



Frontlines

NEWS FROM OUTFRONT MINNESOTA

Volume 10 Number 1 October 2000

OutFront Minnesota Board takes a Stand on the Boy Scouts of America

Like many of you, OutFront Minnesota staff and board have spent a great deal of the summer talking to the media, parents, GLBT community members, and allied organizations about the June Supreme Court decision which supports the Boy Scouts of America in their policy to expel scout leaders who are gay. Following is a resolution unanimously passed by the OutFront Minnesota's Board of Director's at the August 31 meeting. We encourage other organizations to sign on to this resolution or to pass one of their own. We would like a copy of your resolution because it would be very helpful to us as we continue to work further with individuals, community organizations, the United Way, and the local Boy Scouts councils on this issue.

Resolution of the Board of Directors of OutFront Minnesota

Background

The United States Supreme Court in June 2000 decided (in *Boy Scouts of America, et. al., vs. Dale*) that the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of association allows the Boy Scouts of America to reject and expel scouting participants just because they are gay.

Human rights laws forbidding such discrimination are unconstitutional in such circumstances, ruled the Court by a one-vote margin, in that they intrude into a group's internal affairs by forcing

it to accept a member it does not desire. The Boy Scouts, therefore, were allowed to reject gay scoutmaster applicant James Dale despite his unchallenged, exemplary record of performance and leadership within the Boy Scouts of America.

In the wake of the Dale ruling, well-meaning people and organizations are struggling to reconcile their support for scouting with their belief that the Boy Scouts' anti-gay policy is ignorant and intolerant.

GETTING THE BSA TO CHANGE

I have been talking a lot about the Boy Scouts lately. I've talked with the OutFront Board and the staff. I've talked with GLBT community leaders and OutFront Minnesota members. I've talked with executive directors from other organizations and representatives of the United Ways of Minneapolis and St. Paul. I've talked with the media. I've talked with other GLBT people. I've talked with my partner, my siblings and my friends. I've even talked with some Boy Scouts about the Boy Scouts.

But my decision remains the same: the Supreme Court decision upholding the Boy Scouts of America's policy to discriminate against gays is disturbing and dangerous. It will have serious consequences for the young men and boys who learn about honesty, bravery, and leadership through the Scouts. Instead of taking a leading role as the nation's largest young men's leadership development organization, it is contributing to an environment where prejudice born of fear and misinformation are the norm. As the head of an organization that confronts anti-gay violence, I can tell you that such an atmosphere of hatred and ignorance has led more often than you think to violence and even murder.

"the Supreme Court decision upholding the Boy Scouts of America's policy to discriminate against gays is disturbing and dangerous."

Many people have asked if I support the United Way's stance to continue funding the Boy Scouts. My answer in the long term is no, at least while this policy stands. The United Way has taken a strong stand to end discrimination and to respect diversity, and that is exactly what it should do. By continuing to fund the Boy Scouts, funders like the United Way are supporting an organization that cannot, in all good conscience, sign on to those basic principles.

But we need to distinguish between the Boy Scouts of America and its two local affiliates, the Viking Council based in Minneapolis and the Indianhead Council based in St. Paul. Those two local councils are caught in a squeeze between a national office that orders them to conform and a local community that, by and large, supports the GLBT community.

In its decision, the Supreme Court addressed the Boy Scout policy concerning Scout Leaders. It said nothing about the boys themselves. All of us know that there are boys who are gay or perceived to be gay and who are currently members of Scouting and there probably always will be. I am very concerned about those boys. Their safety needs to be addressed now.

Given that the United Ways of both Minneapolis and St. Paul have decided for now to continue funding the Boy Scouts, OutFront Minnesota is using this opportunity to pressure the local Councils. They must enact and actively enforce policies and practices that deal affirmatively and proactively with the elimination of all anti-gay harassment within the Boy Scout organization. As an organization that joins them at the United Way table, not to do so at this point in time would be irresponsible. However, if these issues are not addressed soon and the policy is not rescinded, there ought to be additional consequences.

The OutFront Minnesota Board Resolution elsewhere in this issue of *Frontlines* does a great job of addressing the policy of discrimination in the Boy Scouts and the cessation of public support. It calls upon funders and other organizations to be true to their values of non-discrimination and diversity. It is my hope that similar resolutions will be passed by organizations all across Minnesota with the result being a change in BSA policies and a reconciliation of the local Councils back into the fold of leading community organizations.

Ann DeGroot, Executive Director

OutFront Minnesota is a not-for-profit 501(c)4 lobbying organization supported primarily by contributions from individuals. Donations to OutFront Minnesota are not tax deductible.

OutFront Minnesota Community Services is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 direct service organization supported primarily by funding from the United Way, foundations, and select government contracts as well as some fees for services provided. Donations to OutFront Minnesota Community Services are tax deductible as charitable contributions as allowed under federal law.

OutFront Minnesota's mission is to eliminate heterosexism and homophobia in Minnesota.

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FRONTLINES
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"A COMIC MEGASTAR"

—The New York Times

DAME EDNA THE ROYAL TOUR

OutFront Minnesota is pleased to present the event no one will want to miss!

DAME EDNA: THE ROYAL TOUR!

Fresh from her smash Broadway appearance is none other than Australia's answer to Britain's royalty.

The evening begins with

THE POSSUM PARTY

a benefit for
OutFront Minnesota

This Down Under reception for Dame Edna's fans will feature a light buffet, cash bar, entertainment, and lots of see-and-be-seen opportunities for everyone to experience!

**SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 5, 2000**

5:30 p.m. The Possum Party
LaSalle Plaza Building
7:30 p.m. Dame Edna Live!
Historic State Theatre

\$75.00 per person
OFM members
\$85.00 per person
non-members

To order tickets:

Online: www.outfront.org

By phone:

Twin Cities: 612-822-0127

ext. 610

Statewide: 800-800-0350

ext. 610

Tickets also available at
Rainbow Road.

Sponsors:

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BURNET

LAVENDER



MINNESOTA'S GLBT COMMUNITY WELCOMES DAME EDNA

On Sunday, November 5, OutFront Minnesota is pleased to present the event no one will want to miss! Fresh from her smash Broadway appearance and immediately following her regal performance at the closing ceremonies of the Sydney Olympic Games, it is none other than Australia's answer to Britain's royalty, Dame Edna! On her first Royal Tour of the United States, Dame Edna is the comedienne queen that so many of us have always wished we could be.

The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. in the lobby of the LaSalle Plaza, adjacent to the State Theatre, with the Possum Party, a Down Under reception for Dame Edna's fans from here in the central hinterlands of the new world. This private party for Dame Edna's possums will feature a light buffet; cash bar; entertainment; and lots of see-and-be-seen opportunities for everyone to experience.

Then, at 7:30 p.m., it's show time! OutFront Minnesota has reserved the entire main floor of the Historic State Theatre for this outlandish GLBT community event. Attendees will be seated in only the best seats in the house providing an intimate experience for Dames and Lords alike.

Possum Circle event sponsorship costs \$250 for OutFront Minnesota members, \$300 for non-members, and includes two tickets in the exclusive Possum Circle seating section, the Possum Party and more. Koala Klatch individual tickets are \$75 for OutFront Minnesota members, and \$85 for non-members and include the Possum Party and main floor, A-section seats for the performance.

Seats will be assigned on a first-ordered, first assigned basis. Don't delay; order your tickets early as this event is sure to sell out.

Tickets are available online at

www.outfront.org;

by phone at

612-822-0127

ext. 611 or

800-800-0350 ext. 611;

or at Rainbow Road

in Minneapolis.

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY, OCTOBER 11

OutFront Minnesota is once again the major presenter of the annual National Coming Out Day Luncheon, being held 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 11, 2000, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Minneapolis. This year's featured speakers are:


- Scott Mayer, renown organizer of the famous Hollywood Parties here in the Twin Cities and thereby successful fundraiser of over \$5,000,000 for AIDS charities.

- Jason Schellack, Park Rapids resident and Hamline freshman

- Mary Olson, a Minneapolis writer and PFLAG member with a 14 yr-old son

- Reema Bazy, recovering attorney

"OutFront Minnesota has reserved several premier tables for this event just for OutFront Minnesota members and their guests. It is wonderful to have them join us for this large community event," said Ann Marie DeGroot, Executive Director of OutFront Minnesota. As the presenting organization for the National Coming Out Day Luncheon, OutFront Minnesota is able to offer its members tickets at a reduced price of \$22.50 per person. Members should feel free to bring their boss, diversity director, co-workers, friends or family members to join them at the OutFront Minnesota National Coming Out Day Luncheon at this special price. These tickets must be purchased through OutFront Minnesota and be ordered no later than October 1 in order to ensure proper processing. Go to our website, www.outfront.org or call 612-822-0127, ext. 611 to order tickets.

Immediately following, OutFront Minnesota, and its affiliated project, the Workplace Alliance, are co-sponsoring the Lavender Career Expo just one floor up from the luncheon in the Minneapolis Hyatt Regency hotel. This first-ever event is free and open to everyone. Bring your resume and meet with dozens of employers seeking you as their next new employee. 



OUTFRONT
MINNESOTA

proudly presents the

Sixth Annual National Coming Out Day Luncheon



Hosted by **Robyne Robinson,**
News Anchor, KMSB TV Channel 9

Speakers Include

Reema Bazy, recovering attorney, Mpls

Scott Mayer, Marketing Manager
Community Relations—Daytons

Mary Olson, writer and essayist, Mpls

Jason Schellack, Hamline Univ. student

Presenter

Ann DeGroot, Executive Dir., OutFront MN

Wednesday, October 11
Hyatt Regency Minneapolis

\$25 per person • \$225 per table of ten

For reservations & information

612-870-4943

NCOD@quotientgroup.com

See October 6 issue of Lavender for "Official NCOD Program"

NCOD Luncheon is supported in part by Twin Cities Quorum, The Travel Company, Lavender Magazine

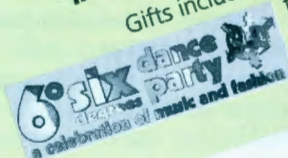
Looking for a career with a company that cares about its GLBT employees?
Check "out" your new career.



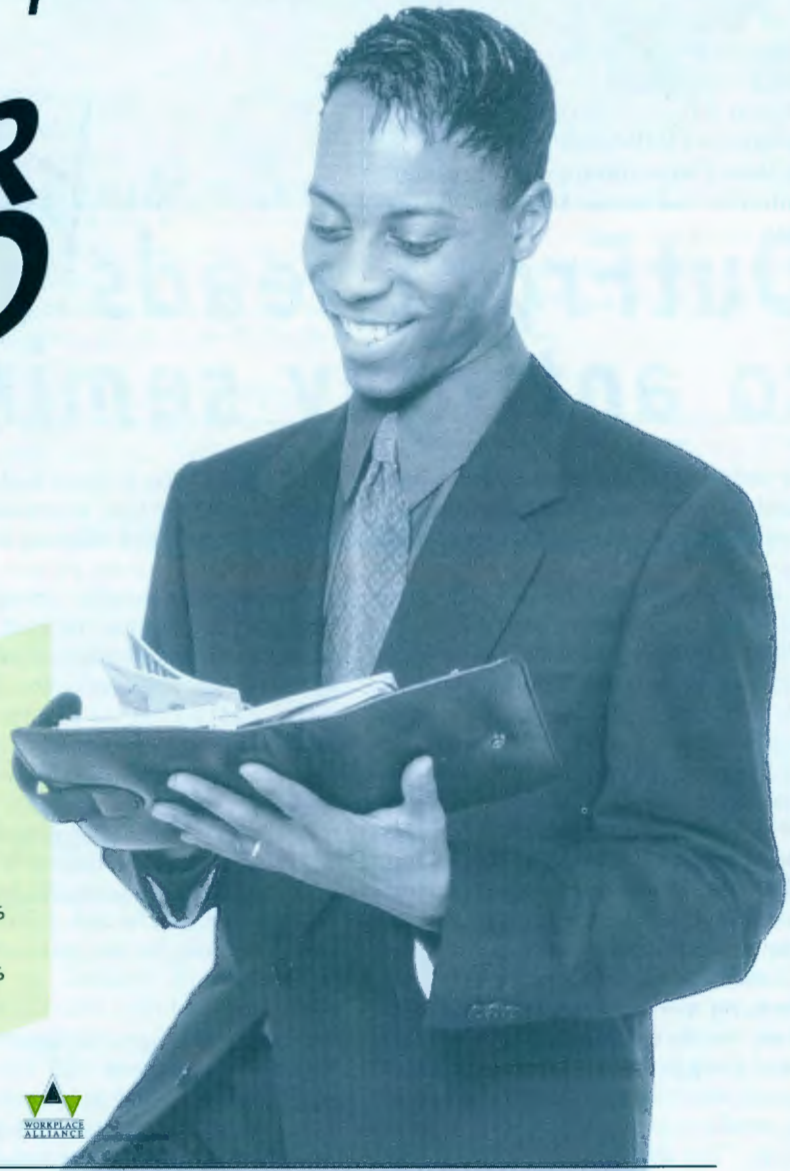
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Hyatt Regency Mpls

Bring Copies of Your Résumé

Turn in a copy of your résumé at the Information Table and get a gift!



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COMPANIES PARTICIPATING INCLUDE:

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| Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Minnesota | Health Partners | Metro Transit | State of Minnesota |
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...and others to be announced

In the October 6 edition of *Lavender*, see the Lavender Career Expo Guide, in which companies will list positions or types of positions available.

Photo by Roy Blakey



OutFront leads the response to anti-gay seminar

In early August a very unwelcome visitor arrived in Minnesota: the Colorado-based Focus on the Family brought to town its infamous "Love Won Out" seminar. The seminar, which tours the country, is widely advertised as being educational, promising to give concerned parents, teachers, school counselors and nurses, and youth workers the tools and information needed to spot the "early warning signs" of homosexuality and thus prevent it, and to help kids and teenagers get out of the "lifestyle." It is packaged as if it is a loving and viable alternative to being gay.

OutFront Minnesota saw that a strong response was called for, particularly because of the seminar's target audience. "If it were just a matter of a church group having a conference, we may not agree with the content but we wouldn't necessarily fight it," commented Doug Federhart, OutFront's Deputy Director, who worked with staff and community members to come up with a response strategy. "But the 'Love Won Out' people were trying to bring this insidious and dangerous message to an audience far outside the private domain of church. That needs to be strongly counteracted." OutFront staff then organized a four-part response.

A press conference, held on Tuesday, August 8 at Sabathani Community Center (where OutFront's offices are located), was the first stage of response. Local media personnel had the opportunity to hear from several people, including Rev. Paul Tideman, pastor of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran

(ELCA), and Jeffrey G. Ford, M.A. Since most of the "Love Won Out" conversion process is based on a so-called religious belief, Pastor Tideman spoke to point out that many, many faith-based communities strongly disagree with those premises. In turn, Mr. Ford brought an insider's view of what the so-called "change" ministries are all about: for many years, he was the director of Outpost Ministries, a conservative Christian program that promises release from homosexuality by applying "reparative therapy," prayer and peer support. Mr. Ford eventually left that organization when he realized it didn't work and was in fact damaging. He has been happily together with his male partner, whom he met at Outpost, for over thirteen years.

The second response, an educational forum, followed right after the press conference and included presentations by OutFront anti-violence program staff Rebecca Dreke and Phil Duran, and once again, Jeff Ford. Over 85 concerned individuals listened intently as Mr. Ford went into detail about his own attempts to change his sexual identity. Attendees were surprised to learn that, in addition to enforced celibacy and other tactics intended to "cure" homosexuality, genital-shock therapy is still used as a deterrent for same-sex arousal. After the presentation, OutFront Minnesota hosted a reception for all those in attendance.

Then on Thursday evening, August 10, OutFront worked with a network of people of faith to coordinate an interfaith event called "A Celebration of Our Faith and

Identities," held at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Saint Paul. "The generous outpouring of support from our religious allies was great!" said OutFront Minnesota's School Resources Coordinator, Rebecca Hostetler, who is also a former ordained Lutheran minister. "It was incredible to have over 500 people, representing so many communities of faith, stand in solidarity with the GLBT community."

Before 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 12, the last event of the week began. OutFront Minnesota staff members arrived at the intersection of County Road 96 and Old Snelling Avenue in Arden Hills to coordinate a community protest aptly entitled "Love Comes Out." With the cooperation of Ramsey County Sheriff's Deputies, one lane of the busy highway for was closed off to provide a safe place for demonstrators to walk. When the pre-registered Love Won Out attendees began arriving around 7:00 a.m. at the expansive North Heights Lutheran compound, they were peacefully greeted by over 200 members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied communities. Signs carried by the demonstrators, and some very creative chants, brought a counter-message about GLBT acceptance and understanding, letting conference participants know that there is a life-giving, affirming point of view.

Note: Mr. Ford's comments, an eye-witness report from Bob Werner of Rochester, MN, who attended Love Won Out and a statement from Senator Paul Wellstone concerning this event can all be found in the BibliothQue section of OutFront Minnesota's website, www.outfront.org.

Resolution of the Board of Directors of OutFront Minnesota (continued)

We believe...

•The Boy Scouts of America's policy forbidding participation by gay people is repugnant to the values of a pluralistic society.

•An individual's sexual orientation is irrelevant to her or his ability to serve with distinction as a role model and mentor to youth. This truth is recognized by other youth groups including such thriving, multi-million-member organizations as the Girl Scouts of the USA and Scouts Canada (Footnote 1).

•Youth who are questioning their sexuality are often frightened and self-destructive. The Boy Scouts of America's anti-gay message is dangerous and potentially destructive to these young people.

•Some young people are especially cruel to their peers if they sense that those peers are questioning their sexuality. Such abusive youth hear in the Boy Scout's anti-gay message a validation of their cruelty. In this way, the Boy Scouts of America's anti-gay message is dangerous and potentially destructive.

•Organizations whose values forbid unfair discrimination must remain true to those values. Decisions to disassociate, disaffiliate and defund the BSA should be made with the same certainty and confidence as would occur when responding to an organization that advocates bigotry against people based on their race, sex, or their religious affiliation.

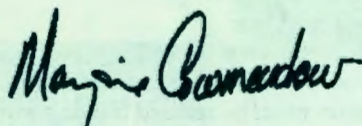
We resolve...

•We oppose taxpayer-subsidized benefits that accrue to the Boy Scouts of America, such as use of public meeting facilities and tax-exempt status; taxpayers should not be compelled to subsidize an organization that advocates unfair discrimination. We will work to educate elected leaders and candidates about this issue.

•Organizations whose purpose includes a pledge to respect diversity and end discrimination must remain true to this stated purpose especially when it becomes inconvenient or unpopular. We will work to educate such organizations about the destructive and dangerous effects of the BSA's discriminatory policy.

•We will work to support healthy alternatives for youth interested in scouting-type activities such as YWCA/YMCA, Scouting for All, and Scouts Canada.

PASSED on August 31, 2000 by unanimous vote of the Board.



Marjorie Cowmeadow, Board Chair

Footnotes:

Consider the following sampling of organizations that embrace participation by gay and lesbian people:

-**Scouts Canada** requires only that its members fall within certain age limits and take the Scout promise. The promise does not contain phrases such as in the BSA's oath to be "morally straight" which could be interpreted as prohibiting gay people. Potential Scout leaders are not asked to reveal their sexual orientation. Leaders who are determined to be gay or bisexual are not expelled. Individual Scouts who are bisexual or gay are also not expelled. See: <http://www.scouts.ca>

-**Girl Scouts of the USA** National Executive Director Marsha Johnson Evans makes the following simple statement about the Girl Scouts' openness to everyone regardless of sexual orientation: "Girl Scout Membership is open to all girls between the ages of 5 and 17, and to men and women over 18 who accept the Girl Scout law and make the Girl Scout promise." See <http://www.gsusa.org/>

-**Scouting for All** "... believes that Federal, state, and local laws should require non-discrimination on the part of public facilities, including Scouting and youth organizations, based on sexual orientation, gender, and religion." See <http://www.scoutingforall.org/>

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17
31

**SHOW YOUR
OUTFRONT MINNESOTA
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AND REAP THE BENEFITS!**

Wednesday, October 11, 2000, Noon
National Coming Out Day Luncheon
Discounted tickets for OutFront Minnesota members
Only at www.outfront.org or at 612-822-0127 ext. 611.

Friday, October 20 thru Sunday, October 29
Twin Cities GLBT Film Festival
\$1 discount on individual tickets
\$5 discount on festival passes
Show your card when purchasing

Wednesday, December 6, 2000, 5 - 8 p.m.
OutFront Minnesota Member's Holiday Party
Boom! Hosted by Miss Richfield 1981 and Santa's helpers
Show your card at the door or make a \$5 contribution

11 X LGBT Film Festival

October 20 through October 31

22 FEATURE FILMS



Saph-O-Rama Oct. 23-31
Lesbian Cult Films at Oak St.
The Children's Hour Oct. 28-29

University Film Society and the
OAK STREET CINEMA

2 VENUES

A Boy Named Sue at Bell



Queer As Folk at Bell



12 DAYS

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and \$5 off Festival passes. Call 612-627-4430 for
info. Look for our Festival Program in October!**