

4520 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. • Minneapolis, MN 55406 • 612-607-4997 • alawler@post.harvard.edu

June 1, 2013

The National LGBT Bar Association  
1301 K Street NW, Suite 1100 East Tower  
Washington, DC 20005

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to nominate Bev Luther for the Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Class of 2013. Bev is a prominent and respected voice both in Minnesota's LGBT bar and in the legal community generally. She played a particularly important role in the fight for marriage equality in our state, and think that this award would be a timely acknowledgement of her contribution to this year's realization of that goal.

I first met Bev in 1999, when we were both students at Wellesley College. Bev was a natural leader on campus, and as an out lesbian served as Class President for all four years, and then as Alumnae Class President for another five. She then went on to law school, where she nurtured an interest in an area that most lawyers find daunting: international tax law. She successfully served as a student attorney at the University of Minnesota Low-Income Tax Clinic while also juggling moot court and a leadership position with Outlaw, the GLBT student group.

Since graduating from law school in 2008, Bev has developed a successful international tax practice, and has volunteered countless hours to Minnesota's Lavender Bar Association, the Minnesota State Bar Association, and Minnesotans United for All Families. As a tax attorney she has advised multinational corporations on mergers, acquisitions, restructuring, and other tax planning issues. She applied the same knowledge and care when advising GLBT lawyers by presenting a series of *pro bono* Continuing Legal Education courses on tax and estate planning for same-sex couples and their families. As the preeminent LGBT tax specialist in Minnesota, she became the leading voice highlighting the unfair tax effects of marriage inequality.

She has also become a leading voice for LGBT equality generally. As one of the co-chairs of the Lavender Bar Association, in 2011 and 2012 she organized volunteers, hosted fundraisers, staffed tables at events, and helped to create and lead CLEs on the 2012 Minnesota statewide vote on the constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. Bev was indefatigable, and never tired of concocting new ways to raise money, awareness, activism, and votes, down to shrink-wrapping her car with the "Vote No" logo. Many volunteers after this campaign were exhausted, and viewed the 2012 victory party as the end of the line.

Not Bev. She tapped a seemingly endless reserve of energy, and poured untold hours into Minnesotans United for All Families' campaign for marriage equality in late 2012 and 2013. She was the face and voice of Minnesota's Lavender Bar, encouraging Minnesota's legal community to donate, lobby, and speak out for equality. Countless phone banks, lobby days, and other campaign events later, I got to stand next to Bev on the Capitol Lawn last month and celebrate as Minnesota's governor signed Minnesota's marriage equality law.

What was particularly remarkable to me was that throughout this process Bev was working long hours as an associate international tax counsel at Ameriprise Financial, and was additionally working on her LLM in Taxation from New York University. I often wonder when Bev sleeps, since she gave none of these endeavors the short shrift. She never leaves a project unfinished, and never gives less than full attention or devotion to either her paid work or her volunteering for LGBT rights. She has truly been an inspiration to me and to other attorneys in Minnesota, both LGBT and straight. This award would be the perfect recognition for an attorney who has accomplished so much in her own professional life and in her activism for marriage equality and LGBT rights.

Sincerely,

Amy Lawler