

LGBTQ+ rights are human rights

Kimberly Adams, JD

All throughout the month of June, individuals, communities, and organizations across the nation are celebrating Pride. This month-long celebration highlights the unique and collective contributions LGBTQ+ people have made to our society, and Community Legal Aid proudly stands in solidarity with our staff, volunteers, board members, clients, and community members who identify as LGBTQ+.

We also recognize the many challenges that this community still faces in exercising their basic human rights, and we want to call attention to the progress we've made as a society, as well as highlight the areas where we still have work to do.

Many people equate the fight for LGBTQ+ equality to simply being able to be with who you love. While this is an important space to celebrate and honor, we and our allies are fighting with the same vigor to belong, be respected, and to be our true and authentic selves.

Underneath each of the issues we're highlighting lies a core principle: that LGBTQ+ rights are human rights. Our nation's founding value of justice for all demands that every person be granted the same protection by and access to the social and political systems that allow each of us to realize our own American dream. When one person, or one group of people, is systematically denied those opportunities, the great American experiment fails.

As legal advocates, we live each day inside the justice system. Our expertise lies in how laws create structures of opportunity or, as has too often been the case with our country's minority citizens, systems of oppression. Our lives outside the justice system also inform us about the struggles for equity and justice in the communities we live in and serve. Our own stories and life experiences inspire us to keep moving forward in our mission to break down systemic barriers and improve the lives of those who cross our paths.

In recognition this year of Pride Month, we're renewing our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community, in celebrating, standing next to, and walking alongside you in the continued fight for equal civil rights. Learn more by visiting www.communitylegalaid.org/pride.

This article is part of Legal Aid's ["Big Ideas" series](#).

Last updated on June 23, 2021.

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