

STARR NEWSLETTER

PARENTS, FAMILIES & FRIENDS ALLIED WITH THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

www.pflagLA.org

President's Message



Websites at Risk: Help us meet a \$2,500 challenge grant. In 12 months, the software we use for our websites will no longer be supported by its maker. That means we will be unable to upload new information about speakers at our monthly meetings, about the Los Angeles Pride Parade, about Models of Pride, and about opportunities for advocacy.

Transitioning to new software, WordPress, will be expensive. The most conservative estimate is \$5,000 for rebuilding only the English language website. That's double if we include the Spanish language website.

A generous anonymous donor has offered PFLAG Los Angeles a challenge grant. It is a one-to-one challenge. For every dollar donated, we receive an additional dollar up to \$2,500. A \$25 gift becomes \$50, a \$100 gift turns into \$200. Your contribution will enable us to fund the transition to WordPress and maintain our most important internet portal.

As you know, our websites—both English and Spanish—are the most important way we connect with new people who need our services. When we ask newcomers to our meetings how they found us, most say through one of the websites.

The Speakers Bureau also relies on the website to attract new organizations to our panels and services. One of the most recent was a local section of the Department of the Interior.

Increasingly, donors use our website to become PFLAG Los Angeles members or to make a contribution in support of our work. Without the website, our ability to fundraise will be seriously damaged.

Please go to our website right now and donate. Here's the link: www.pflagla.org/information-form.html

If you are uncomfortable with donating online, you will soon be receiving a letter about the challenge grant and a donation envelope you can use.

Your support is critical. Please help.



Get Ready to MARCH!!!
PRIDE PARADE ON JUNE 9th
 PFLAG Los Angeles together with other Los Angeles chapters and friends will be marching in the Los Angeles PRIDE Parade for the 42nd time!!

Marching down the parade route is an experience you don't want to miss. The crowd roars when they see us. Their love and appreciation is tremendous.

You don't need a ticket. Just get out your red t-shirt (or buy a [PFLAG Los Angeles t-shirt](#) from our website), your water bottle, sunscreen, hat, walking shoes and signs, and join us!

The time of the parade is from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. We recommend arriving by 10 a.m. to get a parking place (the Pacific Design Center is a prized spot) and find our staging area.

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SUPPORT EDUCATION ADVOCACY

President's Message

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Assignments have not yet been made, so check our website for our approximate location and last minute updates. You'll have an opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones while we wait for our turn to start down the parade route.

Happiness and celebration are guaranteed!

[50 Years Ago...It was June 28, 1969, when early in the morning police raided the Stonewall Inn, a Greenwich Village bar that had become a staple of New York City's underground gay community. But this time, tired of ongoing raids, community members fought back, striking what would become known as The Stonewall Riots. A year later, the first Gay PRIDE March was held to commemorate the riots. Now we have PRIDE parades and events all over the world.] **END**

Our Stories

— Lynette Sperber, Loving Mom

I suspected for probably a year or two before Scott came out that he might be gay. This would have been in 1987, 1988 – long before Elton John was even bisexual. Ellen DeGeneres was not even a blip. I started saying things to Scott like "I've never met a gay person I don't like", thinking that would help him if in fact he was gay. I sent him off to see a film that was out around that time. And then I felt bad sending him to see it because I thought he'd think, "Why is she sending me to see a gay film?". And then I talked to a therapist who knew our whole family and she said that Scott is definitely not gay. In hindsight, I would have been more comfortable had she said, "What's your concern about that?", rather than summarily saying, "Scott is definitely not gay."

So we come to the crucial time when Scott comes out. I remember it clearly as if it was yesterday even though it was 30 years ago. He and I were going to have lunch together. We went to Art's Deli in Studio City. I asked Scott if there was anybody special, a girlfriend, and he said, "Mom, there's something I need to tell you." And those

little hair go up on the back of your neck, like, Oh my god, here it comes. And so he disclosed that he was in fact gay. I was so proud of him because I knew how much it took for him to share that information with me. Now, I was the last of the intimate circle who he told, which made me feel really sad. But I understand the fear of rejection is so strong. And he and I are so close. And I can only imagine how frightening it must've been for him to feel like I would've rejected him. We're a very open, liberal, talk-about-everything kind of family. So if that's how difficult it was for Scott, how is it for men and women to come out to families that aren't necessarily that embracing?

"So we come to the crucial time when Scott comes out. I remember it clearly as if it was yesterday even though it was 30 years ago."

My mother, Scott's grandmother, asked "Do we have to refer to Scott's 'friend' as a boyfriend?" And I said, we absolutely do, just like we do for his sisters. That put it away for her. And if there were any people who couldn't accommodate our son and his orientation, then they would not be a welcome part of our family.

My husband Larry and I became very active in terms of gay rights, GLBT rights. And I became a public speaker on homophobia which was very rewarding because we were back in the years when if I went into a school and asked, by a show of hands, who knew or had a family member who was gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, nobody raised their hand. And everyone kind of turned around in the classroom, looking at each other furtively, like, is she kidding? But then at the end of the presentation, quietly and furtively, kids would come up to me and thank me and say how frightened they were and that they had never, ever had this kind of experience where there was a straight ally, a parent who was in their corner, talking about this.

It was very, very difficult to get into schools. Talking to students was seen as if we were giving them the right to become gay or lesbian. The number of Bibles I had shaken in my face, saying "look what you have done to your son, he's an abomination and you'd better take responsibility for that." It was infuriating. But it was rewarding in the sense that I saw people listening and thinking because

Our Stories

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I'm a mom. And I think people can relate to parents. I'm just a mom who loves my kids.

Before my son's coming out, gay wasn't even in my world at all. Not at all. Not positive, not negative. I didn't think about it. Other than when I was probably 15 or 16 years old, my parents owned clothing stores and I worked there. One day two women walked in who were lesbians. But I wouldn't have known that. I just saw two women walking in and one sat down to wait for what I now know was her

"That was the birth for Larry and me to call and reach out to PFLAG because we wanted to be part of that world."

partner who was looking at clothing and I went up to help them. My father came rushing forward and put his arm around me and rushed me to the back of the store to get me away from these what I guess he considered predatory, evil people who were going to spirit me away and take me into their lesbian enclave. I can laugh about it now. But how sorry that is.

PFLAG Los Angeles was my first connection to a GLBT organization. Scott had just come out. And we went to Gay Pride just coincidentally because my mother lived in West Hollywood on Doheny. And Scott and I walked down to the parade. I was beside myself with excitement and enthusiasm seeing all of these people so happy on their floats, and waving. I said, "Oh my god, Scott, that's what we have to do next year." I did just drink in all of that love from the community of the men and women who would be lining the parade route who were so grateful and so appreciative and the tears we would see and their gratitude. That was

the birth for Larry and me to call and reach out to PFLAG because we wanted to be part of that world.

We went to our first meeting. The warmth, the acceptance, the inclusion - they loved my son, although they didn't know my son. They were so welcoming to Larry and me and I hoped that Larry and I were able to pay that forward in the ensuing years when we became so involved with PFLAG. We were involved with PFLAG National as well as PFLAG Los Angeles. There was a point in time for Larry and I that, if it was gay, we were there. We were out five nights a week for gay stuff just because we felt so deeply for a community that was so maligned and so disrespected. And then Larry was co-president for a period of time.

I want struggling families to know that they are not alone. That there are so many people, gay men and lesbians, transgender folks, straight allies who are here to be supportive and loving and will not embarrass you, will not judge you, will not criticize you. We understand that it's a journey. We don't expect you to come in with pompoms, jumping up and down saying, "Yay, I have a great gay child. Yes, I'm so happy, my child is transitioning. Oh boy, this is the greatest." We understand that it's a journey. That you don't think it's the greatest. And we're not going to judge that. It's a journey that you're taking and we would like to be there to help you along the way. **END**

**Your everyday purchases or gifts
can help PFLAG Los Angeles
expand its mission of support,
education, and advocacy.**

**Go to smile.amazon.com and Amazon
donates to PFLAG Los Angeles**

amazonsmile

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-3707419>

**PLEASE
SUPPORT
OUR
WORK!**

As an all-volunteer organization, our work is made possible only with the generous contributions of our 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. When you make a donation of \$35 or more to PFLAG Los Angeles, \$15 of your donation goes to PFLAG National and makes you a member of PFLAG National as well.

Donate online at: **www.pflagLA.org/join-donate**

Somos Familia Conference of Families and Diversity — Gizella Czene

Fifteen of us went to the Somos Familia Conference of Families and Diversity (Encuentro de Familias y Diversidad) held at Stanford University on May 3-5: Two members of PFLAG Los Angeles's Board (Juan Castillo-Alvarado and I), as well as 13 parents, friends and family allied with and of the LGBTQ community drove in a van to the event. Our diverse group consisted of two parents of a young transman, the grandmother of a young transman, two parents of two lesbian women, two parents of a young gay man, two parents of a queer woman and their young child, and a lesbian couple with one parent.

All of them Latinx. All of them regular attendees of both PFLAG en Español and Familias Afortunadas support groups at MiCentro in Boyle Heights.

The conference was sponsored by the Santa Clara County Office of LGBTQ Affairs and Dr. Rigoberto Marquez, professor at the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University, and organized by Somos Familia, an LGBTQ group that began in the Bay Area about 10 years ago.

It was a wonderful experience to see so many loving families, from the Bay Area as far north as Napa, and Southern California as far south as Santa Ana or even San Diego! We divided into three groups: Families, Allies, and LGBTQ folks to share our experiences and learn how to support ourselves and each other in our communities.

The conference was beyond amazing!!



The photo above shows our group along with five health promoters (promotoras) from Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, who were there to support the group and present their workshop on activities that they use to open minds and hearts to embrace the LGBTQ community.



Testimonials

Maria Quezada – Grandmother (*pgp's: she, her, hers*)

I was able to educate myself through other testimonies and empower myself. This has helped me with my acceptance of my Transgender grandson and his transition. This will help me influence others in my community and family to be more understanding and accepting of my grandson. I want to be more visible and support other LGBTQ individuals to put an end to Bullying and discrimination that the community faces. I want to support in helping the LGBTQ community gain their equal rights.

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Somos Familia Conference

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Matthew Torres (son), Yoni Torres and Isabel Martinez

— Ally Family (pgp's: *he, him; he him; she, her*)

Yoni Torres: Having family that is part of the LGBTQ community, I've always accepted them but after this conference I finally understand why I need to accept them.

Isabel Martinez: As an ally of the LGBTQ community, I learned how to better understand the community, how to unite ourselves to improve the rights of the LGBTQ community.

Como aliado de la comunidad LGBTQ aprendi a como mejor entender a la comunidad, a como unirnos para mejorar los derechos de la comunidad LGBTQ.

Janet Quezada – Cisgender Lesbian (pgp's: *she, her, hers*)

Long live the people who actively fight against homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism and all social ills. I enjoyed the 2019 Family gathering of Diverse Families hosted by Somos Familia from May 3-5 at Stanford University. We went in a van from Los Angeles with the group of Spanish PFLAG and Familias Afortunadas (Fortunate Families) hosted by Latino Equality Alliance and the Los Angeles LGBT Center. Much remains to be done to make the world safe for everyone. Let's fight against hate and ignorance with love, information, union and safe spaces. Thanks to Juan, Gizella, Laurin, Maritza, Mirna, Zizi, Pau, Monica, Maribel, families and people who are fighting for a positive change in the world.

Que vivan las personas que activamente luchan en contra de la homofobia, transfobia, el racismo, el sexismo y todos los males sociales. Disfrute tanto el Encuentro de Familias Diversas 2019 organizado por Somos Familia Bay desde el 3-5 de mayo en la universidad de Stanford. Fuimos en un



van desde Los Angeles con el grupo de PFLAG en Español y Familias Afortunadas creado por Latino Equality Alliance y Los Angeles LGBT Center. Falta mucho por hacer para que el mundo sea seguro para todex. Batallamos en contra del odio y la ignorancia con amor, información, union y espacios seguros. Gracias a Juan, Gizella, Laurin, Maritza, Mirna, Zizi, Pau, Monica, Maribel, las familias y todex las personas que luchan activamente para crear un cambio positivo en el mundo. **END**

PFLAG Volunteers Spread the Word

with education, activism

& advocacy through our

Speakers Bureau engagements

Girl Scout Troop 1135

Silver Award: Liz Mullen and Chris Thompkins

Westview School for Art

& Technology: Barry Mason, Margie Mullen, and Cara O'Donnell

Violence Intervention Program:

Ana C., Jehanne Eily, Barry Mason, and Chris Thompkins

California State University,

Northridge (CSUN): Ana C., Sarah Jones, Steve Krantz, and Sylvia Weisenberg

Polytechnic High School:

Ana C., Steve Krantz, Liz Mullen, Cara O'Donnell, Cathy Sumner, and Sylvia Weisenberg

Indya Moore On Cover of Elle Magazine

Another first for a trans person! Here's what Mariah Cooper from the Washington Blade [www.washingtonblade.com] reported on May 10, 2019: "Pose" star Indya Moore is the first transgender woman to land the cover of Elle Magazine. The actress and model appears on the cover of Elle's June 2019 issue.

The 24-year-old told Elle that her parents were confused when she was assigned male at birth but acted feminine as a child. "Because I was assigned male at birth, they expected me to be masculine or to perform the way they thought young boys should perform. And I did not. They didn't understand. They had never experienced what it was like to have a family member who was genderqueer," Moore says.

Moore left home when she was 14 years old. She revealed that she became the victim of sex trafficking when she was a teenager. She says when she was 16 years old she was contacted by people on Facebook who offered her money for hormone therapy in exchange for sex. "They told me that they had a lot of friends who were trans and they wanted to help me in my process, and that they could help me to get the money that I needed to be a woman," the star recalled. "They told me that all I had to do was play with these men who will come in for a moment to see me and play with me and then they'll give me money," Moore says. Moore agreed and participated several times. She says she "didn't understand" what sex trafficking was at the time.

She received her big break on Ryan Murphy's "Pose" as the beautiful prostitute Angel who falls in love with one of her clients, Stan Bowes (Evan Peters), who works in Trump Tower. Moore told Elle she knew the role would be groundbreaking for her. "I just knew my life was going to change. I knew I had a chance to teach the world something that would help more people to be safe," Moore says.

"Pose" season two returns on June 11 at 10 p.m. on FX.

Trans Youth Assaulted More Often When Restroom Use Restricted – By Trudy Ring

Transgender and nonbinary young people suffer sexual assault at a higher rate in schools that don't allow them to use the restrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identity, a new study indicates.

Researchers led by Gabriel Murchison, a doctoral candidate at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston, looked at data from 2017's LGBTQ Teen Study, an anonymous online survey of U.S. youth age 13 to 17, CNN reports.

They gathered information on 3,673 transgender and nonbinary teens in seventh through 12th grades. They found that 25.9 percent of these students had experienced sexual assault in the previous 12 months, but among those in schools with restroom and locker room restrictions, 36 percent had.

"We can't tell from this study whether restrictive restroom and locker room policies cause sexual assault," Murchison told Reuters. "However, at the least, they seem to be a marker for an environment where trans and nonbinary youth are at risk." He noted that the all-gender restrooms offered at some schools are a helpful option, but they shouldn't be the only option for trans students.

The study was published Monday in the journal *Pediatrics*. It is behind a paywall, but a free abstract is available.

In an accompanying editorial, Diane Ehrensaft and Stephen Rosenthal, both of the University of California, San Francisco, Child and Adolescent Gender Center, pointed out that some nontrans people erroneously see trans people as perpetrators of sexual assault or at least think that sexual predators pose as trans in order to gain access to potential victims.

"Sometimes it is the school personnel who hold this attitude," they wrote. "Sometimes it is anxious and angry parents who do not want their children exposed to or 'damaged by' the gender-minority youth at their school." It's also an attitude that has been exploited in many political campaigns.

California is the only state in the nation that requires public schools to let trans students use the facilities comports with their gender identity. [www.advocate.com]

Quote - Unquote

"There are just as many LGBT people in our communities as there are throughout the country. We too have gay and lesbian hermanos y hermanas, friends and children."

— Dolores Huerta, Civil Rights & Labor Activist

PFLAG Los Angeles is an all volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization run by parents, family members, LGBTQ 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.

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.



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RESOURCES

Support Meetings

sponsored by PFLAG Los Angeles

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

Gender Focus

Bienestar in Hollywood
4955 W. Sunset Blvd., LA 90027
2nd Thursday of each month
7:30 - 9:30 pm / Free Parking

South LA

Meetings suspended until further notice

Boyle Heights (Sólo Español)

Mi Centro - Boletín
553 S. Clarence St., Los Angeles, CA 90033
2nd Wednesday of each month
7:00 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

East LA (Sólo Español)

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

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Contact Melanie Woloz at
SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

PFLAG National
202.467.8180
www.pflag.org

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

The Trevor Project

24-hour suicide prevention line
866.488.7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

REMEMBER

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

www.pflagLA.org