

PROFILE

I work at the county and am running to represent District 2. That data points to areas where we can work better to improve health outcomes for our community and as commissioner I will research the recommendations from groups like the Native American Youth Association and the Urban League to find the significant policy changes that will make a marked difference.

JO: Especially considering your work with Basic Rights Oregon, could you reiterate your stance on marriage equality?

Collymore: I believe in, support and will continue to fight for marriage equality—no question about it. Telling a group of people they aren't allowed the protections of the law, the celebration with family, the inclusion in community because they love someone of the same gender is inherently unfair. And I will say that whenever I can.

JO: What kind of city commissioner do you intend to be, especially to the underserved populations you speak of?

Collymore: I intend to be a very involved, collaborative and inclusive commissioner. This office is legislative, and so there aren't many parameters. It can be as productive as one wants it to be. Great work has been done for underserved populations in District 2 like opening a new library, creating a farm for at-risk youth at the Juvenile Justice Center and a larger scale farm that grows food for local food banks. I plan to continue in that tradition of innovative solutions to complex problems.

JO: What do you mean when you describe this position as being the "ideal environment for activism"?

Collymore: The county commissioner seats are ideal for social activism. One can help create [innovative] programs like the CROPS farm in Troutdale, the St. Johns Farmers Market in North Portland, or include health-

care as a parameter for contracting. All these things create positive social change. When the state allowed domestic partnerships, but had different rules for same-sex couples registering, District 2 staff all became notaries public so that community members didn't have to pay a notary or leave the building and come back to get their forms. This is the kind of positive thing we can do.

JO: What have you heard, from the LG-BTQ community in particular, regarding priorities of most concern?

Collymore: I think the issues of the LG-BTQ community are not that different. They want protection in the social safety net. They want defense from hate crimes and discrimination. They want their children in safe schools, libraries and playgrounds.

JO: You mention hate crimes and discrimination. Have you played any part with Q Center and the Q Patrol that's been developing?

Collymore: I was a board member at the Q Center and have a positive relationship with [Executive Director] Kendall Clawson. I'm happy that the center found a building in District 2, and I am happy the Q Patrol has been developed to protect communities from hate crimes.

JO: Smith said that you two were not that different in your views, and your support of the LGBTQ community in particular. She also mentioned the historic nature of two African-American women running in this race. What is your take on her comments?

Collymore: My approach is different because I am different. I thrive on bringing a multitude of people together for good work. I've done that over the years but there is still work to be done. I'm excited to stay at the county and bring my energy to the board of commissioners. 



Karol Collymore

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