

**Jessica Halem Remarks**  
**LCCP Fall Brunch**  
**September 25, 2005**

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LCCP has fought in the trenches of this nation's health care crisis for the past 15 years. We are a voice for those who are silenced, educators to those who need us, and advocates for those who are discriminated against. We believe everyone deserves access to affordable healthcare that is respectful of who we are and who we love.

In 2003, LCCP embarked on a new plan for a new era. Since then we have worked with more than 40 institutions and over 800 health care providers to train them to provide culturally competent care for lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people. Let me repeat that. In just two years we have changed over 40 institutions and over 800 individuals whose very hands we put our lives in everyday in this city and state's hospitals, medical schools, public health clinics, research facilities, and cancer agencies. We accomplished this with a staff of three people and with a budget of 300,000 dollars.

- We advocate for lesbian health even as nurses think we are immoral and gay men think we are icky.
- We advocate for bisexual health even as psychiatrists think we are just going through a phase and our own families ignores us.
- We advocate for transgender health even as doctors don't understand us and our community is divided.

We advocate on behalf of 46 million uninsured and for legal right for our families. We fight against safety nets being cut and clinical trials being denied. We talk to each other about being our own advocates and how to find free early detection screenings. We talk about how hard it is to quit smoking and how to have a nutritious diet. We talk about how to keep intimacy alive during illness and how to manage stress during cancer. And we will advocate and fight and talk about whatever it takes ensure the health of our entire community.

Much has changed for lesbians in the past 15 years and much has changed for LCCP. We are more than lesbians and we are more than cancer. What has not changed is that we will continue to fight the fights that need us. We will continue to talk about what you need. We will continue all of this because of you.