



# *Our Voices*

## podcast

by  OurPath

S4 Ep 1

Welcome to OurPath

Kristin Kalbli: Hello everyone and welcome to OurVoices, the podcast by Our Path, formerly the Straight Spouse Network. I'm your host, Kristin Kalbli.  
(theme background music)

Kristin Kalbli: Today on the show, we are going to talk about what the heck happened to the Straight Spouse Network? Where did it go and what is OurPath? What do these changes mean for Straight Partner(s) and Partner(s) of Trans People who have gotten support from the Straight Spouse Network for years? Our guests today are Amity Pierce Buxton, the Founder of the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) and hence the founder of OurPath, Kelly Hollimon, the Executive Director of OurPath path and Board of Directors Member, Tiffany Butler, who was the Chairwoman of the Rebranding Committee. So, welcome to the podcast everybody. This is the first podcast of OurPath. Thank you so much for being here today.

All: Thank you.

Kristin Kalbli: So I want to start at those who have gone to the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) website already will have noticed that they've been redirected to a website for something called OurPath, and they're probably going - wait- what- what happened to the Straight Spouse Network? Where did it go? What's going on here? So this podcast is all about the rebranding and relaunch of the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) as OurPath. So what happened? I want to start with Board of Directors Member, Tiffany Butler, and talk about where did the SSN (aka Straight Spouses Network) go?

Tiffany Butler : Well, Kristin, we embarked upon, the very beginning conversations of a website redesign a couple of years ago. And the more that we talked about what we wanted for the organization going forward, we realized, that a rebrand was in order. And that brought up the conversation of the name of the organization, Straight Spouse Network (formerly). Lots of changes have happened societally since this organization first came to be and the word straight has been in recent years kind of co-opted by groups that are promoting Straight Pride and things of that nature, leading people to associate an anti- LGBT+ sentiment with the word, straight. So we were starting to encounter that when we were reaching out to partner organizations or looking for grant partners and things of that nature. So we realized that the word, straight, was probably going to be holding us back in some ways going forward.

Tiffany Butler: So we started thinking about that. And the other thing that has happened over the last few decades that we've been around is that we've been serving more, more partners, not only of lesbians bisexuals or gay people, but also transgender individuals. So the word, straight, didn't necessarily include that group, the Partner(s) of Trans People. So we were feeling like, like the word, straight, was not all Inclusive. Furthermore, the word SPOUSE is not all inclusive. We serve a lot of people who are in committed relationships, but not necessarily married. So we, we started just seeing some issues going forward with how we represent ourselves. So we had lots of conversations internally. At the Board level, we set up a task force to look at a rebranding and we struggled for months to try to come up with a concise, succinct name that described what we do, and for whom and we could not get there. It's, it's complicated.

Kristin Kalbli: It's a very complicated, straddle the fence, kind of a thing that we do and I was part of those discussions so I know there was a lot of heads banging against walls for a long time to be like - how can we do this? So you spearheaded like focus groups. You asked people outside - we tested a couple of names. I don't remember all of them, but we tested a couple of options and people came back with various things. I do remember one of the options we tested was, Another Side of the Closet, which was actually the name of Amity's first book. Right. And somebody came back and was like, are you a closet organization company? (Laughter)

Tiffany Buttler: We that's. Right. Yeah. We, we had that. We had, people that we surveyed who thought the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) was a dating website for straight people. So even as much as it seems like a very descriptive name, people were still confused. And worst, of the results that came back is that a significant number of people assumed we were, Straight Spouse Network was somehow, opposed to LGBT+, so - to the community. And so we did not want that. That was kind of recent enough to say, we need to make a change. There's too much confusion.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. And I think, you know, Amity, if I could just get you to comment just briefly on just that - you know- the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) from its inception, has always been an LGBT+ ally organization. Is that correct?

Amity Pierce Buxton: Yeah. Oh yeah. And by the way, the name of my book was, The Other Side of the Closet.

Kristin Kalbli: The Other Side of the Closet. Yes. Thank you. Thank you. Yes. So yeah, we, initially the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) started as a task force under, P Flag, which is Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, is that correct Amity?

Amity Pierce Buxton: Yes, that's right and they turned it over to me.

Kristin Kalbli: Yeah. So there was always an alliance, at least with P Flag with an LGBT+ organization. That was the very origins of the Straight Spouse Network (formerly).

Amity Pierce Buxton: In addition, the, Gay Fathers Organization was the one that, that suggested I write the book.

Kristin Kalbli: Ah. Okay. So even more evidence that our founding and origins was built on some reciprocity and partnership. So I want to just talk though for a moment, about leaving the name STRAIGHT out of the title of the organization, Tiffany. That, you know, some of our listeners are gonna feel like you're leaving Straights in the dust Straight Partner(s). Are you abandoning Straight Partner(s)? Are you somehow changing the agenda up? Are we not the focus anymore? How would you answer that question?

Tiffany Butler: I would say Kristin, that our focus and our mission has not changed a bit. It is still our primary focus is still to support the Partners of People in heterosexual relationships where their other partner comes out as LGBT+ during the course of that relationship. So, our purpose, our focus has not changed. We just want to make sure that we are including, the entire population that we serve and that people who are, you know, not necessarily married or are partnered with trans people also feel like they have a home with us.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. And I think one of the things that's important to note too, is that these decisions were made, they weren't taken lightly. They were canvassed and discussed for several, several months. And the ultimate goal is to be able to serve Straight Partner(s and Partner(s) of Trans People and People in Mixed Orientation (MOR) relationships better, not, not worse. Like not stepping back, but stepping into how can we better position the organization to better serve the people that we do serve. So, Kelly, I want to bring in Executive Director Kelly Hollimon here, just for a moment and talk about also, you know, one of the reasons for the name change and the rebrand was also kind of a broader scope around, you know, funding and research and things that are out that we have to be able to reach outside. We can't just talk to the audience of Straight Partner(s). We have to be able to talk outside of the organization because that impacts some of the other things that we want to try to do. Can you just talk about that broader scope a little bit?

Kelly Hollimon: Sure Kristin. You know, we've always supported the Straight Partner(s), through personal one-on-one support group support, online support, but you know, that kind keeps the Straight Partner stuck in - we're the only people that understand what they're going through. And part of what we envisioned for the future is educating the general public about what the Straight(s) Partner goes through, or the Partner(s) of the Trans Person goes through so that the general public understands and can be more supportive of our situation. So we have to go bigger in the general public and we have to have a name that's received well by the general public. So yeah, we've got a lot ahead of us and we want to make sure that the name enables us to do everything that we want to be able to do.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. Including major funding grants, things like that.

Kelly Hollimon: Yeah. I mean, the bottom line is if you can't get funding, you can't exist. And so it's really not about the money we use the money to pour back into the organization, but you can't exist without being able to support yourself.

Kristin Kalbli: Correct. So I want to take a moment. We are going to talk about the specific name, OurPath, and how we got to that name and why we chose that name. But before we do that, I want to pivot to Amity for a minute to just talk about the mission of the organization, because the mission of the organization has not changed. It's remaining the same. It is being reaffirmed with this rebrand and relaunch. And so Amity, would you tell us a little bit about the mission as it always was with the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) and now continues to be with OurPath.

Amity Pierce Buxton: Sure. Since we began in the early nineties, our mission has been threefold. Reaching out, healing and building bridges. The reaching outward, it aims at two populations. The primary one are women and men in heterosexual partnerships whose partners come out or are discovered to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. Our secondary population is the larger community holding negative unfounded attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. So for our three missions, healing for the healing, we provide resources to spouses and partners of LGBT+ persons to help them process that coming out shock, accept reality, learn the facts regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. Restore their own identity and belief system, rebuild their lives. And to this end, we provide personal support and fact based readings. For the larger community, we work to eliminate heterosexism and anti-LGBT+ beliefs and actions by providing fact based information about sexual orientation and gender identity. For the building bridges mission, the spouses and partners, our resources help them restore family connections, broken by the disclosure as much as possible. Regarding the larger community, we work with local national and international organizations to achieve equality and acceptance of LGBT+ persons. Thereby, eliminating the marriage closet. In sum, to achieve our mission of reaching out, healing and building bridges. Our tools are also threefold; support, education and advocacy.

Kristin Kalbli: Amity. Can you tell us a little bit about - more about- the support, the education and the advocacy piece?

Amity Pierce Buxton: Sure. Well, the support or support groups either in person or online. The education are research articles like I have written. Trying to get ourselves on as many conference programs as possible, going to conferences, having tables at gay pride parades, or going to conferences of the American Psychological Association, as I did, the Association of Family Courts. Just to get as much education out there about the situation of how closeted marriage can hurt, not just the person who's closeted, but the person that gets left in their closet until we help them out.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. And, and children as well. Children and families are part of that of being in the closet relationship as well, if they're there.

Amity Pierce Buxton: The advocacy part is again, getting out there and telling people we're all created equal and we've got to be honest in our relationships.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. Right. So thank you so much Amity for that recap of the mission of the organization and just letting people know that mission has always been there and has never changed and is not changing. So I want to talk a little bit about the name, OurPath. So Tiffany, can you tell us. Okay, so we went through this process, we used focus groups, and we said, okay, we've got to kind of start from fresh, you know with something new, something different. Now, OurPath, at a first glance, doesn't exactly say what we do either. We do have a tagline under OurPath that says, "Your partner isn't straight? You're not alone". And, that's our tagline. And so I was just wondering if you could tell us how, why the name, OurPath, what the heck? (Laughter)



Tiffany Butler: It was a process Kristin and we did work with some branding professionals on coming up with this name and what resonated with us, and the name, OurPath, is that.. you know.. each person who's gone through this experience finds their own unique path. There are a lot of common threads in all of the stories that we hear and share with each other but each person ultimately is finding their own way forward in how their life is going to unfold from that point forward. OurPath has a sense of empowerment and ownership of that future. Which is something that I think is restorative for people who have come through this experience and maybe felt like they didn't have control or that they were living in someone else's path.

Kristin Kalbli: Right.

Tiffany Butler: For years, it's a way to kind of, put a sense of control and ownership back in the Straight Partner(s) or Partner(s) of a Trans Person's place, you know, and in their hand. It's inclusive, we're not excluding anyone that we're serving. The name, OurPath, also implies a journey, which this very much is a process that unfolds over time. Lots of different aspects to it and each one unique to the person walking that path. And then the tagline really serves to, very succinctly, say what we're doing and who for. So, "Your partner, isn't straight? You're not alone", that implies that you have found yourself in this situation. There are other people like you, who really understand what that's like. And in working with a lot of the people that we support, that's one of the big healing aspects of the service that we offer, is that they are able to connect with people who have lived this experience. And for a lot of people, there's nothing quite like being able to talk to someone who has lived it.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. Thank you for that. Because I think that the tagline is... I just want to say, that in the discussions around the tagline "Your partner isn't straight? You're not alone.", that was the way that the Board of Directors working with our branding professionals and our rebranding committee, really where we're able to basically pivot back to Straight Partner(s) and Partner(s) of Trans People and and the Straight Partner(s) in Mixed Orientation Relationships (MOR). And say, yes, we are still here for you. Yes. This is, what the org is. And then the other thing is about OurPath is... Kelly, maybe you can talk about this for a second. Is that, you know, the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) has never, and does not stand as OurPath will not take positions about whether people should stay in their marriages, leave their marriages or their partnerships. Right? That there's, that there's every per the, the point is to empower people, to find their path through this experience.

Kelly Hollimon: Right. Yeah. It's, you know, there are so many paths to not only to take, but so many meandering spots in those paths. Where you sometimes think you know what you want to do, you walk down that road a bit, that's not working out. Well, you double back.. you know... you see a Y in the road and you say, I think I'm going to go that way. And that's, you know, that's a big part of this too, but we can't help Straight Partner(s) across the board and Partner(s) of Trans People across the board, if we tell them that we'll only support them if they plan on leaving their partner, or if they only plan on staying with their partner or how they do that. That's really an individual choice and it comes down to your belief systems and your life experiences and so we want people to know that we understand. Even those of us who didn't choose, you know, to leave, still understand grappling with those decisions, or we didn't choose to stay. We understand grappling with staying. We get all of that, all have thoughts of what am I supposed to do before we came to our decisions. And so we really want to be supportive of everyone in all aspects. People have the right to make the decisions that are right for their relationship, for their family, for their circumstances. And they have the right to make it in their own time. You know, it can be frustrating when people aren't doing what you think they should do but you aren't them and you wouldn't like to be rushed along either and so we're respectful of that.

Kristin Kalbli: Well, and I think that that's a great time to talk about the logo specifically. I want to talk about the logo because that was kind of my baby. You know... I just remember during this process, we were working with branding people and experts, and we were kind of giving them...you know what we.. what we wanted. We arrived on the name, OurPath with the help of our firm that we were working with. And then, we were looking at logos and the first iterations were kind of ..like I don't know... there was sort of cheesy. They were like hearts with like pathways leading off into the sunset.

Kristin Kalbli: They kind of looked like.. kind of looked a little medical a little bit, a little bit nursing home, that sort of thing, that field. Not that that's a bad thing, it's just that's not us. And so I was playing around one night and I hit on the idea of a labyrinth because...you know...the thing about labyrinths is, is that they are a path, a journey, and sometimes they appear to be taking you farther away to the center, but they're always taking you to the center, even when you feel like you're going farther away from the center. And so that spoke to, I feel like this whole journey of sometimes it's a journey to the center of yourself, to find out what you really want for your life. And even after, if you leave your partnership or you are no longer in it, or if you are in it, it's all about empowering people to decide and find and discover what they want for their own life after this has happened to them. And that's why we felt like the labyrinth was a powerful logo.

Kristin Kalbli: And anybody who goes to our website will see the labyrinth and the pathway imagery repeated throughout the website because we want to encourage people to understand that this is a larger journey. It's a longer journey. There's different stops along the way but that there's a partner in OurPath to walk along with them as they take this journey. So let's shift gears then, and it's a kind of a perfect segway to talk about the website. It has been a longer process than what we initially anticipated. We've had, I want to shout out to all the donors who gave to the website development. We were originally thinking that, you know, it was going to launch in early 2021. But you know, with the pandemic and, being an all volunteer organization, everybody who helps with the website work was all volunteer. We had to do it as we could. So it delayed things by a couple of months, but we always think that good things are worth waiting for, and we didn't want to rush it. So thank you to our donors for donating to this process and project, and then your patience in waiting for it to come down the pike. We've got a new website. Why did we change the website? Did we really need a new website? Tiffany, would you take that one?

Tiffany Butler : Absolutely. Kristen. So the website, as it stood, had been around for I'm guessing at least 10 years or more and these days websites are... it's not unusual for websites to be entirely revamped after maybe two to three years of use. So we were right for a redesign and we also had missed out on a lot of, just technology improvements that have come about in the last several years. One being a responsive website. One that's going to work better on a tablet or a mobile device. So, architecturally there was a lot of opportunities for improvement in that regard.

Kristin Kalbli: Okay. So... Kelly... the website obviously. Okay. It's totally new. It looks different. It not only is there a new name and a new logo, but it looks different. It feels different. Can you walk us through like some of the things that people are going to find on our website?

Kelly Hollimon: Sure, well, it's going to look completely different even from, even from the home page. And it's really about being able to get to where you want to go very easily and not necessarily having to know where that is. You will be able ... it's very intuitive. But you know, we have some really great search options. We've got all new content.. you know... you can go in and say, I want to learn everything I can about being the partner of a lesbian and put in that search and it'll pull back every blog, post, every book, every video, every podcast that's associated with that. That's brand new and.. you know.. there's lots of subjects you can choose. You can choose what's newest, you can choose to look at what's older. That's what really is going to make this so much more powerful and the constant updating of content on the site. Which.. you know... we want this to be an educational site where you can come back again and again, and learn new things, see new content.

Kelly Hollimon: and it's a continual process. It's not like you find what you want and you never have to come back again. You can come back at any time and find new content, but you'll, additionally, you'll find the blog on the website, just like it always has been, you'll find the open forum, which didn't used to be on the website, will now be housed on the website. There'll be videos, testimonials. So let's talk about the open forum for just a second because that's something that not a lot of people don't understand it fully and so maybe I can explain it a little bit. The open forum is a public piece of the site where you can go to posts and ask questions and give feedback about your experiences as you're living them day by day. You do that by choosing your own anonymous user names.

Kelly Hollimon: So nobody has to know who you are, you choose that. It is publicly readable though, even if you don't choose to register and start posting. So there are typically thousands of messages in there on different topics threads, where somebody talks about, what am I supposed to be doing in this situation and they talk it through. And you see updated versions of this going out day by day. You kind of get to know these stories, and the people in them, even though you may never meet them or know their real names. It's a really excellent resource for current up-to-date stories and happenings of how people are dealing with their journey. So I'd encourage more people to use it if they've never stopped by. That's where I'm from, that's what I used almost exclusively and it's a huge help to a lot of people .

Kristin Kalbli: And so people can either be anonymous by choosing a pseudonym or not be anonymous. They can use their real name if they want to but they can post on the forum. And they should be aware that everybody in the general public can read what's there so they should consider that before they choose a pseudonym. So one of the things that I think is great about the site is we have these specific resource pages where we've compiled like books, articles, blogs, Ted Talks, videos, things like that, resources for Straight Partner(s). There's a whole page of resources for Partner(s) of Trans people, which maybe Tiffany, you can talk to a little bit because we wanted to really make sure that our Partner(s) of Trans People understood that we saw them, that this is a unique experience. That while there is some overlap with having an, lesbian gay or bisexual partner, if you're in a heterosexual relationship, that having someone come out as transgender within a partnership is fundamentally different in a lot of ways.

Tiffany Butler: One of the resources that we're really excited to be bringing to people is two different guides for people who are coming out to their spouses or partners. And so one is dedicated to lesbian, gay or bisexual people who are coming out and want to understand how they can best do that with their spouse or partner. And another guide specifically for people who are transgender and want to come out to their spouse or partner in the best possible way to, to minimize the potential, difficulty, hurt, damage that occurs.

Kristin Kalbli: Yeah, because when you go out and you look for guides to coming out, there's all kinds of information about coming out to your boss, coming out to at work, coming out to parents, coming out to grandparents, coming out to friends. Almost very little information about coming out to a spouse or partner, which you would think would be kind of like the biggest thing. And so we said we need to come in and step into this kind of vacancy and say, we've seen so many stories of how, coming out the way someone comes out, how they handle coming out can either lessen or increase the difficulty and strife of COMING OUT. And we're all about lessening the strife of coming out for all parties. And we're all about then... you know... that benefits the Straight Partner(s), a Partner(s) of a Trans People, but then that also circles back and benefits the actual LGBT+ partner. So, and any children when things can be done in a way that mitigates harm. So, there's also a page Tiffany for resources for professionals. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Tiffany Butler: Sure. We've put together a bit of content, and it's something that we're going to continually develop further, to help people who are in... you know... a mode of a therapist or a role as a counselor to support, to better support people who are... you know.. experiencing this COMING OUT process of a partner. What we hear repeatedly from the people we serve, is unfortunately, they've run into counselors or therapists who really struggle with fully appreciating and understanding that this is not a typical rupture in a relationship. There are some very special traits and characteristics to it that affect the person that we're focused on, in ways that they may not fully recognize. So we were seeing, in some cases, gaps in the professional support community and we want to try to help those people who are in professional support positions, to better care for and support the Straight Partner(s) or the Partner(s) of a Trans Person.



Kristin Kalbli: That's exciting resources to be able to bring to the table. So I just.. we're coming close to time, but there's a couple other things that I want to hit on. You know, Kelly, can you talk a little bit about what's next for OurPath now that the website is live, we're doing this podcast, what's coming down, what is OurPath hoping to do?

Kelly Hollimon: Well, we've obviously been, quite tied up in this project for quite a while, and everything that goes with it. So we really envisioned that now that we are, free from this project, we can really pour our resources, time and energy into content for the website, so that it's continuing to be updated and.. you know.. a constant source of information and learning. But we're also embarking on doing some research. There's this huge gap where there should be information and statistics in this industry about how people are affected and that's just not out there. That information is just not out there on a really wide scale.

Kristin Kalbli: Yeah. Other than what Amity did in the early days, there's, there's no recent data.

Kelly Hollimon: Right. There's nothing recent. And I don't think anybody wants to touch it. There's people that'll do small studies through their college doctorate or something, but there's nothing that really something really widespread and we want to be the organization that does that. We have the members to tell us what that is like and if we aren't educating the community about what we go through, who would be doing that? That's our place. (Kristin:Right) So we want to be embarking upon education. We want to be, you know, pushing that education out there, statistics out, to places this like the American Psychological Association so that they can distribute that information better. So we really consider, our future job besides reconnecting with other organizations and all of that, we really want to be the preeminent authority on the Straight Partner experience and the experience of being the Partner of a Trans Person, that's us. And we want everyone to be able to look at us as an authority on what does this mean for people and what they experienced and how do they hurt and how do they heal and how long does that take. And of course, there's a lot of variables there but there are commonalities in our experience and we want to be able to, educate the general public about that.

Kristin Kalbli: Right. And we need some data to be able to do that. So we're hopefully going to be embarking on some new research initiatives coming down the pike. So, before we close, I just want to ask Amity, you're good with this. The Straight Spouse Network (formerly) was your baby. You know, there's a lot of people who still love, know, respect you. You're still a figure in this community and you let these crazy people, myself included, take your baby and change it. Are you okay with that? (Laughter)

Amity Pierce Buxton: You haven't changed it a bit.

Kristin Kalbli: (Laughter) Great. Thank you.

Amity Pierce Buxton: That's why, as I was writing my little piece here, I realized if you you're doing exactly what I wanted. In fact, you are doing what I wanted, what never was done. And that whole outreach component has got locked in, locked out. We used to be present at all kinds of professional conferences across the country, across the world.

Kristin Kalbli: Yeah. We became kind of insular for a time in there. And we sort of were talking to ourselves for a long time, and that is ultimately to help Straight Partner(s) and Partner(s) of Trans People and People of Mixed Orientation Relationships (MOR) in a in a bigger way. We have to be able to talk to people outside of just our walls, our container.

Amity Pierce Buxton: That's why that reaching out component is critical.

Kristin Kalbli: So critical. So the last thing I want to talk about.. you know... Kelly and Tiffany.. you know... Calls to Action. What do we want to invite people to do now that they are familiarized with OurPath and what we're up to here? What can they do to kind of jump in and get involved?

Tiffany Butler : Come to the website, come learn, come get help if that's what you need. Potentially volunteer, if that's where your heart is at and that's where you're at in your journey, there's ways just to help.

Kristin Kalbli: There's pages on how to give back to the organization. Obviously, monetarily, which... please feel free. There's a whole new donations page. We are welcoming any and all gifts to further us in our plans for the future, but there's also job descriptions for open positions on the staff. We continue to need really good quality, competent, enthusiastic help to help us implement these plans. And there's also ways that you can interact with the podcast and the blogs. If you want to become a guest blogger, there's guidelines for guest bloggers. If you would like to contribute to the blog, if you have a topic for the podcast idea, there's ways on the website, if you go to the podcast page, you can submit ideas. So there's lots of ways that you can participate and always there is on the Find Support Page, if you're looking for support, that is of course the bread and butter, the bedrock of what we do is provide support. And you can find that Support Request Form, (Tiffany: you'll find it easier than ever) easier than ever to find that Support Request Form on the Find Support Page. So I want to thank everyone for being on our podcast today. Kelly Hollimon, Executive Director of OurPath, Dr. Amity Buxton, Found of the Straight Spouse Network (formerly) and also Founder of OurPath by dent of rebrand, and then Tiffany Butler, a member of our Board of Directors. Thank you all for coming in today.

All: Thank you.

Kristin Kalbli: I want to thank our listeners for tuning in today. Welcome to OurPath. We hope you have fun looking around the website, and clicking through and becoming more engaged. Be on the lookout for all new podcast episodes. Season 4 got a little bit wonky this year because we were so busy with the website and the rebrand, but we do have great shows planned for you. Don't forget to subscribe to the podcast. You can find us wherever you get your podcasts. This is a reminder that the views of the host, yours truly, are not necessarily the views of Our Path or its Board Of directors. I want to thank our engineer and editor, Drew at Gwen Sound, right here in Cincinnati, Ohio and this is Kristin reminding you until next time, keep using your voice. (theme music playing) Transcribed by: Designrr

Kelly Hollimon Bio: KELLY HOLLIMON became Executive Director of OurPath in 2019 after serving as Deputy Director and Interim Director in 2018. Kelly leads OurPath's day-to-day operations, carrying out the Board's objectives and furthering OurPath's Mission. She leads the staff, which has expanded greatly in size since she began her tenure, and oversees about 120 members of the Volunteer Force. In 2011, Kelly learned she had been a Straight Partner for the previous 16 years when a mutual friend came forward to inform Kelly that her husband was indeed gay.

Tiffany Butler Bio: TIFFANY BUTLER is a member of the Board of Directors of OurPath, Inc. She has been a Straight Partner since 2014. The lack of resources and support focused on her side of this experience at the time prompted her to do two things: become a Volunteer Support Contact and Group Leader in the Portland/Vancouver area, and return to school to get a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Tiffany credits the giving and receiving of support as key components of her healing and continues to grow through her involvement.

Amity Pierce Buxton Bio: AMITY PIERCE BUXTON: In 1983, after 25 years of marriage, Dr. Amity Buxton's husband, a decorated World War II veteran now buried in Arlington National Cemetery, came out of the closet. Realizing that there were no resources for people like her, she formed the Straight Spouse Network, today known as OurPath, Inc. OurPath is the only organization of its kind in the world that supports heterosexual partners of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender people. Amity, author of 'The Other Side of the Closet, believes Straight Partners are too often untold victims of homophobia and now in her 90'S, remains an outspoken proponent of equality.