

Toledo resigns helm at successful post of NGLTF

by David Elliot
Special to Q-Notes

WASHINGTON, DC — The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force announced April 20 that Elizabeth Toledo has chosen



Elizabeth Toledo

not to renew her contract as the group's executive director and is resigning her position effective May 18. In announcing the decision, Toledo expressed appreciation for the "talented and passionate staff at NGLTF."

Under Toledo's leadership the NGLTF Policy Institute published three reports on major issues affecting the GLBT community: "Transgender Equality: A Handbook for Activists and Policy Makers;" "Outing Age: Public Policy Issues Affecting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Elderly;" and "Redistricting: A Strategy Memo."

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Jerry Clark, Co-Chair of the NGLTF Board of Directors said, "It is with great sadness and regret that we accept Elizabeth's resignation. She made significant strides for the Task Force. We thank her for her accomplishments and dedication during the last year, and we are confident that she will continue to be a voice of progressive leadership in the movement."

In her letter of resignation, Toledo indicated that her decision was based on the needs of her family: "Months ago when my mother's illness became progressively worse," she wrote, "Cindy and I realized that we needed to commit more time to family matters. We can no longer delay our relocation closer to my family, and we can no longer commit to a rigorous travel schedule that takes us away from family matters."

"I have strived to be unapologetic in my need to devote time and emotional energy to my family, and I hope that, by example, I have been able to make our movement more sensitive to leaders with families." ▼

Families United Against Hate seeks help for NC family

by Clay Ollis
Q-Notes Staff

RALEIGH, NC — Families United Against Hate (FUAH), a new national organization launched by Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) and others, is working closely with PFLAG of the Triangle and the national PFLAG organization to obtain assistance for a North Carolina family. This lesbian couple, who reside with their four children in a rural area of the state, is currently being threatened and harassed by a male relative. Local law enforcement has been pointedly non-supportive and sometimes blatantly hostile.

After seeing the national PFLAG phone

number on television, the couple called for help. The Triangle PFLAG chapter has been hard at work supporting the family and identifying resources in the area to help the couple, including various shelters and a local religious congregation.

Unfortunately the situation has escalated to the point where the family is no longer safe in their home and will need to move. The family will need approximately \$2000 for moving expenses. This includes hiring someone to move their trailer (which they own) to a new piece of land and getting their utilities connected. Once the family is safely relocated, PFLAG and FUAH will be working with Lambda Legal

Defense and Education Fund to pursue legal remedies.

FUAH is requesting financial contributions to help this family secure a safe home for their children. Emmaus Metropolitan Community Church has generously offered to collect and pass on any donations received. All check should be made payable to Emmaus MCC, designated "PFLAG family safety fund," and mailed to P.O. Box 346, Fayetteville, NC 28302-0346. FUAH and PFLAG thank you for your support. ▼

[Questions about this request should be directed to PFLAG of the Triangle or to Lisa Weiner-Mahfuz, PFLAG central field manager (lwmahfuz@pflag.org) or TC Duong, PFLAG east field manager (tduong@pflag.org) at the PFLAG national office (202-467-8180). For more information about FUAH, visit their web site, claytoly.tripod.com/fuah.htm.]

Home Depot opposes addition of sexual orientation to hiring policy

by Clay Ollis
Q-Notes Staff

ATLANTA — Stockholders of the worlds largest home improvement retailer will consider a proposal to amend Home Depot's equal employment opportunity policy to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation at the stockholder meeting May 30 in Atlanta.

In the proxy distributed to stockholders in advance of the meeting, company leadership recommends that stockholders vote against the proposal. The company states that the proposal is "not necessary," and that current stated policy "mirrors the categories required by federal laws." The current written policy prohibits discrimination based on color, race, age, sex, national origin, religion or disability.

Proponents of the policy revision explain in the proxy that though Home Depot claims to prohibit discrimination, "its written policies do not explicitly bar discrimination based on sexual orientation." They also argue the financial benefit of "preventing discrimination and resolving complaints internally so as to avoid costly litigation and damage to its reputation as an

equal opportunity employer."

Home Depot is among several Georgia-based companies targeted by the Georgia Equality Project in an attempt to get them to provide domestic partner benefits. (That list also included Wachovia Bank, recently acquired by NC-based First Union.)

Harry Knox, Executive Director of Georgia Equality Project, said in an interview with Atlanta's Southern Voice that "coming out specifically as a corporation against naming sexual orientation as a non-discrimination category" belies their verbal claims of inclusiveness.

"They are, in this action, specifically choosing to leave us out," Knox told Southern Voice.

Last year, according to the proxy, the company extended some family benefits to domestic partners and dependents, including providing leave equal to what is provided by the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as relocation expenses, bereavement pay, and inclusion in the health and fitness program. The company also states that "certain laws prevent the Company from treating same-sex partners in an equivalent manner as spouses for some benefits." ▼

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