younger children. [On Welcoming Schools Wednesdays](#), we have shared a book

and a related activity each week for caregivers to use with children at home — with texts that focus on embracing all families, being an ally and respecting differences inclusive of LGBTQ identities. We have also begun weekly webinars on Thursdays to help educators adapt our Welcoming Schools materials to the virtual environment.

### Supporting Global Advocates

The impact of COVID-19 has no borders, and the [HRC Foundation](#) has highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on LGBTQ advocates abroad. Despite having to cancel our annual Global Innovative Advocacy Summit due to the pandemic, we will host a virtual summit to recognize 30 of the most innovative advocates from around the world and to bring them together to learn from HRC and one another. We also launched a virtual partnership program, providing virtual training to two cohorts of global advocates on engaging employers and faith leaders in advancing equality in their countries. And we held a panel lifting up the voices of global Latinx

leaders whose fight for equality and justice continues in the face of numerous challenges. HRC will continue to uplift these and other incredible leaders around the world and do all we can to support their essential efforts.

### Finding Comfort in Faith and Community

Faith can be a source of comfort for many during difficult times, and as people are no longer able to visit their places of worship in person, HRC Foundation organized a [virtual interfaith service](#), Remaining Home in Faith: An Interfaith Prayer Service, for LGBTQ people of faith and allies to come together and find community in a welcoming setting. Building upon this work, and recognizing many people were unable to celebrate Easter or Passover with their families and friends, and many may even be mourning the loss of friends and family while in isolation, we organized a virtual interfaith memorial service, Remaining Home in Faith: An Interfaith Memorial Service. These

*continued on p. 35*



Families are at the heart of all we do

	<b>BEST</b>
<small>HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION</small>	<b>PLACES TO WORK</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>for LGBTQ Equality</b>
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# WE MUST ELECT JOE BIDEN

## WITH THE FUTURE OF LGBTQ RIGHTS ON THE LINE, THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN ENDORSES A CHAMPION FOR EQUALITY

**Nov. 3 marks the most consequential election of our lifetimes.** For the past four years, the Trump-Pence administration has used every lever of its power to demean, dehumanize and attack LGBTQ people. We must take our country back.

We need a leader in the White House who will not only undo the damage of the Trump-Pence administration but be a champion for equality — someone who will instead use every tool at their disposal to restore our hard-fought gains for LGBTQ youth, transgender people, LGBTQ workers and more, and who will work to beat back all forms of discrimination.

The choice could not be more clear: We must elect Joe Biden as the next president of the United States.

“Vice President Joe Biden is the leader our community and our country need at this moment,” said Human Rights Campaign President Alphonso David. “His dedication to advancing LGBTQ equality, even when it was unpopular to do so, has pushed our country and our movement forward. Joe Biden will be a president who stands up for all of us. HRC and our more than 3 million members and supporters will work day and night to ensure he is the next president of the United States.”

### A MAJOR TURNING POINT

HRC announced its endorsement of Biden on May 6, 2020, exactly eight years after he vocalized his support for marriage equality while serving as vice president. Biden was the highest-ranking American official to speak out at a time when marriage equality was legal in just six states and the District of Columbia. It was a major turning point for LGBTQ rights and led to a sea change in public opinion, ultimately culminating in the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 2015 that made marriage equality the law of the land.

Make no mistake — we are not simply fighting to remove the Trump-Pence administration. We are fighting to ensure every person is treated with the dignity and respect we all deserve under the law, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, sex, ethnicity, national origin or ZIP code.

*continued on p. 23*

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ONE MILE AT A TIME.



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*cont'd from p. 21*

Time and again, Biden has proven himself to be a true ally to the LGBTQ community.

From his advocacy for strengthening hate crimes laws in the late 1980s to championing landmark non-discrimination legislation such as the Equality Act, Joe Biden's decades-long record supporting LGBTQ people is both strong and multifaceted. Few other national politicians have such a long record of acting on behalf of LGBTQ equality.

During his 36-year tenure in Congress, Biden championed dozens of pieces of legislation providing greater protections for LGBTQ people. As both a member of Congress and as vice president, he supported workplace protections, HIV & AIDS programs, open military service by LGBTQ people and more.

### **FIRST 100 DAYS**

His work to advance equality will begin the moment he steps foot in the White House. In 2019, just weeks after announcing his candidacy, Biden committed to passing the Equality Act during his first 100 days as president at the 36th HRC Columbus Dinner.

Biden reiterated that commitment during a special event for HRC members and supporters on the day of HRC's endorsement, broadcast live on HRC's social media channels.

"It's critical that the president make it clear that [LGBTQ] discrimination exists," said Biden. "Enacting the Equality

Act will be one of the top priorities I have...I'm going to make it a priority in my first 100 days."

Throughout his career, Biden has been ahead of the curve on expanding protections and rights for transgender Americans. In 2012, he called transgender rights the "civil rights issue of our time," articulating a truth that many — even in his own party at the time — left unaddressed.

He worked with President Obama to install transgender Americans throughout the administration, including to positions within the White House. Throughout his campaign, Biden has elevated the need to address violence facing the transgender community.

"There's been an epidemic of violence against trans women, particularly trans women of color," he said during HRC's video broadcast. "At least 26 transgender or gender non-conforming individuals have been violently killed in 2019, and a majority were Black transgender women. Hatred and bigotry weren't born when Trump took office, but let's be clear: He's giving it safe harbor."

The stakes in this election could not be higher. The safety of our young people, our health care rights, workplace equality, protections for transgender people, open military service, the future of the U.S. Supreme Court and more are all on the line.

The challenges are even more significant for LGBTQ and Equality Voters as we grapple with COVID-19, which has a disproportionate impact on the health and finances of these communi-

ties, and especially those who are multiply marginalized. Many LGBTQ people are uniquely vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19, as we are more likely to work jobs in highly affected industries, often with more exposure and/or higher economic sensitivity to the COVID-19 crisis, are less likely to have health coverage, and are more likely to smoke and have chronic illnesses.

### **THE PATH TO VICTORY**

This election will define our nation's future. And it's clear that LGBTQ and Equality Voters are a force that must power Joe Biden to victory on Nov. 3.

"The courage and determination of the LGBTQ community and movement is one of the most astonishing moral forces in modern American history ... we're going to need the same force and the same drive, the same conviction to win the battles ahead of us," Biden said during HRC's video event. "Protecting LGBTQ youth, winning full rights for the trans community, passing the Equality Act, guarding the rights of the LGBTQ workers... nothing about this will be easy. But I am absolutely convinced the American people are with us. Together, I know we're going to do it."

As president, we know that is the same dedication he will bring to push us ever closer to full equality. Join HRC in our work to elect Joe Biden and other pro-equality candidates in 2020. Unite for equality. Like never before.

Learn more about how you can get involved at [hrc.org/election2020](https://www.hrc.org/election2020). 🇺🇸

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HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

In a time where uncertainty looms because of a public health crisis, there's one thing that remains certain: Donald Trump's response in moments of crisis shows he's unfit to lead this country, and HRC will work hard to ensure we elect a pro-equality president on Nov. 3.

"Now, more than ever, we must do all in our power to remove the vestiges of hate, indifference and blatant discrimination emanating from the Trump-Pence administration and anti-LGBTQ politicians in statehouses across this country," said HRC President Alphonso David. "We will continue to work toward these goals, and weather this crisis as we have weathered crises before — by uniting."

Building on our momentum from the 2018 election, HRC is mobilizing LGBTQ and Equality Voters to once again turn out the vote — because LGBTQ equality is once again on the line these elections.

It's clear that the COVID-19 pandemic will likely affect how many of us will vote this fall. Part of HRC's work

to turn out the vote is educating voters about how they can safely make their voices heard at the ballot box.

HRC's new "Vote Equal, Vote Safe" initiative is focused on ensuring LGBTQ voters and their allies across the political spectrum are able to exercise their right to vote without compromising their own health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will be educating voters about their voting options and advocating at all levels of government for funding as well as expanded voting options, including but not limited to: vote by mail, more early voting options and Election Day polling locations.

If the 2018 and 2019 elections prove anything, it's that anti-LGBTQ agendas are no longer a winning strategy. On the contrary, incumbents and challengers who voiced their support for equality on the campaign trail won — and they won big.

Three years ago, HRC invested in our largest grassroots expansion in our 40-year history. We started by identifying priority states where our investments in key races would make a

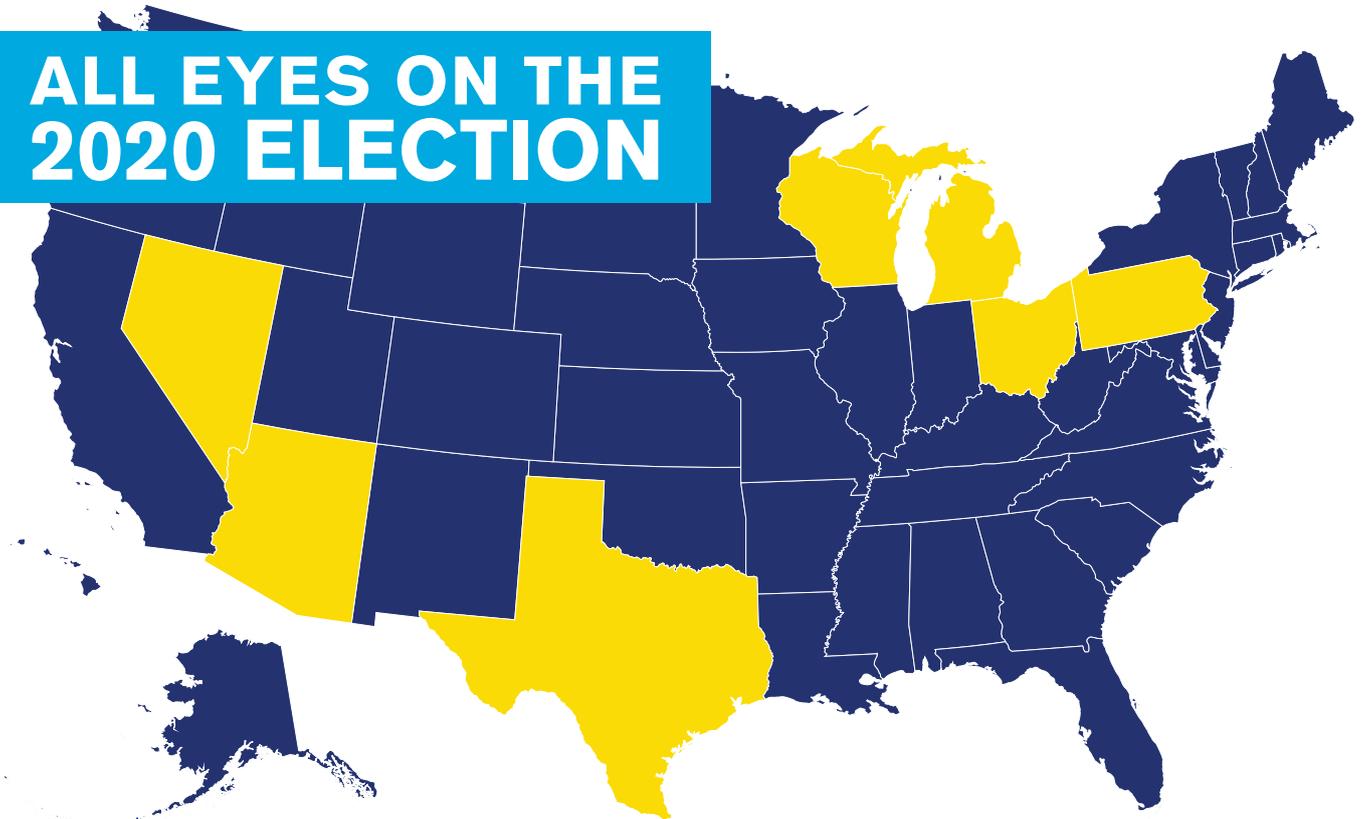
difference: Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. These states had congressional, gubernatorial, state legislative and other elections important to moving equality forward, in addition to their potential importance to the presidential election in 2020. Among other things, our 2018 victories resulted in a pro-equality U.S. House majority that passed the Equality Act, comprehensive LGBTQ civil rights legislation, in May of last year.

In 2019, HRC made its largest investment in a state legislative election in Virginia and, together, we elected historic pro-equality majorities in both chambers of the General Assembly. These pro-equality majorities opened the door for long-stalled pro-LGBTQ legislation, including the Virginia Values Act, which takes effect on July 1, 2020, and will make Virginia the first Southern state to enact comprehensive non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people.

In the primaries this year, exit polls show LGBTQ voters are turning

*continued on p. 27*

## ALL EYES ON THE 2020 ELECTION





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out in record-high fashion. From New Hampshire and South Carolina, to Texas and Illinois, LGBTQ voters have more than doubled — and in some cases tripled — their turnout as a proportion of each state's voting eligible population.

These numbers show what we already know — that the power of LGBTQ voters is only growing, and that if candidates want to succeed, they must run on pro-equality platforms to do so.

"All of the data from this year's presidential primary, the 2018 midterms and the 2016 presidential election show the LGBTQ voting bloc is growing and that LGBTQ voters are difference-makers," said HRC National Campaign Director Geoff Wetrosky. "We turn out at rates much higher than the general public, and we overwhelmingly support pro-equality candidates ... The fate of LGBTQ people and our rights have been on the ballot for decades, compelling us to register to vote and participate in politics, as opposed to letting others decide our rights for us."

With our eyes on the 2020 elections, HRC has identified more than 57 million "Equality Voters" for whom issues of equality are a make-or-break issue. Approximately one-third of Equality Voters nationwide are at risk of not turning out to vote in 2020, including 2.5 million in the key presidential battleground states of Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. HRC is targeting these voters for mobilization and engagement in our priority states and in key districts nationwide. We are also expanding our list of priority states to include Texas, a state where HRC has had on-the-ground staff working for years to combat dozens of anti-LGBTQ bills put forward by Texas legislators. In Texas, there are a half-dozen competitive U.S. House races on the ballot in 2020, the state House is in play, and it's possible the presidential campaigns will invest in the state more so than in any other presidential election in recent memory.

2020 provides us the starkest choice in American history: to elect equality champion Joe Biden as president or to face four more years of a Trump-Pence administration that has attacked LGBTQ people at every opportunity. Join HRC in the fight to make America pro-equality again at [hrc.org/election2020](https://hrc.org/election2020). ■

## FIVE WAYS TO HELP US MOVE EQUALITY FORWARD VIRTUALLY

Here are five actions you can take immediately to help ensure pro-equality Joe Biden defeats Donald Trump.

- +** **Join our virtual HRC 'Team'**  
HRC has launched our new advocacy app, 'TEAM.' By downloading this app, you can directly engage your own personal contacts via SMS text, email and social media about the pro-equality issues they care about. Sign up today at [go.JoinTeam.com/HRC](https://go.JoinTeam.com/HRC).
- +** **Promote HRC's Election and Voting Resources**  
Visit [HRC.org/election2020](https://HRC.org/election2020) to pledge to get three friends to vote; Join HRC's mobile action network to confirm your voter registration status and receive information about volunteer opportunities; and recruit individuals from your networks to become HRC members.
- +** **"Operation Swing State"**  
HRC has identified a set of states — Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — that will be pivotal to the outcome of where we need to build capacity now. Starting now, every Tuesday until the 2020 election, HRC staff and volunteers are calling into these states to help our on-the-ground organizing staff identify and mobilize HRC members and Equality Voters. Join today at [HRC.im/SwingStateSquad](https://HRC.im/SwingStateSquad).
- +** **Sign up for Virtual Volunteer Shifts**  
Staying at home doesn't mean you won't have opportunities to volunteer. HRC will be rolling out virtual actions you can take over the coming weeks to help us this election. Learn more at [HRC.im/volunteershifts](https://HRC.im/volunteershifts).
- +** **Join or Renew Your Membership**  
We wouldn't be able to do this work without your support. Support HRC and our organizing work by joining or renewing your membership this year and inviting friends to join as members for as little as \$5 at [hrc.org/donate](https://hrc.org/donate).





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# REMAINING HOME IN FAITH

By **Madeleine Roberts**

*they/them pronouns*

**H**RC Foundation's national faith tour, "Coming Home to Faith: A Search for Common Ground," launched in early March with the goal of strengthening the bonds between communities of faith and the LGBTQ community — communities that are not mutually exclusive. With the changes brought on by the COVID-19 health crisis, the platform of the tour has moved from in-person to online, but the underlying aspirations remain the same.

The tour launched at the Historic African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in Philadelphia, Pa., with a focus on love, dignity and equity.

"These themes are found at the core of all faith traditions, and are also themes of the LGBTQ movement," said Michael Vazquez, HRC Foundation's new religion & faith director. "During the age of COVID-19, we must proactively live out an ethic of love, justice and equity."

The current and vital practice of social distancing is hard for many people, but it can put an especially heavy burden on the LGBTQ community. Many LGBTQ people may be at home with unaccepting families, may be separated from their chosen family and friends and could even be mourning the loss of

friends and family while in isolation. In addition, many in the LGBTQ community are likely to be more negatively impacted by the current situation because of the high likelihood of losing their income, jobs or housing, compounding the sense of isolation, loss and grief.

"I can remember in the mid-80s, at the height of the AIDS crisis, we used to pray for those who lived in fear... [and] I think that's an important prayer for right now," said Ret. Bishop Gene Robinson, Episcopal Church. "And, let's remember that there were isolated and lonely people long before this pandemic began, and now we are just so much more aware of it."

That knowledge is why one of HRC Foundation's first actions after moving our work online was to host two virtual faith services, "Remaining Home in Faith: An Interfaith Prayer Service" and "Remaining Home in Faith: An Interfaith Memorial Service." These virtual gatherings featured faith leaders from a multitude of different backgrounds and religious traditions.

We know that faith can be a source of comfort for many, including LGBTQ people, during difficult times. The HRC Foundation is dedicated to meeting people where they are now, and making sure these affirming, virtual spaces exist for LGBTQ people of faith and allies to build community.

These services were a reminder that we are not alone — either as an LGBTQ community or as an affirming faith community. While the prayer service focused on the perseverance of our community, and the memorial service was centered on finding solace in the midst of our grief, both services were grounded in the knowledge that we can find strength, resilience and hope with each other during this difficult time.

**"I look at the giants who came before us, who wrestled with discrimination and oppression, and a government who did not care about their lives or our lives," said HRC President Alphonso David during the prayer service. "Their practice was justice. Their practice was resilience. Their practice was love. Every day, they decided to start again; every day, they made their communities and the world a little better, more joyful and more free. It is this practice that I call on all of us to embrace anew."**

HRC Foundation will be continuing our important work of engaging on religion and faith issues throughout the virtual age of COVID-19 — and beyond. We know that it's ever more critical to make sure that LGBTQ people of faith feel supported, valued and loved. Visit [hrc.org/religion](https://www.hrc.org/religion) to learn more. 🏳️‍🌈

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**ELLE SMITH**

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE (THEY/THEM)**

MORE VIDEOS

# CELEBRATING THE LGBTQ CLASS OF 2020

## AMID SOCIAL DISTANCING, HRC & GLSEN HOST STAR-STUDED VIRTUAL EVENT

**By Elliott Kozuch**  
*they/them pronouns*

When HRC estimated that nearly a half-million LGBTQ graduating high school and college students may not get to walk across a stage to celebrate their accomplishments, we knew we had to do something. Too often, LGBTQ young people are not allowed to be their true selves at home or at school — and we know these challenges can be heightened during times of stress, such as during COVID-19.

So, on May 8, HRC partnered with GLSEN, the leading national organization focused on LGBTQ issues in K-12 education, to host a virtual graduation ceremony to offer words of wisdom, a few laughs and two powerful musical moments to lift the spirits of these graduates as they prepare for their next steps in life. As HRC President Alphonso David said during the event, these graduates are “today’s visionaries for tomorrow’s future.”

The incredible lineup of speakers included Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif.; actor Josie Totah; drag performers and stars of HBO’s “We’re Here,” Shangela, Bob the Drag Queen and Eureka; GLSEN Executive Director Eliza Byard; Dillard University President Walter M. Kimbrough; Marshall Fundamental Secondary School (Pasadena, California) Principal Mark Anderson; and a host of LGBTQ graduates — from high school to graduate school.

“It is our duty as academics to use the power and privilege that we have to give back to those who are not so fortunate — to continue to challenge the status quo and live our lives as best we know how,” said Charles C. Patton, a 2020 graduate of South Carolina State University, during the ceremony.

Singer, songwriter and advocate Shea Diamond shared a powerful message of resilience by performing her hit song “American Pie,” inspiring these graduates with her lyrics: “Just want my piece of the American pie /

Got your slice, where is mine / Lick my fingers on this thing called life / Just a piece of the American pie / Break the chains of old beliefs / I’m the flame that you can’t unsee.”

HRC Youth Ambassador Nhandi, formerly known as dj young 1 and a 2020 high school graduate, closed the event out with a virtual dance party hosted from her own living room — complete with rainbow-colored decorations and an illuminated sign with the words “We did it!”

These graduates are our future doctors and nurses, church leaders, organizers and activists, lawyers, elected officials, teachers and parents. This generation is the most openly LGBTQ generation in history. They are fired up when they see injustice, and they are ready to go change the face of our nation for the better.

Missed out on the fun? Need a dose of inspiration during these trying times? You can watch the full program at [hrc.im/VirtualGrad](https://hrc.im/VirtualGrad). 🇺🇸

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# FDA LOOSENS BAN ON BLOOD DONATIONS FROM GAY AND BI+ MEN

## THE NEW POLICY IS PROGRESS, BUT MORE WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE

One of the many crises the U.S. is facing during the COVID-19 global pandemic is a shortage of blood donors. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has long had in place varying restrictions around how and when men who have sex with men can donate blood. In early April, the FDA announced that it was revising those restrictions again to shorten the period of time it requires men who have sex with men to remain abstinent before donating blood.

While this FDA announcement is a step in the right direction, it's still not enough. We are not yet there with equality in the rules surrounding blood donations, and won't be until the policy treats all potential donors based on the actual risk their blood poses to the blood supply rather than who they are.

"As the global pandemic wears on, the integrity and safety of the blood supply in this country must be preserved, strengthened and maintained," said HRC President Alphonso David. "Continuing to enforce the de facto prohibition on blood donation by sexually active gay and bisexual men does not reflect the best science available."

For decades, HRC has been advocating to bring an end to this policy, and has undertaken a variety of actions around this advocacy since the 1980s. These actions include holding meetings with the American Red Cross and the American Association of Blood Banks, working with and calling on presidential administrations to support changes to the so-called blood ban and partnering with members of the U.S. House and Senate, as well as our coalition partners, to advocate for changes to the policy.

This work centers on the need for a blood donation policy that reflects current science and an assessment of individual risk, rather than the sexual orientation or gender identity of the prospective donor.

But under the guidelines announced at the beginning of April, a person can give blood days after having unprotected sex, while a gay or bi+ man who has had sex with another man within three months of the date they would like to donate blood — even with condoms and taking HIV prevention medicine such as PrEP — cannot. It is unacceptable for this bias to be the basis for determining eligibility to donate blood.

"Modernization of the policy is essential to ensure that the blood supply remains as safe as possible while maximizing the donor pool," David said.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., joined David on a virtual press

conference with reporters and concurred that the FDA's upcoming policies should be based on the best public health information, not anti-LGBTQ bias.

"It shouldn't have taken a pandemic and the resulting urgent blood shortage to make progress on this issue," Baldwin said. "It's an important step to addressing an immediate dire blood supply shortage, but the administration needs to change their donation policies to be based on an individual's risk, rather than blanket deferrals so that all healthy gay and bisexual men are able to donate blood."

HRC will continue to advocate for full equality with blood donation rules and fight systemic anti-LGBTQ policies. Keep up with our ongoing national advocacy work at [hrc.org/explore/topic/federal-advocacy](https://hrc.org/explore/topic/federal-advocacy). 🏳️‍🌈





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virtual services are an extension of a series of in-person events launched earlier this year with a goal of building bridges between the faith and LGBTQ communities. (See more on page 29)

### The Fight For Health Equity For People Living With HIV

Folks with compromised immune systems are at greater risk during this

crisis, [including people living with HIV](#). Our HIV and Health Equity Program is working to ensure this community is getting the information and support they need. HRC Foundation hosted a [webinar bringing together public health experts](#) to provide information about how health centers and HIV programs are responding to the needs of LGBTQ patients. And in partnership with Native Son and TheBody.Com, [HRC Foundation hosted "CommUNITY Voices"](#) a panel discussion focused on gay and bi+ Black

men navigating HIV and COVID-19. In partnership with HRC Foundation's Transgender Justice Initiative, we'll also be hosting more virtual events in the coming months to provide crucial resources to communities most in need.

This is an abnormal time amid an already abnormal few years. But we will get through this — because we have gotten through crises before. But we cannot do it alone; we have to stand together. The HRC Foundation and our broader HRC family is with you every step of the way. 🇺🇸



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# Membership Matters HRCares.

*A virtual care package for you!*

HRC depends on our members day in and day out to help push our movement for equality forward. You give us hope and inspiration daily. We know it is a challenging time for everyone, and we want you to know we are here for you – that's why we put together this virtual care package for HRC members. We hope it brings a smile to your face and little bit of comfort to help get you through the day!



## JAM OUT AT HOME:

Throw a dance party at home with this special Spotify playlist Billy Porter created for the HRC community. Listen whenever you need a pick-me-up or something to brighten your day!



## WORKING WITH PRIDE:

Zoom with pride using HRC's virtual backgrounds. Then grab a screenshot of yourself using one and share it with us on Instagram (@HumanRightsCampaign) and Twitter (@HRC).



## VIDEOS TO INSPIRE YOU:

Nate Berkus and Jeremiah Brent have a special message for HRC members. Check it and other inspiring videos out on our YouTube channel!



## GET COOKING:

Watch the tutorial to make this comfort food recipe from chef, television personality, brand partner and LGBTQ advocate Melissa King! This recipe is perfect for staying cozy indoors!



## PERUSE OUR RESOURCES:

Flip through our new #WeAreHRC special report to see how HRC Foundation programs touch the lives of everyone – all ages – all identities – all races. Don't miss the info on Transgender Justice initiatives, our Healthcare Equality Index, and our Historically Black Colleges and Universities programs.



## GIVE BACK:

Donate to HRC to get your HRC cloth face mask. As part of HRC Gives Back, we will donate two navy blue cloth face masks to our nonprofit partner, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health.

**Thank you again for all that you do. To renew your support and help us continue to advance equality, visit [HRC.org/spring](https://www.hrc.org/spring).**

The EY logo is positioned in the upper right corner of the advertisement, set against the dark facade of a skyscraper at night. The logo consists of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a yellow diagonal line striking through the top right corner of the 'Y'.

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