



Racial Justice Program

Since 2007, Basic Rights Oregon has had a dedicated Racial Justice Program. We pride ourselves as being leaders among state-based LGBTQ rights organizations in fighting for racial equity and against racism in our communities. From coalition work to leadership development, and from the legislature to the ballot box, we make these values known.

Racial Justice Coalitions

Our racial justice work is rooted in solidarity with groups that have supported us as we've supported them. For instance, in 2004 the farm workers union and immigrant rights group PCUN opposed, and organized its members against, Measure 36, which banned same sex marriage. Then, in 2014, after marriage equality was settled in Oregon's federal court, we shifted our staff to focus on fighting against Measure 88, a ballot measure which sought to repeal the rights of undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's cards. Here's a look at some of the coalition work we're involved in today:

One Oregon – We are founding members of the One Oregon coalition, which fights against anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim policies and ballot measures and works to ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of country of birth, are treated with dignity and respect. Our Executive Director



Nancy Haque was an initial architect of the coalition.

Facing Race – Starting in 2010, as part of a collaborative effort, we helped create the Facing Race: Oregon Legislative Report on Racial Justice. This biennial report, which we work on with groups like the Coalition for Communities of Color, Causa, APANO and others, highlights the legislature's progress toward creating more equitable outcomes and opportunities for all.

Fair Shot – In 2014 we became founding members of the Fair Shot for All coalition, designed to help give a voice to those often left behind in the political process. Since then, some of the coalition's victories have included: the securing of paid sick days, a minimum wage increase, health care for every kid, job opportunities for people with prior convictions, and training and accountability to help end police profiling.



Leadership Development

At Basic Rights Oregon we're committed to creating leadership that truly reflects our community. This means prioritizing groups that have been historically marginalized within the mainstream LGBTQ movement, namely queer and transgender people of color (QTPOC). We do this through our leadership development cohort Our Power/Poder. Founded in 2009 and revamped in 2016, this yearlong cohort affords participants real life opportunities to acquire skills in community organizing, program management and relationship building, as well as the chance to find mentors in their chosen fields. Our Power/Poder features residential weekend retreats and day-long trainings, as well as hands-on experience at lobbying, organizing and fundraising. We created Our Power/Poder as a pipeline not just for staff and board leadership at Basic Rights, but as a vital development vehicle for QTPOC leadership across Oregon.

Ballot Box

Basic Rights Oregon was born out of ballot measure fights. Oregon has faced more anti-gay ballot measures than any other state, making us seasoned veterans

at the type of "get out the vote" operations that are needed to win when a community's rights are on the line. One place our racial justice values emerge is in giving field support to battle Oregon's anti-immigrant ballot measures.

National Leadership

Along with our coalition partner the Western States Center we have published two editions of our Coming Out for Racial Justice Toolkit. In this resource we captured the process we underwent in becoming an anti-racist organization. We've shared this curriculum with other state-based LGBTQ rights groups, in hopes that they can learn from our evolution. In addition, we led a workshop on this topic at the 2016 Equality Federation Conference for state-based LGBTQ organizations. In 2012 and 2013 we created the Our Families video series, which features families from African-American, Asian-American and Native American backgrounds sharing about their support of their LGBTQ relatives. These resources were also shared nationally, and helped debunk myths regarding heightened levels of homophobia and transphobia in communities of color.