

BUSINESS OF PRIDE 2019

Stuart



KURLANDER

Healthcare & Life Sciences partner,
Latham & Watkins LLP



Age: 56

Residence:
Friendship
Heights/
Tenleytown

Education:
Bachelor's in
political science,
Indiana University;
master's in health
administration
and J.D., St. Louis
University

Family: Partner
David Martin

As the most senior LGBTQ partner in the D.C. office of Latham & Watkins LLP, Stuart Kurlander makes it a priority to meet with all LGBTQ lawyers when they first join the firm. But his support doesn't end there. He meets with them throughout their tenures, offering mentorship and other advice. "It's important that an effort be undertaken to meet with and talk about their career, answer their questions about firm, progression to partner and any other related issues," Kurlander says. "The more they have a sense of inclusion, the more likely they are to remain at the firm."

Kurlander took on his role as mentor and adviser when he joined the firm in 1997 to start the health care and life sciences practice in the D.C. office. At the time, there wasn't another LGBTQ partner. "As it related to LGBTQ inclusion, the associates were very supportive of me as a partner, and I took from that the importance of mentoring and having a sense of community within the company," he says.

In addition to mentoring LGBTQ associates, Kurlander also encourages them to be active in the local community. The firm – the fourth-biggest in the region with 350 metro-area lawyers and about 540 total local employees – has a commitment to pro bono work and all lawyers are expected to have a minimum number of

pro bono hours. "We've done a lot of work for Human Rights Campaign, Williams Institute, Sage and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund," he says.

Kurlander also spends time supporting the Jewish community. "I have for my entire professional life been involved in the Jewish community through community engagement, education, and humanitarian and philanthropic giving," he says.

He has served as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, becoming the organization's first openly gay president. He is the founder and past chair of the Kurlander Program on Gay and Lesbian Outreach and Engagement (GLOE) at the District of Columbia Jewish Community Center, which

focuses on engaging LGBTQ Jews and their allies. He also served as the first national board chair of Keshet, a leading national grassroots organization that works for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Jews in Jewish life. In 2016, he served as the national chair of the Jewish Federations of North America LGBTQ Mission to Israel, where he has worked closely with LGBTQ organizations to bring best practices in governance and fundraising to assist their efforts.

"I've been going to Israel for a number of years to do philanthropic work and volunteer," Kurlander says. "I'm trying to help younger gays living in religious homes to manage being gay."

– Lisa Rabasca Roepe

Q&A

► **What are you most proud of?** As an openly gay man, having the opportunity to make a living in Washington, D.C., doing what I enjoy most while also giving back to the community in terms of pro bono work and community service

► **What encourages you about the climate for LGBTQ equality?** I am fortunate to work at a law firm where I can be open and feel included. My firm is leading the way in inclusivity training so that diversity and a collaborative work environment go hand in hand.

► **We've just given you a TED Talk. What's the topic?** That having it all is attainable. I think that with the right approach and goals in place, you can have a healthy balance of professional success, civic engagement and personal fulfillment.

► **As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?** A medical doctor. But I soon concluded the physical sciences were not in my future. So, I decided to combine medicine with the law and become a health care lawyer, which I have been for more than 25 years.