



Embracing Diversity: LGBTIA+ Protections Virtual Program

AGENDA

July 27, 2022

Opening Remarks

Tisha M. Leonardo-Santiago, Bil. Community Relations Specialist, NJ Division on Civil Rights

Moderator

Tisha M. Leonardo-Santiago, Bil. Community Relations Specialist, NJ Division on Civil Rights

Panelists

- **Iris Bromberg** Legal Specialist, NJ Division on Civil Rights
- **H. Craig Cutler, LCSW, NCPsy.A** Founder & President, Equality Mental Health, LLC
- **Christian Fuscarino** Executive Director, Garden State Equality
- **JP Pedoto, LSW** Program Coordinator & Clinician, Family Connections Pride+

Questions and Answers

Closing Remarks

Tisha M. Leonardo-Santiago, Bil. Community Relations Specialist, NJ Division on Civil Rights

Speakers & Panelists



Iris Bromberg

Legal Specialist

*Strategic Initiatives & Enforcement Unit
New Jersey Division on Civil Rights*

Iris Bromberg (she/her) is a Legal Specialist in New Jersey Division on Civil Rights' (DCR) Strategic Initiatives and Enforcement Unit (SIE), where she works on proactive initiatives aimed at advancing civil rights and preventing discrimination. She leads SIE's fair housing and fair chance in housing work, and co-leads SIE's gender equity and LGBTQ rights work. Prior to joining DCR, Iris served as a senior staff attorney at Legal Services NYC's LGBTQ and HIV Advocacy Unit, where she provided direct representation and advice in a wide

range of civil practice areas including fair housing, disability rights, public benefits, eviction defense, asylum matters, and name changes. Previously, Iris served as an open government attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey (ACLU-NJ). There, she primarily focused on strengthening open government through impact litigation, amicus support, legislative advocacy, and public education.

In 2020, the National LGBTQ Bar Association recognized Iris as one of the best LGBTQ+ Lawyers under 40. Iris is a current Affirmative Leaders Fellow with the Public Rights Project. She is a proud graduate of Rutgers-Newark School of Law, where she served as a Wenk Public Interest Fellow at the ACLU-NJ and co-chaired the LGBTQ+ caucus.



Christian Fuscarino

*Executive Director
Garden State Equality*

Christian has deep roots in New Jersey, growing up in Belmar and spending much of his youth in and around Asbury Park. Fuscarino has been an activist and organizer in the LGBTQ community for over a decade. He credits his positive experiences in Asbury Park as helping influence him to become an activist. In 2016, PolitickerNJ named Christian the 2nd most influential advocate in New Jersey politics and later that year The Observer listed him on the Power List 100.

At GLSEN, Christian worked with high school Gay Straight Alliances (GSA) for several years. In 2007, Christian joined the Pride Connections Center of New Jersey as a program developer serving gay inner-city youth. That same year, he won a student Emmy award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for his End the Silence public service announcement. In 2008, Christian founded The Pride Network, a national leadership development non-profit.

In 2013, Christian joined Alan van Capelle, former Executive Director of Empire State Pride Agenda, by serving as his digital strategist at Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice. They focused on mobilizing Jews to advance social issues by speaking out against injustice and inequality. One of the organization's greatest accomplishments was a campaign that resulted in California Governor Jerry Brown signing The Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

Christian served as the Communications Director for the Educational Alliance until 2016. The Alliance is a non-profit that aims to break the cycle of poverty for low-income children and families through preschool, after school and college prep programs.

Fuscarino's volunteer work has received numerous accolades, including recognition from the New Jersey State Senate and Assembly, Congressmen Bill Pascrell and Donald Payne, U.S. Senators Robert Menendez and Frank Lautenberg, and Governor Jon Corzine. Media outlets such as CBS News, Sirius XM and Genre Magazine have featured Christian in groundbreaking stories. Hofstra University honored Christian, an alum, as their 2012 Man of the Year for his work developing safe-campus space for LGBTQ students while earning his BA in digital media and LGBTQ studies.

Christian recently moved back to New Jersey from Brooklyn where he was living with his partner, Aaron Williams, a tennis instructor, now serving in the Marines.



H. Craig Cutler

*Founder and President
Equality Mental Health, LLC*

H. Craig Cutler is the founder and president of Equality Mental Health, LLC, a dedicated practice for the LGBTQ+ community in River Edge, New Jersey. Craig is an experienced, licensed, clinical social worker and certified psychoanalyst and has been in private practice for over 20 years.

He is a graduate of the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College in New York City and the New Jersey Institute (NJ) for Training in Psychoanalysis in Teaneck, New Jersey.

He currently provides clinical and psychoanalytic supervision to graduate and psychoanalytic candidates and teaches on the topics of the working alliance at the NJI.

Past work experiences include, the Director of the Clinic of the New Jersey Institute in Teaneck, New Jersey; Director of the Hudson County Services of the Jewish Family Service of Metrowest in Bayonne; the Assessment Coordinator at the Renfrew Center in Ridgewood, New Jersey, specializing in eating disorders and complex trauma; and medical social worker at St. Mary Hospital in Hoboken.

Trained as a community organizer, Craig was part of the working group to create the Pride Center of New Jersey in Highland Park, has facilitated HIV support groups for the Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, led psychoeducation workshops for Easton Mountain in Greenwich, New York and has provided individual, couples, and family psychotherapy for members of the LGBTQ+ community.



Tisha M. Leonardo-Santiago

*Bilingual Community Relations Specialist
New Jersey Division on Civil Rights
(Moderator)*

Tisha M. Leonardo-Santiago is the Bilingual Community Relations Specialist in New Jersey Division on Civil Rights' Community Relations Unit. A second-generation Latinx Hudson County native and a first-generation college graduate earning their undergraduate and graduate degrees in Criminal Justice from New Jersey City University.

In 2017, Tisha joined DCR as a Bilingual Investigator in the Enforcement Unit, served as the bilingual subject matter expert for the New Jersey Bias Investigation Access System (NJBIAS) Project that launched in November 2020, and now serves as the Statewide NJBIAS Community Liaison for the online complaint portal.

Tisha is based in Newark, and primary counties are Bergen, Hudson, Hunterdon, Passaic, Sussex and Union. Tisha leads their unit's strategic planning and programming initiatives on breastfeeding, pregnancy, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, nationality, ancestry, and religion (Islam). Tisha serves as the subject matter expert on Youth, Higher Education, Prisons and Policing, Latino/a/x, LGBTQI+, Muslim and Immigrant communities. They also serve as the DCR Youth Ambassador Program Coordinator.



JP Pedoto

*Program Coordinator & Clinician
Family Connections' Pride+*

JP Pedoto, LSW (He/Him) is a proud transman and social worker. JP began socially and medically transitioning in 2018 and since then, has been sharing his transition on social media as a LGBTQ educator and activist. JP is the Program Coordinator and Clinician for Family Connections' Pride+, a program that provides a safe space for middle and high school-age youth that identify within the LGBTQIA+ community. Pride+ offers a wide range of free services including individual, family, and group counseling, psychotherapy and psychoeducation programs for youth, parent support and education groups, as well as opportunities for youth to participate in various field trips, activities in their communities, and pride events.