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All Revved Up!
HRC's Brandon Braud (R) and friends at Atlanta Black Pride. See p. 6.
HRC's headquarters building is taking shape. As I write this, construction crews are laying cables, drywalling and working furiously to complete the renovation of our beautiful new home. What seemed an unattainable dream so many years ago is soon to be reality. In this issue of HRC Quarterly, we bring you scenes from a building. We hope you find these images inspiring because our capital campaign continues to need your help!

Also in this issue, we focus on our work at the grassroots as Senior Field Organizer Sally Green looks at the past successes and future plans for HRC's Equality Fund grant program. Going global, Liz Sexton, senior staff counsel, compares and contrasts marriage laws around the world with the situation in the United States while guest columnist Michael Heflin of Amnesty International describes some of the horrific conditions under which our GLBT sisters and brothers live, and die, in other countries.

Lisa Bennett, deputy director for HRC FamilyNet, looks at some of the remarkable policy statements coming from prestigious professional organizations in support of our families — even as we provide a snapshot of the inequities under the Social Security program.

On the political front, Senior Policy Advocate Tracey St. Pierre lays out the challenges we face in the 108th Congress. Political Director Winnie Stachelberg has a candid conversation with Louisiana Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu, and Mark Shields, communications associate director, profiles Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts.

You may have picked up this issue of HRC Quarterly at a GLBT pride celebration. If so, we hope that you met some of our staff or loyal volunteers, that you'll take our pride IQ test, and — if you're not already a member — that you'll join the Human Rights Campaign.

As always, we welcome your feedback.

Kim I. Mills
Executive Editor
kim.mills@hrc.org

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A Kinder, Gentler HRC?
I just wanted to say that I'm very impressed with the new content on the HRC website. It's great to see so much information on issues that reach beyond the Beltway and into the lives of everyday LGBT folks. It's also great to see you cover diverse topics that I haven't traditionally associated with HRC, like aging and transgender issues. Is this a sign of a kinder, gentler HRC?

David Mariner
Washington, D.C.

I first joined your organization back in the early '90s. I didn't renew my membership because I felt you were ignoring transgender issues. Now that is no longer the case and I am happy to support you once again.

Gloria Eskew
Long Beach, Calif.

Editor's reply: HRC added gender identity and expression to its mission statement in 2001, responding to our members and reflecting years of work on these issues. We continue to be gratified by the positive responses we receive as our efforts in this area grow and intensify.

All Partners Deserve Parity
I read “Health Insurance: A Taxing Benefit for Domestic Partners” in the Winter 2002 HRC Quarterly. While the article was very poignant and brought up issues that demand attention, it's important to note that many insurance companies — including my own — support health benefits for same-sex domestic partners but not opposite-sex domestic partners. Believing in equality for all means also believing that couples — regardless of sexual orientation — need not be married to maintain a relationship of lifelong commitment. This treatment by health insurance companies is also unfair and deserves equal treatment.

C. M.

Editor's reply: According to data compiled by HRC WorkNet, approximately two-thirds of the employers that offer domestic partner health insurance offer it to opposite- and same-sex partners. We suggest you approach your employer with facts and statistics you can find at www.hrc.org/worknet and make a business case for changing carriers. Good luck!

Dads in Limbo
I have four kids and a partner of two years, but my partner has not been able to meet my children. The judge, at my ex-wife's urging, felt that would be best for the kids. But this situation has put an enormous strain on my relationship with my partner. I just want him to meet the kids I love so much. HRC FamilyNet sent us some resources and my lawyer filed them to use in future cases like ours. Thank you. I can only hope that they help the state of South Carolina to see that we are people, too — with feelings just like the next family. Not to mention that we also pay taxes just like the next family.

A Dad Waiting for His Rights South Carolina

Editor's note: For more information on GLBT families, visit www.hrc.org/familynet.

HRC Aiming High
I am a lesbian serving in the U.S. Air Force abroad. I just saw an HRC public service announcement on the Armed Forces Network. I'm impressed, amazed and above all thankful. Your efforts to educate the military audience are incredibly necessary.

With much gratitude,
Anonymous

For information on military issues, visit www.hrc.org/documentingcourage.

EQUALITY SIGHTING!
Becky Dinwoodie Flynn, left, and Sharon Flynn make a vow for equality in Provincetown, Mass., at their commitment ceremony. Congratulations!

Have you spotted an HRC Equality logo in an unusual place? Send photos of them our way! If your photo is selected, we'll send you a free HRC T-shirt. Send to HRC Quarterly, 919 18th St., N.W., Ste. 800, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Correction: In the fall HRC Quarterly, an article entitled “Transforming The Public Debate: Transgender Activists Post Huge Wins at the Local Level” should have included Free State Justice, Maryland's statewide GLBT group, as the sponsor of the lobby training in Baltimore for transgender activists.
TransForum

Despite the worst cold snap in Boston since the 1880s, more than 100 people attended a Human Rights Campaign-sponsored town hall meeting on transgender issues in January. Speakers included: (L-R) Diego Sanchez, JRI TransHealth and Education Development Program; Grace Sterling-Stowell, Boston-Area Gay and Lesbian Youth; Gunner Scott, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition; Jennifer Levi, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders; David Smith, HRC; and Mara Kiesling, National Center for Transgender Equality.

On the Front Line

Former National Football League defensive lineman Esera Tuaolo signed autographs for Human Rights Campaign fans during a visit to its offices to discuss the challenges of coming out in the professional sports leagues. HRC has urged NFL officials to address the problem and continues to monitor the situation.

Cracker Barrel Cracks, Lockheed Unlocks

Shareholder activists have racked up some impressive victories for lesbian and gay employees in recent months. In December, Lockheed Martin Corp. told workers it would add sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy, mere months after students at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania mounted a shareholder initiative seeking the change. Lockheed — which received a zero on the Human Rights Campaign's 2002 Corporate Equality Index — also announced it would implement domestic partner benefits starting in January 2003.

In late November, the board of directors of CBRL Inc., the parent company of Cracker Barrel Country Stores, voted to add sexual orientation to its policy. The unanimous ballot came on the heels of the annual shareholder meeting where a resolution asking the company for such a policy change stood to garner some 58 percent of the vote. The change ended a decade-long struggle that began when Cracker Barrel issued a policy of firing employees who failed to “demonstrate normal heterosexual values.”

And in January, New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson Jr. announced that the city’s pension systems were sponsoring first-time resolutions calling for shareholder votes on non-discrimination policies at eight Fortune 500 companies. One of the companies, Dynegy Inc., changed its policy within days of the city’s announcement.

In the meantime, New York is the lead filer of a resolution asking ExxonMobil Corp. to add sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy for the fifth year in a row. Once again, the HRC Foundation is a co-filer of that measure. “ExxonMobil remains one of the last and most stubborn holdouts on this issue,” said Kim I. Mills, HRC’s education director, who has led the organization’s efforts around this company. “ExxonMobil is clinging to antiquated business practices that are detrimental to employee morale and the company’s bottom line.”
The U.S. Supreme Court is slated to hear oral arguments March 26 on a Texas sodomy case that centers on the constitutionality of anti-gay state sodomy laws. The Human Rights Campaign signed a “friend of the court” brief, supporting New York-based Lambda Legal’s efforts to have the high court declare a violation of equal protection and privacy in the case, Lawrence v. Texas. The brief describes the sodomy laws as outdated, and provides strong evidence that gays and lesbians are law-abiding, productive citizens who are healthy partners, good parents, patriotic veterans and sometimes heroic citizens. A decision in the case is expected this summer.

Sex on Appeal

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“African-American lesbians may face double jeopardy in terms of mortality and morbidity from cancer and other diseases,” says Fields. “But because very little research has focused on our community, very little is known about our health status and health needs. The Spirit Study is an important step toward bridging that knowledge gap.”

The study is recruiting black lesbians nationally through publications, newsletters, community groups, churches and Internet sites, as well as gay and lesbian community/health centers and lesbian cancer projects.

This innovative research project is partially supported by a grant from the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. For more information about the Spirit Study, call 202/332-5536 or e-mail cfields@mautnerproject.org.

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Start Spreading the News

New York activists set off fireworks in the skies above Albany Jan. 16 to celebrate the first day of the state’s new law barring discrimination based on sexual orientation in the public and private sectors. A month earlier, Republican Gov. George Pataki signed the bill, making New York the 13th state to outlaw such discrimination — after decades of hard work led by the statewide advocacy group. Empire State Pride Agenda spent years mobilizing the community to educate New York state elected officials on both sides of the aisle about the incidents of discrimination faced daily by gay men and lesbians, said HRC National Field Director Seth Kilbourn. A key remaining challenge will be to bar discrimination based on gender identity. “ESPA is committed to full equality for the entire GLBT community, and HRC stands ready to support their efforts,” he said.

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In nearly two dozen communities across the country this year, HRC volunteers will march in their local pride parades — more than double the number who did so five years ago. And the numbers are rising, says Frank Butler, HRC's deputy director for membership outreach.

“It allows the local community to see the face of HRC,” said Butler. “It's also a lot of fun.”

And it's an opportunity to be creative. Last year, a supporter in San Francisco made a 50-foot flag with the blue-and-yellow HRC Equality logo for the HRC contingent to carry in the city's pride parade. A million people cheered them on as they marched down Market Street.

Black pride events have more than doubled in number over the past few years. This year, HRC will participate in and sponsor more than 14 black pride celebrations — and two Latino/a pride events.

Every year, HRC participates in more than 75 pride celebrations. Approximately 2,000 HRC members and supporters volunteered to march and help staff HRC booths in 2002.

For more information or to volunteer, contact HRC Membership Organizer David Adrine at david.adrine@hrc.org, call 800/727-4723 or log onto www.hrc.org.

Test Your Pride IQ

Pride celebrations have long been an important part of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community's culture and history. Here's your chance to show your stuff! The first 50 members who e-mail, fax or write in the correct answers will win an HRC Equality cap.*

1. The modern GLBT civil rights movement was launched by a rebellion at the Stonewall Inn in New York City. What month and year did that occur?

2. Name the first West Coast city to commemorate the Stonewall uprising with a gay pride march.

3. What rip-roarin' contingent often leads pride parades?

4. Where was the first official Dyke March held?

5. Whose participation in pride-related activities came under discussion during Senate hearings about his confirmation as U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg?

6. What city hosted the Iowa State Republican Party convention and the city's first annual gay pride celebration on the same day a few blocks apart?

7. For many years, Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., proudly led the HRC contingent in what city's annual pride parade?

8. What is the 2003 international pride theme?

9. Identify the religious political extremist who predicted that Orlando, Fla., would suffer “terrorist bombs ... earthquakes, tornadoes and possibly a meteor” for flying gay pride flags along its streets?

10. Complete this popular pride parade ditty: “We're —— , we're —— , get used to it.”

*Send answers to Frank Butler at: (e-mail) frank.butler@hrc.org, (fax) 202/234-5323 or (mail) HRC, 919 18th St., N.W., Ste. 800, Washington, D.C. 20006.
On a tree-lined corner a few blocks from the White House, a new building is emerging amid the clang of metal and swirling dust of construction.

The building is one that many never imagined possible — a permanent home in the nation’s capital dedicated to securing full equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans. Its message to the thousands of people who will pass by it every day: “Power, permanence and presence for the Human Rights Campaign and the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community — that’s what our new building is all about,” says Elizabeth Birch, HRC’s executive director.
So far, Birch and members of HRC’s capital campaign team have found that lots of people from across the country understand the significance of the effort. More than 600 donors have already stepped forward — pledging more than $20 million. Another $5 million, however, still must be raised to complete the project.

A Force to Be Reckoned With

In the fall, HRC will dedicate the newly renovated, eight-story headquarters, steps away from three major Washington avenues, near Embassy Row and buildings housing leading think tanks, labor unions, associations and civil rights groups.

“It’s a great location — with great visibility. We believe it’s going to remind everyone we are a force to be reckoned with,” said Gwen Baba, co-chair of HRC’s board of directors.

Indeed, the new 60,000-square-foot building will provide much more than office space. “It’s going to be a place to work, to meet and to dream,” said Birch. “We’re creating a kind of toolbox for the GLBT movement.”

It will include a visitors lounge and public gathering space, an area for public education, news conferences and large galleries with rotating and permanent exhibits; computer access to HRC’s Action Center; and conference and training facilities, said Jeff Sachse, president of the capital campaign. It will also feature state-of-the-art video production facilities, available for use by allied organizations.

HRC has kept the main structure of the building, opened in 1956 and formerly occupied by B’nai Brith, a Jewish civil rights and community service organization. HRC is updating all the interior systems, installing new lighting, thermal windows, new air conditioning and cutting edge fire prevention and security systems.

HRC’s new home also will have a “green roof” — one of the first in downtown Washington — that will feature soil and plantings to reduce rainwater runoff, thus limiting the flow of pollutants into the city’s water system. The green roof will also provide greater insulation, reducing heating and cooling costs.

The workspace is also innovative, said Christopher Speron, capital campaign director. “One of our overall concepts was to make the space ‘open and honest’ — to leave a lot of open space for a team-based environment, and not trap employees and their creative energy in a warren of small offices.” There will be small and large meeting spaces on each floor, glass-fronted offices, floor-to-ceiling windows and open workstations. In addition, there will be a limited number of private offices, each the same size.

“What has been so exciting has been to see these design plans take shape every day,” Sachse said.

The Final Stretch

Meanwhile, the goal is to raise the final $5 million before the building’s dedication in the fall — not an easy task, Speron said. “Like others who have bought their own headquarters, we are finding that the final months of raising money are the most critical.” Volunteers and members of the capital campaign team continue to travel extensively across the country and reach
out to members. The team is also working to lease the space on the top three floors — approximately 21,000 square feet.

One person who has been a major driving force is Birch, said Tim Boggs, co-chair of HRC’s board of directors. “Elizabeth has had an incredible vision for this building — that it would be something more than just utilitarian, that it would be a great work environment for employees and a space to welcome the GLBT community and supporters,” he said. Further, Birch has spoken at building fund raisers in several U.S. cities over the last few months and will continue to through the fall.

People donate for a variety of reasons, said Speron. Many understand the practical business reasons to buy a headquarters building — especially in the face of Washington’s skyrocketing rents. The annual benefits of HRC’s owning its own building will jump dramatically, allowing more dollars to go directly to programs rather than to rent. In years 10, 15 and 20 of ownership, projected occupancy costs are estimated at approximately $1.3 million, $1.5 million and $1.7 million, respectively. If HRC were to lease in those same years a comparable space, the annual occupancy costs would be $3.2 million, $3.9 million and $4.6 million.

Many want to contribute because they understand how critical it is for the GLBT movement to have visibility in Washington, Boggs noted. Several say they want a big, bold presence for youth across America to see or hear about — as they try to understand their own sexuality and gender identity. Finally, others give as a way to pay tribute to a family member — a parent, a child, an uncle, he said. “They want to leave a legacy — in a special way.”

To pay tribute, a commemorative Equality logo plaque will be prominently displayed on the first floor of the building, listing $100 donors in the blue area, $500 donors in the yellow area and $1,000-$4,999 donors framing them. Additional recognition opportunities are available for gifts of $5,000 and above, and are payable over five years.

To make a tax-deductible gift — over and above your annual support — log onto the HRC website. For more information on gifts above $5,000, contact Christopher Speron at 202/216-1548 or chris.speron@hrc.org.
As the gavel came down Jan. 7 to start the 108th Congress, Republicans controlled the Senate, the House of Representatives and the White House. It marked the first time in 50 years — except for a few months in 2000 — that the GOP held such an array of power in the nation’s capital.

What the GOP sweep will mean to the fight for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality in the months ahead is unclear. Republican Bill Frist, a Tennessee senator in his second term, unexpectedly took over as Senate majority leader in January after Trent Lott of Mississippi — who once likened gays to alcoholics and kleptomaniacs — left the post after making racially insensitive remarks at the 100th birthday party for retiring Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., Meanwhile, one of the most anti-GLBT senators in history, Jesse Helms, R-N.C., has also retired.

It’s tough to predict what the new Congress will be able to get done as huge challenges — including situations in Iraq and North Korea, domestic security, and economic uncertainty — demand their attention. Also looming over Washington is the presidential election, less than two years away.

But one thing is certain, says Winnie Stachelberg, political director of the Human Rights Campaign. “We’re going to keep working with our allies in both parties to build majorities of support for advances for our community. And we will be there if any anti-GLBT attacks arise.”

It’s hard to tell if Frist will follow Lott’s footsteps and stymie efforts on Capitol Hill to advance GLBT equality — or choose to follow a different direction. While both senators earned zeroes on HRC’s legislative scorecard for the 107th Congress, Frist has not been a vocal opponent on GLBT-related issues. The only physician in the Senate, Frist co-sponsored and helped broker the reauthorization of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act in the 106th Congress — legislation that has been critical to the care and treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS. He has also worked on legislation aimed at combating HIV/AIDS internationally.

In the House, the good news for GLBT Americans is that House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas — who once called openly gay Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., “Barney Fag” — has retired. Unfortunately, his replacement is fellow Texas Republican Tom DeLay, another outspoken opponent of equality. Meanwhile, House Democrats took the historic step of electing the first woman as party leader — Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., a strong HRC ally.

A Steady Drumbeat

The HRC political team has been laying the groundwork for legislative advances on traditional civil rights issues, including hate crimes and employment discrimination, Stachelberg said. On the heels of its release last year of its landmark transgender poll,
HRC will also expand its efforts to educate on transgender issues and press for legislation that would specifically protect all members of the GLBT community, she noted. HRC is hopeful that inroads can be made on hate crimes, particularly as the Republican Party struggles to recover from Lott's remarks in December and the ensuing public debate about the GOP's commitment to full civil rights. “In the short run, comprehensive hate crimes legislation that would expand jurisdiction to race-based hate crimes may move ahead — especially in the Senate where individual members can more easily force a vote on a piece of legislation,” said Barbara Menard, HRC’s deputy director for legislation.

HRC lobbyists also will push to build support for other key bills, including the Permanent Partners Immigration Act, a measure that would allow U.S. citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their same-sex partners for immigration. Another bill, the Early Treatment for HIV Act, would expand Medicaid to cover life-saving drugs to treat HIV/AIDS. Menard predicted that the two bills will draw more co-sponsors as HRC begins to highlight lawmakers’ stances on these issues by tallying their support or opposition in its congressional scorecard.

‘Kitchen Table’ Issues

In 2003, Congress is likely to intensify its focus on tax and finance issues, especially as growing numbers of Americans voice their concern about the country’s economic problems. “They’re hot, front-burner issues for Capitol Hill, the White House and HRC,” Menard said.

GLBT Americans, in particular, are hit hard because they are taxed more and protected less than their heterosexual counterparts with regard to health insurance, retirement and other areas. (See “Cost of Being Gay,” p. 13.) HRC has been working to educate lawmakers and the American public about the need to remedy federal laws that cover such everyday, “kitchen table” issues even before they came under greater scrutiny in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks.

“When you explain it simply, people get it, including members of Congress,” said Menard, citing the Mychal Judge Act as an example.

In the summer of 2002, Congress approved that measure to provide a federal payment to the beneficiaries of public safety officers killed in the line of duty (including those who died in the Sept. 11 attacks) without a surviving legally recognized spouse, son or daughter. The bill cleared Congress quickly and was signed into law by President George W. Bush.

In the coming months, HRC will support various proposals that seek to provide equitable protections to domestic partners — including provisions on pension reform, hospital visitation, tax treatment of health benefits and health insurance coverage under COBRA, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986.

On the Bench

One battle already erupting in Washington in 2003 is over Bush's federal judicial nominees, who must win approval from the full Senate. Leaders of the anti-GLBT Christian Coalition have announced that the confirmation of “conservative judges” will top their agenda this year. Bush has already renominated several judges with anti-GLBT records to the federal circuit, including Charles W. Pickering Sr., Jay Bybee and Timothy Tymkovich.

In the previous Congress, the Senate Judiciary Committee — under Democratic leadership — was able to defeat Pickering. Moreover, a battle may emerge if an opening arises on the U.S. Supreme Court. “If that’s the case, buckle your seat belts,” Stachelberg said.

St. Pierre is an HRC senior policy advocate.
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Any people think that Social Security is only a retirement program. But it also functions like survivor’s insurance. When someone who has worked and paid into Social Security dies, certain family members are eligible for survivor benefits that are often worth more than the deceased person’s life insurance.

The following family members are eligible for Social Security survivor benefits: surviving spouses over a certain age,2 surviving spouses of any age who are caring for their deceased spouse’s child under 16, and unmarried children up to 18 years of age.3 But the definitions of qualifying family members deprive same-sex families and their children of crucial benefits provided to other families, even though these families are required to contribute just as much to Social Security.

A child is not eligible for surviving child benefits if the parent who dies is not her biological parent or has not adopted her (often because the state would not allow a second-parent adoption).

A domestic partner caring for a child — even if the child is her partner’s biological or adopted child — is not eligible for surviving parent benefits because the partner does not meet the federal definition of “spouse” or the Social Security definition of “widow.”

“The program needs to treat all families equally,” said Winnie Stachelberg, political director of the Human Rights Campaign.

To remedy this arbitrary and unfair treatment of same-sex couples and their children, HRC is strongly encouraging the Bush administration to (1) require that any Social Security reform efforts ensure that these critical survivor benefits are available to all Americans in committed, long-term relationships; and (2) ensure that federal law ceases to penalize children for their parents’ marital status, especially when their parents are prohibited from marrying.

HRC is working to educate voters and legislators alike about the inequities in federal law, and promoting numerous federal legislative proposals that would reduce — and eventually eliminate — the high cost of being gay.

Schwartz is an HRC senior counsel.

1 These figures are for illustrative purposes only, and reflect a contributor with a 10-year work history who earned $50,000 in the final year of her life.
2 Because they cannot marry, same-sex domestic partners are not entitled to surviving spouse benefits. The cost of this inequity is not addressed here.
3 Or 19 years of age, if they are attending elementary or secondary school full-time.

Know Your Benefits
The Social Security Administration sends each contributor an annual statement of estimated benefits. Regardless of your marital or parental status, the statement will include estimated surviving child and surviving parent benefits. You can request a new estimate through the Social Security Administration website, www.ssa.gov.
Late last fall, Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., turned back a strong challenge by a Republican opponent in a closely watched runoff, marking a stunning triumph for the Democratic Party. Landrieu, who in 1996 was the first woman elected to represent Louisiana in the Senate, has been a strong ally of the Human Rights Campaign — earning 100 percent in the last Congress. The 47-year-old senator, a former state treasurer and legislator, is the eldest of nine children and the daughter of former New Orleans Mayor Moon Landrieu. She recently spoke with Winnie Stachelberg, HRC’s political director, in her Capitol Hill offices, about her victory, gay supporters and the need for the president to “set the tone” in the years ahead.

Stachelberg: You have an incredibly strong record on gay and lesbian issues. Where did that come from?

Landrieu: Well, I guess it started many years ago, coming out of the family that I had the great privilege to be raised in — just a mother and a father committed to equality and justice and non-discrimination. My father, early in his career, led the fight to dismantle the Jim Crow laws on the books in Louisiana. He was elected when I was 5 years old, and so literally my first memories are of belonging to a family that just put human rights and civil rights at a very high priority.

Stachelberg: You’ve supported some tough votes over the last several years, and have spoken out against some anti-gay attacks. What lesson can we — and some of your Senate colleagues — learn from the votes that you have taken?

Landrieu: I would start by saying that I am privileged to represent the wonderful state of Louisiana. … not that these issues are not controversial in my state or in that region of the country. Louisiana is … tolerant of diversity, and perhaps it is because of our very unique history of more Spanish and more French influence in terms of our law. And so I recognize the extra latitude that I have. … But I would even say for senators who don’t represent constituencies that have this characteristic, that it is always best to just try to do the right thing and … to hold to the principles, the moral principles, even if it is unpopular with general constituents.

Stachelberg: There is a tremendous organization in your state, the Louisiana Lesbian and Gay Political Action Caucus. What is your impression of their efforts?

Landrieu: They have been very effective and they have built a great coalition, not only [among] gay and lesbian individuals themselves but their families, their friends, supervisors, employers, employees [helping people recognize] it is just a very valuable community … in terms of the contributions that gays and lesbians make business-wise, in culture, arts. … [The coalition] has presented this
to the Legislature in a way that has frankly been able to attract a lot of Republican support and Democratic support.

**Stachelberg:** Clearly, election year 2002 ended up being a bleak one for Democrats. Your Senate victory was a bright spot — despite some very tough odds and in the face of a tide that some thought was turning exclusively toward the Republicans. To what do you attribute your win?

**Landrieu:** A couple of things. One was our focus on putting Louisiana first and explaining to the voters in the state that while you could be supportive of the president, the most important thing was to have a senator that you could trust to deliver for the state. ... If [the president] is not supporting ideas, plans or policies that promote the welfare and well-being of the people of my state then obviously I am not going to support him. ... That was the overall theme, and then underneath that we put a very sophisticated political outreach which included the base, the Democratic base, which in our state is the unions, working people, African Americans, small business owners, pro-choice community, generally, the gay and lesbian community. Not that that community doesn't support Republican candidates, but in this case, the Republican candidate that I ran against [Suzanne Terrell] absolutely reversed her position on hate crimes legislation, on ENDA. I am disappointed in the Senate, and the Republican leadership that is holding it up. ... I think this president has an obligation if he wants to set a new tone and wants to show compassionate conservatism. This could be where he could step out. He just has not done that and it is disappointing.

**Stachelberg:** The Human Rights Campaign sent staff to be on the ground for the first race in November and again in December. What was your impression of HRC?

**Landrieu:** Very professional, extremely helpful. My margin of victory was 40,000 so you could imagine by estimating what the gay and lesbian community is in Louisiana and their direct impact on friends, co-workers, business people, etc. It had a tremendous positive impact in delivering votes to the bottom line — which delivered the victory.

**Stachelberg:** On Capitol Hill, I think we've made great progress. We've had some successful votes on the hate crimes measure. Congressional support has grown against job discrimination, and recently, President Bush — in his State of the Union address — talked about the AIDS epidemic. But our community is still far from achieving our equality both in Congress and in state legislatures. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about progress in the next few years in Congress for our community?

**Landrieu:** I feel like we have taken a few steps forward and then a few steps back. ... But I would hope in this day and age that we would see more immediate progress, particularly on hate crimes legislation, on ENDA. ... I am disappointed in the Senate, and the Republican leadership that is holding it up. ... I think this president has an obligation if he wants to set a new tone and wants to show compassionate conservatism. This could be where he could step out. He just has not done that and it is disappointing.

**Stachelberg:** Yes, and it certainly has disappointed us. Of course, there is a whole range of issues that many in our community have faced for a long time, such as ensuring that we can take care of our children and families through pensions, Social Security survivor benefits and adequate adoption protection. What is your understanding and support for gay and lesbian relationships?

**Landrieu:** I most certainly support the law and individual states' laws, and encourage them to allow for civil unions and to allow for a broad range of benefits, whether it is medical or insurance benefits. Now I wouldn't cross the line in terms of advocating for legalization of marriage. ... In terms of adoption and child rearing, there are so many children in this world who need a place, a home and a loving environment that we should be proud of adults who step forward, who are employed and responsible, to raise these children with a good upbringing. ☑
Born in a military hospital in 1943 to a World War II serviceman and his wife, John Kerry has had a lifelong affiliation with the U.S. military. As a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, Kerry made a distinctive stand in support of gays in the military during early '90s hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

“I think that any American ought to be able to serve their country if they are physically qualified and able,” said the Massachusetts senator in a recent interview with HRC Quarterly. “There were gay people who served in Vietnam. There were gay people who served in World War II, Korea and World War I — and great acts of heroism have been performed by people who are gay.”

Kerry is among the early front-runners in the bid for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination. A Yale graduate, Kerry was elected lieutenant governor of Massachusetts in 1982. He was elected to the Senate in 1984, and has consistently supported, sometimes at great political peril, civil rights for the gay community.

In addition to his support for gays in the military, he was one of only 14 senators to vote against DOMA. Today, Kerry supports the idea that gay and lesbian relationships should enjoy rights and privileges equivalent to those of marriage. “I’m for civil union and partnership — and I would make sure that every federal entity works to make those provisions available,” he said.

Kerry says his record over the years on a range of issues sets him apart from other candidates. In 1985, he authored the Senate version of the gay civil rights bill — a measure that, if passed, would have covered discrimination in employment, housing and credit. His average score on the Human Rights Campaign’s congressional scorecard, begun in the 101st Congress, is 96 percent — with a perfect score for the last four congresses.

But Kerry has opposed HRC on three measures — an amendment that sought to restrict schools from using materials that “promote homosexuality;” an amendment that sought to levy a $10,000 fine and lengthy prison term on health care providers who know they have HIV and perform medical procedures without telling patients; and an amendment barring the permanent immigration of people who test positive for HIV/AIDS.

Meanwhile, Kerry has strong words about the current administration’s policies on HIV/AIDS, which favor abstinence-only programs over scientifically based prevention programs. “It’s embarrassing for the United States to have this kind of zealotry getting in the way of common sense. ... [As president] I’m going to reverse as many of those particular directives as possible, and I’m going to set us on a path of common sense and decency.”

“I think that tolerance is what this country is built on,” said Kerry. “That’s what America is about. That’s our journey.”

Shields is HRC’s associate director of communications.
Lisa Bennett clearly recalls the day in early February 2002 when the fax arrived from the American Academy of Pediatrics, saying the national organization was going to issue a public statement calling for equal protections for gay and lesbian parents and their children.

“We were absolutely thrilled — and surprised,” said Bennett, deputy director for the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s FamilyNet project. “Children’s doctors nationwide were standing up for gay and lesbian parenting with little direct pressure from our community.” After its Feb. 4 announcement, the Chicago-based group faced the inevitable backlash — ugly, personal attacks on some doctors, canceled memberships and a stream of angry faxes orchestrated by anti-gay opponents.

But it refused to budge.

In May, the American Psychoanalytic Association issued a similar statement of support for gay and lesbian parenting, followed by the American Academy of Family Physicians in October. A month later, the American Law Institute, a group composed of some of the most prominent lawyers and judges in the country, released a set of recommendations calling for greater equity for gay and lesbian couples and parents.

Never before had so many important professional organizations stood up in support of gay and lesbian families in a single year as they did in 2002, said Bennett.

So what comes next?

In 2003, HRC’s FamilyNet project will work to ride this unprecedented wave of support by educating more mainstream professional organizations about the challenges that face all families.

Under a first-time grant from the San Francisco-based Haas Fund, HRC will pursue a three-step strategy to increase public and professional support for gay and lesbian families. First, HRC will seek to interview key staff members at the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychoanalytic Association and the American Academy of Family Physicians to determine what inspired their statements, what hurdles they faced and how they overcame both internal and external opposition.

Second, HRC will develop a best-practices strategy paper that outlines the most successful tactics for advocating for equality within such groups. Third, HRC will approach other organizations with this roadmap in hand, and encourage them to take a similar stand.

“One powerful tool are first-hand accounts from our families about second-parent adoption,” said Bennett. Such adoptions allow the partner of an adoptive or biological parent to become a legal parent. HRC will continue to collect such testimonials through FamilyNet’s “Share Your Story” pages on HRC’s website.

As of this writing, only eight states and the District of Columbia have made second-parent adoption available statewide while 19 states have awarded second-parent adoptions in certain counties.

For more information, visit www.hrc.org/familynet, the most comprehensive, up-to-date resource on GLBT families.
Human Rights Campaign field organizers are stepping up their efforts to give intensive, hands-on help to statewide gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender advocacy groups in their work with state legislatures.

Last year, HRC’s field organizers criss-crossed the country to help statewide groups train volunteers and develop strategies. This year, HRC will build on the state-level partnerships developed under its Equality Fund grants program, especially as a large number of battles for GLBT equality loom.

Fighting for gains at the state level is crucial to the GLBT movement, said Seth Kilbourn, HRC’s national field director. “When there is a victory in any one state, there are reverberations in other states and in Congress because lawmakers at all levels pay attention to what state legislatures do. The more states there are with fair laws, the closer GLBT Americans are to full equality. A truly national GLBT movement must recognize that reality.”

And a lot can happen in statehouses. In general, bills move much more rapidly at the state level than they do on Capitol Hill, he noted. They often cover a much larger scope of rights and protections than do similar bills in Congress.

In 2002, HRC Senior Field Organizer Michael Crawford visited Pennsylvania twice to help lead lobby trainings for volunteers who, in turn, met with their legislators to push for a hate crimes bill that sought to expand the state’s ethnic intimidation law to cover sexual orientation, gender identity and other categories. The bill — stalled in a House committee despite Senate passage 17 months earlier — eventually passed, thanks in large part to constituent pressure.

“The passage of the hate crimes bill, and its inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity, was a huge success for the coalition of groups that came together to make it happen. HRC was a valuable ally in this fight,” said Stacey Sobel, executive director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, based in Philadelphia. Along with providing a total of $10,000 in Equality Fund grants, HRC sent e-mail messages through its online Action Center and worked with the Philadelphia HRC steering committee to help motivate members to contact their legislators. HRC made a difference in Alabama, too. It sent a field organizer to Montgomery to join Ken Baker, co-chair of
Equality Alabama, in a meeting with the lead sponsor of a hate crimes bill. “Our partnership with the Human Rights Campaign on our proposed state hate crimes bill enabled us to really step up our lobbying efforts,” said Baker. “With HRC’s assistance, we were able to identify key targets and get crucial feedback from the lieutenant governor on the bill’s chances. Although we didn’t pass it in 2002, we were also able to help design a proactive strategy for 2003.”

HRC’s work on the ground has increased over the years alongside the growth of the Equality Fund program. During 2000, the grant program’s first year, HRC provided $114,115 to 27 state groups. A year later, that number increased to $122,000 to 28 groups. This year, HRC will provide $151,000 to 40 groups for their work.

HRC is hoping that GLBT groups will be able to use recent grants to fight for — and against — some key pieces of legislation.

In California, HRC provided the statewide group, the California Alliance for Pride and Equality, with a grant to build a database of names of GLBT and GLBT-supportive voters. The aim is to tap these people to build support for domestic partnership bills that have been filed in the Legislature. Last year, California enacted several groundbreaking domestic partnership laws, and is set to continue in 2003. One such bill, A.B. 17, seeks to require state contractors to offer the same benefits to their employees’ domestic partners as they offer to their employees’ legal spouses.

“We’re very grateful to HRC for its continued support of our legislative efforts in California,” said CAPE’s Geoff Kors. “The Equality Fund grant will help us build our database of voters who support equality and, as a result, enhance our lobbying efforts.” CAPE is working with HRC to gain support from the business community for the equal benefits legislation, and is looking to continue that work in the future, he noted.

Unity Utah is using an Equality Fund grant to fight an anti-gay marriage measure and support a hate crimes bill, according to Michael Mitchell, executive director of the Salt Lake City-based group. “We’ve used the money to conduct town hall meetings around the state and conduct a survey on what the GLBT community and our allies would like to see us be doing on the legislative front,” Mitchell said.

Also in 2003, a large number of family-related bills may come up for consideration in statehouses. Bills addressing marriage, civil unions and domestic partnership may arise in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Wisconsin. Texas will face an anti-gay defense of marriage bill and an anti-gay foster care bill. Ohio may face a bill to prohibit the state from recognizing any GLBT relationships. Meanwhile, various fights loom in Iowa: A civil rights bill is up for consideration as is legislation barring gay adoption and foster care. In Minnesota, anti-gay lawmakers are trying to repeal an existing civil rights law and have filed a bill that would remove all references to “sexual orientation” — and thus “gender identity” which is covered in the state’s law — from state law. The bill also would cancel employment non-discrimination, hate crimes, safe schools and other protections.

“We’re ready to work closely with our friends at the state level in the year ahead,” said Kilbourn. “Every win counts for each one of us.”

Green is an HRC senior field organizer.

“**The more states there are with fair laws, the closer GLBT Americans are to full equality,**” says HRC’s Kilbourn.
In one area, however, historically black colleges and universities have failed to take the lead — and that is in addressing gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues. Over the last year and a half, the Human Rights Campaign has begun to reach out to HBCUs to try to change that.

Last November, HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch urged Walter E. Massey, the president of Morehouse College of Atlanta, to address such issues after a student assaulted a dorm mate with a bat because he thought he was gay. Within 24 hours, Massey responded, assuring Birch that officials would investigate. The school took strong action against the assailant. And in late January, a Morehouse student involved in discussions with school administrators contacted HRC to help organize a campus forum about the effects of homophobia.

Members of HRC’s staff also have begun to establish a network of informal contacts across the historically black college and university student community — through discussions on the Internet and at black pride festivals, said Donna Payne, HRC’s constituent field organizer. This year, HRC is looking to co-sponsor a student forum in New Orleans. In April 2002, HRC sponsored a forum at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C., and co-sponsored another last fall in Atlanta for students of several area HBCUs. Hate crimes, HIV/AIDS, harassment and coming out came under discussion.

Many people are afraid to speak up about GLBT matters on historically black campuses, Payne said. One reason is because many of the schools retain close links to the churches that helped establish them. Most leaders of these churches, which remain the bedrock of many black communities and family life, say little about GLBT issues. Those that do almost invariably preach that homosexuality is immoral.

Another problem on campus is that a number of students do not come out because of fear of rejection. “One of the biggest challenges we’re facing today is that there is very little understanding or awareness at all levels of HBCUs about dealing with gay issues,” said Brandon Braud, an HRC staffer who moderated the Charlotte and Atlanta forums.

So silence reigns on most HBCU campuses. Few efforts have been made to establish GLBT student groups at these schools — and when they do, recognition and financial support are slow in coming.

Third-year student Jonathan Perry, who spearheaded the forum last year at Smith, one of the oldest historically black colleges in the country, says it took more than six months to secure approval for a GLBT student group he formed last year. Administrators, teachers — even alumni — voiced opposition, he said.

But Perry believes the school is starting to listen. Diversity trainings are in the works. Administrators seem more open.

“We’re quite hopeful but proceeding carefully and with sensitivity,” said Payne.

Meanwhile, HRC continues to try to build relationships — sponsoring forums and keeping in touch with students and local community groups to provide resources and monitor developments.

“Discussions are beginning to open up,” Payne said.

Visit www.hrc.org/diversity — HRC’s new online project, Celebrate Diversity.
Knock, Knock, Knockin’ on Every Door

Young Activists Canvass for Equality

By Frank Butler

At first, knocking on the doors of strangers and starting conversations about the fight for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality was hard work, Janine Benner says. But it got easier. And it felt good to work for an important cause, she says.

Benner, 24, is one of thousands of young activists who have done door-to-door campaigning under the tutelage of the Fund for Public Interest Research for the Human Rights Campaign and other socially progressive groups. Benner, like most of her colleagues, says the experience was one of the best ever.

“It was invaluable,” says Benner, who campaigned in the Los Angeles area. “Canvassing is really training in how to communicate. It taught me how to talk about the issues — when to push something, and when to back off and move on.”

Most people welcomed her at their doorstep to talk about HRC, she noted. “Even if they disagreed with my cause, they still appreciated that I was a young person who was working hard on something I believed in.”

Benner and others have helped HRC spread its message, and have prompted many Americans to contact their members of Congress about key legislation, says Seth Kilbourn, HRC’s national field director. The Boston-based fund helps HRC build its membership and raise money. In turn, the fund hires the staff to do outreach and canvass.

Year after year, the youth do amazing work, said Kilbourn. They signed up thousands of new HRC members last year and were active in 40-plus communities in all parts of the United States.

And the youth bring in all kinds of new supporters — including a large number of straight allies.

Often, the students find their fund work influences their career path.

“I went into college knowing exactly what I wanted to be when I grew up — a chief executive officer of a Fortune 500 company. But my experience working on an HRC campaign changed me — it made me realize what a difference just a few people can make,” says Jenny Lee, a recent University of Miami graduate who canvasses for the fund in Boston.

“Being surrounded by people who care about the same issues has been an incredible experience,” Lee said. “It constantly confirms my decision to forgo the corporate road.”


“I took away so many great skills from my work,” agrees Kilbourn, who began his career as a fund canvass director. “Most of all, you learn the basic truth that one person can make an immense impact on crucial issues — and that that person can be you.”

Butler is HRC’s deputy director of membership outreach.

The Fund for Public Interest Research trains activists for various progressive groups and causes. For more information, visit www.ffpir.org. For information about the fund’s work with HRC, e-mail frank.butler@hrc.org.
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HRC’s Merchandise Program Promotes Visibility, Pride

Just before the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights, Cathy Nelson had a brainstorm. Nelson, then membership director for the Human Rights Campaign Fund, thought the march would be an unmatched opportunity to ask people to join HRC(F). The organization found a storefront in Washington's largely gay Dupont Circle neighborhood, where people could also send messages to Congress and buy hats and T-shirts. "That store was wall-to-wall people," recalled Nelson, HRC's development director. "Lines were down the block from morning until midnight. It was wild."

Almost a decade later, the merchandise program of the Human Rights Campaign is a full-time professional operation with two brick-and-mortar stores, a slick annual catalog featuring several lines of quality clothing and accessories, an online store — and the admiration and envy of non-profits everywhere.

"Our merchandise program is one of the quiet success stories within HRC," says HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch. "It has broadened our reach into the GLBT community, extended HRC's visibility and provided a point of entry for tens of thousands of new members."

One reason for the phenomenal growth of the program is Don Kiser, HRC's director of retail development. Kiser came to HRC in 1994 after a successful career at Door Store Furniture, where he was vice president of merchandising. Kiser remembers the early days of HRC's program, "when all the phone orders came directly to my desk, and all the merchandise was in boxes in the conference room. I'd work all week taking orders and all weekend packing things up for shipping."

At first, the products consisted of one line of T-shirts and sweatshirts that said: "humanrightscampaignfund: it's that basic." In 1995, HRC dropped the word "Fund" and adopted the blue-and-yellow Equality logo. "It was the most brilliant thing that could have happened for the merchandise program," Kiser says. "We now had a symbol of equality that people would be proud to wear and display."

Another breakthrough came later that year when a handful of staffers were sitting around talking about creating bumper stickers with the new logo. Kiser remembers arguing over whether to use only the logotype or to include the organization name, and whether to make permanent bumper stickers or easily removable "static cling" stickers for windows. "It came down to cost," he says. "Without words and without static cling, we would be able to afford to give them away — and that's what we did."

Today, HRC gives away about 1.5 million bumper stickers each year. Its clothing is distributed by Image First of Wilmington, Del., a huge apparel company that handles all the online and catalog orders for HRC's signature merchandise. In addition to Kiser, the program employs two other full-time staff at HRC's headquarters, two full-time staff in the store in Washington, D.C., one full-time seasonal staffer in the Provincetown, Mass., store and part-time salespeople in both stores. A key responsibility of the employees is to reach out to all visitors, informing them about HRC and its message of equality.

The D.C. store has been open for almost three years now, and is well on the way to breaking even — which usually doesn't occur until the fifth year of a retail operation, says Kiser.

In 2002, some 34,000 people visited the D.C. store, and 41,000 dropped into the one in Provincetown. They purchased more than 50,000 articles of HRC-branded merchandise. "Our program is about visibility, about connecting with people we've never reached before," Kiser says. "We think we're achieving that goal."
Several Countries Far Ahead on Marriage Equality

By Liz Seaton

Despite some bold efforts in a few states, the United States is lagging behind several other countries in advancing marriage equality. The Human Rights Campaign and other national human rights groups, however, keep an eye on developments around the world — to prepare for progress in this country.

“It makes sense to examine how some other countries are handling marriage rights for same-sex couples,” says Seth Kilbourn, the Human Rights Campaign’s national field director. “There are lessons to be learned, and it brings our work into perspective, too.”

Here is a glance at progress abroad:

**Belgian Breakthrough**

On Jan. 31, Belgium became the second country in the world to legalize same-sex marriages. Last fall, a parliamentary committee voted 11-4 for national legislation providing for same-sex marriage, paving the way for both chambers of the Parliament to approve the legislation in early 2003. The measure affords all the benefits of opposite-sex marriage, except adoption rights.

**The Netherlands’ Lead**

Two years ago, the Netherlands became the first country in the world to allow same-sex marriages. Last fall, a parliamentary committee voted 11-4 for national legislation providing for same-sex marriage, paving the way for both chambers of the Parliament to approve the legislation in early 2003. The measure affords all the benefits of opposite-sex marriage, except adoption rights.

**The Netherlands’ Lead**

Two years ago, the Netherlands became the first country in the world to allow same-sex couples to marry. Their children also receive full protection under the law. And if a lesbian couple marries in the Netherlands and one woman has a baby, both have parental authority and responsibility for the child — just like any legally married heterosexual couple. Unfortunately, the United States does not recognize same-sex marriages performed in the Netherlands or Belgium.

**In the Running: Canada**

The United States’ northern neighbor may be on the cusp of granting same-sex marriage. Last summer, courts in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec ruled that prohibiting same-sex couples from marrying was unconstitutional and violated the country’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms — a document similar to the U.S. Bill of Rights. The court gave the Canadian government two years to fix the problem, and legislation to allow same-sex marriage is expected to be introduced this year. To track developments, visit www.samesexmarriage.ca, the website of Marriage Equality, a Canadian advocacy group.

**Solid Start in Europe**

Europe appears to be moving toward marriage equality as a bloc of nations. In January, the European Parliament narrowly approved a report asking the 15 European Union countries to give live-in couples, including same-sex couples, the same legal rights that married couples enjoy. The vote, while not binding on the member states, constitutes a legal point of reference for them. France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greenland, Iceland and Finland have a type of partnership law that extends to registered partners most of those legal rights enjoyed by married couples. Portugal allows same-sex couples to enter into common-law “marriages” — similar to domestic partnership arrangements in terms of the limited rights and benefits available.

**Others Outpacing United States**

Unlike the United States, a few other countries — including Australia, Brazil, Israel and South Africa legally recognize same-sex couples for various purposes including inheritance, social security and immigration.

Seaton is an HRC senior counsel.
what is it like to be a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person outside the United States? While the situation is different for every region of the world, most face widespread discrimination, intolerance and violence. In no country are GLBT people entirely free from discrimination.

Most GLBT people continue to live in fear of violence, both at the hands of the government and their fellow citizens — often including their own family members. GLBT people undergo torture and ill treatment in 50-plus countries, according to an Amnesty International report issued in 2001.

In Egypt, police rounded up, arrested and jailed men solely on the basis of their alleged sexual orientation. While in custody, the men were suspended by their wrists and beaten with thick sticks, some of them said.

In Uganda, President Yoweri Museveni has called for the arrest of all homosexuals countrywide, and a number of people have been arrested and tortured, according to Amnesty documentation.

In Ecuador, police continue to harass and beat up GLBT people despite the country’s constitutional protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

In Saudi Arabia, courts have convicted men of homosexuality, sentencing them to be flogged and, in some cases, to be beheaded.

And in Venezuela, police in the city of Valencia have systematically abused transgender people through verbal harassment, physical assault and arbitrary detention. When activists in the country filed a complaint alleging police involvement in the murder of a transgender activist, the police responded by targeting the activists for further abuse.

Harsh Penalties
Nearly half of all countries still outlaw homosexual conduct, including the United States, where 13 states still have sodomy laws. Across the world, penalties for violation of these laws vary widely and include execution, torture, flogging, forced psychiatric treatment, lengthy jail sentences and fines. In those countries without such bans, GLBT people often are persecuted under broadly defined laws criminalizing “debauchery” or “offenses against morality or public decency.”

Lesbians and bisexual women often face a double layer of oppression because of their gender and sexual orientation. Some families force them into arranged marriages or other sexual relationships with men to “cure” them.

But there are signs of progress. Several countries have begun to recognize GLBT human rights. In 1994, post-apartheid South Africa became the first country to explicitly ban in its constitution discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, which has been interpreted to include transsexuals. Many Western European countries, unlike the United States, now recognize the right of GLBT people to be free from discrimination and to enjoy most, if not all, of the same rights as other citizens.

GLBT people are becoming more visible and organized in the developing countries in Latin American, Africa and Asia. But they have few resources and are often at the margins of their societies, vulnerable to persecution by their governments and other citizens.

What can we, as citizens of the richest country in the world, do to help? We need to work to secure our rights at home to set a positive example. We can also support groups that document and campaign against GLBT human rights abuses worldwide. And we can help emerging local GLBT rights groups and advocates in developing countries. The time is more than ripe to help our brothers and sisters move ahead.

Heflin is director of OUTfront, Amnesty International USA's program on human rights and sexual identity, working on behalf of GLBT people everywhere OUTfront has GLBT groups in 35 countries. See www.amnestyusa.org.
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The path to equality is no exception. The Human Rights Campaign — 500,000 members strong — is paving the way. We’ve made progress but much ground remains to be covered. And HRC is committed for the long haul.

Continue with us on this journey by renewing your 2003 HRC membership. Renewing your support reaffirms your commitment to achieving equal rights for all GLBT Americans. And it shows your unwillingness to settle for anything less along the way.

We’re heading in the right direction. Renew today and provide us with the strength to travel farther, faster — taking us the extra mile and bringing us that much closer, that much sooner.

Carry your 2003 HRC membership card with confidence as we journey onward. After all, it is your passport to equality.

Each year at this time, HRC works to renew — in the most cost-effective way — every single member, including you. Your decision to answer our renewal reminder is the key to winning lasting gains and equal protections for all GLBT Americans. Your voice, through the dollars you invest, has the power to ensure that one day soon, every American can be safe, at work, at home and in the community.

*If you have already renewed for 2003, please accept our sincere thanks. We’re glad you’re marching onward with us.

*If you have yet to renew, please take a moment and return the enclosed renewal form that came with HRC Quarterly, or visit www.hrc.org. We look forward to continuing the journey with you.
In working to create a fair-minded majority in Congress, the Human Rights Campaign continues to build relationships with all members, including supportive legislators who represent traditionally conservative Southern states. Eight Democrats from the region who HRC endorsed last year are expected to help in the fight for gay and lesbian equality during the 108th Congress and beyond. They are: Reps. Artur Davis, D-Ala.; Kendrick Meek, D-Fla.; Denise Majette, D-Ga.; David Scott, D-Ga.; C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, D-Md.; Christopher Van Hollen, D-Md.; Frank Ballance, D-N.C.; and Brad Miller, D-N.C.

"We thank each one of these members for stepping forward on our issues," said HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch. "We hope their stances will encourage others in their states to join us in our fight."

**prejudice** Pushing Anti-Gay Policies & Remaining Out of Step

Rep. Thomas Tancredo, R-Colo., sent a letter to President Bush in November 2002 attacking the Big Brothers-Big Sisters of America Inc. for extending its non-discrimination policy — which covers sexual orientation — to its affiliate groups last summer. The national group's policy has been in place for more than 25 years.

"Representative Tancredo and his associates are playing on longstanding prejudices in an attempt to smear gay men and lesbians who are giving of their time and talent to mentor at-risk youth," said HRC Political Director Winnie Stachelberg.

In his letter, Tancredo also attempted to link sexual orientation with pedophilia. Several major U.S. health and child welfare organizations have issued policy statements saying no correlation exists between homosexuality and child abuse. Eight of Tancredo's Republican colleagues also signed the letter. They are: Reps. John Hostettler, R-Ind.; Ernest Istook, R-Okla.; Brian Kerns, R-Ind.; Joseph Pitts, R-Pa.; Jim Ryun, R-Kan.; Bob Schaffer, R-Colo.; Chris Smith, R-N.J.; and John Sullivan, R-Okla.

Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., wants to include language in federal legislation that would allow faith-based groups receiving federal funding for community service programs to discriminate against gays and lesbians in hiring — even in cases where local and state non-discrimination laws are already in place, according to a Nov. 25 published report in The Washington Post. "I will make that stand," he told the newspaper.

"Senator Santorum is not only suggesting that the federal government help fund discrimination with tax dollars against gays and lesbians, but his support for such a provision would also override state and local non-discrimination laws across the country," said Stachelberg.

Santorum's remarks contradict those he made last year upon drafting legislation with Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn.

Within hours after the Post ran Santorum's comments, Birch urged him in a letter to clarify his views. At HRCQ press time, he had yet to respond.
Real History.

1978
Adopted non-discrimination policy based on sexual orientation

1988
Began support of GLBT community causes and nonprofits

1993
Founded GLBT employee group - LAGER

1995
First major brewery to offer same-sex Domestic Partner benefits

2001
Colorado Human Rights Campaign Award given to LAGER

2002
Letter of Support for ENDA given to Human Rights Campaign

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