

Don Gaudard



An organization known as Gay Liberation Movement, later called Gay Liberation Front, began with a gathering of some gay men in the apartment of Don Gaudard in East Lansing, Michigan early in 1970. Before the year was out, GLM was officially recognized as a student organization on the East Lansing campus of Michigan State University.

Don appeared before the city council on behalf of GLM in 1971 and asked the city to adopt a policy to prohibit discrimination against employees or applicants for city jobs on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, or sexual orientation. The motion was approved on March 7, 1972, making East Lansing the first city in the nation to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination in city employment.

In 1972, Don spoke out against a proposed state law to criminalize cross-dressing. Also that year, on the local front Don pressed the city council to expand the scope and reach of its nondiscrimination ordinance to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in housing, public accommodations, and private employment. It took nearly a year of advocacy, but the city adopted a new law in May 1973 with all of the provisions intact except for housing.

In 1974, Gaudard criticized the legislature for declining to add sexual orientation as a protected category under the state's civil rights bill.

Don moved to Los Angeles in 1976 where he attended People's College of Law, a progressive law school that engaged in recruitment efforts to encourage women, people of color, and gays and lesbians to enroll. Don became a volunteer researcher for the Sexual Law Reporter, a bimonthly national legal publication focusing on LGBT and sexual civil liberties issues. Thomas F. Coleman was its publisher.

Years later, Don moved back to Michigan. He became a contributor to The LGBT News, a publication of the Lansing Association for Human Rights. A posting he made to an internet blog in 2009 referenced him as "Professor of Law Emeritus" but did not specify where or when he taught law.

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