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2022 Staff

Erika Lorshbough, B.A., J.D.  
they/she  
Executive Director

Marissa Adams  
she/her  
Program Coordinator

Sylvan Fraser, J.D.  
they/them  
Legal & Policy Director

Maddie Moran  
they/them  
Director of Communications

Bria Brown-King  
they/them  
Director of Engagement

Bill Lorenz  
he/him  
Operations Consultant
2022 By The Numbers

220 Members of Congress who voted for intersex data equity

419 Donors

3 New staff hired

23 Intersex leaders invited to IAD Roundtable with U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

34,860 Social media followers

41 Talks, panels & presentations given by staff and Youth Advocates

156 Youth Members

1,465 People viewed our new Intersex Variations Glossary

14 White House & federal elected officials shared our social media toolkit for Intersex Awareness Day

5 Scholarships given to Youth to attend the InterConnect conference

interACT 2022 Annual Report
Message from Executive Director
Erika Lorshbough

2022 was a year of transformation for interACT, and a year of continued momentum toward justice for intersex people in the U.S.

When I joined interACT in July, our small staff was carrying the weight of recently departed leadership, but still engaged and advocating tirelessly - and valiantly holding space for the growth and change to come. Personally, I’m deeply grateful for the grace and fortitude of interACT’s wonderful staff and board, who welcomed me in, set me up for success, and navigated change with me.

By December, interACT looked very different than it had in January: new staff and board members, new opportunities emerging, new victories on the books, and new plans on the horizon.

We accomplished so much in 2022, despite the demands of transition and the turbulent U.S. political climate, and we’re excited to share the highlights in this report.
And, of course, we couldn’t have done any of it without our constellation of community members, partners, and supporters! When I started here, I was unabashedly excited about all the amazing folks in interACT’s universe that I was about to meet. I really had no idea - and I have barely met a fraction!

If you are reading this, you are an important part of interACT’s vision to achieve Intersex Joy and Intersex Justice - thank you for your part in it, whatever your contribution.

Together, we’re advancing affirming policy, creating cutting-edge educational resources, engaging with healthcare providers to make change, and taking part in groundbreaking research.

We are demanding dignity, equity, and autonomy. We’re making noise, claiming progress, and taking up space.

Together, we’re building the world we want to see - I can’t wait to look back in another year and see how far we’ve come!
January

Bria and Al give a talk at Georgetown

Met with leaders at the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss priorities for agency action

February

Launched the search for our new Executive Director

Submitted comments on WPATH’s draft Standards of Care Version 8, recommending improvements to the new chapter on intersex care

March

Responding to new recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine, interACT joined 190 LGBTQI+ & allied groups to explain why data collection matters

interACT collaborated with Think Tank for Inclusion & Equity to create a fact sheet on accurate representation of intersex people in media

Met with Equal Employment Opportunity Commission staff to discuss the need for workplace protections

Joined the research team for Project Recognize to improve LGBTQIA+ data collection

Bria and longtime intersex advocate Casey Orozco-Poore gave a talk to students at Keck Medical School

Marissa joins staff as Program Coordinator

Welcome TO THE TEAM

Marissa Adams
she/her
2022 At A Glance

April

interACT said goodbye to long-time Law and Policy Director, Al Ittelson

A BITTERSWEET FAREWELL TO

ALESDAIR ITTELSON

Bria spoke on a panel at OutCare Health to discuss queer body experiences

Highlighted legal updates and ongoing discrimination in a submission to the UN Independent Expert on SOGI

Partnered with PRIDEnet to co-facilitate listening sessions on improving intersex health research

May

Bria joins intersex activists from around the world at the Annual ILGA World Conference

Recognized International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interpbobia & Transphobia with our 2022 theme, “Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Rights!”

June

Maddie joins staff as the Director of Communications

interACT implemented a pay equity model for the salaries of all non-executive staff

Recognized International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interpbobia & Transphobia with our 2022 theme, “Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Rights!”

Partnered with Kansas State University to gather data on the socialization experiences of intersex youth

Celebrated President Biden’s intersex-inclusive Pride Month Executive Order
2022 At A Glance

July

Greece passed national legislation restricting the practice of IGM

Sponsored five youth to attend the InterConnect conference

Erika joined interACT’s staff as our new Executive Director!

August

Sylvan promoted to Legal and Policy Director

Staff retreat in New York City

Kenya adopts a new intersex rights law

September

Recruited comments & submitted our own in support of intersex inclusion in proposed Title IX rule

Youth Advocate Banti spoke at Back to school: advocating for LGBTQ+ young people event with Greater Boston PFLAG

interACT staff & community allies participated in HHS listening sessions to shape the Department’s Intersex Health Equity report
interACT published a new *Intersex Variations Glossary*

Launched a TikTok highlighting 4 of our youth members with their intersex stories: Irene, Mari, Justin, and Sam!

Created a *guide for intersex patients* based on the updated WPATH Standards

Created a map of the “intersex exceptions” in anti-trans bills with HRW & UNC Human Rights Law program

**October**

Maddie, Bria & board member Kyle Knight hosted a panel at GLMA Nursing Summit

**November**

Partnered on Intersex Awareness Day Postering Action 2022

For Intersex Day of Solidarity we updated our *online resource* of every intersex organization we can find globally

**December**

The American Medical Association adopts an intersex-inclusive *athletics resolution*

Sylvan & Erika met with the Office for Civil Rights at Health & Human Services

Sylvan and Erika met with the Office for Civil Rights at Health & Human Services

Erika gave Out for Safe Spaces talk to youth service providers at The Center in NYC

For Intersex Day of Solidarity we updated our *online resource* of every intersex organization we can find globally

Bria & Sylvan presented to the California TGI Policy Alliance on making legislation intersex-affirming
As queer & trans kids are barred from gender-affirming healthcare, intersex kids are impacted too. Bria Brown-King is featured in this *Washington Post* coverage alongside Kristina and Ori Turner.

Bria Brown-King and Alicia Roth Weigel share with the *Texas Observer* that the right to bodily autonomy and safety is what both intersex and transgender people are fighting for.

Bria Brown-King publishes for *Modern Military Magazine* in support of ending the ban on intersex military service.

interACT responds to the Biden administration's rule to reaffirm that discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people is illegal, calling it a win for intersex people, in *Xtra Magazine*. 
“Normalizing” infants’ genital appearance isn’t medically necessary and can negatively impact quality of life. This Scientific American video includes former Legal Director Alesdair Ittelson talking with Sean Saifa Wall.

Maddie Moran and Mari Wrobi respond to the Affordable Care Act’s various non-discrimination protections in the Bay Area Reporter.

Erika Lorshbough explains in Metro Weekly that state legislation in the U.S. that targets transgender youth is also harming intersex youth, and is more about erasing bodily diversity than protecting anyone.

Maddie Moran shares with The 19th how the proposed clarifications to Title IX’s scope would mean much-needed protection for already-marginalized groups of students, including intersex students.
Law & Policy

On the heels of the first-ever White House roundtable commemorating Intersex Awareness Day near the end of 2021, interACT’s federal policy work continued to gain momentum throughout 2022.

Anti-discrimination protections

The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services each released proposed rules that would clarify that anti-discrimination protections extend to intersex people in the context of Title IX and of Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, signaling a growing recognition of the needs of the intersex community in healthcare and educational settings.

interACT submitted comments in support of the intersex-inclusive proposed changes, and encouraged intersex community members and our allies to do the same.

In collaboration with GLSEN, interACT staff and three intersex young people with recent experience in schools joined Department of Education Secretary Miguel Cardona to share perspectives on what is still needed for students with intersex variations to feel safety and belonging in their learning communities – from kindergarten all the way through graduate school.

An allied educator based in Washington state, Mr. Daniel Harada, joined the roundtable as well to speak to what support teachers need in order to be effective advocates for intersex kids in their classrooms.

Executive order for health equity

In June, we were thrilled to see that President Biden’s Pride Month Executive Order took note of the intersex community and contained an explicit directive for the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate promising practices for the advancement of health equity for people with intersex variations.

The finished product, a comprehensive Intersex Health Equity Report, was given a 2023 due date and will be the first document of its kind to be produced by a US federal agency. interACT staff, allied medical experts, and intersex community members with lived experience worked closely with HHS over the rest of 2022 to inform the report’s creation, participating in listening sessions and providing resources for the Department’s review.
Combating "intersex exceptions"

Meanwhile, anti-trans legislative efforts designed to restrict access to gender-affirming care and to sports teams continued to proliferate, often with harmful impacts on intersex youth as well.

To track the “intersex exceptions” that purport to allow non-consensual and unnecessary surgeries on infants and young children with intersex variations while banning consensual and necessary care for trans adolescents, we worked with Human Rights Watch and the UNC School of Law’s SOGIESC Human Rights Initiative to create a map calling out state legislation that takes this cruel and doubly discriminatory approach.

WPATH’s guidelines stand in opposition to the anti-trans, anti-intersex legislative assault by prioritizing autonomy and bodily self-determination for both communities, and interACT is grateful that the input of our staff and medical allies contributed to this positive development.

New Legal & Policy Director

When Al Ittelson moved on from interACT in the spring, our organization lost a champion ally and legal advocate. Down to just one full-time attorney – the leanest our “legal team” has been since 2014 – interACT soon promoted Sylvan Fraser to Legal & Policy Director to oversee the program in which they’ve worked for seven years.

WPATH recommends against IGM

In the fall, the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) released an update to its Standards of Care (version 8), which included – for the first time – a clear recommendation to delay decisions about non-emergent interventions on intersex children to prevent the harm that can follow when the individual is deprived of these choices through preemptive surgery.
Intersex people are #BornBeyondBoxes

This Intersex Awareness Day interACT created the #BornBeyondBoxes campaign to educate allies and to remind the world that nearly 2% of the population is born with innate variations in their sex traits or reproductive anatomy.

Intersex people deserve to live a life free from oppression while embracing the sex traits they are born with. Intersex people have their own unique struggles, movements and triumphs under the rainbow.

Intersex people don’t need to be fixed, but to be respected for who they are. On Intersex Awareness Day, we join advocates calling for an end to non-consensual surgeries and for bodily autonomy.

Learn more about how a public demonstration on October 26, 1996 inspired a movement in this blog post.
Our 2019 Goals

Talkin' Bout My Variation
interACT Youth Mari, Irene, Justin & Sam educated the world on their unique intersex variations & experiences!

TALKIN' BOUT MY VARIATION

MARI
THEY/THEM

“I love to share my experience as someone who has hormonal intersex variations because there isn’t just one way to be intersex! There isn’t just one way to exist authentically. At the end of the day, we all deserve bodily autonomy and to get to decide what we want to do with our bodies.”

#BornBeyondBoxes

TALKIN' BOUT MY VARIATION

IRENE
SHE/HER

“I found out that I’m intersex and have XY chromosomes. It was the thing that helped me love my body. It was the truth that was kept secret from me for many years. But actually, being intersex is cool and amazing. All I wish is that I could have been told the truth earlier.”

#BornBeyondBoxes

TALKIN' BOUT MY VARIATION

SAM
THEY/THEM

“Being intersex makes me feel more connected to the inherent diversity on earth, knowing that—like many plants, animals, fungi and other organisms—I’m other, neither, and both, male and female.”

#BornBeyondBoxes

TALKIN' BOUT MY VARIATION

JUSTIN
HE/HIM

“Did you know around 2-5% of the world’s population is born intersex? But we usually don’t have the same experiences as one another. Because I have PAIS, my body looks a bit different. But that’s perfectly ok!”

#BornBeyondBoxes
In observance of Intersex Awareness Day 2022,

interACT’s Executive Director Erika Lorshbough (pictured here with advocate Scout Silverstein) attended a roundtable hosted by the Department of Health and Human Services and White House officials!

Erika and other incredible intersex advocates (including our former Executive Director, Kimberly Zieselman) called for official action to achieve full equality for intersex people in the US, including strong civil rights protections and health equity measures!
interACT’s Director of Engagement, Bria Brown-King, joined intersex activists from around the world at the 2022 ILGA World Conference held in Long Beach, California where they attended an intersex pre-conference event to discuss the state of intersex issues both domestically and internationally.

This involved roundtable discussions with U.S. Special Envoy to Advance LGBTQI+ Persons, Jessica Stern and the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz.

Erika and Bria had the opportunity to attend the Out & Equal Workplace Summit in Las Vegas to give a talk on intersex inclusion in the workplace. interACT provides specific guidance to support companies in raising awareness about intersex issues, ways to take tangible steps for creating more inclusive workplaces, and reducing liability by preventing discrimination, as outlined in Supporting Intersex Inclusion in the Workplace -- a guide produced by Out & Equal in partnership with interACT.

"Intra-movement solidarity provides an opportunity for us to organize around shared experiences. We reclaim our dignity, reminding the world that intersex people have always existed throughout history and we’re here to stay."

- Bria Brown-King
Youth in Action

Several Youth described this opportunity as “life changing.” Oftentimes, due to shame and stigma, intersex youth grow up feeling isolated and made to believe there aren’t other intersex people out there in the world like them. All of the Youth expressed immense gratitude for having the opportunity to connect with other intersex people, learn together, heal together, and share resources.

Three of the scholarship recipients spoke on a keynote panel during the conference to talk about the importance of investing in intersex youth. Also at InterConnect’s most recent board of directors election, three of interACT’s Youth members were elected to join InterConnect’s board. This exemplifies how interACT’s Youth program empowers intersex youth to take leadership positions in the intersex community and the value seen in the connection of intersex advocacy and peer support.

One of interACT’s founding Youth members, Jahni Leggett, educated the public about intersex in this “ask me anything” video from Jubilee Media.
interACT helped me to find a voice for myself, and those not old enough to voice what they want.

— Marissa Adams

Hi, I’m Marissa! I’m a staff member at interACT—and I’m also intersex! I wanted to tell you a bit about how I came to know interACT and how through interACT, I came to understand more about myself and my experiences.

It was October 2013, and I was about to join a small online hangout with several other young people with intersex variations, something I had never done before. I was unsure about this because it was my first time speaking with a group of other intersex people.

I didn’t use the term intersex at the time. I just thought of myself as having a “syndrome.” Soon after I joined the meeting, I felt more at ease by the energy and encouragement from Pidgeon Pagonis, the Youth Program coordinator at the time, and the presence of the other people on the call. That was my first introduction to the interACT Youth Program.

Over the next 9 years, I became more involved with the interACT Youth Program. I learned what interACT was and that it advocates for the human rights of intersex children.

As I write this, I am now a staff member at interACT, something my time in the interACT Youth program prepared me to do. interACT creates much-needed resources and leads valuable research initiatives, all while continuing to advocate for the human rights of intersex children.
Keely Bosn

In 2022, Keely Bosn joined interACT’s board of directors, where she has served on the Executive, Fundraising, Finance, and Strategic Planning committees. She is the parent of an intersex child, a US Navy veteran, and a multiple-degree graduate of the University of Michigan. Keely currently works as a Future Technology Strategy Manager at General Motors, where she is an avid LGBTQI+ Employee Resource Group member and a voice for intersex inclusion in the workplace.

How did you come to be an interACT board member?

Shortly after finding out our child was born intersex in 2016, interACT became our primary resource for information as it was one of the very few online resources available. At a critical time when we felt utterly lost, interACT provided us with proper terminology along with insights into the human rights and global policy issues facing intersex individuals. We quickly understood that surgery should not even be a consideration until our child was old enough for consent. As a result, our child is happy and healthy, and they are growing up to be an extremely proud intersex person! I am so thankful that interACT was there when we needed guidance the most. Our family continues to be avid supporters of interACT and I was thrilled to have the opportunity to join the board and give back where possible.
What excites you about serving on interACT's board?
To have the chance to work with such intelligent, established people on the board who care so deeply about intersex rights. I’m always blown away by the other board member’s experiences and knowledge base. It’s also been exciting to see all the external momentum this year through the release of several intersex documentaries, short films, memoirs, social media postings, etc.

What do you love most about interACT's work?
I love the level of commitment and direct, measurable impact that interACT achieves year after year. For such a small organization, the power it has is astonishing. Whether it’s driving policy changes, supporting youth, or expanding awareness, this organization accomplishes so much with so little.

What are your hopes and dreams for interACT over the next year?
My hopes and dreams for the coming year are for interACT to gain additional donor support to aid in growing the organization and increasing our ability to tackle the ever-growing law and policy challenges impacting intersex people.
The Anne Tamar-Mattis Advocacy Award, established in 2017 in honor of interACT’s founder, recognizes and honors outstanding allies of the intersex community for their support and advocacy on behalf of intersex youth. Awards are made in recognition of tremendous contributions to intersex human rights.

Dr. Arlene Baratz is exceptionally deserving of this award, as demonstrated by over two decades of trailblazing leadership in medical research and education, commitment to accurate representation of intersex persons in the media, and leadership in peer support to intersex individuals and families.

In her roles as a mother of two intersex adults, physician, advocate, and provider of peer support, Dr. Baratz exemplifies outstanding intersex allyship and advocacy.

Special Recognition from Katie (Baratz) Dalke, MD, MBE

I am so fortunate to have been raised by – and to have as a role model – a mother who is so devoted to making the world a safer and more nurturing place for people like me, and the people who love us. As proud as I am of her titles, publications, and awards, and as confident as I am that what doctors think about intersex human rights would be hugely different without her, I am most in awe of the impact she’s had on our community. Too many people to count have told me that she has been their surrogate mother, helped them understand their medical care, find a good doctor, or saved their lives. For me and my siblings (biological and spiritual), my mom is a beacon of love, safety, and hope.

View our thank-you video to Dr. Baratz.
Thank You

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

Champions ($1,000 +)

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 2022 donors at this level.

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Guardians ($250-$999)

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.

Anonymous
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interACT 2022 Annual Report
Thank You

*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, and 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 2022 donors and their planned, recurring gifts.*

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

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interACT 2022 Annual Report
Thank You

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How You Can Get Involved

Join our Facebook Ambassador Program and raise funds for our work with your friends and family.
Email fundraising@interactadvocates.org to join.

Youth Group

Join iSpace if you are an intersex youth between the ages of 13-29 and looking for peer connections.

Give!

Go to interactadvocates.org/donate to give now.
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