



THE NEWSLETTER

February 2016

ISSUE 2

VOLUME 23



WELCOME, 2016 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Please join us for our general meeting on **Monday, February 22** at 7:00 pm at Jewish Family Service (JFS), 8788 Balboa Avenue, San Diego. **PLEASE NOTE, WE MEET ON THE 3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH, NOT FEBRUARY 29.**

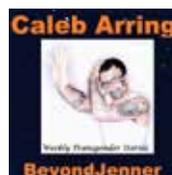
Our guest speaker is Paul Messerle, who was not only Teacher of the Year at Rancho Bernardo High School, but also for the San Diego Unified School District, the County of San Diego, and was one of the top 10 finalists in the State - all with being an out, gay teacher.

Paul will touch upon topics such as being in denial as a kid/teen, getting harassed in school, coming out and being out as a teacher, being a co-advisor for the GSA, and teaching the full spectrum of LGBTQ+ youth in school. Phew!

Please join us for support groups, then the cookie social, followed by Paul's presentation.

BEYOND JENNER PODCAST

One of our PFLAG members, Jo Eager, brought to our attention that her son, Caleb Arring, conducts weekly interviews that explore the experiences of many different transgender people. Every Thursday at noon, there are new episodes.



Caleb, who transitioned in 2003, has a take that Caitlin Jenner's bravery created mass awareness of transgender issues and the existence of transgender people, but her experience is different from most. What is the story behind transgender people who do not have the resources to be glamorous enough to come out on the cover of Vanity Fair beautifully polished? The Beyond Jenner Podcast explores just that, the non-celebrity trans person. Through a series of interviews, the podcast shines a light on experiences of trans people from all walks of life.

To see the interviews, go to beyondJenner.com. You can check out previous interviews there, as well. Any comments or questions, tweet Caleb @BeyondJennerPod or email him at BeyondJenner@gmail.com.

EDUCATOR MIXER: SUPPORT LGBTQ + YOUTH

On **Friday, February 26**, GLSEN SD (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network), The Trevor Project, Lambda Archives, and San Diego Pride are laying out the welcome mat for their very first joint educator reception. All educators, administrators, counselors, and youth-serving individuals are invited for an evening of socializing and sharing best practices in support of LGBTQ + Youth. This is a great way to build valuable networks within the LGBTQ community.

The event, held at The T Lounge, 1475 University Avenue in Hillcrest, is free, and light refreshments will be provided. Additionally, The T Lounge is offering special deals on food and drinks.

Please RSVP by February 24 through Google Forms: <http://goo.gl/forms/uOv39VqlxC>

NOTEWORTHY MOVIES AND BOOKS

Although PFLAG isn't in the entertainment business, we would like to pass on good entertainment LGBT information. *The Danish Girl* is based on the true love story of Danish artists Einar Wegener, who would later become Lili Elbe, and his devoted wife, Gerda. In 1930, Lili underwent one of the first sex reassignment surgeries and is considered a transgender pioneer. *Carol* is based on an acclaimed lesbian romance novel that takes place in the 1950s. Two women develop a fast bond that becomes a love with complicated consequences.

There is a new children's book, *Introducing Teddy*, which is a gentle story about a teddy bear who identifies as female. It's a positive picture book about friendship, identity, and being yourself. Another book, intended for grades 3-7, is *George*. It is about a 9 year-old transgender girl. Finally, an inclusive textbook, *Students, Teachers and Leaders Addressing Bullying in School* that the first textbook in which children, teachers, families, school leaders, community members, social justice-oriented organizations, and scholars have come together to address issues of bullying in schools and promote culturally responsive practices and policies. Getting this into the San Diego County School District is another matter.

NOW OR LATER STILL SHOWING

The Diversionary Theatre's *Now or Later* continues through **March 13**. For the synopsis, performance times, and ticket info, go to www.diversionary.org. You can also call 619-220-0097. When ordering, use the Promo Code PFLAG for a \$5 discount.

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or go online www.pflag.com (forms available)

VISION STATEMENT

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.

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

Current Events

February 18 | Thursday
North County Inland

February 22 | Monday
San Diego Metro General Meeting and Support Group

Through March 13
Now or Later
Diversionary Theatre
(see article)

March 7 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Coastal

March 17 | Thursday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Inland

March 21 | Monday
Mi Familia Support Group

GET IN THE MEMBERSHIP SPIRIT!

Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership for 2016. We are looking forward to receiving more renewals or first time dues. These monies are used to provide support, education, and advocacy on behalf of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender community and their families. They enable us to provide monthly meetings, an info line, newsletters, educational brochures, etc.

Please send your dues to PFLAG San Diego, as \$15 of it is sent to PFLAG National. If you renew with them, there is no benefit for our San Diego chapter.

The membership application is in this newsletter and also on our web site (www.pflag.com). We accept PayPal for your convenience. You can also pay at any of the meetings or mail a check made payable to: PFLAG San Diego, P.O. Box 82762, San Diego, CA 92138. All donations and memberships are tax deductible.

SUPPORT GROUPS

SD COUNTY GENERAL MEETING & SUPPORT GROUP

Meets every 4th Monday at 7:00 pm, at Jewish Family Service, 8788 Balboa Ave, San Diego in Kearny Mesa.

For further information, contact the Info Line:
888-398-0006 or www.pflag.com

NORTH COUNTY COASTAL

Meets the 1st Monday, at 7:00 pm, North County LGBTQ Resource Center, 510 North Coast Hwy, Ste C, Oceanside.

Contact northcountycoastal@pflag.com or Annette Ottone, 760-518-3345

NORTH COUNTY INLAND

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:00 pm, Windermere Homes & Estates, 16783 Bernardo Center Drive, Rancho Bernardo.

Contact Kathie Moehlig: 858-382-9156 or northcountyinland@pflag.com

EAST COUNTY

The Support Group is not presently meeting.

Contact Terrie Vorono: 619-997-6139 or tvorono@pflag.com

ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDER

The Support Group is not presently meeting. We are looking forward to re-starting in the spring.

Contact email: sandiegoapipflag@gmail.com

SOUTH BAY

The Support Group is not presently meeting. For a private meeting for support and concerns, call for an appointment.

Contact: Patti Boman, 619-227-6092 or pboman@pflag.com

MI FAMILIA (Spanish)

Meetings are the 3rd Monday of the month; 6:30-8:00 pm at The Center, 3909 Centre St, Hillcrest

Contact Patti Boman, 619-227-6092

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT

For more information on the Transgender Support Group

Contact Kathe Dunn, ftm_mom@yahoo.com

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A CURIOUS TURN OF EVENTS



Last November, a very diverse crowd of over one hundred people had gathered for the "Love Not Hate" protest in front of ATLAH World Missionary Church in Harlem, which had become notorious due to the signs that the pastor displayed - a series of incendiary messages inciting hatred and violence against the LGBT community.

"Where are the rest of the faggots?" was the mantra of Rev. (one must use this term lightly) James David Manning as he screamed at kids from the Ali Forney Center and the rest of the crowd gathered in protest of his hate speech. The Center's mission is to help homeless LGBTQ youth be safe and become independent as they move from adolescence to adulthood. Studies have found that LGBTQ youth comprise up to 40% of the homeless youth population in New York City, so for them to hear this hate speech had to be very difficult since most were thrown out of their homes after hearing such speech all the time.

The evening got worse when Manning came out with a small group of his congregation. He had an amplified microphone, and he screamed, using the most vile hate language imaginable, taunting the group with homophobic, transphobic, racist, and misogynist epithets.

Then something remarkable happened in January. Apparently, Manning hadn't been paying his bills (owed to the tune of \$1.2 million). His church building had been foreclosed and is being put up for public auction on February 24. Immediately, the good people of the neighborhood who had organized the protest, implored the Executive Director of the Ali Forney Center to try to buy the building and turn a place of hatred into a place of compassion for homeless LGBT youth. Realizing the remarkable opportunity to acquire a residential building only three blocks from their drop-in center, where they provide over 1,000 homeless LGBT youth with food, clothing, medical care, and educational and vocational services, they launched a campaign to raise funds to turn the ATLAH church into a housing program for the Center's kids. They started a GoFundMe campaign and have been progressing very well to raise the \$200,000 necessary to buy the church of hate.

Of course, now Manning has been giving "over my dead body" speeches that the gays (only he didn't use that polite word) will never own "his" church. Come February 24, he may be "dead" wrong.

SPREAD THE WORD TO LGBT SCHOLARS

PFLAG San Diego hopes everyone is busy reminding LGBT seniors, full-time undergraduate, and graduate students to apply for PFLAG scholarships. This is our 18th year of offering scholarships

The application and requirements are available on our web site, www.pflag.com/scholarships. The deadline to apply is **Tuesday, March 15, 2016** and the awards presentation for our annual Launching Leaders Luncheon will be **Friday, May 13, 2016** from 11:30 am-2:00 pm. Anyone who attended last year will testify that we've come a long way in our presentation of the scholarships and the fanfare that is rightly due the recipients.

Besides applying for our local scholarships, LGBT high school seniors can also apply for National PFLAG scholarships. These scholarships are open to allies, as well. Applications are being accepted until **April 15, 2016**. For information and requirements, go to www.community.pflag.org/scholarship. Two of our scholarship recipients from 2014 also received National's scholarships.

For local scholarship questions, contact scholarship chair, Hillary Flocke: scholarships@pflag.com.

CAPITOL LGBT

On February 2, the Council of the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C.'s governing body, unanimously passed B21-168, the LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act, and once it is signed by Mayor Muriel Bowser, the district will be the first jurisdiction in the nation to require LGBTQ cultural competency training for health care providers. The bill sets this needed training by requiring any health care professional who is required to receive continuing education to include at least two credits of LGBTQ-related clinical or cultural competency training.

Even in the district, where LGBTQ people have some of the strongest legal protections in the country, they still have disparate health outcomes and unique health care needs. As an example, gay and bisexual men are at higher risk for STIs and anal cancer, lesbians and bisexual women are at higher risk for breast and gynecological cancers, and transgender people may be at risk for behavioral health conditions like depression or cancers not typically associated with their gender presentation. If a medical providers does not know how or feel comfortable asking about a patient's same-sex sexual contact or their gender-related medical history, they may not screen for important risk factors or know what other questions they should be asking.

High marks for the Capitol.

HOMOPHOBIC DOCTORS NOT WELCOME

Dr. Paul Church (ironic, isn't it?) who sent antigay emails to colleagues has lost his final appeal to maintain his affiliation with Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He lost his appeal to the Boston hospital's board of directors to overturn a decision revoking his admitting privileges and other connections with the institution. He had been affiliated with the hospital for 28 years.

Over the past decade, Church had objected to LGBT Pride observances at Beth Israel. He had sent emails to hospital staff containing antigay statements and had posted similar comments on Beth Israel's internal website.

In 2011, a Beth Israel peer review committee reprimanded Church, and told him to stop communicating with staff regarding his views on homosexuality. Last year, hospital officials said he had violated that order on communications, citing website posts such as this one in 2013:

"Celebrating sexual perversions is highly inappropriate, especially in the context of a medical center that should be aware of the negative health consequences of high risk behaviors. It also ignores and dishonors the religious convictions and moral objections that many members of the hospital community share who are opposed to these behaviors."

That resulted in Church's appearance before Beth Israel's medical executive committee, which voted to sever the hospital's connections with him; he appealed the decision to the board of directors, but it was upheld. The statement with the news media said his behavior was inconsistent with its "established standards of professional conduct."

LGBT SPORTS UPDATE

Billy Bean has been promoted to vice president for social responsibility and inclusion by Major League Baseball. MLB has also added Curtis Pride as an ambassador for inclusion.

Bean came out as gay in 1999, four years after his final major league season. He was hired by MLB in July, 2014 as a consultant and given the title ambassador for inclusion.

Bean will oversee MLB's workplace code of conduct and anti-bullying programming and continue to develop strategies with a focus on the LGBT community.

Pride has been deaf since birth. He spent parts of 11 seasons in the majors through 2006. He is to encourage participation and equal opportunity for MLB's youth programs, help develop an educational and training forum and be a resource for disability issues. He will remain at Gallaudet, where he is entering his eighth season as baseball coach; Gallaudet is a leading university for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

We need lots of support from the World of Sports.

SHARING IS CARING

Since early December, Lambda Archives of San Diego's exhibit space has been brightened by an exhibit on loan from some folks at San Diego Unified School District.

Six paintings created by San Diego students at the Youth Safe Zone at Pride 2015 now adorn their walls, accompanied by a display of photos and testimonials from students involved with Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in San Diego schools.

These beautiful and powerful materials were part of a month-long display for LGBTQ History Month at San Diego Unified's district building.

They have chosen to complement this exhibit with a small display of some of their own materials related to the Briggs Initiative — also known at the time as Proposition 6 — the 1978 ballot measure that, if approved, would have banned gays and lesbians from working in California's public schools.

Included in that display are "No on 6" campaign posters, newspaper clippings related to the initiative from San Diego editorial pages and internal campaign documents from Save Our Teachers, the group working against the Briggs Initiative in San Diego.

The progress highlighted by the juxtaposition of these two displays is significant; the community has certainly come a long way from the community's defensive position during the No on 6 campaign in 1978, to the student art and testimonials provided by middle and high school GSAs in 2015. The successful messaging used by the No on 6 campaign — deflecting attention from "the issue of homosexuality" by emphasizing free speech, separation of church and state, calling the initiative "unnecessary, dangerous, and expensive" — stand in stark contrast to some of the words on these paintings. One panel proclaims, "I am happy to be gay," "trans is beautiful," and "love is universal."

Says Jen LaBarbera, lead archivist at Lambda Archives, "We've been honored to host these materials from San Diego's LGBTQ youth and GSAs for the past month. It's not often we get a chance to juxtapose such contemporary materials with our historic collections in our exhibit space, so do stop by the Archives before the end of February to see this education-and youth-focused exhibit while it's still here."



UPDATE ON SDUSD LGBTQ STATUS

The article below was written by Kevin Beiser, San Diego Unified school board member and a former board president. Although what he reports is accurate, the difficult road to get there isn't mentioned in the article. Changes did not happen in a timely manner. It was only after much kicking and screaming by members of the LGBT Community that changes were made. In addition, the school board had to have accountability by the February 9 Board Meeting so they had to get moving as to not embarrass themselves.

"This week, the state's leading education publication reported that of the 10 largest districts in California, only San Diego Unified has an accountability plan to improve the lives of its LGBTQ students.

The Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) is the measure by which school districts across the state keep track of the promises they have made to the communities they serve. The fact that San Diego's LCAP contains an emphasis on LGBTQ students is the result of years of hard work and struggle by this diverse community.

On February 9, the San Diego Unified School Board received a progress report on implementation of our LGBTQ programming. As a member of the board, I am pleased to report the progress was substantial. As a lifelong activist on LGBTQ issues, I know a lot more work must be done before our schools are worthy of all our students. Now is the time to finish our work on their behalf.

Creating schools that are safe and welcoming for LGBTQ youth is not simply an academic issue. We know from research that 9 out of 10 LGBTQ youth are bullied, and LGBTQ youth are four times more likely to take their own lives compared with heterosexual youth. Keeping our commitment to provide LGBTQ students with welcoming schools is literally a question of life and death.

With this in mind, San Diego Unified created the Office of Youth Advocacy last April and just hired our first-ever employee focused solely on service to LGBTQ youth.

Last fall, the board approved an ambitious LGBTQ agenda set by Superintendent Cindy Marten. That agenda included more LGBTQ-dedicated staff members, easier reporting of bullying incidents, increased training for teachers and administrators, curriculum changes and a system-wide survey to identify areas where our children feel unsafe or isolated. It was nothing short of historic.

Since that time, we've made progress across our entire system of more than 100,000 students. We've implemented Seth's Law, Assembly Bill 9, named for Seth Walsh of Tehachapi, a young boy who hanged himself after relentless bullying due to his perceived sexual orientation. Our policy

on bullying and intimidation now requires investigation and documentation by the principal or a designee at the school involved.

San Diego Unified staff is required to complete training in these new procedures, our enrollment forms now allow students to make their own decisions about their gender identity, and our teaching and learning department is developing a new curriculum — based on the FAIR Act, Senate Bill 48 — that includes the contributions of the LGBTQ community. The school board passed a resolution recognizing the many contributions of our community during LGBTQ history month.

As of this week, the web page for every school in the San Diego Unified district contains an online reporting form for bullying activity. This week, we also began piloting an online school climate survey based on work by the Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN). The results of this survey should be available next month, allowing the school board and the district to begin assessing the size and scope of the bullying problem within our schools system. The response to these issues will be led by our first-ever LGBTQ program manager, who was also hired this week.

Despite these dramatic gains, we know there is more work to be done. On Tuesday night at our board meeting, we heard a heart-wrenching letter from a young woman, whose transgender friend does not feel welcome or accepted at their school. Superintendent Marten spoke for the entire district and those of us on the school board, when she told the young woman, 'We simply will not allow anyone to feel unsafe and unwelcome at one of our schools.'

Together, we can finish building a school system that is worthy of our LGBTQ youth."

CAN YOU BE A GOOD DEED DOER?

WANTED: sponsors for the Launching Leaders Luncheon. After last year's inaugural LLL to honor our scholarship recipients, it became clear that we would like to expand the event so that more people can attend. We are soliciting sponsors ranging from \$400 to sponsor a table of eight to \$1000 to be an Awardee Sponsor. To check out the Sponsorship Package, go to www.pflag.com, click on the Education & Advocacy tab, then Scholarships from the drop down menu, then Support our Students. You may also purchase individual tickets for \$60 on the same page. For questions, please contact Ian Morton at ian@sdhdf.org.

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT



Ellen DeGeneres thanked President Obama during a visit to her show for “what you’ve done for the gay community.”

“I cannot tell you, or thank you enough, for what you’ve done for the gay community,” the out comedian and host said to applause. “So, thank you.”

“It’s one of the things I’m proudest of,” the president said, “because my whole political career has been based on the idea that we constantly want to include people and not exclude them. How do we bring more and more people into opportunity and success and feeling hopeful about their lives?”

During his presidency, Obama passed hate-crimes legislation, repealed the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, and he evolved on marriage equality before his reelection, proving to Democrats that it was possible to win even while backing marriage equality. His administration refused to defend the Defense of Marriage Act from challenge at the Supreme Court, where it eventually was ruled unconstitutional. And most recently, Obama issued an executive order banning employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity by any company that has contracts with the federal government. His Defense Department is now

WHO IS THE MOVABLE MIDDLE?

Many years ago, PFLAG embarked on a billboard campaign, Project Open Mind, to change people’s minds and hearts as it relates to LGBT persons. The project was capably led by Board Secretary at the time, Gail Folkman. The idea was that there were so many people who didn’t have a strong opinion one way or the other regarding LGBT issues/people, and PFLAG’s job was to move them from the uncertain middle to a positive and pro position on LGBT matters. So who is the movable middle?

1) People who are wrestling with their understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons. 2) People in our own LGBT community (yes, allies too), who are wrestling and being held hostage through fear about speaking and living authentically. 3) People who are wrestling because

examining how to allow full service for transgender members of the military. And the president supports passage of the Equality Act through Congress, though it’s stalled there. In November, *Out* magazine named Obama Ally of the Year, and he posed for the cover — the first president ever to do that for an LGBT publication.

Still, while Obama’s changed policies, he gave DeGeneres a lot of credit for changing hearts and minds.

“But I will say, we were driving over here today — and I meant this. I said it to my staff — I said, as much as we’ve done with laws and ending ‘don’t ask, don’t tell,’ et cetera, changing hearts and minds -- I don’t think anybody has been more influential than you on that,” he told DeGeneres. “I really mean that.”

Obama praised her “courage,” which dates back to coming out on her ABC sitcom and with the landmark 1997 cover of *Time* magazine, headlined “Yep, I’m Gay.”

“You being willing to claim who you were, that suddenly empowers other people,” the president said. “And then suddenly, it’s your brother, it’s your uncle, it’s your best friend, it’s your coworkers. And then attitudes shift. And the law is followed, but it started with folks like you. I’m so proud of you.”

Of course, Ellen shot back, “Well, thank you,” she said. “I’m not really gay.”

“But, on TV, you play one and it’s great,” the president joked back.

“I just thought it would work and,” she said to laughs, “and I’ve had to stick with it, because people were responding.”

they don’t have a foundation for understanding transgender and intersex persons. This includes our own community of gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, questioning and ally persons, as well as heterosexual persons.

The question is: How can we change the world if we don’t know our neighbors? This question led to the realization that, “You can’t hate someone whose story you know.” That works both ways. Through everyday interactions, creating authentic connections, and dissolving/transcending differences that separate us is a big step. Being inclusive, we also avail ourselves to those who hold firm beliefs that do not match our sense of who we are.

Together, we can move the middle.

Luan D. Andrews, M.A.

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