



## 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

### **Our Mission**

Founded in 1997, Equality Florida is Florida's statewide civil rights organization dedicated to securing full equality for Florida's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community. Through grassroots organizing, education, and coalition building, we are changing Florida so that no one suffers harassment or discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

### **Our Major Progress in 2023**

With support from donors, volunteers, partners, and elected allies, we are pleased to report our 2023 achievements in moving equality forward.

- Our invitation to join the resistance resonated throughout the state. We tripled our volunteer engagement to nearly 3,500 active volunteers and increased our membership base to 455,000 people.
- Our 2022 first-ever cable television ads [My Heroes](#) and [Content of Our Curriculum](#) garnered the prestigious Reed Awards for Campaign and Elections, solidifying Equality Florida's growing media presence and reputation as experts in defining anti-LGBTQ policies appearing in Florida's political landscape.
- Working in coalition with local organizers and agencies was especially important in 2023. In April, we held a town hall in Sarasota to strategize ways to fight back against the state government's anti-LGBTQ agenda and, based on its overwhelming success of 200 attendees, organized the Resist Townhall Series in an additional six regions: Broward, St. Petersburg, Orlando, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, and Miami.
- The impact of our Safe and Healthy Schools program fell into three defined areas: collaborating with school district superintendents and school board members; supporting parent advocacy; and mobilizing community members to school board meetings where crucial issues were being addressed.
  - *Collaborating with School District Superintendents and School Board Members:*
    - We worked closely with over fifty school system leaders and trained over 1,500 principals, school-based mental health professionals, and teachers this year alone. Since its inception, our Safe and Healthy Schools program has trained more than 38,000 professionals statewide.

- Despite challenges from the State Board of Education, we persuaded multiple school boards to introduce LGBTQ youth support guides in 10 counties.
- We helped select pro-LGBTQ superintendents in four school districts.
- *Supporting Parent Advocacy:*
  - In response to the conservative “parental rights” narrative used to justify harmful policies targeting LGBTQ youth and to provide a centralized resource for parents to learn from one another and experts on how to support their LGBTQ children, we launched Parenting with Pride. In a few short months, the program drew 1,600 parents and caregivers to monthly webinars and launched a website (<https://parentingwithpride.org/>) of toolkits and guidance.
- *Mobilizing Community Members to School Board Meetings:*
  - Our Fall into Action campaign launched in September and served as the main opportunity to engage with parents and families who were ready to push back against the harmful laws and rules being passed in Florida. The efforts that ensured these wins could come to fruition included:
    - Recruiting 1,800 parents to show up to more than 230 school board meetings in more than 40 counties;
    - Hosting trainings to ensure parents were confident and prepared to give powerful testimony; and
    - Ensuring Equality Florida staff presence at more than 40 school board meetings.
- Our Equality Means Business program has partnered with the Movement Advancement Project to participate in and uplift the Open to All (<https://www.opentoall.com/>) public engagement campaign. The campaign goal is to build awareness and understanding about the importance of our nation’s nondiscrimination laws and ensure that public businesses are truly inclusive of all people.
- Our 2-day intensive legislative training for LGBTQ community members and allies, formerly called Lobby Days, was relaunched as Pride at the Capitol (PATC) and had record-setting attendance this year, hosting over 230 people in Tallahassee. In response to the onslaught of anti-LGBTQ legislation, PATC kicked off a session-long program that engaged an additional 154 volunteers to testify at 31 committee hearings.
- An increase in anti-LGBTQ rhetoric in Florida had detrimental consequences for the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ youth. Young people and their families face difficulty locating informed mental healthcare providers. To provide support where it was most needed, we hosted a mental health summit attended by nearly 500 clinicians in roles such as school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker.

- We helped raise \$100,000 in 48 hours for the Campaign for Southern Equality's Trans Youth Emergency Project, a project quickly formed in response to the disruption of gender-affirming care for many of Florida's trans youth due to hostile policies like SB 254. Funds were disbursed as \$500 microgrants for doctor's visits, travel to new providers, or other trans healthcare needs.
- Despite threats to Pride festivals and drag artists, Equality Florida participated in 28 Pride events from January to June in communities ranging from Pensacola to Key West. These events are outreach opportunities where we educate festivalgoers about the latest issues, collect pledges to support pro-LGBTQ initiatives, and recruit new volunteers to support our critical work.
- Equality Florida has systematically incorporated HIV Modernization education and advocacy into our work with elected officials. Our team reaches out to virtually every candidate for the House, Senate, and Cabinet to provide an initial briefing on the need to modernize HIV laws, specifically by placing it as an issue at the core of our efforts to educate new lawmakers.

### **Our 2023 Officers and Board of Directors**

Located in key communities throughout Florida, our board of directors is committed to our mission and helps drive organizational success. We're grateful for their support!

- Selisse Berry (St. Petersburg)
- Susan Bottcher (Gainesville)
- Angus Bradshaw (Orlando)
- Nathan Breummer (Gulfport)
- Keith Davenport (Orlando)
- Jeff Delmay (Hollywood) - Co-Chair
- Victor Diaz-Herman (Miami)
- Dana Farmer (Tallahassee)
- Anastasia "Annie" Hiotis (St. Petersburg) - Co-Chair
- Danny Humphress (Winter Park) - Secretary
- Pauline Parrish (Sarasota) - Treasurer
- Nadine Smith (St. Petersburg) - Ex-officio
- Dan VanTice (St. Johns)

*For the most up-to-date listing of officers and board members, please visit [equalityflorida.org/board](https://equalityflorida.org/board).*

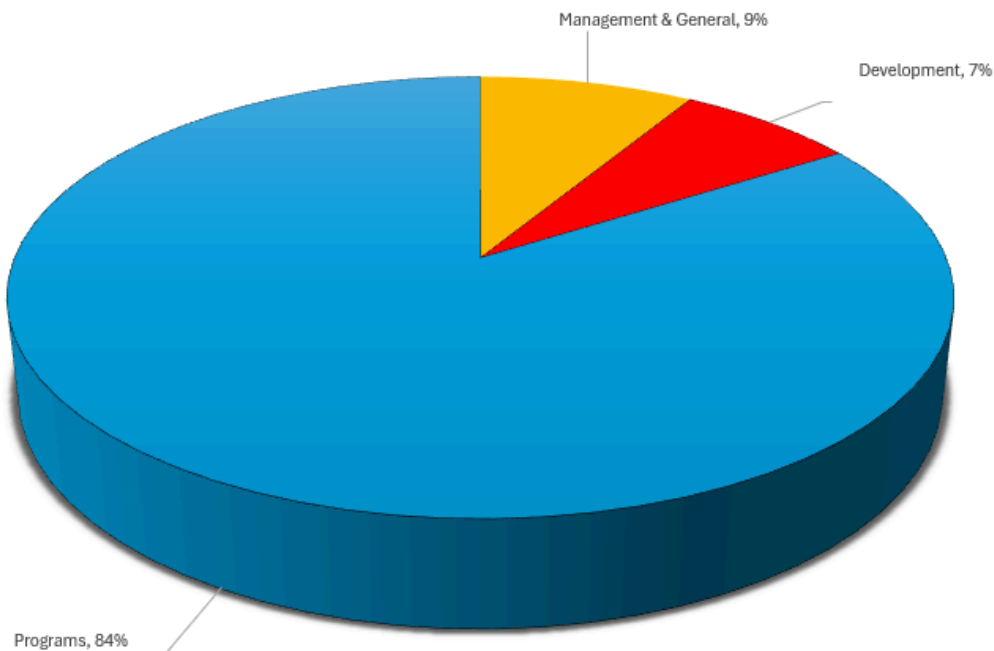
### Our Finances

Approximately 40% of Equality Florida’s support comes from individual donors, with the remaining amount coming from a growing mix of Fortune 500 companies, privately held corporations, and nationally recognized private foundations.

	Equality Florida Institute, 501(c)(3)*	Equality Florida Action, 501(c)(4)**
2023 Operating Support & Revenue	\$6,945,453	\$1,419,924
2023 Operating Expenses		
Program Services	\$5,226,364	\$ 1,073,400
Development	\$ 251,346	\$ 296,629
Management & General Administrative	\$ 579,859	\$ 72,598
 Net assets as of December 31, 2023	 \$8,492,935	 \$1,432,040

\* Figures independently audited by Mayer, Hoffman, McCann, P.C., a top 10 national accounting firm. See [equalityflorida.org](http://equalityflorida.org) for full financial reports and audit opinion.

\*\* Figures independently reviewed by Mayer, Hoffman, McCann, P.C., a top 10 national accounting firm. See [equalityflorida.org](http://equalityflorida.org) for full financial reports and review conclusions.



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### **Our Invitation to You**

Volunteers and donors are the backbone of our organization, providing us with the resources necessary to create a better Florida for us all. Please join us to help move equality forward by volunteering at one of our many events throughout the state; joining one of our many volunteer committees; or making a financial contribution that's meaningful to you. We're a long way from full LGBTQ equality in Florida, and we hope you'll join us on our journey to get there.

Equality Florida has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, its top rating, and is the highest rated statewide LGBTQ civil rights organization in the nation, with four stars for both accountability and transparency. We're also a Platinum Level GuideStar participant, a top-rated nonprofit by GreatNonprofits, and nationally accredited by the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance (give.org).

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