


Anne Wynne

Partner
Ikard Wynne
Austin
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A portrait of Anne Wynne, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a white blazer over a light blue top and a pearl necklace. She is seated in a chair with a textured backrest. The background is a wall with abstract green and orange paint strokes.

As a family lawyer, Anne Wynne is a proponent of collaborative law, where families work together instead of fighting. When it comes to her approach to families that include gay and lesbian parents, however, her gloves come off.

In 2004, Wynne founded Atticus Circle, a nonprofit dedicated to fighting for equality for parents and partners, regardless of sexual orientation. "It's the last major group our laws discriminate against," says Wynne. What's unique about Atticus Circle is that the group reaches out primarily to heterosexuals like Wynne who are similarly outraged and energized to effect change.

The group's primary strategy is legislative, an approach that capitalizes on Wynne's years of experience in Austin working for then-Gov. Ann Richards.

Despite an early defeat, Atticus Circle's efforts seem to be working.

That early defeat was the Texas Marriage Amendment. In 2005, Wynne lobbied against it, but it passed, and voters approved it. The next year, however, Wynne and Atticus Circle helped the city of Austin

get domestic partnership benefits for its employees. "That took a charter amendment election," says Wynne, who coordinated the legislative strategy and volunteer efforts behind its passage in 2007.

Another sign of success? Last year's legislative session, "the first session of the Legislature where there was not even one bill introduced that was anti-LGBT something," she says. "We took that as a big win."

On the agenda now is winning equal rights for gay and lesbian employees of the entire University of Texas system, which includes the law school, and the entire Texas A&M system, she says. Those rights include health-care benefits for same-sex partners and for children in second-parent adoptions, says Wynne, a 1978 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law.

Today Atticus Circle has a budget of \$250,000, an executive director and two staffers (Wynne remains active on its board of directors). It also has close to 5,000 supporters, she says, people from across the country who, like Atticus Finch, are willing to stand up for what they believe.