

Amazon's 'Transparent' wins Out & Equal's Momentum Leadership Award

By Mark Calvey

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San Francisco-based Out & Equal presented [Amazon's](#) "Transparent" program with its Momentum Leadership Award.

The non-profit, which works to expand LGBT equality in the workplace, recognized the show for its role in boosting the visibility of the transgender community as well as employing many trans workers. Nearly 80 of its cast and crew are transgender, including the first transgender woman television writer.

"No other show in history has employed more trans workers," said [Amy Landecker](#), a Transparent cast member who accepted the Out & Equal award at a gala in San Francisco March 26.

Transparent is the Golden Globe award-winning TV show that tells the story of a late-in-life main character transitioning to female. The main character, Maura, has a dysfunctional family, providing plenty of fodder for this "dramedy."

Earlier that day, Landecker sat down with reporters to discuss the show and the state of LGBT equality. (She came into the room, sat down and began pouring glasses of water for reporters and herself. This is not the way most press briefings begin, at least not in the circles in which I travel.)

The press forum was an opportunity to discuss one of the key issues facing transitioning the transgender community: use of public restrooms. A major Bay Area employer said a key concern about a transitioning transgender female in the workplace was concern among other women that she'd be using their bathroom.

Landecker said a scene in Transparent in which Maura is harassed for using the women's restroom was one of the most difficult for her to shoot.

"That scene was very intense to film and very upsetting, as anyone would be if a loved one was being harassed and called names unjustifiably," Landecker said, adding that she cried between takes.

In accepting Out & Equal's award, Landecker said, "At our very first table read, our fearless leader and creator [Jill Soloway](#) said, 'I wrote the show to make the world a safer place for my parent to walk around in. So that my parent could walk out of their apartment and be safe.'"

Three years ago, Soloway's parent came out as a transgender female.

"That is what authenticity does. That is what transparency does. It inspires and ignites and illuminates and makes us our most creative and productive and best selves," Landecker said.

"Maura is one of the few trans characters ever represented on TV or film or TV that is not a prostitute, a prisoner or a drug addict," Landecker said. "She is simply a professor and a parent and a human being living her truth."