



COURT OF APPEALS

DARLEEN ORTEGA
JUDGE

1163 STATE STREET
SALEM, OREGON 97301-2563

(503) 986-5721
FAX (503) 986-5865

June 3, 2013

I write to support the nomination of Paul Southwick for the Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award. I am a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals and have known Paul since his first year of practice. He is one very impressive lawyer and would be a worthy recipient of this recognition.

Paul has done fine legal work in Oregon courts, as mentioned by Carol Bernick and others. He has had a key role in achieving success in *Drollinger v. Mallon*, 350 Or 652 (2011), establishing a right to sue post-conviction relief counsel for malpractice without requiring plaintiff to have been exonerated of the underlying offense, and *Uhl v. Krupsky*, 254 Or App 736 (2013), establishing that the "good faith belief" requirement for adverse possession does not apply to extinguishment of easements. He is a clear communicator and a dogged advocate.

Paul has particularly distinguished himself in the area of LGBT rights. Paul and I graduated from the same undergraduate institution, George Fox University, an evangelical Christian school that requires its students to sign a "lifestyle agreement" against homosexual conduct and maintains a stance that such conduct is sinful. When Paul and I became friends, we realized that both of us were separately advocating on behalf of LGBTQ students at Fox, so we joined forces. I participated in a number of meetings with the school's administration in which Paul advocated very forcefully on behalf of those students and was mightily impressed with his courage, his tactical skill, and his talent as a communicator.

Paul learned last year that the school planned to bring a speaker to campus whose message would be damaging to students (basically maintaining that their only godly choice is to remain celibate). We asked the school to allow us to present a different viewpoint on campus but were denied that opportunity. It was then that we launched an alumni group to advocate on behalf of LGBTQ students at Fox, www.onegeorgefox.org. We quickly gained the support of several hundred LGBTQ alums and allies and, under Paul's leadership, put together an alternative event off campus with national speakers on the same day as the school's event.

Since that time, not only has OneGeorgeFox continued to provide support to students, but Paul has launched an effort to collect the stories of LGBTQ students on other Christian college campus, On God's Campus. He is recording interviews with such students and collecting a lot of valuable information that, shared among such students, is building a supportive community for LGBTQ students who desperately need it.

I believe it is in the context of this work that Paul became acquainted with the story of a transgender woman who was expelled from a Baptist college for committing fraud in her application. Paul is serving as lead counsel in her suit against the college and recently persuaded the court not to dismiss the case.

My experiences collaborating with Paul have deepened my respect and admiration for his courage and his skills as an advocate. Paul is perceptive, caring, and has the kind of practical energy for activism that is necessary to bring about effective and lasting change. He is already a great leader and is using a variety of approaches to make a real difference for LGBTQ people.

I would be happy to provide any further information that would be helpful to your process. I hope that Paul will rise to the top of the nominees for this recognition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darleen Ortega', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darleen Ortega