

GLENROY MURRAY

Born: 31 July, 1993, in Kingston, Jamaica

Organisation: J-FLAG

Glenroy Murray is the Executive Director of J-FLAG, which originally stood for Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays. It is the Caribbean country's longest-running LGBTQ+ rights foundation.

Having been outed to his family in his final year at school and been met with a negative reaction, Murray began his journey into activism after joining an LGBTQ+ society while studying for a law degree at the University of West Indies.

In his studies, he was particularly interested in the need for equality legislation, learning about and contributing to LGBTQ+ cases in Commonwealth countries such as Guyana.

That work led to an invitation from J-FLAG's then director of Projects and Strategy, Jaevion Nelson, to write a report about human rights, and an internship opportunity in the legal and policy team followed. After completing his studies, he joined full-time in an advocacy role.

"Fear is the greatest barrier to progress. Politicians tend to be more tolerant than the general public but are afraid to take a leap of faith because of potential backlash and the risk of not being re-elected. Non-queer Jamaicans are afraid that they will be ostracised if they air even slightly more accepting views, and so they 'perform' homophobia." ([GiveOut.org](#), May 2019)

As an organisation, J-FLAG has come through many challenges, such as the murder of its co-founder Brian Williamson in 2004 and a fire that destroyed its premises in 2018.

Murray returned from taking a Masters in London to become Director of Strategy and Impact, taking on issues such as homelessness and workplace discrimination.

Last summer, he moved up to take on the top job at J-FLAG and is continuing to build support for LGBTQ+ equality from a range of stakeholders, amid social attitudes that are shifting slowly but encouragingly.

"Queerphobia in Jamaica is very complicated, nuanced and intersectional. A big part of it is, which queer person are you speaking to and what are their other identities? Does this person identify as a woman, are they from a rural area, are they poor, and that will impact on the ways queerphobia manifests in their lives." ([The Pride House Podcast](#), May 2022)

