Governor and Mayor March in Pride Parade

There was a time, not so long ago, when major political figures shunned PrideFest activities, so it was especially heartwarming to see these two prominent politicians marching in the Pride Parade on Sunday, June 17! At right, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper and, below, Denver Mayor Michael Hancock wave to the crowd. As always, PFLAGers turned out in large and enthusiastic numbers, and were greeted by cheers and applause.

Photos by Becky Bleiwas.

Asian/Pacific Islander LGBTQ Panel Held

By Jaime Marston Cook

On Saturday, April 28, 2018, the Sakura Foundation, the Japanese American Citizens League, Mariposa Embracing Wholeness, CU Asian-American Student Services, Asians and Friends, and PFLAG Denver hosted a panel of three diverse perspectives on the shared experiences among Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities and queer communities.

Most notable was the common theme among the panelists of having experienced microaggressions and judgment as Asian-Americans, and also as parents of/members of the LGBTQ community.

Ian Pham, Stacey Shigaya, and Patrick Walton made up the panel of presenters, bringing the 30-person audience to tears on more than one occasion with their anecdotes shared from the heart. When asked, “What did your parents do, specifically, to make you feel supported,” Patrick shared a memory of walking around San Francisco with his family many years before coming out. His parents turned to him and said, “Just so you know, we will always love you no matter who you are.” Patrick said, “I held onto that.”

This simple yet profound comment to a child reminds us of the significance of every family member and friend speaking and acting in support of the LGBTQ community.

While many API members have come from religious families bound to their ethnic communities by their churches, the tradition of studying the Bible and going to church does not always resonate with younger generations who (Cont. on p. 3)
Introducing New Board Member Curtis Halbach

Curtis Halbach is a 32-year-old Colorado native living in downtown Denver with his partner, Jeff. He grew up in Northglenn as the only child of a single mom, and graduated from Northglenn High School in the early 2000’s. He then worked in both retail and the service industries until 2013, when he went into business with his mother. They bought a retail franchise of Colorado’s Mountain Man Nut & Fruit Company. They have been able to grow their franchise into the company’s number one franchise, as well as acquire two more companies along the way, Basket World and Colorado Gift Baskets. Together, the mother and son duo are trying to conquer the gift basket world here in Colorado.

In 2017 Curtis decided to get more involved in the community and joined the Red Ball planning committee with the Colorado Health Network, the statewide organization serving persons living with HIV/AIDS. This year the ball is celebrating its 10th anniversary; it is a high energy fashion and hair show spotlighting local designers, salons and make-up artists, with the goal of raising awareness for World Aids Day.

In early 2018 Curtis learned, through one of his Red Ball fellow committee members who was on the board of PFLAG, that that board was looking for a new treasurer. He jumped at the opportunity and is now a happy member of the PFLAG Denver Board of Directors, ready to get his hands dirty and help out in any way he can.

Chapter Appreciates Scholarship Fundraisers

By Brett James

A huge THANK YOU to Lady Sativa, Blush and Blu, and Cerebral Brewing for their Pride fundraisers to benefit the Scholarship Fund!

Lady Sativa (photo below) hosted a fantastic drag show at Blush and Blu, sending us out the door with great memories from the evening and a generous and loving donation.

Cerebral Brewing kicked off Pride weekend with the sale of limited edition Pride shirts and a pint night fundraiser. Board members staffed a PFLAG table at the brewery (photo above), where we had a fun night fulfilling our mission of engaging with the community, educating folks, and handing out resources.

A total of $1,500 was raised at the two events! Thank you, Lady Sativa and Cerebral Brewing, for making college a reality for next year’s scholarship applicants!

Volunteer voices

By Lisa Telk

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped us in the booth for this year’s Pride weekend. A HUGE shout out to Becky, Leslie, Sarah, Elisa, Annette, and the Graf family! Mahatma Gandhi stated, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” This is what each and every one of you are doing with your work in the LGBTQ community.

We received such sweet and gracious emails from some of you, saying how much you enjoyed the weekend. The work we are all doing together is beneficial in moving us forward into a better world for the future!

KEEPING UP WITH CHAPTER
Support – Education – Advocacy

SPEAKERS’ BUREAU – Rebecca Reynolds did two speaking events, one at Oppenheimer and one at a school in Arvada.

HELPLINE — The office/Helpline received 15 calls this past month.

SUPPORT GROUPS – Twelve people attended the June trans support group. In addition, Rebecca Reynolds met with or had phone consults with five new families with trans kids.

OTHER ACTIVITIES — Rebecca also represented PFLAG at Colorado Foster Care and the Teen Pride event (p. 3), and she also attended the Colorado Springs Safe Schools Coalition quarterly meeting and a meeting regarding substance abuse prevention with Denver Health.

PFLAG SUPPORT GROUPS

Jeffco Families Group CANCELLED for July because of July 4 Holiday

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

Wednesday, July 11
Grupo de Alianza Familiar
CHUN Mansion, 1290 Williams St.
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, July 11
Transgender Community Circle
3405 N. Downing St., Suite D
6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, July 18
PFLAG Online Community
www.freeconferencecall.com/join/pflagden
6:30 P.M.

July 25
Board of Directors Meeting
CHUN Mansion, 6:30 P.M.

August 18
AIDS Walk Colorado

We in PFLAG feel so grateful that our volunteers give us such solid support. Thank you for being a part of our PFLAG family!

See CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS, p. 3
Asian-Pacific Islander Panel, continued from page 1

have had to forge their own way in the world.

Honor, and the fear or jeopardizing that honor, is such a strong value among Asian (and immigrant) families, it can be frightening for queer youth to risk coming out to the people they love the most. Ian spoke about the experience of growing up Vietnamese Catholic with strong family values. He says his true gender identity was “something I had been suppressing for a very long time.” Being open with his family was the biggest barrier in his life, Ian noted, and caused a world of grief. Now, his parents are more supportive, but as a young person, Ian faced the possibility of conversion therapy because his parents did not understand who he really was inside.

When Stacey spoke about her daughter’s identity as pansexual, she described it beautifully. She said, “My daughter looks at people from the inside out.” Gay, bi, or trans, someone who has a good heart and is working to make a difference in this world is more attractive, plain and simple.

PFLAG’s National office provides cultural and language resources to API families anywhere in the country who may need support. Parents can call and make a connection with someone from the same country to talk with and ask questions. PFLAG Denver is considering building a local API affinity group to meet the needs of LGBTQ families and friends, and can provide support and resources at any time.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS
Please help us raise money for the 31st Annual AIDS Walk Colorado, to be held on Saturday, August 18, at Cheesman Park and sponsored by the Colorado Health Network (CHN), formerly Colorado AIDS Project. If you all would post on your Facebook pages to gather donations, that would be great!

Please join PFLAG Denver’s team! Just follow these steps:

- Go to www.aidswalkcolorado.org
- Click on “Walk or Run”
- Click on “Join a Team”
- Scroll down the team list to PFLAG Denver.

Our goal is $1,500 this year. If we meet the minimum the minimum required, 35% will be retained by CHN and 65% will be returned to our chapter. We then use this money to assist needy persons with HIV/AIDS and their families.

More information will be provided in the August newsletter issue and via email. AIDS and HIV infection is still with us. Thank you for helping out!

Teen Pride Event — On Saturday, June 9, the Arvada Public Library hosted their 2nd Annual Teen Pride event. The event was free and organized by Tana Lucero, Teen Services Librarian at the Arvada Library.

The theme of the day was “Express Yourself!” and there were plenty of ways for all involved to do just that! Sign-making for the Pride Parade, sidewalk art, a clothing swap with clothing donated by the Gender Identity Center, and an extremely popular button-making station were just a few of the activities available to the crowd of teens that attended the event. PFLAG partnered with the JeffCo Safe Schools Coalition to provide reading material and resources to all who attended.

A drag queen story time and a panel of guest speakers attracted everyone inside the library and created a great opportunity for conversation and questions. It was magical to see everyone interacting with each other, connections being made and phone numbers swapped as the event was wrapped up with a celebratory cake.

Call for help from Colorado Foster Care — Colorado needs 1,200 new foster families. Every month, but especially during Pride month, they are encouraging the LGBTQ community to help. If you are interested in becoming a foster or adoptive parent in Colorado please visit their website http://www.co4kids.org/foster-care-and-adoPTION for more information or contact Mary Gerlach at mary.gerlach@state.co.us.