

PANEL 3 | TAKING ACTION:

How can individuals and communities advocate for real and lasting change?



MIKE WEBB

President | Houston GLBT Political Caucus

Mike Webb is a gender-queer socio-political activist born and raised in Houston, Texas. Webb attended Reed College in Portland, Oregon, where Webb studied Political Science. Afterwards, Webb gained private sector experience through employment at a Washington, D.C. law firm but Webb could not resist the call to help change lives in underserved communities and enlisted in a year of service for the Houston Mayor's Office of Education Initiatives as an AmeriCorps VISTA. Recently, Webb joined the Community Engagement team for Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, where Webb mobilizes Houston's most underserved communities towards effective advocacy throughout Precinct 1.

As an affirming HIV-positive Black queer person, Webb has made it their mission to spread love and empowerment to Houston's most underserved communities. Webb also serves as President of the Houston GLBT Political Caucus, Executive Board Member of New Leaders Council – Houston, and focuses on political empowerment and advocacy through their fraternity, Delta Phi Upsilon. Webb's community work has been recognized by the League of Women Voters of Houston, the National Black Justice Coalition, Outsmart Magazine, and Young Black Voices. Ultimately, Webb strives to contribute to the production of responsible, educated citizens and leaders who can help foster communities based on equality, compassion, and service.



BRANDON DUDLEY

Chief of Staff | Office of Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis

Brandon Dudley currently serves as chief of staff and legal counsel for Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis, and served in the same capacity for Ellis in the Texas Senate. In those positions Brandon has directed numerous efforts in the areas of civil rights, criminal justice reform, voting rights, economic justice, and many other social justice initiatives.

Prior to joining Ellis, Brandon worked for a number of civil rights organizations doing legal and policy advocacy, and directed and worked as a counselor for various educational and empowerment programs for at-risk youth. Brandon received his BA in Political Science and attended the Graduate School for Social Work at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of Houston Law Center.



ASHTON WOODS

Co-Founder | Black Lives Matter

Unapologetically Black, same gender loving, HIV positive & atheist. All of these descriptors speak to the identity of the New Orleans native who at age 15 took part in the founding of one of the first Gay/Straight Alliances in a New Orleans area high school. That was the genesis of his work as a civil rights activist. He knows what being marginalized looks and feels like which informs his philosophy that Black liberation and justice must be intersectional. Ashton's belief in Black liberation and intersectional justice is highlighted by his active involvement in the Black Lives Matter movement, racial justice, feminism, LGBTQ rights, and secular activism.

Currently based in Houston, he is the Co - Founder & lead organizer for Black Lives Matter: Houston. When he isn't organizing, Ashton acts as co-chair for the Black Humanist Alliance, a coalition of secular activists under the American Humanist Association. In the LGBT community, Ashton is involved in the fight for equality and his efforts led to a recent appointment to the City of Houston's first LGBT advisory board. As the founder of the Strength In Numbers Project and blog he writes about issues affecting the Black community. In addition to his own blog, Ashton is a blogger for POZ magazine and has contributed to many other publications.



KANDICE WEBBER

Co-Founder, Black Lives Matter | Organizer, March for Black Women Houston

Kandice Webber, is a registered nurse, organizer of the March for Black Women Houston, and lead organizer with Black Lives Matter Houston.

Black Lives Matter Houston is an organization that addresses the issues that affects Black folks and collaborates with partners to build a healthy, educated, and financially stable Black community. Their ultimate goal is to pave a path for Black power and liberation where it is understood that ALL BLACK LIVES MATTER. Their mission is to build a movement that transforms Houston into a city that allows Black Houston to grow and thrive.

[Read more about Kandice Webber in this Houston Chronicle profile](#) where she discusses the March for Black Women Houston.