



PORTFOLIO

"120 years of the Forest Service"

Page 2

Conceived of and wrote feature article for USDA's Forest Service, collaborated with agency historian on research and photos.

Corporate Equality Index 2019

Page 13

Co-authored edited the nationally-recognized survey and benchmarking report on policies, benefits and practices for LGBTQ employees. Collaborated with external designer on data interpretation and infographic presentation.

Buying for Workplace Equality 2018

Page 51

Produced annual consumer-focused adaptation of *CEI* data and partnered with marketing and design teams to format guide and update affiliated Android and iPhone apps.

"HRC Honors the Best Places to Work for Equality"

Page 72

Blog post on the Human Rights Campaign website covering feature event.

"Authority Figures"

Page 74

Nonfiction essay published in online literary magazine Sad Girl Diaries.

"Hayley Glennie Looks Like Liz Cooper"

Page 80

Excerpt from an unpublished nonfiction essay from the author's thesis submitted to The Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Writing.

120 years of the Forest Service

10 facts to celebrate 120 years of agency contributions

Liz Cooper

Office of Regulatory and Management Services

March 31, 2025

Did you know that Smokey Bear has his own zip code? Or that a quarter of U.S. ski resorts are located on national forests? To celebrate 120 years of the USDA Forest Service, we bring you these and 10 more fascinating facts about the agency whose motto is “Caring for the Land and Serving People.”



First Chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot, worked with President Theodore Roosevelt to establish the USDA Forest Service. *(USDA Forest Service images)*

Early days

In 1905, wood was in the forefront of American minds. Cities, railroads, communications and homes ran on wood – in fact, wood served as the main energy source in the U.S. until 1880. Its importance meant it had to be managed. Enter: the Forest Service.

Formerly named the Division of Forestry, the agency was renamed in 1905 when management of forest reserves was transferred from the U.S. Department of the Interior to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Gifford Pinchot became the first Chief. Forest reserves – of which there were 60 and covered 56 million acres – were rebranded as national forests and their size more than doubled under Pinchot’s

leadership. Today, Forest Service employees manage 154 national forests, 20 national grasslands and 1 tall grass prairie, covering 193 million acres in 42 states and Puerto Rico – a total area of land about the size of Texas.



Drinking water has been a priority for the Forest Service since its founding. *(USDA Forest Service images)*

Serving up sips

There is nothing like filling a refreshing glass of water from your tap. While at your hydration station, did you know that national forests are the single most important source of fresh water in the U.S.? National forests aren't just for wood – they are the source of drinking water for over 60 million Americans in 3,400 communities, even large cities like Los Angeles, Portland, Denver and Atlanta. Cheers to that!



Actress Betty White, musician and producer Chuck Leavell, and actor and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger have been Honorary Forest Rangers. (USDA Forest Service images)

Iconic forest rangers

There have only been three Honorary Forest Rangers to the Forest Service: actress Betty White, Rolling Stones' keyboardist and musical director Chuck Leavell, and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

While these honors are recent, to become a forest ranger in 1905, you had to pass a challenging written test and a field exam. If you aced your

written knowledge of basic ranching and livestock, forest conditions, lumbering, surveying, mapping and cabin construction, then you would have to pass the field portion. For the opportunity to earn \$60 per month, applicants had to prove they could:

- saddle a horse, ride at a trot and gallop
- pack a horse or mule
- “throw” a diamond hitch
- accurately pace the distance around a measured course and compute the area in acres
- take bearings with a compass and follow a straight line
- shoot accurately at a target
- cook a meal, eat your prepared meal
- BYO equipment, horses or pack animals



The idea of service is at the core of the Forest Service's mission. (*USDA Forest Service images*)

What's in a name?

When Gifford Pinchot became the first Chief, he purposefully chose to include “service” in the name of the newly established agency. He wanted to remind employees that their work was in service to the public through forestry doing the “greatest good for the greatest number in the long run” His choice makes the Forest Service one of the few federal agencies with “service” in its name.



The iconic Forest Service badge is instantly recognizable. (*USDA Forest Service images*)

Badge of authority

The Forest Service insignia resulted from a design competition among Washington Office Forest Service staff in 1905. But the iconic shield design was not from a winner of the contest. Rather, after reviewing submissions and being left wanting one with more official “oomph,” Edward T. Allen and William C. Hodge, Jr. designed the official Forest Service badge featuring symbols of authority that the public would recognize and respect both in the Washington Office and out in the field. The design was partially inspired by the Union Pacific Railroad shield and sketched out on cigarette rolling paper.



Are you green with envy over our classic style? (USDA Forest Service images)

Sporting the pickle suit

In the Forest Service, district rangers, forest supervisors, and any front-line employees with contact with the public are able to wear the “pickle suit.” Not a mascot costume, but the nickname for the recognizable green and tan agency uniforms that were designed by Max Peterson, the agency’s eleventh Chief. While standard dress has always been part of the agency, the uniforms evolved until 1974 when they reached the look still worn today: dark green blazer, sage green trousers or slacks and greenish tan shirt with myrtle green tie.



National Forests have been a backyard to America since their beginning. *(USDA Forest Service images)*

America's backyard

The first Forest Service campground was developed in 1916 at Eagle Creek on the Oregon side of the Columbia River Gorge on the Mt. Hood National Forest. It was a “fully modern” facility with tables, toilets, a check-in station and a ranger station. After World War II, outdoor recreation increased tenfold on public lands. And today, there are about 159 million recreation visits to national forests each year. One of the unique ways Americans have been able to spend time enjoying their national forests is through the recreation residence program, which allows private citizens to have a permit for a single-family cabin in designated areas of national forests. Who wouldn't love their own

summer home (only one per family) in a national forest?! This program has been around since the early 1900s and although the Forest Service ceased allowing new cabins to be built several decades ago, there are still over 13,000 recreation residences spanning 114 forests across the country. The cabins are private property that may be bought and sold by the private parties. Recreation residences pay annual land use and transfer fees.

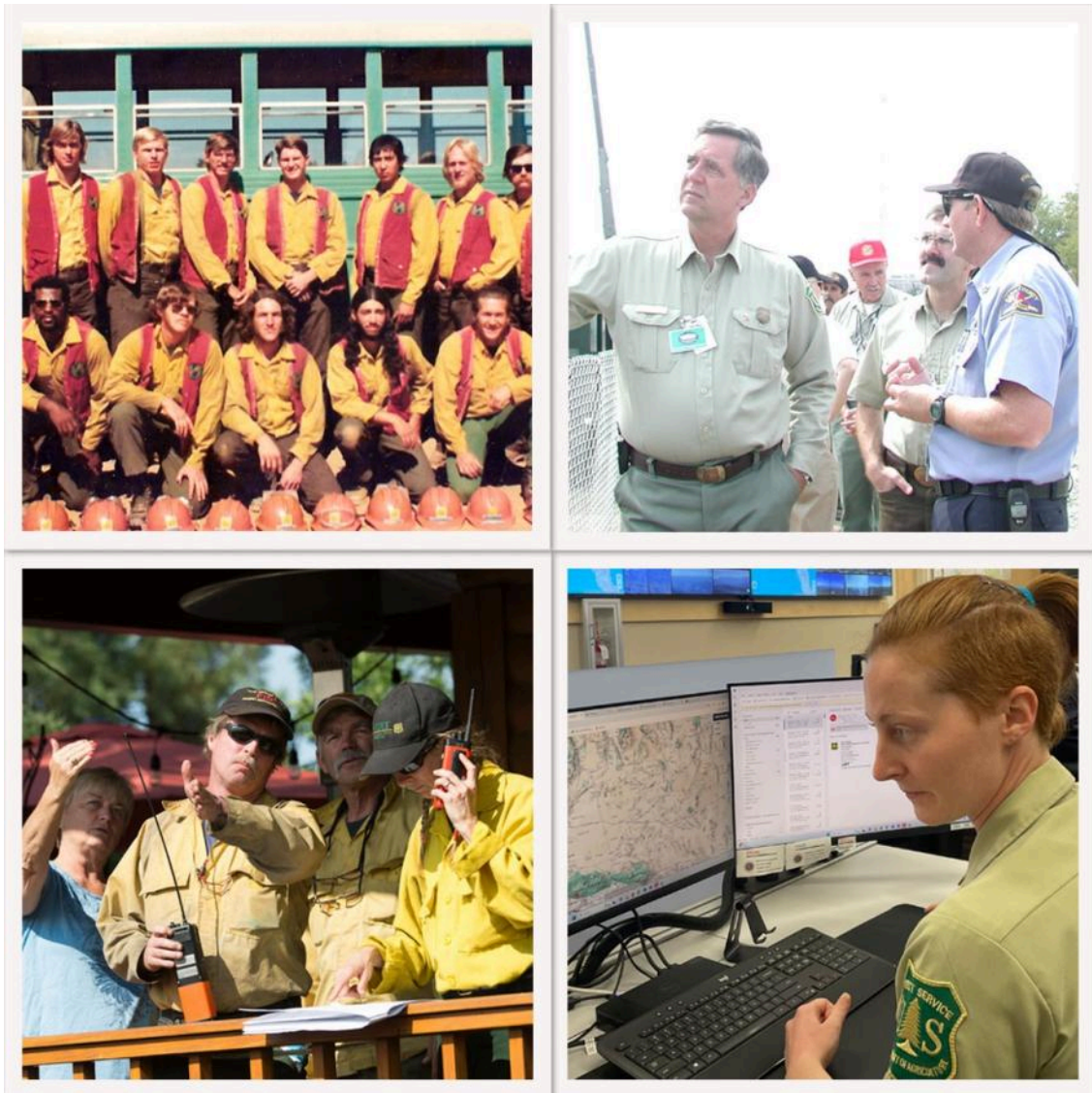


Often copied, never equaled: the iconic Forest Service signs have featured in countless vacation photos. (USDA Forest Service images)

Classic signage

The classic trapezoidal signs welcoming you to a national forest were designed in the 1960s by Virgil “Bus” Carrell. The nostalgic shape and

font that countless visitors have snapped a photo beside have been used by the Forest Service for so long that they have become common law trademark.



Incident Management Teams are a vital element to the Forest Service's crisis response.
(USDA Forest Service images)

A new standard: Incident Management Teams

Whether fighting fire, managing the land or helping Americans recreate across the country, Forest Service staff are adept at managing what could otherwise be chaos. The agency also happens to be the unsung hero in establishing today's standard in emergency response: incident management teams. The Forest Service invented the concept in the 1970s after southern California suffered a wave of destructive fires and

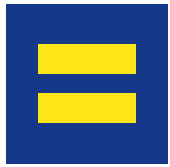
Congress tasked the agency to design a system to effectively coordinate interagency actions following disasters. The result was the Incident Command System. The Forest Service even used this well-tested system after 9/11 at the Pentagon and World Trade Center, aiding in initial recovery efforts and providing months of support and training for responders.



While we're talking about instantly recognizable elements of the Forest Service, we can't leave out the only American with their own zip code: Smokey Bear! (*USDA Forest Service images*)

Smokey Bear

The legend himself, Smokey Bear is the longest continuously running public service campaign in U.S. history. Smokey celebrated his 80th birthday last year, and while not technically a Forest Service employee, the agency manages him along with the National Association of State Foresters and the Advertising Council, spreading the message of Only You Can Prevent Wildfires. He is the only American with a personalized zip code — 20252 — the other belonging to the U.S. President. To learn more, visit smokeybear.com



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION™

CORPORATE EQUALITY INDEX 2019

Rating Workplaces on Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Equality

1,028 of the Nation's
Largest Businesses
Demonstrated Their
Commitment to LGBTQ
Equality and Inclusion





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“The top-scoring companies on this year’s CEI are not only establishing policies that affirm and include employees here in the United States, they are applying these policies to their global operations and impacting millions of people beyond our shores,” said HRC President Chad Griffin. “Many of these companies have also become vocal advocates for equality in the public square, including the dozens that have signed on to amicus briefs in vital Supreme Court cases and the more than 180 that have joined HRC’s Business Coalition for the Equality Act. Time and again, leading American businesses have shown that protecting their employees and customers from discrimination isn’t just the right thing to do – it’s also good for business.”

Executive Summary



Corporate Equality Index 2019

IN THIS 17TH EDITION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

Foundation's Corporate Equality Index, **572 businesses earned a 100 percent rating and the designation of being a "Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality."** Top-rated CEI employers come from nearly every industry and region of the United States. Employers earning top ratings took concrete steps to ensure greater equity for LGBTQ workers and their families in the form of comprehensive policies, benefits and practices. The CEI rating criteria have three key pillars:

- **Non-discrimination policies across business entities;**
- **Equitable benefits for LGBTQ workers and their families;**
- **Supporting an inclusive culture and corporate social responsibility.**

Since 2002, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation has published the CEI report based largely on the annual CEI survey administered to hundreds of major global employers. The first Index in 2002 had 13 top-rated companies. The CEI universe includes Fortune magazine's 500 largest publicly traded businesses, American Lawyer magazine's top 200 revenue-grossing law firms (AmLaw 200) and hundreds of publicly and privately held mid- to large-sized businesses.

The CEI helps guide the wide-scale adoption of LGBTQ-specific practices and language within existing business structures. For example, where businesses enumerate federally protected categories of workers in their non-discrimination policies (e.g. based on race, religion, disability, etc.), the HRC Foundation evaluates them on the inclusion of "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" protections. In terms of benefits, the HRC Foundation evaluates employers on the provision of health insurance

coverage for same- and different-sex spouses and partners. In addition, the HRC Foundation assesses the availability of routine, chronic care and transition-related medical coverage for transgender employees and dependents. Where major businesses regularly provide education, training and accountability measures on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the HRC Foundation seeks to ensure these systems include the LGBTQ workforce. Lastly, major businesses have a range of engagement programs for the communities in which they operate and target markets such as advertising, public policy engagement, supplier diversity, philanthropy and sponsorship: we seek the inclusion of the LGBTQ community in these external engagement efforts.

By using the CEI as a guide, businesses can help ensure that their existing policy and benefits infrastructure is inclusive of the LGBTQ workforce and their families, resulting in greater recruitment and retention of a talented, diverse workforce. The CEI is a key roadmap to LGBTQ inclusion but it cannot serve as a holistic assessment of any employer's unique workplace culture or individual experiences: a CEI rating is one key evaluation metric among other factors in assessing any employer or provider of goods or services.

In addition to the depth of investment the top-rated businesses have made in the name of equality, the 2019 CEI shows an unprecedented breadth of new, participating businesses. This year's CEI contains 93 new businesses that opted into the survey.

The following report is reflective of verified data submitted to the HRC Foundation as well as independent research on non-responding businesses. Wherever credit can be verified, all ranked businesses will receive it, irrespective of their participation in the CEI survey.

The HRC Foundation has worked with thousands of businesses to promote workplace equality for LGBTQ workers.

Key Findings

Raising the Bar: Employers Earning 100 Percent

572 Businesses earning 100 percent under the new criteria of:

- Ensuring full spousal and partner health care coverage parity;
- Affirming coverage for transition-related care and eliminating all so-called “transgender exclusions” from plans; and,
- Ensuring full LGBTQ inclusion in diverse supply chain programs.

This year’s CEI rating criteria account for health care coverage revisions needed in the context of a changing legal landscape for LGBTQ workers, their families and major employers. In addition, the requirement around LGBTQ-owned enterprises in supplier diversity programs caps off over 15 years of work in tandem with the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) and other leaders promoting the economic and social benefits that come from ensuring LGBTQ business leaders are included in opportunities for business solutions.

Transgender Inclusion in the Workplace: Accelerating Progress

The most significant progress in the CEI has been the wide-scale adoption of transgender-inclusive initiatives across businesses.

- A full **85** percent of the Fortune 500 – including both companies that participate in the CEI survey and those that do not – have gender identity protections enumerated in their nondiscrimination policies (up from 3 percent in 2002) and **97** percent of the entire CEI universe of businesses offer explicit gender identity non-discrimination protections (up from 5 percent in 2002).
- **62** percent of the Fortune 500 and over **84** of the CEI universe of businesses offer transgender-inclusive health care coverage, up from 0 in 2002 and **16** times as many businesses as ten years ago. **104** new employers offer this coverage in the 2019 report.

572 Businesses Earning the Distinction of:



Equality at the Fortune-Ranked Companies

193 OF THE FORTUNE 500-RANKED BUSINESSES ACHIEVED A 100 percent rating (compared to **230** last year), with **13** of the top **20** Fortune-ranked businesses at this top score. **93** percent of the Fortune 500 include “sexual orientation” in their nondiscrimination policies and **85** percent include “gender identity.” Over half of Fortune 500 companies offer transgender-inclusive health care benefits.

A record **346** of Fortune 500 businesses have official CEI ratings based on submitted surveys (as compared to **344** last year), with an average rating of **88** compared to **93** last year. The Fortune 1000 list of the largest publicly traded companies was invited to take part in the Corporate Equality Index survey for the eighth year in a row.

Businesses’ Commitment to LGBTQ Employees

	All Fortune 500	Fortune 500 Participants	Fortune 500 Non-Responders
Sexual Orientation in U.S. Non-Discrimination Policy	93%	99%	78%
Gender Identity in U.S. Non-Discrimination Policy	85%	98%	53%
Domestic Partner Benefits	49%	69%	0%
Transgender-Inclusive Benefits	62%	86%	0%
Organizational LGBTQ Competency	64%	89%	0%
Public Commitment to the LGBTQ Community	63%	87%	0%
Average 2019 CEI Score	67%	88%	14%

12 of the Top 20 Fortune-
Ranked Companies
Received 100% Ratings

	Fortune1000	2019 CEI Score
Walmart Inc.	1	100
Berkshire Hathaway	2	20
Apple Inc.	3	100
Exxon Mobil Corp.	4	85
McKesson Corp.	5	100
UnitedHealth Group Inc.	6	100
CVS Health Corp.	7	90
General Motors Co.	8	90
AT&T Inc.	9	100
Ford Motor Co.	10	90
AmerisourceBergen Corp.	11	100
Amazon.com Inc.	12	100
General Electric Co.	13	90
Verizon Communications Inc.	14	90
Cardinal Health Inc.	15	100
Costco Wholesale Corp.	16	60
Walgreen Co.	17	100
Kroger Co., The	18	100
Chevron Corp.	19	100
Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae)	20	100



Findings



Non-Discrimination Policies

Clearly enumerated non-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity are essential to LGBTQ workforce equity and inclusion. The policies help to ensure:

- Equal opportunity for all employees;
- Diverse talent acquisition and retention for broader economic growth; and
- Keeping the employer apace with changing legal and public opinion landscapes.

Furthermore, these policies represent minimal upfront costs and rates of litigation upon implementation are consistent with other protected classes.

Federal laws clearly and consistently afford protections from workplace discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability and genetic information but do not afford these same protections on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Currently, the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is accepting complaints of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in employment based on Title VII's prohibition against sex discrimination. In addition, some states have passed laws and ordinances to establish workplace protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees, but only 21 states explicitly provide workplace protections on the basis of gender identity and 22 on the basis of sexual orientation. Despite this patchwork of state laws and federal guidance, private sector employers have far outpaced lawmakers in the implementation of fully inclusive nondiscrimination policies.

Sexual Orientation Protections

Criterion 1a **Businesses That Prohibit Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation in U.S. and Global Operations**

99% of CEI-rated employers provide employment protections on the basis of sexual orientation in the U.S. and globally.

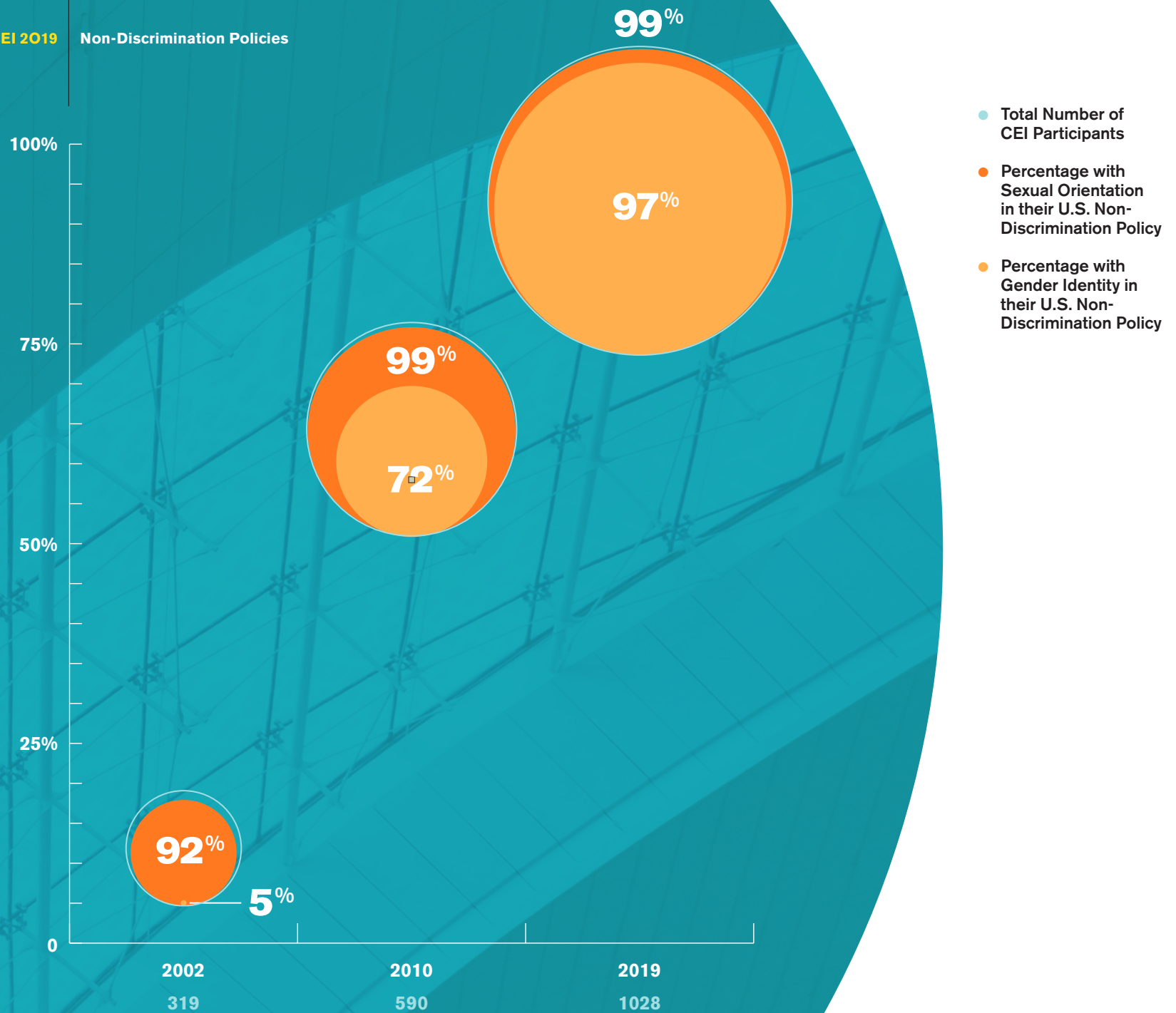
Gender Identity Protections

Criterion 1b **Businesses That Prohibit Discrimination Based on Gender Identity in U.S. and Global Operations**

97% of CEI-rated employers provide employment protections on the basis of gender identity in the U.S. and globally.

This criterion has seen the most rapid growth of any other element of the CEI. In 2002, just 5 percent of the rated businesses included gender identity in their U.S. non-discrimination policies and every year that figure has climbed to today's strong majority with these protections in place. Ninety-seven percent of participants have gender identity protections in their U.S. policy, **a 90 point increase since the CEI's inception.**

CEI 2019 Non-Discrimination Policies



Equal Benefits

IN THE U.S., EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HEALTH INSURANCE IS THE SINGLE LARGEST

source of health care coverage. Competitive employer-provided benefits' packages are critical to attracting and retaining talent and ensuring LGBTQ-inclusive benefits to employees and their families is an overall low-cost, high-return proposition for businesses. In addition, equitable benefits structures align with the principle of equal compensation for equal work. Apart from actual wages paid, benefits account, on average for approximately 31.5 percent of employees' overall compensation (BOL 2016). Therefore, employers have amended many benefits structures to ensure that this valuable bundle of benefits is equitably extended to their workforce, irrespective of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Most employers report to the HRC Foundation an overall increase of less than 3.5 percent of total benefits costs when they implement partner benefits and marginal increases related to transgender-inclusive health care coverage (i.e. a fraction of a decimal point of cost calculations).

When denied equal benefits coverage, the cost to LGBTQ workers and their families is profound. The HRC Foundation rates and gives guidance on two key components of equal health insurance benefits:

- **Parity between benefits available for employees; spouses and partners; and**
- **Affirmative transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits and removal of all broad exclusions to coverage across plan offerings.**

In addition, employers are rated on having full parity across their entire suite of benefits - including non-healthcare benefits such as leave, retirement and others - between spouses and partners.

LGBTQ-inclusive benefits packages are:

- **Necessary for talent acquisition and retention and broader economic growth;**
- **Equal compensation for equal work;**
- **Helping employers keep apace with changing legal landscape and workforce expectations; and,**
- **Minimal upfront costs (on average 1% increase for corporate employers' overall health insurance costs).**

The premise of parity drives businesses meeting the partner benefits and transgender inclusive health care coverage criteria. In its CEI scoring, the HRC Foundation does not penalize an employer if a particular benefit is not offered to any employees, but holds employers accountable to provide equitable benefits to LGBTQ employees and their families across the complete package of benefits offered. For example, where routine care, hormone therapies and medically necessary surgeries are available to cisgender (people who are not transgender), these same health care benefits must also be extended to transgender plan enrollees. Many employers have begun to comprehensively address health insurance coverage for transgender individuals, and most have experienced little to no premium increases as a result.

Continued Need for Partner Benefits

Since 2002, The CEI has required parity between spousal and partner benefits. After the *United States v. Windsor* and before the *Obergefell v. Hodges* Supreme Court rulings, HRC released a position paper cautioning against exposing LGBTQ employees to legal risks by switching to a marriage-only standard for accessing health care coverage.

After the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, ruling that marriage is a fundamental right to which same-sex couples should have the same access as opposite-sex couples, bringing marriage equality nationwide, employers have sought to do the right thing in the name of equality. While marriage equality is undoubtedly a monumental step towards full equality, LGBTQ individuals remain at risk for discrimination in many other walks of life. LGBTQ Americans can get legally married but remain at risk of being denied services for who they are or risk being fired simply for getting married and wearing their wedding ring to the office the next day. Lacking protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity through federal and consistent state law, it remains legal to discriminate against LGBTQ individuals in employment, housing, and access to public places, federal funding, credit, education and jury service. Until LGBTQ Americans have full equality through the federal Equality Act, the CEI standards will continue to fill the void left by federal and state law, better serving the U.S. workforce.

While HRC never changed its partner benefits mandate, a small number of companies moved to spousal benefits only in the middle of the 2016 CEI season. These employers assumed that with the marriage ruling, the need for partner benefits was gone. This is not true and in fact, over the last decade most businesses that have offered same-sex partner benefits also extended these to opposite-sex partners to better meet the needs of their own diverse workforces. In other words, businesses have been decoupling benefits from the legal definition of marriage. Out of an abundance of understanding for participating companies, credit was given for spousal equivalent benefits until this year's 2019 CEI in which, after wide scale education and outreach efforts, 732 businesses ultimately met the standard. The CEI continues to reflect best practices for LGBTQ workers and their families.

Understanding Transgender-Inclusive Health Care Coverage

In 2004 the HRC Foundation identified transgender-inclusive health care coverage as an area of educational outreach and criteria inclusion.

From 2006 through the 2011 CEI, a top score meant businesses needed to mitigate at least one exclusion among five critical categories of transgender health care, namely: mental health; pharmacy benefits for hormone therapy; medical visits and lab procedures related to hormone therapy; surgical procedures; and, short-term leave for surgical procedures. While awareness of barriers to transgender health care coverage steadily increased, a majority of CEI-rated businesses plateaued in offering mental health care coverage and/ or short-term leave for surgical procedures but did not mitigate the exclusions related to other medically necessary treatments.

In 2009 the HRC Foundation announced a major change to what would be the 2012 CEI criteria: to earn a top rating of 100 percent, a business needed to not just mitigate one or more exclusions, but address the root problem of transgender exclusion in coverage and fully affirm health care coverage for medically necessary transition-related care and other routine and chronic conditions. The HRC Foundation embarked on a massive campaign of educational and consultative efforts to address health care and insurance disparities for the transgender population and their families, including: outreach to leading health insurance companies; direct consultation with both fully and self-insured employers to modify their health care plans and collection and dissemination of cost and utilization data from leading businesses.

In this year's CEI, a record 853 of CEI-rated businesses offer at least one plan option with current market standard coverage, up from 0 in 2002, 49 in the 2009 CEI report, 278 in the 2013 CEI report, 418 in the 2015 CEI report, 647 in the 2017 CEI report and 750. This year, of the 853 businesses with at least one inclusive plan, 752 also eliminated all exclusions across plans.

The adoption of transgender-inclusive health care coverage continues to be an area of significant growth in the CEI translating to meaningful access to critical coverage and care for transgender employees and dependents.

Equal Benefits

Criterion 2a & 2b

CEI-Rated Employers Provide Equal Spousal and Partner Health Care Benefits

72% of this year's rated businesses provide equal spousal and partner health care benefits.

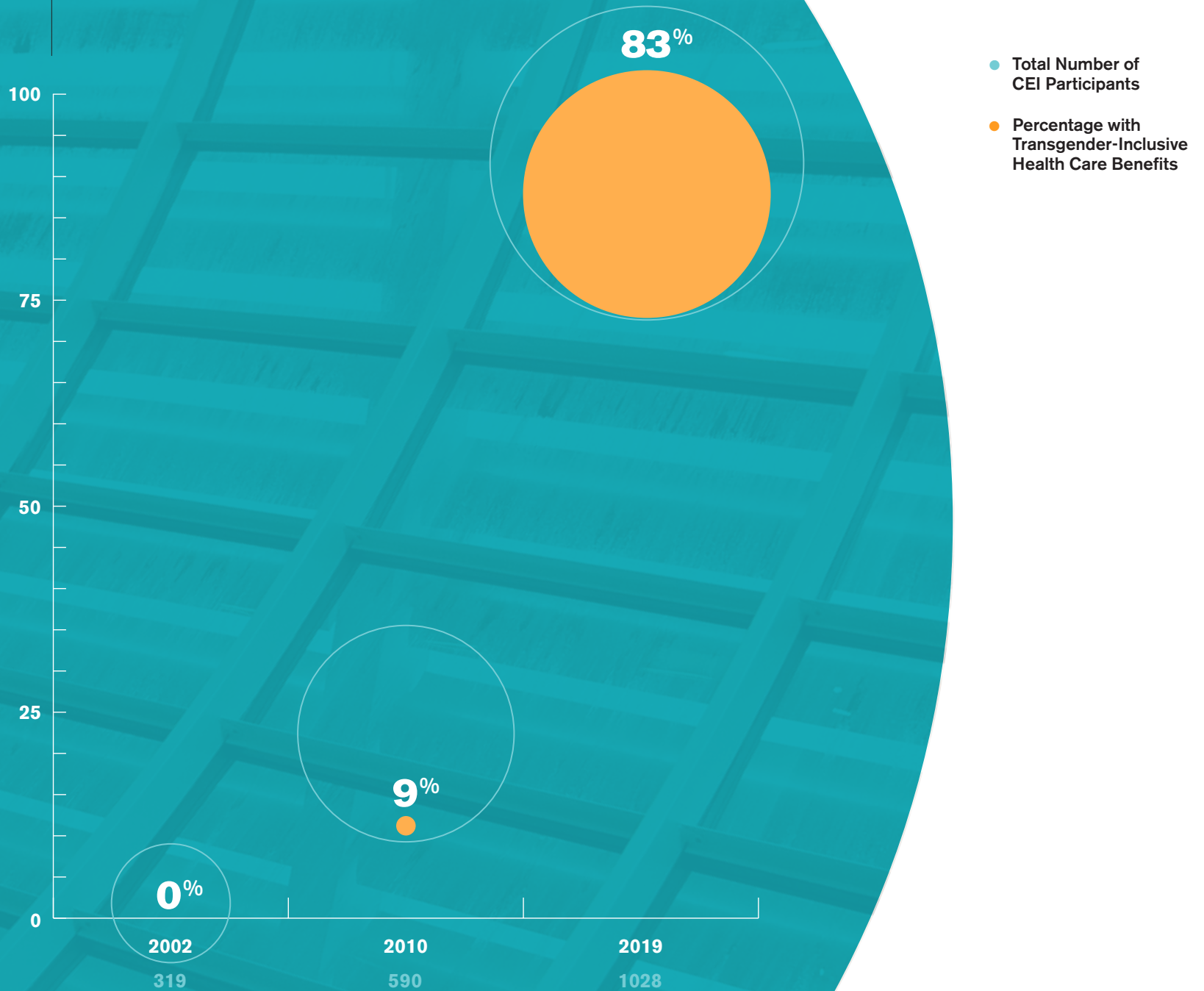
Criterion 2c

CEI-Rated Employers Provide Affirmative Transgender-Inclusive Health Care Benefits

73% of this year's rated businesses provide affirmative transgender-inclusive health care benefits and have removed all broad exclusions to coverage across plan offerings.

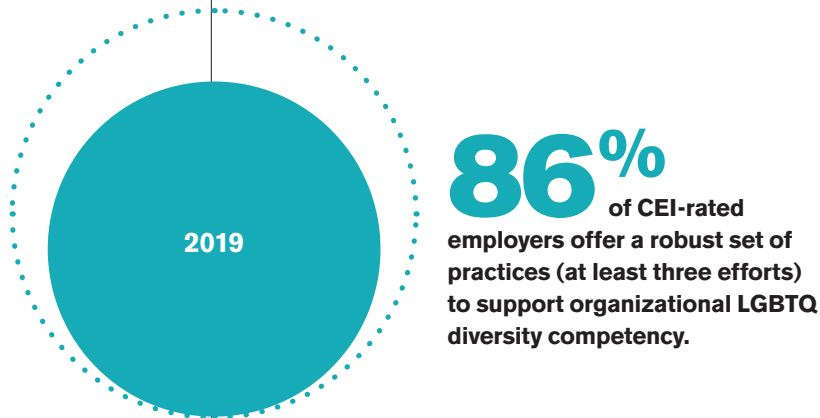
These benefits are critical for the health and well-being of individual transgender people. According to businesses' reporting to the HRC Foundation, making these benefits accessible comes at an overall negligible cost to the employers' overall health insurance plans. This holds true across industries.

CEI 2019 Transgender-Inclusive Benefits



Organizational Competency in LGBTQ Inclusion

Criterion 3a Competency Training, Metrics, Resources or Accountability Measures



Equitable policies and benefits are critical to LGBTQ inclusion in the workforce but alone are not sufficient to support a truly inclusive culture within a workplace. Employers recognize that beyond the letter of a policy, additional programming and educational efforts are necessary. Some of the most common forms of LGBTQ inclusion efforts are: diversity training programs, LGBTQ metrics and evaluation mechanisms and gender transition guidelines.

Many employers integrate these educational programs into already existing diversity and inclusion programs. To obtain full credit in this criterion, employers must show at least three types of organizational competency programming. This comprehensive metric is provided as accountability for employers to devote resources to creating and maintaining a climate of inclusion.

In light of policy and benefits expansion, the HRC Foundation has rolled out a number of studies and resources aimed at making the policies and benefits part of an everyday workplace practice of LGBTQ inclusion. In 2018, the HRC Foundation released *A Workplace Divided: Understanding the Climate for LGBTQ Workers Nationwide* demonstrating that despite significant progress, 46% of LGBTQ workers say they are closeted at work. The commonly used *Transgender Inclusion In the Workplace: A Toolkit for Employers*, is a comprehensive resource to guide employer transgender inclusion efforts. The toolkit includes the HRC Foundation's best practice guidance on transgender inclusive policies and practices (including sample policies) as well as guidance for implementing transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits. Addressing the gap in training and education materials, the toolkit includes scenario-based learning that uses real life examples from HRC's work with businesses to illuminate the everyday experiences of transgender workers on the job.

This resource and additional materials that help employers close the gap between inclusive policy and practice can be found at www.hrc.org/workplace.

Business invest in organizational competency programs because:

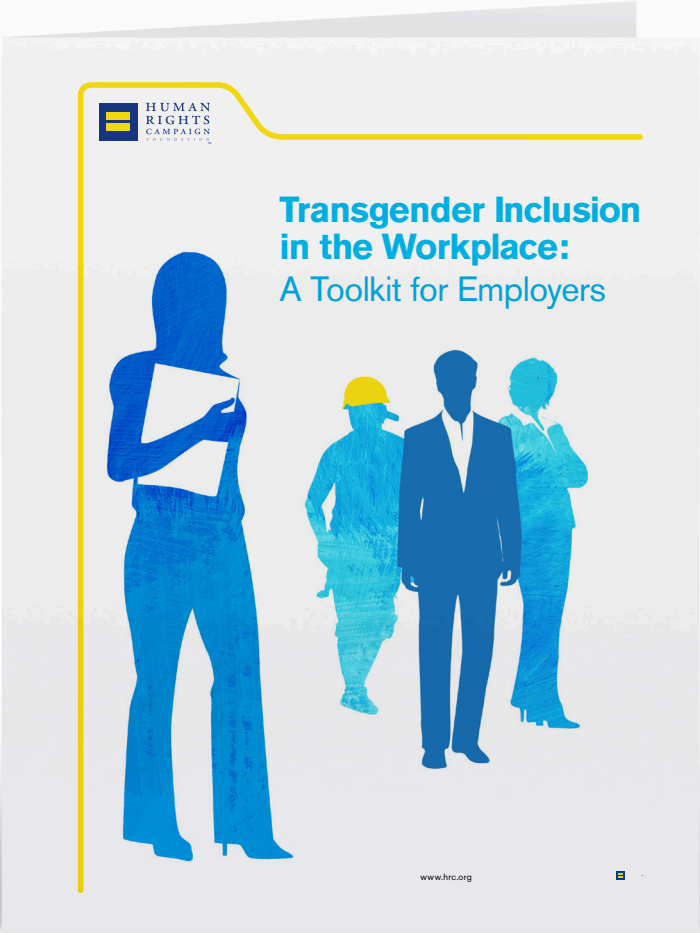
- Policy does not equal practice;
- Despite progress, nearly 50% of LGBT workers nationwide remain closeted on the job;
- Invisible diversity requires unique training focus and defined safe space programs and resources;
- Senior level buy-in and accountability metrics effect change quickly and for the long term; and,
- Retaining workers is largely about everyday experiences on the job.

Gender Transition Guidelines

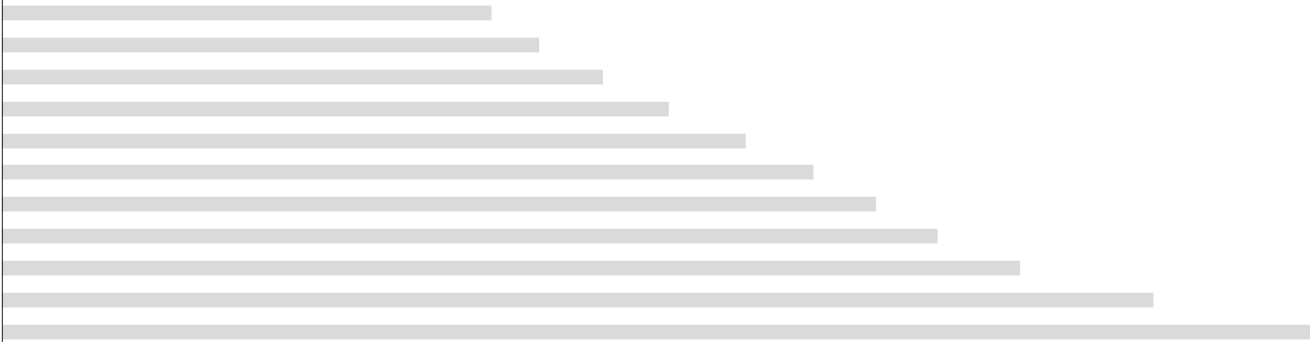
Having easily understandable and accessible guidelines on the gender transition process is a best practice in setting forth some structure to support a respectful and successful workplace transition. The guidelines are aimed at establishing common reference points and expectations for all involved, including the transitioning employee, HR, management and work groups, to further everyone's goal of a respectful transition process that retains the employee and individual engagement.

A record 515 major employers submitted gender transition guidelines – the vast majority of which were adopted from the HRC Foundation's template guidelines (available at www.hrc.org/transtoolkit).

From suggestions on how to have respectful and informative conversations about the topic of transgender inclusion in the workplace to the administrative changes to one's personnel and workplace documents, these guidelines clearly delineate responsibilities and expectations of transitioning employees, their supervisors, colleagues and other staff.



The number of major employers with gender transition guidelines



90	2008
115	2009
141	2010
172	2011
208	2012
239	2013
262	2014
291	2015
330	2016
387	2017
459	2018
515	2019

Senior Leadership Metrics of Inclusion

A steadily growing number of top employers include senior leader engagement around the business's diversity and inclusion goals. By holding their senior leaders accountable through senior performance evaluation, these businesses are raising the structural impact and incentives around diversity and inclusion growth. **Forty percent** of CEI-rated employers allow senior leaders to submit LGBTQ-focused diversity efforts as part of their annual review of contributions to organizational diversity and inclusion goals.

Criterion 3b

LGBTQ/Allies Employee Groups and Diversity Councils

Many large employers have formally recognized employee resource groups (also known as an employee network, business resource or affinity groups) for diverse populations of their workforce, including women, people of color, veterans, parents, people of varied abilities and LGBTQ/ allied people. These groups' purpose is two-fold:

- **To foster a sense of community and visibility of these diverse populations within a business; and**
- **To leverage each unique populations' networks and skills to help accomplish business goals such as market innovation, recruitment and retention of talent.**

ERGs are great platforms for leadership opportunities for LGBTQ and allied employees to better their own work environments. In addition, the reach of many ERGs extends beyond the everyday affairs of an employer to policymaking, representing the employer at professional events and external activities, participating in prospective employee recruitment efforts, mentoring, and other retention-focused programming.

LGBTQ/A ERGs empower employees as change agents and promote inclusion for LGBTQ employees within the workplace. Recognizing the differences in businesses rated in the CEI, this criterion can also be met with an organization wide diversity council or working group with a mission that specifically includes LGBTQ diversity and inclusion.

90% of CEI-rated employers have an employee resource group or diversity council that includes LGBTQ and allied employees and programming.

The Role of Allies

Employees who do not identify as LGBTQ themselves, but are invested in equality and workplace inclusion are increasing their numbers within ERG ranks. While ERGs' mission statements are specific to LGBTQ inclusion, more and more, allies are encouraged to join as membership is not limited to those who are LGBTQ but open to all supporters of equality. Of those companies with an officially recognized LGBTQ employee group, **97 percent** reported being expressly for LGBTQ and allied employees. ERGs have embraced allies as members of the full LGBTQ community, as allies bring their own unique voice and vantage point to workplace equality.

Executive Champions

The profile and impact of an employee resource groups is greatly enhanced by an active executive champion for the group. Ninety-six percent of employee groups rated in the CEI are sponsored by an executive champion. A majority (**57 percent**) of executive champions identify as allies, while 34 percent reported being openly LGBTQ.



Criterion 3c

Public Commitment

Businesses That Positively Engage the External LGBTQ Community

84% of CEI-rated businesses met the standard of demonstrating a least three efforts of public commitment to the LGBTQ community.

Promoting Business Growth Through Visibility: Respectful Advertising & Talent Recruiting Efforts

Businesses have extensive programs to engage with key markets and the communities in which they operate. Public commitment in the CEI is measured through a number of individual engagements, namely through marketing, advertising and recruitment efforts, philanthropic contributions, LGBTQ supplier diversity and public policy weigh-in. Additionally, the CEI includes a set of standards around foundational giving to fully align a business's actions with its core values and to raise the bar for corporate social responsibility.

Businesses see advantages in going public with their commitment to equality, including:

- **Reputational benefits to supporting equality groups and programs;**
- **Corporate case for LGBT legal equality: they are on right side of history and eliminate barriers to investment;**
- **Attracting and retaining next generation of workers and consumers – the importance of communicating pro-equality messages to millennials; and,**
- **LGBTQ public support is seen as a bellwether for broader issues of diversity and inclusion.**

Professional events such as the annual Out & Equal Workplace Summit, Lavender Law conference and Reaching Out MBA career expo are filled with highly rated CEI employers looking to attract diverse employees. Employers' presence at these and other events sends a clear message to potential employees that LGBTQ diversity is part of company culture, and that LGBTQ candidates are valued as the best and the brightest across industries, geographies and trades.

Ad campaigns and sponsorships further this message of company values to the public. Increasingly, ads with authentic images of LGBTQ people are featured in both LGBTQ media outlets and general press alike. Corporate philanthropic activities ranging from financial support to in-kind donations of products or services can bolster a business's profile in the LGBTQ community.

Supporting the LGBTQ Community: Philanthropy

Corporate giving to organizations promoting LGBTQ health, education or political efforts further demonstrates this commitment to broader LGBTQ equality. Typically, these efforts have a strategic connection to the core mission of a business, such as a law firm's pro bono legal support of organizations tasked with direct legal representation of LGBTQ individuals.

Corporate Giving Guidelines

The HRC Foundation has always held businesses accountable for the types of organizations receiving their philanthropic dollars. Historically, the CEI had a mechanism to account for foundational corporate giving to any organization whose explicit mission included efforts to undermine LGBTQ equality. This framework was widened in 2016 to hold companies accountable for any giving to a non-religious organization with an explicit policy of discrimination against LGBTQ people. This requirement sets the standards around responsible foundational giving and ensures that a top rated business does not provide philanthropic support to organizations whose values do not align with theirs.

**Supplier
Diversity
Programs:
Aligning
LGBTQ with
Other Diverse
Business
Segments**

The requirement is that a top-rated business must implement internal requirements prohibiting company or law firm philanthropic giving to nonreligious organizations that have a written policy of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or have a policy explicitly permitting its own chapters, affiliates, etc. to discriminate.

Supplier diversity programs ensure that the procurement process includes specific opportunities for minority-owned businesses, including women-owned, veteran-owned and, more recently, LGBTQ-owned businesses. Supplier diversity initiatives have existed in the business community for at least three decades, going back to the inception of such groups as the National Association of Women Business Owners and the National Minority Business Council, both founded in the early 1970s to promote the inclusion of these under-utilized entrepreneurial groups. Furthermore, there are federal initiatives such as the Center for Veterans Enterprise that is designed to assist U.S. veterans in launching and thriving in private business. These initiatives intend to give more equitable opportunities to those would-be small business owners who are more likely to face social and practical barriers to success.

The National LGBT Chamber of Commerce began certifying LGBTQ-owned small businesses in 2002, a process that requires substantiation of majority LGBTQ ownership in a business and verification of a business' good standing in the community. Supplier diversity initiatives are a win-win relationship for both the LGBTQ-owned small businesses and the businesses that contract them. 91% of CEI-rated businesses with supplier diversity programs specifically include LGBTQ-owned enterprises. These businesses are enjoying a multitude of benefits, including a supply chain that better reflects the diverse communities in which they operate, and in turn garnering sharper innovation and business solutions.

Criterion 3d

Corporate Social Responsibility

Inclusive Contractor/Supplier Non-Discrimination Standards and Philanthropic Giving Guidelines

78% of CEI-rated employers met the criteria of having LGBTQ inclusive contractor/supplier non-discrimination standards and philanthropic giving guidelines in place.

A business's non-discrimination policies shouldn't be limited to human resources or diversity and inclusion. The CEI's Corporate Social Responsibility criteria ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity protections apply to those standards that businesses require their vendors or suppliers to adhere to, as well as recipients of their philanthropic funds.

Large businesses typically rely on other businesses for goods or services, and businesses of the size included in the CEI typically have set standards and guidelines already embedded in their procurement. In order to ensure that suppliers act in a manner that adheres to a business's own standards, it is necessary for businesses to establish standards of conduct that set expectations for behavior of their suppliers. In this year's CEI, 76% of rated employers have supplier mandates with respect to non-discrimination in place, and 98% of these mandates explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity alongside other named categories.

The CEI has a systematic tradition of holding companies accountable for what kinds of organizations receive their philanthropic dollars. The CEI has always had a mechanism to account for foundational corporate giving to any organization whose explicit mission included efforts to undermine LGBTQ equality, and beginning in the 2016 CEI, this framework widened to hold companies accountable for any giving to a non-religious organization with an explicit policy of discrimination against LGBTQ people. This requirement, which 72% of 2019 participants met, sets the standards around responsible foundational giving and ensures that a top rated business does not provide philanthropic support to organizations whose values do not align with theirs.

Equality in the Public Square

OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, THE RATES OF CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT ON MATTERS

of LGBTQ equality under the law and LGBTQ-related public policy have skyrocketed. As hundreds anti-LGBTQ bills proliferated across the states over the last several years of legislative sessions, businesses spoke out and rebuked attempts to undermine LGBTQ civil rights at record rates from state-to-state. These corporate leaders are speaking out not just on principle but also because anti-LGBTQ bills that attempt to curb access to public services for transgender people, or deny basic services to LGBTQ families, or preempt local non-discrimination ordinances ultimately put their employees and their families, as well as their customers, at risk.

CEI-rated employers are on record supporting broad issues of LGBTQ equality at the local, state and federal levels as well as through amicus briefs with the courts because they know equality is good for business.



HRC's Business Coalition for the Equality Act is a group of over 180 leading U.S. employers that support the Equality Act, federal legislation that would provide the same basic protections to LGBTQ people as are provided to other protected groups under federal law. Coalition member companies represent nearly every industry, employ over 8.9 million people in the U.S., command over \$4 trillion in revenue and have operations in all 50 states.



Private sector support for the federal Equality Act surged in the last year. At present, 181 major employers are signatories on HRC's Business Coalition for the Equality Act.

A.T. Kearney Inc.
Abercrombie & Fitch Co.
Accenture
Adobe Systems Inc.
ADP
Advanced Micro Devices Inc.
Airbnb Inc.
Alaska Airlines
Alcoa Corp.
Ally Financial Inc.
Amalgamated Bank
Amazon.com Inc.
American Airlines
American Eagle Outfitters Inc.
American Express Global Business Travel
Apple Inc.
Arconic
Ascena Retail Group Inc.
Aspen Skiing Company LLC
AT&T Inc.
Atlassian
Bain & Co. Inc./ Bridgespan Group
Bank of America Corp.
Bayer U.S. LLC
Becton, Dickinson and Co.
Best Buy Co. Inc.
Biogen
Boehringer Ingelheim USA Corp.
Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.
Boston Scientific Corp.
Box Inc.
Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.
Broadridge Financial Solutions Inc.
Brown-Forman Corp.
Caesars Entertainment Corp.
Capital One Financial Corp.
Cardinal Health Inc.
Cargill Inc.
Chevron Corp.
Chobani
Choice Hotels International Inc.
Cisco Systems Inc.
Citigroup Inc.
Citrix Systems Inc.
Coca-Cola Co., The
Compass Bancshares Inc. (BBVA Compass)
Corning
Cox Enterprises Inc.
CSAA Insurance Group
Cummins Inc.
CVS Health Corp.
Danone North America
Darden Restaurants Inc.
Dell Technologies Inc.
Deloitte LLP
Diageo North America
Dow Chemical Co., The
Dropbox Inc.
E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Co. (DuPont)
Eastern Bank Corp.
Eaton Corp.

eBay Inc.
Ernst & Young LLP
Estée Lauder Companies Inc., The
Evolent Health Inc.
Exelon Corp.
Expedia Group
Facebook Inc.
First Data Corp.
Food Lion
Gap Inc.
General Electric Co.
General Mills Inc.
General Motors Co.
Gilead Sciences Inc.
Glassdoor Inc.
Google Inc.
Guardian Life Insurance Co. of America, The
Gusto
HERE North America LLC
Hershey Co., The
Hewlett Packard Enterprise Co.
Hilton Inc.
HP Inc.
HSN Inc.
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP
Hyatt Hotels Corp.
IBM Corp.
IHS Markit Ltd.
IKEA Holding US Inc.
Ingersoll-Rand Company
Insight Enterprises Inc.
Intel Corp.
InterContinental Hotels Group Americas
Iron Mountain Inc.
John Hancock Financial Services Inc.
Johnson & Johnson
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Juniper Networks Inc.
Kaiser Permanente
Kellogg Co.
Kenneth Cole Productions Inc.
KPMG LLP
Lendlease Americas Inc.
Levi Strauss & Co.
Linden Research Inc.
Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
Lyft Inc.
Macy's Inc.
Marriott International Inc.
Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.
Mastercard
Medtronic PLC
Merck
Meredith Corp.
MGM Resorts International
Microsoft Corp.
Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams
Moody's Corp.
Morgan Stanley
Nationwide
Navient

Navigant Consulting Inc.
Netflix Inc.
Nike Inc.
Northrop Grumman Corp.
Nuance Communications
Office Depot Inc.
Oracle Corp.
Patreon Inc.
Paul Hastings LLP
PepsiCo Inc.
Pfizer Inc.
Pinterest Inc.
PNC Financial Services Group Inc., The
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Procter & Gamble Co.
Pure Storage Inc.
QUALCOMM Inc.
Realogy Holdings Corp.
Replacements Ltd.
S&P Global Inc.
Salesforce
SAP America Inc.
Seagate Technology plc
Shire PLC
Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP
Shutterstock Inc.
Siemens Corp.
Sodexo Inc.
Spotify USA Inc.
Square Inc.
SurveyMonkey Inc.
Symantec Corp.
Synchrony
Takeda Pharmaceuticals USA Inc.
Target Corp.
Tech Data Corp.
TIAA
T-Mobile USA Inc.
TPG Global LLC
TransUnion
Turner Construction Co.
Twitter Inc.
U.S. Bancorp
Uber Technologies Inc.
Ultimate Software
Under Armour Inc.
Unilever
Univision Communications Inc.
Verizon Communications Inc.
Visa
Warby Parker
WeddingWire Inc.
Wells Fargo & Co.
Whirlpool Corp.
Williams-Sonoma Inc.
Workday Inc.
Xerox Corp.
Yelp Inc.
Zillow Group

2019 Corporate Equality Index Rating System and Methodology

The HRC Foundation's CEI rating system is designed for mid to large businesses (500 full time employees and above) and divided into three key criteria categories:

- **Non-discrimination policies across business entities;**
- **Equitable benefits for LGBTQ workers and their families;**
- **Supporting an inclusive culture and corporate social responsibility.**

Launched in 2002, the CEI is the first internationally recognized benchmarking report for businesses to gauge their level of LGBTQ workplace inclusion against competitors.

In addition to growing the number of highly-rated employers, the CEI has seen success in the reach of the survey. **The number of employers rated from the first CEI to the present has expanded from 319 to 1028,** encompassing all major industry sectors.

The largest and most successful U.S. employers are invited to participate in the CEI and are identified through the following lists:

- **Fortune magazine's 1,000 largest publicly traded businesses (2017 Fortune 1000) and**
- **American Lawyer magazine's top 200 revenue grossing law firms (2017 AmLaw 200).**
- **Additionally, any private-sector, for-profit employer with 500 or more full-time U.S. employees can request to participate, including those that are privately held.**

**Note on timing of the lists. Due to the staggered timelines of the ranking and contact lists made available, the ranking lags behind the CEI publication by approximately one year..*

How We Obtain the Information

The primary source of information for the Corporate Equality Index rating each business received is the CEI survey sent every year to previous and prospective respondents. The web-based survey included links to sample policies and other guidance on the HRC Foundation website.

HRC Foundation staff provided additional assistance and direct consultation throughout the process and reviewed submitted documentation (required within each section) for appropriate language and consistency with survey answers.

Invitations for the CEI 2019 survey were emailed and mailed in May 2018 and responses were due back September 2018. If a business had previously participated in the CEI, surveys were first sent to the individuals responsible for prior submissions. If a business had not previously participated in the CEI, surveys were sent to the chief executive officer or managing partner of the firm, as well as the highest-level executive/s responsible for human resources, diversity, communications or community engagement when it was possible to obtain their contact information. The information

required to generate CEI ratings for businesses is difficult to ascertain from public records alone. In addition to the self-reporting provided through the CEI survey, we investigated and cross-checked the policies and practices of the rated businesses, any connections with organizations that engage in anti-LGBTQ activities and news accounts of possible efforts that undermine LGBTQ equality writ-large (e.g. through case law efforts or public policy lobbying actions). Employers were not rated until all appropriate information had been gathered and verified to the extent possible. Businesses were invited to provide HRC Foundation staff with any additional information or updates before this report went to print.

In total, the sources used include:

- **The HRC Foundation's CEI survey;**
- **Internal Revenue Service 990 tax filings reviewed for any business foundation's gifts to anti-LGBTQ groups;**
- **Case law and news accounts regarding findings of discrimination and corporate responsibility and the LGBTQ community at-large; and,**
- **Individuals that report information to HRC Foundation.**

If a business was found to have a connection with an anti-LGBTQ organization or activity, the HRC Foundation contacted the business and provided an opportunity to respond and ensure, to the best of its ability, that no such action would occur in the future and to mitigate the harm done. Businesses unwilling to do so are penalized 25 points from their overall rating through Criterion 4.

Official and Unofficial Ratings

The HRC Foundation may rate businesses that have not submitted a survey this year if the business had submitted a survey in previous years and the information is determined to be accurate, or if the HRC Foundation has obtained sufficient information to provide an individual rating. In both cases, the HRC Foundation notified the business of the official rating and gave them an opportunity for any updates or clarification prior to the report release. Fortune 500-ranked businesses that after multiple invitations have never responded to the CEI survey were evaluated independently and have designated unofficial ratings listed in gray in Appendices B and C (none earned a 100 percent and are therefore not in Appendix A). The HRC Foundation proactively evaluates these 135 Fortune- ranked companies for two key reasons:

- **To provide the public with accurate information on these key employers; and**
- **To ensure the CEI is truly a benchmarking report among peers.**

No matter the rating, any business that participates in the CEI is taking on a transparent, credible process of LGBTQ inclusion. Because LGBTQ workers and prospective employees must navigate the gaps in federal and state protections that affect their employment decisions, our staff views the research on these businesses through this same lens, ascertaining what we can from publicly available information and applying those findings to our CEI criteria.

The HRC Foundation commends those employers that have committed to the public and transparent process of the CEI survey and we invite these 135 companies to do the same.

In total, the CEI 2019 contains official ratings for 346 Fortune 500 businesses, 451 Fortune 1000 businesses, 164 law firms and 413 additional major businesses. An additional 136 Fortune 500 businesses have unofficial ratings, bringing the total to 1163 rated businesses. Findings in the 2019 CEI report are based on the 1028 officially rated businesses.

Criteria

Criteria 1	Workforce Protections (30 points possible) a. Policy includes sexual orientation for all operations b. Policy includes gender identity or expression for all operations	15 points 15 points
Criteria 2	Inclusive Benefits (30 points possible) <i>To secure full credit for benefits criteria, each benefit must be available to all benefits-eligible U.S. employees. In areas where more than one health insurance plan is available, at least one inclusive plan must be available</i> a. Equivalency in same- and different-sex spousal medical and soft benefits b. Equivalency in same- and different-sex domestic partner medical and soft benefits c. Equal health coverage for transgender individuals without exclusion for medically necessary care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equal health coverage for transgender individuals without exclusions for medically necessary care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Insurance contract explicitly affirms coverage and contains no blanket exclusions for coverage ○ Insurance contract and/or policy documentation is based on the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care ○ Plan documentation must be readily available to employees and must clearly communicate inclusive insurance options to employees and their eligible dependents. ○ Other benefits available for other medical conditions are also available to transgender individuals. Specifically, where available for employees, the following benefits should all extend to transgender individuals, including for transition-related services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Short term medical leave ◆ Mental health benefits ◆ Pharmaceutical coverage (e.g., for hormone replacement therapies) ◆ Coverage for medical visits or laboratory services ◆ Coverage for reconstructive surgical procedures related to sex reassignment 	10 points 10 points 10 points
Criteria 3	Supporting an Inclusive Culture & Corporate Social Responsibility (40 points possible) a. Three LGBTQ Internal Training and Education Best Practices <i>Businesses must demonstrate a firm-wide, sustained and accountable commitment to diversity and cultural competency, including at least three of the following elements:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New hire training clearly states that the nondiscrimination policy includes gender identity and sexual orientation and provides definitions or scenarios illustrating the policy for each 	10 points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supervisors undergo training that includes gender identity and sexual orientation as discrete topics (may be part of a broader training), and provides definitions or scenarios illustrating the policy for each ● Integration of gender identity and sexual orientation in professional development, skills-based or other leadership training that includes elements of diversity and/or cultural competency ● Gender transition guidelines with supportive restroom, dress code and documentation guidance ● Anonymous employee engagement or climate surveys conducted on an annual or biennial basis allow employees the option to identify as LGBTQ. ● Data collection forms that include employee race, ethnicity, gender, military and disability status – typically recorded as part of employee records – include optional questions on sexual orientation and gender identity. ● Senior management/executive performance measures include LGBTQ diversity metrics <p>b. Employee group –or– Diversity council</p> <p>c. Three Distinct Efforts of Outreach or Engagement to Broader LGBTQ Community <i>Businesses must demonstrate ongoing LGBTQ-specific engagement that extends across the firm, including at least three of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LGBTQ employee recruitment efforts with demonstrated reach of LGBTQ applicants (required documentation may include a short summary of the event or an estimation of the number of candidates reached) ● Supplier diversity program with demonstrated effort to include certified LGBTQ suppliers ● Marketing or advertising to LGBTQ consumers (e.g.: advertising with LGBTQ content, advertising in LGBTQ media or sponsoring LGBTQ organizations and events) ● Philanthropic support of at least one LGBTQ organization or event (e.g.: financial, in kind or pro bono support) ● Demonstrated public support for LGBTQ equality under the law through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives <p>d. LGBTQ Corporate Social Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contractor/supplier non-discrimination standards AND Philanthropic Giving Guidelines 	<p>10 points</p> <p>15 points</p> <p>5 points</p>
Criteria 4	<p>Responsible citizenship (-25)</p> <p><i>Employers will have 25 points deducted from their score for a large-scale official or public anti-LGBTQ blemish on their recent records. Scores on this criterion are based on information that has come to HRC's attention related to topics including but not limited to: undue influence by a significant shareholder calculated to undermine a business's employment policies or practices related to its LGBTQ employees; directing corporate charitable contributions to organizations whose primary mission includes advocacy against LGBTQ equality; opposing shareholder resolutions reasonably aimed at encouraging the adoption of inclusive workplace policies; revoking inclusive LGBTQ policies or practices; or engaging in proven practices that are contrary to the business's written LGBTQ employment policies.</i></p>	-25 points
	CEI 2019 Perfect Score	100 points



Appendices



Appendix B

Ratings and Criteria Breakdowns

Corporate Equality Index Rating Criteria

- 1a** Prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation for all operations **(15 points)**
- 1b** Prohibits discrimination based on gender identity for all operations **(15 points)**
- 2a** Equivalency in same- and different-sex spousal medical and soft benefits **(10 points)**
(half credit for parity across some, but not all benefits)
- 2b** Equivalency in same- and different-sex domestic partner medical and soft benefits **(10 points)**
(half credit for parity across some, but not all benefits)
- 2c** Equal health coverage for transgender individuals without exclusion for medically necessary care **(10 points)**
(half credit for inclusive coverage, but blanket exclusions for transition-related care remain in place)
- 3a** Three LGBTQ internal training and education best practices **(10 points)**
- 3b** Employee group or diversity council **(10 points)**
- 3c** Three distinct efforts of outreach or engagement to broader LGBTQ community, and if supplier diversity program is in place, must include LGBTQ suppliers **(15 points)**
- 3d** Contractor/supplier non-discrimination standards and philanthropic giving guidelines **(5 points)**

Ratings in Gray

Unofficial ratings of the Fortune 500 companies that have not responded to repeated invitations to the CEI survey. These ratings are based on publicly available information as well as information submitted to HRC from unofficial LGBTQ employee groups or individual employees.

CEI Rating Criteria

- 1a** Prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation for all operations (15 points)
- 1b** Prohibits discrimination based on gender identity for all operations (15 points)
- 2a** Equivalency in same- and different-sex spousal medical and soft benefits (10 points)
- 2b** Equivalency in same- and different-sex domestic partner medical and soft benefits (10 points / half credit for parity across some, but not all benefits)
- 2c** Equal health coverage for transgender individuals without exclusion for medically necessary care (10 points / half credit for inclusive coverage, but blanket exclusions for transition-related care remain in place)
- 3a** Three LGBTQ internal training and education best practices (10 points)
- 3b** Employee group or diversity council (10 points)
- 3c** Three distinct efforts of outreach or engagement to broader LGBTQ community, and if supplier diversity program is in place, must include LGBTQ suppliers (15 points)
- 3d** Contractor/supplier non-discrimination standards and philanthropic giving guidelines (5 points)

Ratings in Gray / Unofficial ratings of the Fortune 500 companies that have not responded to repeated invitations to the CEI survey. These ratings are based on publicly available information as well as information submitted to HRC from unofficial LGBTQ employee groups or individual employees.

Ratings and Criteria Breakdowns			Criterion											Rating								
			15 points		15 points		10 points		10 points		10 points		10 points		10 points		15 points		5 points		-25 points	
Employer	Headquarters Location	State	1a	1b	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	3c	3d	4										
3M Co.	St. Paul	MN	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	94						
A.T. Kearney Inc.	Chicago	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100							
A X Armani Exchange	New York	NY	●	●	●		●	●	●	●				55	80							
Abbott Laboratories	Abbott Park	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			90	95	135						
AbbVie Inc.	North Chicago	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	111						
Abercrombie & Fitch Co.	New Albany	OH	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	675						
ABM Industries Inc.	New York	NY	●											10		500						
Accenture	New York	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100							
Activision Blizzard	Santa Monica	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100		406						
Adecco North America LLC	Jacksonville	FL	●	●	●	●		●	●					70								
Adidas North America Inc.	Portland	OR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100							
Adobe Systems Inc.	San Jose	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	443						
ADP	Roseland	NJ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	240						
ADT	Boca Raton	FL	●											10								
Advance Auto Parts (Advance Holding)	Roanoke	VA	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		90		292						
Advanced Micro Devices Inc.	Sunnyvale	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	565						
AECOM	Los Angeles	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	161						
Aéropostale Inc.	Lyndhurst	NJ	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		90	85							
AES Corp., The	Arlington	VA												0	40	194						
Aetna Inc.	Hartford	CT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	43						
Aflac Inc.	Columbus	GA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				80	85	126						
Agco	Duluth	GA	●											10		370						
Agilent Technologies Inc.	Santa Clara	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		85	85	576						
AIG	New York	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	55						
Air Products & Chemicals Inc.	Allentown	PA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	294						
Airbnb Inc.	San Francisco	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100							
Airbus Americas Inc.	Herndon	VA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100								
Airgas Inc.	Radnor	PA	●	●										20	10	489						
AirTran Holdings Inc.	Orlando	FL			●									10								
AK Steel Holding Corp.	West Chester	OH	●	●										20		441						
Akamai Technologies Inc.	Cambridge	MA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	851						

CEI Rating Criteria

- 1a** Prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation for all operations (15 points)
- 1b** Prohibits discrimination based on gender identity for all operations (15 points)
- 2a** Equivalency in same- and different-sex spousal medical and soft benefits (10 points)
- 2b** Equivalency in same- and different-sex domestic partner medical and soft benefits (10 points / half credit for parity across some, but not all benefits)
- 2c** Equal health coverage for transgender individuals without exclusion for medically necessary care (10 points / half credit for inclusive coverage, but blanket exclusions for transition-related care remain in place)
- 3a** Three LGBTQ internal training and education best practices (10 points)
- 3b** Employee group or diversity council (10 points)
- 3c** Three distinct efforts of outreach or engagement to broader LGBTQ community, and if supplier diversity program is in place, must include LGBTQ suppliers (15 points)
- 3d** Contractor/supplier non-discrimination standards and philanthropic giving guidelines (5 points)

Ratings in Gray / Unofficial ratings of the Fortune 500 companies that have not responded to repeated invitations to the CEI survey. These ratings are based on publicly available information as well as information submitted to HRC from unofficial LGBTQ employee groups or individual employees.

Ratings and Criteria Breakdowns			Criterion												Rating						
			15 points		15 points		10 points		10 points		10 points		10 points		15 points		5 points		-25 points	2019 CEI Rating	2018 CEI Rating
Employer	Headquarters Location	State	1a	1b	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	3c	3d	4									
Akerman LLP	Miami	FL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld LLP	Washington	DC	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Alaska Airlines	Seattle	WA	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		90	100	438					
Albertsons Companies Inc.	Boise	ID												0		49					
Alcoa Corp.	Pittsburgh	PA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		95	100	300					
AlixPartners LLP	New York	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Alleghany Corp.	New York	NY	●	●										20		428					
Alliance Data Systems Corp.	Plano	TX	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		85	100	378					
Alliance One International	Morrisville	NC												0		963					
AllianceBernstein LP	New York	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Alliant Energy Corp.	Madison	WI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	677					
Allianz Life Insurance Co. of North America	Minneapolis	MN	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Allscripts-Misys Healthcare Solutions Inc.	Chicago	IL	●	●										20	40						
Allstate Insurance Co.	Northbrook	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		95	100	84					
Ally Financial Inc.	Detroit	MI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	286					
Alston & Bird LLP	Atlanta	GA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Altice USA, Inc.	Long Island City	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100							
Altria Group Inc.	Richmond	VA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	148					
A-Mark Precious Metals	Santa Monica	CA												0		395					
Amazon.com Inc.	Seattle	WA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	12					
AMC Entertainment Inc.	Leawood	KS	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
Ameren Corp.	St. Louis	MO	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	431					
American Airlines	Fort Worth	TX	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	67					
American Apparel LLC	Los Angeles	CA	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		80							
American Eagle Outfitters Inc.	Pittsburgh	PA	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		85	100	630					
American Electric Power Co. Inc.	Columbus	OH	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		85	100	167					
American Express Company	New York	NY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	86					
American Express Global Business Travel	Jersey City	NJ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100						
American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I	Madison	WI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		100	100	315					
American Financial Group	Cincinnati	OH	●	●										20		411					
American Tower Corp.	Boston	MA	●	●	●	●	●				●			55		449					

HRC Foundation's Workplace Equality Program

The Workplace Equality Program Team, *Authors*

HRC Foundation's Workplace Equality Program is a nationally recognized source of expert information and advice on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workplace issues. It provides decision makers with cutting-edge research, expert counsel, online resources, best practices information and on-site training and education. Program staff serve as trusted consultants to diversity professionals and other executives seeking to position their business as welcoming workplaces that respect all employees, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. The Workplace Equality Program also makes available the expertise of the HRC Business Council for invaluable peer-to-peer advice.

Beck Bailey, *Acting Director*

HRC Foundation Workplace Equality Program

Beck Bailey joined HRC in June of 2014. As Deputy Director, Bailey focuses on helping America's largest employers become more LGBTQ inclusive through employee engagement, training and education. He regularly supports corporate stakeholders – from executive leadership, to human resource professionals, to employee network leaders – in building greater LGBTQ-inclusion through public speaking, facilitated workshops, customized training and in one-on-one consultation. Bailey also conducts outreach to engage corporations in deepening their impact by supporting legislative action to create workplace protections for LGBTQ people.

A lifelong LGBTQ advocate and out transgender man, Bailey often speaks about his personal journey as a way to increase awareness and understanding. He proudly serves on the Board of Directors for GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) and the Advisory Board of Reaching Out MBA (ROMBA). Beck holds a BS in Management from Virginia Tech and an MBA from the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst.

Liz Cooper, *Associate Director*

HRC Foundation Workplace Equality Program

Liz Cooper joined HRC in August 2010. As Associate Director, Liz engages directly with employers to identify and improve policies and practices affecting LGBTQ employees. Cooper brings her background in sales marketing research to develop the Program's resources on LGBTQ diversity and inclusion best practices aimed at employers, employees, and consumers. She has a special focus on engaging new businesses to participate in the CEI survey, and oversees the annual Buying for Workplace Equality Guide. In her five years at HRC, Cooper has enlisted the support of dozens of major businesses for pro-equality public policy across the country. She also uses her advocacy to elevate the role of allies in the LGBTQ community. Cooper holds a BA in Political Science from Davidson College in North Carolina and an MA in Writing from Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C.

Madeline Perrou, *Coordinator*

HRC Foundation Workplace Equality Program

Madeline Perrou joined the Workplace team in October 2017. As the Workplace Equality Program Coordinator, she provides support to the entire team through assisting companies with the Corporate Equality Index, researching and updating brands for the annual Buyer's Guide, and completing daily administrative tasks. Perrou has been with the Human Rights Campaign for almost two years beginning with her internship with the Federal Club Program in the summer of 2016 and a temporary position with Membership Outreach. She graduated from Appalachian State University in North Carolina with a BS in Political Science, a concentration in American Politics and a minor in Gender, Women, and Sexuality studies.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to former Workplace Equality Program Director **Deena Fidas**. Under Deena's nearly twelve-year tenure with HRC, the Corporate Equality Index grew from just over 500 rated companies to over 1000, driving LGBTQ inclusive workplace policy change and positively impacting millions of LGBTQ workers across the globe. We sincerely thank Deena for the gift of her expertise and stewardship of the CEI and the Workplace Equality Program.

Special thanks to Jay Brown, Acting Senior Vice President for Programs, Research and Training.

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Special Thanks

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CEI 2019 was beautifully and efficiently designed by Tony Frye Design.

The Human Rights Campaign Business Advisory Council was founded in 1997. Members provide expert advice and counsel to the HRC Workplace Equality Program on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer workplace issues based on their business experience and knowledge.

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BUYING FOR WORKPLACE EQUALITY 2018

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HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
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A Guide To
Companies,
Products And
Services That
Support
Lesbian, Gay,
Transgender,
Bisexual
And Queer
Workplace
Inclusion

TAKE ACTION FOR EQUALITY

1

Share this information with your friends, family and co-workers. Help them become supporters of workplace equality by factoring the information from this guide into purchasing decisions.

2

Advocate for equality in the workplace. If your company isn't on this list or you think it can do better, go to www.hrc.org/cei to find out how to engage your employer.

3

Get active about equality. Sign up for newsletters and Action Alerts at www.hrc.org/workplace.

The maxim that the customer is always right has never been truer in today's hyper-connected global market. Consumers can publicly praise or criticize businesses they patronize with the click of a button and influence friends' and strangers' purchasing behaviors. Businesses cannot afford to ignore the increasingly savvy and engaged consumer.

As consumers, you know that you have a choice. And with this Buying for Workplace Equality guide, providing the most accurate review of a business's workplace policies toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees, we hope that you feel empowered to make those purchasing decisions that are most important to you.

This year's guide includes results from the 2018 Corporate Equality Index, which features 609 businesses that scored a perfect 100 percent. All scores are based on the same set of criteria, rating 40 LGBTQ-related policies, benefits and corporate practices among the largest US businesses.

While flipping through this guide, remember: by virtue of participating in the CEI, having an official score demonstrates a commitment to LGBTQ equality in the workplace. Official scores indicate that companies are publicly holding themselves accountable to you, their consumers, about how they treat their workforce. While 100 is certainly the goal, all official scores in this guide represent a meaningful journey to full LGBTQ workplace equality. You can learn more about all the work that is behind a business's score by visiting [***www.hrc.org/buyersguide***](http://www.hrc.org/buyersguide).

Whether you are buying a cup of coffee or renovating your home, by supporting businesses that support workplace equality you send a powerful message that LGBTQ inclusion is good for the bottom line. We hope that you will use this guide as one component when determining if a business's social practices make it worthy of your dollars.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Where do the scores in this guide come from?

The information in this guide comes from the 2018 *Corporate Equality Index*, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's annual report card on corporate America's treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer employees.

How are the scores calculated?

Businesses are rated on a scale from 0 to 100, based on whether or not they have policies that support LGBTQ employees. These include non-discrimination protections, domestic partner benefits, diversity training and transgender-inclusive benefits. We provide an estimated score to businesses that have not, after repeated attempts, responded to the survey. An estimated score is reflective of the information that HRC has been able to collect without help or input from a business.

Why don't I see a business listed?

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation researches policies at more than 1,800 companies (including the Fortune 1000 and American Lawyer 200). However, we do not provide a business with an official score until we have collected and verified all the information we need. In all, we officially rated 947 companies in the 2018 CEI.

How can I get a business listed?

Any business with 500 or more U.S. employees can be rated. If you don't see a company listed, contact the Human Rights Campaign Foundation with any information you have about a company's policies on LGBTQ issues. Or, contact and motivate businesses to participate by letting them know that you make purchasing decisions based on how they scored in this guide.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO CONTACT US, PLEASE VISIT
WWW.HRC.ORG/BUYERSGUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS BUYER'S GUIDE

EACH BUSINESS/BRAND IS ASSIGNED ONE OF THREE COLORS BASED ON ITS SCORE IN OUR REPORT: **GREEN**, **YELLOW** OR **RED**.

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

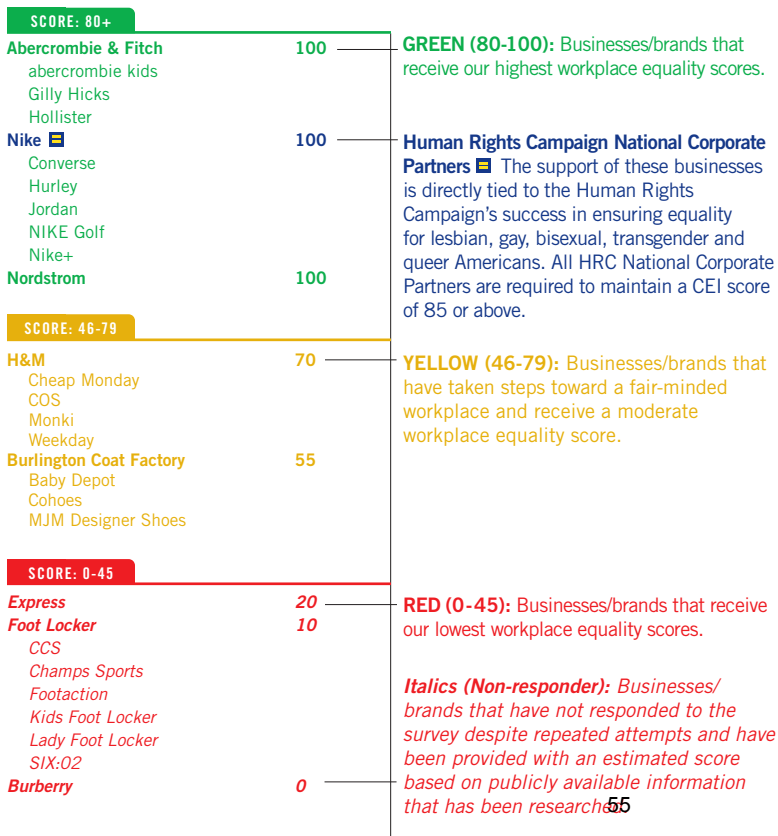


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Retailers

SCORE: 80+

Ahold USA	100		
bfresh			
Food Lion			
Giant Carlisle			
Giant Food Stores			
Giant Landover			
Hannaford			
Martin's Food Markets			
Peapod			
Stop & Shop			
Amazon.com 	100		
6pm			
AbeBooks.com			
Amazon Business			
Amazon Echo			
Amazon Prime			
Amazon Studios			
Amazon.com			
AmazonFresh			
AmazonGlobal			
AmazonSupply			
Audible.com			
BeautyBar.com			
Book Depository			
Casa.com			
East Dane			
Echo Dot			
Echo Show			
Echo Tap			
Endless			
Fabric.com			
Goodreads			
Home Services			
LOVEFiLM			
Prime Now			
Shopbop			
Soap.com			
Twitch			
Vine.com			
Wag.com			
Warehouse Deals			
Woot			
Yoyo.com			
Zappos.com			
Ascena Retail Group	100		
Ann Taylor			
Catherines			
dressbarn			
Justice			
Lane Bryant			
LOFT			
Lou & Grey			
		maurices	
		Barnes & Noble	100
		BN.com	
		NOOK Store	
		SparkNotes.com	
		Best Buy	100
		Best Buy Mobile	
		Cell Shop	
		Connect Pro	
		Geek Squad	
		Insignia	
		Magnolia Audio Video	
		Magnolia Home Theater	
		Pacific Sales	
		The Phone House	
		BJ's	100
		Caleres	100
		Allen Edmonds	
		Carlos by Carlos Santana	
		Famous Footwear	
		Famous.com	
		Ryka	
		Shoes.com	
		Chevron 	100
		Star Mart	
		CVS Health	100
		Accordant	
		CarePlus Pharmacy	
		Coram	
		CVS.com	
		CVS/caremark	
		CVS/pharmacy	
		CVS/pharmacy y mas	
		CVS/specialty	
		ExtraCare	
		Longs Drugs	
		MinuteClinic	
		Navarro	
		SilverScript	
		Delhaize America	100
		Food Lion	
		Hannaford	
		Dollar General	100
		eBay	100
		Close5	
		eBay Classifieds	
		Half.com	
		Shopping.com	
		StubHub	
		GameStop	100
		EB Games	
		Game Informer	

Gamestop.com			ELLE	
Kongregate			Jennifer Lopez	
PowerUp Rewards			Jumping Beans	
Simply Mac			LC Lauren Conrad	
Spawn Labs			Marc Anthony	
Spring Mobile			Mudd	
ThinkGeek			Simply Vera Wang	
GE Appliances	100		So	
Café			Sonoma Life+Style	
FirstBuild			Tek Gear	
GE Profile			The Big One	
Monogram			Tony Hawk	
Haier			Urban Pipeline	
Hotpoint			L Brands	100
Groupon	100		Bath & Body Works	
Groupon Goods			C.O. Bigelow	
Hallmark Cards	100		Henri Bendel	
Crayola			La Senza	
Crown Center			The White Barn Candle Company	
Crown Media Holdings			Victoria's Secret	
DaySpring Cards			Macy's 	100
Feeln			Bloomingdale's	
Hallmark Cards			Bloomingdale's Outlet	
Hallmark Gallery			Bluemercury	
Hallmark Garage			Nike 	100
Hallmark Gold Crown			Office Depot	100
Hallmark International			Ativa	
Hallmark Keepsake			FORAY	
Hallmark Mahogany			OfficeMax	
Hallmark Party Express			Tech Depot	
Hallmark Retail			PetSmart	100
Hallmark Sinceramente			PetsHotel	
Hallmark Tree of Life			PetSmart Doggie Day Camp	
Halls LLC			PPG Industries	100
Life is Good			GLIDDEN	
Nature's Sketchbook			LIQUID NAILS	
Shoebox Cards			OLYMPIC	
SpiritClips from Hallmark			PPG PAINTS	
Sunrise			Sears	100
Herman Miller	100		Kmart	
Design Within Reach			mygofer	
Herman Miller Collection			Sears Auto Centers	
Herman Miller Store			Sears Optical	
Home Depot	100		ShopYourWay.com	
Iron Mountain	100		Staples	100
Box Butler			Avant	
Crozier Art Storage			BETTER	
OSOM (Out of Site Out of Mind) App			Brighton Professional	
J.C. Penney	100		Corporate Express	
Sephora inside JCPenney			Office Centre	
Kohl's	100		One-Touch	
Apt. 9			Quill Corporation	
Bobby Flay			Staples	60
Croft & Barrow			Staples Arc	

Staples Business Advantage			Fred Meyer	
Staples Business Delivery			Fred Meyer Jewelers	
Staples Express			Fry's	
Staples National Advantage			Gerbes	
Staples The Office Superstore			Harris Teeter	
Staples.com			Jay C	
Sustainable Earth			King Soopers	
Steelcase	100		Kroger Fresh Fare	
Coalesce			Kwik Shop	
DesignTex			Littman Jewelers	
Details			Loaf 'N Jug	
Health			Owen's	
Metro			Pay Less	
PolyVision			Quality Food Centers	
Turnstone			Quik Stop	
Vecta			Ralphs	
Target 	100		Scott's	
SuperTarget			Smith's	
Target Optical			Tom Thumb	
TJX	100		Turkey Hill Minit Markets	
HomeGoods			Meijer	95
Marshalls			REI	95
Sierra Trading Post			Novara	
T.J.Maxx			REI Adventures	
Toys 'R' Us	100		REI Outdoor School	
Babies 'R' Us			True Value	95
Walgreens	100		Grand Rental Station	
Balance Rewards			Home & Garden Showplace	
Beauty.com			Party Central	
Boots No7			Taylor Rental	
drugstore.com			Brooks Brothers	90
Duane Reade			Cox Enterprises 	90
Ology			Savings.com	
SeniorMed LLC			Valpak	
Soap & Glory			DSW	90
Studio 35			SYSCO	90
Take Care Health Systems			SuppliesontheFly.com	
Walgreens Delish			Williams-Sonoma 	90
Walgreens Health and Wellness			Pottery Barn 	
Walgreens Health Services			Rejuvenation	
Walgreens Home Care			west elm 	
Walgreens Mail Service			HSN	85
Walgreens Nice!			Ballard Designs	
Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy			Chasing Fireflies	
Wawa	100		Cornerstone	
Crate and Barrel	95		Frontgate	
CB2			Garnet Hill	
The Land of Nod			Grandin Road	
Kroger	95		Improvements	
Baker's			TravelSmith	
City Market			AIX Armani Exchange	80
Dillon Food Stores			Books-A-Million	80
Food 4 Less			Waste Management 61	80
Foods Co.			Bagster	

SCORE: 46-79

Lowe's	75
allen+roth	
Aquasource	
Garden Treasures	
Harbor Breeze	
Kobalt	
Lowe's HIW	
Lowe's Home Centers	
Portfolio	
Reliablilt	
Top Choice	
Utilitech	
Overstock.com	75
SUPERVALU	75
Cub Foods	

Farm Fresh	
Hornbacher's	
Save-A-Lot	
Shop 'n Save	
Shoppers Food	
Whole Foods	75
365 Everyday Value	
Engine 2 Plant-Strong	
Whole Trade	
Costco	70
Kirkland Signature	
H&M	70
Big Lots	65
Rite Aid	65
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store	60

SCORE: 0-45

Winn-Dixie Stores	45
Chek	
Clear Value	
Fisherman's Wharf	
Kuddles	
La Baguetterie	
Lip Lickin Chicken	
Prestige Ice Cream and Frozen Treats	
Prestige Pasta Sauce	
Topcare	
Whiskers & Tails	
Winn-Dixie	
RadioShack	40
H-E-B	30
Gas 'N Go	
H-E-B Plus	
H-E-Buddy	
Bed Bath & Beyond	20
buybuy BABY	
Christmas Tree Shops	
Cost Plus World Market	
Harmon Face Values	
Of a Kind	
One Kings Lane	
PersonalizationMall.com	
Dick's Sporting Goods	20
Field & Stream	
Golf Galaxy	
True Runner	
Dollar Tree	20
Deal\$	

<i>Dollar Bills</i>	
<i>Dollar Giant</i>	
<i>Dollar Tree</i>	
<i>Dollar Tree Deal\$</i>	
<i>Family Dollar</i>	
hbgregg	20
<i>Fine Lines</i>	
<i>HHGREGG.COM</i>	
Lennar	20
<i>Lennar Commercial</i>	
Luxottica Retail	20
<i>David Clulow</i>	
<i>Eye Med</i>	
<i>GMO</i>	
<i>Ilori</i>	
<i>Laubmen & Pank Optomotrists</i>	
<i>LensCrafters</i>	
<i>OPSM</i>	
<i>Oticas/Carol</i>	
<i>Pearl Vision</i>	
<i>Salmoiraghi & Viganò</i>	
<i>Sears Optical</i>	
<i>Sunglass Hut</i>	
<i>Target Optical</i>	
Rent-A-Center	20
<i>Acceptance Now</i>	
<i>Get It Now!</i>	
<i>Home Choice</i>	
Trader Joe's	20
Ace Hardware	62
Children's Place	10

Foot Locker	10	<i>Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World</i>	
<i>Eastbay</i>		<i>Cabela's</i>	
<i>Footaction</i>		<i>Outdoor World</i>	
<i>Kids Foot Locker</i>		<i>Tracker Marine</i>	
<i>Lady Foot Locker</i>		Belk	0
<i>Runners Point</i>		Casey's General Stores	0
<i>SIDESTEP</i>		Dillard's	0
<i>SIX:02</i>		Discount Tire	0
GNC	10	<i>America's Tire Co.</i>	
Guess?	10	Genuine Parts Company	0
<i>Guess Factory</i>		<i>Altrom Canada Corp.</i>	
Harley-Davidson	10	<i>Belkamp</i>	
<i>Harley-Davidson Motor Company</i>		<i>EIS Inc,</i>	
Jo-Ann Stores	10	<i>Grupo Auto Todo</i>	
<i>Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft</i>		<i>Motion Industries</i>	
Neiman Marcus	10	<i>Rayloc</i>	
<i>Bergdorf Goodman</i>		<i>S.P. Richards</i>	
<i>CUSP</i>		Krispy Kreme	0
<i>Last Call</i>		La-Z-Boy	0
O'Reilly Auto Parts	10	<i>LaZBoy Comfort Studio</i>	
Public Storage	10	Liberty Interactive	0
Sally Beauty	10	<i>Bodybuilding.com</i>	
<i>Armstrong McCall</i>		<i>QVC</i>	
<i>Systems Group</i>		<i>Right Start</i>	
<i>CosmoProf</i>		<i>zulily</i>	
<i>Sally Beauty Supply</i>		Michaels	0
The Container Store	10	<i>Aaron Brothers</i>	
<i>elfa</i>		Pier 1	0
<i>TCS Closets</i>		Publix Super Markets	0
TravelCenters of America	10	<i>Publix GreenWise</i>	
<i>Minit Mart</i>		<i>Publix Premium</i>	
<i>Petro Stopping Centers</i>		Sheetz	0
<i>TA</i>		Susser	0
84 Lumber	0	<i>Stripes</i>	
Aaron's	0		
Bass Pro	0		
<i>American Rod & Gun</i>			

SCORE: 80+



Banking and Finance

THE BUYING POWER OF THE
US LGBT ADULT POPULATION
FOR 2016 WAS ESTIMATED AT
\$971 BILLION.

Source: Wiltek Communications

Ally Financial	100
American Express	100
American Express Green Card	
Amex EveryDay	
Amex EveryDay Preferred	
Blue Cash Card from American Express	
Blue Cash Everyday	
Blue Cash Preferred	
Blue from American Express	
Blue Sky from American Express	
Delta Reserve Card from American Express	
Gold Card from American Express	
Gold Delta Skymiles Credit Card	
Hilton Honors Card from American Express	
Platinum Card from American Express	
Plenti	
Plenti Credit Card from American Express	
Premier Rewards Gold Card	
Premium Delta Skyliners Credit Card	
Serve	
Starwood Preferred Guest Credit Card from American Express	
The Mercedes-Benz Credit Card from American Express	
TrueEarnings	
Ameriprise	100
Ameriprise Financial Services	
Columbia Management	
RiverSource	
Bank of New York Mellon	100
BNY Capital Markets Holdings, Inc.	
HedgeMark International, LLC	
Mellon Capital Management	
Pershing Group LLC	
The Dreyfus Corporation	
Barclays	100
Barclaycard	
Corporate and Investment Banking	
Wealth and Management	
BB&T	100
BB&T Equipment Finance Corporation	
AFCO Credit Corporation	
American Coastal Insurance Co.	
BB&T Financial, FSB	
BB&T Insurance Services, Inc.	
BB&T Investment Services, Inc.	
BB&T Scott and Stringfellow	
BB&T Securities, LLC	
Branch Banking and Trust Co.	
Clearview Correspondent Services	
CRC Insurance Services	
Grandbridge Real Estate Capital LLC	
Lenmark Financial Services	
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<i>Saddlebred</i>	
Burberry	0
Cabela's	0
Chico's	0
<i>Soma</i>	
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<i>A/X Armani Exchange</i>	
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<i>Armani Jeans</i>	
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Skechers	0
<i>BOBS</i>	
<i>Marc Ecko</i>	
<i>Mark Nason</i>	
<i>Skechers</i>	
<i>Zoo York</i>	
The Trump Organization	0
<i>Donald J. Trump Collection</i>	



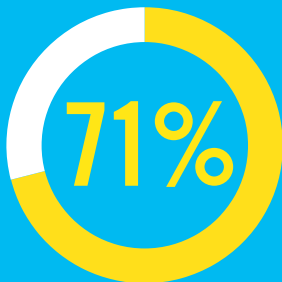
Food and Beverages

IN **28** STATES LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE ARE AT RISK OF BEING FIRED SIMPLY FOR WHO THEY ARE.

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ARE AT RISK IN **30** STATES.



Health and Beauty

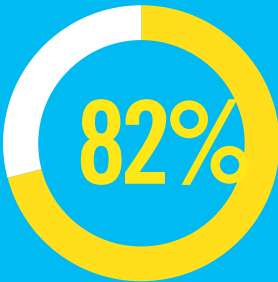


OF LESBIAN AND GAY PEOPLE SAY THEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO REMAIN LOYAL TO A BRAND THAT THEY BELIEVE TO BE VERY FRIENDLY AND SUPPORTIVE OF LGBT ISSUES, EVEN IF IT COSTS MORE OR IS LESS CONVENIENT.

Source: Witeck Communications/Harris Poll



Travel and Leisure

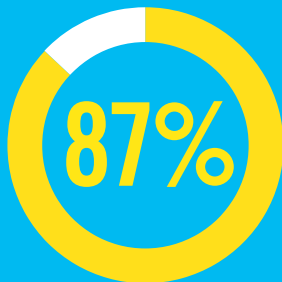


WHEN ASKED ABOUT FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING AMONG PRIVATE HEALTHCARE CARRIERS, 82% OF LGBT ADULTS SAY THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEIR HEALTH INSURANCE CARRIER PROVIDES DOMESTIC PARTNER COVERAGE IN EMPLOYER-OFFERED PLANS.

Source: Witeck Communications/Harris Poll



Pet Care



OF LGBT ADULTS SAY THEY ARE LIKELY TO CONSIDER A BRAND THAT IS KNOWN TO PROVIDE EQUAL WORKPLACE BENEFITS FOR ALL OF THEIR EMPLOYEES, ALONG WITH 75% OF NON-LGBT ADULTS.

Source: Witeck Communications/Harris Poll

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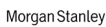
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HRC Honors the Best Places to Work for Equality

By Liz Cooper

April 18, 2017



On Monday, Time Warner hosted the HRC Foundation Workplace Equality Program's CEI 100 Percent Awards. The evening reception celebrated [2017's Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality](#), recognizing the 517 companies that received a perfect score in the 2017 Corporate Equality Index (CEI).

The program, held in New York City, included a welcome from Time Warner's Karen Magee,

Executive Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer, remarks from HRC Foundation's Mary Beth Maxwell, Senior Vice President for Programs, Research and Training, and the Workplace Equality Program's Director, Deena Fidas.

Anderson Cooper, anchor of *Anderson Cooper 360*, interviewed HRC President Chad Griffin, reflecting on remarkable progress and the ongoing challenges of inclusion in the workplace at home and abroad.

The program featured special remarks from Andrew Davis, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at [The Coca-Cola Company](#), and [Viti Muntarbhorn](#), Independent Expert on Protection against Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity at the United Nations.

The event was book-ended by a roundtable discussion with members of [HRC's Global Business Coalition](#) and a CEI Learning Forum, both generously hosted by JPMorgan Chase. These two conversations explored challenges and opportunities to global LGBT workplace inclusion, as well as knowledge sharing on providing transgender-inclusive customer service and how to expand employee resource group engagement.

A second event will be held in Dallas, Texas, next month.

Thank you to our hosts, Time Warner and JPMorgan Chase, and to all the [business leaders](#) that celebrated their historic achievements in the 2017 CEI with the HRC team.

Filed under: [Workplace](#)

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Jan 16, 2021 · 16 min read

Authority Figures – Elizabeth Cooper

In 2015, a woman at work asked if I was pregnant. To my face. In front of other colleagues. In front of svelte colleagues standing next to me.

A year later, another woman at work got into the elevator with me as I balanced two huge trays of leftover lunch to distribute among the unpaid interns seated downstairs.

“I hate to ask, but are you pregnant?” she asked.

I felt all the blood simultaneously rush to my face and out of my brain. Mortified, I could only eek out, “No, I’m not.”

She didn’t say sorry. She said, “Oh well, you know, I hate to ask,” as if I were in the wrong for confusing her with my body and how I carry weight in my belly. She *hated* to ask but she just *had* to. She was entitled to that information when she couldn’t quite figure out my figure.

I wanted to gracefully say, “Well, no one compelled you to ask and that’s the danger of asking rude questions.” I wanted to smash the boxes into the elevator buttons and shove the extra carbs in my face, sandwich after sandwich like Goya’s *Saturn Devouring His Son* to prove that I didn’t care what she thought, that she didn’t know my life! Instead I got off the elevator without making eye contact when we reached the fifth floor, hoping I didn’t drop anything. I felt so small.

From preschool to college I was actually small in stature. Not just skinny and short but a good foot shorter than my classmates. The well-documented bat/bar mitzvah season of 2000 looks like my friends are generously tolerating someone’s little sister at the parties.

Kids in middle school gossiped that I was anorexic. Some probably thought I was sick. I bundled the waist and binder clipped my Limited Too XXS pants to get them to fit. I couldn’t bear any more humiliation of shopping in the kid’s section of department stores.

No matter how much junk food I put into my body, my preteen and teen size never changed. Half a lifetime ago I ate donut holes and whole milk for breakfast, chips and salsa before field hockey practice in the afternoon and an entire Italian loaf with butter and Coca-Cola for dinner. I remember seeing one of my best friends meticulously log her calories on college-ruled notebook paper during our tenth grade pre-calculus class. It looked ridiculous. My mom always told me how lucky I was that I had a fast metabolism, like my dad. I would never have to worry about my weight.

I started to look like a woman in college. My body filled out and no one mistook me for a high school prospective student. It was a good thing. I finally had boobs, my butt from field hockey, and a mostly flat stomach despite my diet of bread, popcorn, cereal, and cheap champagne. A more confident girl would have finally taken that bod out for a spin from time to time. I could finally get boys’ attention. I could act on my crushes rather than playing them out in my head because I didn’t look like someone’s younger brother anymore!

But I didn’t flaunt my figure in college. Or rather I didn’t flaunt it for the straight man’s gaze. I was fine dressing slutty for a night out on campus with girlfriends and gay friends, sporting my best low-cut going out top, tight flare jeans, and Rainbow flip-flops. But using my body for actual sexual contact was out of the question.

Is this a good time to explain why, friends?

Like any undergrad art history student, I read John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*. He writes one of the most basic truths in this seminal text: "Women watch themselves being looked at." I was well aware.

I grew up in one of those neighborhoods that wasn't gated but had the same safety bubble effect for young families. Hundreds of upper middle class, mostly white families lived in the preplanned community in one of the dozen or so styles of house. There was a swim and tennis club. The whole neighborhood went to the same elementary school. Neighbors became friends and then family-friends. Parents were hyper involved in their kids' lives and in their family-friends' kids' lives. My family didn't fit in particularly well with this social scene.

You see my mother is beautiful.

She has high cheekbones, blue-hazel eyes, blond hair, a tiny waist, and a playful demeanor that makes small children flock to her. Despite her claimed insecurities, I've associated every pretty blond woman with her from a young age: Julie Andrews in *Sound of Music*, Meg Ryan pre-plastic surgery, Princess Diana and Natasha Richardson, RIP. I also picked up on my mother's propensity to flirt with men who weren't her husband from a young age. She was an outsider among the mothers that ran the PTA and Girl Scout Troop.

And by March 1997 I was nine years old and I had noticed my mother's drinking. I knew she hid alcohol in the closet with our Christmas presents. I knew she would leave the movie theatre to go to the restaurant next door to get a drink. I knew she spiked her Diet Coke cans. I played dumb: asking her what she was doing after she replaced the handle of vodka in the cabinet over and over and over again.

"You are just like Dad and Nana!" she would say to me, and stomp off to my parents' bedroom on the first floor of our house. My sister and I used to sit on the top of the stairs, listening to our parents have wall-shaking screaming matches across their bedroom and the kitchen and the living room.

"You never loved me, you treat me like shit!" my mother would say.

"This is bullshit. I'm not doing this," my dad would say. He would try to walk away. Stay calm. Don't engage.

"You and your father, and your brother, none of you have any respect for me. After all I do for you. You treat me like garbage. I don't deserve this, you condescending asshole."

Allie and I would naively yell, "Please stop and just get along!"

The neighbors definitely heard.

The blue carpet. The sad brown floral bedspread. The ironing board. On this particular March 1997 day, my mother awakened from another "nap" and sat me on the bed. I could tell that she had been crying. She told me that she had an affair with my best friend Cassie's dad. I asked her what she meant. She bitterly told me that *I knew what that meant*.

My mother told me through tears how hurt she was. That he made her promises that he would take her away and they could start a new family and adopt kids from Asia. My broken mother confided her disappointment in me, a fourth grader, about no longer being able to start a new life with my best friend's dad.

No wonder she drank.

"You know that wasn't her first," my dad says to me twenty-one years later.

We are at a bar, his old college bar, chatting over beers and chicken sandwiches about how his and my mother's three-year divorce is still dragging along, three years after I found out about it while sipping champagne with him at my birthday lunch. We are chatting about his regret for not ending the marriage sooner, at least when I was in college. Chatting about the Big Things that shaped our lives that we've spent two decades not talking about.

"John, right? Wasn't he her therapist?"

"John Morris," my dad said.

My mother finds the most inappropriate relationships within any group. She would flirt with the video checkout clerk in front of my sister and me. She formed bizarre friendships when she worked at United Airlines and would gab about how funny the Canadian pilots were to my sister and me as if she were being coy about which boy on the football team she fancied and who would become her beau. She invited male friends from Alcoholics Anonymous over to our house, making me so uncomfortable that I would hide in my room until they left. I would lock the door.

I asked my mother during her early years of sobriety when I was eleven or twelve if she had slept with him yet, the AA guy. I asked in the middle of the mall parking lot connecting our Saab to JC Penney. She was mad. She was insulted.

"Why would you ask that?" she said.

Why wouldn't I ask that? I knew how to recognize patterns.

Back to John Morris. Back in Connecticut. Before we moved to D.C., before my dad left his New York consulting job for a new job in D.C. that would allow him to actually see his young family, my mother was sleeping with her therapist. How do I know this? How did I know this before my dad confirmed it for me just weeks ago at his college bar? I was four when we lived in Connecticut and John treated my mother. I remember waiting in his office's waiting room. Alone. Cool tones decorated the waiting room, and I remember sitting in a chair on the right side of that room. I remember the door to his office in front of me.

Were they having sex in there? Did I know at the time that they were having an affair or did I only put it together in hindsight? After The Incident when I was nine, I would wait for my mom in other therapists' waiting rooms, and in the Georgetown hospital waiting room during her group outpatient sessions, and in the car outside the church of her AA meetings, and on the front steps of our house hoping she would come home. I remember holding things while I waited. *My Beauty and the Beast* video game, *Number the Stars*, *Lily's Crossing*, the cordless phone. Did I hold anything in John's office? A *Highlights* magazine? A toy? How do I know this?

At least Dad confirms this first affair. My mother told him – well, no. We had just moved to D.C. and he found out by overhearing a conversation between her and Uncle Michael, the most stable and reliable of her siblings. My mother would remind my sister and me that if anything happened to her and Dad, we would live with Uncle Michael. She told reliable Uncle Michael over the phone that she had an affair with her therapist in Connecticut. John Morris. I would have only been five when this reveal happened, newly in D.C. with no family or friends. We were living in a temporary ground-floor apartment in Georgetown while my dad started his new job and looked for a permanent house for us in a good school district. The smell of boxes and crates in liquor stores brings me back to these early Georgetown days when I would go with my mom for another bottle of wine.

"Hey, weren't you here yesterday?" the clerks would ask.

After my dad overheard the phone call about John, my mother continued the affair. She claimed she and my aunt were going on a retreat, but she would actually go see him. Did she want to run away with him too? Start a new family with John?

My dad and I aren't sure how I knew so much when I was that young. My dad tells me now over beers at his college haunt that an attorney told him to sue John Morris at the time. He didn't pursue it.

Is John still a licensed therapist? I have his number. I looked him up. I could ask. Do you remember me, the tiny, shy, curly-haired girl from your waiting room?

I want to know if my dad loved my mom like a husband loves a wife before he found out about John. I want to ask if he was heartbroken when he learned about John, if he saw my mom as his wife up until that point, and then his wife cheated on him and broke his heart even though he had made all these changes to bring his family closer together. He was alone in a new city where they knew no one and he had no support. Dad tells me now that he didn't care about the second affair with Cassie's dad. So he must have cared about the first. He must have felt hurt. Not the kids, him. As her husband. Is this true? Am I strong enough to ask? I also want my dad to be free.

My dad's cousin Susan posted old family movies on YouTube a few years ago. Her dad, Uncle Dale, filmed Christmases and Easters, and decades later she uploaded these silent films and added nostalgic music to the background. These adorable, sweet snippets of my dad as a toddler opening Christmas presents and rolling around on a bed in his footie pajamas drinking a bottle absolutely destroy me. He was just a kid. He looks so sweet and cute.

His family looks happy, and I know they weren't. I feel so much compassion for him. I hurt for what a happy son expects from his family in those first innocent years compared to what he would live through with each passing year: his own mother's scary heavy drinking and depression; the criticisms of his father; the wedges between him and his older brother; the death of his mother; the death of his father; his estrangement from his younger brother; the death of his sister. Who took care of him? Who takes care of him now?

Hearing my dad talk about John and Cassie's dad punch me in a primal place that I don't like to visit. I want to reach back in time and snuggle that toddler version of my dad when I learn, for a fact, how alone he was through all of this trauma and how he felt like he was the only thing keeping his girls together. I want to protect and comfort him. I'm grateful that he entertains my line of questioning about our past. I'm not sure if he has talked directly with anyone about... all of it.

So when my mom told me in her bedroom that March day in 1997 that she had an affair and that I knew what it meant, I suppose I did. I had been through this five years earlier. But the fallout was not the same. At least for me.

I knew facts about my mom's affair when I was five and didn't feel singled out by the neighbors, but by the time I was nine I knew we were being looked at. I knew how my mother was looked at by this neighborhood of gossips. Can you blame them? The boozy pretty housewife slept with Cassie's dad! My mother went to their house and banged on the door, demanding for him to come out and see her. His wife called my dad.

"I'm going to call the cops," she said.

"Go ahead," my dad said.

I didn't remember my sister being scared that my mom had AIDS when she learned about the affair. She learned days before me when she overheard Mom and Cassie's mom fighting on the phone. Cassie's older brother was in my sister's grade in school. But let's not go there yet, friends – there is too much to cover where my sister's and my memories diverge.

My sister didn't develop the same shame that I did around sex after 1997. To me, sex was something that liars and bad mothers did to ruin their families. My sister didn't recoil from being kissed or intimately touched as if she would have to confess these moral indiscretions to the whole family, to the whole neighborhood. But I felt people looking at what I did, what we did, and I cared. Walk the line. Sex was something you had to own up to. Why would you do something that would make you feel guilty?

We were raised Catholic, but not that Catholic. My shame originated from knowing that our family was being looked upon badly. From middle school on I took the safe role of confidant and advice giver to friends that were allowed to date, even though I had no romantic experience to draw upon. I used my body to be speedy in sports and tolerate massive amounts of caffeine and sugar to fuel my homework-filled nights to maintain a 4.0 in high school.

A few years ago, I ran into a mom and daughter from my childhood neighborhood. This woman pretended that she didn't know me. When her daughter reminded her that I grew up in their neighborhood, was in the same grade as her younger sister, she said, "Oh yes. How is Cassie's family doing?" Adults continued to bully me into my twenties for something my mother did when I was nine. I carried her shame in my body.

Knowing what happens when you are looked at, how attention can make you hate yourself, I would not have sex for longer than I would like to admit. Prolonged virginity carries a shame similar to that of being the neighborhood home wrecker. I asked my therapist permission to have sex with Rob for the first time. I felt like I had to.

I don't own this body; the people looking at it do. They are the authority.

So pregnant, huh?

I wanted to take control when I first felt things getting away from me weight-wise my senior year of college. Somehow. So I signed up to model for a figure study class.

Stay with me. I was a nude figure study model during my senior year of college for the introductory drawing class because... who cared?

For two hours, I modeled. I posed in angles the students needed for their work: standing with my long curls framing my face, lying down with my arms over my head, sitting with my legs to one side looking over my shoulder as my back muscles tightened. I posed in front of students I recognized – some I had classes with, some I ran in social circles with, some who creeped me out. Some I had crushes on.

No one aside from my doctors had seen me this naked before. But this was fine, because my naked body was for artistic purposes, not sexual. I wanted to prove to myself that my body was fine, that I had a functional body even if I was too scared to have sex with it, even if it was growing a potbelly. I chatted with the students during a break in the two-hour session, sitting naked on a beanbag in the center of the room talking about classes, but I refused to look at any of their sketches because I had a sense that they captured the image of a brave woman that was four months pregnant. It was the first time I tried to really own my body. I didn't feel confident in it, but I accepted it.

After college I started gaining weight in the way that worries women: was I getting fat? At the time, I didn't know that I had polycystic ovary syndrome, a hormone imbalance that can make women become insulin resistant, and makes it very difficult to lose weight, especially around your midsection. I thought that I was getting older and that I had to try proper food and exercise at some point if I wanted a change. But I felt young and wild and didn't care at that moment what happened to my body. I wasn't trying to seduce anyone, and even if I wasn't the skinny college freshman anymore, I would still get on that figure study platform in front of a class looking like this. So pass the nachos and I'm never exercising!

I officially started to care about how others saw my body when a woman at Safeway thought I was pregnant. I was I openly weeping for unknown reasons (probably the hormone imbalance) while checking out with a pack of tortellini. She pointed at my stomach and sympathetically nodded, saying "Because of the baby?"

I laughed. I laughed because what else could I do. "No," I said, not wanting her to feel bad. I got my pasta, took it home, and then smashed a plastic to-go mug with a hammer. I let my rage and shame fly into shards on my carpeted apartment floor.

Thus I began trying to control my body for the first time in my life. I knew I was blessed with my metabolism and genes, so I thought this would be a matter of willpower: exercise regularly, pack my lunch and stop binge drinking every weekend. So easy! But something scary happened when I tried. Nothing happened to my body.

I still had people on the metro offering me seats, nodding at my belly even when I sucked in my stomach. I remained very aware of my posture after spin class. I avoided eye contact with good-intentioned but mistaken passengers. A homeless man once wished my future child and me well as I walked up Wisconsin Avenue in a billowy shirt on a blustery day. My heart races when sweet, curious children are around because I fear they will ask if I have a baby in my tummy.

I've made some boring diet and exercise changes with help from my doctor to relieve the symptoms of PCOS, which, oddly enough, mirror a lot of what my newly pregnant friends report: upset stomach, excess fatigue, weight gain, only wanting beige carbohydrates. The funny part about being asked if I am pregnant, though, is that statistically, women with PCOS have more trouble getting pregnant.

“But don’t worry, you will never know if you will have issues getting pregnant until you start trying to get pregnant,” my doctor says in her thick, compassionate Russian accent. She always closes our appointments with “Good seeing you. Be well.” I love her.

The funniest part about my mistaken shape is that I will never try to get pregnant. I know how much pain a mother can cause a child. I would never inflict that upon any little girl. My mother knows I don’t want kids, but she doesn’t know that she’s the reason.

When I was nine, a great schism appeared in my family, right there in the blue carpet below my feet in my mother’s bedroom. That carpet was in the house when we bought it and came with us when we moved a few months after everyone learned about the affair. This conversation, about how my mother’s needs weren’t being met, activated me. I became the source of validation and unconditional love rather than the recipient. She just wanted someone to love her.

She would say this often, before and after the affair. “Oh I want someone to love me,” she said while driving down the parkway or standing in the kitchen or flipping through the TV channels. It was like how a fairytale princess would say it.

“We love you, Mom!” my sister and I would say.

“I don’t mean like that,” my mom would say.

She was deprived of love. But she couldn’t get what she wanted from the men she slept with. Sex didn’t get you anywhere. In fact, it got you the opposite of the love you really craved.

Message received.

I saw my mom as a lonely woman in the aftermath of this confession, this rupture in the fabric of my dysfunctional family. She was still my mother, yes, but also just a person. A person who didn’t have the answers, one who was lost. A person who needed things outside of her family to live.

Then so did I.

One of my mother’s favorite, inaccurate, hurtful accusations to throw at adult-me when she is calling me disrespectful or selfish is that “I didn’t raise you like this.” I suppose that’s right. I raised myself with my dad. I left your care when I was nine, Mom.

Friends, please try to focus on pregnancy accusations. How would they make you feel? Whose observation is more important: those who see me as pregnant based on their own two eyes or mine as the source, knowing I am not and will never be? Which truth is more plausible? What I know to be true won’t change how people see me and what they think they know about me when they see me. They think they have facts. But I have the truth.

So why do I care? I don’t know, but I do.

Elizabeth Cooper was born in New Haven, Connecticut. In 2009 Cooper earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina where she learned that every day is a great day to be a Wildcat. Cooper earned her Master of Arts in Writing from Johns Hopkins University in 2018, where she learned it is ok to make mistakes. Cooper works and lives in Washington,



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Excerpt from Hayley Glennie Looks Like Liz Cooper, a personal essay from the author's thesis submitted to The Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Writing (Elizabeth Cooper, April 2018).

What are the chances that three similar looking girls all attended the same small liberal arts school in North Carolina? Did we actually look similar, or was the pool just so small that it seemed like we did in this bubble?

* * *

Doppelgangers, “unrelated look-alikes,” and “Twin Strangers” are out there. François Brunelle is a photographer out of Montreal who has been photographing unrelated dead-ringers for years. Reached through email, Mr. Brunelle says he began photographing after he “noticed many similarities between complete strangers for many years.” His photos are shot in black and white and remind me of the portraits that hung in my pediatrician’s office: warm, genuine, and familial. I would swear these people are siblings. When I first saw Brunelle’s work a few years ago, I sent Hayley a Facebook message (joking?) that we should be photographed together.

Mr. Brunelle now has “close to 300 pairs of look-alikes photographed.” Hayley and I are not in his collection featured in exhibits from Colombia to Geneva and in Nespresso ads and TEDx lectures. He is working toward “a book and a major exhibit of it all at some point in the future.” It isn’t just international art galleries and fancy coffee companies that are taking notice of Mr. Brunelle’s work.

Dr. Nancy Segal is a psychologist out of California State University, Fullerton specializing in twin research. She believes that the personality similarities among twins come from genetics, while critics say twins only seem the same because they look the

same, so the world therefore treats them the same. A classic nature vs. nurture argument. I set up a phone interview with Dr. Segal after promising that I had already read her research online, and she said that this debate between genes and the environment “surfaces from time to time” in twin research, so she saw an opportunity to partner with Brunelle and compare personality traits between identical twins and what she calls “unrelated look-alike individuals (ULAs).”

Dr. Segal hypothesized that “identical twins are treated alike because they evoke responses from people based on genetically influenced behaviors.” In her view, twins’ shared-genes determine their behavior, dictating their interactions with the rest of the world. Behaviors build relationships, which is why twins seem so similar to others. It is like a parallel personality universe: twins have their own free will, make their own choices and forge their own individual path, but their tendency to make certain choices is hardwired. If twins didn’t share identical chromosomes influencing their choices, the parallel personality wouldn’t exist.

So far, Dr. Segal’s research supports her hypothesis. Personality and self-esteem questionnaires fielded to identical twins yield similar results, but results from unrelated look-alikes revealed that ULAs “were not at all similar in personality.” Unrelated people may look alike, but without sharing the same underlying code to their physical appearance, they won’t act alike. Personality distinguishes individuals and when it comes to personality, actions speak louder than looks.

Davidson gives the Myers-Briggs personality-type test to all incoming freshman and uses the results to place roommates and compose freshman halls. I am an ENFJ: extraverted (slightly), intuitive, feeling, judging. Hayley is an INFP: introverted, intuitive,

feeling, perceiving (“we are kind of opposites – it is weird,” she said). I strongly self-identity as being an ENFJ, as does Hayley as an INFP. ENFJ’s are emotional creatures. I am nearly certain that if Felicity from *Felicity* took the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, she would be an ENFJ (“I feel things and I need to be able to get upset and talk about how I’m feeling”). INFP’s are “idealistic, curious, flexible” and assign significance to their personal values. ENFJ’s help others grow while INFP’s help ideas grow. Both types are noted for their loyalty.

You might expect people who look so similar to actually *be* similar. While chatting with Hayley, talking about “real things” for the first time ever over video chat, it was like talking to my own reflection. I noticed that we both rub our noses the same way. We both look up and off to the side when we are searching for words or recalling certain details. I would see angles of my face in Hayley’s that a mirror doesn’t reflect. Our profiles are the same, and we lean in and laugh with our whole upper bodies in the same way. We have the same gummy smile and our noses, are, of course, a match.

But talking to Hayley about her experience at Davidson, it’s clear that we are, in fact, different humans. She was friends with mostly guys and hasn’t talked to many people since graduating in 2011, whereas I am an “emotional lesbian” on the Kinsey Scale (look it up, it’s a thing) and share daily group emails and texts with my large group of friends from my graduating class of 2009.

Dr. Segal finds that there is “not much of a bond between look-alikes and it makes sense because personality is in your brain not in your face.” She says real twin connections exist because they are fused through genetics. Copies of genes yield copies of behaviors and it’s these similar behaviors that sustain a bond. Research on friends and

spouses supports the importance of genetic similarities in forming strong relationships.

Brunelle's experience seems to match with Dr. Segal's findings. When asked if his look-alike subjects keep up a relationship after the photo shoot, he said, "To my knowledge a few of them. Very few."

* * *

Then there is Niamh (pronounced "Kneev") Geaney. In March 2015, she and two friends based in Dublin, Ireland decided that they wanted to find their doppelgangers using social media. Reached over an expensive phone call, Niamh explained to me that after an English journalist found her look alike "quickly through social media" a few years ago, she and her good-looking friends felt inspired. "It's always something me and my friends have been interested in," Niamh said. A TV production company in Dublin heard about the trio's interest and set them up with a twenty-eight day campaign, "Twin Strangers," to find their look-alikes. "It exploded," Niamh said. "And I found Karen in two weeks."

Niamh says of meeting Karen (pronounced "Karen"), "It was just freaky." In silent moments, they would simply stare. "It's different talking to a stranger than a twin stranger," Niamh said, where you are "really analyzing their face, really concentrating." Finding Karen was a surprise, as Niamh and her friends assumed she would be "paddy last" to find her twin since people would comment how unique she looked growing up. She has big blue, down-turned eyes, fair skin, and long, silky dark brown hair. She doesn't necessarily scream "Irish."

Niamh and Karen only live an hour apart, but Niamh is convinced that they aren't related. And even though the two don't line up perfectly in the personality department,

they are planning to stay in touch. “When you meet someone that looks like you, you have such an instant connection,” Niamh said. “Part of it [is that you have been] looking at this face for years [so it] feels like you know this person already.”

Niamh has already found another doppelganger, Louisa from Italy. “Karen and Louisa are two completely different people,” Niamh said. “Karen was far shyer than I would be,” while Louisa is “more on par in terms of personality.” Niamh was “going nutty” when she saw that she and Louisa shared the same mannerisms. “It was like watching myself and how I interact,” she said. When asked how she explains her and Louisa’s similarities, Niamh can’t. They share no genetic or familial overlap. “[It’s] insane to find so much of yourself in another person and especially another person with your face,” Niamh said.

And she is determined to find five more of those faces while expanding the campaign worldwide. Twinstrangers.com is now a “full time gig,” Niamh said. People can go to the site, upload their picture and select their face shape, eyebrow, eye, nose, and lip type, and hope to find a match. Now everyone can search for his or her long lost look-alike. It’s like everyone found the leprechaun’s email address to request his or her own twin. According to Niamh, twinstrangers.com has 150,000 registered users.

But why five more? “I have a natural burning curiosity to find my other five,” Niamh told me. “The seven doppelganger myth has never been proven, and I’ve really been trying to find where this thing has been pulled out of. It would be amazing to see if this is actually fact or fiction. So a personal and a world quest, I suppose.”

I had never heard of the seven-other-people-on-Earth-looking-like-you myth, and neither had Dr. Segal. “I don’t know about that, what it’s based on,” she said. “Sounds nice and romantic, but don’t know if I believe it.”

Following Niamh’s crazy success finding Karen and Louisa – and so quickly – there have been several stories of other folks finding their doppelgangers or detailing how their own Twin Stranger found them through social media.

This urge to find our carbon copy seems hardwired. It explains why I was always fascinated by Hayley and wanted to someday get her story. But I never took the time to talk to her until our Google Hangout to write this piece. I’ve felt twinges of guilt that I didn’t know her at Davidson. We overlapped in this small, intimate community and I didn’t bother to get to know her as anything other than pseudo-me. But after speaking with Dr. Segal, Niamh, and Hayley, I see that I wasn’t writing her off as a face-stealing nuisance. We simply don’t have that much in common other than how the world perceives us.

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