



For Immediate Release

Identity
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Report shows discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Alaskans.

Anchorage, AK, Nov. 10, 2011 -- The non-profit group Identity released today preliminary results of a study conducted this year about discrimination in Anchorage's lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) community. The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey's initial results indicate members of the LGBT community in Anchorage continue to experience significant levels of discrimination in areas of employment, housing, education, public services and child custody as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity or presentation. They also experience high levels of verbal harassment and physical violence.

"Unfortunately, we know discrimination within the LGBT community continues to be a problem in Anchorage as it does in other communities across the country," stated Phyllis Rhodes, Executive Director of Identity. "The survey will help us quantify the problems we face so we can work to eliminate discrimination in our community as a whole."

In the area of employment, 44 percent of respondents reported being harassed by employers or other employees; nearly 21 percent believed they were turned down for a job when otherwise qualified; almost 18 percent were denied a promotion and close to 15 percent said they were fired by their employer based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

In housing, over 18 percent of respondents reported being harassed by a landlord or other tenants, and more than 10 percent said they were denied a housing lease, even though they were otherwise qualified, because they were LGBT.

The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey also shows that roughly three out of four survey respondents experienced verbal abuse, and nearly 43 percent were subjected to threats of physical violence. Further, almost 13 percent experienced property damage because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Melissa S. Green was the principal investigator for the project and authored the preliminary report released today. Green was also part of two similar research efforts in the 1980s conducted by Identity to document sexual orientation bias and discrimination in Alaska. The new study added transgender Alaskans to the survey and was conducted between January and March of this year, and involved paper and online surveys collected from 268 respondents in



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Anchorage who identified themselves as being LGBT. The project was designed by members of the Alaska LGBT Community Survey Task Force in consultation with Dr. Brad A. Myrstol and Khristy Parker of the Justice Center at University of Alaska Anchorage. Dr. Myrstol also assisted with statistical analysis.

Identity is an Anchorage-based, non-profit organization founded in 1977, and provides programs supporting equality for the LGBT community and its allies. The complete report from the Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey will be released in December 2011.

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A copy of the complete preliminary report is available online at www.identityinc.org
or www.alaskacommunity.org.

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