



**LGBT MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY ON THE RISE  
RECORDING ARTISTS, CREATIVE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS,  
ACTIVISTS, FRIENDS & ALLIES COME TOGETHER  
TO AMPLIFY THE MUSICAL SOUNDTRACK  
OF THE LGBT EQUALITY MOVEMENT**

The LGBT Academy of Recording Arts (LARA) to launch  
Freedom of Expression Equals Music Equality campaign  
to raise \$200 thousand dollars to support the efforts of the Academy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New York, NY (May 7, 2014)** – OUTmusic the LGBT Academy of Recording Arts (LARA) announced today the launch of the **Freedom of Expression Equals Music Equality (FOE=MEQ)** campaign to raise awareness as part of LARA's **Capital Fund initiative**.

The phenomenal success of Mackelmore, Ryan Lewis and Mary Lambert's "Same Love" gay marriage anthem has created a stronger opportunity for the Academy to amplify the songs of same gender loving, transgender and queer recording artists like Mary Lambert.

Deepa Soul, Sean Robinson, Kristen Henderson of Antigone Rising, Danny Norell, Marck Angel, Athena Reich, cast members of the hit web series "Producing Juliet", Kat C.H.R, Q.B. Of the Midwest, DOLL, Peter Henri, Donnis Collins, Niki Gee, Matthew Fishel and many others will move forward with the LGBT Academy of Recording Arts using their social media network including Facebook and Twitter to encourage their fans and followers to support LARA's Capital Fund initiative by donating \$1 dollar or more through the organization.

"No person should have to sacrifice or even consider relinquishing their freedom, their dignity, or lose an opportunity to advance in their careers because they are open about their sexual orientation and gender identify," said Chairwoman Diedra Meredith. "It is important that LGBT people express their authentic emotions and images through their music, art, acting, performance art and writing. It is just as important that OUTmusic Awards be included and celebrated in media, music & entertainment history like the Latin Grammy Awards, the Country Music Awards, the Black Entertainment Music Awards. The more LGBT people are included, acknowledged and celebrated, for their achievements and contributions, the more impact we can make in changing hearts and minds to erase the stigmas."

"We are excited to have the support of everyone who has committed to generously donate their time to promote the FOE=MEQ campaign for the LGBT Academy of Recording Arts. These recording artists, creative industry professionals, advocates, friends & allies will help to bring more awareness to support LARA's mission. In 2015, LARA will celebrate 25 years in New York when the Academy presents the 9<sup>th</sup> OUTmusic Awards (OMAs). The OMAs is not traditionally funded like other music & entertainment award platforms, therefore we are really counting on loyal fans and supporters to come together to ensure that we are successful in our efforts to raise \$200 thousand dollars."

The participants in the campaign will direct fans and followers to their personal page at [www.FOEMEQ.org](http://www.FOEMEQ.org) where the supporters can directly donate by clicking the DONATE NOW button to donate \$1 dollar or more to LARA.

In addition to using their Facebook and Twitter network, each of the participants have submitted photos for FOE=MEQ advertising component of the campaign using their smart-phones and digital cameras. The participants pose similarly in the photo to show their solidarity for human rights and our inalienable right to Freedom of Expression without penalty or compromise. These ads will run online throughout the campaign.

### **ABOUT OUTmusic the LGBT ACADEMY OF RECORDING ARTS**

In 1990, OUTmusic Inc. a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization, was founded by life partners Daniel Martin and Michael Biello in their East Village Apartment in New York, NY. They wanted to create a place where LGBT and Queer music people could exercise their authentic freedom of expression in all beautiful ways.

In 2007, Diedra Meredith aka Deepa Soul a three time top 5 Billboard Chart topping recording artist and activist was appointed as Executive Director to lead the organization into the next era. In 2010, she became the Chairwoman of LARA and CEO of OUTmusic Inc.

The mission of the organization is to:

- Promote the advancement and appreciation of LGBT Music Culture & Heritage
- Provide homeless and at risk young people access to the arts
- Increase the visibility of the LGBT Music & Entertainment through media outlets worldwide
- Honor, document and archive the contributions and achievements of marginalized LGBT recording artists & entertainers and ensure that they are included in the history of the world in the media and music/entertainment industry.

The programming that LARA offers has made an impact in the lives of deserving LGBT artists to be recognized, celebrated and documented for their achievements and contributions. Transforming the lives of homeless and at risk young people by giving them access to the arts via the I AM MUSIC PROJECT inspired more people to support the Academy's mission to create change in the world.

LARA is home to the OUTmusic Awards (OMAs) the biggest night in LGBT music & entertainment providing a platform to promote underrepresented LGBT recording artists and entertainers to a broader audience base.

[www.outmusicawards.com](http://www.outmusicawards.com) (more about the OUTmusic Awards)

The Academy is producing the first feature length LGBT music documentary “**For Which WE Stand**” directed by award winning director **Sean Robinson** and produced by celebrated Hollywood filmmaker and producer **Paul W. Warner**. [www.forwhichwestand.com](http://www.forwhichwestand.com) (more about the film)

**To learn more about the LGBT Academy of Recording Arts (LARA) go to [www.theLARA.org](http://www.theLARA.org)**

###

### **Media Contact:**

Media@theLara.org