



## **Bringing NFCHA's Values to Florida**

Each year, hundreds of field hockey coaches gather for networking, education, business, celebrating, and recruiting at the NFHCA Annual Convention and Winter Escape Showcase. For the past several years and through 2027, the NFHCA Annual Convention has and will convene in Florida. Selection of Convention sites for the NFHCA Annual Convention begins two to three years in advance of the actual meeting.

Recently, some statements and actions by some political leaders and lawmakers in Florida have made headlines for their opposition to specific diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and freedoms. The NFHCA has fielded questions about our decision to gather in this state. While the NFHCA refrains from endorsing ideologies, we do and will continue to value belonging, inclusion, and diversity as an Association. The NFHCA does not support racism or discrimination of any kind. Our gatherings, regardless of physical location, are committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all members.

## **Why is the NFHCA Annual Convention still convening in Florida?**

Hosting the Annual Convention in Florida has been a point of discussion among staff and some board members since January 2023. It is extremely disappointing and disheartening to observe the opposition to specific DEI initiatives in the state of Florida. These actions do not align with our values as an Association, and we will not allow politics, ignorance, or geography diminish or divert us from our mission and values. We remain resolute in our vision, mission, and values as an organization while our mission to champion, strengthen, and celebrate field hockey coaches and the game continues to be our compass. We believe that our presence yields a greater influence than our absence. We are forging ahead with an unyielding conviction that our work makes a positive difference in the lives of those we coach everywhere.

The NFHCA affirms our commitment to:

- Support our members in Florida and anywhere, regardless of politics or geography.
- The inclusion and strong support of all BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and marginalized populations
- Demonstrate that our profession is stronger when we are together, united, and present.
- Provide members with the option and information to contribute to organizations in Florida that support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that resonate personally. A list of suggestions is provided below.
- Recognize and acknowledge that our members' safety and feelings of safety are valued

## **Seminole County and Orlando Show Support for LGBTQ+ Community**

Seminole County, Florida is LGBTQ+ friendly and they welcome all their visitors with open arms. Danny Trosset, the Director of Sports Tourism for Seminole County, FL shared “We have built an entire LGBTQ+ friendly itinerary for our destination, partnering with Rachel Covellos, who is the President/Founder of a local non-profit organization called [Outcoast](#), which is a great resource for several LGBTQ+ friendly businesses and associations throughout Central Florida. Seminole County hosted Rachel and friends where they got to experience several of our favorite local spots. [Check out the itinerary](#) and [LBGTQ guide to Orlando North video](#).”

Another top attraction is Top Golf, located in Lake Mary, FL. Topgolf has recently partnered with the One Pulse Foundation to install 49 trees alongside the driving range fence as a symbol of the 49 angels lost to the Pulse Nightclub shooting.

## **About the Marriott Hotel (host hotel of the NFHCA Annual Convention)**

Marriott scored 100% on the 2022 Human Rights Campaign’s Corporate Equality Index and Marriott International, Inc. was again named among America’s top corporations for LGBTQ+ equality, earning a perfect 100 percent score on the Human Rights Campaign’s (HRC) 2022 Corporate Equality Index (CEI).

Skye Buckner, Sales Manager of the Orlando Lake Mary, Florida Hotel shared “Marriott is proud of our culture of inclusion and fairness that welcomes all our associates and all our guests. This includes the LGBTQ+ community, and their families and allies. Marriott is a Platinum Global Sponsor & Proud Board Member of [IGLTA.org](#).” IGLTA is headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, FL. The City of Orlando received the highest score on Municipal Equality Index for nine years in row in 2022. Read more about that [here](#).

## **Options for You to Take Meaningful Action**

Below is a list of regional resources that make a difference in the lives of others. Opting to donate can provide a way to channel the discomfort or internal conflict felt by some Florida visitors into meaningful action that makes an impact. You can choose to offset any tax spending in Florida that may not align with your values by supporting local charities that do. The following charities support racial justice and/or LGBTQ+ equality. Please know this choice is 100% yours and we are neither advocating nor discouraging you to give. Our aim is to ensure that everyone can make a decision that resonates authentically with them.

[ACLU Florida](#) - American Civil Liberties Union Florida’s mission is to protect, defend, strengthen, and promote the constitutional rights and liberties of all people in Florida. They envision a fair and just Florida, where all people are free, equal under the law, and live with dignity. [Donate here](#).

[Equality Florida](#) - Florida's statewide LGBTQ civil rights organization, Equality Florida is uniquely suited to create real and lasting change for LGBTQ Floridians. In their 25-year history, they have been the backstop in Tallahassee for nearly all anti-LGBTQ legislation sweeping the country and have helped pass hundreds of local pro-equality policies across the state. [Donate here](#).

[The FITZLANE Project](#) – Provides funding for underprivileged transgender youth (ages 13-24) in the Greater Tampa Bay Florida area for LGBTQIA+ specialized therapeutic services at the mental health provider of their choice. [Donate here](#).

[Florida Legal Services](#) – A statewide leader in advancing economic, social, and racial justice. They advocate for poor, vulnerable, and hard to reach people through impact litigation, legislative and administrative advocacy, education, and strategic partnerships. [Donate here](#).

[South Florida People of Color](#) – Established to address the pressing issue of equitable political representation in the town of Miami Shores. The core vision is aimed to bridge the gaps across racial, ethnic, and cultural divides, fostering a sense of community through meaningful dialogue and cultural events. It is their mission to promote intellectual freedom and create an inclusive environment. [Donate here](#).

[WeaveTales](#) – Their mission is to humanize immigrant experiences – especially for those who have faced forced displacement. They aim to correct misconceptions through education and by sharing immigrants' stories in their own words. Their actions support local and global efforts, help new Americans experience a welcoming home where they can thrive, and leverage the strength that comes from the diversity of our nation. [Donate here](#).

This is not an inclusive list of options nor is it intended to be. You are encouraged to explore other options that align with your values, should you wish to do so.

#### **NFHCA Diversity Statement**

The National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) and its members are committed to fostering a welcoming and equitable environment where diversity and inclusion are learned, nurtured, expressed, and valued. We are purposeful in our pursuit to educate ourselves on systemic discrimination in all its forms in order to cultivate a culture of belonging. We seek to rebuild those systems with an anti-hate/anti-racist lens. It is through this lens that we persistently build a community based on empathy, acceptance, and respect.