

# 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS

*Celebrating hard-won victories in building community, advancing rights,  
and breaking barriers.*

**1924**

The Society for Human Rights establishes its first chapter in Chicago, IL, becoming the first gay rights organization to be recognized in the United States.

**1958**

One, Inc v. Olesen results in a landmark ruling that affirmed LGBTQ+ Americans' right to freedom of speech in LGBTQ+ publications.

**1965**

Activists from several LGBTQ+ rights groups organize to march on Philadelphia's Independence Hall.

**1950**

Activist Harry Hay founds the Mattachine Society with the goal of changing the public's perception of gay men.

**1961**

Illinois becomes the first state to legalize same-sex consensual activity.

**1969**

Almost overnight, the modern fight for LGBTQ+ rights began with the Stonewall Uprising.

**1973**

The board of the American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

**1978**

SAGE is founded. It remains one of the only non-profits providing services and advocacy for LGBTQ+ older adults.

**1982**

Wisconsin becomes the first U.S. state to expand its anti-discrimination laws to include sexual orientation in its list of protected classes.

**1980**

Steve Endean founds the Human Rights Campaign, which still funds crucial training initiatives and research into LGBTQ+ safety and wellness.

**1985**

West Hollywood becomes one of the first cities in America to enact a domestic partnership registry, a crucial step toward same-sex marriage.

**1996**

The United States Supreme Court makes a historic ruling in the *Romer v. Evans* case: states cannot amend their constitutions to deny members of the LGBTQ+ community the legal protections given to all U.S. citizens under the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause.

2000

Vermont welcomes the new millennium by being the first state to legalize same-sex civil unions and registered partnerships.

2004

Massachusetts becomes the first state to officially legalize same-sex marriage. New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Iowa, and Washington D.C. quickly follow suit.

2010

The U.S. Senate repeals the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, allowing gay and lesbian officers to serve in the military openly.

2015

The 5-4 decisions in the Obergefell v. Hodges case serves as the catalyst that declares same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states of America.

# 2025 AND ONWARD...

***Looking back on a century of hard-won progress, we honor the pioneers who dared to live authentically and fought for equality against all odds.***

***Among them are our elders, older adults whose lives, struggles, and resilience laid the groundwork for so much of the progress we strive to protect today. As we honor their victories, we must also acknowledge that many still face isolation, discrimination, and inequity. The journey for inclusion and fairness is far from over. We carry their legacy forward with pride, vigilance, and with hope for a future in which every member of the LGBTQ+ community can thrive.***