We Had Best Fundraising for AIDS Walk in Years

By Sara Winter

The 31st annual AIDS Walk Colorado took place on August 18. This year the PFLAG Denver Team really outdid itself and raised $2,060, the largest amount in years! (Board member Brett James was our team’s top fundraiser, and newest Board member Curtis Halbach was runner-up.) Of that amount, 65% will be returned to the chapter to continue our program of financial aid to persons and families dealing with HIV/AIDS, and the remainder will benefit the Colorado AIDS Project (CAP).

Since some of our younger and newer members are unfamiliar with this program, I’d like to review how we got into this work and why we continue.

It was a harrowing experience to live through the AIDS epidemic during the 1980s. Although several other population groups were also affected, by far the greatest number of cases occurred in gay men. It was to be expected that PFLAG Denver would rise to the occasion and offer support to families coping with intense stigma as well as the imminent loss of a loved one.

The Colorado AIDS Project was formed in 1983 and held its first fundraising walk in 1988. In 1991 PFLAG Denver applied to become a beneficiary organization, i.e., a percentage of the money our team raised would be returned to us for our own programs.

The recipients are grateful and help to spread the word about what a wonderful organization PFLAG is. We get a few thank-you notes, such as this one addressed to “P-FLAG Denver Chapter”:

“Dear Folks,

Thank you for the $29.00 payment for my accumulated rent co-pay at Dave’s Place. You sincerely impacted my transition into housing that is stable. Thanks again!!”

Call for a Senior LGBTQ Chorus

By Judith Nelson

Having sung, as a 74-year-old, recently with the Denver Gay Men’s Chorus and other women, I have become very excited about the possibility of creating a SENIOR LGBTQ chorus for our Denver community!

So — mark your calendars for the Lunch and Learn gathering at The Center on Wednesday, September 19, from 11:30 - 1:00. We will show some of the incredible 2008 film Young at Heart, which depicts a straight senior chorus from Boston, and we will be inspired. Following the film we’ll have a discussion, attended also by Kevin Crowe, a dynamic young conductor who is excited about this possibility.

I see it as a support group for our beloved elders — who have given so much in their unique lives, and are still strong, vibrant, and full of joy, all of which SINGING celebrates!

The group will also serve as a vehicle to educate against the ageism that exists in our society and our community. Here is a chance to share what our nontraditional lives have entailed and how they have ended up! By the way, straight friends of our community are also very welcome to this event and also to sing in the choir!

In a way, it will be an opportunity to “sing ourselves out!” It has been scientifically documented that singing is very good for one’s health, especially singing in a choir.

Let’s pack The Center on Sept. 19 for this “kick off” for a Denver LGBTQ Senior Chorus, perhaps the first one in the country. Incidentally, you don’t have to join the chorus to attend and to see the movie.

Please RSVP to Reynaldo at 303-951-5222 or rmireles@glbtcolorado.org.
PFLAG SUPPORT GROUPS

Wednesday, September 5
Jeffco Families Group
100 Jefferson County Pkwy, Golden
Kittridge/Pleasantview Combo Rooms
5:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 5
Denver Families Group
CHUN Mansion, 1290 Williams St.
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 12
Grupo de Alianza Familiar
CHUN Mansion, 1290 Williams St.
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 12
Transgender Community Circle
3405 N. Downing St., Suite D
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 19
PFLAG Online Community
www.freeconferencecall.com/join/pflagden
6:30 P.M.

Volunteer Voices
By Lisa Telk

Volunteer Recognition:
A HUGE thank you to Becky, a PFLAG volunteer, who helped set up at our annual membership brunch! Thank you, Becky, for all your hard work! We appreciate you!

Fall Volunteer Training:
On Monday, October 15, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the CHUN mansion, we are having another Volunteer Training. Our first volunteer training back in April was a success, when we trained three new volunteers. At this fall training in October, we are expecting at least four new volunteers to be trained.

If you are interested in attending the fall training to learn more about PFLAG in general, and what our specific Denver chapter does, please come join us! Also, if you know someone else who is interested, please let them know they are welcome to come and learn about PFLAG Denver.

If you have any questions about this training, please send me an email at lisa@pflagdenver.org.

Call for Scholarship Committee Members
We are looking for one or two new committee members who are in high school or college to join the Scholarship Committee. Members must be at least 16 years old and live in the state of Colorado.

Responsibilities include reading and selecting finalists for our annual scholarship awards. This is highly rewarding work as you get to help applicants who have made the world a better place for the LGBTQ community go to college. Other responsibilities are minimal, including 4 - 6 meetings per year and attendance at fund-raising events and the award ceremony in May.

To sign up for the committee or to find out more, email brett@pflagdenver.org or call the office at 303-573-5861.

On July 31 Senators Kamala Harris (D-CA) and Tom Carper (D-DE) introduced the Census Equality Act, to require the U.S. Census Bureau to count the nearly 10 million Americans who identify as LGBTQ in the Census and the American Community Survey.

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