

## Tuesday Plenary

### Nicole Maines & Wayne Maines

Student & Parent Activists

Tuesday, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

#### “One Father’s Journey Raising a Transgender Child”

Pulitzer Prize-winning Author Amy Ellis Nutt brought Wayne’s family’s story to life on a national scale, with the best-selling book, *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family*. In a kind and honest manner this book reveals Wayne’s struggles and lessons learned as he tried to help keep his family whole. Revealing his biggest failures to the world has not been easy, but Wayne hopes that doing so will help others stop bullying, harassment, and discrimination for all children that are perceived as being different.

Having the opportunity to watch his identical twins move through each developmental stage of life has provided Wayne Maines with many life lessons. Understanding and accepting his son as his daughter has been the most powerful and rewarding life lesson to date. The journey was often painful and stressful, occasionally quite comical, but very insightful. Everything from marriage, school, doctors, dealing with family, and the typical issues of adolescence all became potential roadblocks to positive development. Wayne will share some of the pitfalls and successes that occurred during their family's journey, and provide insight on creating a positive and successful climate for transgender youth.



#### Nicole Maines

Nicole Maines is seventeen years old. She lives in Portland, Maine with her brother, Jonas, her mother, Kelly and father, Wayne. When she was four, she started telling her family and her community who she was. Every step of the way she has worked with her classmates and community to be open and honest so everyone could learn and grow throughout the process. Unfortunately, some people continued to fear the unknown, and this fear impacted Nicole and her family’s ability to lead a normal life. These fears changed her world and her family’s world forever.

Because of this painful journey, Nicole has become a strong woman with a clear and loud voice for safety and equality. She has been recognized nationally for fighting to make sure transgender students have the same rights as their classmates. In January of 2014, Maine’s Supreme Court ruled that Nicole's rights had been violated under the state's Human Rights Act, marking a historic and landmark victory for transgender rights in the U.S. It is the first time a state’s highest court has ruled that it is unlawful to deny transgender students access to the bathroom of the gender with which they identify.

For her hard work and commitment, Nicole was named one of *Glamour Magazine's* 50 inspiring women of the year and was chosen to represent the state of Maine in the series "Hometown Heroes," titled "50 Phenomenal Women of the Year Who Are Making a Difference." She also was named one the 14 Most Fearless Teens of 2014 for standing up against injustice.

The Maine ACLU, Equality Maine, and Healthy Girls and Hardy Women have also recognized Nicole for her courage, strength and commitment to promoting change. When she was just thirteen years old she worked closely with GLAAD, Equality Maine, the ACLU and the Maine Women's Lobby to defeat LD 1046, a bill that would have rolled back transgender protections in Maine. Over two days, she talked with almost every state leader to help provide much needed education and encourage each member to continue to support the transgender community in Maine.

Nicole is a sophomore in college and is studying art, new media, and communications. She was a guest star on *Royal Pains*, on the USA Network, which won a GLAAD media award last January. Her performance is setting the stage for other transgender youth to speak out. It is her hope that she can combine these loves to help future LGBT students and adults gain total equality across the nation.



### **Wayne Maines**

Dr. Wayne M. Maines is first and foremost the proud father of identical twins, one boy (Jonas Maines) and one girl (Nicole Maines). Wayne and his wife Kelly have worked extremely hard to raise their children in an environment that was not ready for a new generation of transgender children.

His family's story is featured in *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family*, which is a *New York Times* Notable Book, was named one of the 10 Best Books of the Year by *People* magazine, one of the Best Books of the Year by *Men's Journal*, is a Stonewall/Israel Fishman Non-Fiction Award Honor book, and a 2015 Discover Great New Writers Award Finalist/Non-Fiction. *The Washington Post* describes it as "the inspiring true story of a transgender girl, her identical twin brother, and an ordinary American family's extraordinary journey to understand, nurture, and celebrate the uniqueness in us all."

Wayne has been a safety professional and nationally known emergency management expert for over twenty years. Wayne is an Air Force veteran, an outdoorsman and basket maker who also has a Bachelor's degree from Cornell University and Doctor of Education from West Virginia University. Now he has turned his attention to introduce the world to transgender children and transgender rights and to "provide a safe environment for transgender children to grow, to learn, to be safe and to become productive members of our society."