



THE BUSINESS OF BELONGING:

Strategies for Optimal Workplace Culture & Outstanding Events

Erin Uritus, CEO Out & Equal Workplace Advocates



Today at ECEF



- Why me, today?
- Why this topic, now?
- Why and how you, yes... you!

Who We Are

Out & Equal is the global convener, thought leader and catalyst actively working to support workplaces of equality and belonging – supporting LGBTQ+ employees and leaders who thrive in their careers and lives and achieve greater impact on the world.

2020

Strong partnerships. We work with nearly 800 Fortune 1000 companies to create inclusive, successful teams and workplaces around the world.

2004

First Workplace Summit. LGBTQ professionals from across the country gather for the first Workplace Summit.

2001

Building Bridges. O&E's first educational trainings begin with the national rollout of the Building Bridges training course.

1996

Out & Equal founded. Only 4% of Fortune 500 companies have sexual orientation & gender identity/ expression nondiscrimination guidelines.





What We Believe

Join us in our mission to help achieve global workplace equality, where everyone feels like they belong



No one should have to choose between being who they are and doing what they love.



Our companies and organizations are strongest when we have welcoming and inclusive workplaces.



Each of us is responsible for creating Out & Equal workplaces.



Diversity is about counting heads. Inclusion is about making heads count.



Erin

- Single Mother
- Mother of bi-racial daughters
- Bi-sexual/Pansexual/Queer
- Household includes aging parents
- Cis-Gender, She/Her Pronouns
- Spiritual, active church member
- CEO
- Background in Change/Org Dvlp & business strategy
- Have lived in worked on 4 continents



Leadership Landscape

2018

- Rapidly evolving LGBTQ community demographics
- Marriage equality & progress towards workplace equality
- Parkland shooting and floodgates opening of CEO/Corporate advocacy & Activism
- Shifts in culture and politics
- Internal movement shift, dynamics

DIVERSITY

Inclusion

Belonging



Sawu Bona, Sikhona

"Sawu Bona": I see you

"Sikhona": Because you see me, I exist

A large crowd of people is gathered in a conference hall. In the foreground, a man in a light blue shirt and dark trousers stands with his back to the camera, looking towards the crowd. To his left, another man in a light blue shirt is also looking towards the crowd. In the background, many people are seated at round tables covered with white tablecloths. Some people are standing and raising their hands in the air. The room has a high ceiling with a grid of lights. The overall atmosphere is one of a large-scale event or conference.

So... why this topic now?

Out & Equal “Snowflake”



“What is something you are hiding at work that is negatively impacting your performance or relationships with colleagues?”



MUSLIM

THAT I'm in WEEKLY
THERAPY to UNPACK MY
PAST.

I'm
covering
mental
illness

TRANS
INDIAN
WORKING

That I am secretly
not a confident person.

It feels impossible
to talk about the
traumas that I am
having to live with
myself, and
why it's so hard
to be honest
about it.



What we learned...

**... and this
was *before*
Covid 19**

 **I am...**

- An imposter... I'm not good enough to be here, someone will find out and I will be replaced
- Lonely
- Depressed, anxious
- My friends and family don't really know me
- Dealing with addiction
- Taking care of children and/or parents who are sick or with disabilities, or are aging
- Was very poor growing up/ have been homeless
- Can't afford my rent or expenses, on the "edge" of losing everything
- Drive to work in a way that takes twice as long to avoid hitting the radar screen of police who may pull me over
- Dislike my spouse, haven't been intimate in 5 years
- A bad parent
- Suicidal, don't want to go on

How O&E changed and what we grew to become known and cherished for...

Plenaries & Gala

- Outies Awards
- Corporate sponsor speeches transformed to "Ted-Talks"
- Top and "emerging" talent collaborating specifically for the LGBTQ audience

Workshops

- Multi-faceted content
- Practitioner speakers

Wellness Labs

- Fun Run
- Comfort animals
- Creative art spaces
- Quiet room
- Silent disco
- 12-step meeting

Mass Participation

- Belonging Booth
- Snowflake Exercise

Roundtable Discussions

- Open/closed door sessions
- Identity-focused

Inclusive human/emotional connection is not a by-product... it drives how we design the entire event experience & our strategic plan

New Leadership Imperative Calls for...

- Covid-recovery (trauma-informed leadership)
- Monumental shift towards “workplace of the future”, younger and more engaged workforce
- Racial justice and equity
- Ongoing political dynamics and backlash
- Unprecedented, rapid evolution of LGBTQ (and other identities), within and as part of the general population
- Changing customer/client demands within changing economic pressure
- Challenging customer attention bandwidth across new/changing mediums

...The Business of Belonging



Why & How You?

Get grounded in why and how and you show up...



- ✓ Popular Culture
- ✓ Politicians / Public Life
- ✓ Business Leaders
- ✓ MBA & other Education Programs



Home » media » Press Releases

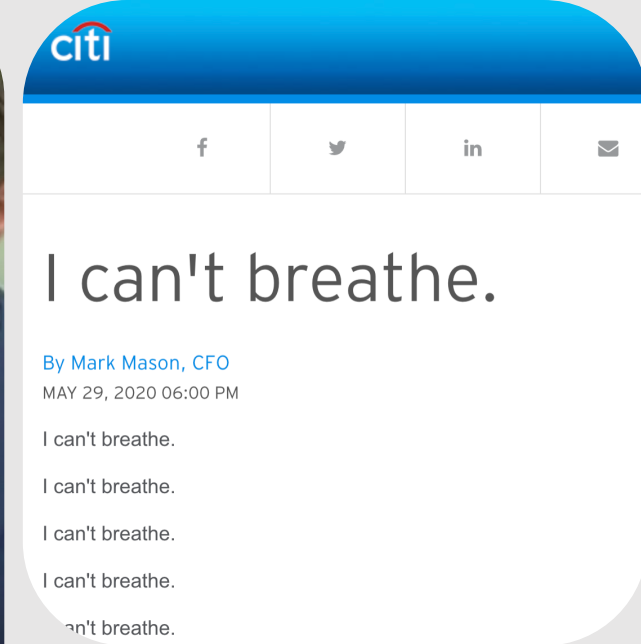
CONGRESSMAN RASKIN ANNOUNCES LOSS OF SON TOMMY RASKIN

December 31, 2020 | Press Release

TAKOMA PARK, M.D. – With profound sorrow, Congressman Jamie Raskin (MD-08) and Sarah Bloom Raskin today announced the loss of their son Thomas (Tommy) Bloom Raskin, 25, who was a second-year student at Harvard Law School and a graduate of Amherst College.

"Tommy was pure magic. His brilliance and compassion knew no bounds. He passionately loved his family, friends, and animals, and was devoted to the cause of the global poor. We are devastated and demolished to be without him."

Tommy is survived by his beloved sisters Hannah and Tabitha, dozens of loving aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and grandparents Arlene Bloom and Lynn Raskin. The family is grateful for the outpouring of support and love from neighbors, constituents, and friends.



Work and the Loneliness Epidemic

Reducing isolation at work is good for business. by Vivek Murthy



On Leadership

This former surgeon general says there's a 'loneliness epidemic' and work is partly to blame



Harvard Business Review | THE BIG IDEA

“During my years caring for patients, the most common pathology I saw was not heart disease or diabetes; it was loneliness.”





What's Allyship?

"An active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group..."

[A]llyship is... a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people."

The Anti Oppression Network

Where are you coming from?

**Yes, it's
pronouns..
But it's
really about
gender**

**Nearly half of
Americans now
see gender on a
spectrum and feel
comfortable using
gender-neutral
pronouns.**

(Sosin, 2020; The Harris Poll, 2018)

The Imperative for Inclusion Now

Current research demonstrates a clear imperative for implementing inclusive pronoun practices in the workplace. Demographic trends illustrate new and accepting perceptions of gender identity and expression, particularly in younger generations.

1 Gender is More Expansive than Ever Before. In the US today, there are an estimated 1.4 million transgender Americans, and one in three adults (ages 18-29) know someone who uses gender-neutral pronouns (Geiger & Graf, 2019). Notably, nearly half of Americans now see gender on a spectrum and feel comfortable using gender-neutral pronouns, figures which are expected to continue to rise (Sosin, 2020; The Harris Poll, 2018). Millennials now represent the largest share of the US labor force—a generation notorious for its open-mindedness, inclusive values, and higher rates of LGBTQ identity—while members of Generation Z enter adulthood and are poised to be the most diverse and gender-fluid generation yet (Cilluffo & Cohn, 2019).



**One in three adults
(ages 18-29) know
someone who uses
gender-neutral
pronouns.**

(Geiger & Graf, 2019)

3

Inclusivity Improves Business and Inclusive Pronoun Practices Are Key.

As a whole, LGBTQ inclusivity boosts business outcomes. Research consistently demonstrates that LGBTQ-inclusive workplace environments generate increased performance, productivity, retention, talent, and well-being (The Human Rights Campaign, 2014). Furthermore, LGBTQ-supportive policies are associated with higher company value, productivity, and profitability. Younger generations actively seek employment at companies that share their own values of inclusion and facilitate connected cultures of belonging (Johansson, 2017).

In addition, an increasingly global workforce is calling for new tools to ensure tenants of respect and cultural competency are built into everyday interaction. Incorporating and normalizing practices to identify pronouns in the workplace is both critical for LGBTQ inclusion and can be helpful in instances of cross-cultural communication where pronouns are less apparent.

*Many transgender/GNC individuals choose to go by a name that is different than the name given to them at birth. A chosen name may be different than the name indicated on official records.

Remember: Don't complicate the simplicity of humanity

Q: HOW DO YOU ADDRESS A SERVICEMAN WHO USED TO BE A SERVICEWOMAN?



And...

“If someone is brave enough to tell you who they are, be brave enough to support them.

Even if you don’t understand, they’re showing you who they are, and that is the biggest gift anybody can ever give you.”





QUESTIONS &

ANSWERS

@erinuritus

www.outandequal.org