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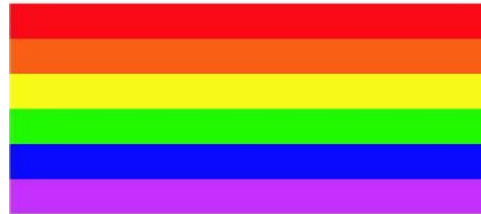
**Employment over the Rainbow:
Supporting LGBTQI Peers with their
Employment Goals
September 17, 2014**

This presentation is made possible by grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant #SM059955



Some useful terms to know

- **LGBTQQIA** - Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Questioning Intersex Ally
- You may also see **LGBTQI2S** (2S stands for Two Spirited – from some Native communities)



Some useful terms to know (continued)

- **Cisgender** - A gender identity that society considers to “match” the biological sex assigned at birth. The prefix cis- means “on this side of” or “not across from.” A term used to call attention to the privilege of people who are not transgendered.
- **Bigendered** - Having two genders; exhibiting cultural characteristics of male and female roles.

Some useful terms to know (continued)

- **Heterosexism** - The assumption that all people are or should be heterosexual. Heterosexism excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and other non-monosexual people as well as asexual, transgender, and intersex people, while it gives advantages to heterosexual people. It is often a subtle form of oppression which reinforces realities of silence and invisibility.

Some useful terms to know (continued)

- **Internalized homophobia** - The fear and self-hate of one's own homosexuality or non-monosexuality that occurs for many individuals who have learned negative ideas about homosexuality throughout childhood. One form of internalized oppression is the acceptance of the myths and stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.
- **Intersex** - People who naturally (that is, without any medical interventions) develop primary and/or secondary sex characteristics that do not fit neatly into society's definitions of male or female.

Some useful terms to know (continued)

- **Transphobia** - A reaction of fear, loathing, and discriminatory treatment of people whose identity or gender presentation (or perceived gender or gender identity) does not “match,” in the societally accepted way, the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgendered people, intersex people, lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and other non-monosexuals are typically the target of transphobia.

Source: <http://lgbtcenter.ucdavis.edu/lgbt-education/lgbtqia-glossary>

Factors to consider

Evidence indicates that individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) are especially susceptible to being placed at a socioeconomic disadvantage.



Factors to consider (continued)

- LGBT youth experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate. Studies indicate that between 20 and 40 percent of all homeless youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.
- Upon coming out to their parents, up to 50 percent of gay teens report a negative reaction, and 26 percent report being kicked out of their homes.

Source: American Psychological Association

Factors to consider (continued)

FOR LGBT OLDER ADULTS, A LIFETIME OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, CONTRIBUTES TO DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH POVERTY RATES.

- One study found that same-sex elder couples face higher poverty rates than their heterosexual peers; 9.1% and 4.9% among elder lesbian and gay couples, respectively, in contrast to 4.6% among elder heterosexual couples.

Source: SAGE: Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Elders

- Almost a quarter of lesbian and bisexual women ages 18 to 44 live in poverty, compared with 19 percent of straight women.

Source: Center for American Progress

Factors to Consider (continued)

While LGBT persons tend to have more education on average than the general population, evidence suggests that they make less money than their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts.

Source: Factor and Rothblum, 2007; Fassinger, 2007; Egan, Edelman, & Sherrill, 2008

Studies on income differences for LGBT persons indicate that:

- Gay men earn up to 32 percent less than similarly qualified heterosexual men.
- Up to 64 percent of transgender people report incomes below \$25,000.
- While 5.9 percent of the general population makes less than \$10,000, 14 percent of LGBT individuals are within this income bracket.

Source: American Psychological Association

Discrimination and other employment factors:

- Discrimination of LGBT persons in the workplace is a significant factor in the differences in socioeconomic status for LGBT persons. In many cases, discrimination against and unfair treatment of LGBT persons remains legally acceptable

Source: Fassinger, 2007

- In 34 states, it is legal for lesbian and gay employees to be fired because their employers discover, and disapprove of, their sexual orientation.

Discrimination and other employment factors (continued)

- Termination of an employee based on gender identity remains legal in 39 American states.
- A 2011 Transgender Discrimination survey found that 90% reported experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job or took actions like hiding who they are to avoid it, and that transgendered individuals experience unemployment at twice the rate of the general population.

Source: National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

Discrimination and other employment factors (continued)

- Fifteen percent to 43 percent of gay and transgender workers have experienced some form of discrimination on the job.
- Eight percent to 17 percent of gay and transgender workers report being passed over for a job or fired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Ten percent to 28 percent received a negative performance evaluation or were passed over for a promotion because they were gay or transgender.
- Seven percent to 41 percent of gay and transgender workers were verbally or physically abused or had their workplace vandalized.

Source: Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy

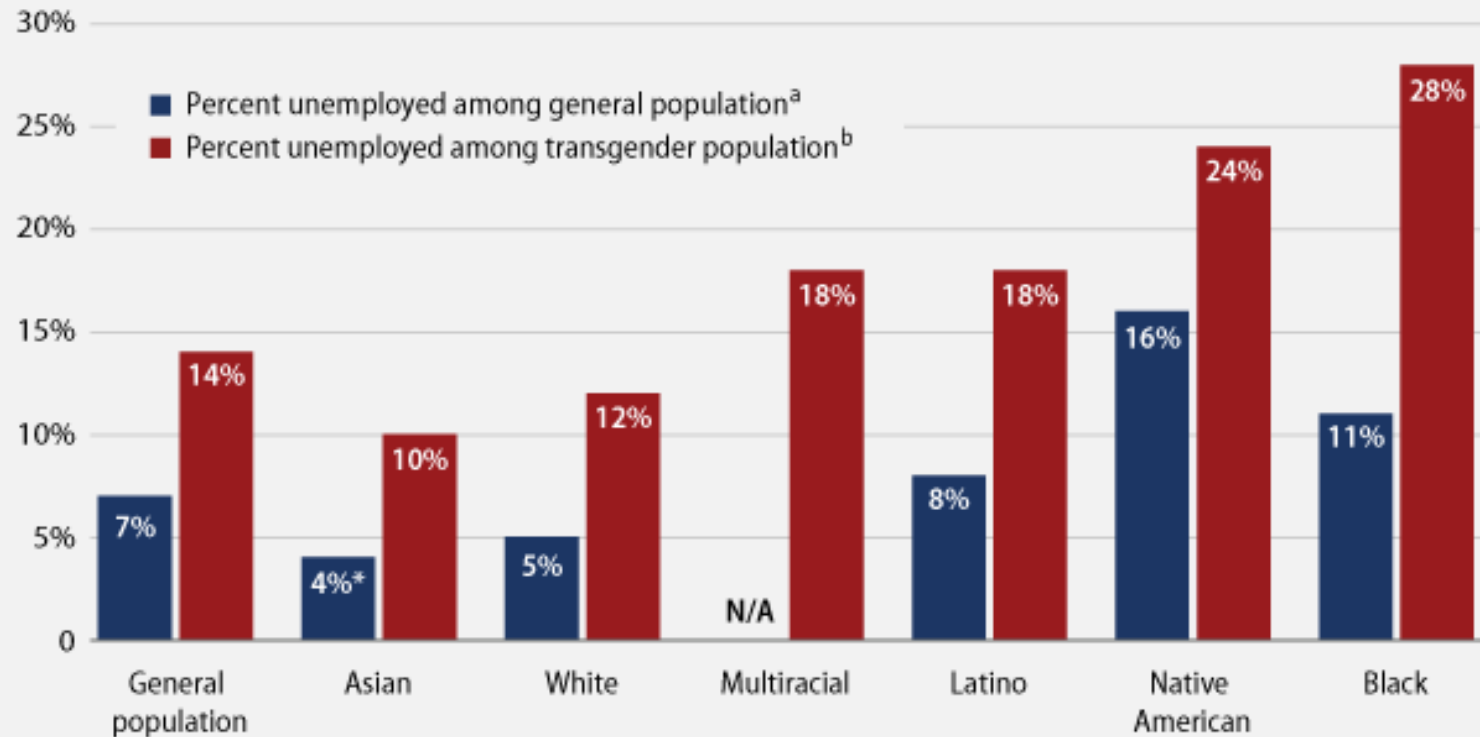
Discrimination and other employment factors (continued)

- A recent study found that lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults are unemployed at a rate 40 percent higher than the overall average. The numbers get even worse for transgender workers: “The National Transgender Discrimination Survey” from the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force found that transgender adults report unemployment rates double the rates of the non-transgender population, with transgender workers of color reporting nearly four times the national average.

Source: Center for American Progress

FIGURE 1

Unemployment rates among transgender adults by racial and ethnic group



* While the other rates are based on seasonally adjusted data, such data are not available for Asian Americans in September 2008.

The figure is therefore based on the nonseasonally adjusted rate for September 2008.

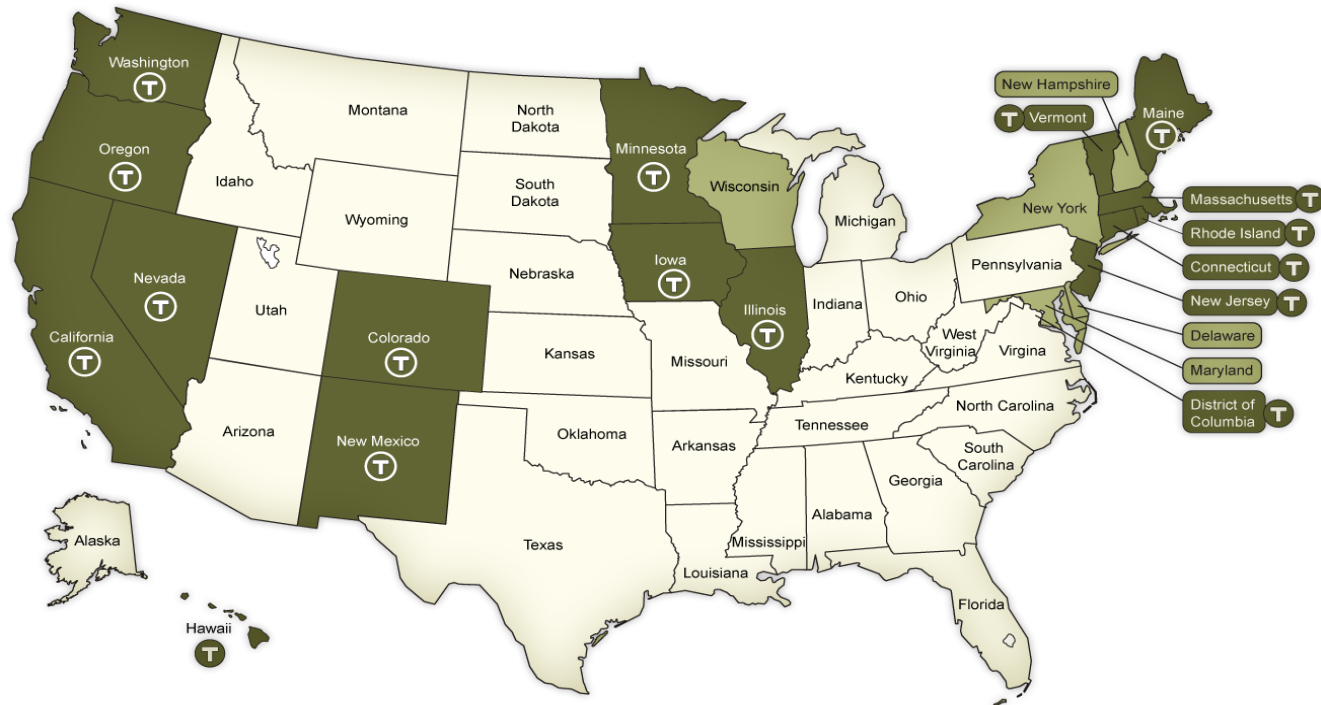
a. Unemployment rates are based on September 2008 figures. See U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Employment Situation: September 2008," Press release, October 3, 2008, available at http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_10032008.htm.

b. Jaime M. Grant and others, "Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey" (Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011), available at http://www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/ntds.

Discrimination and other employment factors (continued)

A national bill that would ban employers from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation (Employment Non-Discrimination Act) has been submitted to Congress almost every year since 1994, with no success to date.

Protections Across the Country



Employment non-discrimination law covers sexual orientation and gender identity (16 states + D.C.)



Employment non-discrimination law covers only sexual orientation, but federal law prohibits discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people (5 states)



No employment non-discrimination law covering sexual orientation or gender identity, but federal law prohibits discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people

Source: http://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/employment_non_discrimination_laws

Glimmers of hope



While social prejudice and discrimination create stress that increases risk for some LGBTQI individuals and groups, this population has also demonstrated significant resiliency and resourcefulness.

Glimmers of hope (continued)



In 2010, 87 percent of Fortune 500 companies had non-discrimination policies that included sexual orientation, and 46 percent include gender identity too.

Source: Human Rights Campaign

Glimmers of hope (continued)

In surveys, 72% of Americans support laws prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. An even greater number answer yes when asked, “Do you think homosexuals should have equal rights in terms of job opportunities?” This consensus is remarkably widespread: in all states a majority support antidiscrimination laws protecting gays and lesbians, and in all but 10 states this support is 70% or higher.

Source: <http://www.frumforum.com/>

Mental health and LGBT

A staggering 41% of respondents reported attempting suicide compared to 1.6% of the general population, with unemployment, low income, and sexual and physical assault raising the risk factors significantly

Source: National Transgender Discrimination Survey Report on health and health care - Findings of a Study by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

Mental health and LGBT (continued)

In many cases, even the self-identification of an LGBTQI person as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender is challenged or denied by the very mental health care provider entrusted to support the person, in the name of “repairing” or “converting” the person to a “normal” condition.

Mental health and LGBT (continued)

LGBTQI people have sometimes been excluded from the Surgeon General's report on mental health, from the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, from the report to the U.S. Congress on the "Prevention and Treatment of Co-Occurring Substance Abuse Disorders and Mental Disorders," as well as from state and local mental health and substance abuse plans.

Davis, Mark A., "Reducing Stigma and Discrimination among People who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender," Presentation to U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, Center for Mental Health Services, March 12, 2008.

Mental health and LGBT employment concerns

- People with mental health issues have a significantly higher unemployment rate than the general population
- LGBT have a significantly higher rate than the general population
- Imagine the unemployment rate for people with mental health issues who identify as LGBT

What do we do?

Use respectful language at all times:

- Be respectful of how the individual chooses to identify
- Follow the individual's cues on gender identity
- If you aren't sure...ask

What do we do? (continued)

Check your biases

- If you find yourself uncomfortable around peers who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or with peers who seem to fall outside the “gender norm” ...ask yourself, “Why? What bothers me about this?”

Checking your biases: questions to ask yourself

- Would I support an openly gay male get a job in a day care center? If not, why not?
- Would I support a lesbian get a job in a women's refuge center? If not, why not?
- Should people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender be able to get any job they want? If not, why not?

Tips for LGBTQI peers who are looking for jobs

- Look online to find out about a company's policies. Do they offer anti-discrimination policies that are inclusive of LGBTQI employees?
- If the company does not have such policies, ask yourself, "Do I want to work here?"

Tips for LGBTQI peers who are looking for jobs (continued)

Decide if it is important to you to be out at work

- If so, there are three strategies you can:
 - Show this in your resume by adding known LGBTQI organizations you are, or have been, affiliated with;
 - Inquiring about nondiscrimination policies or domestic partner benefits during an interview, you can come out without having to say, "Yes, I'm gay."

OR

- You may choose to come out after you've been hired. Articles and tips can be found through various websites such as, <http://gaylife.about.com/od/comingout/u/howtocomeout.html>

Tips for employment supporters

- Encourage peers to follow their dreams.
- Honor the person's self-identity and self-expression.
- Remember: It is not your place to advise or encourage a peer to come out or not to come out to an employer. This is a personal decision that can have consequences either way.

Tips for employment supporters (continued)

- Don't make assumptions about the peers you are working with. Some may identify as LGBTQI, but don't feel comfortable disclosing, or simply don't feel this should be a factor in your working relationship.
- Keep in mind that if a peer does disclose to you, this may not be information the individual wants you to share. Remember: confidentiality.

Resources for LGBTQI job seekers and employees

<http://www.hrc.org/worknet>

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation's workplace project, HRC WorkNet, is a national source of information on laws and policies surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity and expression in the workplace.

<http://www.hirediversity.com/>

HireDiversity.com - This website has resources for several diverse populations including African Americans, Asian Americans, disabled, gay & lesbian, Hispanics, Native Americans, and women.

Resources for LGBTQI job seekers and employees (continued)

<http://www.outandequal.org/>

Out & Equal - Offers career and job resources, latest news.

<http://www.lambdalegal.org/>

Lambda Legal - Offers a legal help desk and state by state information.

www.tjobbank.com

Trans Job bank - Job postings from trans-friendly employers organized by industry.

Discussion

Do you have any questions,
feedback, or comments?





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