

Equality Virginia Presents: Virginia Transgender Information and Empowerment Summit (TIES)

Nearly 200 people attended the Virginia TIES held in Richmond this past fall. In addition to offering seminars and workshops for transgender individuals, significant others, parents of transgender youth, and advocates, Virginia TIES offered an opportunity for transgender individuals and advocates to come together in support of each other to help achieve a more inclusive commonwealth.

In Their Own Words... What Attendees Said About Virginia TIES

"Conferences like this are so important for lots of different reasons. Many people need access to resources that are provided here, and some people who want to get more involved in activism can connect with others who want to do the same. Most importantly, this is a community building tool and is a way to be there for each other and to be here with each other."

-Mara Keisling, Executive Director, National Center for Transgender Equality

"I think that Equality Virginia holding this summit marks the beginning of a movement for transgender individuals where we will no longer be scrambling for information about ourselves, and where we, as a community, will be better able to stand up for our rights."

-Aydan O'Connor, Ford

"This conference was a tremendous step forward for Virginia, and for Equality Virginia. This is really a great effort at pulling the whole community together and having some really meaningful and well informed speakers. For so many people to show up is incredible, and I think it only has room to grow. I'd love to see something like this happen on an annual basis because so many people in Virginia can't get to Philly, they can't get to Atlanta – but they can certainly get to Richmond."

-De Sube, Hampton Roads

"I am here because information for the transgender community is really hard to come by. There's a lot of really good information here today, and making contacts; talking about medical care, insurance, the political movement – it's all really important to people who are transgender. Even though in some respects, I'm done with my transition, I think it is really important to be here to support the community and to learn more about what's going on in the movement."

-Connie Rice, Leesburg

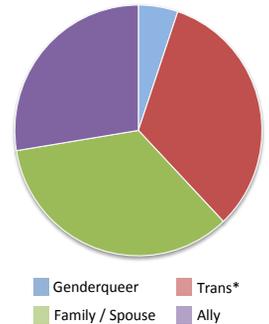
"This summit was far more than I ever expected. Every workshop humanized so many issues, and brought about much understanding. Summits like these are not only an opportunity, but a responsibility as a community."

-Bill Harrison, President and Executive Director, GCCR

2014 Virginia TIES Attendees



Self-reported Identity Composition of Attendees



Virginia TIES by the Numbers:

- ✓ 17 Sponsors and community partners
- ✓ 24 Accessed the name / gender marker change clinic
- ✓ 19 Received health care / insurance consults
- ✓ 9 Lawyers received CLE credit
- ✓ 99% of respondents would attend another TIES

Next Steps for Transgender Equality

Equality Virginia's ongoing commitment to transgender equality will emphasize administrative policy change and state level advocacy. Currently, EV is collaborating with national partners and engaging with state executive administrators to: 1) improve the process to change gender markers on birth certificates; 2) increase access to transgender inclusive health care and insurance; and, 3) establish clear and uniform guidance for protecting transgender students in Virginia public schools as required by Title IX.

In addition, EV continues to coordinate Coffee Talks, a community building and outreach program that brings together transgender advocates and LGBT-affirming faith communities in an effort to grow understanding and support for transgender people.

EV is in the process of planning the 2015 Virginia TIES, which is anticipated to reach an even broader audience, with more diversified programming and an expanded resource center. Workshops this year will include resources for youth, parents, families, faith, advocacy, transition, health, and wellness.