

**Project Sample:** Personal Narrative

**Parameters:** Describe how subject fights for equality

**Target Audience:** General public; supporters of Basic Rights Oregon



Most of the voices for gay and lesbian equality present arguments based on ethics. If those reasons alone don't convince a listener, look to Mike Hollern, CEO of Brooks Resources in Bend, for another approach: an argument based on economics.

“This issue affects everything, even Oregon's economic situation,” he says. “To remain successful, a community needs to attract young, creative, dynamic people. And I'm not talking about just artists. Programmers, engineers, entrepreneurs...these are all creative fields, and they're essential to a community's growth. We know that young, bright people gravitate toward areas that are perceived as tolerant and open. So if our communities do not adopt principles and legislation demonstrating our tolerance of all sexualities, we'll be losing that influx of people. We'll be economically disadvantaged compared to places like Seattle, like Austin.”

Mr. Hollern has presented that point of view in many forums, from testifying on an equal rights amendment before the Bend City Council to accompanying Basic Rights Oregon to meetings with the Bend Bulletin. Whether he's arguing for legislation that benefits his community's economy or that guarantees fair treatment for all, Mike Hollern is a strong voice for equality.

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