

PART TWO:
THE
ASSETS

OUT IN THE SOUTH



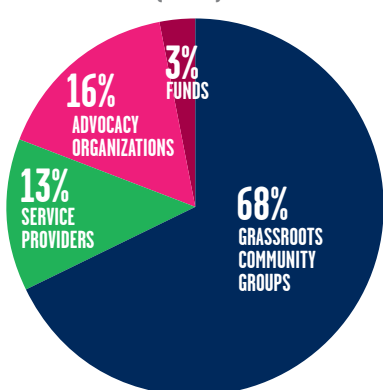
FUNDERS FOR
LGBTQ
ISSUES

A map of the Southeastern United States showing the number of new businesses by state, color-coded by growth stage. The states and their corresponding values are: Texas (104), Oklahoma (28), New Mexico (16), Louisiana (32), Mississippi (14), Alabama (31), Georgia (76), Florida (138), North Carolina (42), South Carolina (74), Tennessee (48), Kentucky (37), West Virginia (12), and Virginia (131).

Growth Stage	Count Range	States
Small But Potent	0-25	West Virginia (12), New Mexico (16), Mississippi (14)
Grassroots	26-50	Oklahoma (28), Louisiana (32), Alabama (31), Tennessee (48), North Carolina (42)
Burgeoning	50-100	Kentucky (37), Georgia (76), South Carolina (74)
Robust	101+	Texas (104), Florida (138), Virginia (131)

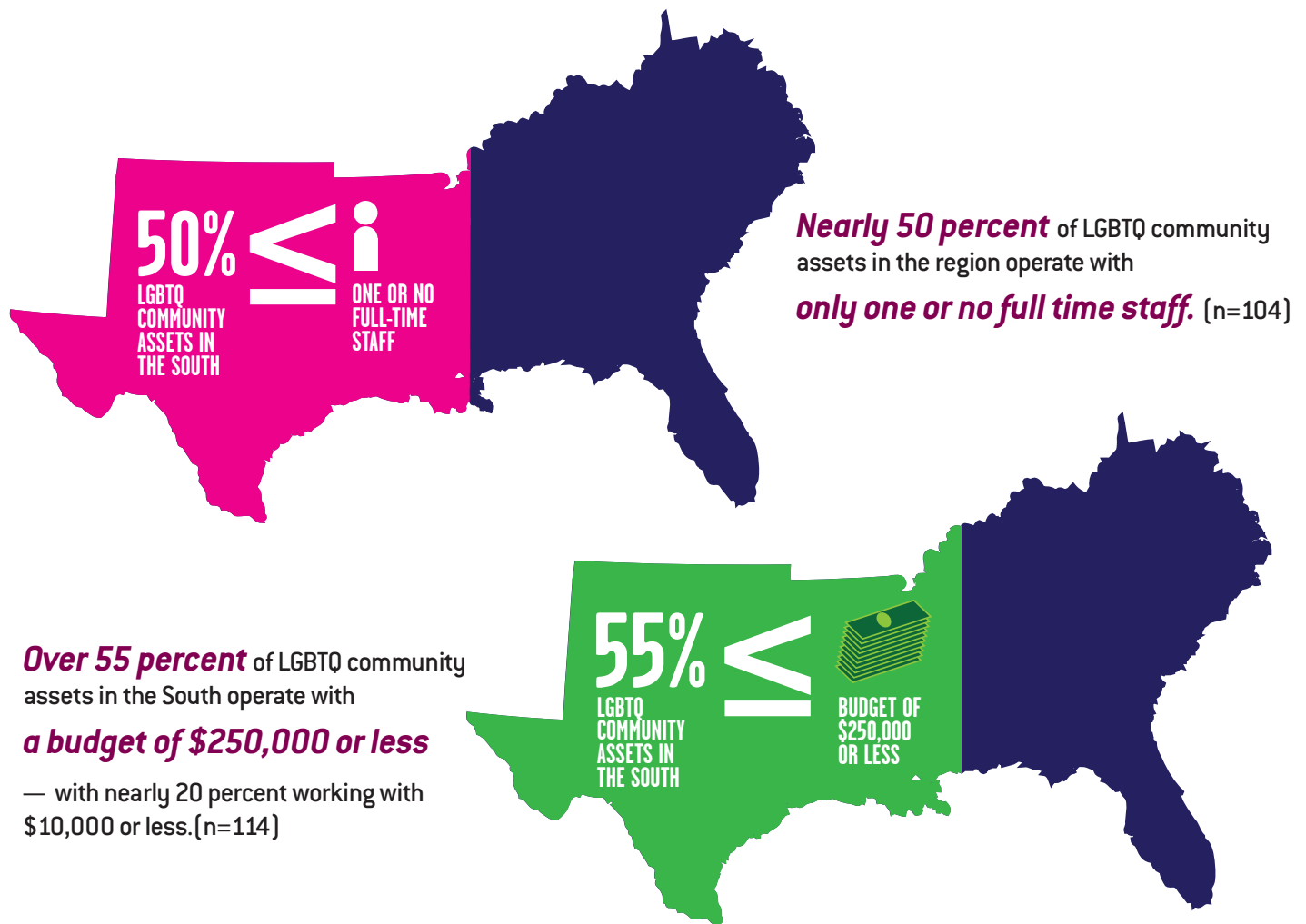
SMALL BUT POTENT	0-25
GRASSROOTS	26-50
BURGEONING	50-100
ROBUST	101 +

CATEGORIZATION OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. SOUTH (N = 783)



Category	Count
FAMILY GROUPS	128
FAITH-BASED GROUPS	101
CAMPUS GROUPS	91
PRIDE ORGS	60
STATE-WIDE ADVOCACY ORGS	59
ARTS & CULTURE ORGS	47
HIV / AIDS ORGS	37
LGBT COMMUNITY CENTERS	31

A survey of over 140 of the organizations revealed that these groups are doing a lot of work with comparatively few resources.



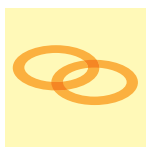
With growing attention on the U.S. South, funders have several opportunities for increased impact on LGBTQ communities in the region:



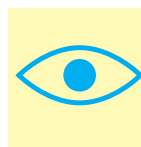
BUILD CAPACITY OF PROVEN GROUPS IN THE REGION



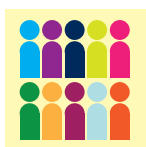
HELP MAINTAIN AND GROW DIRECT SERVICE CAPACITY



STRENGTHEN ORGANIZING BEFORE, DURING, AND BEYOND “THE MARRIAGE MOMENT”



SUPPORT EFFORTS TO INCREASE LGBTQ VISIBILITY AND SHARE THE STORIES OF LGBTQ SOUTHERNERS



SUPPORT ALLIANCES AND RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM COALITIONS AND SOLIDARITY



EXPLORE CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR ASSESSING INTERMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH

INTRODUCTION

This report, authored by Claudia Horwitz, is the second in our *Out in the South* series and seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment of LGBTQ community resources in the 14 states of the U.S. South.² It is perhaps the most in-depth study to date of the region's LGBTQ civic sector, drawing on three methodologies:

- an extensive scan of nonprofit organizations and informal community groups serving or advocating for LGBTQ communities in the region;
- a detailed online survey of more than 200 LGBTQ community leaders representing more than 140 nonprofits and community groups; and
- in-depth one-on-one interviews with 30 LGBTQ movement leaders representing 13 Southern states.³

The report finds that there are more than 750 LGBTQ community assets in the U.S. South, ranging from small grassroots organizing groups to multi-service community centers. These groups are accomplishing much with little, battling intense homophobia and transphobia to provide critical services to LGBTQ communities, to win equality one county and one town at a time; and to change the hearts and minds of family members, neighbors, and friends. While the majority of groups report that they struggle with limited funding and capacity, they have found innovative, intersectional, and cost-effective ways to strengthen LGBTQ communities. The LGBTQ South is rich in leaders, relationships, and resilience; financial resources are what the region most lacks.

This report builds on part one of *Out in the South*, which explored foundation funding for LGBTQ issues in the U.S. South. That report found that, while LGBTQ domestic funding averaged \$5.78 per LGBT adult, the South only received \$1.71 per LGBT adult. The *Out in the South* report series is part of the LGBT Southern Funding Project, which seeks to expand the scale and impact of funding for LGBTQ communities in the U.S. South.

I hope this report will help to ignite continued dialogue about how funders can help strengthen the impressive array of LGBTQ communities asset in the South.

Sincerely,



Ben Francisco Maulbeck
President

² The U.S. South is defined here as the following 14 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

³ Additional details about research methodology and respondent composition are provided in the Methodology section at the end of the report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses the state of the LGBTQ movement in the U.S. South, based on a comprehensive scan of the region's LGBTQ community assets, a survey of more than 200 organizers and service providers working in the South, and in-depth interviews with 30 LGBTQ leaders.

REGIONAL CLIMATE

While each of the 14 Southern states is unique, the research revealed several common themes about the current overall regional climate:

- The region's generally **conservative culture** still makes it difficult for many LGBTQ people to come out, presenting challenges for both organizers and service providers.
- Severe **racial disparities** and **poverty** deeply affect Southern LGBTQ communities.
- Rapid advancements for **marriage equality** are creating new opportunities for dialogue around LGBTQ issues, although some leaders also fear that it could lead to backlash locally.
- **National LGBTQ organizations** have recently begun to devote more attention to the South, bringing welcome and needed resources but also presenting challenges for local organizations with limited resources.

LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS OF THE REGION

The regional scan identified **783 LGBTQ community assets in the U.S. South**, ranging from informal groups of LGBTQ parents to fully staffed health clinics. More than two-thirds of these assets are **grassroots groups**, largely driven by volunteers and addressing a range of community concerns through a mixture of mutual support, community education, and organizing. An additional 127 assets are **service providers**, including LGBTQ community centers, HIV/AIDS service organizations and health clinics, and programs specifically serving LGBTQ youth or seniors. The region also has more than 100 LGBTQ **advocacy groups**, most of which advocate for policy change at the state level, while a smaller number are local, regional, or national in scope. Finally, the South is home to at least 22 LGBTQ community **funds** — including four that started within the past two years, pointing to rising momentum for locally-rooted LGBTQ philanthropy.

The 14 states of the region vary considerably in their level of LGBTQ civic infrastructure and resources, falling roughly into four tiers:

- **“Robust states”** (Florida, North Carolina, and Texas) each have more than 100 LGBTQ community assets, including a number of fully-staffed service providers and advocacy organizations. However, they also have large geographies and populations — meaning that even community groups in these states are often stretched beyond capacity.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“If you want to talk about return on investment, it doesn’t get bigger than investment in the South. In five years we’ll be having a totally different conversation and at a fraction of the cost.”

— STATEWIDE ORGANIZER

- The two **“burgeoning states”** (Georgia and Virginia) have about 75 community assets each, including a number of staffed organizations, though they are heavily concentrated in urban centers.
- There are a number of **“grassroots states”** (Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Tennessee), which each have between 25 and 50 LGBTQ assets — the vast majority of which are volunteer-driven grassroots organizations.
- The **“small but potent states”** (Arkansas, Mississippi, and West Virginia) each have fewer than 20 LGBTQ community assets, with only one to three organizations having any paid staff at all — though these states, too, have impressive leaders and promising models.

STRENGTHS, ALLIES, & STRATEGIC PRACTICES TO BUILD ON

In every state in the region, there is an inspiring depth of LGBTQ work being done with shoestring budgets and minimal or no full-time staff. In some ways, the scarcity of resources seemed to have birthed innovation by necessity, with LGBTQ leaders using creative strategies, building cross-cutting intersectional alliances, and drawing on impressive volunteer networks. While legal equality for LGBTQ people still lags at the state level throughout the region, there have been important victories at the local level — and countless anti-LGBTQ bills have been effectively staved off.

The Southern LGBTQ movement has also cultivated an impressive range of allies, including progressive leaders of faith, other constituencies working for social change, and supporters from the business community. Alliance-building in the South presents a challenging paradox: the region’s conservative culture means that other core progressive constituents are sometimes the only allies, yet a progressive coalition “isn’t always enough to get you a majority.”

Promising practices in the region include the increasing development of peer-learning cohorts and other partnerships, as well as the leveraging of national resources, particularly foundation support and large federal grants.

CHALLENGES FOR LGBTQ WORK IN THE SOUTH

Surveyed organizations cited lack of funding as their most significant challenge — which is not surprising, considering that 55 percent of groups are operating with a budget of less than \$250,000. The majority of organizations also have one or no staff, and many cited capacity-building as their greatest area of need, particularly in the areas of fundraising and organizational development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this assessment, there are several funding strategies with potential for high impact in LGBTQ communities:

- Build capacity of proven groups in all 14 states, with an emphasis on building diverse revenue and financial sustainability.
- Maintain and grow direct service capacity, especially to address basic economic needs, HIV/AIDS, and other health issues.
- Strengthen intersectional organizing to leverage the current “marriage moment” for longer-term culture change and policy gains at the state level.
- Leverage existing alliances and transition them to long-term relationships of solidarity.
- Support efforts to increase LGBTQ visibility and share the stories of LGBTQ Southerners.
- Explore creative strategies for assessing intermediate and long-term progress in the South.

THE REGIONAL CLIMATE

While each of the 14 Southern states is distinct, both the survey and in-depth interviews revealed several common themes about the regional climate as a whole.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

*“ We pick up the phone down here;
we go to each other’s meetings.”*

— MOVEMENT ELDER

*“ The person who cuts your hair
goes to church with your grandma.”*

— SMALL TOWN ORGANIZER

CULTURAL CONSERVATISM AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Survey respondents indicated that it is still “scary to be gay” in many parts of the South. The threat of being shut out of social structures is significant. People have relied on a learned invisibility to survive and “you can’t organize people who aren’t out.” Some of this homophobia comes from conservative faith institutions that promote a culture of repression. However, there are also progressive communities of faith that have served as both a refuge and anchor for many LGBTQ people, particularly in small towns.

ROLE OF SYSTEMIC RACISM, POVERTY AND CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Local LGBTQ movement leaders say that, given the realities of rac-

ism and poverty in the region, sexual orientation and gender identity issues are deeply intertwined with race and class. Growing populations of color in many Southern states are slowly leading to greater diversity in the LGBTQ movement; youth programs in particular tend to cut across race, class, and gender in ways that were unlikely or unheard of only ten years ago.

Trans inclusion has also increased over the past five years, but many leaders report that there is still widespread misunderstanding about trans issues in lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities.

A REGION OF BIG CITIES AND SMALL TOWNS

There is a significant gap in the South between life for LGBTQ people in population centers — with greater organizational presence, safety and services — and the reality in rural areas and small towns, with limited housing, health care, mental health, or domestic violence services. In small towns, life tends to revolve around churches and schools, and, in the words of one interviewee, “if both are coming against you, it’s difficult.” There is also the sheer challenge of representing such large physical swaths. In some cases, Southerners must travel hours to access resources and community.

There can also be advantages to working in smaller communities. As an Arkansas survey respondent noted, “There are not many people with your voice, your determination, your organizational strength and your methods; you can have a tremendous impact. You are a bigger fish.” A campus leader in Kentucky echoed a similar sentiment: “It’s common in the South to be the one who started something, like our LGBT office.”



SOUTHERN VOICES:

*“ Even if we win [marriage equality], there will
be 30 states where folks can get fired
and no statewide protections.”*

— NATIONAL ADVOCATE
WORKING IN THE SOUTH

MARRIAGE: GAME CHANGER ON THE HORIZON

Most LGBTQ leaders in the South see marriage equality as a mixed blessing and want to make sure it is leveraged into other protections. On the positive side, people believe that it will come soon through the Supreme Court, that it is a good thing for the LGBTQ community, and that it brings passionate volunteer energy to the movement. In the vein of national groups like Freedom to Marry, some Southerners see marriage as a strategic opening for other significant victories. In addition, the conversation has expanded people's understanding of who LGBTQ people are.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ Everyone is talking about the South now. ”

— STATEWIDE EQUALITY DIRECTOR

“ How do we welcome what national groups have to offer while still keeping the work connected to the needs and values of folks on the ground? ”

— REGIONAL ORGANIZER

Some respondents also raised concerns about the recent rapid advancement of marriage equality. Some fear backlash: since the region continues to lag behind the national tide, they worry that many Southerners will “feel like the feds are cramming it down.” Others fear that a national victory for marriage equality could lead to complacency around LGBTQ issues, both within the movement and among the general public. Some LGBTQ leaders of color also feel that marriage equality campaigns have been too couched in whiteness, with insufficient representation of the LGBTQ community's full diversity.

ROLE OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many national LGBTQ organizations have developed specific initiatives and campaigns in or for the South. The Equality Federation is focusing on non-discrimination policy in Southern states and has been convening

a Southern cohort that is starting to bear relational and strategic fruit. Freedom to Marry has embedded organizers in Southern states where marriage lawsuits have a good chance of winning at the District Court level. And the Human Rights Campaign recently launched Project One America, an \$8.5 million initiative aimed at Alabama, Arkansas and Mississippi.

Local LGBTQ leaders say that they greatly appreciate when national organizations approach their work as a partnership, find collaborative ways to leverage national resources, add skill-building expertise, and bring greater media attention to the work. Some Equality directors, for example, have praised the Freedom to Marry approach; “They have given us a lot of latitude, it has been a joy. They listen.” The Victory Fund has supported LGBTQ candidates throughout the South and that representation matters. The ACLU was frequently named as a consistent and strong partner for the region's LGBTQ movement.

However, national groups do not always have a good reputation for local collaboration; in the worst cases local work has been ignored or belittled. Local groups worry about being left out of setting the agenda, when millions of dollars come into their state via a national organization. They worry that the influx of national resources - which often do not come with funds for local groups - will lead funders to perceive that the local movement is better resourced than it actually is. Since national organizations and initiatives tend to have significantly more resources and staffing at their disposal, local change agents have a big leadership challenge: how to proactively determine what kind of relationship they want to have with a given initiative while not allowing their own work to suffer. Southern leaders see the necessity of being at the table to help shape the agenda but struggle when that takes energy away from their own strategic priorities.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ Too often it's more about saving the South than building the South. ”

— MOVEMENT ELDER

Furthermore, local campaigns that are deemed too risky or stray from a strict LGBTQ focus (police brutality, for example) often go unsupported by national groups. In addition, some national groups raise significant money from members in the South without using those funds to advance LGBTQ issues in the region. It is also noticed that because national organizations are well-resourced they pay much higher salaries in contrast to what most local leaders are earning. This risks a brain-drain from the region unless and until regional organizations are financed to the point of being able to pay similar salaries.

THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS OF THE REGION

As a region, the South is home to a diverse and striking set of over 750 LGBTQ community assets. These assets include nonprofit organizations, faith groups, support groups, service agencies, business networks, and more. Each asset is dedicated to serving or advocating for the LGBTQ community in the South.⁴

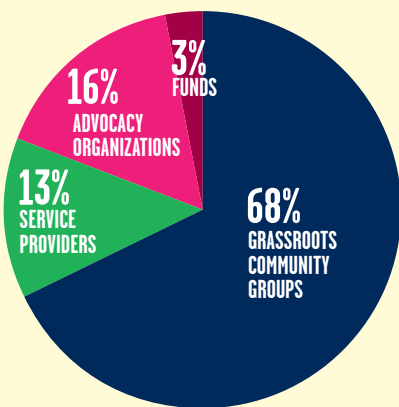


SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ There are shared challenges in the cultural landscape in the South that aren’t as consistent in other regions ”

**— NATIONAL ORGANIZER
WORKING IN THE SOUTH**

**CATEGORIZATION OF LGBTQ
COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. SOUTH**
(N = 783)



Of the 783 LGBTQ community assets identified, nearly 70 percent are grassroots groups engaged in a range of advocacy, community-building, and mutual support activities. The remainder are split roughly evenly between advocacy organizations and service providers. The South is also home to a small but growing set of LGBTQ-focused philanthropic funds.

GRASSROOTS GROUPS

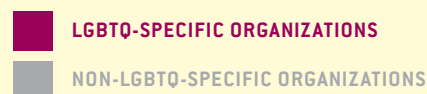
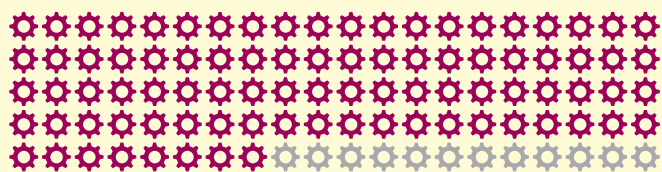
The vast majority of LGBTQ community assets in the South are grassroots community groups largely driven by volunteers. This category includes 128 family-focused groups, such as PFLAG chapters and support groups for LGBTQ parents. It also includes more than 100 faith-based groups, such as Metropolitan Community Churches and Integrity chapters.

Most grassroots groups are unstaffed or have a small staff of one or two at most (often part-time). Many of these groups rely on formidable networks of volunteers deeply committed to strengthening LGBTQ communities. Many do not fit neatly into the buckets of “service” and “advocacy,” as they routinely take on activities in both categories. A number of transgender groups, for example, provide support groups for trans people but also educate the general public about gender identity. PFLAG chapters provide invaluable support and services for parents coping with their children coming out, but also can be exceptionally effective voices and advocates for LGBTQ equality.

⁴ NOTE: What is not captured in this scan, but nonetheless contribute to the well-being of LGBTQ communities in the South, are the countless number of purely social groups. In our scan we found many happy hours, sports leagues, and book clubs, which undoubtedly provide important space for LGBTQ Southerners to connect with one another but are too numerous and too transient to accurately track in this report.

PROPORTION OF LGBTQ-SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS VS. NON-LGBTQ-SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONS

(N = 783)



ADVOCACY GROUPS

There are slightly more than 100 LGBTQ advocacy organizations and groups in the South. These groups advocate for policy and systems change through a range of strategies, including community organizing, legislative advocacy, litigation, media campaigns, and public education. This category includes more than 50 state-level advocacy organization, such as broadly focused state equality organizations, groups advocating for LGBTQ rights within specific issues or populations (such as education, gender identity rights, or racial justice), and allied advocacy organizations such as state ACLU chapters. There are also about 25 organizations working to advocate for LGBTQ rights in their local municipal,

county, or metropolitan area. Finally, this category also includes advocacy and movement-building organizations with a region-wide focus, such as Southerners on New Ground and the Campaign for Southern Equality, as well as allied organizations such as the Southern Poverty Law Center; and a handful of national LGBTQ advocacy organizations based in the South, such as Campus Pride, Interpride, and Soulforce. While the LGBTQ policy infrastructure in the 14 Southern states is much less resourced than in some Northeastern and West-Coast states, every state has at least two advocacy-focused groups.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

About 129 LGBTQ community assets are primarily service providers, offering a range of health programs, social services, and support programs for local LGBTQ communities. These include 31 LGBTQ community centers, which vary widely in size from all-volunteer efforts to multi-million-dollar service agencies such as the Resource Center of Dallas. Notably, several of the region's LGBTQ centers were established in the past two to three years, and a number are in their start-up phase. There are also at least 37 HIV/AIDS service organizations, some of which primarily focus on serving gay men and/or transgender people, while others have outreach programs or support groups specifically targeting those populations. The region's service providers also include transitional shelters for LGBTQ homeless youth and more broadly focused youth centers. The remaining service organizations address issues such as health, legal services, and aging.

While a handful of community centers and AIDS service organizations have significant budgets, many of these service providers are operating with only one or two full-time staff and are severely under-resourced relative to the demand they see in their communities.

FUNDS

The South is also home to 22 philanthropic funds that raise and distribute money for LGBTQ communities. Of these, 19 are LGBTQ-focused, and three focus on HIV/AIDS with strong roots in LGBTQ communities. A few Southern funds, such as Aqua Foundation and OurFund in Florida and Guilford Green in North Carolina, are free-standing organizations, but most are housed at a local community foundation or women's foundation. A number are driven by fundraising events; the largest of these is Black Tie Dinner in Dallas, which raises about \$1 million annually for LGBTQ community organizations. At least four Southern LGBTQ funds were established within the past two years, pointing to a rising momentum for local LGBTQ philanthropy in the region.

BREAKDOWN OF ASSETS BY TARGET POPULATION

Of the 783 assets identified, about 88 percent are organizations or groups primarily focused on LGBTQ communities; the remaining 12 percent are more broadly-focused organizations with at least one program or service targeting the LGBTQ community. At least 36 groups work primarily in transgender/gendernonconforming communities, and at least 30 are focused on LGBTQ communities of color.

BREAKDOWN OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE REGION

ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS	103	13%
Local Advocacy Organizations	25	3%
National Advocacy Organizations	10	1%
Regional Advocacy Organizations	9	1%
Statewide Advocacy Organizations	59	8%

FUNDS	22	3%
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GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY GROUPS	529	68%
Arts and Culture Organizations ⁵	47	6%
Business/Professional Networks	27	3%
Campus Groups ⁶	91	12%
Faith-based Groups	101	13%
Family Groups ⁷	128	16%
GSA Networks	5	1%
Multipurpose Organizations	23	3%
Political Groups ⁸	22	3%
Pride Organizations	60	8%
Support Groups	25	3%

SERVICE PROVIDERS	129	16%
LGBTQ Community Centers	31	4%
LGBTQ Health Centers	12	2%
HIV/AIDS Service Organizations ⁹	37	5%
Youth Service Organizations	26	3%
Other Service Providers ¹⁰	23	3%

TOTAL KNOWN ASSETS	783	100%
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⁵ Arts and cultural groups include 24 gay and/or lesbian choruses, 10 LGBT film festivals, and several LGBT theaters.

⁶ In cases where a college or university had many groups, only one group was counted so as to not distort the overall number of assets. (E.g., a university with a GSA and LGBTQ theatre troupe would only be counted once).

⁷ Family groups include 110 PFLAG chapters, 17 LGBT parents groups, and one COLAGE (children of LGBTQ parents) chapter.

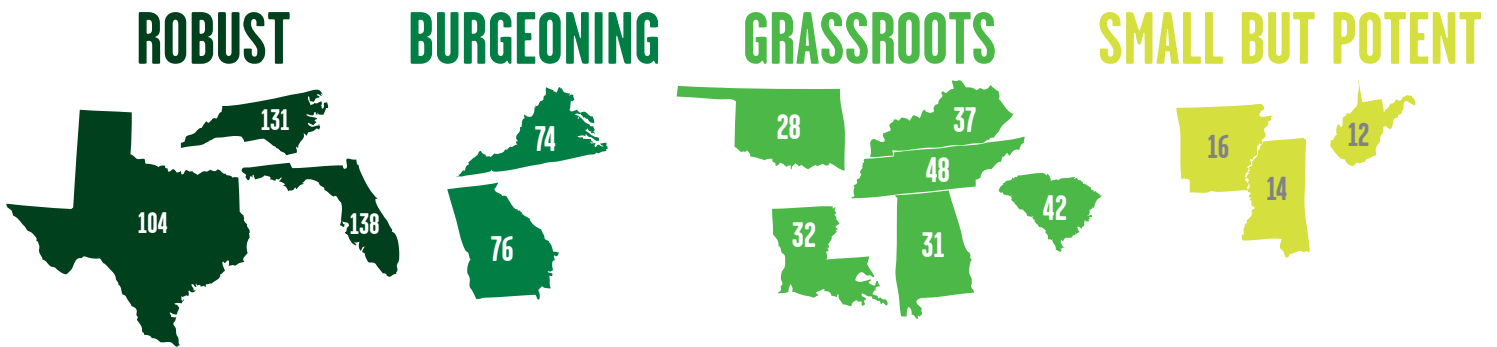
⁸ Political groups include 12 Log Cabin Republicans chapters and 10 Stonewall Democrats chapters or other caucuses of LGBT Democrats.

⁹ This does not count all HIV/AIDS service providers in the South. This only takes into account HIV/AIDS service providers who explicitly focus significant resources on LGBTQ communities.

¹⁰ This includes about 10 service providers focused on the needs of LGBTQ older adults.

COMMUNITY ASSETS BY STATE

The South is home to 14 states with vast differences in capacity, infrastructure, and political climate. The number of LGBTQ community assets per state ranged from twelve in West Virginia to nearly 150 in Florida. Based on the number of LGBTQ community assets per state, we have categorized the 14 states into four levels of roughly similar infrastructure.



“Robust states” like Florida, North Carolina and Texas each have diverse networks of more than 100 LGBTQ community assets, including a number of staffed LGBTQ organizations. These states have strong infrastructure compared to the rest of the region, but also have large populations and geographies and are still relatively under-resourced, especially outside their urban centers. Texas, in particular, actually has the region’s lowest number of assets relative to its population. While North Carolina has a large number of assets, virtually all of them have small budgets of less than \$1 million; the state lacks the large-budget anchor organizations found in both Florida and Texas.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ If you’ve seen one state, you’ve seen one state. ”

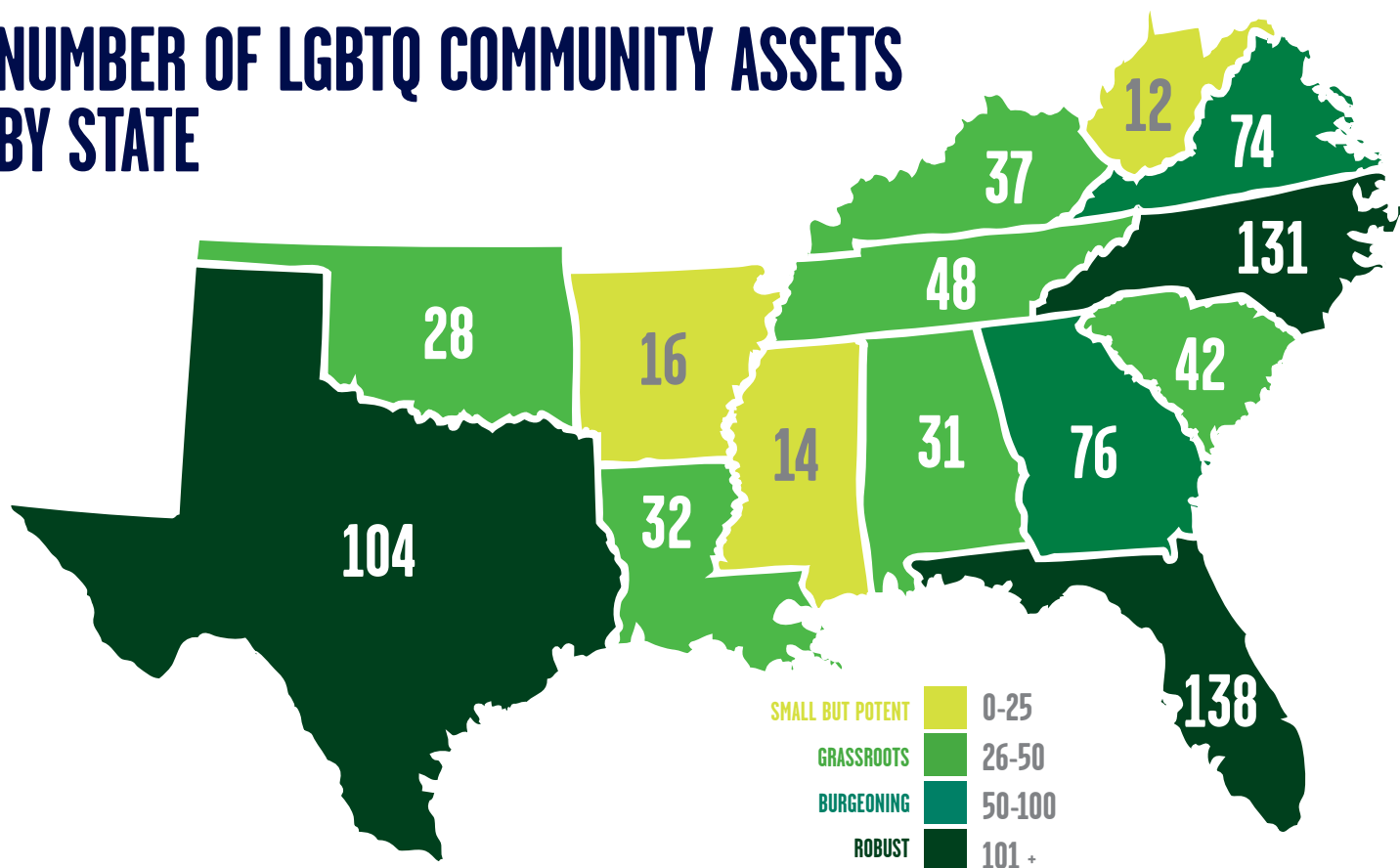
— DEEP SOUTH SERVICE PROVIDER

Georgia and Virginia could be defined as **“burgeoning states,”** each with roughly 75 LGBTQ community assets, though only a handful are staffed organizations while the majority are all-volunteer efforts. Many of these states’ assets are concentrated in urban centers such as Atlanta and Richmond.

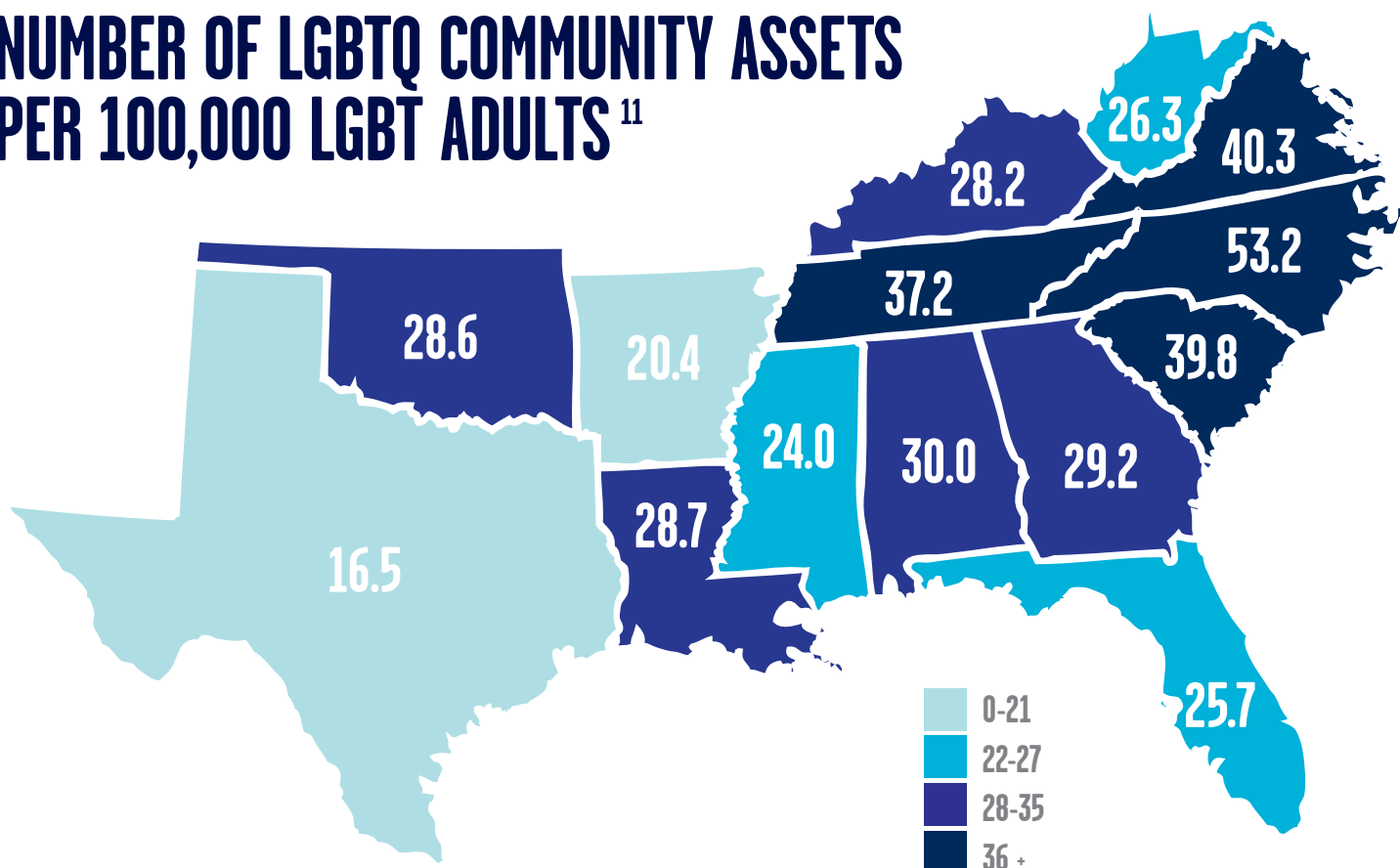
The **“grassroots states”** — Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Tennessee — each have 25-50 LGBTQ community assets. Most of the assets in these states are grassroots groups, and even many advocacy organizations and service providers are largely driven by volunteers.

Arkansas, Mississippi and West Virginia all have between 10 and 20 LGBTQ community assets making them **“small but potent states.”** While these three states only support a handful of staffed or grassroots LGBTQ groups, each of these states also possesses important strengths to build on.

NUMBER OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS BY STATE



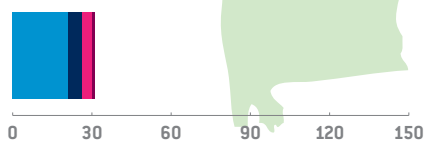
NUMBER OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS PER 100,000 LGBT ADULTS¹¹



¹¹ Population estimates are based on "LGBT Populations" www.lgbtmap.org Movement Advancement Project, 9 Sept. 2014 Web. 21 Sept. 2014 <<http://lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/lgbt-populations>>

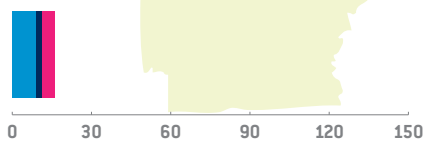
ALABAMA

KNOWN ASSETS — 31



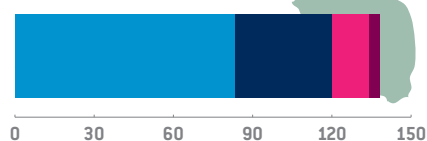
ARKANSAS

KNOWN ASSETS — 16



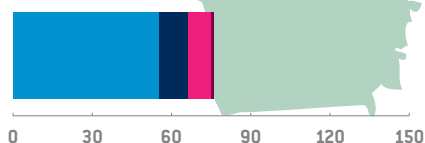
FLORIDA

KNOWN ASSETS — 138



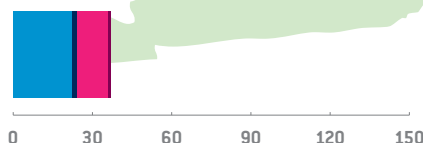
GEORGIA

KNOWN ASSETS — 76



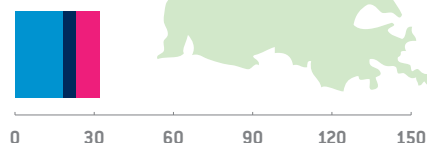
KENTUCKY

KNOWN ASSETS — 37



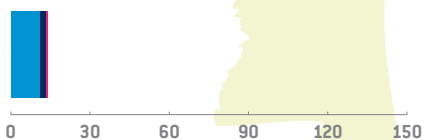
LOUISIANA

KNOWN ASSETS — 32



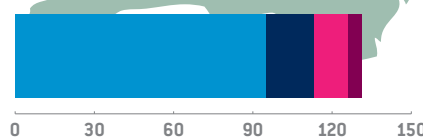
MISSISSIPPI

KNOWN ASSETS — 14



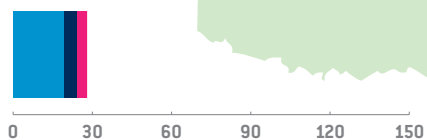
NORTH CAROLINA

KNOWN ASSETS — 131



OKLAHOMA

KNOWN ASSETS — 28



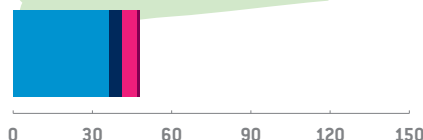
SOUTH CAROLINA

KNOWN ASSETS — 42



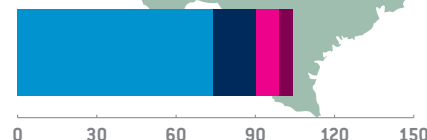
TENNESSEE

KNOWN ASSETS — 48



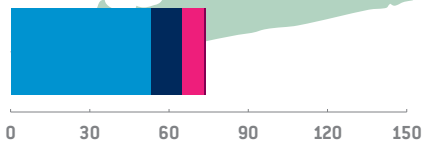
TEXAS

KNOWN ASSETS — 104



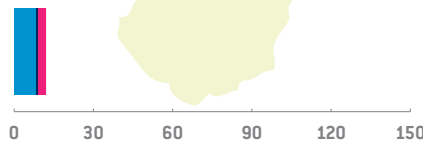
VIRGINIA

KNOWN ASSETS — 74



WEST VIRGINIA

KNOWN ASSETS — 12



STRENGTHS, ALLIES AND STRATEGIC PRACTICES

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

STRONG WORK BEING DONE WITH MINIMAL RESOURCES

In every state in the region there is an inspiring depth of LGBTQ work being done with shoestring budgets and minimal or no full-time staff. Some organizations throughout the South have been working for a decade or more with strong political analyses, skill sets, and a base. Their continued existence is a testament to wisdom and tenacity common to the region. For example, Southerners on New Ground (SONG) has been doing vital work to build organizing capacity in the region and often serves as a bridge for mainstream, white-led organizations to smaller groups, rural areas, and communities of color.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ If we sat and waited for the right money, we’d never get anything done. ”

— COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

“ I’ve stayed for the duration and so have others; continuity and determination make a huge difference. ”

— YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR

“ Funders are excited about intersectional organizing; we’ve been doing that. That’s how organizing has happened in the South. ”

— YOUTH ORGANIZER

“INTERSECTIONAL” WORK IS AN INDIGENOUS FORM

While an intersectional approach is new for some, many have been working this way in the South for a long time. More than a third of the groups surveyed noted that they work within a racial justice framework and work across issue areas. Working with partners on issues like immigration or criminalization nurtures a cross-race, cross-class coalition. North Carolina’s Moral Monday movement is a potent example. Its strength rests on a number of alliances and relationships built over time, including the one between the state’s NAACP and a number of LGBTQ groups. In small towns the numbers of those working on social change issues is so limited to begin with that working across issue areas becomes a given and “provides some cover so that queer people don’t have to out themselves.”

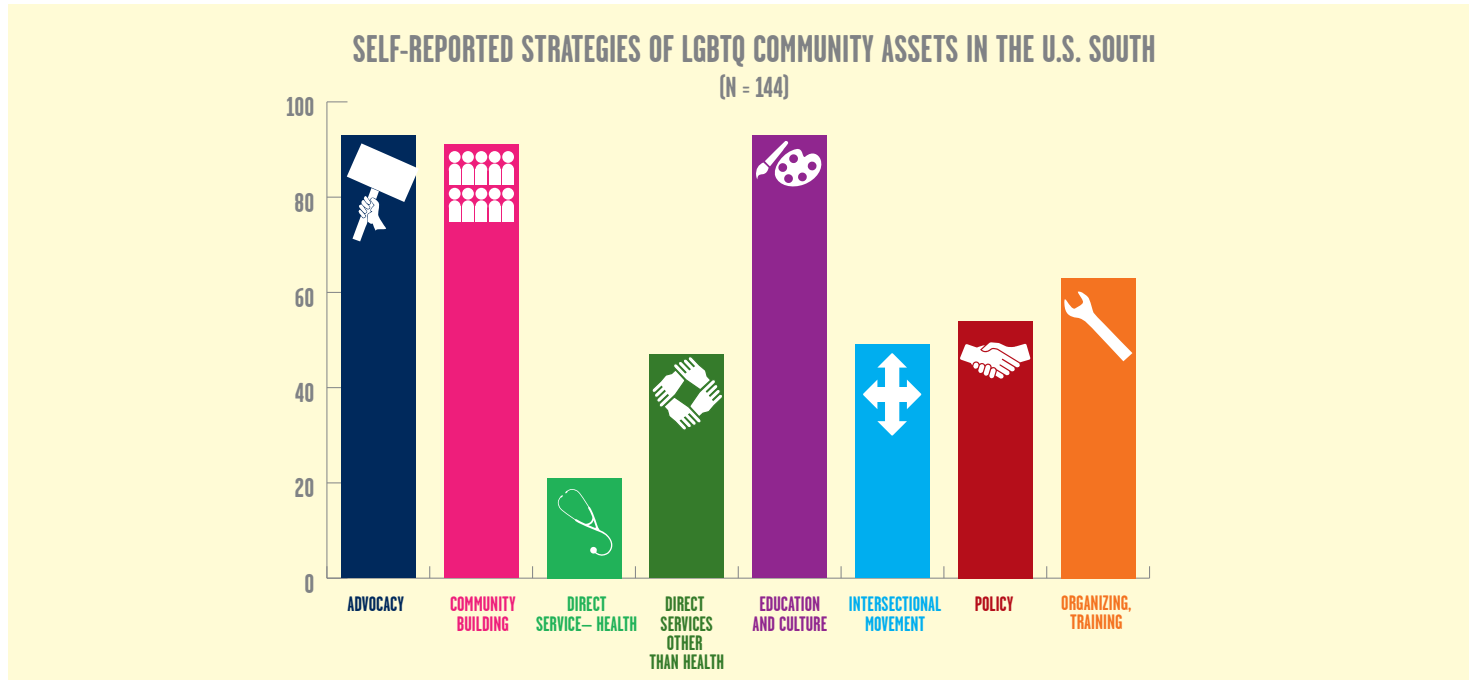
Mandy Carter, who’s been working on LGBTQ issues in the South for four decades, offered this reflection on North Carolina Senate Vote ’90 campaign to get Harvey Gantt elected to the US Senate in 1990:

We got all the LGBT people together but it wasn’t going to be enough to defeat [Jesse] Helms. So we wondered, who else would have a vested interest? That was a big ‘a ha’ moment. We started to make a list – women, people of color, environmentalists. And those relationships, that we built through that campaign, exist to this day.

The Fairness Campaign in Kentucky is one of the region’s most potent example of long-term, cross-issue work that has produced significant victories over time. Launched in 1991, a group of organizers decided to connect racial justice to the campaign for anti-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation. The need for legal protections for LGBTQ people was clear but the campaign was also used as an opportunity to build a new coalition. As each piece of legislation was won, the sense of connection between once more disparate constituencies got stronger. Fairness is now focused on local organizing in rural areas.

A WIDE RANGE OF STRATEGIC APPROACHES

LGBTQ groups in the South are using the same vast spectrum of strategies as other parts of the country:



Additional strategies include litigation, coalition-building, research and spiritual or religious development. Most organizations are employing several strategies, a testament to their versatility and to the wide range of needs they are seeking to address.

A STRONG BASE OF LOCAL PROGRESS TOWARD LEGAL EQUALITY

Cities, towns and counties across the South have seen progress in both cultural change and increased legal protections against discrimination. The School Board Association in Tennessee was a key ally in helping to fight negative education bills. The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce put off a nondiscrimination policy until advocates threatened a full-page ad discouraging new businesses from coming to the city; the policy was changed. These are emblematic of multiple victories in cities and towns across the region.

CULTURE AND FAITH AT THE CORE

The Southern LGBTQ movement rests in a fabric woven by cultural, social and spiritual connection. As Rev. Dr. Nancy Wilson, Moderator of the Metropolitan Community Churches points out, “Because the South was more hostile, and more religiously hostile, there was a need for a strong religious counter voice and refuge was necessary.” This is confirmed by the community scan, which identified 101 LGBTQ-affirming faith groups, including 58 Metropolitan Community Churches, eighteen Integrity chapters, eight Dignity chapters, and dozens of other faith groups. Clergy prayer breakfasts have been used to build support around specific bills, like anti-bullying. Some United Methodist churches and United Church of Christ congregations act as bridge builders with more conservative denominations. And, “you can always count on the Unitarians.” Baptist churches are independent, and a strand of progressive congregations have lent a strong leadership voice. Even some faith leaders who see homosexuality as a sin believe in equal treatment under the law. Additionally, a number of MCC churches own their own buildings and have become organizing and gathering centers for the LGBTQ community.

NATIONAL RESOURCES ARE BEING LEVERAGED

For those running social service agencies in the South, there has been a much-improved climate of funding and support under the Obama administration. And there is a substantial percentage of overall funding coming largely from entities outside of the region; AIDS United, Arcus Foundation, Astraea Foundation, Elton John AIDS Foundation, Ford Foundation, Gill Foundation, Public Welfare Foundation, and Resource Generation were all mentioned by name.

ALLIES IN THE WORK



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ When you’re standing in front of city hall and they want to marginalize you as a bunch of perverts, it matters that a Black minister stands up and says, ‘We are all God’s children.’ ”

— LONG-TIME COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

LGBTQ work in the South does not occur in a vacuum. Circumstances and conditions have given rise to both likely and unlikely bedfellows.

GOVERNMENT: Increasing numbers of elected officials at the state and federal level serve

as strong advocates and allies. Because engagement of Republican support has been much slower to come in Southern states, according to one interviewee, “a bipartisan push like the one happening at the national level will have to take a backseat to the progressive coalition work.” The paradoxical challenge is that a progressive coalition “isn’t always enough to get you a majority.”

PROGRESSIVE COUNTERPARTS:

- **HIV/AIDS Groups**

While HIV/AIDS groups are generally not focused on organizing, they tend to be better-resourced than LGBTQ groups and often provide vital services for the LGBTQ community as well as a place of connection for people. HIV/AIDS is still a major issue for the LGBTQ community, particularly for LGBTQ people of color in the South (70% of new infections in Alabama, for example, are in African-Americans). Luckily, there appears to be more openness to collaboration on the part of both HIV and LGBTQ groups than in the past.

- **Immigrant Rights Groups**

Immigrant rights groups and LGBTQ groups have begun to more readily work together and create a powerful coalition. This includes local partnerships like the one between El Centro and the LGBT Center in Raleigh and between the Congress of Day Laborers and Break Out Youth in New Orleans, where leaders are working on a joint proposal for cultural work, shared power analysis and a policy agenda. Increased local organizing by young LGBTQ undocumented immigrants is giving this intersection a vibrant and visible presence.

- **Reproductive Justice Groups**

Reproductive rights and LGBTQ rights are often lumped together and attacked similarly by conservative lawmakers. In some states legislators “don’t make a distinction between a woman who wants an abortion and a gay person.” In some cases this has fostered a natural affinity and collaboration; in other places LGBTQ groups may feel it hurts their cause to align with groups like Planned Parenthood.

- **Progressive Communities of Faith**

There are progressive churches in the South, and they can be powerful allies. Moreover, the Cimarron Alliance in Oklahoma has made it a priority to work with other groups who are targeted in that state (Muslim-Americans in particular) to show solidarity and support.

- **Colleges and Universities**

Across the South, at least 91 college and university campuses have at least one active LGBTQ student group or center. Many of these student groups advocate within their own campuses and beyond, often working in creative and intersectional ways. Campus Pride, the national network of campus groups, is based in North Carolina, and has a strong and deep base in the region.

CORPORATE SECTOR: In many cities and some states, the Chambers of Commerce and other organized groups are essential in beating back anti-LGBTQ legislation like religious liberties bills. Many youth organizations have enlisted significant corporate sponsorship and volunteer energy. Over 300 companies in the South participate in HRC's Corporate Equality Index and some advocates see the potential to leverage that into more significant participation. The community scan identified 27 LGBTQ chambers of commerce, business associations, and professional networks, all potential assets to be leveraged in strengthening relationships with the business community.

STRATEGIC PRACTICES



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ People don’t look to the region enough for the models of best practice but they do exist, need to be highlighted. ” — SURVEY RESPONDENT

The examples highlighted below are only a handful within the strategic practices that can serve as inspiration and models for work in the South.

COALITION AND CONVENING: Arkansas for Human and Civil Rights is a coalition of 10 groups focused on nonpartisan electoral work, racial justice, creating a human rights commission and adding “sexual orientation and gender identity” to the state civil rights law. In a very different frame, Equality Florida’s Equality Means Business recognizes businesses that have adopted nondiscrimination policies and enlists employers to pressure the state legislature. SONG’s Small Town Initiative is building a network and deepening understanding of current conditions and challenges for rural areas and small towns. South Carolina Equality is leading a nascent effort to gather all LGBTQ groups around the state to rebuild relationships and lay the groundwork for long-term strategy.

COHORT PROGRAMS: Race Forward’s Better Together in the South, funded by the Arcus Foundation, is a leadership cohort-program for 22 leaders from ten Southern states, a unique space where leaders can think strategically together. The Equality Federation’s Southern cohort is building peer relationships, which is leading to shared strategy and ideas for cross-training. The Federation is working to offer assistance with fundraising, board development, and leadership coaching. As Equality Federation staffer Ian Palmquist, who is based in the South, says, “Groups with different theories of change may never work hand in hand but they can communicate and not step on each other’s efforts; and in some places there could be a lot more collaboration.”

LEVERAGING FEDERAL FUNDING: JASMYN in Jacksonville, FL and The Montrose Center in Houston, TX are just two examples of service-based organizations that have successfully pulled in federal funding for youth work (JASMYN) and mental health counseling (Montrose). In both cases lead staff went outside of the South to study relevant models; now these programs have become models within the region. In the case of JASMYN, the organization has identified and partnered with a host of social service agencies that needed to improve their work with LGBTQ youth; these collaborations have led to positive shifts in local institutions.

CHALLENGES FOR LGBTQ WORK IN THE SOUTH



SOUTHERN VOICES:

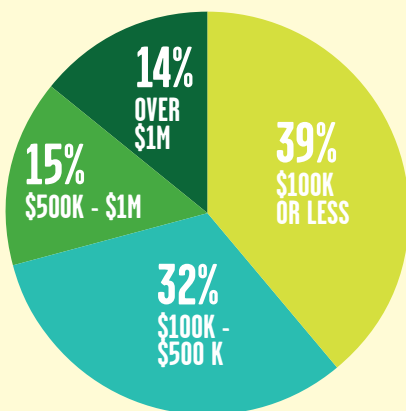
“ People need to understand the power of what has been accomplished with nothing in terms of money, training and development. ”

— ORGANIZER

More than 40 percent of organizations that participated in the survey reported funding as one of their two largest challenges. The South does not have the same traditional funding base that LGBTQ nonprofits benefit from in other regions. There are few resources coming from municipalities, state governments or mechanisms like the United Way. Only one-third of organizations surveyed have dedicated fundraising staff. The other two thirds have no development staff. Moreover, a third of the groups had no connections to foundation funding.

In general, many of the groups struggle with increasing development capacity, attracting new resources, diversifying income, and attaining multi-year grants. For groups led by and serving people of color, working class people and trans people, the funding challenges are even more extreme.

BREAKDOWN OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. SOUTH BY SIZE OF ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET
(N = 114)



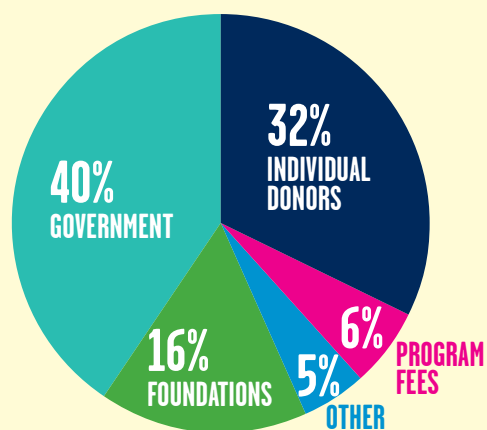
VOLUNTEER ENERGY

Organizations surveyed reported over 5,500 regular volunteers, but the range in participation is significant. While slightly more than 30 percent of groups report 10 or fewer regular volunteers, nearly 20 percent of groups report 500 or more regular volunteers. Sadly,

FUNDING

Most organizations surveyed in the South had a small budget, if they had a budget at all. For those with a budget, the median budget size was \$200,000; however, almost 20 percent of groups had a budget of under \$10,000.

COMBINED REVENUE BY FUNDING SOURCE FOR LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. SOUTH
(N = 75)



CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Approximately 35 percent of organizations named capacity and infrastructure as their next biggest challenge.

Nearly half of the organizations participating in the survey have one or no full-time staff. In the case of all-volunteer organizations, the board of directors usually do most of the work outside of their “day jobs” during the evenings and on weekends. As one volunteer board member put it, “I can’t tell my boss that I can’t come to work because I have to go to an LGBT meeting.” In organizations with only one full-time person there is pressure to wear a wide range of hats internally while representing the organization in multiple arenas externally. This can lead to greater turnover, which contributes to the fragility of the movement.



SOUTHERN VOICES:

“ The far right alleges that we are bullying them with more inclusive laws but guess what? Our side is the only one with a body count. ”

— LARGE SERVICE ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR

leaders report it is harder to maintain consistent, dedicated volunteers because “people are more distracted than they were 20 years ago; they are working longer and harder and they don’t have strength.”

Volunteers are crucial for organizing, and several survey respondents identified organizing capacity as an area for growth in the South.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA

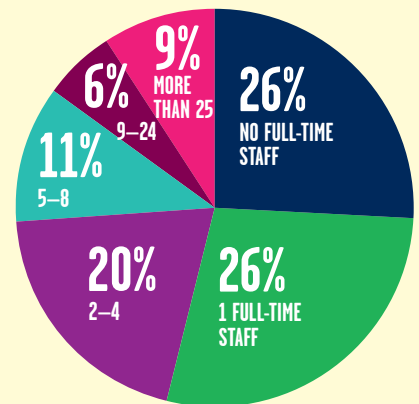
In smaller and medium sized organizations, the responsibility for communications, marketing, and technology falls to the director or a board member. In many rural areas and small towns media outlets are limited (one newspaper, one local television station) and often not open to alternative narratives and stories. On the plus side, those in smaller cities often find it easier to get a meeting with a managing editor or producer.

Of the groups surveyed, only slightly more than half work with the press. However, more than 75 percent of respondents maintain an organizational website. Social media use is even more prevalent, with over 80 percent of respondents maintaining a group Facebook page.

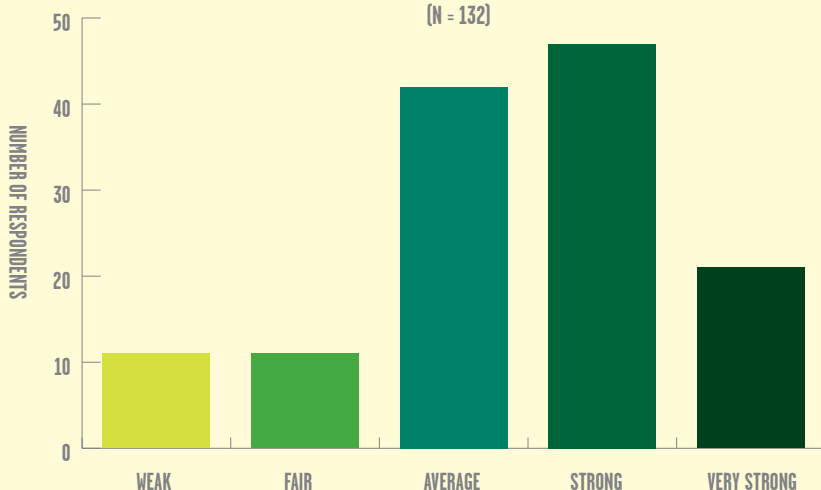
PHYSICAL SPACE

Approximately 10 percent of respondents named physical space as a challenge. For some this was a need for space for a community center, church, office or direct services. For others it was about maintenance or outgrowing current space.

BREAKDOWN OF LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. SOUTH BY NUMBER OF FULL-TIME STAFF
(N = 104)



RESPONSES FROM LGBTQ COMMUNITY ASSETS IN THE U.S. TO "HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS"
(N = 132)



CURRENT CLIMATE

Nearly 20 percent of LGBTQ nonprofit leaders in the South see the current political and/or religious climate in their state as a major challenge. In most cases this refers to conservative and/or hostile state legislatures, increased opposition, specific attacks on the LGBTQ community, and the persistent threat of violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

“ There is no place in the country that will work harder to prove their worth as a funded organization than LGBTQ organizations in the South ” — SURVEY RESPONDENT

LGBTQ organizations in the South want to strengthen their own work and capacity; there is a strong desire for steady, long-term funding that can take work to the next level of impact.

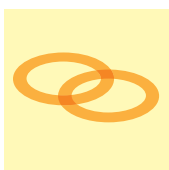


BUILD CAPACITY OF PROVEN GROUPS IN THE REGION

“ It will not be enough to win. There is a need for continuity and strong organizations to gain the wins and keep the wins. That is the investment’s return. ”
— SURVEY RESPONDENT

The South is home to a plethora of LGBTQ organizations working on a range of strategies and at various scales. Investment in groups that have proven experience, documented success, strong relationships and in-depth understanding of local issues and culture could change the local landscape. Specifically, capacity building focused on fundraising, diversifying funding and creating sustainable revenue streams would benefit many organizations. Models for building fundraising capacity include a fellowship initiative that trains and places cohorts of fundraisers in LGBTQ organizations, or partnerships with statewide nonprofit networks to provide training and resources.

Funders might also consider supporting shared physical space for LGBTQ organizations as a way to institutionalize movement centers in less-resourced places and build a more dynamic presence. Spaces can serve as community hubs, incubate new work, and generate revenue. One of a handful of groups in the region with a robust physical space, The Montrose Center in Houston, is a convening place for groups, which lends itself to the “symbiosis of having people together; it is impossible not to bump into people.” MCC churches often own their buildings in the South and that means “we have what movements need to grow: kitchens, meeting space, parking lots, bathrooms and a ready-made constituency.” Other key areas for capacity building include communications, policy and advocacy, finance and operations management, and board development.



STRENGTHEN ORGANIZING BEFORE, DURING, AND BEYOND “THE MARRIAGE MOMENT”

“ If we were able to hire more organizers who are developing local leadership in an intersectional context, that would be great. ” — STATEWIDE EQUALITY DIRECTOR

Each marriage equality case that comes to courtrooms in the South leads to increased media coverage and conversation about LGBTQ issues in the region - as will the eventual federal ruling by the Supreme Court itself. With appropriate resourcing, these opportunities can be channeled to raise awareness and advance cultural change for marriage equality and LGBTQ issues more broadly. There is the potential to leverage “the marriage moment” into expanded policy capacity and advocacy efforts in the region, particularly for statewide nondiscrimination protections and school anti-bullying policies.

There is a widespread desire, from both advocacy and organizing groups, for greater organizing capacity. Organizing builds a base of empowered people. For advocacy groups, that serves as a foundation for lobbying and legislative work. “The field organizer is not

someone parachuting in but living the experience and able to engage the community in a sustained conversation.” For grassroots organizations it means nurturing the power and skills of people on the ground to speak out. This work happens over time but comes to fruition in periods of particular campaign work and responding to incidents. One Campus Pride leader at the College of Charleston referenced the vital organizing support from SONG and two South Carolina groups — AFFA and We Are Family — during recent protests of the state legislature’s decision to pull funding from the college after Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home* was assigned reading for incoming first-year students. An investment in organizing also builds the capacity for people to take risks collectively, especially important in rural parts of the South where the stigma and threat of violence is greatest.



SUPPORT ALLIANCES AND RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM COALITIONS AND SOLIDARITY

“ There is an incredibly deep history around intersectionality – it’s been our lived experience. ” — MINISTER AND ORGANIZER, MID-SOUTH

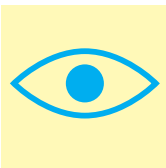
Because LGBTQ groups in the South have relationships that cross multiple lines (issue, sector, approach and demographic), there is tremendous potential to create long-term, strategic ties with other movements. Increased opportunities for statewide and regional convening can build relationships and strategy rooted in solidarity and facilitate sharing of strategic practices and models. Many of these efforts dissipate without the resources to hold them together over time. In addition to supporting formal alliances, funders can encourage and resource organic relationship-building and then provide additional support for ensuing collaborations.



HELP MAINTAIN AND GROW DIRECT SERVICE CAPACITY

**“ Health is a great equalizer. When you’re healthy, you’re a different person. ”
— SERVICE PROVIDER, DEEP SOUTH**

While foundations are unlikely to be able to fully fund any direct services sector, they can play a crucial role in supporting pilot programs, needs assessments, increasing capacity and cultural competence, and helping successful programs grow to scale. This role is particularly important when it comes to LGBTQ communities in the South, which face exceptionally high rates of poverty and have the nation’s highest incidence of HIV/AIDS. There are very specific service needs at both ends of the age spectrum. With a handful of exceptions, organizations serving LGBTQ youth are underfunded or, as in too many Southern cities, nonexistent. And with large numbers of baby boomers retiring, “they face having to go back into the closet when needing Long Term Care.” Seniors are more likely to live alone and need greater access to community, housing, affirming and inclusive health and mental health services; they are often invisible in LGBTQ work. Transgender communities also often lack access to a range of services - particularly health care - and very few providers in the region have the capacity and cultural competence to serve their needs, especially in more conservative areas.



SUPPORT EFFORTS TO INCREASE LGBTQ VISIBILITY AND SHARE THE STORIES OF LGBTQ SOUTHERNERS

“ People are their stories in the South. Storytelling is the way people perform their identity. It’s a long tradition. It’s a way that we know who we are. ”

— CULTURAL WORKER

It is vital to increase visibility, support and safety for people to come out; “it’s hard for people to speak up for themselves if they are afraid to be themselves.” Increased visibility could shift the potential of movement work. Over 25 percent of respondents to the survey listed cultural work or the arts as a primary strategy, though only 9 percent of Southern LGBTQ funding goes to this strategy. Lifting up LGBTQ people’s stories strengthens leadership, creates spokespeople for the movement, and contributes to a much-needed ongoing education process. In addition to funding campaign-based storytelling, it is important to resource people who care about the legacy of storytelling and do it in a way that builds community. “You won’t see the outcome as quickly and it won’t be as flashy but it builds networks, support systems, and intergenerational wisdom.”



EXPLORE CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR ASSESSING INTERMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH

“ A short-term investment is unlikely to turn the tide. ” — SURVEY RESPONDENT

Many respondents raised the challenge of using short-term policy victories as the primary measure of success in a highly resistant political context. LGBTQ Southern leaders are keenly aware of the importance of outcomes and expressed a desire to work collaboratively with funders to define outcomes and measures of success—including and beyond policy victories. Acknowledging the need for a long-term and broad vision for LGBTQ rights in the South, these practices and models for measuring progress may be helpful:

- Recognize policy victories at the municipal and county level, as well as the defeats of anti-LGBT legislation and other intermediate steps toward full legal equality at the state level.
- Set benchmarks in capacity-building and organizational development.
- Explore creative outcome measures to assess progress in cultural and attitudinal change.
- Consider using longer-term, multi-year approaches to both funding and outcome measurement.

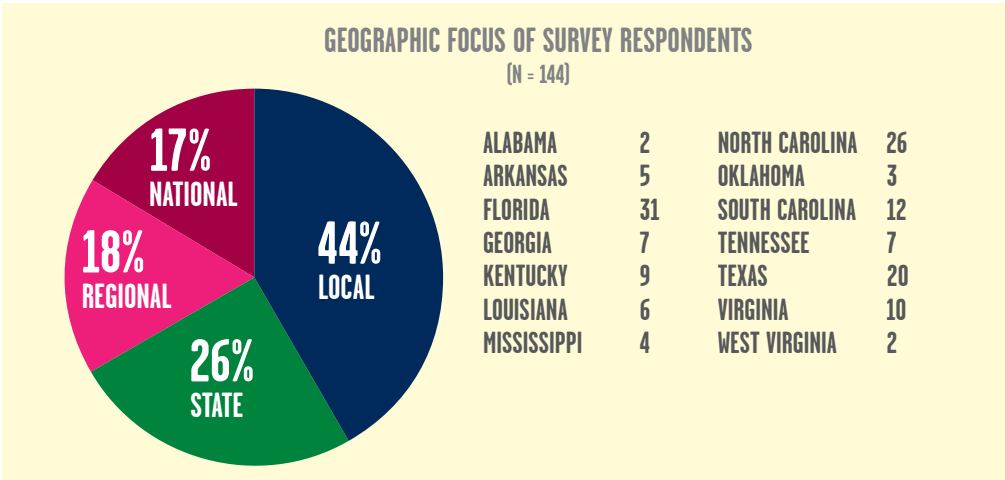
Respondents also expressed great gratitude to funding partners who take the time to understand the uniqueness of their local context, who attend regional and local meetings, and who are transparent and collaborative in the establishment of appropriate outcome measures for grants.

METHODOLOGY

This report synthesizes findings from several lines of research to conduct a thorough and in-depth assessment of the LGBTQ community assets in the U.S. South:

SCAN

The author and staff of Funders for LGBTQ Issues identified as many Southern LGBTQ community groups as possible, drawing on the Movement Advancement Project’s (MAP’s) database of LGBTQ nonprofits, Campus Pride’s online database of LGBTQ campus groups, InterPride’s online database, Center for Black Equity’s online database, Centerlink’s online dataset, Funders for LGBTQ Issues’ own database of LGBTQ-related grant recipients, supplementary online research, and additional qualitative research that involved asking leaders and community representatives for additional resources. The scan intentionally included programs of larger agencies, chapters of national organizations, and informal groups as well as more traditional nonprofit organizations. Excluded from the final tally were groups devoted primarily to social and recreational purposes, such as meet-up groups and athletic leagues. While these groups play an essential role in LGBTQ communities, they are vast in number, are sometimes short-lived, and are more difficult to track accurately. Had these groups been included, the total number of community assets would have easily exceeded 1,000.



SURVEY

A detailed 31-question survey was distributed to the LGBTQ community groups identified through the scan, and promoted widely via e-mail, social media, and word-of-mouth. More than 200 people responded to the survey, representing more than

125 LGBTQ community groups from all 14 states, as well as regional and national groups. Respondents spanned a broad range of advocacy, education, service, cultural and organizing groups. In cases where more than one person from an organization responded to the survey, only the responses from the most senior representative of the organization were used for all tallies of organizational data.

INTERVIEWS

To add further depth to the findings from the scan and survey, the author conducted one-on-one interviews with 30 leaders representing 13 states in the region and a mix of strategic approaches, organizational size, and demographics.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: CLAUDIA HORWITZ

Claudia is a leader in national efforts to integrate the power of spiritual practice and the work of social justice. In 1995 she founded stone circles, a nonprofit organization committed to sustaining activists and strengthening the work for justice through spiritual practice and principles. In 2007, the organization created The Stone House, a center on 70 acres of land in Mebane, North Carolina that welcomes people of all traditions for training, retreat and fellowship. She is the author of *The Spiritual Activist: Practices to Transform Your Life, Your Work, and Your World* (Penguin Compass 2002) and has a Master's degree in Public Policy from Duke University. She currently serves as Interim Executive Director of the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a part of the LGBT Southern Funding Project, this report is made possible because of the generous contributions made by the Arcus Foundation, the Chartrand Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Foundation for Louisiana, Four Freedoms Fund, Gill Foundation, Andrew Lane, Weston Milliken, Laughing Gull Foundation, the Amy Mandel and Katina Rodis Fund, Mario Palumbo, and Urvashi Vaid. Thank you for helping us advocate for increased philanthropic investment in the U.S. South. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dozens of Southern movement leaders who offered their time, insights, and expertise for interviews and meetings with researchers, staff, and members as part of the ongoing research for the LGBT Southern Funding Project. Our thanks as well to the 200-plus community leaders who completed the online survey instrument.

Finally, many thanks to Gita Gulati-Partee, Evangeline Weiss, and Craig White, who conducted early research for the LGBT Southern Funding Project, much of which helped provide a foundation for this report.

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Part Two: LGBTQ Community Assets in the U.S. South (SEPTEMBER 2014)

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Funders for LGBTQ Issues works to mobilize the philanthropic resources that enhance the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities, promote equity and advance racial, economic and gender justice.

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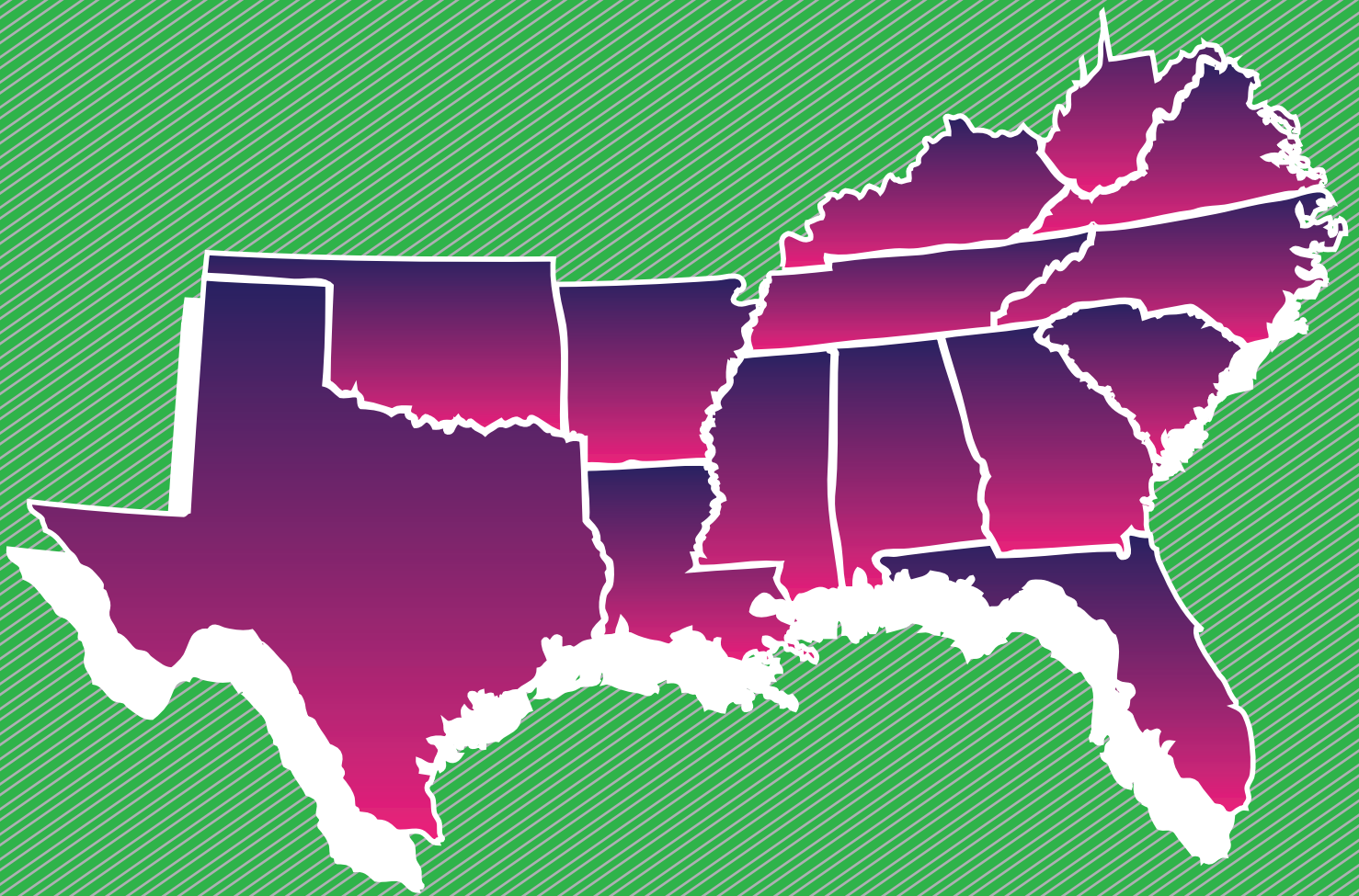
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