




branching out

the immigration family tree

Immigration Equality  
Fall/Winter Update



In the past year, Immigration Equality answered a record number of calls for help from LGBT and HIV-positive immigrants. We worked alongside pro bono partners to represent people fleeing violence and persecution. We pushed the courts, the legislature, and the new administration for changes in the law — and the result was more success than ever before. Our staff grew, along with the coalition of allies — from LGBT, immigrant, and faith communities — who are committed to ensuring that all families, and all immigrants, are treated equally.

Each and every one of us is a member of the immigration family tree.

**36,000 families**  
counting on us to end discrimination

**1,720 legal inquiries answered**  
via detention letters, e-mails, walk-ins, and calls to our hotline

**145 members of Congress**  
support legislation for our families

**44M readers of the *People* magazine profile**  
of Shirley Tan, mother of 13-year-old twins, who is facing deportation

**63 faith, civil rights, and LGBT groups**  
officially support comprehensive immigration reform that includes our families

**430+ organizational allies**  
joined us in endorsing new regulations to end the HIV ban

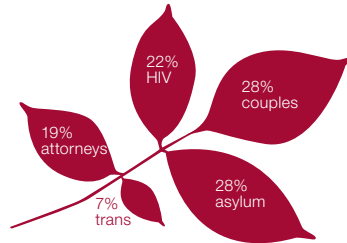
## our legal family

Every day, we answer urgent questions from individuals, families, and attorneys. For LGBT and HIV-positive asylum-seekers, we developed a compassionate vetting process to match cases with pro bono law firms mentored and supervised by Immigration Equality. Some of the toughest cases remain in-house with our experienced legal team. The result is a staggering record of victories; over the past three years, we have won 98% of our cases.

In the words of a gay asylum-winner from Jamaica: "My case was handed over to the most competent attorneys at Ropes & Gray, and I am pleased my asylum approval was granted for both my son and myself. My heartfelt gratitude to Immigration Equality. I really appreciate their help and the opportunity to live my life free from fear or persecution. Continue to do the good work as I am sure there are many more like myself out there."

### THE NUMBERS OUR INTAKE HOTLINE

1,720 inquiries in 2008  
 22% HIV-related  
 28% binational couples  
 28% asylum-seekers  
 7% transgender issues  
 19% attorneys seeking technical assistance



\*total exceeds 100% due to multi-issue inquiries

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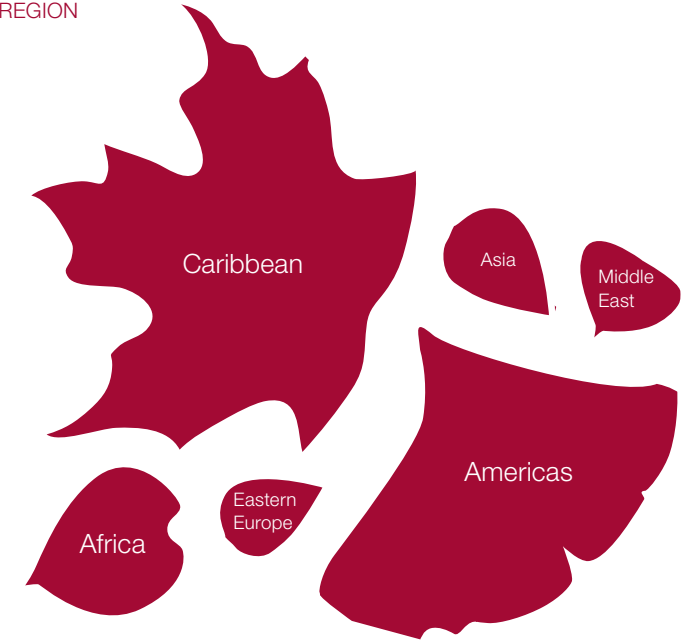
## asylum victories

Over the past year, Immigration Equality won a record 63 cases for LGBT and HIV-positive asylum-seekers from 30 countries.

### BY COUNTRY



### BY REGION



MORE THAN \$11.4 MILLION IN DONATED LEGAL SERVICES

# our legislative family is building unprecedented momentum for UAFA

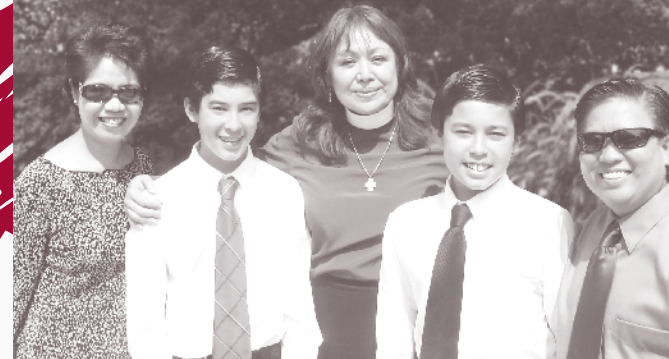


Over the summer, Immigration Equality achieved two critical steps for the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA). On June 3, 2009 the Senate held the first-ever Congressional hearing on UAFA. This hearing was a significant step forward in our work to secure full equality for LGBT binational couples. Members of Congress are traditionally reluctant to pass a bill that has not been discussed at a formal hearing.

Just as important, the Uniting American Families Act was included in a larger immigration bill: the Reuniting Families Act in the House of Representatives. Not only is this the first time that LGBT families have been included in a larger immigration package, it is the first time our families have been affirmed in any federal legislation.

“The NAACP would like to stress that the definition of ‘family’ should not be interpreted so stringently as to omit people who are in a loving, committed relationship but happen to be of the same gender.”

—Julian Bond, Chair NAACP, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of UAFA



Shirley Tan, Jay Mercado, and their twin sons with Methodist Bishop Minerva Carcaño in Washington. The United Methodist Church has endorsed UAFA and the Reuniting Families Act.

“... when we say all families, we do mean all families. And that is to include the gay and lesbian families. We cannot do anything less than that.”

—U.S. Representative Mike Honda (D-CA), lead sponsor of the Reuniting Families Act

## RFA BY THE NUMBERS LGBT INCLUSION DELIVERS VOTES!

- 6 pre-inclusion RFA co-sponsors
- 75 post-inclusion RFA co-sponsors
- 63 faith, immigration, civil rights, and LGBT organizations have officially endorsed

## business coalition for UAFA

Global corporations are fed up with immigration restrictions that prevent hiring and retaining top talent. Immigration Equality’s Business Coalition for UAFA channels that frustration into action. Pfizer CEO Jeff Kindler hosted the Coalition’s first meeting, and our list of member companies is growing quickly.

The Coalition’s letter to Congress vividly describes the harm to business: “We have lost productivity when families are separated; we have borne the costs of transferring and retraining talented employees so they may live abroad with their loved ones; and we have missed opportunities to bring the best and the brightest to the United States when their sexual orientation means they cannot bring their family with them.”

To add your company to this list, contact us.



OmnicomGroup



## our activist family includes board member Ron Buckmire



Ron Buckmire has been an LGBT activist since 1991, when he created the Queer Resources Directory, the first comprehensive directory of LGBT and HIV information on the Internet. He was born in Grenville, Grenada, and earned a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. He chairs the math department of Occidental College and blogs at MadProfessah.com. In 2006, he co-founded the Barbara Jordan/Bayard Rustin Coalition, a Black LGBT advocacy organization in Los Angeles. Before becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen in 2003, he was the foreign half of a binational couple, and he is credited with coining the name “Immigration Equality.”

A seasoned political activist, Ron took the time to answer some of the frequently asked questions about Immigration Equality’s current strategy:

### **UAFA, RFA, CIR – this feels like alphabet soup. Can you explain?**

**Ron:** The UAFA defines “permanent partnership” for same-sex couples under immigration law and outlines how permanent partners can meet strict anti-fraud standards to qualify for immigration benefits. The House RFA, or Reuniting Families Act, is a package of family unification measures, most of which would shorten crushing wait times for families who have applied to reunite. The RFA was introduced this summer and includes the

full text of UAFA. CIR, or comprehensive immigration reform, refers to a pending, omnibus bill that will be a major overhaul and modernization of our broken immigration system. It will make needed changes in family unification, provide a path to citizenship for undocumented people, and correct other aspects of our immigration system. The RFA is a model for the family immigration component of that CIR package. The CIR bill itself has not yet been finalized.

### **Will UAFA be part of CIR?**

**Ron:** CIR legislation is being written now, and Immigration Equality is pushing hard to make sure our families are in it. CIR is moving fast. President Obama has indicated that he supports a vigorous debate — and a vote — on immigration reform early in 2010.

### **Immigration is such a contentious issue — why get caught up in CIR?**

**Ron:** Two reasons: first, it’s the best chance to pass UAFA, because stand-alone immigration legislation outside of CIR is unlikely to succeed. Second, because LGBT families need immigration reform of all kinds. We don’t just need recognition of our loving, committed partnerships — we need to grow up in intact, safe homes with our parents and extended family there to provide us support, not separated by decade-long visa lines. We need enough work visas so that people like me who got a Ph.D. in the U.S. don’t take our skills elsewhere. We need a path to citizenship so queer kids brought here as babies aren’t treated like criminals. We need to know that if we are detained in immigration jail, we will not be targeted based on our sexual orientation or gender identity.

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## “LGBT people bring grassroots power and media savvy to the CIR fight.” — Ron Buckmire

### **So is the stand-alone UAFA still a priority for Immigration Equality?**

**Ron:** Absolutely. Immigration Equality continues to champion the Uniting American Families Act in Congress and in the media, too. Every day, we ask lawmakers to support UAFA and to push for it to be included in CIR as well. Our strategy has never been “either/or.” Our guiding principle is to end immigration discrimination against LGBT families, regardless of what vehicle provides that opportunity.

### **What do LGBT people bring to the CIR effort?**

**Ron:** Our community has never before had the opportunity to support comprehensive immigration reform enthusiastically, loudly, and strongly — because our families have never been in it before. Now that we are included in preliminary legislation like RFA, we have the chance to be a major force for passage of CIR. We bring many assets to the progressive coalition for immigration reform, among them grassroots power that is fiercely committed to family unity, a powerful, 82-member LGBT Equality Caucus in Congress, and media-savvy about how to generate sympathy for families under fire. We are mobilizing individual activists and LGBT groups to support the CIR effort, and together, we will win.

# our family of funders

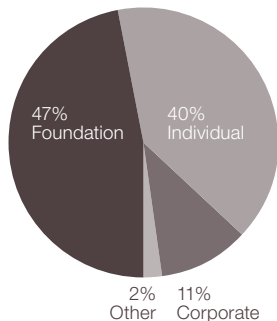
Thanks to the generosity of our individual, foundation, and corporate supporters, Immigration Equality grew dramatically in 2008. We opened our DC office, expanded our program staff, and recorded our most successful fundraising year yet.

## 2008 AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS

### income

Foundation	\$418,591
Individual Contributions	\$352,596
Corporate	\$95,225
Other	\$19,632

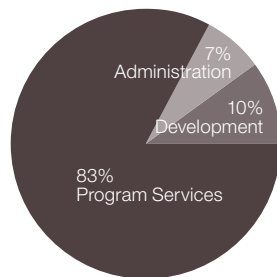
**TOTAL INCOME\*** **\$886,044**



### expenses

Program Services	\$693,157
Administration	\$57,182
Development	\$87,068

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$837,407**



## FOUNDATION FUNDERS

- Anonymous
- Arcus Gay and Lesbian Fund
- David Bohnett Foundation
- Dorian Fund
- Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- H. van Ameringen Foundation
- MAC AIDS Fund
- New York Community Trust
- Open Society Institute
- Vital Projects Fund

\*In addition, three dozen national law firms donated \$11.4 million in legal services as participants in Immigration Equality's Pro Bono Asylum Program.

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The Fall/Winter Update was art directed by one half of a binational couple, Christopher Taylor Edwards.

Find his work at [thisisnone.com](http://thisisnone.com)

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Immigration Equality was a vivid presence at the National Equality March on October 11.

## torchbearers

- \$2,709 RFA House bill number
- \$1,720 hotline inquiries answered
- \$1,024 UAFA House bill number
- \$589 asylum application form
- \$279 votes needed to pass UAFA
- \$145 congresspeople supporting our families
- \$63 asylum wins over past year
- \$36 honoring our families
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ other
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(589 represents the asylum application form I-589)

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“Thank you for fighting for me, my partner, and the thousands of binational couples in this great country. History will remember this organization!”

— Immigration Equality donor

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August 1, 2008 – July 31, 2009

Immigration Equality would like to express its deepest gratitude to each and every one of our thousands of donors who enable our vital work on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV-positive immigrants and their families.

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