

elizabeth birch bio

Elizabeth has bridged the corporate, media and civil rights worlds like few others. For nearly two decades, Elizabeth Birch has been one of the most influential leaders of the civil rights community. With passion and an engaging style, she draws upon her incredible experiences as a civil rights activist, corporate executive and policy expert, to bring a fresh perspective and practical solutions to complicated issues.

From 1995 to 2004, she served as the President and Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) advocacy organization. Credited with bringing LGBT issues into the living rooms of America in a new and creative way, Elizabeth helped open doors and change viewpoints, helping more Americans better understand gay lives and civil rights.

Highly visible symbols of equality, Elizabeth and HRC are well known for their groundbreaking use of the media, bringing the challenges facing the LGBT community into mainstream America. An innovative communications strategy leader, Elizabeth achieved high visibility for her organization, making appearances on *Good Morning America*, the *Today Show*, *20/20*, *This Week*, *Face the Nation*, *Nightline*, *Crossfire*, the *Larry King Show*, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* and profiles in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Elizabeth brought many groundbreaking and innovative programs to HRC which have had a profound effect on major American institutions. Through HRC's Workplace Project, Birch worked with hundreds of companies to transform their corporate nondiscrimination policies. Today, nearly 700 of the Fortune 1000 have implemented some form of nondiscrimination policy to protect their LGBT employees. Birch also brought FamilyNet, the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Program and many others to the HRC Foundation. She also led the effort to build the new HRC headquarters building in Washington, DC, the first building in the nation's capital wholly devoted to achieving LGBT civil rights. For her groundbreaking advocacy work, Elizabeth was awarded one of the highest civil rights honors in the country from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

Elizabeth has also represented clients such as Rosie O'Donnell, as CEO of KidRo Productions, O'Donnell's commercial production company, and leading her foundation, the For All Kids Foundation. As head of the O'Donnell organizations, Birch worked with Rosie to further her charitable efforts. Birch led O'Donnell's post-Hurricane Katrina initiatives in Louisiana and launched the effort to build a new home for Rosie's Broadway Kids, a leadership musical program for low income children in Manhattan.

Birch has made many television appearances and hosted an interview show, *Birch & Company*, for the *here!* network. Her diverse range of guests included conservative commentator Pat Buchanan, civil rights leader and Congressman John Lewis, singer-songwriter Melissa Etheridge, former presidential candidate Howard Dean and many more.

Prior to joining HRC, Elizabeth was the worldwide director of litigation and HR counsel for Apple, Inc. and general counsel to Claris Corp., Apple's software subsidiary.

Currently, she is President and CEO of the Elizabeth Birch Company, a media, communications and strategic change company. Recent clients have included a wide variety of Fortune 500 companies, including Merck, Shell, Kodak, General Foods, and IBM. Elizabeth is frequently invited to speak to corporate and university audiences throughout the nation.

Elizabeth brings her unique perspective and experience to organizations and Fortune 500 companies, helping them to transform their workforces, organizational culture and markets. From non-discrimination and domestic partner benefits policies to employee development and marketing strategy, Elizabeth Birch harnesses her passion to implement solutions for her clients.