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AGM 2017 RESOLUTION

Resolution on the Rights of Transgender, Gender Variant, and Two-Spirited People

Carried unanimously:
April 22, 2017 Annual General Meeting

Proposed by:
Kyla Epstein
Vancouver Public Library Board Chair
BCLTA Board Director

While much work has been done and still remains to be done to overcome discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual people, members of the transgender, gender variant, and two-spirited communities often face additional barriers. While the British Columbia Human Rights Code has been amended to include gender identity and expression and that organizations/people cannot discriminate on these grounds, trans, gender variant, and two-spirited people experience higher rates of hate crimes and often face discrimination in employment, healthcare and housing. For many people, the simple act of stating their preferred pronouns or accessing facilities consistent with their gender identity can result in hostility, harassment, abuse, and outright violence. The combined impact of all of these factors has contributed to higher than average rates of poverty, homelessness and suicide among transgender, gender variant, and two-spirited people.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the BCLTA:

1. Affirms its commitment to the full equality, inclusion and acceptance of people of all gender identities and gender expressions;
2. Affirms the right of transgender, gender variant, and two-spirited individuals to be referred to by their name, gender, and pronoun of choice (regardless of legal status) in all BCLTA communications, events, and related business;
3. Encourages members of BCLTA to continue to advocate for the rights of people of all gender identities and gender expressions;
4. Urges the continued adoption and implementation of legislation and policies that prevent discrimination based on gender identity and expression, and that require individuals to be treated equally under the law as the gender by which they identify. This includes establishing the right to change without undue burden their identification documents to reflect their gender and name and ensuring equal access to medical and social services;

5. Calls on governments at all levels to review and revise all laws and policies to ensure full equality and protections for people of all gender identities and expressions;
6. Urges BCLTA members to begin or continue to work with local transgender, lesbian, gay and bisexual organizations to create inclusive and welcoming communities for people of all gender identities and expressions and to spread awareness and increase knowledge of issues related to gender identity and expression. These activities may include cultural competency trainings and education programs on gender identity and expression;
7. Recommends BCLTA member institutions, facilities and events ensure, to the extent feasible, the availability of gender-neutral washrooms, trans-inclusive signage, and other physical site needs that ensure dignity and safety for transgender, gender variant, and two-spirited individuals; and
8. Urges BCLTA members to review their use of language in conversation, presentations, forms and policies in an effort to ensure people of all gender identities and gender expressions are welcomed, included, accepted and respected. This includes developing statements of inclusion and/or non-discrimination policies pertaining to gender identity and gender expression, the use when feasible of gender-neutral language, and offering more than two gender options or eliminating the need to select a gender on forms.