

# MEET THE EQUALITY USDA TEAM

Equality USDA is the employee resource group for LGBTQI+ employees and retirees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The mission of Equality USDA is to create and continue to foster a work environment free of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Equality USDA seeks to make USDA a place where you can grow your own destiny, no matter who you are or whom you love. For more info, contact us at [info@EqualityUSDA.org](mailto:info@EqualityUSDA.org). To join Equality USDA, [complete a membership form here](#).



President

**Jeremy Wood** (he/him) is the President of Equality USDA. He has been a part of the USDA family for over 20 years and currently works as a Diversity & Inclusion Specialist with the Office of Civil Rights, Diversity, & Inclusion in the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service. Jeremy has been involved with the LGBTQ+ Special Emphasis Program since its creation in 2009 and is co-leading USDA's efforts to implement President Biden's Executive Order on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation.



Vice President

**Adriana Campagna**, E.I.T., (she/they) is the Vice President of Equality USDA and the Lower Willamette/North Coast Basin Engineer for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon. They started their career with NRCS in July 2016 in California. Since starting her career, she has worked in two states in a variety of positions ranging from Field Office Engineer to State Wetland Engineer. She is an At-Large member of the Oregon Civil Rights Committee and was the previously the Treasurer for Equality USDA.



Communications Director

**Justin Fritscher** (he/him) is the Equality USDA Communications Director and serves as the Public Affairs Section Chief for USDA's Farm Production and Conservation Business Center, leading communications for USDA's farm program agencies. He joined USDA in 2011, originally working for the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Jackson, Mississippi. Justin is a Louisiana native and a Louisiana State University alumnus.



Secretary

**Rachel Frei** (she/her) is the Equality USDA Secretary and a District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Chamberlain, South Dakota. She began her career as a soil conservationist in 2019. Prior to working for NRCS, Rachel received her master's degree in agro-environmental science with research in soil physics and fertility from Aarhus University in Denmark. She received her bachelor's degree in environmental science and soil science from the University of Rhode Island.

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Treasurer

**Chris Nasados** (he/him) is the Treasurer for Equality USDA and a Senior Program Specialist who has worked for the last thirteen years in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the Food and Nutrition Service in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Program Integrity. Prior to Federal service, he worked for the State of Pennsylvania for 10 years as both an Income Maintenance Caseworker and then as a Human Services Program Specialist.



Community Outreach & Engagement Co Chair

**Cristina Miller** (she/her) is a Co-Chair for Equality USDA's Community Outreach & Engagement Committee and a health economist with Rural Development Innovation Center supporting the work of the USDA Rural Health Liaison. She has been part of the USDA family for 14 years. Prior to federal service, she was a golf pro and a German-to-English translator for the senior executives of a large German corporation in the U.S. She holds a M.A. in Political Science, a M.S. degree in Agricultural Economics, a certificate in agriculture health and safety, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Economics.



Community Outreach & Engagement Co Chair

**Travi Usinger** (they/them) is a Co-Chair for Equality USDA's Community Outreach & Engagement Committee an Soil Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service at the Kealakekua field office on Hawaii's Big Island. They started their federal career as a Pathways intern working in multiple field offices across the Hawaiian islands. They received their master's degree in natural resource and environmental management at the University of Hawaii, Manoa on Oahu. Their family has lived on the Big Island of Hawaii for over 25 years and currently grow organic lettuce and dragon fruit.



Past President

**Meghan Walter, P.E.** (she/her) is the Past President of Equality USDA and an Environmental Engineer for NRCS's West National Technology Support Center in Portland, Oregon. She provides technical expertise to the western 13 states in dam safety, hydrology, hydraulic and environmental engineering, and stream and wetland restoration. She holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, a master's degree in Water Resources Engineering, and is a licensed Professional Engineer in Oregon and Iowa. Meghan served as the President of Equality USDA from 2018-2021.

# EQUALITY USDA 2022 SHINING STAR

Equality USDA traditionally gives out a Shining Star award as part of USDA's Pride Observance. During the pandemic, this tradition was neglected as we focused on figuring out how to pivot from in-person to virtual Pride Observances and events. This year, the tradition returns!

This year's Shining Star is awarded to someone who tirelessly advocates for USDA's LGBTQI+ employees and customers and whose efforts advance the rights of the community.



## **Equality USDA's 2022 Shining Star is Jeremy Wood**

Equality USDA President and Diversity & Inclusion Specialist for the  
APHIS Office of Civil Rights, Diversity, and Inclusion

Jeremy has served as a Special Emphasis Program Manager for the LGBTQ+ Programs in APHIS and NRCS at the programmatic and national levels. When Secretary Vilsack created the LGBTQI+ (then-GLBT) Special Emphasis Program in 2009 and put out a call for employees to volunteer as Special Emphasis Program Managers, Jeremy decided to come out at work and volunteer to be an SEPM. Since that day 13 years ago, Jeremy has been working tirelessly to make USDA a welcoming workplace.

Jeremy served on the Equality USDA Board as a Communications Director from 2017-2021 and now proudly serves as the current Equality USDA President. He has been instrumental in transforming and revitalizing Equality USDA from its days as USDA GLOBE into a modern LGBTQI+ employee resource group that centers inclusion, belonging, and connection. Jeremy is also co-leading USDA's efforts to implement President Biden's Executive Order on Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation. In this role, he is overseeing the development of USDA guidance on gender inclusive language and supporting gender expansive and transgender employees and eliminating barriers to name changes. He also serves as one of USDA's representatives on the White House's Gender Policy Council and has delivered more pronouns trainings than we can count!

Jeremy and his partner reside in Wendell, NC, outside of Raleigh. He is grateful everyday for the opportunity to work full time on his passion towards civil rights, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Jeremy is committed to fostering a sense of belonging for all those who work for and are served by USDA programs.



# MEET OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



**The Williams Institute** is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. For nearly two decades, policymakers, lawmakers, advocates, and the courts have relied on the Williams Institute's expertise. Williams Institute scholars have consulted with government agencies to improve federal data collection of LGBT people. They have provided testimony to Congress in hearings on Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. Justice Anthony Kennedy cited Williams Institute estimates on the number of same-sex couples raising children as a deciding factor in the landmark decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which granted marriage equality in the U.S.



**The Okra Project** is a collective that seeks to address the global crisis faced by Black Trans people by bringing home cooked, healthy and culturally specific meals and resources to Black Trans People wherever we can reach them. During the Middle Passage, our African ancestors snuck okra onto captive ships to sustain themselves and plant in the new world. Black Diasporic cooking traditions often use the okra plant for its versatility; it is often associated with health, prosperity, and community. In this spirit, The Okra Project hopes to extend free, delicious, and nutritious meals to Black Trans people experiencing food insecurity.



GIVER Network

**The Giver Network** is a collection of organizations and individuals that believe the best way to scale up our giving is by sharing our resources, knowledge, and giving to create greater social impact than each of us alone can achieve. Guided by this ideal, the founding members have created "The Giver Network" to be a platform for all givers who share the belief that together we can give better.



## WHAT DO THE COLORS ON THE FLAG REPRESENT?

There are many variations of the rainbow pride flag. The first rainbow flag was created in 1978 by Gilbert Baker using six stripes to represent the six colors of the rainbow as a symbol of gay and lesbian community pride. The flag represented to the left, made by Daniel Quasar in 2018, incorporates elements from various pride flags to focus on inclusion and progress. It retains the common six-stripe rainbow and adds a chevron along the left side. The black, brown, light blue, pink and white stripes highlight marginalized people of color, trans individuals, those living with HIV/AIDS and those who have been lost to HIV/AIDS.

# UPCOMING USDA PRIDE EVENTS



JUNE 16-18

## Virtual Film Screening of *Freeheld*

Based on a true story, Laurel Hester fights to secure her pension benefits for her partner Stacie Andree when Laurel is diagnosed with terminal cancer. *Freeheld* will be available to watch at any time between June 16-18, 2022. [Register via Swank Virtual Portal.](#)  
[Passcode: AC66D9F575264C7A883CC6FB7D3CC61F](#)



JUNE 21  
1 P.M. EST

## LGBTQI+ Farmer's Roundtable Event

The virtual event will feature four LGBTQI+ farmers in conversations about their operation and experience, followed by a facilitated conversation amongst the panelists, with time for audience questions. Urban agriculture and its importance to LGBTQI+ communities will be explored. The event is open to the public. [Join the event on zoom here.](#)



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all the amazing speakers who shared their time and talents for the 2022 USDA Pride Observance. Thank you to USDA's Farm Production and Conservation Mission Area and the National Institute of Food & Agriculture for leading the Pride Planning efforts in 2022 and thank you to the Pride Planning committee members whose efforts are reflected in today's program.

A very special thank you to the following individuals for their outstanding efforts to make USDA's Pride events a success:

Lauren Bennett, Public Affairs Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Kevin Conner, Television Production Specialist, Office of Communications

Sasha Harrison, Lead Designer, Digital Communications Division, Office of Communications

Rachel Pittman, Public Affairs Outreach Coordinator, National Agricultural Statistics Service





### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

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