



Equality Forward.

CITY OF ATLANTA BIENNIAL REPORT ON LGBTQ AFFAIRS  
MAYOR KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS





*Photo: Kyle Ference*

# contents

**03** MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

**05** MAYOR'S VISION FOR ONE ATLANTA

**06** LGBTQ AFFAIRS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**37** LGBTQ YOUTH

**40** LGBTQ ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CULTURE

**42** TRANS AFFAIRS

**46** LGBTQ HEALTH

**49** LGBTQ ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**53** GLOSSARY OF LGBTQ TERMS

**54** ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**55** CITY OF ATLANTA RESOURCES



Dear Neighbors,

I am proud to stand with and celebrate the contributions of Atlanta’s LGBTQ community. As Mayor, I prioritized ensuring that Atlanta continues to be a city where our LGBTQ residents can thrive by naming the City’s first-ever full-time LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator and establishing the Mayor’s LGBTQ Advisory Board within my first 100 days in office. Since making those appointments two years ago, our Administration has worked tirelessly to bring awareness to LGBTQ issues, promote cultural diversity, and uplift all of our communities.

The City of Atlanta is committed to the fair treatment of all Atlantans, including our lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer residents and visitors. We have made significant gains towards the protection and advancement of Atlanta’s LGBTQ community and strive to uphold our commitment to equality every day. It is my hope that our continued commitment to LGBTQ Atlantans, alongside our work to better our city for all people, will move us closer to truly becoming One Atlanta.



Keisha Lance Bottoms  
60<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Atlanta



Dear Neighbors,

We are honored to stand in solidarity with Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, her administration, and the esteemed members of her LGBTQ Advisory Board to advance her vision of One Atlanta. We commend the Mayor's foresight in establishing this 35-member advisory board, all of whom are respected in the LGBTQ community, passionate about creating inclusive environments, and committed to the betterment of all Atlantans. Mayor Bottoms set out a vision of an equitable, inclusive, thriving Atlanta, and has performed the work to achieve this. The meaningful advancements toward these efforts over our two-year journey so far demonstrate that these values are in fact part of the fabric of her administration.

The Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board remains committed to doing our part in recommending policies, programs, and initiatives that continue to propel equality forward.



Kirk Rich, Co-Chair



Pamela Stewart, Co-Chair



# MAYOR KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS' VISION FOR ONE ATLANTA

*An Affordable, Resilient, and Equitable Atlanta*

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**A Safe and Welcoming City**

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**World-Class Employees, Infrastructure and Services**

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**An Ethical, Transparent and Fiscally Responsible Government**

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**Thriving Neighborhoods, Communities and Businesses**

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**Residents Who Are Equipped for Success**

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# CITY OF ATLANTA **LGBTQ** AFFAIRS ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## *January* 2018

Almost immediately after being sworn in, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms established the first-ever Mayor's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, known as One Atlanta. The office is charged with focusing on policy-driven programs and solutions to make Atlanta a more equitable city, specifically in the areas of:

- Criminal Justice Reform**
- Economic Development and Inclusion**
- Health Disparities**
- Homelessness**
- Housing Affordability**
- Human Trafficking**
- Immigrant Affairs**
- LGBTQ Affairs**
- Sustainability**
- Workforce Development**



[weareoneatlanta.com](http://weareoneatlanta.com)



## March 2018

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms appointed the City of Atlanta's first-ever full-time LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator, Malik Brown. This historic appointment marks the first time a City of Atlanta official has been tasked solely with better connecting Atlanta's diverse LGBTQ community and Atlanta city government.



The City of Atlanta hung the transgender flag, for the first time ever, in recognition of Transgender Day of Visibility.





Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms formed a 35-member LGBTQ Advisory Board, which serves as a bridge between City Hall and LGBTQ residents. Composed of citywide leaders and advocates, the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board is tasked with making recommendations to help shape the City's policies and engagements with Atlanta's LGBTQ communities. The current priority areas of the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board are: **LGBTQ Youth; LGBTQ Arts, Entertainment, and Culture; Trans Affairs; LGBTQ Health; and LGBTQ Economic and Community Development.**

## MISSION

The Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board fosters intentional collaboration between City Hall and Atlanta's LGBTQ communities to advocate for everyone across the Atlanta metro region, in order to protect and advance the lives of residents, workers, and visitors.

## VISION

An equitable, inclusive, and thriving Atlanta for everyone, regardless of race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.







# Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board

## CO-CHAIRS



Kirk Rich



Pamela Stewart

## BOARD MEMBERS



Bishop Oliver  
Clyde Allen



Kia Barnes



State Representative  
Park Cannon



Gabrielle Claiborne



Paul Conroy



Tori Cooper



Lisa Cunningham



Jamie Ferguson



Matthew Garrett



Jeff Graham



Emily Halden Brown



Roshelle Darlene  
Hudson, MSW



Pat Hussain



Miss Lawrence



Rabbi Joshua  
Lesser



Ivette Lopez



Chris Lugo



Tracee McDaniel



Josh McNair



Sandy Mollet



Daniel Newman



Rev. Dr. Joshua M.  
Noblitt



Matt Parkey



Philip Rafshoon



Ryan Roemeran



Jonathan Russell



Brigid Scarbrough



Melissa Scott



Fred Smith



Rickie Smith



Feroza Syed



Alex Wan



Craig Washington

*\*As of December 1, 2019*



## April 2018



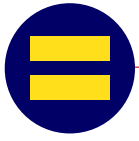
Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms joined Mayors Against LGBTQ Discrimination, a national coalition of over 300 U.S. Mayors in all 50 states, committed to protecting and advancing the lives of LGBTQ Americans.

The Bottoms Administration, through the Office of One Atlanta, launched official City of Atlanta LGBTQ social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, allowing the City and the LGBTQ community to communicate directly. The City's LGBTQ Affairs social media channels have gained over 4,800 followers to date.



The Atlanta Police Department (APD) hosted their inaugural LGBTQ Citizens Academy. This specialized two-day program, facilitated by APD's LGBTQ liaisons, covered homicide, human trafficking, use of force, and more. The program included discussions around challenges faced by the LGBTQ community and various ways citizens can partner with the police.





## May 2018

During the Human Rights Campaign's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Atlanta Gala Dinner and Auction, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms delivered opening remarks reaffirming her commitment to the LGBTQ community. During her speech, she quoted entertainer and drag superstar RuPaul, stating, "never forget that the most political thing you can ever do is to follow your heart."

“Atlanta will always be a place where everyone can follow their heart. As your Mayor, I stand with you offering the political will and the political capital to ensure that it remains true.”

- Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms





## June 2018

On June 28, 2018, the City of Atlanta held its first-ever citywide recognition of the uprising at the Stonewall Inn, in the atrium of City Hall, commemorating the impetus of National Pride Month. City of Atlanta employees and members of the Mayor’s LGBTQ Advisory Board learned more about Stonewall and enjoyed food, music, free HIV testing, and more.



During the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors, Mayor Bottoms joined Boston Mayor Marty Walsh and mayors from around the country to march in the Boston Pride Parade.





Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and the City of Atlanta's LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator hosted Josh Coleman, the City of Birmingham's first-ever LGBTQ Liaison, for a day of best-practice sharing. Appointed by Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin, Coleman works alongside Mayor Woodfin to advance LGBTQ rights in Birmingham, Alabama.



The Atlanta Police Department's LGBTQ Liaison, Senior Police Officer Eric King, was honored by Georgia Equality. King was selected for the award based on his commitment to ensuring strong connections between the Atlanta Police Department and the local LGBTQ community and for his work training officers around the world on LGBTQ cultural humility.



## July 2018

Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board member, Jonathan Russell, and City of Atlanta LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator, Malik Brown, joined the Anti-Defamation League for its law enforcement hate crimes training. Judy Shepard, mother of Matthew Shepard and founder of the Matthew Shepard Foundation, was the keynote speaker.

Brutally murdered in 1998 for being gay, Matthew Shepard's death became one of the most defining cases of hate crimes and was cited during the passing of hate crime legislation. In the 20+ years since Matthew's murder, Judy and Matthew's father Dennis have dedicated their lives to LGBTQ activism.





## September 2018

Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board Co-Chair, Pamela Stewart, moderated a conversation for the Coca-Cola Company with openly-gay Olympian, Gus Kenworthy.



## October 2018

On **National Coming Out Day**, the City of Atlanta highlighted the stories of a diverse group of Atlantans. Through the release of a series of video interviews on the City's social media channels, the City shared the coming out reflections of real Atlantans through their own words.



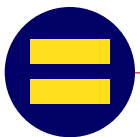
Left to right: Tori Cooper, Rabbi Joshua Lesser, Bishop Oliver Clyde Allen, Thomas Roberts

**105** The City of Atlanta scored a 105 on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index (MEI) – the highest score in the City's history.

Atlanta also achieved MEI "All-Star" status — the only Georgia city to do so — for scoring above 85 despite being in a state with no LGBTQ-inclusive state-level protections.



Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms hit back at a plan by the Trump Administration to roll back recognition and protections of transgender people, saying that such protections are "in the DNA of ATL."





Kicking off Atlanta Pride, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms hosted a historic pride reception at Atlanta City Hall. Hundreds of LGBTQ people and allies, including Congressman John Lewis, former Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin, former CNN anchor Thomas Roberts, and Atlanta Police Chief Erika Shields attended.

Comedian Jaboukie Young-White, Voices of Note, and The Armorettes provided entertainment as guests filled the atrium to join the City's official celebration of Pride. In addition, Mayor Bottoms posthumously awarded Fulton County Commission Vice Chairperson Joan Garner the City's highest honor, the Phoenix Award, for her career in public service, advocacy for the LGBTQ community, and her leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.



“With the bold leadership of Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, this city is sending a powerful message to every LGBTQ person, especially our young people.”

- Chad Griffin  
Former Human Rights Campaign President





Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and the City of Atlanta marched in the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Atlanta Pride Parade. Atlanta Pride is the largest pride festival in the Southeast.



## November 2018



In recognition of Transgender Day of Remembrance, the names of those lost to anti-trans violence in the year 2018 were displayed at City Hall.





## December 2018

On World AIDS Day, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms released a powerful video highlighting the importance of getting tested for HIV and the harmful effects of stigma.

The Mayor's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, in partnership with AID Atlanta, offered free 60-second HIV testing at City Hall. City of Atlanta staff wore red ribbons in honor of the day.



HIV/AIDS has impacted our communities for too long. We know this disease does not discriminate. Regardless of your gender, age, race, sexual orientation and income level - all populations are at risk.

That's why I'm asking you to join me in getting tested on World AIDS Day. Knowing your status allows you to take control of your health and the health of your loved ones.



- Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms



Bishop OC Allen, a member of the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board, joined *The Atlantic* magazine for a World AIDS Day panel.



## January 2019

In commemoration of their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Mayor Bottoms honored The Armorettes with a Phoenix Award for their inspiring drag performances and public health advocacy. Throughout their 40-year tenure, The Armorettes have raised more than \$2.3 million for local HIV/AIDS services.



During the 2019 Super Bowl, the City of Atlanta co-hosted the *Breaking Barriers: Sports for Change* event alongside the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, ESPN, Athlete Ally, The Gill Foundation, and Georgia Equality. Guests heard from inspiring openly-LGBTQ athletes like Michael Sam, Layisha Clerndon, Phaidra Knight, and Pat Manuel.



The City of Atlanta LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator joined the Atlanta Girls' School to talk about the state of LGBTQ affairs nationally and locally.





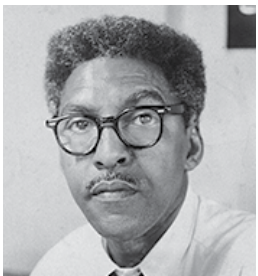
**Keisha Lance Bottoms** @KeishaBottoms

Any person qualified, willing and able to serve in the military should be allowed to do so. Atlanta stands w/ our trans troops and denounces this dangerous and discriminatory policy. As Dr. King taught us, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."  
[#WontBeErased](#)

12:57 PM · Jan 23, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms denounced the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling allowing President Trump's ban on transgender troops to go into effect.

The City of Atlanta sponsored the annual Rustin Lorde Community Breakfast. Founded in 2002, the breakfast offers attendees the opportunity to gather before joining the Martin Luther King, Jr. March. It also provides an opportunity to educate communities about the life and contributions of Bayard Rustin, Audre Lorde and other activists and enhance mutual support and learning among those committed to social change.



Bayard Rustin



Audre Lorde



Photo by Russ Youngblood

## February 2019



**\$10,000**

The City of Atlanta awarded Above The Status Quo, a non-profit focused on reducing HIV infection rates among youth in Atlanta, a \$10,000 grant for a mobile testing unit.

## March 2019



During the 2019 State of the City address, Mayor Bottoms announced her new \$100,000 PrEP Expansion Project. The project established and funded an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Atlanta and the Fulton County Board of Health to increase the scope and reach of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), an HIV prevention pill. This project represents the broadest set-aside of funds to combat HIV/AIDS in the City's history.



## April 2019

The City of Atlanta hosted the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus at City Hall for their 2019 Spring concert "Sound Off!"



Mayor Bottoms introduced a resolution calling on the State of Georgia to ban the harmful practice of conversion therapy.



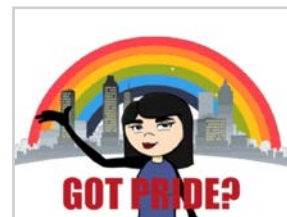
Mayor Bottoms sat down with the *Georgia Voice* to talk about her plans to combat HIV/AIDS in the City of Atlanta and her unwavering support of the LGBTQ community.



Photo: Georgia Voice



In commemoration of 404 Day, the City of Atlanta released the One Atlanta Emoji App, which features several LGBTQ-themed emojis. The app is available on the Apple Store and the Google Play Store.





May 2019



Senior Advisor to Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, Rashad Taylor, City of Atlanta LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator, Malik Brown, and members of Emory University's leadership joined special guest, Chasten Buttigieg, for the National LGBTQ Health Conference, hosted by Emory University.



#3 The City of Atlanta was ranked #3 in the United States on Orbitz's list of

Top 10 Cities to Celebrate LGBTQ Pride



Brandis Haugabrook and Joi Walker joined the Office of One Atlanta as interns, dedicated to working on LGBTQ Affairs, Immigrant Affairs, and efforts around the 2020 Census.



50

# June 2019

In recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising at the Stonewall Inn, the City of Atlanta highlighted the stories of 50 key figures in the fight for LGBTQ equality through a large exhibit in the atrium of City Hall.



In an effort to increase the amount of LGBTQ-focused art on public display in the City of Atlanta, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms issued a call for artwork by LGBTQ artists or art reflecting LGBTQ themes. Featuring an array of visual art pieces in diverse mediums, the Mayor's LGBTQ Pride Exhibit highlighted 33 artworks by 20 local artists. The exhibit was displayed in the Office of the Mayor in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising at the Stonewall Inn.





Upon learning of the cancellation of a Drag Queen Story Hour event in Alpharetta, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms invited local drag queen Miss Terra Cotta Sugarbaker to host the event at Atlanta City Hall. Taking place during National Pride Month, the event hosted over 300 children, families, and the young-at-heart for an event that celebrated diversity.

Guests enjoyed readings of children's books, fun games, playtime with Harry the Hawk (Atlanta Hawks) and Freddie the Falcon (Atlanta Falcons), and snacks donated by Whole Foods and the Georgia Beverage Association.





Doubling down on her commitment to fostering diverse and inclusive environments for youth, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms appointed Dr. Damian Denson, an openly gay man, to the governing body of the Fulton County Library System. Mayor Bottoms has tasked Dr. Denson with collaborating with the Fulton County Library System on a comprehensive non-discrimination policy.



## July 2019

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms appointed Dr. Angelica Geter Fugerson as the City of Atlanta's first-ever Chief Health Officer. In this role Dr. Fugerson will create a policy blueprint for tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Atlanta. She will also focus on combating the leading causes of illness and disability in Atlanta, improving health literacy rates, and assessing emerging health needs to improve community health.



Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms and the City of Atlanta signed onto an amicus brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to protect LGBTQ citizens in the workplace.



Mayor Bottoms announced plans for the City's management of federal grants to be centralized under one office, reporting to the City's Chief Operating Officer. As part of the restructuring, the City requested that the administration of Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds be aligned under the Atlanta Continuum of Care, managed by Partners for HOME (PfH). After months of planning, the restructuring is contingent upon approval from HUD, Atlanta City Council, and the PfH Board. Additionally, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms allocated \$20,000 to Partners for Home to provide supportive services for HOPWA consumers.







## August 2019

In celebration of the 2019 Atlanta Black LGBTQ Pride festivities, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms hosted hundreds of LGBTQ Atlantans and allies for a mayoral reception at City Hall. Mayor Bottoms awarded Dee Dee Ngozi Chamblee, a tireless advocate for the trans community, with a prestigious Phoenix Award. Guests enjoyed entertainment from legendary drag troupe Stars of the Century and local R&B singer Phillipia.

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms also announced three \$1,000 donations awarded to LaGender, Inc., Vision Community Foundation, and In The Life Atlanta. The donations were matched dollar-for-dollar by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation.





# September 2019



Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms signed an administrative order enacting anti-bullying policies for youth in all City of Atlanta facilities – including the bullying of LGBTQ youth.



The Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (AGLCC) presented the City’s LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator, Malik Brown, with a Rising Star award for his work to advance the rights of LGBTQ Atlantans.



NATIONAL GAY MEN'S  
HIV/AIDS  
AWARENESS DAY

The City of Atlanta, in partnership with Someone Cares and Midtown Moon, availed free HIV and STI testing to residents in recognition of National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.



The City of Atlanta joined thousands of participants for the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Atlanta and Music Festival. The event is the largest community fundraiser and awareness event for HIV/AIDS in the Southeast. It benefits AID Atlanta and other local HIV/AIDS service providers.





# October 2019



The City of Atlanta hosted the **NOH8 Campaign** for a photoshoot at City Hall with photographer Adam Bouska. The NOH8 Campaign’s mission is to promote marriage, gender, and human equality through education, advocacy, social media, and visual protest.



For **National Coming Out Day**, the City of Atlanta highlighted the coming out stories of four diverse Atlantans. Their stories highlighted life as an LGBTQ parent, being an elder in the fight for LGBTQ equality, being out in the business world and in public office, and more.



Left to right: Matt Parkey, Pat Hussein, Pam Stewart, Councilmember Antonio Brown



The Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Atlanta, in partnership with the Mayor’s Office of International Affairs and the Mayor’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, hosted Dutch artists Léon Hendrickx and Micha Schneijderberg to learn more about their Kings and Queens project. The internationally acclaimed photography series depicts drag queens posed intimately next to their normal selves. Through this portrayal the series means to disrupt gender norms and begin dialogue.





After the Federal Highway Administration began asking cities to remove their rainbow crosswalks, citing "safety concerns," the media asked Mayor Bottoms if she would consider removing Atlanta's. She responded: "While we have received no such request, Atlanta's rainbow crosswalk is located on city-owned streets. Much like glitter, the crosswalk is here to stay indefinitely. The Bottoms Administration wishes Atlanta a safe and fabulous Pride."

Atlanta's rainbow crosswalks are here to stay, says mayor



NEWS | Oct 08, 2019

By Stephen Deere, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

“  
Much like glitter, the crosswalk  
is here to stay indefinitely.”

- Michael Smith

*Press Secretary, Mayor's Office of Communications*

*On behalf of Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms*

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms launched the City of Atlanta's first-ever LGBTQ resource website at [atlgbtq.atlantaga.gov](http://atlgbtq.atlantaga.gov). Using this digital platform, constituents can access the website to find vital resources specific to the LGBTQ community.





In partnership with Tony Conway and Legendary Events, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms hosted her 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pride Reception. Over 600 guests enjoyed entertainment by the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, The Armorettes, DJ Ree De La Vega and special speakers like Sarah Kate Ellis, GLAAD President and CEO, to kick off Atlanta Pride. Mayor Bottoms awarded openly-gay philanthropist, Tony Conway, a Phoenix Award.



“ Thank you again Mayor Bottoms, and the City of Atlanta for this vital step in protecting LGBTQ youth. ”

- Sarah Kate Ellis  
President & CEO, GLAAD



# LGBTQ Affairs Accomplishments



Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms joined senior City officials, Atlanta police officers, and firefighters to march in the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Atlanta Pride Parade. Even in the rain, the parade was attended by tens of thousands of residents and visitors.



Photo: Kevin Lowery



# LGBTQ Affairs Accomplishments



The City of Atlanta co-sponsored the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual LGBTQ Institute Business Forum, hosted at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. This forum provided attendees with an exclusive look at the LGBTQ Institute’s most recent LGBTQ business data, as well as networking opportunities with Atlanta’s corporate leaders.



“ This Spirit Day I invite you to join me in taking a stand against the bullying of all youth, especially our LGBTQ youth. ”

Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms wore purple in recognition of Spirit Day, a day to take a stand against bullying and to visibly show solidarity with LGBTQ youth.



The City of Atlanta’s LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator represented the City of Atlanta at the 2019 Out & Equal Workplace Summit. He joined over 6,000 people committed to advancing LGBTQ equality in the workplace. The summit encouraged attendees to share strategies and best practices to create workplaces which are inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

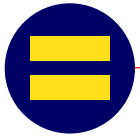


Senior Advisor to Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, Rashad Taylor, delivered welcome remarks on behalf of the City of Atlanta, at GLAAD’s Annual Sunday Brunch in Atlanta. GLAAD President and CEO, Sarah Kate Ellis, provided keynote remarks and entertainment was provided by Eureka O’Hara from RuPaul’s Drag Race, and Country Music Artist, Brandon Stansell.



## November 2019

Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board Co-Chair, Pamela Stewart, co-hosted actress and activist, Peppermint, at the Coca-Cola Company where more than 40 Atlanta-based companies attended.



**107** The City of Atlanta earned a seventh consecutive perfect score on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index (MEI). With a total raw score of 107, the 2019 report awarded the City of Atlanta its highest-ever score on the MEI.

For the second year in a row Atlanta achieved MEI "All-Star" status — the only Georgia city to do so — for scoring above 85 despite being in a state with no LGBTQ-inclusive state-level protections.



In ongoing efforts to reimagine the future Atlanta City Detention Center (ACDC), the City of Atlanta participated in a Trans and Queer Townhall, where members of the LGBTQ community gave vital feedback.



In partnership with the organizers of Transgender Day of Remembrance and local LGBTQ organizations, the Office of Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms hosted the first-ever Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil at Atlanta City Hall. Hundreds of Atlantans joined to remember the lives lost to anti-trans violence in 2019.







# IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

## Giving Back To The Community:

**\$100,000**

**Fulton County Board of Health**

To Expand the Scope and Reach of PrEP in Atlanta

**\$20,000**

**Partners for Home**

To Provide Supportive Services for HOPWA Consumers

**\$10,000**

**Trans Housing Atlanta Program**

Safe Housing and Appropriate Supportive Services to Trans and Gender Nonconforming Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

**\$10,000**

**Above the Status Quo**

HIV Education and Prevention on Atlanta's Westside

**\$3,200**

**AID Atlanta**

Southeast's Oldest and Largest HIV/AIDS Service Organization

**\$2,000**

**Southern Unity Movement**

Organizers of the Annual Bayard Rustin and Audre Lorde Community Breakfast

**\$2,000**

**Vision Community Foundation**

Organizers of the Pure Heat Community Festival

**\$1,000**

**Voices of Note**

Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus + Atlanta Women's Chorus

**\$1,000**

**In The Life Atlanta**

Organization Dedicated to Advancing Atlanta's Black LGBTQ Community

**\$1,000**

**LaGender, Inc**

Advocacy & Empowerment Organization for Trans Women

**120** *Volunteer Hours*

**ZAMI NOBLA**

National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging



# LGBTQ PHOENIX AWARDS

The Phoenix Award is the highest honor given by the Atlanta Mayor



**Joan Garner** was a Fulton County Commission Vice Chairperson, community activist, and organizer. Commissioner Garner will be remembered as a brilliant and respected leader who dedicated her life to advancing the welfare of others. Appointed by Mayor Maynard Jackson as a liaison to the gay and lesbian community, she fought tirelessly for the freedom and liberties of all members of Atlanta's LGBTQ community. She will be remembered for empowering the next generation of leaders to influence change in our society.

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**Richard Rhodes** was a mighty advocate in the fight for equality and justice in the LGBTQ community. As the first openly gay man to run for the Georgia House of Representatives, the first openly gay male delegate to the Democratic National Convention from Georgia, and the first openly gay chair of the DeKalb Democratic Party, Richard Rhodes paved the way for generations of leaders inspired by his example. He will be remembered for his talent and courage as well as his unyielding commitment to LGBTQ causes.

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**Dee Dee Ngozi Chamblee** is the Executive Director and Founder of LaGender, Inc. Recognized as a Champion of Change by the Obama Administration, Dee Dee has worked tirelessly to better the lives of trans people for more than 25 years, especially those living with HIV and AIDS. Her decades of knowledge and community-based experience has not only been instrumental in influencing change but has also inspired the next generation to learn, grow, and lead in their communities.



# LGBTQ PHOENIX AWARDS

(Continued)



**Tony Conway** has made an enduring mark on the hospitality industry and the LGBTQ community through his dedication to inclusivity, philanthropy, and the City of Atlanta. For more than two decades, and as a celebrated event connoisseur, Mr. Conway has been recognized for producing showstopping performances and unique celebration experiences. As founder of one of the most charitable event venues in Atlanta, he has received the 11 Alive Community Service Award, served on the boards of several notable organizations such as UNICEF and the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, and donated more than \$12 million to organizations committed to serving the greater community. The City of Atlanta is honored to celebrate Mr. Conway's accomplishments, and we salute the legacy he has built through his unshakeable commitment to excellence.

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Over the past 40 years, **The Armorettes** have raised more than \$2.3 million for local HIV/AIDS service providers. As the longest-running camp drag troupe in the United States, they made history performing at the inaugural Mayor's Pride Reception in Atlanta. The City of Atlanta is proud to celebrate the Armorettes' service to the LGBTQ community and those affected by HIV and AIDS.





# LGBTQ AFFAIRS PILLARS

*Upon establishing the City of Atlanta's LGBTQ Affairs program, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, City of Atlanta staff, and the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board decided to focus efforts on five priority pillars related to the LGBTQ community. These pillars guide the work and goals of the LGBTQ Affairs program.*



LGBTQ Youth



LGBTQ Arts, Entertainment,  
and Culture



Trans Affairs



LGBTQ Health



LGBTQ Economic and  
Community Development



## LGBTQ Youth | *Pillar*

When the LGBTQ Youth Working Group of the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board began convening with area service providers such as Covenant House, Chris 180, Lost N Found Youth, and the Atlanta Coalition for LGBTQ Youth, a common theme emerged: the lack of stable and affordable housing.

"It has to be the foundation of what we address first," said Josh McNair, one of the Working Group co-chairs. "From employment to healthcare, we know that housing stability is connected to so many other things."

Many LGBTQ youth face the prospect of homelessness when they come out to their families, but currently, there are not enough emergency beds in Atlanta to accommodate them. Not only is the group working to secure the funding for increasing capacity, it is also concerned with finding safe spaces for youth, separate from less vulnerable individuals. As Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms has already placed a high priority on affordable housing in Atlanta, the working group hopes to see progress on this goal in the near future.

The working group is also looking toward technology to aid LGBTQ youth in need by developing an Atlanta-centric application for smart phones. When the working group discovered through research that most homeless LGBTQ youth in Atlanta have access to a smart device, they saw a real opportunity to provide a valuable tool. They set out to develop a website that will take advantage of pre-existing resources like those gathered on the Atlanta Youth Count! website. The website features a host of resources available to homeless youth, such as access to housing and health services.

Other initiatives on which the working group has been focused include appointing an LGBTQ youth to the advisory board, hosting a targeted employment fair, and developing apps to aid in census-taking of the homeless. Ensuring accurate numbers of homeless youth can be critical when it comes to leveraging resources to support them.



**You can talk about healthcare and economic opportunity all day long, but if a person does not have stable housing then a lot of those things become moot.**

- *Josh McNair*  
Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board



# Interview with Peter Nunn

## *The Fight Against Conversion Therapy*



Growing up as one of eight siblings in a conservative, religious family from Paulding County, Georgia, Peter Nunn's life went sideways when at the age of 15 his parents found a men's workout magazine in his room. Suspecting he was gay, Peter's father took him on a trip without revealing their destination – a Christian counseling center in Iowa that practiced conversion therapy, a discredited and dangerous practice aimed at changing an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Isolated from other youth, Peter was subjected to two weeks of intense and invasive conversion therapy counseling. Young and vulnerable, Peter says he "bought into everything they said. I desperately prayed for God to fix me." Peter fell into five years of depression and even attempted suicide.

His experience is far from an anomaly. More than 700,000 LGBTQ individuals have been subjected to this harmful practice. A study conducted at San Francisco State University found that LGBTQ youth who were highly rejected by their parents because of their gay or trans identity were eight times more likely to commit suicide versus those who were accepted. Every major mainstream medical or mental health organization, including the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association, has deemed the practice of conversion therapy unethical.

At the age of 20, Peter attended his first Atlanta Pride parade and saw the support that parents had for their gay children. After coming out, he at last learned to accept himself. Now he wants to help other LGBTQ youth that might be facing such a difficult road.

Earlier this year, Peter told his story to the Georgia House of Representatives. Representative Matthew Wilson introduced Bill 580, still under consideration, to ban conversion therapy by licensed professionals in the state. "The practice of conversion therapy is harmful to youth and increases the risk of suicide," Peter said, referring to the bill. "While most parents that send their kids to conversion therapy probably think they're doing what's best for their kid," Peter said, "telling your kid that something is inherently broken with them and needs to be fixed cannot be healthy. There is no way that that does not harm your child and harm your relationship with your child."



In his efforts to see conversion therapy banned, Peter has worked with several organizations such as the Trevor Project and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. He has also spoken with numerous adults who underwent conversion therapy as children. “So many kids that grow up outside of the city don't have the same level of support that you might receive in a queer-friendly city like Atlanta. For the mayor to take a stance in such an open way against conversion therapy, I think sets an example for other cities,” Peter said.

“Growing up, I was very alone. I didn't have any support system, and I didn't have anybody telling me that they were offering me unconditional love. So that's something that's really important to me as a human – letting other people know that there's nothing wrong with them, that they can be themselves. Organizations like the Trevor Project really offer hope to a lot of young people that feel that isolation,” Peter said.



**State-sanctioned practices that inflict persecution and suffering on LGBTQ individuals – particularly young people – should end immediately. Simply put, we cannot and should not endanger the well-being of the LGBTQ community for living their truth. This administration and the City respectfully call on our State partners to join us on the right side of history.**

*- Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms*



**On April 15<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms introduced a resolution that calls on the State of Georgia to protect LGBTQ youth and ban conversion therapy. The resolution was unanimously approved by the Atlanta City Council.**



# LGBTQ Arts, Entertainment, and Culture | *Pillar*

With the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising at the Stonewall Inn occurring in June 2019, the LGBTQ Arts, Entertainment, and Culture Working Group focused on supporting and promoting key events in Atlanta in conjunction with that anniversary. The uprising at the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969 is widely thought to have been one of the key catalysts for the gay liberation movement. Today, LGBTQ pride events are held around the world to acknowledge the significance of that event.

One key initiative for the working group has been to identify and display 33 pieces of visual art in the Mayor's Gallery. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms sent out a call for submissions to LGBTQ artists and artists who create LGBTQ-themed art. After being reviewed and selected by a qualified jury, the art was displayed for two months starting at the end of June. "People in the art community need to be validated through many sources so that they can continue to flourish with their work," said Lisa Cunningham, a co-chair for the arts working group. The working group intends to continue this showcase annually and expand it to additional galleries around Atlanta.

Another key initiative for the working group has been the development of a database of LGBTQ artists and art organizations that will make it easier to find LGBTQ artists for specific projects. "Artists want to work, and they want to collaborate," said Paul Conroy, co-chair of the arts working group. "We're just trying to give them the exposure and the opportunities that they rightly deserve." The

working group has already seen a tremendously positive response from the arts community to both initiatives.

One key challenge that the working group faces is funding. The state of Georgia ranks 47<sup>th</sup> in the country for nonprofit arts funding. Working on initiatives that are specifically focused on LGBTQ artists and art organizations will be a key focus for the working group moving forward.

Other future plans for the working group include developing a few awareness campaigns, facilitating the permanent public display of art around Atlanta by LGBTQ artists, and continuing to establish and expand connections with arts organizations and gallery owners throughout Atlanta.



**The arts, just like sports and entertainment, are the ties that often bind us and bring us together. So we're very hopeful about what these exchanges will provide.**



- Lisa Cunningham  
Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board





# Interview with Camille Love

## *A Legacy of Support for the LGBTQ Community*



“

Having programs that provide support to LGBTQ communities and artists allows them to express themselves in a forum where they can get exposure and be supported.”

”

- Camille Love

*Executive Director, Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs*

Under Executive Director Camille Love, the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs has been supporting LGBTQ artists for years.

The City's grant support for Voices of Note over the past five years has allowed the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus to strengthen its effectiveness by hiring professional musicians and fulfilling its mission of creating productive community dialogue around LGBTQ issues and serving as a positive role model for the gay community. The City also supports the Alliance Theater, which fostered the development of Tony-nominated "PROM," a musical that confronts the trials of coming out.

"There are LGBTQ artists who have been represented and supported by the City for a number of years," said Camille Love. "Having programs that provide support to LGBTQ communities and artists allows them to express themselves in a forum where they can get exposure and be supported. The arts do that. It's a safe space for people to tell their truths."

The Mayor recently spoke of her intention to improve the visibility of LGBTQ artists in Atlanta. "Mayor Bottoms specifically asked that we turned what used to be the mayor's portrait gallery into a rotating gallery space for Atlanta artists to have a space to show their work to City Hall visitors," Love said. "In support of this initiative and the Stonewall commemoration, we featured artists from the LGBTQ community over the summer." Love and her staff collaborated with other members of City staff to serve as jurors in the selection process. The gallery initiative is only the first step in increasing visibility of the LGBTQ artist community.



## Trans Affairs | *Pillar*

One of the first actions the Trans Affairs Working Group took was to reach out to the trans and gender nonconforming (TGNC) community and gather input on their initiatives. They launched a survey to prioritize trans issues in Atlanta. "It's a population that we know is sometimes hard to identify, let alone take a survey. To have nearly 200 trans people and allies take the survey was really inspiring. It shows how much the community really wants and believes in this effort of the Mayor's Office and of this specific working group," said Ryan Roemermam, member of the Trans Affairs Working Group and executive director of the LGBTQ Institute.



“

Trans people and gender nonconforming people are in a fight for our lives, and we have someone in the White House that continues to use us as a wedge issue. I strongly believe that the work the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board is doing is going to be helpful in shedding light on anti-trans violence and on the employment, housing, and healthcare discrimination that we face on a daily basis.

”

- Tracee McDaniel  
Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board



Top photo: TRANScending Barriers, bottom photo: @AtlantaPride

The survey, along with a community town hall the team conducted, allowed the working group to identify two areas they felt needed the most attention – housing and employment. “We’re currently working to help alleviate some of the issues with TGNC homelessness, some of the discrimination TGNC people are facing in homeless shelters and halfway homes,” said Feroza Syed, co-chair of the Trans Affairs Working Group.

The working group is also focused on finding greater funding for organizations that have already been doing work in these areas. For example, the Trans Atlanta Housing Program has been training the staff at emergency housing facilities on non-discrimination practices for several years.

The Trans Affairs Working Group has collaborated with numerous organizations, many of which gathered at the first housing working group meeting. “Seeing all the different organizations that have been working in trans housing, all sitting at one table together, working together, really made a big impact on me,” said Syed. Important partners for the working group include the Trans Atlanta Housing Program, TRANScending Barriers, Transformation Journeys Worldwide, Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, LGBTQ Institute, Atlanta Homeless Continuum-of-Care, and Lost-n-Found Youth.

# Interview with Zahara Green

## *Trans Equality Now!*



Zahara Green is the Executive Director of TRANScending Barriers, a non-profit organization committed to helping trans people reenter the world after incarceration.

Growing up in Southwest Atlanta, Zahara was always shy, and never really knew how to express herself. She vividly remembers Christmas day when she was six years old. Disappointed with the traditional male gifts that she received, she found herself much more drawn to her sister's gifts, most of which society has traditionally deemed feminine. Since that moment, Zahara felt pressured to live life presenting as a boy, even though that's not what she felt on the inside.

Not fully understanding her feelings, Zahara took to YouTube to learn more about what it meant to be transgender. At 17, Zahara bravely came out to her grandmother as transgender and let her know that she wanted to begin

openly living as a girl. Unfortunately, her religious grandmother kicked Zahara out of her home, leaving her homeless and on the streets. Through social media, Zahara connected with other TGNC youth who were also living in unstable housing conditions, stemming from being abandoned by their families.

Struggling to take care of herself at the young age of 17, Zahara began engaging in "survivor crimes," while living in the streets on her own. That same year, Zahara was arrested and sent to the Georgia Department of Corrections, then on to a transitional center. It was here that Zahara learned significant life skills by attending resume building workshops and receiving job readiness training. For Zahara, her reentry into society was different because she had a better understanding of what she needed to sustain herself on her own without resorting to survivor crimes.

Zahara found that she wanted to do more than just work for a company; she wanted to give back to her community. Her advocacy started while she was incarcerated. While in jail, she saw that trans women were being mistreated. Zahara fought for housing improvements and voiced the concerns of women who faced language barriers. "Through that advocacy, I was able to see change for the first time," she says. "I realized that if we actually speak up and use our voice, we can actually see something change, and we have to fight these systems of oppression in order to bring about change."



In April of 2017, Zahara started her non-profit organization, TRANScending Barriers, with a friend after discussions about what could be done for the community. Zahara wanted to find a way to grant others the opportunities she received after reentering society in an effort to prevent others from getting caught back up in the criminal justice system. With the help of national non-profit organizations, Zahara developed her organization, conducted focus groups, and began serving TGNC people across Georgia. Since its start, TRANScending Barriers has blossomed into a full-functioning organization, equipped with staff members who have been impacted themselves by the organization.

The City of Atlanta, Zahara believes, has been instrumental in uplifting the trans community. "Trans visibility has become a focus because many people in the City of Atlanta are recognizing that trans experience and trans people are disproportionately affected by many things, from HIV to violence, to incarceration, to homelessness." Zahara also praises the Bottoms administration for its continuous efforts to uplift the TGNC community. She believes that progressive politics are needed in order to ensure proper representation for all the people of Atlanta, and that is something Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms has done since the beginning of her Administration, especially for transgender people. Trans-led organizations, housing organizations, and other resources that trans people can access is something that older generations never had, but Mayor Bottoms has ensured that communities now have the support right when they need it.

Zahara has a clear vision for the future of trans rights. "Being trans is having to deal with oppression... but through it all, we are resilient. We are still fighting against these systems that are fighting against our community every day." Zahara's hope is that there is a place for TGNC people when they are rejected in society from family and friends once they start living in their truth.



**Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, through and through, has shown that she is a champion in the fight for equity and equality for the trans community in Atlanta.**

**We are at a time where anti-trans violence is at its highest in recorded history, but the City of Atlanta and the progressive leadership of Mayor Bottoms continues to uplift trans people and echo the words of our community that Trans Lives Matter. Having the City of Atlanta support us has changed a lot of the stigmas that exist in our society that perpetuate a lot of the hate in our community.**



*- Zahara Green*

*Executive Director, TRANScending Barriers*



# LGBTQ Health | *Pillar*

When the Health Working Group for the LGBTQ Advisory Board first gathered, they decided to start with a clear vision statement: Comprehensive health and wellness for Atlanta's diverse LGBTQ communities. That vision was certainly aided by Mayor Bottoms' resolute commitment to supporting the LGBTQ community.

In her Fiscal Year 2019 budget for the City of Atlanta, Mayor Bottoms earmarked \$100,000 in HIV program resources to help battle the City's HIV/AIDS crisis. This line item is the broadest set-aside in the City's history to combat HIV/AIDS.

The allocation is already being used to fund and establish an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Atlanta and the Fulton County Board of Health to increase the scope and reach of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), an HIV prevention pill.

Understanding the urgency of the HIV/AIDS crisis, the Health Working Group has been focused on the HIV initiative and working with Fulton County for the first six months of 2019.

For FY19, the working group focused on two additional missions. The first was to conduct community engagement sessions to better understand what accessing healthcare is like for the LGBTQ community. The team gathered data to drive a more informed health agenda.

The working group is preparing to review the City of Atlanta's health policies and analyze how they impact LGBTQ employees.



Looking to the future, the Health Working Group hopes to anticipate and to respond to the comprehensive health needs of Atlanta's diverse LGBTQ community by collaborating with agencies and organizations, advising the Mayor's Office on emerging and existing issues, and advocating for better connections to essential resources.

“  
It's up to all of us to  
engage our communities  
about HIV and end the  
harmful effects of the  
stigma.”

- Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms



# Interview with Melanie Thompson

## *Fighting HIV in Atlanta*



Photo: AJC

Dr. Melanie Thompson is the Principal Investigator at the AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta (ARCA).

A native Atlantan, Dr. Thompson has been a longtime member of Atlanta's LGBTQ community. She has been in a committed relationship for thirty years and married for the past eleven. Dr. Thompson has also been working in the HIV medical field for the past three decades.

The first time Dr. Thompson saw a patient with HIV was in 1982 when she was in training as a medical student. At that time, HIV/AIDS was still fairly new. By the time she finished her training in 1987, HIV had fatally affected many people within the LGBTQ community, including many of her friends. "It was the compelling medical issue

of our time," said Dr. Thompson. The earliest form of treatment for the virus was AZT, which was toxic, tedious to take, and had negative side effects. No longer able to stand the suffering of patients, Dr. Thompson, along with other physicians, established the AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta in an effort to contribute to research on other drugs that could serve as alternative forms of treatment.

In addition to researching newer and better drugs, ARCA focuses on prevention research. According to Dr. Thompson, HIV exploits inequality everywhere, including Atlanta; inequality continues to drive the epidemic. Communities of color (particularly African Americans), closeted men, trans women, and African American cisgender straight women are most affected by the epidemic. "This epidemic," said Dr. Thompson, "is driven by structural racism and the legacy of slavery that is still with us today. It drives the inequalities – not only in HIV, but also in other areas of healthcare. HIV is not just a health disease, but it's also a complex societal disease as well."





While there is limited Atlanta-specific data on health outcomes, one of the key barriers in the LGBTQ population – whether HIV-positive or not – is the ability to access client-centered, non-discriminatory healthcare. This has posed a challenge to those who have not found affirming healthcare. Stories have spread about discrimination and societal stigma against patients across Atlanta, specifically for trans individuals and immigrants. Dr. Thompson believes that this discrimination is a barrier to quality healthcare. Further, she believes that efforts should be made to educate healthcare providers on how to guide and support their patients with LGBTQ-friendly physicians.

In the midst of all the tragedy, there is a silver lining. People are now living with HIV and not dying from it. There has been remarkable development that has allowed researchers to provide effective treatment. The birth of PrEP has greatly prevented the spread of the virus, as has the development of treatments that make the virus undetectable, which inspired the phrase “Undetectable = Untransmittable.” One of the most seminal moments in Atlanta occurred in 2014, when the Fulton County Board of Commissioners led by the late Commissioner Joan Garner created the Fulton County HIV/AIDS Task Force, bringing together individuals from all aspects of society to address HIV/AIDS. The task-force successfully advocated for a rise in federal

efforts with the help of the State and counties around Georgia to end HIV/AIDS. Dr. Thompson also credits the National LGBTQ Health Conference hosted at Emory University this past summer as another pivotal event in Atlanta. It put a spotlight on Atlanta and brought researchers and thinkers to the city to collaborate and continue the conversation.

Since her start, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms has upheld her commitment to advancing HIV/AIDS efforts in the City of Atlanta. Mayor Bottoms announced the citywide expansion of PrEP access in March of 2019. This was followed by her appointment of the City’s first-ever Chief Health Officer, Dr. Angelica Geter Fugerson. “I think it’s a terrific development that Mayor Bottoms has expressed a commitment to addressing the HIV epidemic in Atlanta. That’s never happened before, and it’s very important,” said Dr. Thompson.

As the discussion around HIV continues in the City, Dr. Thompson hopes that Mayor Bottoms’ initiatives will be embraced by state and county leaders. The work to end this epidemic is far from over but with dedicated researchers and activists like Dr. Melanie Thompson, there is an unwavering belief that the LGBTQ community in Atlanta will not be forgotten.



**I think it’s a terrific development that Mayor Bottoms has expressed a commitment to addressing the HIV epidemic in Atlanta. That’s never happened before, and it’s very important.**

*- Dr. Melanie Thompson  
Principal Investigator, ARCA*







# LGBTQ Economic and Community Development | *Pillar*

The mission of the Economic and Community Development Working Group is to support equity in local businesses, tourism, commerce, and legislation across Atlanta. “That’s a wide charge,” said Jamie Ferguson, working group co-chair and executive director of Atlanta Pride. “So for now, we’ve chosen to focus on three specific goals:”

- 1. Make Atlanta a premier LGBTQ tourism destination.***
- 2. Support LGBTQ-run and -owned businesses in the Atlanta metro area.***
- 3. Advance LGBTQ supportive policy in Georgia and Atlanta.***

The City of Atlanta is already a powerful leader in the policy arena. “Atlanta was the first, and until months ago, the only city in the state of Georgia that had a comprehensive non-discrimination ordinance that protected against discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodation,” said Jeff Graham, working group co-chair and executive director of Georgia Equality. “It’s not just protection for members of the LGBTQ community.” Since 1999, all City of Atlanta non-discrimination laws prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as race, color, creed, religion, sex, marital status, parental status, familial status, national origin, age, and disability. This comprehensive set of non-discrimination laws prohibits discrimination by business establishments, commercial housing agents, and service providers in Atlanta.





“These laws really set the bar for equality and inclusion of LGBTQ individuals,” Graham said. “Many are shocked to find out that Georgia is one of only three states around the country that lacks a non-discrimination ordinance or civil rights laws to protect any group of people from discrimination. These Atlanta ordinances serve as an important model that we are actively encouraging the State of Georgia to adopt.”

“

With the Mayor making statements supportive of the trans community, supportive of people living with HIV/AIDS, and highlighting our city’s commitment to equality – I think the biggest win for us over the last year has been the ability to amplify all of these voices and causes in a more connected and unified way than we’ve done in the past.”

- *Jamie Fergerson*  
Mayor’s LGBTQ Advisory Board



Photo: wabe.org



# Interview with William Pate

## *How Atlanta is Leading LGBTQ Tourism in the South*



William Pate serves as the President and CEO of the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB).

Born and raised in Atlanta, William could not be more proud to call this progressive destination home. The ACVB is charged with maintaining tourism as one of the City's top economic drivers. During his time as President and CEO, visitation to the city has increased by 60 percent. In 2018, Atlanta welcomed over 56 million travelers. William reported that city guests generate \$16 billion in visitor spending and sustain around 300,000 jobs annually. "As the singular voice for Atlanta's hospitality community, ACVB takes great pride in marketing and promoting the City as an inclusive destination that welcomes all visitors with Southern hospitality," said William.

Since he joined ACVB, William says he has seen tremendous advancements for LGBTQ tourism with far-reaching effects. In 2011, ACVB launched a partnership with Georgia Voice to produce Destination Gay Atlanta, Atlanta's official LGBTQ travel guide, to showcase the city to LGBTQ travelers. For the past seven years, Atlanta has received a perfect score on the Human Rights Campaign Municipal Quality Index, reflecting a positive quality of life for members of the LGBTQ community. "This notoriety is important," said William, "as it makes Atlanta an ideal location for LGBTQ travelers, as families from all walks of life can visit and feel welcome to explore all the city has to offer."

“...it makes Atlanta an ideal location for LGBTQ travelers, as families from all walks of life can visit and feel welcome to explore all the city has to offer.”

- William Pate  
President and CEO of the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau



Tourism is an economic driver for Atlanta, and ACVB successfully bid to host the 2021 International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association's (IGLTA) Global Convention. The event brings hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators and travel media to Atlanta, allowing ACVB to highlight what makes the City so dynamic and why it is a prime choice for LGBTQ travelers. To promote Atlanta's inclusiveness on a global scale, ACVB became a silver level global partner of IGLTA in 2013 and presented at the LGBTQ Tourism and Hospitality Symposium in 2017 on the impact that legislation can have on tourism.

While LGBTQ-centered events occur year-round in Atlanta, William cites Atlanta Pride as the most successful and impactful event each year. "This week-long celebration is unmatched and extremely important to the city." William believes that Atlanta Pride is so successful because of how easy it is for guests to get in and move about. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest and most efficient airport, allows for easy travel and guests have an array of hotels, chef-driven restaurants, and world-class attractions to enjoy. Atlanta Pride is one of the largest LGBTQ gatherings in the Southeast, and William looks forward to celebrating Atlanta Pride Festival's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020.

When asked what advice he would give to an LGBTQ person wanting to visit Atlanta, William replied, "I encourage visitors to get out and explore Atlanta's diverse neighborhoods. Beyond the City's core, Atlanta's intown neighborhoods are packed with personality."



Crosswalk photo: Kyle Ference



# Glossary of LGBTQ Terms

*Courtesy of our Friends at the Human Rights Campaign*

Many people refrain from talking about sexual orientation and gender identity or expression because it feels taboo, or because they're afraid of saying the wrong thing. This glossary was written to help give people the words and meanings to help make conversations easier and more comfortable.

**Ally:** A person who is not LGBTQ but shows support for LGBTQ people and promotes equality in a variety of ways.

**Androgynous:** Identifying and/or presenting as neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine.

**Asexual:** The lack of a sexual attraction or desire for other people.

**Biphobia:** Prejudice, fear or hatred directed toward bisexual people.

**Bisexual:** A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.

**Cisgender:** A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

**Closeted:** Describes an LGBTQ person who has not disclosed their sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Coming out:** The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

**Gay:** A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.

**Gender dysphoria:** Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the term - which replaces Gender Identity Disorder - "is

intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults."

**Gender-expansive:** Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system.

**Gender expression:** External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

**Gender-fluid:** According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a person who does not identify with a single fixed gender; of or relating to a person having or expressing a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

**Gender identity:** One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither - how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

**Gender non-conforming:** A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

**Genderqueer:** Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. People who identify as "genderqueer" may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female or as falling completely outside these categories.

**Gender transition:** The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

**Homophobia:** The fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who are attracted to members of the same sex.

**Intersex:** An umbrella term used to describe a wide range of natural bodily variations. In some cases, these traits are visible at birth, and in others, they are not apparent until puberty. Some chromosomal variations of this type may not be physically apparent at all.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to other women.

**LGBTQ:** An acronym for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer."

**Living openly:** A state in which LGBTQ people are comfortably out about their sexual orientation or gender identity - where and when it feels appropriate to them.

**Non-binary:** An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do.

**Outing:** Exposing someone's lesbian, gay, bisexual or

transgender identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety or religious or family situations.

**Pansexual:** Describes someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to people of any gender though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree.

**Queer:** A term people often use to express fluid identities and orientations. Often used interchangeably with "LGBTQ."

**Questioning:** A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Same-gender loving:** A term some prefer to use instead of lesbian, gay or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender.

**Sex assigned at birth:** The sex (male or female) given to a child at birth, most often based on the child's external anatomy. This is also referred to as "assigned sex at birth."

**Sexual orientation:** An inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

**Transphobia:** The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people.



## Keisha Lance Bottoms

Mayor of Atlanta

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LGBTQ Affairs Coordinator

### Kelly Smith Beaty

Director of Strategic Engagement

### Judi Weber

LGBTQ Affairs Report  
Art Direction/Design

### Pamela Stewart

Co-Chair  
Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board

### Kirk Rich

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Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board

### Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board

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Officer Lynadius Joseph  
Senior Police Officer Eric King  
Captain Kamula McKnight  
Captain Latia Posey

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Office of Cultural Affairs	404.546.6788	Corrections	404.865.8001
Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	404.330.6100	Enterprise Assets Management	404.330.6225
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Office of Film & Entertainment	404.546.0311	Fire & Rescue	404.546.7000
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Office of Innovation & Performance	404.330.6794	Human Resources	404.330.6360
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs	404.330.6100	Information Technology	404.546.6110
Office of International Affairs	404.858.3898	Law	404.546.4100
Office of Resilience	404.865.8715	The Municipal Court of Atlanta	404.954.7914
Office of Special Events	404.330.6741	Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs	404.546.6788
Atlanta Beltline, Inc.	404.477.3003	Pension Services	404.330.6607
Atlanta Housing	404.892.4700	Planning & Community Development	404.330.6070
End Human Trafficking ATL	404.330.6100	Procurement	404.330.6204
Invest Atlanta	404.880.4100	Police	404.614.6544
WorkSource Atlanta	404.546.3000	Public Works	404.330.6240
Atlanta City Council	404.330.6030	Watershed Management	404.546.1290
Aviation	404.530.6600	Zoning and Development	404.330.6150



Photo: Scott Cunningham



# EQUALITY FORWARD.

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