



NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY—OCTOBER 11TH

THE HISTORY OF COMING OUT

IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS A MARCH

On Oct. 11, 1987, half a million people participated in the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. It was the second such demonstration in our nation's capital and resulted in the founding of a number of LGBT organizations, including the National Latino/a Gay & Lesbian Organization (LLEGÓ) and AT&T's LGBT employee group, LEAGUE. The momentum continued four months after this extraordinary march as more than 100 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender activists from around the country gathered in Manassas, Va., about 25 miles outside Washington, D.C. Recognizing that the LGBT community often

reacted defensively to anti-gay actions, they came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out and chose the anniversary of that second march on Washington to mark it. The originators of the idea were Rob Eichberg, a founder of the personal growth workshop, The Experience, and Jean O'Leary, then head of National Gay Rights Advocates. From this idea the National Coming Out Day was born.

To this day National Coming Out Day continues to promote a safe world for LGBT individuals to live truthfully and openly.