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## 'Eliminating the low bar'

Foxx, other elected officials attend CLGF 'Happening'

by Matt Comer :: [matt@goqnotes.com](mailto:matt@goqnotes.com)

With a crowd of nearly 360 guests, the Charlotte Lesbian & Gay Fund hosted their third annual "The Happening" on May 13 at Uptown's Omni Hotel and celebrated another year of grant recipients. The Fund also announced it had met its \$100,000 matching grant goal issued by community philanthropist Sandy Berlin last year.

Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx served as keynote speaker. Foxx's appearance marked the first time a local elected official had appeared at a Fund event and the first time a sitting Charlotte mayor had spoken to an LGBT group in at least a decade.

Foxx, the city's second African-American mayor, said he was delighted to be at the event. He thanked the Fund and other LGBT community members for their support and spoke of the city manager's recent decision to include "sexual orientation" in his employment policies.

Foxx thanked the county commission,



Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx's keynote at the Charlotte Lesbian & Gay Fund luncheon marked the first time any elected official had attended a Fund event, and the first time a sitting Charlotte mayor had spoken to an LGBT group in at least a decade.

including former Chair Parks Helms, for having the "courage" to make such a change and pave the way for inclusive changes at the city level.

"I look back at the history of this discussion of a policy change that says discriminating against people based on sexual orientation is wrong and I have to say that we had more courage to help propel our city manager to make that policy change because of changes that had happened earlier," Foxx said. "A few years earlier, the county commission was embroiled in a heated debate about saying sexual orientation-based discrimination is wrong. They made the right decision and their decision created the courage for the city to do the same."

Foxx said he'd keep working in his role to ensure an inclusive city.

"I hope that we can eliminate the low bar of having to feel thankful that our elected officials would show up at a luncheon. I hope that the bar gets set higher and that as we move forward in this community that you feel included and part of the community that we will be in the 21st century in Charlotte."

Other elected officials present included Mecklenburg County Commission Chair Jennifer Roberts, Commissioner Dan Murrey and City Councilmember Patsy Kinsey.

The Fund awarded \$67,000 in operating and "Community Connections" grants this year. Fund recipients include: Campus Pride, Gay Men's Chorus of Charlotte, Lionel Lee Jr. Center for Wellness, One Voice Chorus, Time Out Youth, Charlotte Pride Band, Holy Covenant United Church of Christ, Planned Parenthood Health Systems and Theatre Charlotte. ::

### commentary

Are elected officials in the Queen City really showing political courage on LGBT issues? Editor Matt Comer doesn't think so. Read his Editor's Note on page 4 for more.

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