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May 18, 2020

Note: High-res photos available [here](#).

National LGBT Cancer Network founder Liz Margolies steps down from executive director role

NEW YORK CITY—Liz Margolies, who founded the National LGBT Cancer Network, the first and only nonprofit organization in the country to address the cancer-related needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, is stepping down from her role as executive director in June. She will continue to serve on the organization's board and as a therapist in private practice.

Since its founding in 2006, the Network has:

- Trained thousands of healthcare providers and policy makers in LGBTQ+ cultural competency
- Won Centers for Disease Control funding for a major anti-tobacco campaign, and funding from top national and state organizations including Bristol Myers Squibb, the American Medical Association, LiveStrong Foundation, the New York State Department of Health, and New York City Health and Hospitals
- Conducted public awareness campaigns that included four billboards in Times Square
- Received international acclaim for short films it produced
- Identified and shared best and promising practices for treating LGBTQ+ people with or at risk for cancer
- Achieved LGBTQ+ inclusion in dozens of leading professional and cancer organizations
- Convened more than 170 organizations to issue an open letter urging decisive action to prevent COVID-19 discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, an effort that garnered international media coverage

- Expanded its staff to seven with an annual budget of more than \$600,000 per year

Margolies began the LGBT Cancer Network at her kitchen table in her apartment in New York City after losing four friends to cancer. She had been a practicing psychotherapist for more than 30 years, with no experience in running a nonprofit. She was very clear and focused on the new organization's mission: to educate the LGBTQ+ community about its increased cancer risks, train healthcare providers to offer more safe and welcoming care, and advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusion in national cancer organizations, research, and media.

Along the way, Margolies became an internationally recognized LGBTQ+ health leader, invited to events at the Obama White House in 2012 and twice to events at Vice President Joe Biden's residence. Margolies was chosen as one of the Out Magazine OUT100 leaders in 2014, and has received numerous other awards and recognition. She has authored multiple peer-reviewed articles, several based on the Network's original research; and several book chapters.

While the National LGBT Cancer Network has accomplished major goals, there is more work to do, Margolies says. "I am extremely proud of what the Network has accomplished in 14 years, and know that the work to eradicate LGBTQ+ health disparities is far from over. We will not stop until all LGBTQ+ people have equal access to high quality health and cancer care."

Hector Vargas, executive director of GLMA Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality, says: "Liz's leadership in promoting culturally and clinically competent healthcare for LGBTQ people, especially those who are experiencing cancer, is unparalleled. We all owe her a huge debt of gratitude for a lifetime of contributions to advance LGBTQ health equity. I'm honored and humbled to count her as a GLMA member, colleague, co-conspirator, and friend."

Margolies will be succeeded by the Network's deputy director of 18 months, NFN Scout, PhD. He has been a leading executive and consultant in the fields of LGBTQ+ health and policy for more than 20 years, is a member of the National Institutes of Health Council of Councils, and an adjunct professor at Boston University.

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About the National LGBT Cancer Network

The LGBT community is disproportionately affected by cancer. The National LGBT Cancer Network is the largest organization in the country working to improve the lives of LGBT cancer survivors and those at risk. Its initiatives include educating the LGBT community about increased cancer risks and the importance of screening and early

detection; training health care providers to offer more culturally-competent, safe and welcoming care; and advocating for LGBT survivors in mainstream cancer organizations, media, and research. The National LGBT Cancer Network also runs a CDC-funded public health network focused on eliminating tobacco and cancer health disparities. Due to the disproportionate impact COVID-19 is having on our population as a result of increased smoking and cancer rates, the Network has been actively creating resources for LGBTQ+ organizations to help respond to this unprecedented public health crisis. Learn more at cancer-network.org.