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2019 STAFF

Kimberly Zieselma, JD
Executive Director (she/her)

Sylvan Fraser, JD
Staff Attorney (they/them)

Bria Brown-King
Communications Intern (they/them)

Laurie Iria
Executive Administrative Assistant (she/her)

Alesdair H. Ittelson, JD
Director of Law and Policy (he/him)

Hans Lindahl
Communications and Outreach Director (she/they)

Amanda Saenz
Youth Program Manager (they/them)

Bill Lorenz
Operations Consultant (he/him)
interACT launched its first paid, part-time internship in 2019. The program was designed to pair a Youth member and staff member for close 1:1 mentorship and learning within one type of nonprofit role. Our first intern, Bria Brown-King, worked with Communications Director Hans to learn about writing, social media, and public speaking for intersex causes.

We’re incredibly proud of Bria and all they accomplished in 2019. Here’s what they had to say:

“In seven months I went from sweating profusely during classroom presentations to talking about my experience as an intersex person in front of more than 300 healthcare professionals at the Trans Health Conference in Boston. This internship has helped me find my confidence and my voice as an intersex advocate. I used to be ashamed of being intersex and I saw it as a setback. In October, I became the first, out, intersex person to speak about intersex related issues on the steps of the Supreme Court.

I was the first communications intern with interACT and I didn’t know what to expect. I had no idea that I’d get to collaborate on a piece with the ACLU or have my personal essay shared by them magazine. A quote of mine was shared in Teen Vogue along with quotes from my intersex friends. My personal piece on intersex dating taught me the true power of storytelling and social media. I still receive messages from people who felt inspired by my story.

This internship has given me the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone and heal deep wounds that I tried to hide for so long. Being intersex was always something that was taboo in my family. I didn’t learn what being intersex was until I was a teenager. Now I have the opportunity to own being intersex and wear it proudly.

For the first time in my entire life my family has used the term “intersex” in an endearing way. My family have been big supporters of my work. My grandmother read my personal essay and told me to continue sharing my testimony with the world.

This experience has taught me so much about myself as a person and about my potential as an intersex activist. I’ve overcome doubts and fears that I’ve held onto for most of my life. I always let my intersex traits hold me back from opportunities because of severe bullying. I learned to hide in the background so that people wouldn’t notice me. In the process, I lost my voice and my confidence. I forgot who I was and what I was capable of becoming.

Because of this internship I’ve been able to experience parts of myself that I didn’t know existed. I’ve been able to set concrete goals and achieve all of them. I had seven months to do meaningful work and I can proudly say that I’ve accomplished that.”

See Bria’s full recap on our blog.

Background illustration by Ohni Lisle for Bria’s personal essay published by them magazine.

Photos, clockwise from top left: 1. Bria speaks out against sex discrimination on the steps of the Supreme Court on October 8th, 2019. 2. Bria poses with Mari and Hans after delivering testimony for SB 201 in California. 3. Bria with Law & Policy Director Alesdair at the Supreme Court rally.
2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Read more about our board members at interactadvocates.org/board

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(Emeritus)
 Former Vice President **Lynnell Stephani Long** retired from interACT’s board in 2019 after 5 years of service. Lynnell has been on the front lines of intersex advocacy for decades, having served as a volunteer for the Intersex Society of North America in the late 90’s. She has spoken to countless audiences about intersex human rights, including on the national stage by being one of the first out intersex people to share her story on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. Without a doubt, Lynnell’s work and spirit have shaped interACT into the organization it is today. We are incredibly grateful for her service, and wish her all the best.

*Hear Lynnell discuss her advocacy via the Interface Project.*
In 2019 we saw intersex youth spreading their own wings in advocacy. Not only did interACT’s Youth program provide countless media and speaking opportunity connections, our current and former members are becoming incredibly proactive in speaking out and sharing their stories on an international stage. Just 5 years ago, I couldn’t have imagined the momentum they are driving today.

Momentum is a word that truly encapsulates our 2019. In the past 4 years, 5 states (Indiana, Nevada, Texas, California, and Connecticut) introduced bills to give intersex people their own choices. We’ve received inquiries from lawmakers in other states, too. Many of these efforts were led by interACT, some were led by other advocates—such as the Houston Intersex Society in Texas—and several happened when lawmakers noticed the issue and were moved to action all on their own.

I have personally stood face-to-face with the doctors who lead opposition to intersex bodily autonomy bills. I testified for California's SB 201. I spoke on an ethics panel at Yale University alongside surgeons who stood their ground on infant intersex interventions. While these experiences were in some ways tests of faith, they showed me that change is happening. We’re in the room, we’re seeing what’s been said, and there’s no more room to hide behind closed doors. Even leaders vested in continuing infant intersex surgeries are publicly acknowledging that the paradigm is changing. Their position is on the defensive.

It’s because of our supporters that interACT is able to fight for this change at state and national levels. You are the reason why we can be in the room, why we can keep creating legislation, why we are able to carry your voices toward change. I am immensely proud to share 2019’s accomplishments with you. Let’s keep it up!

XOXY
Kimberly
2019 AT A GLANCE

January

interACT staff and board gather for annual strategic planning retreat

February

SB 201 launches to protect intersex rights in California

interACT Youth attend Human Rights Campaign’s Time to Thrive, a premier conference for young LGBTQIA+ social change makers

March

interACT staff and youth educate and learn at Harvard University and travel to New Zealand to participate in the ILGA World Conference
April

interACT consults for The New York Times when new evidence shows that war hero Casimir Pulaski may have had intersex traits

SB 201 is delayed in California due to medical industry opposition

May

interACT Youth weigh in on Caster Semenya’s case and sex discrimination in athletics

Largest U.S. study of health outcomes for intersex adults presented at UCSF

Bria joins the team as interACT’s first paid Communications Intern

Law & Policy team makes sure that intersex status is explicitly included in the federal Equality Act
June

ED Kimberly presents to the UN LGBTI Core Group in New York City

interACT Youth members bring intersex awareness to Pride celebrations across the U.S. and beyond

July

New York City Commissioners Barbot and Malalis speak out against infant intersex surgery

interACT files amicus briefs opposing sex discrimination for October Supreme Court cases

August

Law & Policy Director Alesdair educates at Harvard University, and at Lavender Law, the largest conference for LGBTQ+ legal professionals
September

interACT educates allied medical professionals at USPATH and GLMA conferences

Delaying intersex surgery is mentioned in two U.S. presidential campaign platforms

October

Bria becomes the first out intersex person to speak on intersex issues at the Supreme Court

Senator Brad Hoylman announces he will author a New York state bill to delay infant intersex surgery
New York City Councilmember Daniel Dromm introduces a New York City Council bill to mandate that the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene develop a first-of-its-kind public education campaign to prevent unnecessary surgery on intersex infants.

Intersex Awareness Day 2019 concludes with *Steven Universe* creator Rebecca Sugar releasing original art of the show’s intersex character, Stevonnie.

November

interACT staff and youth speak across California to prepare for SB 201’s re-launch.

December

ED Kimberly and board member Elizabeth Reis participate in an Ethics panel opposite doctors advocating for intersex surgery at Yale.
The Massachusetts Medical Society becomes the second state-level medical organization (after Michigan in 2018) to release intersex-affirming policy, thanks to interACT advocacy in collaboration with local medical students and physician allies!

CNN releases a popular video profile on the Lohman family’s delay of infant surgery, also featuring Executive Director Kimberly, with push notifications sent to millions of Americans
2019 BY THE NUMBERS

$12,037 raised by interACT followers and supporters in one day for #GivingTuesday

10,690 new followers on social media

90 pieces of media coverage written by or featuring interACT staff, board, and Youth members

29 intersex talks, panels, and presentations given by staff and Youth advocates

6 new advocates joined interACT Youth
Our legal team allies with top human rights and legal organizations worldwide to advance intersex rights and raise up the voices of intersex youth. 2019 was a monumental year, with increased attention on intersex at the national level.

The U.S. House proposed the Equality Act, a piece of legislation to address LGBTQ+ discrimination. Thanks to the work of the interACT Law & Policy team and the Equality Act sponsors, the act explicitly includes intersex status.

In October 2019, the Supreme Court heard several pivotal cases on sex discrimination. interACT submitted an amicus brief to support Aimee Stephens, a transgender woman who was fired for transitioning. Staff continues to weigh in when court cases and legislation promote essentialist and restrictive definitions of sex.

In a historic first, intersex rights were mentioned in not one, but two presidential candidates’ LGBTQ+ platforms. Elizabeth Warren’s campaign reached out to interACT for consultation. Pete Buttigieg’s campaign cited interACT’s 2017 report with Human Rights Watch. We hope that this incredible trend in visibility will lead to action in 2020.
interACT LAW & POLICY

SB 201

California’s SB 201 started critical conversations about intersex rights in the California legislature. interACT worked with Senator Scott Wiener to create a followup to 2018’s intersex-affirming resolution, SCR 110. An enforcement bill, requiring the delay of intersex surgeries to give individuals choices about their bodies, was the clear next step.

SB 201 was announced in February 2019 at a press conference with Senator Wiener, interACT staff, and partners from Equality California, Transgender Law Center, and the ACLU of California. Stanford medical students delivered moving remarks, representing the next generation of physicians’ respect for intersex autonomy.

After a hearing in April 2019 with fierce opposition from urology groups, SB 201 was delayed and converted into a two-year project, with hearings to resume in 2020. Sponsoring organizations resumed action in November 2019. Representatives from top LGBTQ+, children’s rights, and reproductive rights groups—Equality California, the ACLU of California, the ACLU of Illinois, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Center for Youth Law, and Health Access California—gathered to learn from a panel of intersex Californians and re-launch a strengthened bill.

interACT staff, Youth, and board members leave the California capitol after SB 201 was voted down by the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee.

Train more doctors and medical professionals on the health needs and human rights of intersex people. More training opportunities will help ensure that medical professionals provide respectful and appropriate information, advice, and care to parents and intersex children.

Combat discrimination on the basis of intersex characteristics or status. Pete will combat discrimination in a range of settings, including in health care, education, and employment.

Protect and respect the rights of intersex people’s bodily autonomy, bodily integrity, and health.

- Ban medically unnecessary genital surgeries on intersex infants and children. In the United States, 1.7 percent of babies cannot be easily categorized as male or female at birth. Some intersex children are subject to medically unnecessary genitalia-altering surgeries that can be so physically and psychologically harmful that the United Nations has deemed them human rights violations.
At the time of this report’s publication, following a January 2020 committee hearing, SB 201 received 2 votes in favor and 4 against, with 3 abstaining. This followed a $50,000 donation from the California Medical Association made three days earlier to the reelection campaign of Senator Steve Glazer, the committee’s chair—the highest amount ever received by Glazer from the association. Equality California, the bill’s co-sponsor, revoked its organizational endorsement of Committee Chair Glazer as a result.

Each bill we support brings us one step closer to laws that uphold bodily autonomy. Since 2016 there have been several bills on the issue, and California’s SB 201 created a lot of momentum in other states.

In March 2019, Connecticut Senator Matt Lesser launched a bill to require delay of infant intersex surgeries, packaged with considerations for gender markers on state ID documents. The intersex surgery sections were later removed from the bill due to medical opposition, and a task force to further investigate the issue was proposed instead.

Several other states inquired with interACT, showing the visibility that each new bill creates, regardless of its results. In Fall of 2019, interACT announced sponsorship of two initiatives in New York: a state-level enforcement bill to delay infant surgeries with Senator Brad Hoylman, and a city-level public education campaign with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene filed by Council member Danny Dromm.

Youth member Sarah Kosheff appears on the news to share her experience as an intersex person in support of legislation in Connecticut.

New York City will continue to support and advocate for intersex people, and we call on others to join us as allies.

Now is the time for doctors to respect the rights of intersex people.

interACT partnered with UCSF to recruit for the largest online study of intersex adults in the United States. Research was conducted last year, and in 2019, interACT Medical Advisory Group member Dr. Suegee Tamar-Mattis and Dr. Jason Flatt of UCSF presented preliminary findings, showing significant gaps in healthcare access and health outcomes for intersex adults.

interACT also helped recruit for a study out of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign by PhD student Alishia Alexander looking at specific disparities faced by Black intersex people. We continue to consult and recruit for studies that work with us to prioritize intersex community input from the beginning.
In 2019 interACT solidified its place as a leader in the media, with outlets reaching out when several major stories broke.

Staff and Youth members were tapped to consult on projects such as Vox’s video coverage of Caster Semenya and sex testing discrimination in sports, New York Times coverage of the discovery that war hero Casimir Pulaski was intersex, anti-transgender and anti-intersex bills in Iowa, and a mounting federal effort by the Trump administration to enforce rigidly oppressive definitions of sex and gender.

interACT’s work was featured in 90+ pieces of media coverage in 2019, including by VICE, CNN, The BBC, and the LA Times.

Intersex Awareness Day 2019

Intersex Awareness Day 2019 featured Youth members sharing their stories in a big way. The #MyIntersexBody campaign featured individuals speaking out against surgeries without individual consent, with graphics shared over 6,000 times from interACT’s social channels alone.

Youth members took over Instagram stories for influencers Jen Winston, Adam Eli of Voices 4, and The Advocate, and were published in 13 major media outlets. With Intersex Justice Project, interACT created a list of 26 ally tips that was widely circulated, with one tip released each day in October leading up to the 26th.

In honor of the day, Steven Universe creator Rebecca Sugar created original art of Stevonnie, the show’s intersex character. The image generated a buzz online, with many fans of the show reaching out to ask, “what’s this intersex thing all about?”

Going Out with a Bang

In late December 2019, CNN released an in-depth video piece on the Lohman family and their pushback against infant clitoral and vaginal surgery, as well as Executive Director Kimberly’s personal story. The CNN app sent push notifications to over 7 million users.
interACT Youth is our intersex youth advocacy group, providing young intersex peers with connection, leadership skills, and a platform to raise their voices. This is the heart and soul of our mission to honor intersex bodily integrity and autonomy in decision-making.

In the past few years, Youth members in their teens and twenties have spread their wings, pursuing independent advocacy projects and even starting organizations in their own countries. Our collective provides support, training, social activities, and a space for these voices to join together.

Around the World

Youth members were on the road—and in the air—more than ever this year. Youth Program Manager Amanda Saenz represented interACT as the only representative from the United States at ILGA World in New Zealand, and at the Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Intersex forum in Britain. Both experiences brought incredible knowledge to and from the world stage. This international dialogue has always informed interACT’s work.

Domestically, Amanda and Youth member Johnny Leggette also presented on intersex rights at Human Rights Campaign’s Time to Thrive in Anaheim, a premier gathering for young LGBTQIA+ organizers, at GLSEN’s annual conference for high school LGBTQ+ inclusivity, and to allied physicians at the annual conference for GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality in New Orleans.

In addition to all of interACT’s staff travel, Youth members gave countless talks, panels, and presentations all year long! In June, Youth members Arti and Keegan, alongside Youth Program Manager Amanda, educated lawmakers at the Oregon capitol. Youth member Lat Brown led a presentation on intersex for the Michigan Community College Gender & Sexuality Conference in Ann Arbor Michigan, and Youth member Banti Jaswal gave the Keynote address at GLSEN Massachusetts Fall Conference.

Several Youth members participated in or helped organize events for Intersex Awareness Day. Alicia Roth Weigel and Robyn Foley organized a rally in Austin, Texas to mark the day, a first for the city. Seattle, Washington also saw its first-ever event for IAD, organized by Amanda and Youth member Arti Tripathi. Mari Wrobi also organized a community brunch event in Sacramento, California.
interACT YOUTH

Weighing In

interACT Youth participated in many important media conversations surrounding sex and gender discrimination.

When Caster Semenya was asked to take medication to suppress her natural testosterone levels, interACT Youth members created a swift response against athletic sex testing for them magazine. Top athletes have continued to fight this discrimination by international athletics bodies.

For Intersex Awareness Day 2019, Youth created a Teen Vogue feature on their experiences having intersex bodies. The magazine reported that the feature was its most popular story that weekend.
We are proud to give the 2019 Anne Tamar-Mattis Award for Intersex Allyship to Carter Covington.

Carter is a Hollywood screenwriter and producer who was the showrunner of *Faking it!* The MTV series included the first recurring intersex main character on TV, and included the first intersex actor playing an intersex character on TV—interACT Youth member Amanda Saenz. From 2014-2017 interACT Youth and staff worked with Carter and his team to ensure accurate and respectful intersex representation. Carter has continued to be a major supporter of interACT and promotes further representation in film and on TV.
FINANCIALS

INCOME BY REVENUE TYPE

- 67% Foundations
- 32% Individual Donors
- 1% Program Income

EXPENSES BY AREAS

- 85% Program
- 10% Admin
- 5% Fundraising
To Our Donors

* = Has given for the last 5+ years
† = Board member

($1,000 and Above) Champions:
Our Champion Donors make a fantastic commitment to interACT. Their gifts are $1,000 or more each year and the difference that they make is immeasurable. Our sincerest gratitude goes out to our 2019 donors at this level.

Anne and Suegee Tamar-Mattis
Anonymous *
Arlene B. Baratz, MD †
Ashley Van Otterloo

($250 - $999) Guardians:
Our Guardian Donors give at a level which keeps our work going. We are thankful every day for those who put their trust, and their gifts, in our hands so that interACT can work toward making the changes we want to see for intersex children.

Adam Muto
Allison Price
Amy Tryon
Andrea Irvin
Anne and Jeff Dalke
Anonymous *
Ashish Agrawal, MD and Bryan Wildenthal
Barbara Taylor *
Bettina Brown *
Ellen Whelan

Sustaining Donors:
Sustaining donors give on a consistent basis, understanding that interACT can achieve more if we know what funding we can depend upon. Most give monthly, some quarterly or even annually, but knowing that this funding is around the corner helps to keep our programs active and on track. A special thank you goes out to these 2019 donors and their planned, recurring gifts.

Ali Webster
Amanda Meegan *
Amy Tryon
Annie Menzel
Anonymous *
Arin Hilton
Arlene B. Baratz, MD †
Bill and Nelson Lorenz-Galdamez

2019 Grantors:
Arcus Foundation
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The Future Fund of Horizons Foundation

Tides Kicking Assets Fund
Van Loben Sels/RembeRock Foundation
Wild Geese Foundation
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
Thank You

To Our Community and Allies

The intersex community is a global community. We are forever grateful to those who have supported our work financially, and with attention, effort, and time, and to our fellow intersex organizations and grassroots organizers across the globe. interACT is committed to transparency and to responding to our community’s needs. We look forward to continuing to build a movement with all of you.

We thank Eler de Grey for their tireless work and generosity photographing SB 201 events, including for the cover image of this report.

To Our Volunteers

Members of our Medical Advisory Group (Arlene B. Baratz, MD, Chair)

Volunteers and Interns
Natalie Mulkey
Priyanka Nadar
Casey Poore

Nonprofit partners

The American Civil Liberties Union
Equality California
Human Rights Watch
Lambda Legal
The Southern Poverty Law Center
The Intersex Justice Project

Houston Intersex Society
Voices4
Out-Right Action International
Intersex Human Rights Australia
The National Center for Lesbian Rights

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