

## **National gay rights conference opens in Denver**

By 365gay Newscenter Staff  
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**Some 2,000 LGBT civil rights activists from across the country are meeting in Denver to plan strategies on the national and local level. The Creating Change conference, sponsored by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, opened Wednesday and will run through the weekend.**

Organizers said it is the nation's largest convening of LGBT rights activists.

"While the November 2008 election produced what many are hoping will be the most LGBT-friendly administration in history, it also produced some setbacks with the passage of anti-LGBT initiatives in states such as Arizona, Arkansas, California and Florida," the NGLTF said in a statement.

Conference participants will hear first-hand accounts and perspectives from statewide LGBT leaders, discuss lessons learned and strategize on how to defeat future attacks against LGBT families.

An entire session at the conference will be devoted to Proposition 8, the California amendment which bars same-sex marriage, approved by voters last November.

The conference also includes sessions geared toward effecting change at the federal level, including passage of the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Act, and inclusive ENDA and repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

Other sessions will focus on LGBT rights battles in other states. Organizers said they hoped delegates would bring home with them the best ideas that have been successful elsewhere.

Among the speakers are Dolores Huerta, the Co-founder of the United Farm Workers Union; Dr. Marjorie J. Hill, the Chief Executive Officer of Gay Men's Health Crisis; and **Rea Carey, Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.**

But there also will be time for some levity with participation from comic Kate Clinton and drag performers The Kinsey Sicks.