



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**JULY 1, 2013 – JUNE 30, 2014**

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund  
203 S. Paterson Street, Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703  
(608) 441-0143  
E-mail: [info@fairwisconsin.com](mailto:info@fairwisconsin.com)  
Web: [fairwisconsineducationfund.com](http://fairwisconsineducationfund.com)

Copies of our most recent annual report are available to the public on our website at [fairwisconsineducationfund.com](http://fairwisconsineducationfund.com).

## STAFF

Katie Belanger, President & CEO

Megin McDonell, External Relations Director

John Smallwood, Advocacy & Organizing Director

Breianna Hasenzahl-Reeder, Development Manager

Auston McLain, Southeast Regional Program Manager

Marilyn Beckman, Accountant

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shannon Anderson, Madison, Chair

Rachel Strauch-Nelson, Madison, Vice-Chair

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Robert Starshak, Fox Point, Immediate Past Chair

Eyon Biddle Sr., Milwaukee

Virginia (Ginny) R. Finn, Milwaukee (Former Vice-Chair, term ended March 2014)

F. M. (Mike) Fitzpatrick, Green Bay

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Helen Boyd Kramer, Appleton

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Willem (Will) Van Roosenbeek, La Crosse

# OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Fair Wisconsin envisions a fair, safe, and inclusive society in which lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are treated with dignity and respect.

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund works to build a fair, safe, and inclusive Wisconsin for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people by advancing, achieving, and protecting LGBT civil rights and workplace equality through education, movement capacity building, grassroots organizing, civic engagement, research, and legal challenge preparation.

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund carries out this mission in accordance with the following values:

- We value human dignity.
- We recognize, respect, and celebrate the diversity within the LGBT community.
- We believe LGBT and allied people should shape and inform the work of our organization to ensure we are responsive and accountable to the people we serve.
- We believe a multi-issue approach is necessary to address the diverse challenges facing the LGBT community.
- We believe social, racial, and economic justice are key intersectional issues that impact LGBT people and their families.
- We believe change is possible through strategic public engagement.
- We believe in developing strategic collaborations, partnerships, and coalitions with LGBT and allied organizations.
- We believe in maintaining and expanding our statewide presence.
- We believe in building organizational infrastructure to support the capacity of the LGBT equality movement.

# HISTORY AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund (FWEF) was formed in 2002 as a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to educate the general public about the harms of discrimination toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and build more inclusive communities and workplaces for LGBT Wisconsinites. FWEF employs education, movement capacity building, grassroots organizing, civic engagement, research, and legal challenge preparation to reach these goals.

In 2006, FWEF and Fair Wisconsin Inc. organized a massive effort and diverse coalition to fight Wisconsin's constitutional amendment banning marriage equality and civil unions. We educated hundreds of thousands of citizens about the dangerous effects of the amendment, built a statewide sustainable grassroots infrastructure and developed relationships with key elected officials around the state. Unfortunately the amendment passed, but the foundation we built during the campaign in every community in the state left us in a strong position to accomplish our ultimate goal of equality for LGBT Wisconsinites.

In 2009, we built another coalition with our national and regional allies to protect domestic partners. Wisconsin became the first state in the Midwest to protect same-sex couples via legislation and made us the first state with an existing constitutional amendment banning both marriage equality and civil unions to enact domestic partnerships.

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund, represented by Lambda Legal, became the sole intervening party in a lawsuit challenging the domestic partnership registry in 2010. Wisconsin Family Action and the Alliance Defense Fund asserted that the registry violated our state's constitutional ban on marriage equality and civil unions. In June of 2011, the Dane County Circuit Court upheld the registry in a strong victory for fairness. Our opponents appealed that decision, which was upheld in December 2012. A subsequent appeal was filed with the Wisconsin State Supreme Court, which accepted the case in June 2013, and ultimately upheld the constitutionality of the domestic partnership registry in a unanimous decision of the Court in July 2014.

Since that time, Fair Wisconsin has played a critical role in advancing equality in local communities, including the passage of domestic partner benefits for gay and lesbian employees in Milwaukee County and the cities of Appleton, Racine, Manitowoc, Eau Claire, Kenosha, Janesville, Stevens Point and many others. We also supported a successful bipartisan effort to protect an inclusive pupil nondiscrimination law from repeal in late 2011, and the passage of fully inclusive nondiscrimination ordinances in Milwaukee County, and the Cities of Appleton and Cudahy in 2014.

In June 2013, Fair Wisconsin merged with another successful Wisconsin LGBT education and advocacy organization, Equality Wisconsin, a co-founder of the 2006 Fair Wisconsin campaign. Originally incorporated as Center Advocates in 2001, this organization included elements of the LGBT Alliance for Equality and the Human Rights League. The organization changed its name to Equality Wisconsin in 2009 to better reflect its mission. As part of this merger, the Equality Wisconsin Fund (formed in 2008) officially merged with Fair Wisconsin Education Fund.

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund is a member agency of Community Shares of Wisconsin and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee. With a statewide board of directors and a full-time staff, Fair Wisconsin Education Fund is also the Badger state's representative in the Equality Federation, the strategic partner to state-based organizations advancing equality for LGBT people in the communities we call home.

## **WISCONSIN LGBT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

In January 2012, Fair Wisconsin Education Fund launched the Annual Wisconsin LGBT Leadership Conference, entitled "Connecting Leaders, Advancing the Movement. This new and innovative program seeks to build a more skilled and connected network of LGBT and allied activists across Wisconsin. For our inaugural event, we gathered over 150 leaders from across the state to join our keynote speaker and nationally recognized transgender activist, Chaz Bono.

In 2013, FWEF formed a partnership with Diverse and Resilient to present this annual gathering, significantly increasing both the number and diversity of participants, with expanded programming. This partnership arose from the recognition by both organizations that we are engaged in similar efforts to advance LGBT equality through leadership development.

In February 2014, we launched the first-of-its-kind Trans\* Leadership Institute at the 2014 Wisconsin LGBT Leadership Conference. The purpose of the Trans\* Leadership Institute (T\*LI) is to build a more trans\* inclusive movement for equality by bringing leaders, activists, significant others, friends, families and allies together from around the state to work on creating policy, legislation and environments that are inclusive of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

More information about this annual event can be found online at <http://wilgbtleadership.org/>.

## SOURCE AND USE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund is grateful for the generous support of the State Equality Fund, The Brico Fund, Otto Bremer Foundation, Plymouth Church of Milwaukee, Cream City Foundation, and numerous private individual donors.

Fair Wisconsin Education Fund accepts unrestricted gifts of cash or check, payroll deductions, publicly traded securities, and bequests. Other gifts are subject to approval.

### EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 243,603
Management and General	\$ 76,304
Fundraising	\$ 56,009
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Total Expenses	\$ 375,916