



ANNUAL REPORT

2020

The Queer-Oriented Rural Resource Network (QORRN) is dedicated to helping LGBTQ+ individuals in rural communities access the resources and services they need.

ORIGINS

QORRN was founded in November 2019 in response to Frankie DiCiaccio's move to rural Northern Illinois and inspired by the Movement Advancement Project's report "[Where We Call Home: LGBT People in Rural America](#)".

We began with researching **LGBTQ+ Focused and LGBTQ+ Friendly resources at the local, state, and inter/national levels**, focusing on lower-population and rural counties across Illinois.

When LGBT people in rural areas face discrimination, or even simply are struggling with acceptance or coming out, there are fewer places to turn for social support, legal support, or even just basic information.

— "Where We Call Home"

2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over 30 researchers identified 230+ resources across 40 service categories. In addition to Illinois, we published local and statewide resources in North Carolina.

A \$48 contribution in 2019 helped cover initial costs of our website domain and email. To date, all other expenses have been contributed by the Executive Director.

Pro bono graphic designer [Bowie Dunwoody](#) created a QORRN logo and pro bono web designer [Enrico Spada](#) created an easy-to-navigate website. It includes maps of Illinois and North Carolina counties as well as a platform for volunteers and community-members to easily submit resources.

On Instagram, [@qornetwork](#) has 220+ followers and counting. We use IG to mark QORRN milestones and dates of importance to LGBTQ+ communities.

In February, QORRN was featured in the [Illinois Eagle](#), "a community e-newspaper covering the LGBTQ communities of Illinois."

In March, we added a list of [Crisis Resources](#), including those related to Covid-19. In September, we published and posted information about [voting](#), including [registration/early voting](#) for each state and resources focused on **protecting the votes** of Gender Non-Conforming and Trans individuals.



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ONGOING

We continue our focus on community engagement and forging connections with peer organizations and projects across the country.

Before further expansion, we are working to clarify how to leverage QORRN for the empowerment of Queer individuals, organizers, and organizations in rural communities. In particular, we are refocusing anti-racism as a guiding principle and evaluating how our first year has and has not served that principle.

We value the important work that is happening on the ground in rural communities all across America. Our aim is to elevate the profile of existing resources and to amplify their messages so that people in need can find them easily.

We recognize that the LGBTQ+ communities are expansive and expanding. We strive to include resources that attend to a wide variety of needs, identities, and experiences.

Importantly, we know that struggles are interconnected: the quest for Queer liberation is intrinsically connected with the quests for Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Immigrant liberation. Black Lives Matter. Black Queer Lives Matter. Black Trans Lives Matter.

— "About Us", QORRN.com

LOOKING FORWARD

QORRN will welcome our first-ever intern in Spring 2021. Daisy Campuzano is pursuing a master's degree in Sociology at Northern Illinois University. The internship will involve research, communications, a Queer reading group with Frankie, and a self-designed passion project. Daisy hopes "to create a safe, LGBTQ space in DeKalb, IL where younger and older LGBTQ folks can interact with each other."

While QORRN remains 100% volunteer-driven since its founding, **it is important to us to create an internship program that does not rely on unpaid labor.** Strategic fundraising efforts will begin in earnest in 2021 to compensate Daisy, as well as to pay for website domain/hosting and email service.

Daisy and Frankie will collaborate on strategic ways to **better connect the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals with the work of providers in rural communities across the country.** These may include a virtual round-table discussion with activists and organizers, a survey for rural Queers, mutual aid coordinating, and providing printed material to community stakeholders, like libraries, health clinics, community centers, and schools.