

## About Spectrum Institute

Spectrum Institute is a nonprofit operating foundation incorporated in California in 1987. It has tax exempt status under section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Through its various projects, the organization promotes respect for human diversity. It has an office in Los Angeles, California.

Over the years, Spectrum Institute has championed a variety of human rights issues and causes: protecting personal privacy, ending hate crimes against minorities, promoting respect for family diversity, stopping discrimination on the basis of marital status and sexual orientation, ending the abuse of troubled teenagers by boarding schools and boot camps, and targeting physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.

Specific projects have been sponsored by Spectrum Institute to advance these causes. Among these projects have been the Family Diversity Project, the American Association for Single People and its website known as Unmarried America, the Emancipation Project, and the Disability and Abuse Project.

The various projects of Spectrum Institute have always included people with disabilities in their focus, such as ending violence against people with disabilities, or eliminating marital status discrimination that imposes barriers to marriage on people with disabilities. Among the publications sponsored by Spectrum Institute was the Final Report of the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity, a landmark report published in 1988 which included a section on families with members who have disabilities. A precursor to Spectrum Institute was the California Commission on Personal Privacy, a blue ribbon task force which, among other issues, focused on privacy issues affecting seniors and people with disabilities.

The Disability and Abuse Project is the current project of Spectrum Institute. It is directed by [Dr. Nora J. Baladerian](#), a clinical psychologist, who is a national expert in the field of disability and abuse. Dr. Baladerian was a member of the California Commission on Personal Privacy and chaired its Committee on Aging and Disability. She was the co-chair of the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity, a project which inspired the formation of Spectrum Institute.

[Thomas F. Coleman](#), a human rights attorney, serves as the principal legal consultant to The Disability and Abuse Project. For some 40 years, he has worked with all levels and branches of government to promote equal rights and to end discrimination. He served as executive director of the Privacy Commission and of the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity. He has participated in major litigation in the United States Supreme Court and various state supreme courts as a champion of civil liberties and equal rights. In 2009, he published his memoirs: *[The Domino Effect: How Strategic Moves for Gay Rights, Singles Rights, and Family Diversity Have Touched the Lives of Millions](#)*.

Other consultants to the Project include disability rights advocates, educators, medical and mental health practitioners, service providers, and people from a wide range of professions and walks of life.