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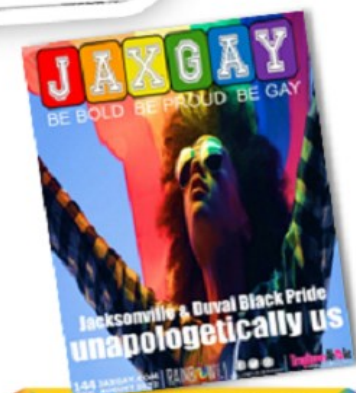
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News & Politics



Federal Court Rules Against Trans Student's Right To Use The Correct Bathroom

By Will Breyer

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in Florida has reversed a lower court ruling that granted access to boys' restrooms for a trans student in the state. The 7-4 decision said the student's civil rights were not violated under either the Equal Protection Clause or Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

The vote was split for and against between Republican and Democratic appointees.

The Eleventh Circuit's decision is a break with the Fourth and Seventh Circuit Courts, which found in favor of trans students in similar cases presenting the same issues.

In 2017, Drew Adams, a trans student at Nease High School in St. Johns County, Florida sued the state for access to bathrooms that conform to his gender identity. The state claimed Adams had to use a restroom that aligns with his "biological sex." Adams was born female.

The story made headlines as one of the first test cases for transgender rights in Florida and sparked a far-right backlash exploited by Florida

Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) in his push for the Parental Rights in Education Act, also known as the Don't Say Gay law.

At trial in December 2017, the court heard testimony that Adams identified as male from a young age and used the boys' restrooms in St. Johns' schools without incident. When he started high school, Adams continued the practice, without issue from fellow male classmates. Girls at the school, however, complained to school administrators.

While the school district had established rules that honored trans students' desired names and pronouns, they refused to let trans students use single-sex facilities, insisting students would be treated according to the sex on their birth certificate.

By the time Adams was at trial, his transition was well underway with gender-affirming hormone therapy, a legal name change, and a new birth certificate identifying him as male. The school district, however, maintained that Adams' sex was fixed at the time of enrollment.

In 2018, U.S. District Court Judge Timothy Corrigan, a George W. Bush appointee,

found for Adams, saying the school district's policy violated both his equal protection and Title IX rights. In particular, the school district's admission that Adams would be allowed to use boys' restrooms had he enrolled with his current birth certificate undermined their argument that the district had an "important governmental interest" in protecting the privacy of cisgender boys in those facilities.

Two three-judge 11th Circuit Court panels agreed before the full court reversed those decisions on December 30.

In her opinion for the majority, Circuit Judge Barbara Lagoa, a Trump appointee, avoided identifying Adams by he/him pronouns, instead using only his surname repeatedly. She also wrote a separate, concurring opinion detailing why a ruling in Adams' favor would dismantle girls' school sports, an issue not relevant to the appeal.

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OUT & HEALTH

Geron Says Blood Cancer Drug Succeeds In Late-Stage Study

By Maggie Wilson



Geron Corp said on Wednesday its experimental drug helped more patients with a difficult-to-treat blood cancer achieve independence from routine transfusions in a late-stage trial, sending shares of the drug developer nearly 50% higher.

The drug, imetelstat, was being studied in patients with types of lower risk myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), which requires frequent blood transfusions for patients to manage their anemia, the company said.

The drug, if approved, will enter into a market that already has players such as Bristol Myers Squibb's Reblozyl, which has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat forms of the disease.

Geron anticipates a peak market potential of \$1.2 billion in the United States and some key EU countries by 2030, Chief Executive Officer John Scarlett told Reuters.

Nearly 40% of the 118 patients who were on the drug showed independence from transfusion for eight weeks, compared with 15% of the 60 patients on placebo, the company said in a statement.

The data appears to be a "better/best case scenario" for the drug's chances at approval, said Stifel analyst Stephen Willey.

Adverse effects observed during the late-stage trial were consistent with previous trials, with low count of platelets and white blood cells among the

most common, the company said.

Geron said these adverse effects were not uncommon, adding "the side effects are short lived and reversible, and do not have an increased risk of bleeding or infections."

The company plans to file an application for U.S. approval in mid-2023.

Geron is also testing the drug for myelofibrosis, a rare type of bone marrow cancer, and expects data from an interim analysis in 2024. If approved, the drug would compete with Incyte Corp's myelofibrosis drug, Jakafi.

Shares of California-based Geron rose 50% to \$3.61 in morning trade.

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Robin Roberts Plans To Marry Longtime Girlfriend Amber Laign

By Terry Cannon



Robin Roberts is taking a big step in 2023.

During a conversation with author and motivational speaker Gabby Bernstein about setting intentions for the new year, Roberts went public with her plan to marry longtime partner, Amber Laign.

The "Good Morning America" co-anchor initially said she was "hesitating because I haven't said it out loud yet" about sharing her intention.

"I'm saying 'yes' to marriage," Roberts then continued. "We're getting married this year." She and Laign have been

together since 2005 and Roberts told Bernstein, "It was something we had talked about but we had put it off. She became ill."

Roberts had shared last February that Laign was battling cancer.

"My sweet Amber wanted me to tell you something that she's been facing," Roberts said in a video on her verified Twitter account at the time. "At the end of last year, Amber was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had surgery last month and this morning will begin chemotherapy."

The journalist, who is herself a cancer survivor, also shared the news in July that Laign had completed a portion of her treatment.

"Sweet Amber completing radiation, a very important phase of her treatment," Roberts wrote in the caption of a video on her verified Instagram account which showed Laign ringing the bell to signify the end of her treatment. "We both thank you for all your well wishes and prayers. Proud of her and all fellow Thrivers for your grit and grace during a challenging time."

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OUT & HEALTH

Carl Nassib Confirms Olympic Swimmer Søren Dahl Is His Boyfriend
By Melissa Roberts



2023 is already a great year for Carl Nassib and his boyfriend Søren Dahl.

In an Instagram Story, Tampa Bay Buccaneers linebacker Nassib posted a picture of himself with his arm around former Olympic swimmer Dahl, who is adorably wearing a Nassib jersey. The NFL star wrote in the caption:

“Kicking off 2023 with my man and a trip to the playoffs.”

Not only has Nassib found love, but he’s also returning to the playoffs after he became the first out NFL player to play in a playoff game in 2022 while signed to the Las Vegas Raiders.

Nassib’s team, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, recently won the NFC South title after defeating the Panthers 30-24. Led by veteran all-time-great quarterback Tom Brady, the Bucs have a good shot to make it far in this year’s playoffs.

What makes the playoff run even better is Nassib having Dahl by his side along the way.

Throughout 2022, Nassib started posting pictures with Dahl on social media, with fans identifying him as a Danish swimmer who competed in the 2016 Rio Olympics. Initially, the two posted pics of each other hanging out together on the beach, in a club, and at the gym. This led to new

speculation about the two athletes.

Rumors got even stronger in November when Dahl shared an Instagram Story of him and Nassib that read “Weekend 11/10” and a heart emoji. Nassib then re-shared the story to his own Instagram Stories.

Nassib is famously private about his personal life, so this new post where he calls Dahl “my man” is the first time we can confirm that the two are actually more than just friends.

Dahl, and all of us, will be cheering on Nassib as he and the Buccaneers advance to the playoffs, which are scheduled to begin on January 14.

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Life and Style

Dating Professional And Millionaire Gay: Premium Sites And Apps

By David Vandygriff

There's no reason why you should go through this life alone. You can find rich gay men who are single anywhere. However, online dating allows you to get to know them a bit before you agree to meet in person. With so many options for dating a gay millionaire, young professionals, and more, it pays to know which sites and apps should be used.

Matchmaking online allows you to control more of the details and find love once and for all.



Tips For Using Dating Apps To Meet Gay Rich Men

When you're going to date gay rich men or even millionaire, it's important to find the right websites. It will make it easier for you to find guys that you can truly connect with. While you may want to date a millionaire, you also have to remember that relationships are two-sided. What do you have to offer the gay

millionaire? Why should he spend money for you?

This is when it comes down to not only using the best dating sites and services but also creating the right

profile.

There are a few tips that you can follow:

- Be honest about yourself and tell your story
- Include an appropriate, recent photo
- Don't play games
- Talk about what you enjoy doing



The dating advice for a single person is the same regardless of whether you're dating within the LGBT community or not, whether they're poor or rich and wealthy, young or old guys. It comes down to being honest so that people know who you really are.

While the dating apps and services will help you to make connections, eventually you're going to meet up guys in person. This is when you must be as authentic as possible especially if you want to impress wealthy gay man.



Features Found in Top Dating Apps

As you're searching for apps and websites to help you with rich gay dating, there are a few features to look for that you're not always going to find with a matchmaker.

First, be sure that there's a safe onboarding process. It ensures that the people you chat with are authentic. It's a way to feel safer when you decide to meet up in real life. Membership should be relatively expensive to attract wealthy men and professionals. By these means you will find quality gays faster.

Second, ensure that there are push notifications available in an app. This way, if you get a message or a match, you're notified of it right away.

Additionally, you will want to make sure that there is some kind of chat feature available. It will make it easier for you to talk to some of the matches for a bit before deciding to meet. You can get to know them and determine whether there really is something there or not.

There are a few other features to look for as well:

Geolocator: Find people who are close to you

Block profiles and black lists: Block people who won't take the hint

Required profile pic: Ensure that photos are required in order to create profile

Most of the features that you want are designed for your safety. You will highly likely find them in premium gay dating apps. However, with so many sites popping up, they tend to be loaded with features to ensure that you get the best possible matchmaking experience and meet yours only millionaire faster.



Find a Gay Millionaire Dating Site Right for You

There are all sorts of gay dating apps and legitimate sites (cheap and premium) that are out there. Finding the one that's right for you is all about defining what it is that you're oriented for. There's a big difference between wanting a speed hookup and a forever beau. For the latter chances are higher with a premium app. Whatever it is that you want, there's a website that will help you find a single quality man, gay millionaire or professional gays.



Top Gay Dating Apps & Sites

When you want to date rich single gays, you have to consider what it is that you want. Perhaps you want someone who is handsome who also happens to be a sugar daddy. When you want to find a rich white gay man or wealthy millionaire, there are some top dating sites to consider:

EliteSingles.com: This website is focused on helping professional men seek other professional men. The members are highly educated, and their success rate includes helping thousands of singles find love monthly.

Match.com: This is one of the most popular dating sites in the world, and there is a "Man Seeking Man" option available. A wide array of support tools is offered to help get a good match.

Zoosk.com: This site has won a variety of awards. Additionally, it uses behavioral matchmaking to help you find a quality professional to fall in love with.

Older professional and quality gays may prefer simpler sites and apps and you should consider it when looking for your wealthy partner.

Top LGBT Gay Dating Apps & Sites

Within the LGBT community, there are a few other dating apps that you may want to explore. While you may not find rich gays or millionaires, you will meet gay professionals and quality gays.

Scruff: Consider Scruff to be the Tinder for gay and queer guys to connect. There are over 15 million users on the app worldwide. You can also curate to a specific type of guy based on your interests.

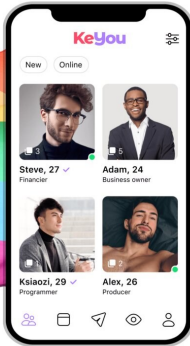
PlanetRomeo: This app is passed in Germany but offers instant chatting along with video calling. It is heavily used by the LGBT community around the world.

Growlr: With 10 million members worldwide, you can certainly find a match. It is particularly possible with the bears of the LGBT community, including the older and hairier men.

Chappy: This app focuses on authentic and discrimination-free connections where users can slide scales to rate a relationship from "cure" all the way to "sexy."

As a gay man you've probably try all of them and much more apps at least once. Feel frustrated? It is absolutely reasonable, especially if you are looking for LTR with quality or professional gay, not a one night stand. Community feeling and freedom of being yourself are really limited. In other words the dude in chat is only interested in your dick not personality.

In KeYou they took it seriously and decided to make a difference. That is how the concept of all-in-one ecosystem has emerged based on a survey of gay professionals and quality gays. To build LTR with quality gays, you have to learn more about the person, his interests, social life and feel safe.



Bringing together dating app, messenger and social network is what they implemented in KeYou, premium gay dating

app. They started from serving gay community in New York where you can easily meet gay millionaire, lots of wealthy gays. Expansion plans cover LA, SF and other major US cities where quality and professional gays keep looking for their best halves.

Getting Started with Your Online Dating Journey

When you're ready to meet someone who is a professional or who is rich and wealthy, online dating is the way to go. Download premium app or join one of the membership websites based on who you are and who it is that you want to meet.



Find a good photo of yourself (nothing shirtless) that is recent. Ensure that it shows you are having fun. If you can't find anything on your phone, take a selfie or ask a friend to snap a photo of you (especially, for premium apps). Then, get ready to create your profile to attract wealthy men. Answer the questions honestly, say what you're looking for, and don't hesitate to talk about some of the upscale things you like to do (such as going to the opera or visiting wineries). By these means wealthy gays and millionaires could see your serious intentions and pick you up from others.

Then, let the network do what it does best to find you a potential mate.

Before you know it, you could be dating a quality single man all because of letting an online dating site connect you. Never forget balancing your career and personal life.

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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Pride Journey: Jacksonville, Florida

By Joey Amato



The last time I visited Jacksonville, I was probably in my early-mid 20s and living in Orlando. It was a very long time ago. I was eager to visit again as I know much has changed in the city since the early 2000s. If you are ever planning on visiting Jacksonville, I would highly recommend renting a car.

Jacksonville is the largest city in the country by land mass and many of its popular attractions are spread out, especially if you want to get a good idea of all the city has to offer.

I decided to stay downtown for this trip as much of my itinerary was within a few miles of city center. The Residence Inn Downtown Jacksonville is a beautiful property located within walking distance to some of the city's attractions, great restaurants, and a block from one of Jacksonville's popular LGBTQ nightlife spots, Incahoots. The bar offers some incredible drink specials so be sure to check their social media before you go so you can capitalize on those. It is also the place to catch a fabulous drag show while in town.

I wanted to make the focus of this trip about budget travel.

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Many times, people tend to not visit certain destinations, or travel at all, because they think it isn't affordable. Before setting out on my Jacksonville adventure, I did some research and discovered some restaurants and attractions that are not only affordable, but also some of the highest recommended in the city.

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and the Residence Inn offers a complimentary breakfast for guests, but if you are in the mood to try out a local breakfast spot, head to Cool Moose Cafe. I met my friend there and we both had a delicious meal for around \$10. Everything was scratch made and the service was wonderful.

Next, head over to the Cummer Museum of Art, which offers free admission on the first Saturday of each month. I visit so many art museums that sometimes they can become monotonous, but this museum happened to be exhibiting two very cool exhibitions during my visit. The first was The Age of Armor, an incredible collection of dozens of pieces of armor dating back hundreds of years. Most of the pieces in the

collection were of European descent but there were a few pieces from other civilizations.

Another interested exhibition is a display of movie posters from Norman Studios. Jacksonville was the filmmaking hotspot prior to Hollywood with 26 movie companies calling Jacksonville home during the silent movie era. In the earliest years, Black actors and actresses were only cast as extras in films, which were mostly catering to white audiences. Richard Norman purchased the Eagles Studio complex and went on to create one of the top production companies featuring prominently black cast members. Unfortunately, Norman was forced to close his studio during the Great Depression, but his legacy can be seen in this wonderful exhibition at the museum. The Norman Studio building itself is the last known silent film studio still standing in Jacksonville and efforts are underway to make it into a museum.

For a quick lunch, head over to Arepa Please, just a few blocks from the museum. Try their signature Pabellon arepa which contains shredded beef, sweet plantains, queso blanco, and black beans. It was delicious

and filling but didn't break the bank.

I always like to visit local art galleries when I travel. On the way out to Jacksonville Beach is Gallery 725, one of the top galleries in the city. The gallery was showcasing the works of late animator Ron Campbell which included artworks based on the Beatles Yellow Submarine and the Beatles Saturday Morning TV Cartoon Series as well as Scooby Doo, Smurfs, Rugrats, Jetsons, and Flintstones. The gallery also features works from internationally renowned pop artists Peter Max and Roy Lichtenstein among other artists.

Jacksonville's beaches are beautiful and not as crowded as South Florida's so I would recommend spending the morning or afternoon exploring the area which also includes Atlantic Beach and Neptune Beach. You'll find a ton of wonderful seafood restaurants in the area as well.



The highlight of my trip was a visit to Catty Shack Wildlife

Sanctuary, which provides a safe, loving and forever home to endangered big cats. The sanctuary's mission is to educate the public about their plight in the wild and in captivity. The sanctuary is home to a variety of big cats, but the majority of the residents are tigers. While most of them have their own individual space, the siblings share an enclosure.

I was most intrigued by the black leopard. I don't think I've ever seen one before. Khala Hala was born at Catty Shack Ranch on June 16, 2004. She was happily positioned on her perch and made eye contact with every visitor who passed by her enclosure.

Catty Shack is undergoing a large expansion which will include some additional large enclosures to give the cats more room to roam and play.



If you are in the mood to do some shopping during your stay, head to St. Johns Town Center, a beautiful outdoor shopping experience featuring a variety of retailers ranging from Tiffany and Louis Vuitton to Pottery Barn and Restoration Hardware. There are many dining options available there including a great

Mediterranean fast-casual chain called Cava, but if you are looking for a local option, head back downtown and try S & R Dim Sum, which is located not too far from Memorial Park. I ordered the shrimp dim sum as well as the sweet and sour chicken and both were wonderful. I especially liked the chicken dish as it was only lightly breaded and sauteed rather than deep fried like in other Chinese restaurants.



For one last cocktail in Jacksonville, head to Park Place Lounge, just a short 5-minute drive from downtown. Park Place boasts an extensive Happy Hour from noon until 7pm and you can mingle with the locals on their outdoor patio.

If you are looking to escape the harsh winter but avoid the crowds of other beach cities, then Jacksonville is a great option. The city provides a variety of indoor and outdoor activities for every budget.

River City Pride will take place in October, so there more than enough time to make your Jacksonville pride plans.

Enjoy the Journey!

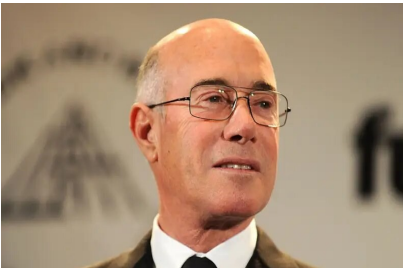


Ultra Rich: 12 Richest LGBTQ People In The World

By Drew Jefferson

In this list, we take a look at some of the richest LGBTQ people in the world. They hail from various industries, including entertainment, fashion, tech, biomedical and more. The net worths listed here are as reported by Forbes as of 2022.

Read on to find out who made the cut for the richest LGBTQ people in the world.

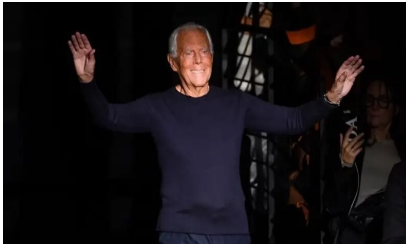


David Geffen, the co-founder of DreamWorks, is worth \$9.9 billion, according to Forbes.

Starting as a Hollywood talent agent, Geffen made the foundation of his fortune when he created record labels Asylum Records, Geffen Records, and DGC Records. In 1994, he created the DreamWorks film studio with Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg. Geffen also has a large real estate portfolio and a \$2 billion art collection,

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according to Business Insider. In 2007, Out magazine called Geffen the most powerful gay man in the country.



Fashion Designer Giorgio Armani's Fortune Is About \$8.1 Billion.

Armani began his career in the military after leaving medical school. In the '70s, he started designing menswear clothing, but his career really took off when he started designing for Richard Gere in 1980. Since then, Armani's brand has expanded into an empire, which includes accessories, interior design, and hotels.

The famously private designer spoke about his sexuality in a 2000 interview with Vanity Fair, saying, "I have had women in my life. And sometimes men."



Paypal's Co-Founder Peter Thiel Is Worth \$5 Billion, According To Forbes.

In 1999, Thiel co-founded PayPal, which was meant to be a simple way to exchange money via devices. He was CEO of the company up until eBay acquired PayPal, and his stake in the company was said to be worth \$55 million. Thiel was also an early investor of Facebook, and he founded a data analytics company, Palantir, which is valued at \$20 billion, according to Forbes.

He now lives with his husband, Matt Danzeisen, in Los Angeles.



Jon Stryker is an heir to a medical equipment company. Forbes reports his net worth at \$4.3 billion.

Stryker's grandfather founded Stryker Corp., which is a medical supply company that sold \$14.9 billion in equipment in 2019, according to Forbes.

One of the heirs to the family fortune, Stryker is a philanthropist, donating large sums of his money to charities and scholarships. So far, he has given away \$585 million.

Stryker also founded the Arcus Foundation, which fights for LGBTQ rights and ape conservation.



Norwegian Businessman Stein Erik Hagen Is Worth \$2.7 Billion, According To Forbes.

Hagen founded the supermarket chain Rimi with his father in the 1970s and is a major shareholder of the consumer goods conglomerate Orkla. He was Norway's seventh wealthiest person in 2020, according to Norwegian business magazine Kapital.

Hagen, who is bisexual, publicly came out on one of Norway's biggest chat shows, Skavaln, in 2015, saying he only came to understand his sexuality "well into adulthood," The Local reported.



Jennifer Pritzker, A Hotel Heiress, Is The Only Openly Transgender Billionaire In The World.

A former lieutenant in the Army, Pritzker inherited part of the Hyatt hotel fortune, giving her a net worth of \$2 billion, according to Forbes.

She came out as transgender in 2013 without much fanfare, but she made headlines in 2017 when President Trump announced a ban on transgender people serving in the military. Before this, Pritzker supported Trump and donated large sums to his campaign, but the ban prompted her to support Biden in his bid for the presidency.



Fashion Designer Domenico Dolce Is Worth \$1.6 Billion.

After meeting in a club, Dolce and Stefano Gabbana started a fashion brand together in 1985. The company's signature animal print made waves at fashion events and even caught the attention of Madonna, solidifying Dolce & Gabbana's place in fashion history.



His Business Partner Stefano Gabbana Is Also Worth \$1.6 Billion.

Dolce and Gabbana ended their personal relationship in 2003 but still own the company and design together.



In 2020, Apple CEO Tim Cook Officially Became A Billionaire.

Cook became CEO of Apple in 2011 after the death of its founder, Steve Jobs. A decade later, the company is nearing a market value of nearly \$2 trillion, making Cook a billionaire.

He is now worth \$1.3 billion, according to Forbes. Despite his billionaire status, he lives in a relatively modest home in Palo Alto.

He came out as gay in 2014.



Fashion Designer Michael Kors Used To Be Worth \$1 Billion, But Today, His Fortune Is Estimated To Be \$600 Million.

Kors began his fashion design company in his mother's basement in the '80s and turned it into an empire. In 2011, he took the company public when it was valued at \$3.5 billion. In 2004, he became a superstar when he became a judge on "Project Runway." Ten years later, Kors became a billionaire.

Today, his fortune is a bit smaller, but he calls downtown New York City home with his husband, Lance Le Pere.



Elton John Has Been In The Music Industry For Decades, Earning A Fortune That's Reportedly Near \$500 Million.

John began his music career in England and became known for his flamboyant and outrageous costumes. Quickly, he became a cultural phenom-

enon, launching his decade-spanning career. He still tours today and has sold over 300 million records, according to The Times.

Plus, John has been with his partner, David Furnish, for nearly three decades.



Ellen Degeneres' Net Worth Is Estimated At \$370 Million, According To Forbes.

DeGeneres began her career as a standup comedian and eventually landed a successful sitcom titled "Ellen" in the late '90s. During that time, she came out as a lesbian, and she was blacklisted from Hollywood. In 2003, she made her return as a daytime talk show host, although the show will end after its 19th season airs in 2022.

She's married to Portia de Rossi and they live in Los Angeles.



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Actor Alexander Lincoln Just Opened Up About His Sexuality

By Brad Massengill



Alexander Lincoln, an actor on the British soap *Emmerdale*, just opened up about his sexuality in an exchange on Instagram.

In 2021, the actor starred in *From the Side*, an LGBTQ+ film that follows a drunken encounter between "two equally attached men from a cash-strapped and divided gay rugby club unwittingly sleep-walk into an adulterous affair but must conceal their growing feelings or risk destroying the club they love."

Lincoln was recently longlisted for a "Breakthrough

Performance" BIFA Award and he took to social media to celebrate. "Infinitely proud of this film and what it continues to do and how it continues to resonate with audiences," Lincoln said at the time.

Lincoln took the time to respond. "Thanks so much – really appreciate it!!!! And no, I'm not straight."

This seems to be the first time the 28-year-old has publicly spoken about his sexuality. Another commenter responded, "I know this may sound dumb, but thank you for saying this," adding, "seeing

you say it here on Instagram means a lot more than you know".

Lincoln then replied again, "Really appreciate you saying that. Thank you."

He has previously chimed in on the queer-actors-playing-queer-characters debate to *Attitude Magazine*.

"My view has always been of sexuality as a spectrum, and I've felt most in tune with myself when I've not prescribed any labels to it," he said. "For me, sexual attraction has always been more to do with the person than their gender."



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Life and Style

Christian Manufacturing Company Denies Trans Woman Health Care Because Of “Honoring God” Mission

By John Davis



A transgender woman in New Hampshire has filed a discrimination complaint against her employer for denying her healthcare coverage for gender-affirming care.

Lillian Bernier, 31, has been an employee of New Hampshire-based manufacturing company Turbocam since 2019. She began transitioning in 2020. According to the complaint, filed on December 16 with the New Hampshire Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the company's self-funded health coverage plan says that no benefits will be paid for “gender dysphoria treatment, including but not limited to, counseling, gender reassignment surgery or hormone therapy, and related preoperative and postoperative procedures, which, as their objective, change the person's sex and any related complications.”

Bernier, the complaint says, suffers from gender dysphoria and requires hormone replacement therapy, counseling, and medically recommended surgeries. As a result of Turbocam's refusal to

cover gender-affirming care, Bernier said she has paid out of pocket for medical care and put off treatment.

The complaint alleges that the company and Health Plans Inc., which administers Turbocam's health coverage plan, are violating employment nondiscrimination provisions of the New Hampshire Human Rights Act, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“I'm proud of my work as a machinist at Turbocam,” Bernier said. “Like everyone else I rely on the pay and healthcare coverage from my job to support myself and my family. I'm just asking for fair coverage and to be treated the same as my coworkers.”

“It's frustrating and overwhelming not to be treated equally and not to receive the full benefits my coworkers do,” she said in a statement. “I'm paying into the employee health plan like everyone else, but I have to pay completely out-of-pocket on top of that for my healthcare, which is a stress on me and my family. I take pride in my job and work hard, but no matter how much extra effort I put in, I'm not getting the full benefit of my

work.”

Bernier's lawyer, Chris Erchull, of LGBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) in Boston, said that she is simply asking “to be treated with the same dignity, humanity, and fairness as other employees of the company.”

“By maintaining a blanket exclusion of coverage for any health care related to transgender transition, the company is providing Lillian and any other transgender employees, presently or in the future, a lesser tier of benefits,” Erchull said. “It sends a message that her healthcare needs are not legitimate.”

“Turbocam sees Lillian and all employees as created in God's image and is providing as much support as possible consistent with its Mission, faith, and the law,” Jordan Pratt, senior counsel at First Liberty Institute, a Christian legal group representing Turbocam, said in a statement.

According to the company's mission statement, Turbocam “exists as a business for the purpose of honoring God, creating wealth for its employees, and supporting Christian service to God and

people.”

Pratt said that all Turbocam employees “have the option of taking a substantial cash bonus that they can use to choose any health insurance or medical services they desire. This should resolve the issue.”

But Erchull called the bonus a “red herring” and said that it is “insufficient to purchase other coverage.”

“A company like Turbocam does not have a legally protected right to provide lesser benefits to transgender employees simply because of the owner’s religious belief,” Erchull said.

In a statement, Health Plans Inc. said that “While we understand and empathize with the issues raised by GLAD, this employee is not insured by Health Plans Inc.” According to the statement, Health Plans Inc. processes health benefit claims for employers, but Turbocam has control over its health plan design and benefits.

As the Associated Press notes, depending on how the New Hampshire Human Rights Commission’s investigation proceeds, Bernier’s complaint could evolve into a lawsuit in state or federal court.

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Twinky 'Drag Race' Twins Sugar And Spice Have Us Wanting Some Double Trouble

By Drew Williams



Rupaul's Drag Race season 15 is only a couple of days away, and the competition is already hot. Well, at least the competitors are. Amongst a sea of queens vying for "trade of the season" are TikTok-beloved twins, Sugar and Spice.

Cooper and Luc Coyle have had a strong internet following since they were teens, when their since-privated coming out video to their mother went viral. Since then, they've taken their love of the limelight, appreciation of drag, and natural twinkiness and made themselves into a successful drag duo.

Sugar out of drag is bound to give you a sweet tooth:



While Spice out of drag is almost too hot to handle:



Though, of course, both together is twice as nice:



As fun and free as the pair are in drag, they're even more free — and often, more scantily-clad — out of it. These queens

know how to turn a look with nothing on!

While the queens are most known for their funny transformation videos (and the more than occasional thirst trap), their performances are as fun as the queens themselves.

As fun and free as the pair are in drag, they're even more free — and often, more scantily-clad — out of it. These queens know how to turn a look with nothing on!

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News & Politics

Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs Extends Protections To LGBTQ+ State Employees And Contractors

By James Russell



Arizona's newly elected Gov. Katie Hobbs (D) signed an executive order extending employment protections to state employees and contractors who are LGBTQ+.

As the Human Rights Campaign reports, the executive order, signed on Hobbs's first day in office Tuesday, directs the state's Department of Administration to update hiring, promotion, and compensation policies for all state agencies to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and include provisions in all new state contracts to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The executive order goes beyond what is already required under state and federal laws banning employment discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, pregnancy, and veteran status, to include factors such as sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, culture, creed, social origin, and political affiliation.

KAWC notes that sexual

orientation is already covered under a 2003 executive order issued by former Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano (D). But as press aide Murphy Herbert explained, "The order from 2003 arguably allowed the state to consider sexual orientation in hiring so long as it wasn't the only reason for a hiring decision."

Hobbs's executive order, Herbert said, "clarifies that discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited in all state hiring decisions."

"Gov. Hobbs has been all over the state and she's been hearing from communities who say that they want a state that reflects the values and a state where they feel seen and safe," Herbert told KAWC. "This executive order is one step she's taking to ensure that everyone in Arizona knows that she is the governor for everyone and that these communities can and will be safe."

Human Rights Campaign Arizona State Director Bridget Sharpe said that the LGBTQ+ advocacy organization "was proud to work alongside

countless other LGBTQ+ organizations and allies to help Katie Hobbs become Arizona's governor. She ran on the promise that she would immediately act to stop the attacks on Arizona's LGBTQ+ individuals and families and use the full extent of her power to protect our community. On her first day in office, she took an important step towards fulfilling that commitment by signing an Executive Order providing non-discrimination for LGBTQ+ state employees and state contractors. This is what it looks like to have a champion for equality in office. We can't wait to work with the Hobbs administration to move our state forward."

But Cathi Herrod, president of the conservative lobbying group Center for Arizona Policy, claimed that Hobbs's executive order may violate the constitutional rights of faith-based agencies.

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Last year, former Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey (R) approved S.B. 1399, which created religious exemptions for faith-based adoption and foster care agencies. "That law should take precedence over any executive order," said Herrod. "The question is, does the state want to continue to have faith-based agencies providing such critical foster care and adoption services? I think we do."

Sarah Warbelow, legal counsel for the Human Rights Coalition, conceded that S.B. 1399 trumps the new executive order. However, she explained, Hobbs's order covers other things that organizations and agencies that contract with the state's government can and cannot do.

"For example, if the YMCA wanted to contract with the state to broaden summer camps, that new executive order doesn't say anything about discriminating against the kids who go to those camps," Warbelow explained. "It does say when you're hiring those camp counselors, you can't discriminate on the basis of race or sex, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity."

Herrod disagreed. "You can't discriminate and not award those contracts on that basis," she told KAWC. "Because if they didn't award the contract because of the religious entity's beliefs, then they're violating their constitutional and statutory rights."



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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

The Hub Brooklyn Ready For Construction

By Jennifer Joshlin

The Hub Brooklyn is ready to rise.

The city issued three permits Jan. 3 for Danis Construction LLC to build three shell buildings at 400 Riverside Ave. at a construction cost of almost \$2.46 million.

The project, at Riverside Avenue and Forest Street in the Brooklyn/Riverside area, is led by Jacksonville-based Southern Grounds & Co. owner Mark Janasik.

Southern Grounds is listed as the owner on the permit applications.

Hospitality Hub LLC, led by Janasik, paid \$285,000 for the 0.21-acre site Oct. 1.

The Hub Brooklyn tenant improvements would be done under separate permits.

The permits come more than two years after the Downtown

Development Review Board approved the final design 6-0 at its Oct. 8, 2020, meeting.

Joseph Cronk and Cliff Duch, partners in Cronk Duch Architecture, said Sept. 10 that CD+urban is the project developer with partial ownership and Cronk Duch Architecture will be the tenant in the studio and loft space.

CD+urban is a studio within Cronk Duch that is focused on consulting, planning, designing and branding urban infill projects with an emphasis on re-emerging neighborhoods.

Cronk said the group adjusted the programming to add a rooftop bar and adjust to the growth of the mid-Brooklyn area.

The three buildings comprise space for Alder & Oak restaurant and bar; a rooftop bar; loft space for CD+urban; and a Southern Grounds coffee shop and patio space.

Cronk said the rooftop bar likely will be branded as SkyBar.

Alder & Oak is Janasik's concept that offers local and coastal-inspired wood-fired cuisine and Prohibition-style

cocktails.

Janasik said Oct. 9, 2020, that he plans to expand Downtown's Brooklyn neighborhood with a coffee bar and "seasonally fresh" restaurant concept.



He said Southern Grounds was working with Cronk Duch Architecture to fill retail spaces and the kitchen at the proposed The Hub Brooklyn.

"It's certainly a quaint gathering spot with the open courtyard design," Janasik said.

"It's a place to meet friends, a place for weekenders," he said. "Gathering together is a huge part of what The Hub is and part of Southern Grounds' philosophy."

The restaurant menu and the courtyard design connecting the business concepts will be similar to the Southern Grounds Neptune Beach



location, he said.

Janasik said the restaurant will be fast-casual, with food from local farms with “globally inspired cuisine.”

The Southern Grounds owner envisions a 1930s-style “prohibition kitchen” serving cocktails in the bar space. Cronk told the Downtown Development Review Board the “DNA” of The Hub Brooklyn is to “blur the lines” between the public pedestrian right-of-way and “internal street” feel of the courtyard.

Janasik said the small interior space and emphasis on outdoor dining was intentional for the post-coronavirus market.

Cronk said the character has changed to a more midcentury,

white stucco with mixed materials “to draw inspiration from the automobile dealer history of the area.

“The site was the old Studebaker showroom,” he said.

The group does not anticipate returning to the DDRB because the design intent is consistent with original approvals, he said.

The site at southwest Riverside Avenue and Forest Street puts it across the street from the Fidelity National Information Services Inc. headquarters that will house more than 1,700 employees.

Cronk said the public parking structures and street parking, as well as private lots, will be the primary parking for patrons.



“There will be an emphasis on pedestrian and biking access to the destination,” he said.

Cronk said in September he is working on a concept to use the studio space as an architectural studio Monday-Wednesday and then for a creative-oriented purpose, such as events, exhibits, lectures and private functions, Thursday-Sunday that tie into the roof terrace and bar space.

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