

the ALLIANCE

Celebrating LGBTQ+ People in Real Estate | VOLUME II, Issue 1 | 2024

PRI^{ME}²⁰²⁴



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LEGACY BLUE**
2024 National
President

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Cover photo: Couplesflyingdressportraits.com



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WELCOME to the alliance

OUR VISION...

To create a world free of housing discrimination.

OUR MISSION...

ADVOCATE. ELEVATE. CELEBRATE.

Advocate for fair housing for all and promote LGBTQ+ homeownership. Elevate professionalism in the industry through education and networking. Celebrate diversity and inclusion in our members and allied partners.

OUR VALUES...

COMMUNITY
COLLABORATION
EQUALITY + EQUITY
INCLUSION
TRANSPARENCY
PRIDE

OUR CORE BELIEF...

We believe in accountable leadership to the members of the organization, as well as the practice of transparency from all members, in all things. We will be an organization that hears every voice and will reflect the values and ethics of its members.

Celebrate Your Resilience!

FRIENDS,

HAPPY PRIDE! It is my privilege and honor as your 2024 National President to share with you the second issue of the Alliance Magazine as we kick off Pride season. In an election year when LGBTQ rights will be a target for the hard right, our community must continue to move forward together in unity for our rights. Our theme this year "Celebrate Pride, Celebrate Resilience" seems fitting.

The concept of resilience resonates for me, personally, as a Black lesbian woman and a military veteran. I am here today in this role because of my faith and a God-given tenacity that kept me moving forward through undesirable challenges. My faith in myself is my super-power.

My journey as a single mother, hiding in plain sight in the military as an LGBTQ woman during the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" era taught me a lot about myself. I had to learn to keep my fear in check and I worked harder than others to excel at my job. I used "excellence" as a tool to deflect questions away from my personal life and to instead center the attention on my performance. It was my way of coping.

My story isn't unique. For many LGBTQ people, moments like this make us aware of our differences. Younger generations may experience greater acceptance and transparency today, but as recent history has shown, discrimination is always a threat.

Our personal stories matter. That saying, "You're stronger than you think," is an important reminder that we're not the only ones who have difficulties. Our stories are more similar than different. We learn resilience from one another.

I invite you to spend a few moments getting to know fellow Alliance members in this issue who find ways to focus on their blessings, stay positive in the face of negative news and embrace the gift of PRIDE every year. These people inspire me with their stick-to-itiveness and courage.

Moments are what you make of them. Get swept up in Pride and take a moment to celebrate your strength and the amazing perseverance of our community.



ANITA BLUE

2024 National President
LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance

A purpose for all people.

At the core of our purpose—to build better lives and communities—are the values that guide us to be intentional about diversity, equity, and inclusion. We do the work every day to diversify our leadership, empower all teammates, fight for the opportunities we all deserve, and support organizations like the LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance and their mission to advocate for fair housing for all and promote LGBTQ+ homeownership.

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My Journey to an Authentic LIFE

Anita Legacy Blue's
path to a national
leadership role began
with faith and
tenacity

For Anita Legacy Blue, serving as President of the LGBTQ Real Estate Alliance is more than a professional milestone: It's a "pinch me" moment in her personal story as a community servant leader.

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT all those years during her military career has made the transparency of her national role a memorable experience. "Every time I step on a stage in front of hundreds of people to share my story, my truth, and my experience as a Black lesbian, I am grateful for where this journey has taken me," she says.

Growing up in rural Alexandria, LA. in the 1970s without LGBTQ+ friends or role models, Anita's self-discovery emerged from a struggle to reconcile her identity within the confines of conventional norms. "Being a lesbian was not something that was accepted. I was raised in the church, and that influenced how I thought about myself and my differences," she shares. Despite these external messages, Anita learned to embrace her internal truth. "Eventually I grew to have faith in myself. I knew I was a good person," she affirms. "I am definitely a believer in God. That's how I've been able to survive. It's really my faith, my belief that I am in the right place. I knew I was put here for a reason."

Anita also knew that she needed to leave her hometown and family to explore her life's purpose. Feeling out of place in the traditional school setting, she sought alternatives to build a better future for herself and realize her legacy. "The military was my way out," she explains. "I wanted to be a part of something bigger than me."

Her aspiration came with its own complex set of hurdles. Anita served in the Air Force during a time when transparency was a professional liability. "In my whole 35 years in the military, I only told one person that I was a lesbian," Anita says. During the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" era, she describes a daily work environment shrouded in secrecy. "The level of fear and shame was unbelievable. I was not able to



shine my light." She recalls the constant paradox of advancing her military leadership role while dodging personally oppressive policies. "Not living as your authentic self is like living in a box. I was able to rise, but it was hard. I was always challenged to become a leader while hiding in plain sight," she confides. "I deflected questions about my personal life by being the best I could be. I strived for perfection. I always showed up. I looked sharp, and my performance and commitment made me an example to others."

Anita's experience navigating through systemic barriers to become an accomplished entrepreneur, author, community mentor, and successful eXp Realtor shaped her passion to cultivate environments that help other LGBTQ+ individuals thrive. "We are an important part of the fabric of America. We are people who exist with intelligence, with love, with the spirit of giving. We want to live our lives and be elevated to where we belong without fear of repercussions, without having to hide, without fading into a background when you enter a room," she contends. "I treasure my freedom, my wife, my family, and the life I am able to live now. The Alliance exists as a place where I can bring my family, I can talk about my wife, I can feel comfortable in a space that is all ours."

Anita's message to fellow Alliance members centers on the power of determination and collective action to uphold the legacies of those who came before us. "Don't be afraid to step out there and speak up for yourself. Be courageous. Believe in yourself. That's the key to resilience," she declares. "We must fight because somebody fought for us to be where we are today. And we must stand in solidarity to dismantle what is being placed on or against us. Find your niche, find your tribe, and show up there." ■



EVERYONE EXPERIENCES CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS. But some people seem to sail around obstacles, while others get derailed and discouraged. Their secret isn't just a positive mindset. They dive right into their feelings and confront situations head on. In essence, they moderate their response to life events, and they don't give up.

Take a moment to read these inspiring personal stories about Alliance members who stood up for what's right, took a stand against hate, shouted their differences through action, ran for political office in the deep South, rallied a Pride tribe, or was a white supremacist in a past life. They all found the courage to lean into the challenge.

Maybe they will motivate you to stand up in a way you have never done before. **That's how we all win.**

GABRIELLE CLAIBORNE
she/her
AUTHOR, INCLUSION TRAINER,
TEDX & KEYNOTE SPEAKER

"For me, resilience is every time I walk out the door... What you see is what you get,"

—Gabrielle Claiborne



COURAGE IS A SUPERPOWER

Gabrielle Claiborne builds courage muscles as a transgender advocate

Gabrielle Claiborne hasn't always considered herself to be a courageous person, especially when it came to facing one particularly relentless internal dilemma. "I spent half of my life wrestling with cultural expectations regarding my gender. The fears in my head kept me stuck in a place that was not in integrity with my heart," Gabrielle explains during a 2019 TEDx Talk, **Building Your Courage Muscles**.

She describes courage as a power that lay dormant deep inside, a force that longed to be awakened and nurtured. Until 19 years ago, when the man she had been living as discovered a website that showed pictures of transgender women. "When I saw those images, my heart immediately recognized, 'that's me,'" Gabrielle reveals.

Gabrielle's path to becoming a transgender advocacy leader today is a culmination of hundreds of sometimes terrifying steps to build what she calls "courage muscles," until she was finally ready to step into her authentic self.

"For me, resilience is every time I walk out the door," Gabrielle says. "What you see is what you get." Her expression carries the weight of a daily exercise in magnified visibility and vulnerability. "And this is the reality for many LGBTQ+ people, especially trans and non-binary people, in the culture that we are living in right now," she points out.

As co-founder of **Transformation Journeys Worldwide**, Gabrielle helps organizations create trans-inclusive cultures. She also serves on the Alliance board of directors, spearheading their transgender-focused diversity and inclusion training. Her activism, now in its 14th year, began with the Atlanta

"None of us are **safe** until all of us are **safe**"
—Gabrielle

Pride organization. Gabrielle reflects on a time when the visibility of trans people was far from prevalent. "There weren't a lot of us at the table," she recalls. The organization's commitment to better representation and understanding marked the start of an evolutionary journey, one that continues to take Gabrielle across the globe to educate and elevate the voices of her community.

However, the path has not been without its pushbacks. "They just couldn't wrap their heads around it," Gabrielle says, recounting the initial resistance she faced within the LGBTQ+ – then LGBT – community. The struggle for inclusivity and recognition was further challenged during the introduction of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), as the LGB community grappled with advocating for gender identity alongside sexual orientation.

"Unfortunately, the LGB proponents of ENDA advocated for their own rights, sexual orientation, and they left the trans community out," Gabrielle recalls. It was a moment that exposed the need for solidarity and the importance of sharing stories to foster empathy and unity. "None of us are safe until all of us are safe," she contends.

Today, as the LGBTQ+ community continues to evolve, Gabrielle sees a silver lining in all the lessons learned. "The good news is that the community is starting to recognize that we could have done better," she shares, invoking the wisdom of Maya Angelou. "When you know better, you do better.."



**Embrace Your Truth:
A Journey of Authenticity**
by Gabrielle Claiborne



RYAN ADAMS

he/him

VP OF GOVERNMENT AND
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AT
BIRMINGHAM ASSOCIATION
OF REALTORS®, INC.

"I was married.
I had a kid. I did
all the things a
good Southern
Republican boy
was supposed to
do... But there was
something not
right."

—Ryan Adams



STAND BY ME

Ryan Adams Takes a Stand Against Public Bullying

Ryan Adams sank into his car seat in a Birmingham parking lot one Friday night last November, stunned as he gleaned the headlines. F.L. "Bubba" Copeland, a small-town mayor and preacher in Central Alabama, died by suicide that night, 48 hours after a conservative blog published a story that included what it alleged were photos of Copeland wearing women's clothing.

"I didn't know Mayor Copeland, but the news really hit me hard. It was the mean-spirited nature of the way they went after him. I thought of the Tennessee Williams quote: 'Deliberate cruelty is not forgivable,'" he rebukes.

Witnessing the callousness of those who sought to shame and destroy Mayor Copeland, Ryan was driven to speak out. He took out his phone and posted a powerful TikTok video that made national news, condemning the perpetrators. He stated emphatically, "You have blood on your hands. You should be ashamed of yourself. This is why suicide is so high in the LGBTQ community."

Ryan knows from personal experience how emotionally destabilizing a public outing can be for someone in a visible community position. "Nobody has the right to do it for you. I don't care who it is, it's never okay to out someone," he contends.

"I am now living the life that 10 years ago I only dreamed of but didn't think was possible."

—Ryan

was the beginning of the end of my marriage," he recognizes. Following their divorce, rumors began to percolate in Ryan's professional circles, testing his resilience to its core.

"I woke up every day, waiting, assuming that this rumor was going to be plastered all over a blog somewhere. That never happened, but it felt like The Scarlet Letter when the legislature came back into session. That feeling when you walk into a room, and you know everybody has been talking about you. It was a very lonely, dark period of my life," Ryan admits.

As he navigated the aftermath of being outed, Ryan found solace in his role as a father to his young son. "I take pride in being a dad, and my son needs somebody to lead by example." Determined to create a world where his son could embrace his true self without fear or shame, Ryan decided to move forward as an openly gay man. "I decided that the best thing I could do for my son is to arm him with the truth. Ultimately,



everything I do is to try to make sure that the world is a little bit better for him," he explains.

Ryan contemplates his journey towards authenticity, a tumultuous yet transformative experience that reshaped his life and identity. "I am now living the life that 10 years ago I only dreamed of but didn't think was possible. I wish I could have had the opportunity to share that with Mayor Copeland and others like him," he adds. "I am living proof that it doesn't have to end that way." ■



**EVE
KELLER**
she/her
REALTOR

"Remember,
we're proud all
year long, not
just at the Pride
events. Stay
connected to at
least five people
every single day,"

—Eve Keller



Pictured: Eve Keller (center right) with her colleagues.

UPLIFTING ACTIVISM

Eve Keller on Queer Heritage and Fostering Supportive Communities

The whispers of the past have a way of echoing into our present, carrying lessons of resilience, identity, and the undying human spirit. For Eve Keller, a former history teacher with a passion for historical perspectives on LGBTQ+ identities, these echoes are not just faint sounds but guiding voices for her mission to empower and support today's youth.

Last April, amid the stone-cobbled streets of Halifax, UK, Eve attended a gathering in honor of Anne Lister's birthday. Known as Gentleman Jack, Anne Lister was a 19th-century figure whose 25 volumes of diaries chronicled her life as a woman who loved women, a rarity in historical records that often erased such existences. "She did consider herself queer," Eve recounts. "She literally wrote down that she felt queer." Eve shares Lister's story as a reminder that queerness is not a modern invention, but a perennial aspect of human diversity.

Her pilgrimage to Anne Lister's world was more than a historical excursion; it was a reaffirmation of her own journey as a community activist, facilitator, coach, and Realtor. She draws parallels between her life and Lister's—both women

"I have a **gratitude journal**
in the morning, and an
accomplishment reflection
journal in the evening...
It helps me look for more
things to be grateful for,"

—Eve

documented their lives meticulously, Lister through her diaries and Eve through her own journals. "I have a gratitude journal in the morning, and an accomplishment reflection journal in the evening," Eve shares. This reflective practice is her anchor, maintaining a cycle of gratitude and achievement that fuels her advocacy work. "It helps me look for more things to be grateful for, and the same thing happens when you document your accomplishments," she attests.

In Indianapolis, Eve is channeling her inspiration into reviving the "Natural Helpers" program—a peer

support initiative for high school students with roots in her own adolescence. It's a program where caring and inspirational students are identified through anonymous surveys and then trained in coping skills, self-care, and active listening. The aim is to strengthen a network of youth support, connecting vulnerable peers to trusted adults and other appropriate resources.

Eve says programs like these are vital to address the alarming increase in youth suicide rates, especially among young females and the absence of coping curricula in schools. "We're losing our women, and that's the future of our country," she states with a sense of urgency.

As co-president of USA Prides, Eve is heartened by the uplifting activism that Pride events foster, bringing together LGBTQ+ friends, allies, and chosen family. "We understand Pride is queer joy, and joy is an act of resistance," Eve declares.

To sustain the spirit of Pride beyond annual celebrations and to help prevent a chain reaction of disengagement during challenging times, Eve advocates for individuals to maintain authentic connections throughout the year. "Remember, we're proud all year long, not just at the Pride events. Stay connected to at least five people every single day," she suggests. Whether reaching out to a friend or a client, Eve says this heart-centered networking is our community's superpower to build a future where every connection is a step towards empowerment and resilience. "Make sure they understand you're an authentic person that really cares about them," she encourages. ■



**SARAH
GILLESPIE**
she/her
REALTOR

"One of my greatest fears was moving back to this little hometown of mine, and how people might react to me because I'm gay."

—Sarah Gillespie



HOME AGAIN

Sarah Gillespie's Homecoming and Reconnection to Purpose

For many LGBTQ+ folks, returning to a childhood home evokes a complex spectrum of emotions – nostalgia infused with anticipation, hope, and perhaps a touch of trepidation. Thirteen years ago, Sarah Gillespie felt this inner complexity as she packed up her life in Atlanta and moved back to Clayton, Georgia, a small town of about 2,200 residents nestled in the seat of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Her mother's diagnosis with a rare incurable cancer prompted Sarah's life reassessment.

"One of my greatest fears was moving back to this little hometown of mine, and how people might react to me because I'm gay," Sarah says. "But I did it

"Be willing to **listen and try to understand** what other people's needs are or where they are coming from,"

—Sarah

anyway. I wasn't going to let that keep me from doing what I knew was right for me and my mom."

Sarah shifted away from her travel-intensive work as an IT consultant to pursue a career in real estate, allowing her the flexibility needed to prioritize her mother's care. She describes her homecoming as a profound reconnection with nature, familial roots, and a rekindling of her commitment to community stewardship. "It was a challenging transition, but ultimately, it brought me back to where I belong," Sarah affirms.

"My mom and I had a long, hard journey together with her illness, a lot of ups and downs," she recalls. Sarah found her solace in nature. "I live in a naturally beautiful place. Since I was a little girl, if I had a stressful day, I'd escape to the forest or sit by the river and meditate, listening to the sounds of nature," Sarah says.

In 2019, after several years of homecare, her mother passed away. Sarah realized, "It was time for me to focus on my own healing." She spent a few months traveling and immersed herself in a yoga teacher training retreat in Bali. With renewed energy, Sarah returned home and focused on building her real estate business, eventually becoming a top producer in her region. She drew inspiration from her family's deep-rooted heritage as one of Rabun County's original settlers over 200 years ago and became a vocal advocate for safeguarding the town's cultural and environmental treasures. "I want this place to be protected and pristine for future generations," she says.

So last year, Sarah decided to campaign for a seat on the city council. "I still had this underlying fear. People were kind to my face and seemed accepting of me, but I wondered if they would be willing to vote a lesbian woman into office," she admits. Sarah won by a landslide with more than 60 percent of the vote against a staunchly conservative opponent. "The phenomenal support I received was truly humbling," she says, recognizing the significance of her win on both a personal and communal level.

Sarah reflects on her experience reconnecting with community and purpose in her hometown as a manifestation of her personal commitment to nurturing empathy and understanding.

"Be willing to listen and try to understand what other people's needs are or where they are coming from," she advises. "This is true not only in political realms, what we do for work or in our personal relationships. It's life. The common thread is to listen."



SHAE COTTAR

he/him

REALTOR® | VICE CHAIR,
HOUSTON ASSOCIATION
OF REALTORS

"Everything that I
had been taught
to use against
the LGBTQ+
community
was based on
beliefs that no
longer held any
real, positive
relevance to me,"

—Shae Cottar



UNLIKELY ALLY

Shae Cottar's Evolution from Conservative Southern Baptist Pastor to Anti-Racist LGBTQ+ Ally

A former Southern Baptist pastor turned real estate broker and Alliance member, Shae Cottar has embarked on a radical departure from his conservative religious upbringing to become a vocal LGBTQ+ ally and anti-racist leader in his community. Reflecting on his past, Shae says, "There's a lot of regret about what I witnessed and how I participated in treating people."

He remembers carefully crafting a letter to a lesbian couple who nestled in the front pew of his evangelical church every Sunday morning. "While the church welcomed LGBTQ+ people to attend services, they didn't offer affirmation," Shae clarifies. "The invitation was conditional." In fact, the letter was an ultimatum, explaining why the couple's unapologetic presence violated the church's teachings. If they refused to repent, they were no longer welcome. "Deep down, I knew that letter was a betrayal," Shae confesses.

Months later, Shae still couldn't shake that feeling. He began reading progressive Christianity books with alternative interpretations of Biblical verses used to condemn the LGBTQ+ community. "There was a moment when I realized I needed to reexamine everything if I'm going to have any sense of moral and intellectual integrity," Shae says. He started seeing a therapist to help dissect a lifelong pattern of fear-based decision making. "Everything that I had been taught to use against the LGBTQ+ community was based on beliefs that no longer held any real, positive relevance to me," he reveals. "That doctrine was the foundation of my own wounding and my own disconnection with myself."

Shae's personal revelations eventually led him to leave the ministry in 2008. Ten years later, his journey took another leap forward when his youngest son came out to his family as being gay. He says that moment ignited a deeper sense of personal responsibility as a parent and ally. "I became more vigilant about creating safe spaces that offer acceptance, compassion and empathy, where people can be who they are without judgment or condemnation."

He decided to run for a trustee position on the local school board and won. Soon after, Shae found himself at the center of a controversial anti-racist movement to rename Robert E. Lee High School. Over several months following a Facebook post in support of the renaming, Shae and his family were targeted with death threats and a boycott campaign that bulldozed his business. Yet Shae's story took a surprising twist. "Over time, I watched my whole business be reborn with supportive people that want me to speak out, who want me to be who I am," he affirms.

Despite enduring personal and professional hardships along the way, Shae remains resolute in his convictions. "We can't work to free oppression at a rate that makes it comfortable for the oppressor," he asserts. "I have a responsibility to speak out for anybody who's being targeted or marginalized. Because it could be any of us. And it should be none of us." ■



LOVE UNVEILED

Tim Garvey's Journey Through Self-Discovery and Community Connection

When Tim Garvey's 15-year-old son's struggle with addiction reached a tipping point, he made a tough decision to admit him to a treatment facility in Montana. He never imagined this event would launch his own journey to self-discovery.

As his son cycled through intervention programs, he challenged his father to address his own deeply buried emotions. His son's demand: "You made me go to counseling. If you want a relationship with me, you must go to counseling too." Tim agreed and signed up for individual sessions the following week. "In my first meeting with the counselor, he asked, 'What do you want to talk about?' And without a pause, I said, 'I think maybe it's time to confront my sexuality.' That began a two-year therapeutic exploration of his uncharted identity as an openly gay man.

Tim describes a familiar midlife coming of age story: "I view myself as having lived two different lives. I was married in a heterosexual relationship for nearly 25 years, raised a family and did all the things that were expected of me, coming from somewhat of a conservative background." As he began the process of redefining his life, Tim found himself at a critical crossroad.

To move forward, he had to face his fear of rejection, especially from family, which stung the most. But he says, "The more I talked to people within our community, the more I discovered that my story is not unusual for people in my age group. Sometimes the people who are closest to you have expectations, or they are influenced by stereotypes. Making this kind of change shatters their image of who you are."

Emerging from isolation and depression post-divorce, Tim found inspiration in simple actions. He opened his apartment to share with roommates who became friends and business partners. Rediscovering his love for music, he joined a community chorale. Tim was recently awarded the "Beacon of Light Award" and is the Parliamentarian for the LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance's national board. Among other leadership roles, he currently serves on the Massachusetts Association of REALTORS® Diversity, Inclusion and Member Engagement Task Force.

A decade after his divorce, Tim moved out of his bachelor pad and bought his first house with his husband, Gary. For those undergoing a midlife rebuild akin to his, Tim offers a pragmatic perspective on what it takes to redeem a fulfilling life on your own terms: "Simply take it day by day, keep moving forward one step at a time, form your own connections, and keep your focus on the path ahead." ■

TIMOTHY GARVEY

he/him

REALTOR® | ENTREPRENEUR
BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY

"In my first
meeting with
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he asked, 'What
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I said, 'I think
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—Timothy Garvey



By Tanya Reu-Narvaez,
Chief People Officer,
Anywhere Real Estate Inc.

Take one look on social media in June and you'll be overwhelmed by company profiles that have swapped their logos with rainbow flags for Pride Month. It's become an easy way for companies to recognize the LGBTQ+ community, show their support for inclusion, and, well... to do what everyone else is doing.

But showing real, authentic pride is so much more than displaying a "rainbow takeover" on social media once a year... **it's about showing up.** It's about uplifting communities of people who have been underestimated, underserved, and, unfortunately, under attack. It's about recognizing the needs and the potential of LGBTQ+ community – and every other group of people who have been historically dismissed or disadvantaged – this month and always.

Anywhere Real Estate Inc. has long championed a more inclusive real estate industry for all. Our mission is empowering everyone's next move, and to us that truly means everyone. From our employees and partners

to our franchisees and real estate professionals, to home buyers and sellers everywhere, we help people make the moves that matter in their lives, and that impact transcends just a transaction: our work makes dreams possible and often offers financial and emotional security for future generations.

Being a champion for progress is more than a once-a-year commitment. **To make a significant impact, companies must genuinely integrate inclusion as a permanent part of their business strategy.**

Anywhere believes that integrating inclusion into our business strategy is simply foundational to our success and will give us an edge in a market that's changing faster than ever. And it starts at our house: we believe that fostering an inclusive company culture at Anywhere, where everyone can thrive, is a tool that enables us to make stronger, smarter, and more innovative decisions, which helps us empower real, meaningful impact for our industry.

We are actively cultivating a company culture where everyone is included, valued, and empowered to contribute to moving real estate to what's next. Through our eight Employee Resource Groups, including RealPride, an Anywhere community supporting LGBTQ+ employees and allies, we empower our people to be their authentic selves and find support, education, and connection to help them thrive at work.

But, Anywhere cannot do this alone.

All of corporate America has the power to change the trajectory of the LGBTQ+ community and every underestimated community by

simply prioritizing inclusion as a business strategy. And there's good reason to embrace it: inclusive workplaces are six times more likely to be innovative and twice as likely to surpass financial goals. Plus, inclusive business cultures are linked to an almost 40% higher assessment accuracy of consumer interest and demand. By having a pool of strong talent that's inclusive of all people, companies have a variety of perspectives and experiences that can fuel innovation and represent today's consumer.

In real estate, it's simply an imperative: **we are in a people business**, which means it is up to us to recognize and understand the multi-dimensional (and intersectional) identities, wants, and needs of all people – it just helps us do better business. We know that future home buyers and sellers are more diverse than ever, and underrepresented communities are poised to become homeowners in large numbers. According to U.S. Census data, the nation is diversifying even faster than forecasted. The LGBTQ+ community, too, is growing rapidly and today is only at a 49.8% homeownership levels – far lower than the national average.

For those companies that look beyond the rainbow, you'll see that Pride is so much more than a celebration: it's potential. Potential for a better industry and a better future. If we embrace inclusion all year long, as an integrated and essential tool for our business, we can power that potential to shape a better future for all. Will you join us? ■

"We are actively cultivating a company culture where everyone is included, valued, and empowered."

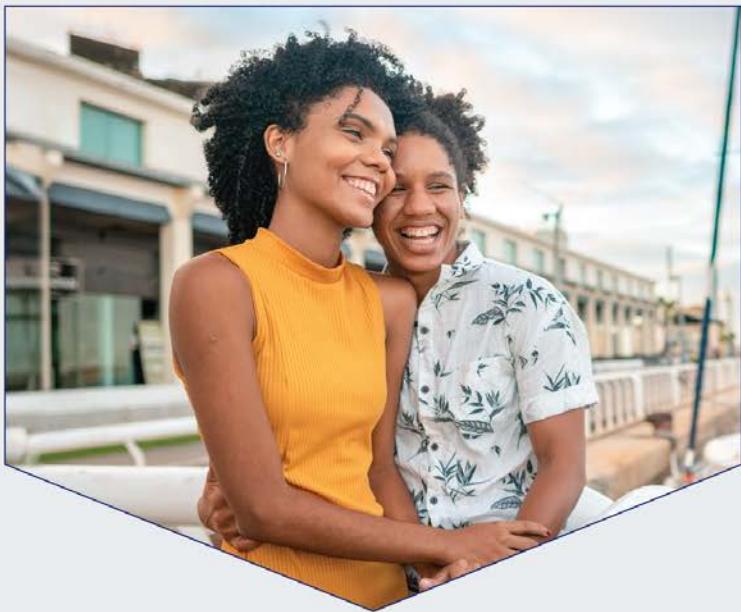
—Tanya Reu-Narvaez

Authentic pride is so much more than displaying a "rainbow takeover" on social media once a year.

Being a champion for progress is more than a once-a-year commitment.

We are in a people business.

Pride plans here.



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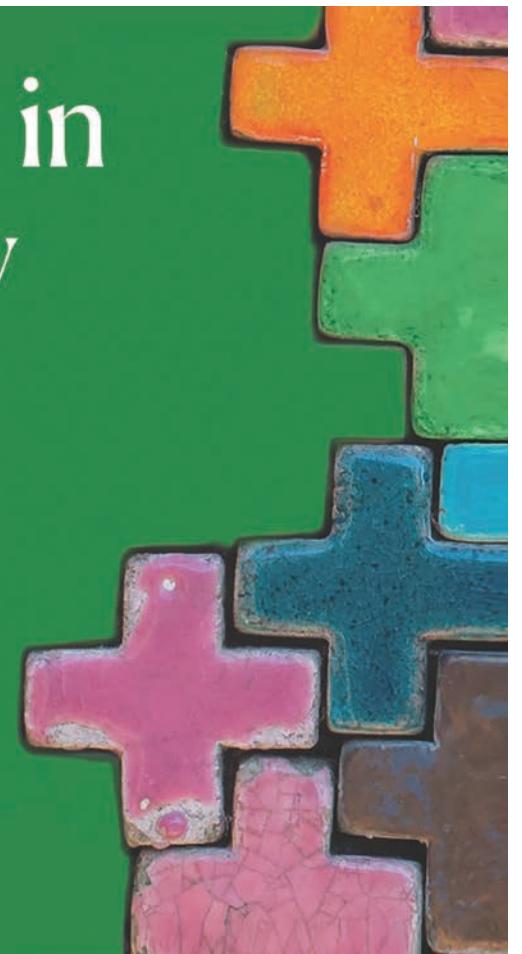
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A Look into The Future For LGBTQ+ Retirement

Retirement, a time to savor the fruits of labor, pursue passions, and create new adventures, marks a significant transition in life. For LGBTQ+ individuals, this phase carries unique considerations shaped by a lifetime of experiences, struggles, and triumphs. For members of the LGBTQ+ community, planning for retirement is seemingly filled with concerns.

The LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance's annual member survey found that compared to straight ally Alliance members 45 and older, 16.5% more LGBTQ+ members of the same age believe that choosing a place to live in retirement is harder for LGBTQ+ people than a straight person. In fact, 75% of those 45-54 felt this way.

Safety, affordability, and the ability to live authentically are top concerns for the LGBTQ+ community in retirement. Notably, 69.6% of LGBTQ+ individuals aged 45-54 expressed their unwillingness to move to areas with low LGBTQ+ acceptance rates. This is likely the reason why more than 20% of those LGBTQ+ members 54-65 are considering retiring in a different country.



TO SELL OR NOT TO SELL

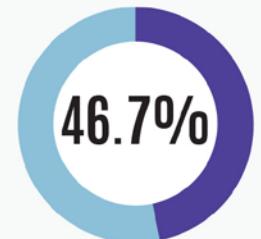
According to Fannie Mae, 56% of Americans over 60 would never sell their homes, while 27% said they might sell at some point. LGBTQ+ members of the Alliance are not as likely to remain in their current homes after retirement as 46.7% of those 65-plus reported they will do so, while just 35.1% of those 55-64 and 17.5% of those 45-54 are planning to. Additionally, of those anticipating selling, 47.1% of those LGBTQ+ members 65-plus, 63.2% of those 55-to-65, and 70.7% of those 45-to-54 expect to sell their home before turning 75.

WHAT THE RETIREMENT HOME WILL LOOK LIKE FOR LGBTQ+ RETIREES

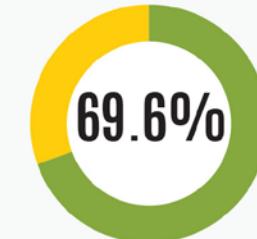
Downsizing has been a popular trend for retirees for years. The same holds true for LGBTQ+ members. Of those 65-plus, 70.6% plan to downsize while nearly 60% of those 55-64 are currently in the downsizing camp.

To see the full findings of the 2024 LGBTQ+ Real Estate Report, please visit RealEstateAlliance.org. ■

LGBTQ+ Boomers & Housing Choices in Retirement



46.7% of LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members ages 65+ said they are not likely to remain in their current homes after retirement.



69.6% of LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members ages 45-54 said they would not consider moving to areas with low LGBTQ+ acceptance rates.



70% of aging LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members believe it is harder for an LGBTQ+ person to choose a place to live in retirement than straight people.



75% of LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members ages 45-54 say choosing a place to live in retirement is harder for LGBTQ+ people than a straight person.



47.1% of LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members 65-plus, 63.2% of those ages 55-to-65 and 70.7% of those 45-to-54 expect to sell their home before turning 75.



Of those LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members ages 65-plus **63.3%** report having higher equity than **\$250,000**.

70.6%

of LGBTQ+ Alliance members said that if they were to move for retirement, they would want to downsize.

Safety, affordability, and the ability to live authentically are the three most critical factors the LGBTQ+ community faces in retirement living, according to LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance members.



LGBTQ+ REAL ESTATE
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www.realestatealliance.org



Source: LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance 2024 Member Survey

Tracking HATE

The Alliance launches real time tracker to monitor donations to anti-LGBTQ legislators

Two years after the Alliance waged its Article 10 campaign to call out offending practitioners who use social media to wage hate against LGBTQ+ people, the Alliance introduced a tool that tracks anti-LGBTQ legislators that have received funding from the Realtor Political Action Committee (RPAC).

The tracker uses data from the American Civil Liberties Union, Bill Track 50 and other public data sources, to offer a real time snapshot of how much RPAC funding anti-LGBTQ+ legislators have received since 2018.

In 2024 alone, lawmakers have proposed 328 bills aimed at denying gender-affirming health care, LGBTQ-inclusive school curriculum, restricting drag performances at certain public venues and giving permission to businesses that don't want to serve LGBTQ+ people. Members and allies can use the tracker to see what

RPAC-funded legislators have introduced

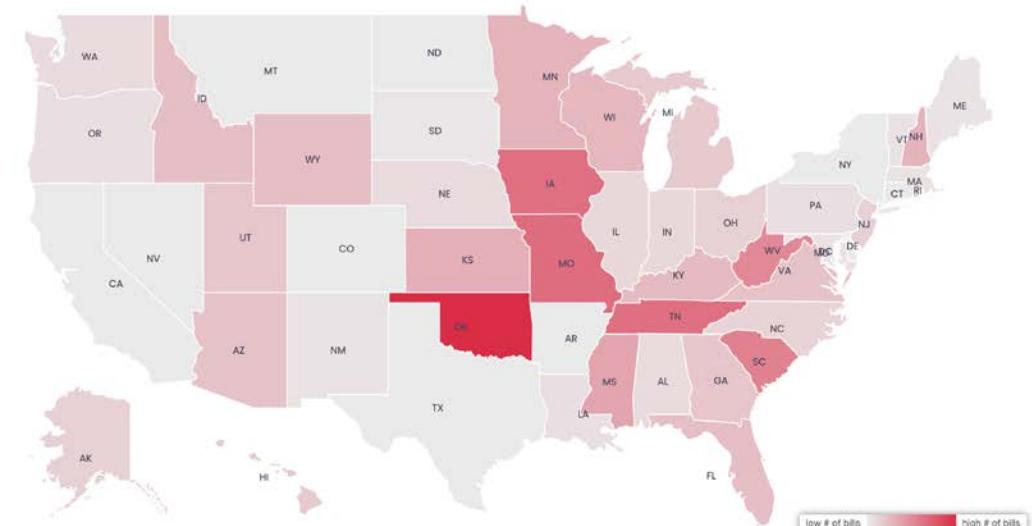
328

anti-LGBTQ+ bills in 2024 alone.

Use the table below to see which discriminatory bills have sponsoring legislators which have been funded by state RPACs.

Click on the bill number link to view more information about the bill.

[About the Data](#)



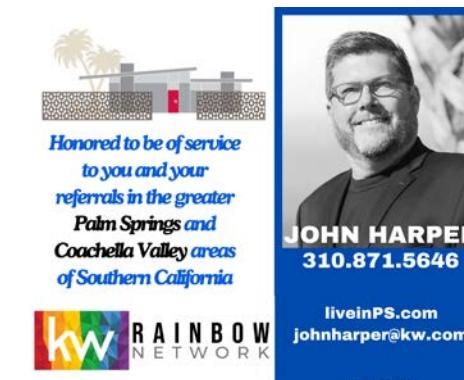
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In Memoriam...

**JANE
SCHMITZ**
FOUNDING MEMBER

JANE SCHMITZ, a Keller Williams agent and founder of the Alliance Central Valley (Fresno, CA) chapter passed away on March 24 after a battle with cancer. A native, Californian, Jane was one of the original chapter leaders with the former organization and part of the steering committee that guided the launch of the Alliance.

A motorcycle enthusiast and a passionate advocate for the LGBTQ community, Jane is survived by her wife, Meg. "Jane was a friend and an ardent supporter of the Alliance since day one," said Ryan Weyandt, founder and CEO. "She believed in our mission and was enthusiastic about our potential. We have lost a mighty ambassador." ♡



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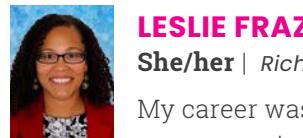
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Unstoppable: the Power of Perseverence

When was the last time you felt like giving up because the odds were stacked against you? We asked these Alliance members to share their experiences about the last time they turned a difficult situation into an opportunity for growth.



LESLIE FRAZIER
She/her | Richmond, VA

My career was in government and politics before transitioning to Virginia REALTORS®. I worked in the administration of then Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, who in February 2019 rose to fame for an alleged photo from his medical school yearbook of him wearing blackface. It was a difficult time for our Administration, especially for the Black staff, as we were taught that all our actions reflected on the governor. I tried to foster a safe space amongst my colleagues for us to come together and share our feelings. What may have appeared as a few coworkers going to lunch was really a place of community, belonging, and storytelling. It became the relief we needed and, quite frankly, what got us through each day of work. At the time, I did not believe my efforts were successful. Our safe space never extended beyond our cohort, and the DEI efforts put forth by the Administration were siloed. I had no idea that the challenges working for Governor Northam would prepare me to lead in the position I hold today.



JAMIE YOON
She/her/hers
Braselton, GA

Losing my mother to cancer shattered my world and reshaped my entire outlook on life at the age of 25. The pain of her absence was an indelible mark on my soul, but through that sorrow, I found an unexpected strength. It humbled me, grounding me in the reality of life's fragility and the importance of cherishing every moment. While my peers may have been shielded from such profound loss so early in life, it forced me to confront the harsh realities of mortality head-on, fostering a depth of maturity beyond my years. Instead of succumbing to bitterness or despair, I emerged with a resilient spirit, determined to honor my mother's memory by living a life of purpose and compassion. Adversity became my teacher, instilling within me a profound empathy and wisdom that set me apart from my peers. In the crucible of grief, I discovered the transformative power of resilience, turning pain into strength and emerging as a better, stronger person capable of weathering life's storms with grace and resilience.



RICK PARILLO
He/Him | Framingham, MA

Once I had a listing client who treated me like I was inept at my job. I did everything by

the book to sell his home and kept him informed, yet he complained to my broker that I was ignoring him. Apparently, he discovered I am Gay and stated to my broker that "my type of people" should not be in the public service industry. He verbally harassed me, but I was determined not to give up. Luckily my broker stood by me. I saw the transaction through to completion with a successful closing.

This was the first time in my life that I had encountered discrimination because of who I am. There were no accolades for me following this transaction even though I had done my job well. What I learned is that if you quit in the face of negativity, the bigots win. I'm proud of myself for pushing through this experience.



JAMES BRITTO
He/Him
San Francisco, CA

It's been a long road over the past almost two decades with moments of adversity and ups and downs. I entered real estate in 2006, just before the market downturn and scratched my way into REO listings. I watched top producers lose it all and leave the industry. It wasn't easy and I wanted to give up many times.

In 2023, I started a new boutique firm with someone I trust. We have a modest number of loyal and reputable agents. My prior work as a professional educator is a benefit as we choose new systems and ways to educate our team. I have grown as a recognized leader. I'm so proud of this new path and where it will take me. More importantly, I am so glad I didn't give up when the going got tough.



RODERICK LOGAN
He/Him | Madison, NJ

At age 22, I realized living the life that I always knew that I was meant to was possible. I was fortunate to work in retail where gay men were commonplace. Nonetheless, when I transitioned into banking, I told myself that I was not going to hide who I am. I'm going to use phrases like "my partner and I" as opposed to "my friend" when I'm referring to the person, I've been with for now 24 years. I personally decided that I am going to normalize my language of choice just as others have. I approached it with confidence in myself and knowing that I am loved and if anyone had an issue with that that was their problem and not mine. I'm just as free to share my life and stories with everyone else just

as the rest of the world. My victory was having the courage to own my truth. I have never looked back.



BRIANNA HURLEY
They/she
Greater Denver Area

Our son came out as transgender during the pandemic while we lived in small-town Texas. For a while, we were able to keep him safe by staying home, but as the world got back to business as usual, we became more and more concerned for his safety. Between the Governor and the Attorney General, our son became less and less safe as more and more of his rights were stripped away. Loving, caring families of transgender children were targeted by Child Protective Services and it became harder and harder to obtain

the life-saving gender-affirming care he needed. A local school board voted in their own version of Florida's "Don't Say Gay" Bill and we knew we needed to get him to safety as quickly as possible.

From that realization to planting our feet on the ground in our new home in the state of Colorado, we fled within 45 days. We collectively took a huge deep breath and gained a peace of mind we hadn't realized was missing. Rebuilding my mortgage business in a new state was an incredibly daunting task, but the community I have found locally and nationally within the LGBTQ+ Real Estate Alliance, has helped to grow my business and expand my ability to help members of our community in a way that I never could have imagined. ■



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