

## President's Message



**Outreach to the Latino Community:** We are proud to announce the launch of our new Spanish language website. With over 80 pages of support and information, it is already attracting visitors who want to learn about LGBT issues and locate our Spanish language meetings. You can find it at [www.pflagEspaolSoCal.org](http://www.pflagEspaolSoCal.org). The name represents our hope that one day a strong, dynamic Latino chapter—or several—will assume the role of providing culturally appropriate content serving the diverse Spanish speaking community in this region.

We are building on a long tradition. Partnering with PFLAG Pasadena, Lenor Holmstrom launched one of the nation's first and most successful PFLAG meetings in Spanish, ultimately expanding the group to a second site at the East Los Angeles location of Bienestar. She has been ably followed in this work by Elvira Sanchez and Gizella Czene (a PFLAG Los Angeles board member), leaders of the Pasadena and East LA groups, and of our new San Fernando Valley meetings. Times and locations are posted on our English and Spanish websites.

If you are interested in supporting our work in the Latino community, you can earmark donations made online or through the enclosed envelope for our Spanish language programs.

**The Mission Re-envisioned:** While remaining faithful to the vision of the founders, PFLAG operates in a world they hoped for but could hardly imagine. Among the most exciting signs of progress has been growing awareness of issues related to gender identity and gender expression. The National organization has given thoughtful attention to the language we use when talking about our work, ensuring that it is broadly inclusive and reflective of our priorities. At the annual meeting held in October the board of directors presented a new formulation of our time-honored mission and vision statements that was unanimously adopted.

From now on, the organization will be known simply as PFLAG (think General Motors and GM). Here are our new mission and vision statements:

**Our Vision:** PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

**Our Mission:** By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through: Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ; Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ; Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

**Check it out!:** An organizational meeting for the South LA satellite will be held in December. If you are interested in being part of a group in this underserved area of Los Angeles contact Stuart Huggins at [southLA@pflagla.org](mailto:southLA@pflagla.org). The first support meeting will be held on Thursday, January 22. Visit our website for more information.

Also, go to the home page on our website for a new way to help PFLAG Los Angeles expand its mission of support, education, and advocacy.



## Our Stories By Steve Krantz, Ph.D.

Before my younger son came out, I suspected he was gay – it was his lack of interest in girls and, sometimes, his mannerisms. When a beautiful girl walked by and I looked, my son would not. I would ask his mother and she would say “No, he is not gay. He is just not as interested as you are in sex!” When he was 17, several years ago, he took me aside and told me he was gay. He seemed tortured as he said it. I cried a little and then hugged him. He was only the second gay person I had ever knowingly met in my life.

His mother and I have loved our son every day of his life. His coming out wasn't a big surprise to me and mattered only a little. He was still the beautiful, wonderful boy that we loved. As I think back over his life, he was wonderful from day one. His nurse said “you couldn't ask for no better baby.” He slept through the night. He smiled all the time. He was happy and outgoing and active. When he turned eleven, he went into a shell, lost his friends, and became “lazy.” He slept a lot and rarely left his room except for school. We thought this was related to a physical problem, but his doctor recommended a psychologist. When she told us he was depressed and had suicidal thoughts, we thought *she* was nuts.

After our son came out at home, things were much better. The day after he came out, I took him to a Gay/Lesbian picnic run by a lesbian mental health counselor. He attended a gay and lesbian support group in our town. But he was still troubled, troubled by hateful words in his school. The words were the everyday talk of ignorant students and, sometimes, teachers. Some days, he would come home enraged at what he had heard and seen. We know these hateful words, we have used them ourselves not realizing the pain they caused.

During this period, he was very fortunate to get to know a wonderful gay man, the local director of an organization *(continued inside)*



P.O. Box 24565  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

info@pflagLA.org

**1.888.PFLAG 88**  
**(1.888.735.2488)**  
**www.pflagLA.org**

PFLAG Los Angeles is an all volunteer, non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization run by parents, family members, LGBT persons and their friends. Each of us came for help, found support, and joined the organization to assist others on their journey to acceptance. Our chapter, together with a group in New York City, founded the national PFLAG organization, which provides assistance to over 350 independent chapters nationwide.

#### **PFLAG LOS ANGELES BOARD**

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## Legislative Corner

**AB 2501** [Assemblymember Susan Bonilla, sponsored by Equality California (EQCA), co-sponsored by Attorney General Kamala Harris]: Outlaws the use of the so-called "gay panic" and "trans panic" defenses in homicide cases. Historically, defense lawyers in such cases have attempted (sometimes successfully) to reduce homicide charges from murder to manslaughter by appealing to "gay panic" or "trans panic." This defense centers around the idea that the defendant was "panicked" into killing another person upon realizing their sexual orientation, gender identity, or trans status, and has resulted in the murders of numerous LGBTQ people being swept under the rug. This law will send a strong message that gender identity and/or sexual orientation are NEVER excuses for murder.

**AB 1951** [Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez, sponsored by EQCA]: Modernizes California's birth certificates to reflect accurately the gender of a child's parent or parents by allowing each parent to self-designate as mother, father or parent.

**AB 1577**, Respect After Death Act [Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, sponsored by EQCA, co-sponsored by Transgender Law Center]: Makes sure that death certificates for transgender Californians accurately reflect their authentic, lived identity.

**AB 2344**, Modern Family Act [Assemblymember Tom Ammiano]: Advances the rights of families including LGBTQ and/or non-biological parents in several ways. It 1) establishes a statutory form that will help clarify and protect the rights of sperm donors and parents who work with them, 2) provides clear specifications relating to financial responsibility for the medical costs incurred by surrogate parents and their newborns, and 3) streamlines the adoption process for parents that meet certain criteria, including waiving some fees and making the process easier for families that include same-sex couples and transgender parents.

**AB 420** [Assemblymember Roger Dickinson]: This bill represents a huge step toward making school discipline processes more transparent and equitable. California public school administrators have, until now,

been capable of suspending or expelling students based on nothing more than a charge of "willful defiance", which refers to no particular infraction and has historically targeted LGBTQ students and, above all, students of color.

**AB 496** [Assemblymember Rich Gordon, sponsored by EQCA]: Requires that healthcare workers be trained in 693 cultural competency. Many LGBTQ people are reluctant to come out to their doctors, and transgender people in particular report meeting with widespread misinformation from their healthcare providers. This law will ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity are incorporated into existing cultural competency training.

[Info provided by [www.eqca.org](http://www.eqca.org)]

## Spreading the Word in the community through our Speakers Bureau engagements/ education, activism & advocacy

Stuart Huggins, Liz Mullen, and Lucy Benji Terrell organized and facilitated our annual speakers bureau training workshop and trained 14 new speakers.

Maurie Davidson, Stuart Huggins, Shawn Lamb, Chrieurphy, and Sarah Vitorino talked to students at Loyola Marymount University.

Maurie Davidson, Mike/Michelle Dennis, Stuart Huggins, Shervin Michaels Khorramian, and Stephanie Muscato spoke to KPMG employees at their new downtown office.

Marta Castillo, Shervin Michaels Khorramian, Liz Mullen, Chris Angel Murphy, Cara O'Donnell, and Kimmy Tran were part of the presentation "Creating Understanding and Welcoming Communities" at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church in Palos Verdes. This was our first time at this church.

Tyler Baker-Wilkinson, Christie Carney, Marta Castillo, Mike/Michelle Dennis, Tim Ky, Liz Mullen, and Chris Angel Murphy talked to students of Maya Wolfson's health classes at Polytechnic High School, Sun Valley.

*(continued next page)*

### **PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK!** Renew your membership, make a special gift today !

As an all-volunteer organization, our work is made possible only with the generous contributions of our members & donors. Your contributions support our monthly meetings, website, helplines, Speakers Bureau, and outreach to ethnic and faith communities. PFLAG Los Angeles is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and 100% of your donation supports our programs.

Please Note: When you pay dues to PFLAG Los Angeles, a portion of your dues (\$15) goes to PFLAG National and makes you a member of both PFLAG Los Angeles and PFLAG National. However, if you pay dues or make donations directly to PFLAG National, 100% of your dues/donation stays with PFLAG National making you only a PFLAG National member.

**Use the envelope provided or donate online at**  
**[www.pflagLA.org/Join-Donate](http://www.pflagLA.org/Join-Donate)**

Visit  
the home page  
on our website for  
an exciting new way  
to support  
PFLAG  
Los Angeles

We all have a PFLAG story to share. Some are a testimony of growth and understanding, others are painful and heart-breaking. These stories of real peoples' lives can be major teaching moments to some and life-savers to others.

# We Need YOUR Stories!

We encourage you to share YOUR story with us. There will be at least one person out there who will benefit from what you have to share.

The focus should be on your personal story as it relates to the coming-out of an LGBT family member/loved one. Maximum number of characters with spaces is 4,300. If you prefer, we can interview you over the phone and write the story for you!

All stories are welcome and submissions are subject to editing. By submitting your story you give PFLAG permission to publish it in our newsletter, on our website or other media to promote PFLAG. If requested, your name will not be published.

Please e-mail your story or request to be interviewed to [NewsletterEditor@pflagLA.org](mailto:NewsletterEditor@pflagLA.org).

*(Spreading the Word: continued)* Marta Castillo, Carolyn Conrad, Maurie Davidson, Terrie Duba, Barry Mason, Karen Mason, and Liz Mullen participated in the "Models of Pride" conference at USC where they presented the parent workshop "Parent's Point of View: From Coming Out to Becoming an Ally and Everything in Between."

Gizella Czene and Driane Juarez were invited by the Parent Association at Animo Mae Middle School & Animo Watts High School to talk to Spanish-speaking parents.

Mike/Michelle Dennis, Stuart Huggins, Liz Mullen, and Sylvia Weisenberg went to LA Southwest College to address its Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender-Intersex/Muxe/Pansexual/Ally/QueerEquity & Equality Organization.

*(Our Stories: continued from cover)* called GLSEN - a gay and lesbian organization dedicated to helping children in schools. With his guidance, family encouragement, and a courageous high school principal, our son worked behind the scenes to bring sensitivity training to the teachers at his school. His mother and older brother accompanied him to a key school meeting for moral support. He made phone calls, speeches, sent email, and wrote his story of being a gay student in local newspapers. He made a real difference.

At the same time, our family joined PFLAG. We joined the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida chapter and learned about PFLAG's mission of support for families, education for the community and advocacy for equal rights.

In 2003, we moved to Los Angeles, California, where we joined PFLAG Los Angeles. My journey in PFLAG continued, serving as PFLAG Los Angeles Chapter President, then Director of PFLAG's Southern Pacific Region and National Board Member in 2007 through 2013. Some of the best experiences during that time were lobbying in Sacramento, California and Washington, DC so that my son could become a first class citizen like his older, straight brother.

Fast forward to 2014: In California, I am pleased that my younger son has all the rights and responsibilities of any other citizen. As I see the state-by-state dominoes of marriage inequality falling, I expect soon to celebrate that the USA will finally join its neighbor Canada and many European nations in granting full and equal rights to LGBT citizens. This signals a pending major legislative victory, but PFLAG's local work will still be needed for many years to address ongoing issues of homophobia in our communities.

## Quote - Unquote

"If we in the judiciary do not have the authority, and indeed the responsibility, to right fundamental wrongs left excused by a majority of the electorate, our whole intricate, constitutional system of checks and balances, as well as the oaths to which we swore, prove to be nothing but shams."

— U.S. Circuit Judge Martha Daughtrey, 6th Circuit Court

*(in her dissent to her two colleagues of the federal appeals court who ruled that bans on same-sex marriage in each of the four states within its jurisdiction are constitutional)*

## RESOURCES

MEETINGS - CONTACTS - ORGANIZATIONS

### PFLAG LOS ANGELES SPONSORED SUPPORT MEETINGS

Westwood\*

Westwood United Methodist Church  
10497 Wilshire Bl. LA 90024  
3rd Wednesday of each month  
7:30 - 10:00 pm / Free Parking

\*Visit our website for upcoming speakers  
[www.pflagLA.org](http://www.pflagLA.org)

Silver Lake

Metropolitan Community Church  
4607 Prospect Avenue, LA 90027  
2nd Thursday of each month  
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Street Parking

Pasadena (Sólo Español)

Neighborhood Unitarian Universalist Church  
301 N. Orange Grove Blvd, Pasadena 91103  
1st Monday of each month  
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

East LA (Sólo Español)

Bienestar East LA  
5326 East Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles 90022  
3rd Thursday of each month  
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Street Parking

San Fernando Valley (Sólo Español)

Bienestar Centro del Valle de San Fernando  
8134 Van Nuys Blvd., #200, Panorama City 91402  
4th Friday of each month  
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

South LA

La Tijera United Methodist Church  
7400 Osage Avenue, LA 90045  
2nd Thursday of each month (starting 1/2015)  
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

### CONTACTS

PFLAG Los Angeles Speakers Bureau  
Contact Liz Mullen at  
[SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org](mailto:SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org)

### HELPLINES

PFLAG Los Angeles & Pasadena  
1.888.PFLAG.88 (1.888.735.2488)  
English and Spanish

Transgender Support  
818.985.9319 (Chris)

The TREVOR PROJECT  
24-hour suicide prevention line  
866.488.7386  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

### ORGANIZATIONS

PFLAG National  
202.467.8180  
[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

REMEMBER

When you no longer need PFLAG that's when PFLAG NEEDS YOU!

[www.pflagLA.org](http://www.pflagLA.org)



P.O. Box 24565  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

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FALL 2014

## TransAction

### Laverne Cox & Glamour Women Of The Year

The verdict is in, the news is out: Glamour Magazine picked Laverne Cox as one of their "Women Of The Year 2014."

Laverne Cox is a Woman of the Year because... "Her unparalleled candor, courage, and eloquence have helped us understand a community that is far too often misunderstood. She teaches us that gender identity lives, first and foremost, in our hearts and minds." —Katie Couric, 1992 and 2006 Woman of the Year. ([www.glamour.com/inspired/women-of-the-year/2014/laverne-cox](http://www.glamour.com/inspired/women-of-the-year/2014/laverne-cox))

### Masen Davis Leaving Transgender Law Center

On November 12, Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center (TLC), announced that he will step down in early 2015. "I have a profound feeling that it's time for change at Transgender Law Center. Personally, I feel ready for a new challenge in my life.

Professionally, I know there's never been a better time for TLC to undergo a successful change of leadership: we are stronger than ever, and have brilliant staff who are ready to lead the organization into its next chapter," says Davis, who served as the organization's executive director since August 2007. ([www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org))

### Transgender Parenting: A Review of Existing Research

A new Williams Institute report shows that between one quarter and one half of transgender study participants are parents. The vast majority of transgender parents report that their relationships with their children are good or positive, including after "coming out" as transgender or transitioning. The study reviewed 51 existing reports on the prevalence and characteristics of transgender people who are parents, the quality of relationships between transgender parents and their children, outcomes for children with a transgender parent, and the reported needs of transgender parents. Transgender parents have also reported having social service needs related to child care, networking with other parents, and support for family planning, as well as discrimination in child

custody and visitation arrangements and when seeking adoption. *You can download the report at [www.williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/transgender-parenting-oct-2014.pdf](http://www.williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/transgender-parenting-oct-2014.pdf)*

### Check Out Transwaves!

[www.soundcloud.com/transwaves](http://www.soundcloud.com/transwaves):

Transwaves is a podcast run by the Trans Youth Equality Foundation, where they interview trans youth, allies, providers, activists, families, and more to bring the voices of the trans child movement to a wider audience. Here you will find varied perspectives from all generations and backgrounds on what it means to be a transgender youth in today's world. They will continually add new episodes. Transwaves will also be answering anonymous questions on the air. You can ask anything, and be assured that your questions and identity will remain anonymous, and the answers will be valuable to an entire listening community! Find Transwaves on tumblr at [transyouthequality.tumblr.com](http://transyouthequality.tumblr.com). There you can send your anonymous questions that will be read and answered on the air and you can always email your questions at [transwavespodcast@gmail.com](mailto:transwavespodcast@gmail.com).