



Alternatives to Guardianship Project

Hulme Resources Inc.

903A SE 7th Street • Lee's Summit, MO 64063

alternativestoguardianship.com • (816) 730-2831

Jennifer Hulme, Director • jennifer@gohulme.com

April 18, 2023

Emily High
Director of Community Engagement
Kansas City Center for Inclusion

Email: directors@inclusivekc.org

Re: Protecting the Social, Sexual, and Marriage Rights of LGBT
Adults and Older Teens with Developmental Disabilities

Dear Ms. High:

I am writing on behalf of Alternatives to Guardianship, a project funded by the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council. Information about our mission and activities is found at: <http://alternativestoguardianship.com/>

The purpose of this letter is share information with LGBT organizations and advocates in Missouri about [Capacity to Love](#) – an endeavor to protect the social, sexual, and marriage rights of adults and older teens with developmental disabilities.

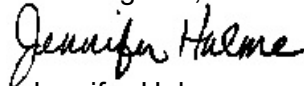
Despite the reluctance of state officials to adopt much needed legal protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, rulings of the United States Supreme Court recognize the right of consenting adults to have sexual relationships and to marry. These protections apply equally to the thousands of LGBT adults and older teens who have developmental disabilities. Yet, because of disability discrimination and social prejudices, such adults may be denied basic relationship rights that are protected by the constitution.

[Capacity to Love](#) will investigate current policies and practices in Missouri regarding sex education and counseling in the fields of education, medicine, and social services. Our research will identify deficiencies in current programs and suggest ways they can better assist adults and older teens with developmental disabilities to have healthy and safe intimate relationships. We will incorporate best practices suggested by Elevatus Training in its [Breaking Down the Walls](#) webinars.

I am attaching information about my background in serving people with developmental disabilities as well as the extensive experience that attorney Thomas F. Coleman brings to this project. Tom has been advocating for LGBT and disability rights for 50 years.

We would like to hear from you and other leaders in the LGBT communities to learn your views on how we can effectively work with LGBT organizations in Missouri to achieve these goals.

cc: Thomas F. Coleman
tomcoleman@spectruminstitute.org

Best regards,

Jennifer Hulme
Project Director

Thomas F. Coleman

LGBT and Disability Rights Attorney



Thomas F. Coleman has been an advocate for justice and equal rights since his law school days in 1972 when he was the founding president of the first LGBT law students association in the nation.

The first decade of his law practice focused on criminal justice reforms and the advancement of sexual civil liberties. He relentlessly advocated on a national scale for decriminalization of private sex between consenting adults and won court victories to stop police entrapment of gay men.

The focus of his advocacy expanded in the 1980s to include hate crimes. From 1984 to 1990, Coleman served on the California Attorney General's Commission on Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Minority Violence where he was a voice for the state's LGBT communities.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Coleman was a leading advocate for legal protections against housing and employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and marital status. He also advanced a family diversity agenda to protect the rights of unmarried families during an era when same-sex marriage was not recognized.

In 2004, Coleman began challenging the practices of a national industry that trafficked in [abused teenagers](#), many of whom were LGBT youth. Working with a coalition of advocates, the industry was eventually shut down and the boot camps and boarding schools were closed.

Coleman's advocacy efforts expanded to include [abuse](#) of people with disabilities in 2007. A few years later, he discovered that the rights of adults with developmental disabilities were being routinely violated by state [guardianship](#) systems. Since then, he has filed class-action complaints and [published](#) policy reports on the need for

guardianship reform. Some of the complaints and reports involve the State of Missouri.

Coleman is a consultant to the Alternatives to Guardianship Project in Missouri. The project has launched [Capacity to Love](#) – an endeavor to protect the social, sexual, and marital rights of adults with developmental disabilities regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Coleman's advocacy for sexual civil liberties and LGBT rights is documented in two books ([The Domino Effect](#) (2009) and [The Seventies](#) (2022)) and on his [professional website](#). His sexual civil liberties papers are in the [One Archives](#) at USC.

Jennifer Hulme

Disability Services Specialist



Jennifer Hulme has worked for 30 years in human services, special education, supported employment, residential, day habilitation, and state case management positions.

She is Executive Director of [Hulme Resources Inc.](#) – a nonprofit providing case management services for people with developmental disabilities and their families through a contract with the Missouri Department of Mental Health.

The nonprofit's services include: **IEP Coaching** to assist students and families in asserting their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); **Transition Planning** to support teens and young adults and their families in navigating the transition from entitlement-based services to eligibility-based services and supports; **Benefits Planning** which assists in identifying options regarding wages, Social Security work incentives, and setting up ABLÉ accounts.

Jennifer directs the [Alternatives to Guardianship Project](#) which operates under a grant from the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council.