



THE NEWSLETTER

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HEAR YE, HEAR YE! County-wide Support Group Coming Your Way

On August 15 at 10:00 am, there will be a Virtual Countywide Support Group Meeting. These will occur monthly, the third Saturday of the month. PFLAG SDC chapter President Tiffany Gonzalez will co-facilitate with Patti Boman from the South Bay Support Group. For the link, please email admin@pflag.com.

Individual support groups will continue to meet virtually. We encourage you to contact your support group facilitator at any time, as they will remain excellent resources for information. The support group locations, dates, and times will continue to be posted on the PFLAG San Diego County Facebook page. You can join in any of the digital meetings. For Zoom links, contact each support group.

Metro Support Group, metrosdc@pflag.com (third Monday of the month)

North County Inland Support Group, RBPowaysdc@pflag.com (second & fourth Tuesdays of the month)

North County Coastal Support Group, northcountycoastalsdc@pflag.com (first Monday of the month, except for September. The meeting will be the second Monday)

South Bay Support Group, southbaysdc@pflag.com (first & third Tuesdays of the month)

East County Support Group, eastcountysdc@pflag.com (third Monday of the month)

4S Del Sur Support Group, 4Sdelsursdc@pflag.com (second Tuesday of the month)

Ramona Support Group, contact northcountyinlandsdc@pflag.com

Mi Familia (Spanish), cramos@thecentersd.org (second & fourth Tuesdays of the month)

Poway LGBTQ Youth Support Group (Our Space-Poway) for High School, al@transfamilysos.org (second & fourth Tuesdays of the month)

Our Space-Poway For LGBTQIA Middle School, dez@transfamilysos.org (second & fourth Tuesdays of the month)

Transfamily Support Group, contact info@transfamilysos.org

The Gender Phluid Collective, thegpcollective@gmail.com (every Saturday)

Transfamily Support Group, info@transfamilysos.org

LGBTQ+ YOUTH SUPPORT

For middle school to college age, there is an LGBTQ+ Youth Virtual Support Group every Tuesday at 6:30 pm until August 25. For the link, contact info@transfamilysos.org.

REST IN PEACE, JOHN LEWIS



Editorial credit: Joseph Sohm / Shutterstock.com

Beloved civil rights leader and congressman John Lewis, who died on July 17, wrote this essay shortly before his death.

"Though I was surrounded by two loving parents, plenty of brothers, sisters and cousins, their love could not protect me from the unholy oppression waiting just outside that family circle. Unchecked, unrestrained violence and government-sanctioned terror had the power to turn a simple stroll to the store for some Skittles or an innocent morning jog down a lonesome country road into a nightmare. If we are to survive as one unified nation, we must discover what so readily takes root in our hearts that could rob Mother Emanuel Church in South Carolina of her brightest and best, shoot unwitting concertgoers in Las Vegas and choke to death the hopes and dreams of a gifted violinist like Elijah McClain.

Like so many young people today, I was searching for a way out, or some might say a way in, and then I heard the voice of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on an old radio. He was talking about the philosophy and discipline of nonviolence. He said we are all complicit when we tolerate injustice. He said it is not enough to say it will get better by and by. He said each of us has a moral obligation to stand up, speak up and speak out. When you see something that is not right, you must say something. You must do something. Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation

John Lewis continued page 3



WELL SAID

Olivia Ottone, daughter of Annette Ottone, North County Coastal Regional Director and Remo Ottone, spoke at the July virtual NCC Support Group Meeting. What she said was very touching and informative; it's shared for all to read.

"Thank you for the opportunity to share w/you during this month's meeting! My name is Olivia. I'm 26, queer, I use she or they pronouns, and PFLAG has been a part of my life since

2011, when I was 17. I love the opportunity to talk about my relationship with PFLAG b/c it's ever evolving. After I came out, I directed my mom, Annette – who many of you know – to PFLAG b/c I didn't want to be her resource on how to navigate my queerness. In this respect, I was a very typical teenager. This is my original dynamic with PFLAG – a way of diverting mom's questions.

Fast-forward a bit, and my mom finds out about scholarship opportunities w/in PFLAG and encourages me to apply for the STEM scholarship, of which, I was fortunate to be the recipient. I continue to be thankful for that opportunity, especially when I reflect on the night of the awards ceremony, where all the scholarship recipients were present. This was where I started to develop a better understanding of what this group stands for, and I recently read a 'zine that I think exemplifies what I mean. It was titled *Accomplices Not Allies, an Indigenous Perspective & Provocation*. You can immediately glean from that title is that it is a definitively radical read, but central tenant feels relevant. In this 'zine, the core point is that the word 'ally' often indicates a position of passive support and solidarity – which are certainly necessary components in any advocacy work, but they're far from the whole story – and what marginalized groups often need are accomplices: people who are willing to 'fight back or forward, together, becoming complicit in a struggle towards liberation.' When I see those words and think of PFLAG, I can start to see it as a network of accomplices – people devoting real time, energy, and thought to going through the stigmas & misunderstandings of queerness alongside queer persons and figuring out how they can: 1. Create space for those individuals to feel love – this is what I see in the support groups PFLAG provides for those people, like my mom and so many others, just looking for a way to understand how the knowledge of the sexual orientation or gender identity of someone they care about influences that relationship and how they can be supportive in being trusted w/that information and 2. Lift those voices that this world

tries so hard to silence – I see this in the broader community work being done through PFLAG. This isn't to say I think PFLAG is a perfect organization – there certainly isn't one that exists – but I do think the work being done here is right. Because it is work. And it is a space that willing to listen to the needs of the communities it's trying to serve. To Nadia's point, this group reflects on who they are/aren't reaching and how they can modify their practices to better serve the entirety of the queer community, acknowledging that this is a heterogeneous group of people with distinct needs.

I mentioned that my personal relationship with PFLAG has evolved over the years, as it should, considering it's been almost nine years. However, one of the consistent associations I do have with it is that it's changed my and my family's lives. How could it not? It's been the foundation for my parents' continued education and engagement w/the queer community in the years since I moved away from home. Which, let me just say is really cool. To put it in perspective, I have exactly zero queer friends whose parents go out of their way to even learn about our communities. That's not say I don't have friends whose parents love and support them, but it's that sort of passive support I mentioned earlier. So, for those of you who are newer to PFLAG and are finding your way as someone who cares about a queer person, there's no pressure. Thank you for having the courage to come. I know it takes courage, and you being here is enough. It's more than most can say. For those of you who are less new, I challenge you to keep pushing. It's something I challenge myself with too – what are the additional questions I can be asking so that I can continue to learn and continue to support people who are in a less advantageous position than myself – and that's something that especially in this moment in history is critically important. This is a time when most of us, to varying extents, need to be listening and seeking resources. So much pain is on display right now, and we're all learning. I think the space it provides for continuous learning is one of the things I respect most about PFLAG and one of the reasons why it's remained an important part of my life.

Something else I was asked to touch on was my relationship with PFLAG and pride. For that I'll show you. My mom sent me this pin, and I have it on this backpack that I bring with me absolutely everywhere. I'm extremely proud to have this pin on my bag b/c it says "PFLAG loves me." Nowhere in there did I have to wave my own flag – someone else held it up for me. And sure, it's a little cheesy, but it feels really good to have that type of external validation that lets you take a breath for a second b/c someone else cares enough to create space to let you. And it's not right that the world we live in makes it so that that's what people need sometimes, but jeez does it bring me peace to know I have that and that people are working to provide that to others. Thank you PFLAG, mom, dad, Adam, and Sarah. It feels so good to be able to share in this space."

John Lewis continued from page 1

must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself.

Ordinary people with extraordinary vision can redeem the soul of America by getting in what I call good trouble, necessary trouble. Voting and participating in the democratic process are key. The vote is the most powerful nonviolent change agent you have in a democratic society. You must use it because it is not guaranteed. You can lose it.

You must also study and learn the lessons of history because humanity has been involved in this soul-wrenching, existential struggle for a very long time. People on every continent have stood in your shoes, through decades and centuries before you. The truth does not change, and that is why the answers worked out long ago can help you find solutions to the challenges of our time. Continue to build union between movements stretching across the globe because we must put away our willingness to profit from the exploitation of others.

Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe. In my life I have done all I can to demonstrate that the way of peace, the way of love and nonviolence is the more excellent way. Now it is your turn to let freedom ring.

When historians pick up their pens to write the story of the 21st century, let them say that it was your generation who laid down the heavy burdens of hate at last and that peace finally triumphed over violence, aggression and war. So I say to you, walk with the wind, brothers and sisters, and let the spirit of peace and the power of everlasting love be your guide.”

AIDS WALK & RUN SAN DIEGO



The AIDS Walk & Run San Diego: 2020 Challenge will take place from **Monday, September 21 – Sunday, September 27**. This year's event has been revamped in order to provide a safe experience for all, and has transitioned from a

one-day experience to a week-long opportunity, allowing walkers, runners, volunteers, and community members to participate safely and as enthusiastically as ever. The 2020 Challenge will give individuals and team members a chance to complete the traditional route or their own over the course of a week, at their own pace, and with their own “socially-distant flair.” Everyone is encouraged to join the Virtual Opening Ceremonies on **Saturday, September 26**, time: TBD.

I AM MARILYN: A MEMORIAL EVENT



On August 1, family, friends, and supporters gathered to honor and remember the life of Brawley resident, Marilyn Monroe Cazares. Marilyn was only 22 years old when her life came to a tragic and violent end on July 13. All because she was transgender.

The Cazares family, assisted by Rosa Diaz and the Imperial Valley LGBT Resource Center, PFLAG San Diego County, The San Diego LGBT Community Center, San Diego Pride, and The Gender Fluid Collective, along with other organizations and individuals, organized a march and vigil to give an affirming space for those who wished to mourn Marilyn. Area activists and transgender community members spoke as a show of solidarity and a call for justice amid violence against our transgender loved ones, while honoring the memory of a brave soul, lost far too soon. Marilyn's family hopes to bring light to the transphobia that affected her and continually affects many others.

PFLAG SDC was proud that Tiffany Gonzalez, Chapter President, represented us as she spoke so movingly about the importance of honoring Marilyn and to bring awareness to the ongoing violence against transwomen, particularly transwomen of color. Nadia Kean-Ayub, PFLAG SDC Board Secretary was also in attendance.

Our PFLAG San Diego County team is registered. Please visit www.aidswalksd.org, scroll down and click on Register, Join a Team, fill in PFLAG San Diego County, and you are ready to register! The registration fee is \$35.00 for all participants. There is also a place to make a donation if you wish. Unlike other years where we needed a minimum of 10 registrants to get our prestigious PFLAG SDC AIDS Walk Sign, this year we would like to reach our goal of \$1000. Last year, we surpassed that amount and we would like to keep the momentum going.

Our participation in AIDS Walk & Run San Diego 2020 is more important than ever. In addition to providing much-needed funds for local HIV services and prevention programs, our visible support for this event shows people living with HIV that they are not alone. With our support, San Diego will once again unite to show that we are an unrelenting force in combating HIV.

THIS IS HOW YOU SPELL SUCCESS



On July 18, Chula Vista's first PRIDE Caravan took place with an amazing turnout. There were over 125 cars that participated, all decked out with Pride decor, flags, and signs. The last stop was at the steps of Chula Vista City Hall where the Pride signs were carefully laid out on the steps for all to see.

Chula Vista resident Madison Beck was the organizer saying, "Our city is a place of love and acceptance for people of all sexualities and gender identities." The car parade was a way of displaying that intolerance is not welcome in Chula Vista.

Although you may not be able to recognize them, the PFLAGers in attendance were Tiffany Gonzalez, Nadia Kean-Ayub, Patti Boman, Bill Luna, Vicki Luna, and Brenda Aguirre.

A big thank you to PFLAG San Diego County President Tiffany Gonzalez and South Bay Regional Director Nadia Kean-Ayub for contributing so much time and effort to help make this a success. Besides PFLAG SDC, included among the organizations and individuals that participated were The Gender Phluid Collective President Angelle Maua, Chicano Federation of San Diego County Brenda Aguirre, Equality Business Alliance Eddie Rey, Mayor Mary Casillas Salas, Councilmember Steve Padilla, Nora Vargas who is running for County Supervisor, Sara Jacobs who is running for Congress, San Diego City Council President Georgette Gómez who is running for Congress, Andrea Cardenas who is running for Chula Vista City Council, and Tim Nader, Southwestern College Board Member.

PFLAG THANKS YOU

General Fund Donation
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