

LGBT Pride Month 2014

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month (LGBT Pride Month) is currently celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan. The Stonewall riots were a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. In the United States the last Sunday in June was initially celebrated as "Gay Pride Day," but the actual day was flexible. In major cities across the nation the "day" soon grew to encompass a month-long series of events. Today, celebrations include pride parades, picnics, parties, workshops, symposia and concerts, and LGBT Pride Month events attract millions of participants around the world.



2014 USTA NorCal Spotlight Michele Yin

Michele Yin is a community member who steps up and take her turn by contributing her voice, amazing work ethic, incredibly calm and effective leadership to create community spaces where everyone is welcome and embraced. Michele makes space to contribute in a life filled with full-time work and an extensive network of family and friends, as well as her four-legged buddy, Cricket.

Michele's most recent accomplishment is her leadership as Director of the United States Gay Open (USGO), an annual tournament held in the Bay Area as part of the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance (GLTA) circuit. As the second oldest LGBT tournament in the world, this event has been held annually since 1980. In 2013, Michele became the first woman to become the director of this event, which brings players together from around the country and world. Her efforts were publicly recognized as the USGO was voted outstanding GLTA tournament for 2013 by GLTA tournament participants.

Born in Berkeley, Michele was delivered by her dad on the living room floor because her mom's labor was so quick and there was no time to get to the hospital—a sign of the rapid pace at which she would move through the world! Raised in Hayward, Michele grew up in a tennis-playing family. Though they say her current pursuits/love of the game have surpassed theirs, that early family experience has so clearly shaped her approach to tennis as a community and team activity.

In addition to serving as USGO Director as a member of the Gay and Lesbian Tennis Federation of San Francisco Bay Area (GLTF) Board of Directors the last two years, she served an additional two years as Secretary and Communications Director, as well as captained USTA teams and served as event director for many GLTF events. Besides her amazing contributions to her community, she is a fierce competitor on the courts and plays several times a week, as well as playing on league teams every season.



Athlete Ally

The Story

Athlete Ally is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization focused on ending homophobia and transphobia in sports by educating allies in the athletic community and empowering them to take a stand.

They recruit Ambassadors in youth, collegiate, professional and international sports, who work to foster "allyship" in their athletic environments.

Athlete Ally also provides public awareness campaigns, educational programming and tools and resources to foster inclusive sports communities.

Beginnings

Hudson Taylor, FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As an athlete in high school and college, Hudson Taylor often observed the use of homophobic language and demeaning humor, especially in sports. Soon after enrolling at the University of Maryland, he befriended LGBT students in his theatre classes and became increasingly aware of the pain caused by homophobic behavior.

Hudson, who is not gay, felt it was imperative he confront the reality sports often marginalize LGBT athletes, coaches and others through systemic homophobia and transphobia. He decided to take action as a straight ally to change athletic culture for the better.

To stand in solidarity with the LGBT community, Hudson wore an LGBT equality sticker from the Human Rights Campaign on his wrestling headgear. Though he encountered criticism from his peers, but received positive attention from the media, and received thousands of emails from parents and closeted athletes, expressing thanks and sharing their own experiences of homophobia and transphobia in sports.

This experience inspired Hudson to launch Athlete Ally.

Tennis Allies

Martina Navratilova, PRO AMBASSADOR/ADVISORY BOARD: WTA (Retired)

"Now that Jason Collins has come out, he is the proverbial "game-changer." One of the last bastions of homophobia has been challenged. How many LGBT kids, once closeted, are now more likely to pursue a team sport and won't be scared away by a straight culture?"

Andy Roddick, PRO AMBASSADOR: ATP Tennis Player (Retired)

"Jason Collin's courage and leadership in coming out reminds me of how important it is for an athlete to be able to be true to him or herself. As an Athlete Ally, I want to support every athlete to feel comfortable and confident being themselves and to make sure that all people - players and fans alike - are welcome and included in tennis."