

**Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40: Class of 2013
Nomination Form**

Nominee Information

Name: Emily Hecht-McGowan Date of Birth: 10/9/74
Title: Director of Public Policy Firm/Organization: Family Equality Council
Mailing Address: 8366 Haddon Dr. City, State Zip: Takoma Park, MD 20912
Phone Number: 202-496-1285 Email Address: ehecht@familyequality.org

Nominator Information

Name: Leslie Cooper
Title: Senior staff attorney Firm/Organization: ACLU LGBT + AIDS Project
Mailing Address: 125 Broad St., 18th Fl. City, State Zip: NY NY 10004
Phone Number: 212-549-2584 Email Address: LCooper@ACLU.org
Relationship to Nominee: professional colleague

Optional: To your knowledge, does the nominee identify as any of the following?

☐ Racial or Ethnic Minority ☒ Female ☐ Transgender
☐ Person with Disability ☐ Other: _____

The complete nomination package must be submitted via email to nominations@LGBTbar.org no later than 5:00 pm EDT on June 3, 2013. Please submit the following information:

- Nomination Form
- Statement of Support of Nominee (not to exceed 2 pages). Please include:
 - Details on achievements within their legal field
 - Details on their commitment to LGBT equality
- Current Resume of the Nominee
- Letters of Support

EMILY B. HECHT-MCGOWAN

8306 Haddon Drive
Takoma Park, MD 20912

202-491-1112
emilyhecht@yahoo.com

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Family Equality Council, Washington, DC

Director of Public Policy

November 2009 – Present

- Launched and currently oversee federal policy advocacy program, including both legislative and regulatory reform efforts, regarding issues affecting same-sex couples and families, including employment, benefits, parenting and child-care issues, health care, immigration, housing and relationship recognition.
- Lead strategist for federal, state and local advocacy agenda, including: develop policy positions, draft legislation, organize legislative hearings and briefings, produce written advocacy resources and white papers, design model laws and policies, develop grassroots campaigns, provide training on model family policy and mobilization, develop communications strategies, and chair national coalitions on family policy, education, labor issues and health care reform.
- Shape organization-wide strategy, including messaging, communications, field, and development efforts, as member of executive management team.
- Represent organization at national legal and policy coalition meetings and in print, television and electronic media.
- Cultivate and maintain pro bono relationships with national law firms contributing more than 1000 hours annually.
- Recruit, train and supervise policy staff and student law fellows.

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, Washington, DC

Co-Director for Law

December 2006 – November 2009

- Directed all aspects of SLDN's legal services program, assisting service members impacted by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) and related forms of discrimination.
- Coordinated the legal aspects of SLDN's legislative initiatives to repeal DADT.
- Worked with members of Congress and their staffs and the Executive branch to move repeal of DADT forward.
- Drafted written testimony for Congressional record, prepared witnesses and coordinated coalition partners in preparation for the first Congressional hearing on DADT since law's enactment in 1993.
- Executed strategies for regulatory reform within Department of Defense and each branch of the Armed Forces – drafted proposed changes to federal regulations and legislation.
- Coordinated watchdog activities and developed and implemented programs to combat anti-gay harassment in the military.
- Managed SLDN's litigation program – including constitutional challenges to the law in both U.S. Federal District and Military Appellate Courts.
- Developed and taught CLE courses and other educational and outreach programs for the legal community, the military, corporate America and the general public.
- Spoke publicly on behalf of SLDN and represented the organization in the media.
- Cultivated and maintained pro bono relationships and recruited, trained and supervised legal staff and student law fellows.

American Bar Association, Section of Individual Rights & Responsibilities, Washington, DC

Assistant Section Director

December 2004 – December 2006

- Coordinated the work of 17 legal committees on a wide variety of civil rights, human rights and social justice issues.
- Coordinated program and policy development and participated in both federal and state legislative and regulatory initiatives.
- Performed complex legal research, tracked legislation and assisted in drafting amicus curiae briefs.
- Created CLE and other educational programming for both the legal community and the general public.
- Supervised numerous staff and interns, managed budgets, and assisted in a wide range of other responsibilities related to Section operations, program and policy development and outreach.

Beins, Axelrod, Kraft, Gleason & Gibson, P.C., Washington, DC

Law Clerk

May 2003 – August 2003

- Performed complex legal research regarding all aspects of both private and public sector labor and employment law.
- Drafted memoranda, pleadings, letters and other documents.
- Participated in arbitrations, negotiations and mediations and assisted in client counseling and witness preparation.

EDUCATION

The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, Washington, DC
Juris Doctor, May 2004

American University, Washington, DC
B.A. History, May 1996

BAR ADMISSIONS

State: Commonwealth of Virginia (2004); District of Columbia (2007)
Federal: U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit (2008)



June 3, 2013

National LGBT Bar Association
Selection Committee
Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award

Re: Emily Hecht-McGowan

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing to nominate Emily Hecht-McGowan for inclusion among the LGBT Bar Association's Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 for 2013. Emily is an outstanding advocate for LGBT families who has provided tremendous leadership among LGBT advocacy groups to achieve greater protections for LGBT parents and our children.

Emily has been the Director of Public Policy at the Family Equality Council (FEC) since 2009. In that role, she has helped transform the organization, formerly known as Family Pride Coalition, into a powerful force for legal and policy change both in Washington and in the states. Emily launched and directs FEC's federal advocacy program, through which she and her colleagues have set an impressive reform agenda in areas including parenting and child care issues, health care, relationship recognition, immigration and other areas affecting families headed by same-sex couples. Emily is involved in every stage of legal and policy reform from developing policy to drafting legislation and model laws to developing communications strategies to organizing grassroots campaigns. And she is a coalition leader that many of us in the LGBT advocacy community depend on.

My professional relationship with Emily has focused primarily on working toward the elimination of barriers to adoption and foster parenting by LGBT people. Emily has been the driving force behind the Every Child Deserves a Family Act, a bill in Congress that would mandate that state child welfare agencies end discrimination against prospective adoptive and foster parents on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status. Largely due to the extraordinary efforts of Emily and her colleagues to promote the bill, including by organizing congressional briefings, the bill now has significant support with over 50 sponsors in the House. Emily has also led a coalition of LGBT advocates in working with federal government officials to implement changes in child welfare policy that would help advance this same goal. In addition, Emily has led efforts to fight discriminatory adoption legislation in numerous states across the country and has spoken out publicly in a variety of venues about how the primary victims of discrimination against LGBT people in adoption are the 120,000 children waiting to be adopted in the United States who are needlessly deprived of loving families.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES
UNION FOUNDATION
LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL
TRANSGENDER &
AIDS PROJECT

PLEASE RESPOND TO:
NATIONAL OFFICE
125 BROAD STREET, 18TH FL.
NEW YORK, NY 10004-2400
T/212.549.2627
F/212.549.2650
WWW.ACLU.ORG/LGBT

SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE:
1663 MISSION STREET
SUITE 460
SAN FRANCISCO,
CA 94103-2400

CHICAGO OFFICE:
180 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE
SUITE 2300
CHICAGO, IL 60601-7401

LOS ANGELES OFFICE:
1616 BEVERLY BOULEVARD
LOS ANGELES,
CA 90026-7511

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Selection Committee
Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award
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I also knew Emily when she was the Co-Director for Law at Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. Whether advocating for servicemembers during the era of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" or fighting the many obstacles faced by LGBT families, she is an incredibly smart and politically wise lawyer, policy guru and organizer. She is deeply committed to working to achieve equality and fairness for LGBT people and brings a passion to her work that is contagious.

The community is incredibly lucky to have Emily Hecht-McGowan working for us. She would be a perfect addition to the Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award.

Very truly yours,



Leslie Cooper
Senior Staff Attorney

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