

WHAT IS THE

CAMPAIGN FOR
SOUTHERN
EQUALITY

?

An innovative strategy to achieve full federal equality for LGBT Americans by engaging LGBT people in the South (and their allies from across the nation) in:

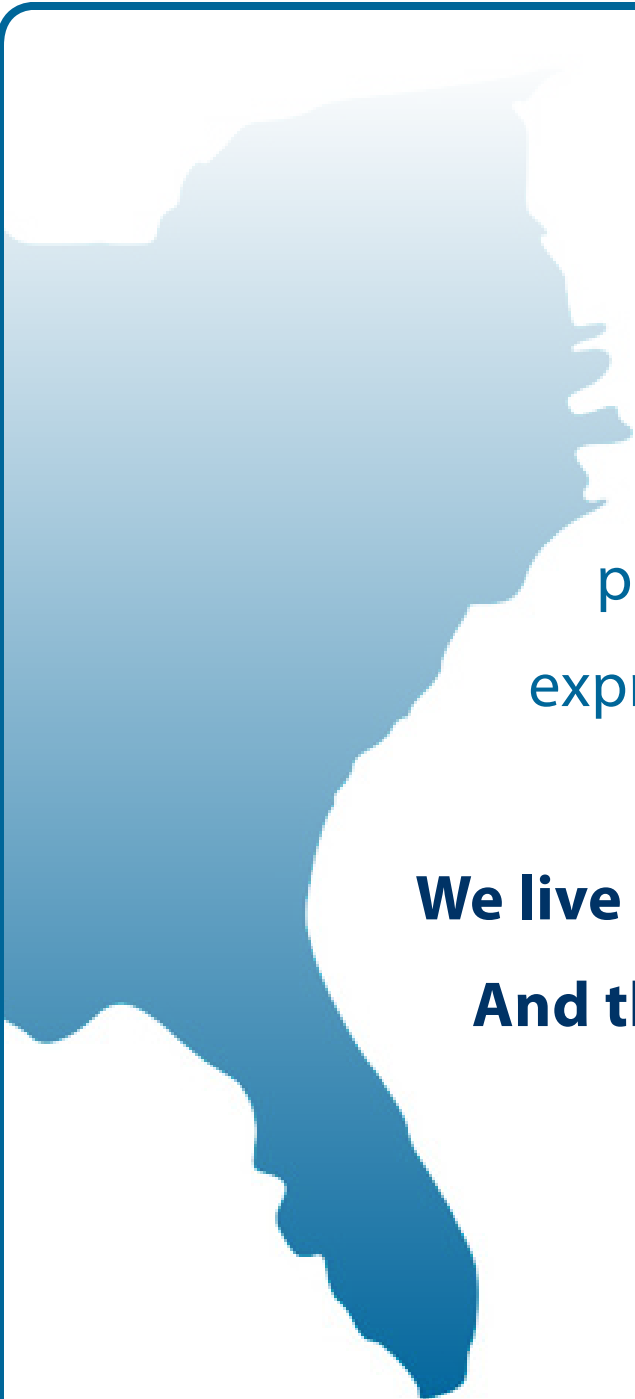
- 1> Coordinated **public actions** that directly resist discriminatory laws and policies;
- 2> Comprehensive **advocacy and crisis response services** for LGBT people as they take such actions;
- 3> Compelling **testimonies** about our LGBT lives shared with the American public.

WHY THE SOUTH?

LGBT people in the South live with the constant risk of discrimination, harassment and violence:

- > We can be fired or evicted due to sexual orientation or gender identity;
- > 9 Southern states have passed constitutional amendments banning marriage between same-sex couples, in most cases with over 75% of the popular vote;
- > Same-sex couples cannot become domestic partners in any Southern state;
- > Nor can we secure even basic relationship protections (e.g. power of attorney) unless we have the funds to hire a private attorney; and
- > Hate crimes and discrimination occur on a regular basis.





Despite the tenuous quality that underlies life in the South, large numbers of LGBT people live here. Many people are out and expressing great courage on a daily basis.

We live here because this is our home.

And that's also why we're taking action here.

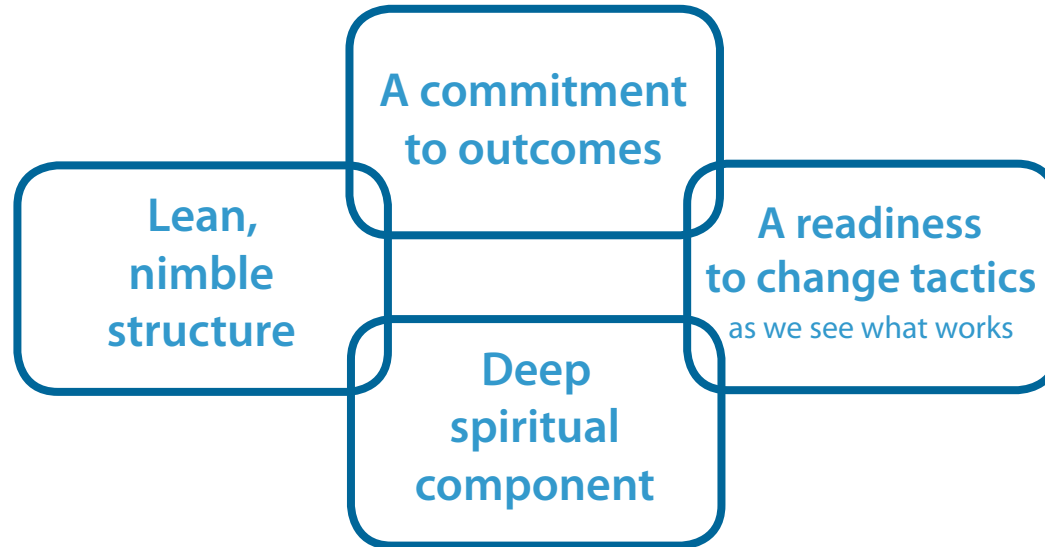
HOW IS OUR WORK DIFFERENT?

The Campaign for Southern Equality:

- > bases all our work on a simple truth – LGBT people *are* equal and our nation's laws need to reflect this;
- > focuses on achieving full rights for LGBT people by working to change the hearts and minds of people who are conflicted about or opposed to our rights; and
- > has developed a new strategy and tactics for resisting discrimination, tailored to the LGBT experience in the South.



OUR CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE



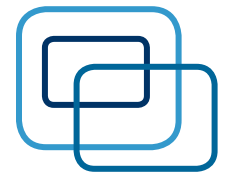
All of our work is based on **empathic resistance**, a new ethic which calls for:

- 1> Resisting persecuting systems by expressing the authentic self; and
- 2> Approaching those who oppose your rights with empathy.

An hourglass with blue sand, positioned on the left side of the slide. The top bulb is empty, and the bottom bulb is partially filled with sand.

WHY NOW?

We are getting close to reaching clear majority support for LGBT equality, but we're not there yet. Nowhere is opposition to our rights more robust than in the South. LGBT people here are thus uniquely positioned to resist this opposition and, in doing so, **to awaken the nation's conscience.**



THE NEED IS GREAT, AND THE OPPORTUNITY IS HISTORIC

Growing up gay in the South, I learned two lessons which can seem to be at odds with each other. First, as an LGBT person, you have to be careful. And second, every single person – even the most ardent opponent of equality – has the capacity to become an ally.

As an adult I've come back home to North Carolina. My marriage to Meghann is not recognized here. The NC State Supreme Court recently banned second parent adoption for same-sex couples. And the NC Legislature is currently considering a bill that would constitutionally ban any form of relationship recognition for same-sex couples.

Facts like these contribute to the commonly-held belief that the South is "unwinnable" when it comes to securing LGBT rights. And yet, instead, I feel both hopeful and resolute about what is possible here. I know we can change the country's heart and mind. And I know we can help create a national political climate in which fair-minded Americans agree that LGBT people deserve full equality under the law.

This work will not be easy, but it's necessary and we are ready.

- Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Executive Director

READY TO ACT

An incredible team of board members and volunteers is preparing for our launch in June 2011. The actions we'll be taking – like requesting marriage licenses day after day and coming out in the workplace – carry real risks. Even in this climate, though, **people are ready to act**. We need to make certain that when they do, they have the greatest degree of support possible – emotionally, spiritually, legally, and logistically.

Elizabeth Eve and her partner, **Kathryn Cartledge**, are two of the people who have stepped up to help with our launch. Kathryn is a volunteer chaplain with us and Elizabeth is helping to organize our Family Dinners in Asheville. They'll also be taking part in a coordinated campaign to request marriage licenses that will start in September. Elizabeth explains more about her involvement here.



I grew up in the Deep South during the late 50's and 60's and I smelled, tasted, felt, and saw what a lack of equal rights does to all people – those being discriminated against and those meting out the discrimination. It taints the souls of all. And it's just plain wrong for people to be denied the basic rights that most have in our country.

When Jasmine came back “home” to do this important work, I was more than ready to jump in feet first...for many reasons.

The first reason is more global – human rights for all is what our country is about.

The other reason is more personal. My partner, Kathryn, and I have been together for 30 years...we have raised two daughters and have four incredibly wonderful grandchildren. AND we are not recognized for who we are as individuals or as a family. Yes, the 1,200 rights that heterosexual couples have are important, mightily important – but more important to me is the visibility, the recognition of “us” and “me” in our day-to-day lives.

The Campaign for Southern Equality is specific in its goals, actions, and responsibilities and that's important to me. At this stage in my life – I'm 66 – I'm more than ready to do the work that is required for equal rights for GLBT folks and I feel more than confident with Jasmine and her team behind us.

We are long overdue on having equal rights and I sure do want it to happen in my lifetime. The time is now! Come join us.

- Elizabeth Eve, Asheville, NC

**“Working with the
Campaign for Southern
Equality is an honor
and a duty”**



1> BECOME AN ALLY AND HELP US LAUNCH THE CAMPAIGN!

In order to launch the Campaign for Southern Equality this year, our goal is to raise \$20,000 from individuals like you. We have already raised almost \$6,000.

This campaign begins with you. To donate (online or for information about sending a check) visit > <http://southernequality.org/donate/>.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Join me and courageous people like Elizabeth and Kathryn by taking action to achieve full rights for LGBT people.

We hope to inspire people to give at the following levels:

- > 5 people at \$1,000 each;
- > 10 people at \$500;
- > 20 people at \$100;
- > 30 people at \$50;
- > 40 people at \$25;
- > 50 people at \$10;
- > 75 people at \$5; and
- > 100 people at \$1

501(c)3 approval is pending before the IRS.
Your contribution will be tax-deductible.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



2> JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

We'll send you periodic updates about our work, including:

- > Achievements or setbacks,
- > Testimonies from members, and
- > Opportunities to get involved.

Sign up at our homepage >
<http://southernequality.org/>



3> COME TO A FAMILY DINNER

Our work is based in the South, but our communities of support across the country will be critical!

Starting in June, we'll be having Family Dinners on the last Saturday of each month in **Asheville**, NC. Starting this fall, we'll be having Family Dinners twice a year in **Boston** and **San Francisco** to organize "Support Teams" who will be closely involved in our work. Join us!

CAMPAIGN FOR
SOUTHERN
EQUALITY

**Every day that we live with injustice
is one day too long.**

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about
the Campaign for Southern Equality.

If you have other ideas or questions, get in touch!

You can reach us at southernequality@gmail.com
or through our website > <http://southernequality.org/>.

