

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EQUALITY ILLINOIS HOSTS STRATEGY SUMMIT FOR LEADING MIDWESTERN LGBT GROUPS

CHICAGO – This past weekend, Equality Illinois hosted LGBT equality organizations from across the Midwest to discuss issues facing the LGBT community and to strategize about future tactics to advance towards full LGBT equality.

“We were honored to host colleagues from all over the Midwest and welcome them to Chicago,” Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, said. “This meeting was a wonderful opportunity to strategize about the future of the movement and to learn from each other’s efforts. It was refreshing to talk with advocates who are working across the region for the same rights and benefits that we are working for here in Illinois.”

Representatives of LGBT equality groups from ten different states gathered in Chicago to discuss such topics as safe schools initiatives, marriage equality, employment non-discrimination, senior care, fundraising and development, grassroots organizing, the 2012 election, working across party lines, social media, and engaging board members. The two-day meeting was organized by the Equality Federation, a national alliance of state-based lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organizations. The Federation works to achieve equality for LGBT people in every state by building strong and sustainable statewide organizations in a state-based movement.

“We gathered together as Midwestern states to share, support each other and strategize, and we came away stronger than ever,” Rebecca Isaacs, Executive Director of Equality Federation, said. “The Midwest has common interests and the possibilities for forward movement on LGBT issues are enormous.”

“The opportunity to meet and share strategies amongst state groups is critical to moving equality forward, whether it is on marriage, such as Illinois is likely facing soon, or bringing workplace equality to every state in the Midwest,” A.J. Bockelman, Chair of the Equality Federation Board of Directors and Executive Director of PROMO (Missouri), said.

From this meeting, Equality Illinois laid a foundation to continue interacting with its counterparts across the Midwest to hasten the fight for full LGBT equality.

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Equality Illinois was founded in 1991 to secure, protect and defend full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. It is the state’s oldest and largest LGBT advocacy organization.



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