



# THE NEWSLETTER

September 2015 // ISSUE 9 // VOLUME 22

## PERSONAL STORIES

Please join us for our general meeting on **Monday, September 28** at 7:00 pm at Jewish Family Service, 8788 Balboa Avenue, San Diego.

Our speaker, Charles Chan Massey, co-founded The Personal Stories Project in 2013. Personal stories are the most powerful tool we have to erase fear, give hope, and unite people. The Personal Stories Project is a social media based organization that promotes activism, advocacy and support for the LGBT community and our allies through the sharing of personal stories. Their mission is to provide a forum where members of the LGBT community and allies can share their stories with others who may

be experiencing the same things they are, the overall goal being to engage people and change hearts and minds towards advocacy and activism.



Welcome to Charles, who will be sharing portions of his story, particularly what led him to co-found The Personal Stories Project.

Please join us for our support groups, then our cookie social, followed by Charles' presentation.

## HELP!! STOP THE PROCRASTINATION



As of now, there are only 2 (two, dos, deux, due, shtey) people signed up for the AIDS Walk

for Team PFLAG San Diego County! We don't want to break the tradition of carrying our PFLAG sneaker sign (as proudly shown in picture) or let down the LGBT community with less money for funding all the AIDS projects. (In case you don't recognize it, this is a Jewish guilt trip!) To qualify for our sign, we must have at least 10 walkers registered by **September 21**.

**The walk is Saturday, September 26 (26th Annual).** This event is San Diego's largest one-day HIV/AIDS fundraiser and the biggest non-governmental financial provider for HIV/AIDS in San Diego County. Dozens of agencies, serving thousands of clients, rely on funds raised at the annual Walk to help provide essential prevention and care

programs to thousands of men, women, and children living with HIV/AIDS.



The 5K Walk starts at 7:35 am and begins at Normal and Harvey Milk Streets (new starting location this year). The registration fee is \$35 (\$25 for 17 & under and 60+).

To register, go to [www.AIDSwalksd.org](http://www.AIDSwalksd.org) and select Register at the top of the page, then Join an Existing Team. Either enter PFLAG San Diego or Search for a Team and find PFLAG San Diego. Click on the Join button and follow the instructions.

PLEASE "WALK THE WALK" WITH US. Even if you can't physically participate, please register so we can meet our 10 person and financial goals (\$1000). If you don't have internet, call 619.692.2077 x 247 (Ian Johnson) to register. For questions, please contact Sherry Cohen-Richards, [scohenrichards@pflag.com](mailto:scohenrichards@pflag.com) or call 858-349-6269.



Join North County LGBTQ Resource Center for a community celebration: Celebrating the Diversity Within. They want to show that everyone matters! It's time to celebrate everyone no matter who they are regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, etc. The event is **Saturday, October 10** from 11:00 am-6:00 pm.

The event is free and offers a full day of fun: big time entertainment, music, dancing, an Art Alley, educational presentations, kids' garden, food, as well as other vendors! The entertainment includes headliner, Mariachi ARCOIRIS de Los Angeles, Popsicle, Celeste & the Upbeats, and GayC/DC.

The location is downtown Oceanside by the beach on Pier View Street and City Hall. Parking is located in the parking garage on the corner of Ditmar and Civic Center.

Funds raised go toward North County LGBTQ Resource Center Project Youth. They coordinate the Pride Prom in the Spring, the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) Awards in the fall and the Youth Leadership Summit in the fall. The Center feels this is a great way to give back to the community. For more info: [northcountypride.com](http://northcountypride.com)

North County LGBTQ Resource Center held a Tiger's Pictionary fundraiser which benefitted Pride by the Beach. Below, The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence joined PFLAG North County Coastal members at the fundraiser.



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## COMING OUT STILL MATTERS

This is the theme as set by the Human Rights Campaign. Every year, on **October 11**, National Coming Out Day celebrates those individuals coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ), as well allies.

The history of National Coming Out Day is noteworthy. On Oct. 11, 1987, half a million people participated in the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. It was the second such demonstration in the nation's capital and resulted in the founding of a number of LGBT organizations, including the National Latino/a Gay & Lesbian Organization (LLEGÓ) and AT&T's LGBT employee group, LEAGUE. There was a realization that the LGBT community often reacted defensively to anti-gay actions so a group of 100 LGBT activists from around the country gathered and came up with the idea of a national day to celebrate coming out and chose the anniversary of that second march on Washington to mark it.

One in two Americans has someone close to them who is gay or lesbian. For transgender people, that number is only one in ten.

## KENTUCKY DOPEY

As of September 2, Kim Davis, a county clerk from Kentucky who refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples when the Supreme Court made same-sex marriage accessible in all states, is in jail. Two opposite sex couples joined two gay couples in filing suit through the ACLU. On August 12, a U.S. Federal District Judge ordered her to issue licenses. She still refused and the matter was taken up by the U.S. Supreme Court. On August 31, they ruled that she cannot disobey the ruling by the judge (and the law). When she still failed to comply, the same judge ordered her to court on September 2 to give her a chance to comply. When she didn't, she was sentenced to jail until she agrees to abide by the law. The ACLU wanted her fined instead of jail time, which was an option. Ms Davis has been receiving her salary from the state of Kentucky, even though she stopped issuing marriage licenses on June 26. She maintains that she could not issue the licenses to gay couples because of her religious beliefs. This from a woman who has been divorced three times and married four.

## TABOO YARDIES

Mark your calendars! On Tuesday, **October 20** at 6:30 pm, PFLAG San Diego County will be co-sponsoring the West Coast premiere of a documentary film concerning the plight of LGBT people in Jamaica. The 70 minute film, *Taboo Yardies*, will be shown at The LGBT Center in Hillcrest (3909 Centre Street). The event is free of charge and light refreshments will be served.

This is a special screening because you will get to meet the filmmaker and director, Selena Blake, who will lead a panel discussion about the film and the current situation in her country.

Also attending is Angeline Jackson, a leading lesbian activist who founded Quality of Citizenship Jamaica. On his visit to Jamaica in March, President Obama praised her courageous efforts to gain basic human rights for LGBT people.

National PFLAG, Washington, DC  
(202) 647-8180, www.pflag.org

## NEXT UP



**Trevor Hill** is the recipient of the **Rob Benzon Memorial Scholarship**. The Rob Benzon Foundation has proudly donated scholarships for the past 10 years. Foundation Board Secretary, Dan Ferbal, presented the scholarship to Trevor.

Trevor is a freshman at New York University, majoring in Economics. During part of his senior year at High Tech High, he served as an intern at the San Diego Human Dignity Foundation and was instrumental in making the first Launching Leaders Luncheon a success.

The Director of High Tech High was very impressed with Trevor's intelligence (GPA of 4.26), his compassion, his maturity, and sense of humor. As Student Senate President, he was required to attend most weekly faculty meetings and he fit right in. He is heralded universally among the staff as the brightest, most well rounded student in the class of 2015 (no small feat considering 100% of their graduates are college bound).

"The toughest issue I have faced as a gay man is being underestimated academically because of my sexuality. Too often, gay men, as well as other parts of the LGBTQ community, are treated like we're all the same. However, in my experience, the LGBTQ community isn't oriented around being alike; it's oriented around embracing uniqueness and difference. This is a fact that even some of the LGBTQ elements of our society tend to forget.

Last year, after my regular salon went out of business, I went on the hunt for a new stylist. I found one named James working at a local salon with great Yelp reviews, and decided to try him out. During the haircut, James and I talked quite a bit. He was a very flamboyant and openly gay man, and

although he butchered my hair, I had a fun time with him. We talked about all sorts of things, including my school, my boyfriend, and the costume I was sewing for Halloween. However, things got uncomfortable when James asked me what I aspired to do after high school. When I told him I wanted to go to NYU to study economics and poli-sci, he frowned. He asked me what I wanted to do after college, and when I replied that I intended to be a politician, he grew even more visibly upset. 'You said you like sewing,' he said, 'you should try fashion or something.'



While there's certainly nothing wrong with working in the fashion industry, one has to wonder what would motivate a gay man to dissuade another from entering politics, where our community is so grossly underrepresented. In my opinion, this is a clear example of a member of the gay community being indoctrinated to believe that homosexuals should act a certain way and belong in certain fields of work (not including politics, apparently). This is a tragedy. While there are many similarities between most gay men that lead many of us down similar career paths, it's hurtful to people like me to have our dreams brushed aside when they don't fit the 'norm' for our community.

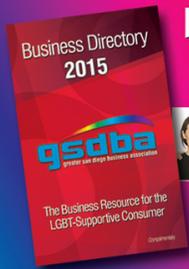
In order to prove to myself and others that I, and certainly all gay men, can be more than just stereotypes, I aim to receive a high quality college level education at NYU and use said education to become a successful politician and campaign for gay rights. While there are certainly a few notable LGBTQ politicians out there, most are not well known or are not vocal about their sexuality. Some, I suspect, are even still in the closet (think Floridian senators). I, on the other hand, intend to be vocal about LGBTQ rights issues and represent my community

in a way that makes them confident in their ability to play an important role in politics.

I've done everything I can on a personal level to make this dream a reality. I'm studious, I get good grades, I put forth my best work, I take extra rigorous classes, and I read political articles day and night. However, while I've put all the necessary work into reaching my lofty goals, I still face the issue of money. NYU is an expensive school, and while I have received a very generous financial aid package, I'm still far below the amount of money I need to be able to attend the school in the Fall without accumulating crippling lifelong debt. This is where PFLAG comes in. I consider myself a promising candidate for the PFLAG scholarship because with every dollar received, my dream of fighting for the LGBTQ community in the political world comes closer to becoming a reality, and that is certainly in the best interest of a group whose aim is to 'promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through support, to cope with an adverse society, education, to enlighten an ill-informed public and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights,' according to the PFLAG About page."

## SPIRIT DAY

Millions go purple on Spirit Day to stand against bullying and show their support for LGBT youth. Originated by GLAAD, this year, it will be celebrated **Tuesday, Oct 15**. Observed annually since 2010, individuals, schools, organizations, corporations, and public figures wear purple, which symbolizes spirit on the rainbow flag. For the last several years, President Obama participated by having the White House bathed in purple lights. Spirit Day draws the participation of celebrities, corporations, media outlets, sports leagues, schools, faith institutions, national landmarks, and individuals.



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UPCOMING MEETINGS

Sept 17, Oct 15: North County Inland Kathie: 858-382-9156

Oct 5: North County Coastal Annette: 760-518-3345

Sept 21, Oct 19: Mi Familia Support Group Patti: 619-227-6092

Oct 12: East County Support Grp Bob: 619-334-8214

Luan D. Andrews, M.A.

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