



JUNE 2016 Equality Illinois News - Pride Month Edition

This is the 25th year that Equality Illinois is celebrating Pride Month, and we'll be honoring our quarter century of fighting for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans in a big way.

We start tomorrow as our new CEO, Brian C. Johnson takes the helm. Brian will be welcomed Thursday evening at the annual **Tribute Reception: A Taste of Pride**. [Tickets](#) are still available. See below for more details.

Then we'll see you at the Summer Pride Cruise on June 5 and Midsommarfest in Andersonville the weekend of June 11-12. And the month culminates with the big Chicago Pride Parade on Sunday, June 26.

It's going to be a fun and exciting Pride Month! Stay tuned for more information.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION BOXED IN BY BUDGET

*Policy Report by
Director of Public Policy
Mike Ziri*

The Illinois legislature is scheduled to end its spring session tonight after members were focused for most of 2016 on the state budget crisis. During the session, Equality Illinois joined with the Responsible Budget Coalition to call for a fair spending plan supported by adequate revenues.

While lawmakers were focused on the budget, our bipartisan lobbying team worked diligently to educate legislators about our top priority: a measure to modernize the ability of transgender Illinoisans to change their gender identity on Illinois birth certificates. While the bill was not called for a vote this spring, we are committed to ensuring its final passage and approval. And we are continuing our education of lawmakers and the public about the challenges to full equality that transgender Illinoisans face every day.

However, Equality Illinois, working with our Springfield allies, did block consideration of the awful HB 4474, which would have stigmatized transgender students by forcing them to use separate

school facilities. And we also made sure that SB 2164, which would allow businesses and individuals to claim religious reasons to discriminate, never got a hearing.

CHICAGO ORDINANCE PROPOSED TO GUARANTEE TRANSGENDER ACCESS

Equality Illinois commends Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City Council's LGBT Caucus for a proposed ordinance to protect transgender access to public facilities such as bathrooms. The proposal, recommended by Chicago Human Rights Commissioner Mona Noriega, prohibits public accommodations—such as hotels, restaurants or grocery stores—from requiring that patrons show a government ID to prove their gender identity in order to access facilities such as restrooms or changing facilities.

Designed to plug a gap in the city's human rights ordinance, the ordinance was sent to the council's Human Relations Committee for a hearing on June 8. Equality Illinois is working with the sponsors and other LGBT advocates to advance the measure.

[READ MORE](#)

EQUALITY ILLINOIS TRIBUTE RECEPTION: A TASTE OF PRIDE

Join our community of supporters, activists, and leaders this Thursday to celebrate our victories and join together in our fight for full equality - Until We're All Equal.

Do not miss your opportunity to meet Brian C. Johnson, our new Chief Executive Officer. Join him at his first official event, and there, you will be able to show him the fun and inclusive Equality Illinois community.

In the spirit of progress and change, we are introducing a new annual tradition at the Tribute Reception. We will be giving awards to three volunteers who have unequivocally helped advance Equality Illinois' mission to procure equality for all, whether it be through working at phone banks, events, or organizing letter writing campaigns to legislators. As we enter a new chapter in the LGBT equality movement, we want to pay homage to the volunteers who make it all possible.

[TICKETS](#)

Equality Illinois' first annual PRIDE Cruise is a great way to celebrate Pride month, with LGB women, trans individuals, and allies on Sunday, June 5. What better way to celebrate all that we have to be proud of than by basking in the sun, enjoying an extensive brunch buffet, drinking a beer, and soaking in breath taking views of the Chicago Skyline. Get on board by purchasing your tickets today at the limited time price of \$75.

[TICKETS](#)

EQUALITY ILLINOIS AT WORK AND AT PLAY



*Activities Report by
Patty Medairy
Director of Field Operations*

EqualityCon 2016, hosted May 13-14 by Equality Illinois Institute, was kicked off with a powerful speech by U.S. Rep. **David Cicilline** (pictured on right), chief sponsor of the Equality Act, who was introduced by U.S. Rep. **Jan Schakowsky** (center). Equality Illinois Public Policy Director **Mike Ziri** (on left) hosted the two members of Congress.

The wide range of issues at the two-day conference at the University of Illinois at Chicago included the intersection of LGBT rights with labor rights and social justice. We also discussed employment, adoption, gender diversity, trans advocacy, faith, the rural experience and aging.

Also in May...we kicked off Pride season at **Springfield PrideFest**...our **Patty Medairy** and **Mike Ziri** helped lead a seminar about current issues in LGBT equality at **Teach For America's Staff Development Day** for more than 75 TFA staff from northeastern Illinois and northwestern

Indiana...Patty and Mike also addressed the **Schaumburg Business Alliance** on transgender issues... about 200 young professionals partied at **Network and Chill** in **Uber's** loft headquarters...about 100 moms and their children were treated to a special brunch at **MOMosa** at Sidetrack.

And Mike Ziri was on the [WGN-TV Morning News](#) and wrote an opinion column for the Daily Herald to explain why transgender students deserve fair treatment and equal access to school facilities based on their gender identity.

[READ MORE](#)

MORE UPCOMING EVENTS

PRIDE PARADE 2016

Nothing beats the fun on the day of the Chicago Pride Parade, coming on Sunday, June 26. This year there will be a special celebration on the Equality Illinois float, where we'll be honoring our quarter century of fighting for the rights of LGBT Illinoisans and our families by pledging to continue our fight UNTIL WE'RE ALL EQUAL.

Join in the fun. Help us decorate the float and then give your best royal wave to the million or so LGBT supporters

who annually line the parade route. It's an unforgettable experience. And you can volunteer for other summer events, too.

JOIN US

OUT AT THE SOX

Take me out to the ball game! Join 150 LGBT fans and allies for Out at the Sox at U.S. Cellular Field for an afternoon game on Saturday, July 9. For \$50, you can get a reserved seat at the game with other LGBT and ally fans and gain entry to our pre-game party, which will feature giveaways, drink tickets, and light bites.

TICKETS

If you would like an Equality Illinois speaker at your event—at work, a local civic organization, on campus, a union meeting, a business group, your faith group, a home EI fundraiser—please contact us at info@eqil.org or call 773-477-7173.

Follow us on the web and social media!



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Stay informed of LGBT-equality matters by visiting us at www.equalityillinois.org, and follow us on: and .

KEEP MOVING FORWARD

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE

Established 25 years ago, Equality Illinois builds a better Illinois by advancing equal treatment and social justice through education, advocacy and protection of the rights of the LGBT community.

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