



# MOFO PROUD

MORRISON  
FOERSTER

**WE'RE HERE.  
WE'RE QUEER.  
AND MOFO  
COULDN'T BE  
PROUDER.**

Morrison Foerster provides a work environment where lawyers can openly be themselves while excelling at their chosen profession. MoFo's LGBTQ+ lawyers—who are out and proud in their professional and personal lives—make valuable contributions to our firm, our profession, and our communities. They're vital members of a firm that highly values and promotes diversity and equality for everyone. That's why MoFo has been a standard-bearer for LGBTQ+ equality in the legal profession for more than 30 years.

# A PROUD HISTORY

**1984**



Sexual orientation is added to the firm's nondiscrimination policy.

**2007**



An openly gay man is appointed head of MoFo's New York litigation practice.

**2008**



San Francisco LGBTQ+ Affinity Group founded.

**2009**



The San Francisco AIDS Foundation salutes MoFo's continued efforts to reduce new HIV infections and ensure care for those living with HIV/AIDS.

**2012**



The HIV Law Project in New York presents MoFo with its Distinguished Pro Bono Award.

**2013**



The firm names an openly gay man as the managing partner of its largest office.

**2014**



LGBTQ+ lawyers participate in biannual MoFo Diversity Summit.



**1992**

MoFo launches a firmwide diversity program.



**1993**

MoFo becomes one of the first law firms to expand benefits to include same-sex partners.



**2001**

MoFo becomes first major law firm to have an openly gay chair.



**2010**

MoFo begins offering tax offsets to lawyers and staff in same-sex domestic partnerships.



**2011**

For the third year running, the AIDS Legal Referral Panel recognizes the firm's participation in the Pro Bono Connections Initiative. New York LGBTQ+ Affinity Group is founded.



**2015**

European LGBTQ+ Affinity Group is founded. 1L Diversity Fellowship Program is expanded to include LGBTQ+ law students.



**2018**

MoFo launches its Gender-Inclusive Employment Policy. Palo Alto and Los Angeles LGBTQ+ Affinity Groups are founded.



**2019**

Asia LGBTQ+ Affinity Group is founded. Washington, D.C. LGBTQ+ Affinity Group is founded.

# AN INCLUSIVE FIRM

WE PLACE A PREMIUM ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, CREATING A COMMUNITY OF PRIDE AND SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ+ LAWYERS.



**Philip Besirof is General Counsel to Morrison Foerster and a partner in the firm's Securities Litigation and Securities Enforcement Groups. He was also managing partner of MoFo's San Francisco office for nearly ten years.**

## OUT LEADERS

Our LGBTQ+ lawyers are leaders within the firm. They serve on our board of directors and the management committees that define our programs, policies, and external strategy.

Philip Besirof maintains an active practice while serving as General Counsel to the firm. He was managing partner of MoFo's San Francisco office for nearly ten years.

San Francisco partner Fredo Silva is co-chair of the firm's Social Enterprise and Impact Investing Group.

John Smith is the co-head of the firm's National Security Practice.

Dan Levison is the head of the Singapore Litigation Department.

Randy Bullard is managing partner of the Miami office and co-chair of the firm's Latin America Desk.

## THE FRONT RUNNER

In 2001, MoFo made history by becoming one of the first major law firms to elect an openly gay man to serve as chair. Keith Wetmore led the firm for 12 years, during which time we expanded our presence in key technology and financial centers in the United States, Asia, and Europe. Keith also helped set new standards for LGBTQ+ equality within the legal profession. He spearheaded the expansion of MoFo's benefits coverage to include same-sex partners, as well as health care tax offsets to employees and lawyers in same-sex domestic partnerships.

For his visionary leadership, *The American Lawyer* named Keith to its inaugural list of the top 50 innovators in the legal profession.

Keith stepped down from the firm in 2018, and in that same year, MoFo renamed the 1L Diversity Fellowship Program the Keith Wetmore 1L Fellowship for Excellence, Diversity, and Inclusion in honor of Keith's commitment to diversity and inclusion and his lasting impact on the firm.

## LGBTQ+ AFFINITY GROUPS

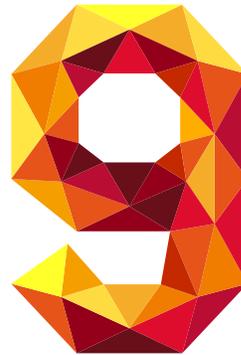
LGBTQ+ Affinity Groups in Los Angeles, New York, Palo Alto, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Europe, and Asia provide support networks and programming for LGBTQ+ lawyers and allies.

## PRIDE MONTH

We're proud of our LGBTQ+ lawyers and the contributions that they make to the firm and our communities every month of the year, but each June we take time out to celebrate LGBTQ+ history, culture, and politics with presentations and entertainment sponsored by the San Francisco Pride Committee and firm Affinity Groups.

In 2018, Pride programming included a virtual tour of the San Francisco queer art scene with Van Buskirk and archivist and librarian Jeff Gunderson.

In 2019, LGBTQ+ attorneys attended the launch of World Pride in New York, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. A presentation by Stacy Lentz, an LGBTQ+ activist and co-owner of the Stonewall Inn, was the highlight of the 2019 office programming.



## NUMBER OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE SEATS HELD BY LGBTQ+ LAWYERS

In 2019, the newly launched LGBTQ+ Affinity Group in Asia also celebrated Pride Month in Tokyo during its April celebration and parade.

In 2020, the San Francisco Pride Committee hosted a delightful and informative webinar featuring the Kinsey Sicks, an a cappella quartet who bill themselves as "America's Favorite Dragapella Beautyshop Quartet."

## MOFO DIVERSITY SUMMIT

Since the 1990s, MoFo has held biennial workshops for our U.S.-based lawyers of color. In 2014, the workshops were expanded to include LGBTQ+ lawyers, and the two-day retreat was renamed the MoFo Diversity Summit.

## FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Our Keith Wetmore 1L Fellowship for Excellence, Diversity, and Inclusion program supports the development of promising law students from some of the top law schools in the United States.

## GENDER-INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT POLICY

In 2018, we instituted a formal gender-inclusive employment policy establishing a solid framework for censuring discrimination against the transgender community. The policy ensures that the firm's protections against harassment and discrimination extend to all MoFo employees, regardless of gender identity or expression.

# LOVE! VALOR! COMPASSION!

WE'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION AND EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW. THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY OUR LAWYERS DEVOTE COUNTLESS PRO BONO HOURS TO WORKING ON SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LEGAL ISSUES FACING LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS.

## MARRIAGE EQUALITY

We have been fierce advocates in the fight for marriage equality around the globe. In the United States, the firm successfully litigated numerous cases and represented amici in multiple jurisdictions on behalf of same-sex marriage rights. Before the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, we also litigated to secure spousal medical benefits for federal employee Karen Golinski.

More recently, we have been very active on this front in other parts of the world. In Japan, MoFo joined forces with our pro bono client, Lawyers for LGBT & Allies Network (LLAN), to work closely with the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan to adopt a "Viewpoint" recommending that the government of Japan permit same-sex couples to marry—the first affirmative public statement supporting marriage equality by the business community in Japan. Since its launch in September 2018, 34 leading organizations, including chambers of commerce, law and accounting firms, international financial institutions, and other companies have supported the Viewpoint. In Hong Kong, Morrison Foerster was part of a 31-member-strong coalition of international financial institutions and law firms that supported a British lesbian's ultimately successful case that overturned the Hong Kong Immigration Department's decision to deny her a spousal visa.

The firm is also assisting in the formation of a regional network of marriage equality activists in Central and South American named "Somos Familias." The network

aims at developing a legal strategy to obtain marriage equality in the region, as well as developing public education campaigns that shift public opinion on LGBTQ+ families.

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Our lawyers champion the rights of lesbian and gay families. We were part of the legal team that won a victory in the U.S. Supreme Court that reversed the state of Alabama's refusal to recognize second-parent adoptions by same-sex partners granted in other states.

## TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

MoFo has sought to empower transgender individuals through the provision of pro bono legal services. Our lawyers regularly take part in legal clinics to help transgender individuals complete the necessary court filings to update their name and gender identity markers on government-issued documents. We also filed an amicus brief supporting a transgender high school student in a recent Title IX case before the Supreme Court. And in 2007, we won an important victory in Idaho for a transgender inmate seeking appropriate treatment while incarcerated, including access to hormone therapy. This was one of the earliest cases seeking this type of important medical treatment for transgender inmates.

## BATTLING AIDS

MoFo was there from the very beginning of the AIDS crisis in the United States, and we have maintained our long-standing relationships with organizations such



Since 2014, MoFo has annually recognized the pro bono contributions made by individual lawyers with the Kathi Pugh Award. MoFo Alum Ruth Borenstein and partner Fredo Silva, respectively, received the award in 2016 and 2014 for their outstanding pro bono work, including matters benefiting the LGBTQ+ community.

as the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the AIDS Legal Referral Panel. We're also providing pro bono representation to organizations seeking a cure for HIV/AIDS, including Cure HIV and the Research Foundation to Cure AIDS.

### **LGBTQ+ ASYLUM**

We have taken on some of the most challenging asylum cases for LGBTQ+ individuals fleeing persecution because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, including groundbreaking cases for transgender asylum seekers. Working with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area, we made headlines for winning asylum for a lesbian activist from Cameroon and her family after they received death threats following a screening of a documentary about Cameroon's underground LGBTQ+ community. Attorneys in our Tokyo office also represent LGBTQ+ individuals who have fled persecution and who are now seeking refuge in Japan.

### **MILITARY SERVICE**

MoFo played a critical role in challenging the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. We thwarted efforts by the U.S. Air Force to discharge a highly decorated lieutenant colonel because of his sexuality, successfully sued for the reinstatement of two service members who had been wrongfully discharged, and continue to represent veterans who were wrongfully discharged based on their sexual orientation.

### **SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS**

MoFo transactional attorneys also provide pro bono assistance directly to nonprofits serving the LGBTQ+ community, including advising on issues such as corporate governance, employment counseling, and intellectual property protection. MoFo has worked with a wide range of organizations, including All Out Action Fund, Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom, Fruits in Suits, Lambda Literary, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, just to name a few.

# OUT AND ABOUT

AS A FIRM, WE CARE GREATLY ABOUT THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH WE WORK AND LIVE. NOWHERE IS THIS COMMITMENT MORE EVIDENT THAN IN OUR SUPPORT OF LOCAL LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS.

MoFo and its charitable foundation support a range of LGBTQ+ organizations. In recent years, these have included AIDS Legal Referral Panel, AIDS Walk New York, AIDS Walk San Francisco, Center for AIDS Research, Education & Services (CARES) – Sacramento, GLAAD, Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA), HKGALA, HK InterBank, Lambda Legal, LLAN, Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, National Center for Lesbian Rights, OutServe-SLDN, SAGE, Pride Law Fund, San Diego LGBTQ+ Community Center, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, StartOut, and The Trevor Project.

San Francisco partner Philip Besirof is a member of the board of directors and chair of the Audit Committee of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

New York senior counsel Jim Hough is one of the founding members of the LLAN in Japan.

San Francisco of counsel Vince Novak provides pro bono licensing advice to the GLBT Historical Society.



**MORRISON & FOERSTER  
FOUNDATION DOLLARS  
DONATED TO LGBTQ+  
ORGANIZATIONS IN 2020**



15

**LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS  
SUPPORTED THROUGH THE  
MORRISON & FOERSTER  
FOUNDATION IN 2020**

# OUT PROFESSIONALS

WE PROUDLY PARTNER WITH BAR ASSOCIATIONS AND LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHARE OUR COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING LGBTQ+ EQUALITY WITHIN THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

MoFo is a member of Out in Law, a national LGBTQ+ leadership organization that engages senior leaders of law firms, corporations, and nonprofit organizations on vital issues related to cultural change, recruitment, client development and business relationships, and strategies for maximizing business impact in the law.

As a national sponsor of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, MoFo annually attends the Liberty Awards Dinners in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

We participate in the annual Lavender Law Conference and Career Fair sponsored by the National LGBT Bar Association, which has recognized our lawyers among the Best LGBTQ+ Lawyers Under 40.

Our institutional partners also include Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom, Tom Homann LGBT Law Association, National Center for Lesbian Rights, LeGal, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Bar Association of Greater New York. MoFo lawyers actively participate in these organizations, and many hold leadership roles in these as well as other LGBTQ+ professional organizations.

Vince Novak, an of counsel in the Finance & Projects Group in our San Francisco office, is a member of the board of directors of the AIDS Legal Referral Panel.

John Smith, co-head of MoFo's National Security Practice, led a lunch-and-learn along with co-sponsors the Hong Kong Gay and Lesbian Attorneys Network (HKGALA) and the Hong Kong LGBTQ+ InterBank Forum ("HK InterBank") in April 2019 and shared his experience as an openly LGBTQ+ professional in the financial services space and in a top law enforcement position, the key factors that brought him success in his career, and his views on important economic sanctions issues faced by lawyers and financial industry professionals. A similar event, which was co-sponsored by JPMorgan and LGBT Finance and LLAN in Japan, was held in Tokyo during the 2019 Pride Month.

New York senior counsel James Hough participated in Out Leadership's 2019 Senior Leader Summit in New York. The annual summit provides a forum for business leaders to discuss advancing LGBTQ+ equality in corporations. New York partner John Owen, Singapore partner Dan Levison, and Singapore partner Jason Nelms have also participated in previous summits.

Partners Susan Mac Cormac and Fredo Silva were featured speakers at Out Leadership's first Quorum event of 2018. Over 40 legal professionals gathered in our San Francisco office to discuss the importance of increasing the diversity of corporate boards. MoFo hosted this event again in 2019.



# A PROUD RECORD

AS A FIRM, WE TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OUR LGBTQ+ LAWYERS, AS WELL AS THE RECOGNITION THAT THE FIRM HAS RECEIVED FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO LGBTQ+ DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.

## **MANSFIELD CERTIFICATION PLUS**

MoFo was one of only 23 firms that received Certification Plus for four consecutive years. Certification Plus status indicates that the firm has affirmatively considered at least 30 percent of women, lawyers of color, LGBTQ+ lawyers, and lawyers with disabilities for leadership and governance roles, equity partner promotions, formal client pitch opportunities, and senior lateral positions.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN CORPORATE EQUALITY INDEX**

Every year since 2003, MoFo has received a 100 percent rating in HRC's annual report on LGBTQ+ equality in corporate America.

## **VAULT 100**

In its most recent guide, *Vault* ranks MoFo among the top 10 firms for LGBTQ+ diversity in the United States.

## **BAY AREA LAWYERS FOR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM**

The nation's oldest and largest bar association of LGBTQ+ persons in the field of law presented the 2012 Legal Service Award to MoFo for our demonstrated commitment to LGBTQ+ equality.

## **BAY AREA NEWS GROUP**

In 2011, MoFo received the Bay Area Workplace Diversity Award, an honor presented to companies that have a record of promoting LGBTQ+ equality in the workplace.

## **SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS TIMES**

In 2016, the *San Francisco Business Times* recognized Chair Emeritus Keith Wetmore's leadership in advancing LGBTQ+ equality with the "Outstanding Voices" award at the Business of Pride LGBTQ+ Leadership Awards.







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