

# Portland Voice

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July, 2013

## President's Message

It's July and the start of another fiscal year at PFLAG Portland. In keeping with our bylaws, July is the month of our Annual Meeting and Election. A few of your PFLAG Portland Board Members have expiring terms of service though I am happy to report that each has agreed to continue to volunteer. (See the related article in this edition of the Portland Voice.)

PFLAG Portland has been hard at work! As we close the books on another successful year, I'd like to give you an update on some of our recent activities.

We had another very successful year of grant-making through our PFLAG Portland Mini-Grant program. We were able to extend a total of 6 grants this year to very worthy organizations: The Sunnyside Environmental School, Portland State University's Queer Resource Center, Benson High School and Franklin High School's

*(continued on page 2)*

## Notice of the Annual Meeting of the Membership

As outlined by our bylaws, July's chapter meeting is also our Annual Meeting of the Membership. We will have a report for you on all the goings-on of PFLAG Portland over the past year, including a financial statement from July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013. This meeting will also be your opportunity to participate in our annual election. This year's slate of candidates includes Shaun Simpkins, Joyce Liljeholm and Mark Weinsoft. Two of this year's candidates – Shaun Simpkins, Web Master, and Joyce Liljeholm, Vice President - are seasoned volunteers seeking additional terms of service. Mark Weinsoft was appointed by the Board to fill a vacancy and now must stand for election. If you are a dues paying member of PFLAG Portland, we invite you to attend our meeting on July 9 and participate in the election.

## Monthly Meeting Information

Join us on **July 9** when PFLAG Portland presents, Basic Rights Oregon's, *Our Families*, about LGBT families of color. In four, short films, *Our Families* is a series of conversations with families from Latino, African American, and Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Here's an excerpt from the video highlighting the lives of LGBTQ Asian Americans:

*"I was bullied a little bit by classmates. It was really not always about being multiracial, but it was probably a combination of both; being multiracial and gay. I was the only [multiracial gay male] I knew of in most of my classes," says Sean, who identifies as a multiracial gay male.*

*"I think people were surprised that somebody who's Phillipina could be gay.." says Remie who shares how challenging it is to come out as lesbian in Philippine culture.*

Plan on joining us for a viewing of these moving documentaries. We'll supply the Kleenex.

**First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson St., Portland. Look for the PFLAG signs.**

## Good-bye DOMA & Prop 8, Hello marriage!

PFLAG National and PFLAG Portland celebrated today's victory at the United States Supreme Court, striking down both Section Three of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) as unconstitutional, and Proposition 8 on standing, which means the restoration of marriage equality to the state of California. But there is still much work to do. Oregon United for Marriage will mount a challenge to Constitutional Amendment 36 – restricting marriage to one man and one woman – in 2014. Now is not the time to stand on the sidelines. Join us today to win the freedom to marry for all Oregonians!

# PFLAG

Inside: ♦ President's Message

♦ Families of Color, July 9

♦ Joyce Liljeholm, Queer Hero

## President's message, continued

Gay/Straight Alliances, the Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Resource Center, and the Student Alliance Project. If you are not familiar with the Student Alliance Project, it is an amazing, youth-led organization whose mission is to inspire youth to realize their power individually and collectively through mentoring programs with the goal of encouraging these young people to become tomorrow's social justice leaders. Our gift - the last of this year's grant cycle - went specifically to help support their 5 week Summer Leadership Camp.

In other recent PFLAG Portland news, Joyce Liljeholm, PFLAG Portland Board Member, and I just wrapped up a three year project to assist in changing the culture of the Beaverton School District (BSD) in their goal to be inclusive of their LGBTQ students. Along with our colleagues at Basic Rights Oregon and OGALLA (the Oregon Gay and Lesbian Law Association), our efforts resulted in some very tangible changes to the District including the development of a screening tool to survey school physical environments for their welcoming appeal to LGBTQ youth, youth of color and those living in poverty. The BSD also adopted a new policy which includes, "sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression." As a Beaverton parent, I can only say that the changes have been stunning, much needed, and very welcome.

Portland PFLAG Board members the Rev. Paul Davis and Mark Weinsont are hard at work, helping to form the nation's second Gay/Straight Alliance chorus patented after the only such chorus in the country, Seattle's Diverse Harmony. The mission of Diverse Harmony is to "... use our passion and the power of music to inspire all to

*(continued on page 3)*

## Learn about the Experiences of Transgender Youth

TransActive is offering PFLAGers a special opportunity to learn more about our communities transgender youth. TransActive is an internationally recognized non-profit focused on serving the diverse needs of transgender and gender nonconforming (GNC) children, youth, their families and allies. At this training, participants can expect to learn how to best meet the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming youth and their families, and learn tools for skillfully interacting with the transgender youth in our community. Thursday, July 25th, 6:30 – 8:00pm at the TransActive office: 1441 SE 122nd Ave (Between Stark and Market streets), Plaza 122 - Lower Level. There is space in this training for 25 people. Call TransActive to register at 503 232-3000 to register today!



## Calendar of Events

**July 9, 2013** – PFLAG meeting: Join us for a special showing of the Our Families videos, produced by Basic Rights Oregon. These short, very powerful videos describe the intersection of race and sexual orientation/gender identity through the experiences of African American, Asian American, Indian American and Latino/a families.

**August 13, 2013** – PFLAG meeting: Representatives from the University of Portland's fledgling queers and allies group will talk about the newly forming presence on this Catholic university campus.

## Joyce Liljeholm: Queer Hero NW

Joyce Liljeholm, PFLAG board member, was honored as one of the Queer Heroes Northwest for 2013 by Q Center and the Gay & Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest (GLAPN). The organizations announce a Queer Hero (or ally) for each day in June as part of their celebration of Pride, and Heroes profiles become permanent parts of the websites of both groups.

Joyce's passion for youth advocacy turned into a statewide effort when she helped found Oregon Safe Schools and Communities (OSSCC) in 2001. OSSCC resulted from Joyce's lead in organizing a state department funded workshop to better meet the needs of sexual minority youth. As the workshop pointed up the serious need for more work, OSSCC was formed.

As an OSSCC Board Director, she helped organize the first Oregon Safe Schools Training in 2002 for teams of youth and adults to meet the needs of LGBTQ youth. She then helped organize the Oregon Gay-Straight Network and assisted students to put on the first GSA Summit in 2006.

Joyce was a regular visitor in Salem as she lobbied for the Oregon Equality Act (2007), to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in education and other areas, and the more recent Safe Schools Act (2009).

Joyce works with the Community of Welcoming Congregations to make faith communities welcoming to LGBTQ individuals. She has served as a board member of Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network of Oregon, Portland Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays and served on the City of Portland Sexual Minority Roundtable.



## ***Yes! I support the mission of PFLAG Portland***

Enclosed is my membership fee. (Your membership includes National PFLAG membership.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Family (\$45)**

**Individual (\$35)**

**Student/Limited Income (\$15)**

**Donation (\$ \_\_\_\_)**

Make check payable to PFLAG Portland. PFLAG is a 501c(3) tax-exempt organization.

**Mail to:** PFLAG, P.O. Box 8944, Portland, OR 97207

### ***The Mission of PFLAG Portland***

We, the parents, families, and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. PFLAG promotes the health and well being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, their families and their friends through support, education, and advocacy. PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and strives to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. Contact PFLAG Portland at 503 232-7676 or visit our website at [www.PFLAGPDX.org](http://www.PFLAGPDX.org).

### ***President's message, continued***

celebrate the differences in our homes, communities and the world". We look forward to supporting the evolution of this new project.

Lastly, I'd like to mention the work of PFLAG Portland Treasurer Cheryl Hall. Cheryl helped to sponsor a bill at the International Court System, a federation of drag courts including our local Imperial Sovereign Rose Court (The International Court System has Chapters/ Courts throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico engaged in hosting social, charity and fundraising events). Cheryl persuaded the courts to dedicate some of their fundraising efforts to supporting Gay/Straight Alliances throughout the US, Canada and Mexico. Well done, Cheryl!

Though these projects garner the headlines, your PFLAG Portland Board of Directors remains committed to providing monthly support groups. Even in "progressive Portland" a meeting does not go by without a new person coming to our meeting for the first time. The reality is that although we have come so far in winning our LGBTQ folks full acceptance in society, the challenges aren't over. Until that day finally arrives, PFLAG Portland will be here.

In peace,

Dawn Holt, President PFLAG Portland

### ***Contact Information PFLAG***

**Dawn Holt**, President

**Joyce Liljeholm**, Vice President

**Austin Lea**, Secretary

**C. Hall**, Treasurer

**Khalil Edwards**, PFLAG Portland Black

Chapter Satellite Representative

**Rev. Paul Davis**, Board Member

**Antoinette Edwards**, Board Member

**Rhonda Laughlin**, Board Member

**Shaun Simpkins**, Board Member

**Mark Weinsoft**, Board Member

**HELP LINE**

**(503) 232-7676**

PFLAG National Website [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

Portland Chapter Website [www.pflagpdx.org](http://www.pflagpdx.org)

Robin Will, Editor [pflagpdxnews@gmail.com](mailto:pflagpdxnews@gmail.com)

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To get this newsletter via email, send an email to [pflagpdxnews@gmail.com](mailto:pflagpdxnews@gmail.com).

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Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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