



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Birds of a Feather

It is a great pleasure to send greetings to the Spectrum Institute and the collective supporters of *Birds of a Feather*. During LGBT History Month in October 2022, activities associated with the project, including a webinar, memory book, and videos, will honor the courageous law students and lawyers who openly advocated for LGBT rights during the 1970s. They took a stand in an era when discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity was all too pervasive.

I am proud to note that many Californians are among those being recognized for their contributions to advancing justice and equal rights during the 1970s – dozens of them receiving their legal training at law schools here in our Golden State. During that time – thanks in many parts to their advocacy – Governor Brown signed the Consenting Adult Sex Bill into law to protect sexual privacy rights, issued an executive order to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in state employment, and appointed to the bench the first openly gay judge in the nation.

Californians of all careers and walks of life continue this vital work – including those in law, who now more than ever must ensure that these hard-won rights are as unassailable as possible.

On behalf of the people of the State of California, I honor the trailblazing law students and lawyers recognized here and offer my best wishes for successful events during LGBT History Month.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California



Dear colleagues, advocates, and friends,

Throughout the history of LGBTQIA+ people in America, brave and pioneering trailblazers have led the march towards liberation and equal rights. We owe a particular debt of gratitude to the lawyers and legal professionals of the 1970s who were activists for LGBTQIA+ rights during that decade. Their courageous advocacy was even more notable at a time when the oppression of LGBTQIA+ individuals was so pervasive in our society.

Throughout the 1970s, the Massachusetts legal community was one of many important hubs of organizing and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ rights. Among the equal rights pioneers who studied law at Harvard Law School were Jose Gomez, Barbara Kritchevsky, Arthur Leonard, Shepherd Raimi, David A.J Richards, Donald Solomon, and Michael Sonberg. Attorney John Ward, a resident of Massachusetts, founded Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders in 1978. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts benefitted through the generations from what these individuals did to address discrimination and advance equal rights and protection under the law for all.

I want to commend the Spectrum Institute and the sponsors of the Birds of a Feather Project for sponsoring webinars and publishing a Memory Book to ensure that the transformative legal events of the 1970s and the individuals who helped produce them are remembered and honored by this and future generations.

My office and countless advocates are proud to take up the fight to ensure that every LGBTQIA+ person in our state and across the country knows that they are seen, they are loved, and we'll always have their back.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maura Healey".

Maura Healey
Massachusetts Attorney General