



# ReachOut e-Diversity News

An Electronic Publication of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

## June is Pride Month!

1. Unique Challenges for LGBTQ
2. Recommendations
3. Interview with Michael Denlinger
4. Ohio's Equality Profile

June 2021 Edition | Volume 16, Issue 3

Read, Pass on to Friends,  
Family Members, Colleagues  
& Constituents



Don't  
Miss an  
Issue!

It is the policy of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council to use person-first language in items written by staff. Items reprinted or quoted exactly as they originally appear may not reflect this policy.

## June is Pride Month!

This month is a time dedicated to celebrating and supporting the LGBTQ+ community. Whether you identify as LGBTQ or are an ally, there is evidence that more work is needed to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including LGBTQ individuals, have full and equal access in American society.



Learn more about Pride Month 2021

***An estimated 3-5 million LGBTQ individuals have disabilities\****

This month's Reach Out e-Diversity edition offers an understanding of the challenges the LGBTQ individuals with disabilities face, shares recommendations for advancing equality and opportunity for LGBTQ individuals with disabilities, identifies the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) Chair's priorities, and provides Ohio's LGBTQ Equality Profile.



You are invited to ACT  
SHARE this information with others  
INCREASE AWARENESS of LGBTQ individuals with  
disabilities needs and challenges

## Unique Challenges for LGBTQ Individuals with Disabilities



Accessing affordable, accessible, and inclusive health care, community services, and more is challenging for LGBTQ individuals with disabilities. This is particularly true for individuals in rural communities. Not only are individuals living in rural areas more likely to have disabilities, but the distances needed to travel to find LGBTQ competent and fully accessible service providers, community programming, and more places LGBTQ individuals with disabilities in rural communities at a greater risk for isolation and increased discrimination.

[-READ MORE-](#)

## Recommendations for Advancing Equality & Opportunity for LGBTQ Individuals with Disabilities

**Fulfilling the promise of the law.** This means improving access to good jobs, to accessible housing, to inclusive and competent medical care, and to public spaces through enforcement of and education about existing laws such as the ADA and state nondiscrimination laws. Raising the wages paid to people with disabilities is also critical to improving the economic opportunity for individuals with disabilities.

[-READ MORE-](#)



## Interview with Michael Denlinger, Chair, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council



Michael Denlinger brings passion, purpose, and commitment to his new role as Chair, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC). During this interview, it is evident that he is prepared to use his voice to influence others to support his call to action. He envisions creating a more inclusive and better place for all individuals with disabilities, closing the gaps experienced by un/underserved populations with disabilities, including LGBTQ+ individuals with disabilities.

[-READ MORE-](#)

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## Ohio's Equality Profile



Movement Advancement Project's "LGBTQ Policy Tally" examines Ohio's LGBTQ policy climate, as measured by over 35 pro or anti LGBTQ laws and policies. These laws are grouped into seven major categories: relationship and parental recognition; non-discrimination; religious exemptions; LGBTQ youth; healthcare; criminal justice; and the ability for transgender people to correct name and gender markers on identity documents. [-READ MORE-](#)

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\*Current estimates suggest there are between 9-11 million LGBTQ adults in the United States. If approximately one in four have a disability, the Movement Advancement Partnership (MAP) estimates there are between 3-5 million LGBTQ people with a disability.

### Did You Know?

**LGBT Pride Month is celebrated every year in June.**

**The month of June was chosen for LGBT Pride Month to commemorate the riots held by members of the LGBT community against a police raid that took place at the Stonewall Inn in New York City on June 28, 1969.**

**The so-called Stonewall riots were a "tipping point" for the gay liberation movement in the United States, according to the Library of Congress. The uproar also paved the way for the modern fight for LGBT rights.**

**Previous U.S. presidents have, on several occasions, officially declared June as LGBT Pride Month.**



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**CALL TO ACTION!**  
**...from the ODDC!**



**Time for consumers to let the Council know about your satisfaction.** Your feedback is important to us.

The Council will use it to:

- provide information to plan for systems change
- document Council's effectiveness
- meet the Office of Management and Budget Performance and Results act funder requirements



Fatica Diana Ayers,  
ODDC Council Staff

**Heads Up!**

Have you received services from any of the following grants?

- Better Child Care for the Student with Developmental Disabilities
- SOAR Ohio Project & OSILCs
- Change Makes Sense
- Empowering Self Advocates- SIL
- Expanding The Amish Community Project
- DD Awareness & Advocacy Day
- Communication to Increase Public Awareness for People with Developmental Disabilities



***If yes, be on the lookout for communication from Carly Zehr, Nisonger Center, The Ohio State University.***

**You will be invited to participate in the survey process and provided options.**

Phone



Email



Video Conference

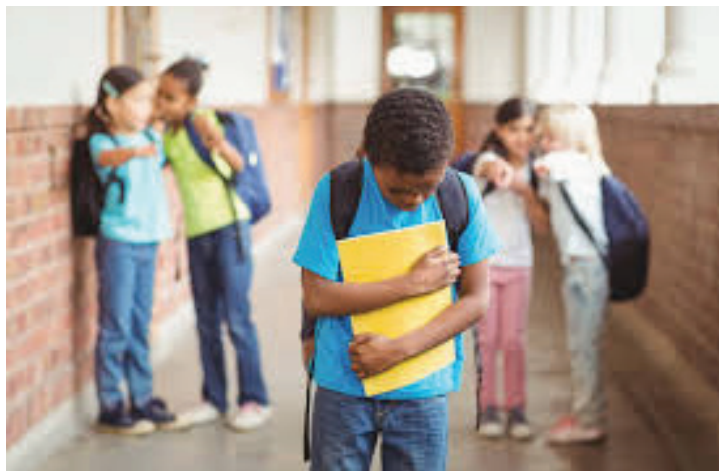


Need help !!!! OR got questions?????  
CONTACT: [Fatica.ayers@dodd.ohio.gov](mailto:Fatica.ayers@dodd.ohio.gov).



## Unique Challenges for LGBTQ Individuals with Disabilities

**Limited access to LGBTQ-inclusive and fully accessible services.** Accessing affordable, accessible, and inclusive health care, community services, and more is challenging for LGBTQ individuals with disabilities. This is particularly true for individuals in rural communities. Not only are individuals living in rural areas more likely to have disabilities, but the distances needed to travel to find LGBTQ competent and fully accessible service providers, community programming, and more places LGBTQ individuals with disabilities in rural communities at a greater risk for isolation and increased discrimination. (RTC: Rural, Rural Institute, University of Montana. "Research that Leads to Solutions for Rural Americans with Disabilities." 2017)



**Bullying and exclusion for LGBTQ youth with disabilities.** An estimated 26% of LGBTQ students were bullied or harassed at school because of an actual or perceived disability. (Kosciw, J.G., Greytak, E.A., Zongrone, A.D., C.M. & Truong, N.L. *The 2017 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation's schools.* New York: GLSEN). LGBTQ students with disabilities are more likely to be disciplined in school and to drop out of schools, compared to LGBTQ

students without disabilities (*Educational exclusion: Drop out, push out, and school-to-prison pipeline among LGBTQ youth.* 2016 New York: GLSEN)



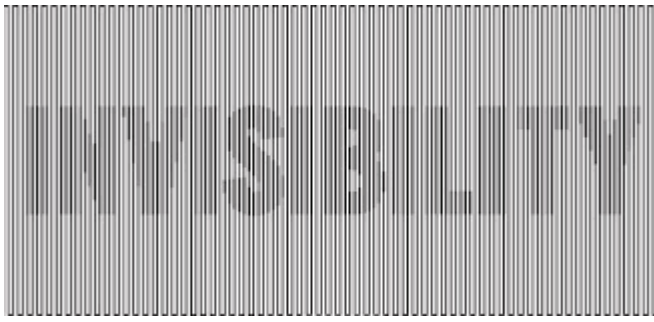
**Added barriers to employment.** People with disabilities report incredibly high rates of unemployment discrimination and unemployment. In 2017, only 36% of adults with a disability were employed compared to 77% of those without a disability. *(2018 Annual Report on People with Disabilities in*

*America)* This discrimination compounded by the discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as racial and ethnic discrimination means that LGBTQ people with disabilities may struggle to find and keep jobs, and to access support services like unemployment benefits, leaving them and their families economically insecure. *(Rooney, C., Whittington, C., & Durso, L.E., 2018. Protecting Basic Living Standards for LGBTQ People Center for American Progress)*

**Overrepresented in the juvenile and criminal justice systems.** Emerging research finds that LGBTQ and gender nonconforming youth are greatly overrepresented in the criminal and juvenile justice systems, as are people with disabilities and people of color. For example, over 40% of incarcerated women and nearly 60% of girls in juvenile justice facilities are sexual minorities, *(Wilson, B.D.M. et al. 2017. Disproportionality and disparities among Sexual Minority Youth in Custody, Journal of Youth and Adolescence 46 (7): 1547-1561)* with as many as 85% of LGBTQ youth being youth of color *(Irvine, Angela and Canfield, Aisha, 2017. Reflections on New National Data on LGBTQ/GNCT Youth in the Justice System.” LGBTQ Policy Journal).*



Recent estimates show that 32% of people in prison and 40% of those in jails have at least one disability *(Bronson, J, et al., Disabilities among Prison and Jail Inmates, Bureau of Justice Statistics)*. Given these high rates, it is likely that LGBTQ people and youth with disabilities comprise a large share of populations in the nation’s prisons, jails, and juvenile detention facilities.



**Invisibility within both communities.** LGBTQ individuals with disabilities often report that it is challenging to have their identities fully recognized. In spaces focused on disability, their unique experience as LGBTQ individuals may not be recognized. In LGBTQ spaces, services and facilities may not be inclusive or accessible, including accessible buildings or restrooms, ASL interpretation and/or CART captioning for deaf or

hard of hearing people, and more (*Movement Advancement Project and CenterLink, 2018. "2018 LGBTQ Community Center Survey Report).*

**LGBTQ people are more likely to experience mental health conditions that can impact daily life.** Mental health conditions can potentially impact a person's daily life to such an extent that it is a disability in the eyes of the law, medical professionals, and/or the individual living with that condition. Research finds that LGBTQ individuals are more likely to have a mental health disorder in their lifetimes, including mood disorders such as depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. A growing body of research



links experiences of discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, as well as race, ethnicity, and disability status, prejudice, barriers to competent health care, lower rates of health insurance, poverty, experiences of violence, and more to these health disparities (*Meyer, I.H., 2003. Prejudice, social stress and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations, conceptual issues and research evidence. Psychological Bulletin 129:674-97).*



**Take Action**

Identify an action that you can take to address one of the challenges LGBTQ individuals with disabilities face. Post the action you took on ODDC social media platforms.



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## Recommendations for Advancing Equality and Opportunity for LGBTQ Individuals with Disabilities

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**Fulfilling the promise of the law.** This means improving access to good jobs, to accessible housing, to inclusive and competent medical care, and to public spaces through enforcement of and education about existing laws such as the ADA and state nondiscrimination laws. Raising the wages paid to people with disabilities is also critical to improving the economic opportunity for individuals with disabilities.



**Advancing legal equality for LGBTQ individuals with disabilities.** Explicit protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are needed in all areas of life including employment, housing, education, public accommodations, and credit. Legislations such as the Equality Act would update our federal laws to prohibit such discrimination, just as the ADA did for discrimination based on disability and HIV status.



**Improving accessibility of LGBTQ spaces and inclusion of LGBTQ individuals with disabilities in LGBTQ communities.** LGBTQ community centers, health centers, websites, and other spaces must be accessible to people with disabilities. Explicit efforts to include and center LGBTQ individuals with disabilities in community meetings, in LGBTQ organizations, and in decision making about community needs are needed.





**Providing paid time family and sick leave.** People with disabilities, LGBTQ individuals and LGBTQ individuals with disabilities are more likely to take time off from work to care for a loved one, so paid sick leave with an expansive definition of family is a critical issue.



**Expanding data collection and reporting to center the experiences of LGBTQ individuals of color with disabilities and others.** With limited data about the experiences of both LGBTQ individuals of color and individuals of color with disabilities- let alone LGBTQ individuals of color with disabilities, more and improved data collections and analyses are needed. Advocates, researchers, and policymakers should expand their notions of who are people living with disabilities and center the experiences of those who are often left out.



**Reducing policing of communities of color and improving training for law enforcement engagement with people with disabilities including LGBTQ people and people of color.** People with disabilities and people of color, and especially people of color with disabilities are particularly at risk for violence by police. Research finds that LGBTQ individuals, particularly LGBTQ individuals of color, are more likely to have negative interactions with police. Law enforcement needs training with skills to de-escalate situations and to improve connections with mental health professionals.



**SHARE** this article with individuals and/or organizations that can take action on at least one of these recommendations. Post the number times you shared this article on ODDC social media platforms.



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## Passion, Purpose, Commitment

**Michael Denlinger,**  
Chair, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

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Michael Denlinger brings passion, purpose, and commitment to his new role as Chair, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC). During this interview, it is evident that he is prepared to use his voice to influence others to support his call to action. He envisions creating a more inclusive and better place for all individuals with disabilities, closing the gaps experienced by un/underserved populations with disabilities, including LGBTQ+ individuals with disabilities.

Michael Denlinger is committed to “making a difference”- leaving an indelible footprint that will impact future generations.

**Q** Within 3 years of you being a new Council member and identifying that you were gay, you find yourself serving now as the Chair. What actions did you take to ensure that you were not just at the Council table but that your voice was heard?

**A** When I am passionate, I am vocal, and I speak up. I joined the Council because I was passionate about advocating for all people with disabilities. After finding the courage to share my personal identity, it was scary. I did not know how Council members and others would react. But I stayed true to what was important. The staff and Council always was willing to listen, and I found support and encouragement from other members of the disability community. This energized me to continue being vocal and acting.

**Q** Now that you are Chair, what are your priorities to ensure that the Council values diversity?

**A** My priorities are to ensure that the Council continues to function well; all voices are heard, and everyone has a seat at the table; the Council is able to show that we care and everyone is important to us. I think this starts with making sure all voices are represented on the Council. For example, we serve the Somali population and to my



knowledge there has not been a representative from that population on the Council. *Reaching out to the Governor's office to ensure nominations are diverse is a major priority.*

**Q** What efforts do you think the Council needs to take to ensure that there is equity of treatment and focus with regards to the un/underserved populations of people with disabilities?

**A** I think it starts with me. If I want people to feel important and their voice counts, then as Chair of the Council, I feel that I must provide them with the opportunity to reach out to me. I want to be as accessible as I can to everyone. So, wherever I go, I have provided my contact information to include my phone and email address. And people have reached out and shared their issues and concerns. If you are reading this and have an issue, concern or question, I invite you to reach out right now and let the Council hear from you. [Click here to do so](#). Also, when I first joined the Council, a former Board member took me under her wings and helped me to understand how to build relationships and navigate the Council. I benefitted greatly from that mentoring. Now I want to do the same. I want to mentor others and encourage those reading this to do the same.

***We all have a personal responsibility to make sure those coming behind us are prepared to pick up the mantle and pay forward.***

**Q** What do you see as the most challenging aspects of the Council's work toward getting feedback from the un/underserved populations with disabilities?

**A** You might find this an unusual response, but I believe the primary challenge is building trust.



When people have been asked in the past to share and then did not feel they were heard, that creates distrust. When promises are made and not kept, that creates distrust. Over time, when distrust builds, it is difficult to get people to engage. When you say something, you must mean it. Your actions must match your words. You cannot say “I’m here for you” and then do not reach out nor return calls.

***I am committed to leading by example.***

I also believe Council must be aware that many of the people we want to reach live in rural areas and the internet is not easily accessible. Hence, use of technology must not be our primary method of outreach for all populations. We need to identify the preferred methods of communication depending upon the populations that need to be included in our conversations.

**Q** What would you like to see be your legacy at the end of your term serving as the Council Chair?

**A** All voices of un/underserved populations with disabilities are valued, heard, and represented including LGBTQ individuals with disabilities.

There are some areas of our state that have never been represented on Council. During my tenure, my goal is to ensure individuals with disabilities from all areas of the state are represented. Also, I want to cast a spotlight on advocacy by focusing on un/underserved populations with disabilities in these areas in future Council meetings. My goal is to find new ways to make sure that un/underserved populations with disabilities know that Council exists and cares.

***At the end of my term, I want to have made a difference that changes the Council's trajectory and offers opportunity for future generations to build upon and champion forward.***



### **Increase Awareness**

I invite you to join me in making a difference. Do something that increases awareness of the needs and challenges of un/underserved individuals with disabilities, including LGBTQ individuals. Let others know what you did by sharing your story on ODDC's social media platforms.

**NOTE:** This interview was facilitated by Patricia Larkins Hicks, Ph.D., Reach Out e-Diversity Newsletter Grantee, the Outcomes Management Group, LTD



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## Ohio's Equality Profile

Movement Advancement Project, 2021.  
"State Equality Profile, Ohio."



### Quick Facts About Ohio

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Percent of Adults (18+) Who are LGBTQ:          | <b>4.3%</b> ( <i>Gallup/Williams 2019</i> )     |
| Total LGBTQ Population (13+):                   | <b>462,000</b> ( <i>Williams, 2020</i> )        |
| Percentage of Workforce That is LGBTQ:          | <b>5%</b> ( <i>Census 2018; Williams 2020</i> ) |
| Total LGBTQ Workers:                            | <b>298,000</b> ( <i>Williams 2020</i> )         |
| Percent of LGBTQ Adults (25+) Raising Children: | <b>30%</b> ( <i>Gallup/Williams 2019</i> )      |

[Click here for more detailed information about Ohio](#)

### Ohio's LGBTQ Policy Tally

MAP's "LGBTQ Policy Tally" examines Ohio's LGBTQ policy climate, as measured by over 35 pro or anti LGBTQ laws and policies. These laws are grouped into seven major categories: relationship and parental recognition; non-discrimination; religious exemptions; LGBTQ youth; healthcare; criminal justice; and the ability for transgender people to correct name and gender markers on identity documents.

Overall Tally: **4/75/38.5 [LOW]**  
Sexual Orientation Policy Tally: **3.75/18.5 [LOW]**

### City and County Numbers

**1** county out of **88** has an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

**33** cities have an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

**30%** of the state population is protected against discrimination based on sexual orientation in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

An additional **2%** of the state population is protected against discrimination based on sexual orientation in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

Gender Identity Policy Tally: **1/20 [LOW]**

### City and County Numbers

**1** county out of **88** has an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

**33** cities have an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

**30%** of the state population is protected against discrimination based on gender identity in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

An additional **1%** of the state population is protected against discrimination based on gender identity in private employment, housing, and public accommodations (full protections).

[Click Here to Access LGBTQ Policy Spotlight Report](#)



### TAKE ACTION

Download the LGBTQ Policy Spotlight Report and identify your county's rating.

Post on ODDC's social media platforms your discovery.



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