



PRESS RELEASE

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One Iowa Commemorates the Anniversary of Iowa's First Same-Sex Marriage, Launches Ticket Sales for 10th Annual Gala Celebration.

[Des Moines]— Eleven years ago today on August 31, 2007, Sean Fritz and Tim McQuillan took their vows in Iowa's first ever legally-recognized same-sex marriage. The two married immediately after the Polk County court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs in *Varnum v. Brien*, only hours before the case was appealed to the Iowa Supreme Court. After the appeal, legal same-sex marriages ceased until April 3, 2009, when the Iowa Supreme Court unanimously decided to uphold Iowa's legacy of equality. This decision made Iowa the third state in the nation to establish marriage equality.

To commemorate this historic moment, One Iowa will have a **Facebook Live conversation at 10 a.m. this morning with ACLU of Iowa Executive Director Mark Stringer**, who officiated Fritz and McQuillan's wedding on the front lawn of his Des Moines home.

"Officiating this ceremony in my front yard will always be a treasured memory for me," **Stringer said**. "It was a great moment not only for Tim and Sean, but also for same-sex couples who had been denied their right to marry for too long and for fair-minded people in Iowa and across the country who understood that marriage matters for all families."

"In my current role as the executive director of the ACLU of Iowa, I am keenly aware that despite the advances made in marriage equality, we still have a long way to go to secure and protect rights for LGBTQ people in our state and in the nation. But milestones like the one that Tim and Sean are celebrating today should remind us that change is possible, worth pursuing, and, once achieved, beneficial for us all. The ACLU of Iowa is grateful to One Iowa for its vital, ongoing work and we are proud to partner with them."

One Iowa also launched ticket sales for its **10th Annual Gala Celebration, which will be held on Friday, April 12, 2019 at the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center to celebrate the ten year milestone of marriage equality in Iowa.**

Every year since 2010, One Iowa has hosted a Gala celebration to commemorate *Varnum v. Brien* and celebrate the Iowa LGBTQ community's successes in the fight for full equality. The 10th Annual Gala Celebration will be the organization's largest celebration yet, honoring a ten year milestone of marriage equality in the state. One Iowa projects nearly 1,000 people will attend to take part in cocktail hour, dinner, live music, silent and live auctions, and an awards ceremony honoring the work Iowa's advocates for LGBTQ equality have accomplished this year.

“The courage Sean Fritz and Tim McQuillan demonstrated by taking the leap to become Iowa’s first legally married same-sex couple is inspiring,” **One Iowa Executive Director Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel said.** “One Iowa was founded as a marriage equality organization in 2005, only two years before these two individuals publicly declared their love for one another and took their marriage vows. Their bravery and the bravery of the six brave plaintiff couples and families who raised their voices and stood up to intense public scrutiny are incredible. We stand on their shoulders today as we fight for broad LGBTQ equality, and we honor them by sharing their story and celebrating their essential contributions to our community at our annual Gala celebration.”

All proceeds from the event will support One Iowa’s mission to preserve and advance LGBTQ equality in Iowa through grassroots efforts, advocacy and education. **Tickets may be purchased online using this link.**

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One Iowa is a statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) organization working toward equality for LGBTQ individuals through grassroots efforts, education and advocacy.

Find out more at www.oneiowa.org.