

Gerhardstein & Branch



AL GERHARDSTEIN



JENNIFER BRANCH

The firm of Gerhardstein & Branch uses the law to empower those who are unfairly demonized and oppressed by the majority. For many years, lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people were on the lowest rung of the power ladder. Thanks in part to the work of Gerhardstein & Branch, the LGBT community is making real strides toward equality.

The first struggle involved a nearly decade-long legal challenge to

Article XII of the Cincinnati Charter, which blocked the city from enacting or enforcing employment and housing protections for gays. Al Gerhardstein and Scott Greenwood represented Equality Foundation in the litigation. During that dark period, Cincinnati stood alone as the only city in America which discriminated against gays in its very charter. The lawsuit—which went to the Supreme Court twice—set the stage for the successful 2004 campaign to repeal Article XII.

Passage of a new Human Rights Ordinance brought a new threat of repeal. But in 2006, G&B partner Jennifer Branch was able to help stop the ballot initiative to repeal the Cincinnati Human Rights Ordinance. As a result of fourteen years of advocacy, Cincinnati once again outlaws discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Steady progress for LGBT people in our region has been fueled by the work of this firm. Cases include the suit challenging the discharge and outing of attorney Scott Greenwood. The firm successfully secured reinstatement for Bruce Glover, a gay teacher fired in Williamsburg. When the Cincinnati Police Department demoted Philecia Barnes, a transgender sergeant, the firm secured a verdict of more than \$320,000.00 in a case of national significance. In another case, the firm sued prison officials who failed to protect a transgender prisoner from assault.

The firm continues to stand with the LGBT community in all its struggles. They are presently cooperating counsel for LAMBDA in the challenge seeking to end partner benefits at Miami University, and in the criminal case that has re-established coverage of the domestic violence laws for gay couples.

The attorneys at Gerhardstein & Branch—along with Robert Laufman, who serves in retirement as “of counsel” to the firm, and Mary Armor, the firm office manager for 30 years—are standing by the community every day and fighting for our rights!

For more information, visit www.gbfirm.com.