

LGBT Justice Fund

Maine Justice Foundation

www.justicemaine.org



Justice for all in Maine? Not yet...

But with your help,
we can make it happen for LGBT people.

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Imagine having your house, your health benefits or even your children taken away. You feel helpless. You don't know what to do or where to turn for help.

Now imagine you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. Your situation just became more difficult and risky. And if you don't have the income to get legal representation, you are left with virtually no place to turn.

The movement for full equality for LGBT people has seen incredible progress in a short time. But there are still many threats to the laws that protect LGBT people. Laws only matter if they work.

Not only do they face discrimination in employment and housing. They also find that current laws do not address their specific need and concerns.

We must make sure that every LGBT person has access to justice. They ought to be able to rely on civil legal aid providers to get them the help they deserve. We need to be sure that they know how to get the services they need. Are they aware of the rights they have? Do they know how to defend themselves?

From domestic violence and custody battles to evictions and restraining orders, most Americans have no idea that there is no constitutional right to a lawyer. And while these types of situations can be devastating for anyone, it's particularly tragic for LGBT people living in poverty. Poverty issues have a disproportionate impact on LGBT people.

Civil legal aid is the only safety net for thousands of Maine residents each year who find themselves in desperate need of legal assistance, but cannot afford it. The dedicated people providing civil legal aid don't have enough resources to help everyone who needs it. They are forced to turn away many deserving people looking for aid.

The Young and the Old

Young LGBT people are especially vulnerable. Rejected by their families they face homelessness, loss of health-care and other essentials. Even when families accept them and provide a loving home, at-risk youth find a world that is discriminatory - and worse. LGBT youth and the children of LGBT parents experience harassment and discrimination regularly in institutions like schools and welfare programs.

LGBT teens and young adults have one of the highest rates of suicide attempts. According to some groups, this is linked to heterocentric cultures and institutionalised homophobia.

Aging LGBT individuals and couples are concerned about social and geographic isolation, declining health, the risks of financial fraud and elder abuse, the complexities of the health care system and the availability of services to help them stay safe in their homes and communities. These concerns are compounded by fears their sexual orientation will affect the personal care and other services they need, both at home and in an assisted-living or nursing home setting. These fears are not groundless.

Poverty is an LGBT issue

January 2016. Legal Services NYC recently conducted a first-of-its-kind survey among low-income LGBT New Yorkers.

The results were published in a report called *Poverty Is an LGBT Issue*, which encompasses the responses of more than 300 low-income LGBT community members who filled out a needs assessment. The report's authors found that being both poor and LGBT posed specific challenges and amplified the respondents' needs for legal services to battle discrimination, find housing, secure benefits, and protect their safety.

From www.takepart.com.

THE LGBT JUSTICE FUND

Bill Robitzek was a successful trial lawyer for over 35 years before starting his current practice as a mediator, arbitrator and trial consultant. As a Bar Fellow and president elect of the Maine Justice Foundation, he has clearly seen the need for justice for all, especially for LGBT people.

So Bill decided to do something. He created the **LGBT Justice Fund** at the Maine Justice Foundation.

This important endowment will provide funding for nonprofit organizations that address the civil legal aid needs of LGBT Mainers.

A Grant making committee will make the recommendations each year for the distributions of grants from the endowment. The committee will include representative founders, grants committee members of the Foundation, and people involved in the work supporting LGBT people.

The **LGBT Justice Fund** will be pooled and invested with all the funds of the Maine Justice Foundation. The foundation's investment policy will guide the investment management of the Fund.

Importantly, the **LGBT Justice Fund** is designed to provide an ongoing source of income and to last for generations. When funding sources are scarce, this fund will still be providing support for LGBT people.

Be a Founder

Create your legacy of support for LGBT Mainers

Bill wants to build a significant endowment and invites you to join him in this vital effort.

Become a founder of the **LGBT Justice Fund** of the Maine Justice Foundation.

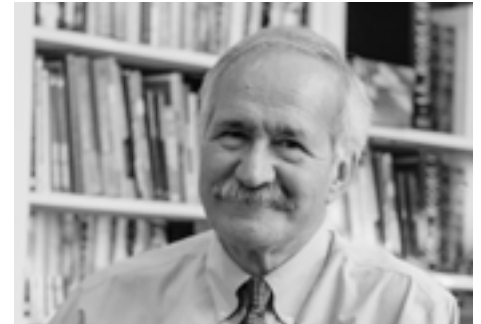
Be a leader in this effort to fund civil legal aid providers addressing the particular needs of LGBT people. Create a legacy of your support for LGBT people who need your help now and will need your help into the future.

With your commitment to justice and your charitable investment in this special fund, we can increase funding for legal aid programs that help the neediest of LGBT Maine residents who face life-altering civil legal issues.

Resources are severely limited. We need your help now.

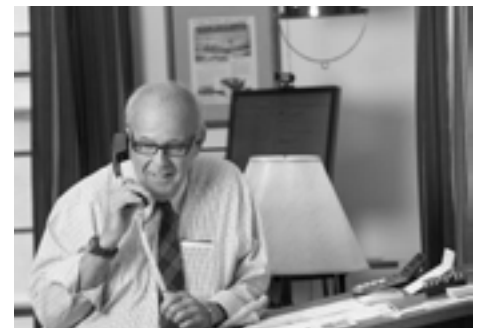
YOU can provide a critical safety net through the **LGBT Justice Fund**.

Join Bill and his co-founders, Sarah McDaniel, Arnie Macdonald and Jon Doyle, to ensure civil legal aid for Maine's most vulnerable LGBT people now and for decades to come.



"The concerns of the LGBT community are personal to me and my family. This fund will help to address some of those concerns for poor and vulnerable LGBT Mainers."

Bill Robitzek



"Being a lawyer is about setting things right. It's fundamental to an attorney's work."

I want to help set things right for the LGBT community. That's why I'm one of the Founders of the LGBT Justice Fund. "

Jon Doyle
Augusta ME

