

## **LGBTQ STUDENTS WIN RIGHT TO FORM OFFICIAL STUDENT CLUB AT YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

June 16, 2022, New York, NY—On Tuesday, June 14, 2022, the Supreme Court of the State of New York, New York County, issued a significant [Decision and Order](#) directing Yeshiva University to immediately recognize an LGBTQ student organization, the YU Pride Alliance, and granting a permanent injunction requiring the university to grant the organization “full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of all other student groups at Yeshiva.”

The LGBTQ student group and four current and former students filed the civil rights lawsuit against Yeshiva University in April 2021, seeking an injunction requiring that the university formally recognize the club. The mission of YU Pride Alliance is to provide a safe and supportive community on campus for LGBTQ students and their allies. Before the lawsuit, the university refused to grant equal treatment to the YU Pride Alliance for years. The suit claimed that the University’s actions violated the New York City Human Rights Law and denied the student organization equal access to the university’s accommodations.

The court’s decision affirms that as an institution of higher education in New York, Yeshiva University must follow the New York City Human Rights Law, and that its conduct violates that law. As the Court, Justice Lynn L. Kotler, held: “What plaintiffs seek is simply equal access to the tangible benefits that Yeshiva affords other student groups on its campus.”

The YU Pride Alliance said: “With gratitude to Hashem, we are beyond elated that the court has recognized our right to form an official pride alliance at Yeshiva University. Since its founding in 2019, the YU Pride Alliance has sought to provide a safe space for LGBTQ students and allies. We are proud to be students of Yeshiva University and are excited to continue our work at YU in an official capacity.”

Bina Davidson, Co-President of the YU Pride Alliance 2021-2022, said: “We are overwhelmed with gratitude and excitement that Yeshiva University will finally be a place for all, and that no student will feel alone or that they don’t belong.”

A YU Pride Alliance student who is also Co-President of the YU Pride Alliance 2021-2022 said: “I’m overjoyed by today’s news that reaffirmed our right to equality at Yeshiva University. I had the privilege of serving on the Pride

Alliance's second and third board, and during my time, I've witnessed the incredible power that an inclusive community has. So many students, including myself, have benefited from the Pride Alliance, and I hope that with the creation of an official club, so many more students will be reached. I have a tremendous amount of pride being a YU student and I'm proud to be a part of a group dedicated to making YU a better place for all students."

Plaintiff Anonymous said: "I am beyond grateful that the law has come to a decision in favor of the YU Pride Alliance's request to be able to help the LGBTQ community here at YU. I never imagined that I would be blessed to be able to join the official YU Pride Alliance club while still a student at YU."

Tai Miller, one of the alumni plaintiffs, said: "Queer people deserve the right to live free of discrimination and I am optimistic that this decision brings us closer to that vital goal."

Plaintiff Molly Meisels said: "Pride is about unconditional love, protest in the face of adversity, and diverse connections. Queer students at Yeshiva University have labored for decades for the right to merely exist. Now they can do so openly, without fear from administrative retribution. I feel forever connected to Yeshiva University, and now I can breathe easy knowing that students will feel safer, more accepted, and have space to be themselves."

Plaintiff Doniel Weinreich said: "It is tremendously relieving and thrilling that this years-long effort by students has at long last come to fruition. This is the first step in ensuring that YU and its community will be understanding and inclusive of its LGBTQ members and conducive to their flourishing."

Katie Rosenfeld, Partner at the New York City law firm Emery Celli Brinckerhoff Abady Ward & Maazel LLP, Plaintiffs' counsel along with attorneys Max Selver and Marissa Benavides, said: "The court's decision paves the way for LGBTQ students and allies at Yeshiva University to fully participate in their community as equal members, just as the New York City Human Rights Law guarantees. Now the students can move on with the true work of their organization: peer support, discussions groups, community service projects, social events, speaker series, and other positive and important student efforts. It's fitting that the court's important ruling comes this month, as we celebrate and mark June as LGBTQ Pride Month."

## About Emery Celli Brinckerhoff Abady Ward & Maazel

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