

# LAVENDER LEGAL CENTER

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025  
ANNUAL REPORT



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she/her

**Dawn Ballard, CPA Volunteer**

"I appreciate everything you do. I say it every time, and it only gets more true every time. I wouldn't have had the courage to do this without you and your staff."

..... **Community testimonials**



# Lavender Legal Center BY THE NUMBERS

- 185 lowans served
- 89 direct representation cases
- 45 advocacy cases
- 72 referrals
- 56 of those served were rural
- 1 fundraising gala
- 174 individual donors & sponsors

**\$99,750 total  
grants**

**\$59,727 total  
donations**



"Thank you again for helping someone like me in these terrible times. You give me hope when I feel the world crushing my soul. Please know, and let your coworkers know, that the small hope you provide has HUGE ramifications in our lives. Thank you all a million times over."

..... **Community testimonials**

# Lavender Legal Center NEWS



## Lavender Executive Director Kendra Weston Named to 40 Best LGBTQ+ Lawyers Under 40 List

The National LGBTQ+ Bar Association named Lavender Legal Executive Director Kendra Weston to their list of 2025 40 Best LGBTQ+ Lawyers Under 40.

The National LGBTQ+ Bar Association and Foundation are a nationwide network of legal professionals and affiliated organizations dedicated to promoting justice and equity for the diverse LGBTQ+ community through advocacy, education, and collaboration within the legal profession.

"I continue to hear from my law student interns that the lack of inclusivity and bullying by fellow students (and professors) continues to be a common problem in law schools," Weston said at their acceptance speech. "When it is allowed in law school, it continues into our profession and in our courts.

"Exclusion and inequity is a problem in the legal profession. Thankfully, not everywhere. But anywhere is unacceptable. We can do better. Having the National LGBTQ Bar Association moves us in the right direction.

"When we can have community in the legal profession, we have visibility and more people working toward a common purpose- a better legal world for ALL people."

## 'Twas the Night Before Prom

Lavender's second annual gala fundraiser, Adult Prom, welcomed 150 people to a celebration of queer joy at the African American Museum of Iowa in Cedar Rapids.

Themed "'Twas the Night Before Pride," the event raised \$11,000 at the end of May.

## Name Change Clinic Trains Attorneys, Helps 32 Trans Iowans

In partnership with Shuttleworth & Ingersoll and Iowa Legal Aid, Lavender hosted a name change clinic in October 2024 at Shuttleworth's office in Cedar Rapids. This collaboration allowed us to serve 32 trans and gender diverse Iowans in legal name and gender marker changes. Funds were also raised to cover the filing fees for each individual who requested financial assistance. We were also able to train volunteer lawyers from other firms in doing this work, making this service more accessible throughout our community.

"I want to take time to thank all the organizations involved in the LGBTQ+ Name Change Clinic. It allowed me to achieve something years in the making that had been elusive due to financial constraints. I think it's important for all involved to know that you made a positive impact on the lives of those served that day, and that I appreciate your time and assistance. Thank you again!

..... **Community testimonials**

# Lavender Legal Center

## STORIES FROM THE FIELD

### A Fight, and a Win, for Parental Rights

It is imperative that nonbiological parents adopt their child even when they are married to the birth parent and are on the birth certificate. The U.S. now has up to 12 states where the nonbiological parent was denied parental rights in these scenarios. And in some instances, the donor was given parental rights instead.

Lavender Legal represented the non-biological mother in a confirmatory adoption. The biological mom was denying her consent to the adoption, as the parents were separated and moving toward a divorce. The bio mom was arguing that the adoption wasn't necessary because the non-bio mom was already on the birth certificate.

She then sought divorce in another jurisdiction (that had potential to be hostile to same-sex couples), claiming that the non-bio mom did not have parental rights because she was not biologically related to the child.

The adoption would have no financial cost to the bio mom if she consented, but she chose to spend thousands on attorney's fee in order to keep her spouse from adopting their child, with her end intent to deny our client's parentage in its totality.



Our client had no income, as she was the primary caregiver for their special needs child.

This is the start to all of the 12 cases mentioned above. Iowa could become one of those states. A parent could move to one of those states. A married parent should not have to adopt their own child. That is not equity.

Here, an adoption was vital because there was a risk that in the divorce, our client would lose parental rights. An adoption was her only full-stop remedy.

To advance equity, we represented her without attorney's fees, and we WON.

**No one can ever deny our client her parental rights  
and no one can take this child's mother away from him now.**

"Truly, from the bottom of my heart, we are grateful for everything Lavender Legal has done for us. I never imagined I could ever be put in this situation, and you guys saved me from going back to the worst days of my depression. I will never be able to adequately express my gratitude."

..... **Community testimonials**



# Lavender Legal Center CORPORATE & COMMUNITY DONORS



A special thank you to our other supporters Gortner May G. Charitable Trust, Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust, New Pioneer Food Co-op, Lyz Lenz, Piper Psychotherapy, David Maier & Matt McGrane, Matt VanMaanen & Rob Lancaster, Neon Dragon Piercing, Golden Aura, Dorsey & Whitney, the Peterson Family, and all of our other donors who supported our cause last year.

In-kind donations were provided by supporters SCOUT, Roasters Coffee House, Lynch Ford of Mt. Vernon, Half Price Books, Iowa Wild, and Great Harvest Bread.

"I am so proud of what you do for our people. It has been an honor knowing you and watching you work. I wish you mighty success fighting this war from within. History will judge you as a hero. I sure do."

..... **Community testimonials**

# Lavender Legal Center

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Platinum  
Transparency  
2025

Candid.



At Lavender Legal Center, we celebrate the value LGBTQ+ individuals and families bring to our community. Make a donation today so we can continue to support these members of our community and ensure they have adequate legal representation and advocacy.

Your donation to this 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is, as always, 100% tax deductible.

**On behalf of our team at Lavender, we thank you for your continued support.**

PayPal Giving Fund



GWOP



Please make checks payable to  
Lavender Legal Center and mail to:

Lavender Legal Center  
P.O. Box 31  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

### BECOME AN IMPACT PARTNER

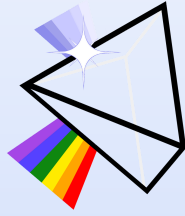
Recurring donors build a predictable revenue stream that helps provide stability for Lavender's future.

Fill out this form to arrange a monthly transfer of funds from your bank through an ACH transaction. Or, choose the "monthly" option through GWOP.



"You've helped us tremendously and we could not be more grateful. The work that you do saves lives, and I am so grateful that we have people like you working in our area. We definitely need you."

..... **Community testimonials**



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