

Letter from Tawnie Ocampo

My name is Tawnie. I'm a second generation Asian-American woman from California, and I'm 22 years old.

In 2014, I found my partner, who is an Irish lady, on Instagram through mutual interests in activism. In 2015, I moved to Ireland to be with her, and we fell deeply in love. At the same time, Ireland's referendum on legalizing same sex marriage passed, thankfully. Soon afterwards, we got engaged, and in May 2016, we got married.

I had heard about Donald Trump's campaign for presidency, but I honestly didn't think too much of it. He's a joke. He wouldn't win, I assured myself. When I heard all of the negative, unprofessional, and inappropriate statements he's made about Muslims, women, people of color, and LGBT's, I thought for sure he wouldn't win! But then he won the Republican Party nomination...and things got scarier from there.

I remember the morning it was announced that Trump was going to be the next president of the United States. I woke up and got up, my wife was still in bed at the time, and I got something to drink. I looked at my phone and there it was. I was in complete disbelief. The next minute my wife rushes into the kitchen, with her phone, and tells me in shock that Trump has won. It was heart breaking. This really showed how many ignorant, straight out racist, and hurtful people are out there.

Luckily I'm from a very progressive state so when I visit back home in California, I feel safe still. But I can't imagine what my fellow same sex couples feel like in states that have voted for Trump. I have friends who, the very next day after Trump had won, have been victims of racist remarks - by complete strangers - and been told that "they would be deported soon" because of Trump's victory.

I've already read stories about gay bashings too. One thing my wife and I have always wanted to do is have a road trip around all 50 states. But since Trump is now going to run the US, we probably won't get to do that until he is out of the office, because sadly, we would now feel unsafe as a same sex couple. Already, he has spread enough fear and hate to prevent me from bringing my wife on a holiday - which in 2017 is absolutely shocking.

Because of Trump, strangers feel like they can get away with being completely evil and awful towards others who are different - and it's because Trump himself has gotten away with it, publicly and consistently. He is teaching his supporters that hate is acceptable, and that there will be no consequences to any hateful act.

If there's one thing I could say to Trump, it would be: "Please set a better example. I don't think you are serious and I don't think you understand what damage you are doing. I don't think, deep down, you are that evil man you portray to be. I think you are smart, because you do know how to get to the people who can't think for themselves. You know how to fill peoples' heads with hate and anger - which is easier to do than fill their heads with love and compassion. But for the sake of people who are different than you, less privileged than you, colored differently than you - do better. Do the complete opposite of what you are doing now. It's not too late. You've created a lot of hate and fear in the world but compassion and love is greater than that and you can still turn that hate into love."

Thank you