



# PFLAG BOULDER COUNTY

January 2015

## One Colorado's Daniel Ramos Presents 2015 LGBT Legislative Agenda Sunday, January 11th at 3pm

Daniel Ramos, Political and Organizing Director for One Colorado, will be presenting One Colorado's 2015 Legislative Agenda. One Colorado's Lobby Day will be on February 9, 2015. One Colorado expects several bills to be introduced that will impact the LGBT community. Please come to the January meeting to get a preview of this year's agenda as well as to hear about the strides One Colorado made in 2014.

*About One Colorado's LGBT Lobby Day:* LGBT Lobby Day is an important



chance to make your voice heard by telling your legislators what matters to you. When it comes to advancing equality, nothing is as powerful as an in-person visit to the elected officials who represent you. That's why each year, our community and our allies gather at the Capitol for this event. Together, we get trained on how to discuss our concerns with our legislators, and then we all head to the Capitol for personal lobby visits. It's a day you don't want to miss!

**Location: First United Methodist Church (Heart of Longmont), 350 11th Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501.**

## Creating Change 2015!

The 27th National Conference on LGBT Equality: Creating Change ("Creating Change") is coming to Denver, Colorado and the Sheraton Denver Downtown, February 4-8, 2015.

What is Creating Change?

Only the premier annual organizing and skills-building event for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and their allies!! The National LGBTQ Task Force sponsors and organizes Creating Change every year. 2015 marks the 27th gathering of this unique national conference. Creating Change is the nation's pre-eminent political, leadership and skills-building conference for the LGBT social justice movement. Since 1988, Creating Change has created the opportunity for thousands of committed people to develop and hone their skills, celebrate victories, build community, and to be inspired by visionaries of our LGBT movement and allied movements for justice and equality.

## Meetings

*First United Methodist Church*  
1421 Spruce Street, Boulder  
303-444-8164

*Cairn Christian Church*  
*(Disciples of Christ)*  
1700 Stonehenge Dr, Lafayette  
303-442-1861

*The Heart of Longmont FUMC*  
11th and Emery, Longmont  
303-651-6125

### 2pm - Support & Advocacy Groups Meet

### 3pm - Program

At 2pm a support group, especially intended for newcomers and others dealing with personal LGBT-related issues, meets in the library as long as needed. Confidentiality is promised.

The public is always welcome to the main program at 3pm., usually on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Our location rotates between the three above locations - see our program schedule for more info.

Contact [info@pflagboulder.org](mailto:info@pflagboulder.org) with questions, concerns, or requests for support to get a personal response.

**January 11th**  
2015 LGBT Legislative Agenda



More than 3,500 people from all over the country attend every year. Presenters and participants come from all walks of life and include members of the business community, elected officials, students, faith leaders and staff and volunteers of non-profit organizations.

Over the five days of the Creating Change Conference, there will be over 18 day-long institutes, two dozen sophisticated trainings in the Academy for Leadership and Action, a special programming segment called Practice Spirit, Do Justice for faith leaders and organizers, approximately 250 workshops and caucus sessions, four keynote plenary sessions, worshipful gatherings, film screenings, meetings, receptions, social events, and a multitude of opportunities for attendees to meet and learn from each other.

They say that everything seems bigger in Denver, so you don't want to miss the 2015 Creating Change Conference!

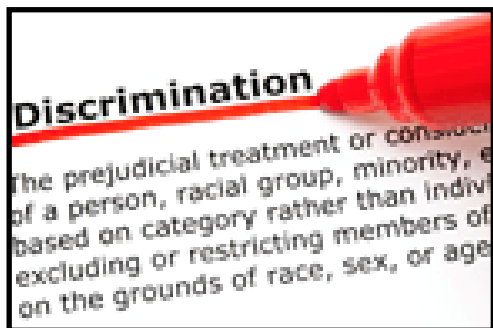
For more information about the event, including how to register, visit: <http://www.creatingchange.org/>

**Attorney General Holder directs Department of Justice to include Gender Identity under Sex Discrimination Employment Claims**

Attorney General Eric Holder has announced that the Department of Justice will consider claims of gender identity discrimination, including bias claims based on an individual's transgender status, cognizable under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The decision is a reversal of the department's prior position on the matter.

Attorney General Holder explained: "After considering the text of Title VII, the relevant Supreme Court case law interpreting the statute, and the developing jurisprudence in this area, I have determined that the best reading of Title VII's prohibition of sex discrimination is that it encompasses discrimination based on gender identity, including transgender status. The most straightforward reading of Title VII is that discrimination "because of ... sex" includes discrimination because an employee's gender identification is as a member of a particular sex, or because the employee is transitioning, or has transitioned, to another sex. . . . the Department will no longer assert that Title VII's prohibition against discrimination based on sex does not encompass gender identity per se (including transgender discrimination)."

The Department of Justice can file Title VII claims against state and local public employers on behalf of transgender individuals but cannot file suit against private employers. However, while the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA), which would specifically prohibit employment discrimination by private employers based on sexual orientation and gender identity, has stalled in Congress, the Obama Administration has taken other measures to combat discrimination on this basis. Two years ago in *Macy v. Holder*, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission determined that a woman's claim of employment discrimination based on gender identity, change of sex and/or transgender status is viable under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. More recently, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs issued a rule that prohibits LGBT discrimination in government contracting. Whether the 114th Congress will take up the ENDA bill remains to be seen.



## The Complicated Geography of Alice

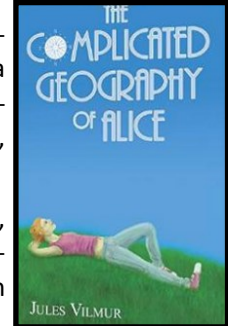
by Jules Vilmur

Reviewed by Dave Parker, Secretary, PFLAG Greensboro, NC

A Mother's memories of her teenage daughter's transition.

Jules's story of living with her mid-teen child during transition is loving, supportive, educational, stressful, sometimes funny, and sad. It deals with the complexities of raising a teen-ager coupled with acknowledging, accepting, and embracing their true gender identity. She makes no attempt to discern a cause of her child's gender identity dysphoria, but does offer some concerns about drug addiction.

To paraphrase one paragraph, what are we teaching our children when Ritalin, Stratera, and Adderall are casually prescribed and recommended to keep them "calm and controlled" in elementary school? How do we teach them to avoid harmful substances when adults around them turn to medication and alcohol to "relax" after a strenuous day?



Jules's experience as an administrator in an HIV/AIDS clinic leads her to a very accepting attitude about LGBTQ individuals and their issues. Even so, she is unaware of her child's gender dysphoria until they finally find a therapist who understands – and listens.

These coming out stories are wonderfully accepting, loving, - and often funny. Her "new" daughter Alice is happier than her mother remembers her to have been in a long time. Some of their interactions –especially shopping together – are hilarious. But Alice's drug addiction is actually enabled as she begins hormone treatment; several of her transgender friends help Alice to obtain stronger, restricted medications.

Jules's love stands strongly through the stresses of dealing not only with Alice's personal problems, but also with unsupportive school administrators, psychologists, and extended family.

As the father of a transgender daughter and an activist ally in the transgender community, I am familiar with many of the difficulties experienced by our transgender children, their families, and many of their friends. The author includes some marvelous insights into dealing with these issues. One of them is attributed to mother's transgender friend William talking about "passing:"... maybe focus on finally expressing your feminine identity, whether you pass or not." Another is her realization how best to answer the 'surgery' question: "To be perfectly honest, I am not comfortable discussing my kid's genitals." I am going to borrow that response when discussing my child the next time a cis-gendered person asks!

This is a well-written outstanding presentation of one parent's experiences with her teen coming out transgender. I heartily recommend it, with the caveat that you may become so emotionally involved with this family that some of it is hard to take.

**TYES - A Support Organization for Families with Gender Variant Children**  
Meets, 2pm on second Sundays  
Same Locations as PFLAG Meetings  
E-mail: [TYES.group@gmail.com](mailto:TYES.group@gmail.com)

## Call to Action from PFLAG National

### Message from Jody Huckaby, PFLAG National Executive Director

On December 9, PFLAG National – along with 46 other LGBTQ organizations – signed on to an open letter regarding the recent outcry (against police brutality and racism) in our country. Here is the essence of that letter:

### An Open Letter: From Ferguson to True Freedom

Words cannot begin to describe the depth of feeling we all share about the unfolding tragedies in Ferguson and New York City. Words cannot relieve the suffering of Michael Brown and Eric Garner's loved ones nor can words alone salve the pain nor quell the anger of millions. It's action we need and we need it now.

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As LGBTQ national organizations, we proudly stand in solidarity with the civil rights organizations and local activists — including the actions of an amazing, fierce, brilliant cadre of youth leaders, many of whom are queer identified — in demanding fundamental systemic change that tackles the root causes of racial and economic injustices once and for all. From political accountability for the deaths of Michael and Eric to the immediate passage of federal legislation that completely bans racial profiling across this land to ensuring that local police departments are representative and fair arbiters of safety and protection for everyone and who — through their actions — are continually working to earn the trust, confidence and respect of the entire community.

We too must speak louder than words and take more action — to change more hearts and minds and fight even harder for the policies and practices that make statements such as this one obsolete.

Nationally and across the country, PFLAG has an open dialogue with the law enforcement community and has leveraged who we are to educate police, prosecutors, judges – all who are involved in keeping our communities safe... Our conversations with law enforcement started because we recognized that they needed to be educated about how to serve and protect our loved ones... We need to make sure our conversations are not just about the LGBTQ community but ALL who are marginalized... PFLAGers everywhere have the opportunity to leverage the unique strength of our mission to listen carefully, respond patiently, and never stop learning as we meet people where they are and build bridges. Here are some actions you can take right now as a PFLAG member/supporter:

- 1) Offer support in social media and in conversations in your community. Be visible in your solidarity.
- 2) Leverage your relationships, if you have them, with your local law enforcement community. Offer to be a bridge of understanding about issues of distrust and disenfranchisement because of potential or subconscious bias.
- 3) Ask your community partners what you can do. If you do not already have relationships with people who are part of this outcry, now is the time to reach out, introduce yourself, and ask what you can do to support them.
- 4) Send a letter to the editor or op-ed of your local news outlet, sharing why these issues resonate with you.

PFLAG's values are America's values... PFLAG has always stood for making the future brighter for the next generation, and that must mean for everyone.

## **The Legal Landscape of Marriage Equality — Updates**

*by Raga Gopalakrishnan*

December 2014 was a slower month for marriage equality, but still saw some action, including a surprising move from the U. S. Supreme Court. On December 19, the Justices denied an application to stay a Florida federal judge's ruling that the state's marriage ban was unconstitutional. While the Supreme Court has been routinely denying such stay requests from other states since October, this denial was the first one in which the overseeing appellate court (in this case the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals) had not yet decided the constitutionality of state marriage bans. As a result, marriage equality is scheduled to come to Florida on January 6, 2015.

Meanwhile, a 3-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals will hear oral arguments in three cases challenging the constitutionality of the state marriage bans of Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, on the morning of January 9. While the Fifth Circuit is known to be notoriously conservative, this particular draw of judges is considered to be relatively moderate, consisting of two Reagan appointees and an Obama appointee.

The Justices of the U. S. Supreme Court, during their January 9 private conference, will consider whether to take up one or more of five appeals challenging the constitutionality of the state marriage bans of Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana. If they take up one of these cases by mid-January, oral argument will likely be held in April, and a decision would likely come out by the end of June. The Justices are widely expected to step in this time, because the Sixth Circuit recently created a conflict with the Fourth, Seventh, Ninth, and Tenth Circuits by upholding the marriage bans of Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee.