

True Colors Annual Conference
True Colors XVII: Focusing on OUR Families
Friday, March 12 & Saturday, March 13, 2010
University of Connecticut - Storrs, CT



The Voice of PFLAG Hartford

Caring

Volume 19, No. 2

March/April 2010

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

PFLAG HARTFORD & TRUE COLORS WILL AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS to LGBTI students or allies. Application forms for the Brill Scholarship will be available at the True Colors Conference, to be held at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, on March 12 & 13, as well as on our PFLAG Hartford website (www.PFLAGHartford.org). Just click on the True Colors link. **Deadline to apply is April 15.**

OUR PFLAG HARTFORD CHAPTER is a proud sponsor of the *True Colors Conference* for youth, to be held at the UConn Storrs campus on March 12 and 13. On those days, we will have a PFLAG Hartford booth where we will hand out pamphlets and information. We need volunteers, so if you attend the conference, please stop by our table and perhaps lend a helping hand for an hour or two.

PFLAG is a welcoming place for parents and friends of lesbians & gays, but we are much more than that. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people are also encouraged to attend our meetings. GLBTI people come with or without their family members, and parents and friends come with or without their GLBTI loved ones. PFLAG is for YOU!

PFLAG HARTFORD MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP MEETS: Third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., Immanuel Congregational Church House, 10 Woodland Street (Just North of Farmington Ave.), Hartford. For more information, please call Marie & Bob at (860) 633-7184 or Becky & John at (860) 633-5111.

REFRESHMENT REMINDER:

March 17 – Scott F.

April 21 – Scott L.

May 19 - Jeanne L.

June 16 – Scholarship Presentations
& Reception

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Student/Limited Income: \$10

Household Membership: \$40

Individual Membership: \$25

*Please make your check payable to **PFLAG Hartford** and Send it to
Joan Jansen, 12 Colchester Commons, Colchester, CT 06415*

**UPCOMING PFLAG
HARTFORD
BOARD MEETING
7:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 14
Hosted by Donna S.**

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and their families and friends through:

SUPPORT: To cope with an adverse society

EDUCATION: To enlighten an ill-informed public

ADVOCACY: To end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

UPCOMING /ONGOING EVENTS

- **RAINBOWROOM:** (a program of the **Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective**) - - A welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning "LGBTQ" teens (13-21 years old). RainbowRoom meets the third Sunday of every month, 3-6 p.m., 1841 Broad Street (Health Collective building), Hartford. For more information please visit our website at <http://www.hglhc.org/> or contact lizy@hglhc.org or call 860/278-4163.
- **HGLHC TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP:** Group is currently not meeting. Updated information will be posted as changes are made. More Info at: <http://www.hglhc.org/> or lizy@hglhc.org or call 860/278-4163.
- **TRANS SOFFA SUPPORT GROUP IN CONNECTICUT:** This is a group for Significant Others, Family, Friends and Allies of Transgendered, Transsexual and Gender Variant people (SOFFAs). Trans people who are SOFFAs are welcome. Meetings held on the 2nd Sunday of each month and are facilitated by Kristal Barnes and Kasha Ho. Contact Kristal- u2kristal@yahoo.com 860/878-5256 or Kasha- kho@afsc.org or call 860/523-1534.
- **THE FOURTH ANNUAL TRANSGENDER LIVES: THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND LAW CONFERENCE** is being held on Saturday, April 17, 2010 at the UConn Health Center, 263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, Connecticut, from 8:00 AM till 5 PM. This all day conference is geared towards Community, Service Providers, Medical and Legal Professionals, Trans and Gender non-conforming individuals, allies and all those interested in the Health and Law issues facing the Trans and gender non-conforming communities. Please continually check our website at, TransgenderLives.org, for evolving conference information.

From your Regional Director – January 2010

Roberta “Bobbie” Barry

It’s been a wonderful six years in this role of Regional Director in New England for the National PFLAG organization. I have met many dedicated and passionate people who are bringing our mission of education, support, and advocacy to their towns and cities. It is you who make this grass roots organization so valuable to those who may be struggling for family and cultural acceptance. I wish that we were not needed in our fairly liberal New England communities; however, in spite of the progress in equality and safety, discrimination continues to fester in schools and other institutions. I thank you all for what you do to make change a reality. From the tasks of making sure there are refreshments at meetings to taking on the role of Chairperson, each individual’s contribution is of great importance to making a difference in the lives of our LGBT family and friends.

My work as Regional Director is to help the leadership in NE chapters to connect and share ideas and information among themselves as well to be an integral part of the PFLAG National work. While I try to visit as many chapters as possible, most of this volunteer work is done via the Internet and phone. There are a dozen other regional directors who volunteer throughout the country. We meet yearly in the fall in Washington, D.C. to share our joys and concerns and to learn more about how to support chapters in our respective regions. Being a part of this group provides each of us opportunities for new perspectives in our membership and work in PFLAG. We are term limited to six years, thus my note to all in the region.

I encourage any of you to consider calling or e-mailing me to ask more about the specifics of this role. Helpful skills are: basic communications via computer, data base use, written and spoken communication, and a belief in the mission of PFLAG. It is extremely rewarding. There is a small expense budget, and support from the staff in the National office. Of course, I shall continue to assist whomever decides to accept this invitation. I am not leaving PFLAG, but continuing in a new role as a National Board Member, where I hope to be of assistance in sharing the realities of grassroots chapter development in New England.

You can contact me at: bbarry29@ne.rr.com or 603-352-6854

*"No matter how I look at the issue...I cannot escape being troubled by the fact that we have in place a policy which forces young men and women to lie about who they are in order to defend their fellow citizens...For me, it comes down to integrity -- theirs as individuals and ours as an institution."
-- Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee.*

NEWS FROM PFLAG NATIONAL:

Obama Appoints First Openly Transgender Person. The Obama administration in November appointed Amanda Simpson, a member of the National Center for Transgender Equality board of directors, to a post at the Department of Commerce. Simpson, 49 and a native of Chicago, will serve as Senior Technical Advisor in the Bureau of Industry and Security. The Bureau's mission is to protect national security through the management of international trade, the enforcement of treaties, and the promotion of economic, cyber, and homeland security. She brings more than 30 years of experience working in the aerospace and defense industry, most recently serving as Deputy Director in Advanced Technology Development at Raytheon Missile Systems in Tucson, Arizona. She holds degrees in physics, engineering and business administration along with an extensive flight background. She is a certified flight instructor and test pilot with 20 years of experience.

U.S. Evangelicals' Role Seen in Uganda Anti-Gay Push. For three days in March 2009, according to participants and audio recordings, thousands of Ugandans, including police officers, teachers and national politicians, listened raptly to several American ex-gay movement speakers, including a board member of Exodus International, who were presented as experts on homosexuality. The presenters discussed how to make gay people straight, how gay men often sodomize teenage boys and how "the gay movement is an evil institution" whose goal is "to defeat the marriage-based society and replace it with a culture of sexual promiscuity." Representatives of Exodus are finding themselves on the defensive, saying they had no intention of helping stoke the kind of anger that could lead to what came next: a bill entitled the Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2009 that would impose a death sentence for homosexual behavior. They issued a letter to Uganda's president advocating against passage of the bill – but only because putting LGBT people in prison would impede the ability of their ministers to help "change" gay people to become straight.

Gay Candidates Get Support Causes May Not. There are currently at least 445 openly lesbian and gay people holding elected office in the United States, up from 257 eight years ago, according to the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, a political group that supports gay candidates. Some political scientists say the rise in openly gay candidates' winning public office is a better barometer of societal attitudes than are the high-profile fights over same-sex marriage. One reason for the shift in attitudes, some political scientists contend, is a rising number of gays acknowledging their sexual orientation openly in various walks of life, from workers on factory floors to Hollywood stars.

A WINNER!

The 57 minute DVD Anyone and Everyone deserves a place in your personal library, your PFLAG library and your church library! The modest price of \$13.95 (no shipping charges) should allow this to happen!

First aired in '07, this DVD has made the rounds of most PBS stations. Parents from all walks of life, and from very diverse ethnic backgrounds as well as diverse religious affiliations (Mormon, Jewish, Roman Catholic, Hindu, Southern Baptist) share intimate accounts of how their children came out and what affected their response. As one reviewer wrote "This is a moving portrayal of love between parents and children and the work some parents are willing to do for the sake of that love."

In this DVD we meet again PFLAG Hartford's good friend Nila Marrone as a PFLAG NYC meeting is highlighted.

Filmmaker Susan Polis Schutz was shocked when her son (just graduated from Princeton) came out to her. Watching her own son struggle, filmmaker Schutz writes "I decided to make a film that would show that anyone and everyone could have a gay child. Many families don't have as happy an ending as my story has. Gay children still have a high risk of suicide. Many communities, churches and families completely ostracize gay people to the point that they are terrified to admit they are gay. I hope that Anyone and Everyone will accomplish its mission and help make it easier for all gay people and their families to live a perfectly normal life that is respected by everyone."

Go to www.ironzeal.com to order your copy. You won't regret it! Pass it on!

Becky Glezen

HIGHER EDUCATION**Rep. Polis introduces legislation to protect LGBT students from harassment in public schools** *by Chris Geidner*

Citing “relentless harassment and discrimination” and “life-threatening violence” faced by students “based on their sexual orientation,” U.S. Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) today introduced the Student Non-Discrimination Act to prohibit such discrimination, as well as that based on gender identity, in public schools in the United States.

The bill would require that no student in public schools be “excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” based on the student’s sexual orientation or gender identity. The bill also would prohibit harassment based on either characteristic.

The bill protects LGBT allies as well, prohibiting discrimination based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the people with whom a student associates.

According to Lara Cottingham, Polis’s spokeswoman, the congressman’s office met with the Department of Justice about the bill and said that the definition of “harassment” in the bill was in keeping with guidance from the Department of Education. She also noted that the bill’s language is modeled after Title IX, the landmark legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sex in public schools.

The bill would create a private right of action, which is the ability to file a civil lawsuit, to enforce the law. It also calls on all agencies involved in funding education programs or activities to set rules and regulations to achieve the goals of the legislation.

“These actions not only hurt our students and our schools but, left unchecked, can also lead to life-threatening violence,” Polis said in a statement. “Like Title VI for minorities in the 60s and Title IX for women in the 70s, my legislation puts LGBT students on an equal footing with their peers, so they can attend school and get a quality education, free from fear.”

The bill, H.R. 4530, was introduced with 60 co-sponsors, including one Republican, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Fla.). Among the Democrats, Washington, D.C., Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton is a co-sponsor of the legislation, as are the other two openly LGBT members of Congress, Reps. Tammy Baldwin (Wisc.) and Barney Frank (Mass.)

The American Civil Liberties Union, along with several LGBT and educational organizations, already are in support of the legislation, according to information provided by Polis’s office.

ACLU Senior Legislative Counsel Christopher Anders said in a statement, “Our public schools should not be places of exclusion, but places where students feel safe and free from discrimination. The Student Non-Discrimination Act will go a long way toward protecting LGBT students and will help promote a better learning environment.”

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM GLAD RE: THE CENSUS:**

It's not just Uncle Sam - GLAD wants you to take part in the 2010 census!

This is an historic opportunity to show who we are as families. For the first time, the census will count **married same-sex couples**, in addition to counting same-sex couples living in the same household.

Visibility matters. If we're not represented as part of the community, then we're written off - legally, politically, and in the hearts and minds of other Americans. GLAD and all LGBT groups use census data in our advocacy work to make us visible to lawmakers, courts, the media, and the general public.

The last time there was a census, in 2000, there was no such thing as a "married same-sex couple." Today, because of the hard work of the LGBT community, tens of thousands of same-sex couples are legally married and living all over the country. Those couples **will be counted** by the 2010 census.

It's also important for couples who live together but are not married to participate in the census. This part of our community was undercounted last time around - let's make ourselves visible, no matter where we live and no matter whether we are married or not.

No survey can capture the wonderful variety of our community, and the 2010 census is not a perfect tool. The form has not yet evolved to include questions about individual sexual orientation or gender identity (see the helpful FAQ at ourfamiliescount.org/form for more information on this). But the counting of married same-sex couples and same-sex households represents progress. This is an historic opportunity to gather information that our community itself would never have the resources to gather. That's why participation is so important. When your census form arrives in the mail in early March, complete it, return it, and make sure you are counted!

Lee Swislow, Executive Director

THANK-YOU

Our January speaker was Hillary Weiss. Hillary is the new group mentoring coordinator for True Colors. She was an intern prior to joining the True Colors' team as a staff member. Hillary graduated from the University of Hartford in May of 2009 and is currently taking courses for a master's degree in social work at the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work.

Hillary enthusiastically informed us that group mentoring is a great way to get started in making a difference for LGBT youth in the area. The True Colors' mentoring program is best summed up as a "gay Big Brothers/Big Sisters." Group mentors commit to transporting one or two youth to one group activity a month (bowling, game night, movie night, etc.). There are activities every month in Hartford, New Haven, Fairfield and New London.

She hopes to recruit many mentors from our PFLAG Hartford family. Training to become a mentor is provided by True Colors. To learn more about becoming a one-on-one mentor or group mentor, go to our website (www.pflaghartford.org) and click on the link to True Colors. At the bottom of the True Colors' home page, click on "mentoring" and you will find detailed information about this very important program.

THANK YOU

Our February 17th meeting speaker was Stephen Thomas, Treasurer of one of PFLAG's most important allied organizations, Stonewall Speakers. Stephen is a 40-year old gay man who resides in Hamden. He works as a Managing Director at Aon Corporation. Stephen grew up, with two sisters and a brother, in a loving, supportive household in a community outside of Boston. One of his sisters is a lesbian.

Stephen came out at the age of 23 during a very difficult period of his life. He has spoken for Stonewall Speakers for the last 6 years, in an effort to educate students in Connecticut. Our thanks to Stephen for sharing his personal story and for doing this vital work.

MOVIE REVIEW:

by Donna Gore

I Can't Think Straight'

"I Can't Think Straight" is a lovely, romantic and provocative movie about finding one's true self, owning up to it, dealing with consequences, breaking down cultural barriers and feeling good about finding love.

The Writer/Director has truly captured the essence of the ups and downs of gay life in cultures in which it is not accepted. The lead actors are very skilled in their portrayals. You want them to make it. Who cares if you must have four heterosexual engagement parties before you realize it. And... the viewer is treated to a considerable background on the making and motivations for the movie. A real winner!

HGLHC
Hartford Gay & Lesbian
Health Collective
Be well, Be yourself.

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Hartford, CT
06145-2094
tel 860/278-4163
fax 860/278-5995
www.hglhc.org

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\$ _____ My name: _____

Please cut out this coupon and mail it with your check (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to our Treasurer, Joan Jansen, 12 Colchester Commons, Colchester, CT 06415.

PFLAG Hartford has been available as a resource for support to families and friends of GLBTI people in Greater Hartford, and beyond, for over 20 years. We are staffed solely by volunteers, and depend heavily on contributions to enable us to continue to educate and advocate for an end to discrimination and to make this a safer world for our GLBTI loved ones.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

True Colors XVII: Focusing on OUR Families
Friday, March 12 & Saturday, March 13, 2010
University of Connecticut - Storrs, CT

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

True Colors annual conference on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and ally youth is right around the corner. We are once again planning an incredible event – the only thing that would make it better is **YOU!**

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ Looking to strengthen your skills in a particular area? You can now enjoy one of several themed institutes throughout the conference – in depth, day-long sessions focusing on a single topic.
- ▶ Been there, done that? Been doing this work for years? How about a day of workshops designed to feed your spirit? Workshops like using laughter to heal the healer; care-giver, self-care; icebreakers – having fun, and learning new techniques for your groups and meetings.
- ▶ For our Friday opening, an award winning comedian and solo theater artist, Rich Kiamco. He received the Overall Excellence Award in Solo Performance at the NY International Fringe Festival and Best Solo Performance at the Montreal GLBT International Theatre Festival. Rich was featured on Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, appeared on Sirius XM Satellite Radio's OutQ, and his writing can be found in Take Out: Queer Writing From Asian Pacific America, and Queer Stories For Boys. For more information, go to <http://www.facebook.com/1/2c9b6;www.VOTEforRICH.com>. How do I "GO FOR IT" when the TV says I suck? Facebook, Body Fat and Reality TV: Pursuing your own personal excellence despite everything that says to give up. Rich Kiamco will speak about his journey as a gay Filipino comedian battling racism and homophobia in the entertainment industry while exploiting himself for reality TV [and any other fame he can grab.] He will include reflections on being in last year's online contest for The Big Gay Sketch Show where many True Colors attendees voted for him daily.
- ▶ For our Saturday opening, we are delighted to offer the extraordinary talents of Scott Turner Schofield, a man who was a woman, a former debutante and homecoming queen who came out in the deep South, a lesbian turned straight guy who is usually taken for a gay teenager. Scott plays with gender in ways that challenge, provoke and engage us all!

All that, plus the energy, excitement, passion and enthusiasm of over 2,000 adolescents and 1000 adults all together in the same room. Whew! How could you stand to miss it? For more information about the conference, or to register, go to: www.ourtruecolors.org.

See you there!

Robin P. McHaelen, MS

Executive Director

(This year, True Colors is going REALLY green - no printing or mailing brochures and registration is online only!)

PFLAG NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

From: Elizabeth Fregiato, PFLAG National Office

To: PFLAG Parents & Students

As many of you know, the PFLAG National office gives out thousands of dollars in scholarship money each year to lesbian, gay, bi and transgender students as well as allies. Today [Dec. 17] we are launching the 2010 scholarship program. You may access the scholarship information and on-line application at: www.pflag.org./scholarships

We look forward to having applications from regions across the country, so please apply for the program today! Application deadline is March 12.

(You may apply for both the PFLAG National and our local PFLAG Hartford/True Colors' scholarships.)

GET WELL WISHES go out to our long-time PFLAG Hartford member, Charlotte H. We are all looking forward to seeing you and Glen back at our monthly meetings as soon as possible!



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIRECTORY: If you would like to advertise your business/service in *Caring* for one year (6 issues), send your business card and a check for \$40 (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to: Jean Cormier, 156 Randal Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06110. Your Patronage of our advertisers, who help us pay the costs of sending the *Caring* newsletter to you, would be greatly appreciated by them and by us. Please mention that you saw their advertisement in *Caring*.

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Connecticut PFLAG Meetings

PFLAG HARTFORD: Information on front page or at our website: www.pflaghartford.org

Helpline: (860) 633-7184

Phone: (860) 633-5111

Transgender Issues: (860) 231-8582

PFLAG NORWALK/SOUTHWESTERN CT

When: 7:30 pm, 1st Wednesday (bi-monthly)
Jan./Mar./May/July/Sept./Nov.

Where: Triangle Community Center
16 River Street (lower level) Norwalk

Help Line: (203) 226-0257 - Sandy
or (203) 322-5380 - Lester

Email: PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com

PFLAG NORTHWESTERN CT:

Contact: Diane (860) 435-2738

PFLAG GREATER NEW HAVEN

Meetings: Church of the Redeemer, 185 Cold Spring
(Corner of Whitney Avenue.), New Haven
3rd Tues of the Month @ 7:30 pm

Phone/Help Line (203) 458-0493

Email: greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com

PFLAG SECT (SOUTHEASTERN CT)

When: Second Monday of every month,
Potluck at 6:00 p.m.; Meeting at 7:00 pm

Where: Noank Baptist Church,
18 Cathedral Heights, Noank (Groton)

Helpline: (860) 447-0884

Email: kreymundi@allianceforliving.org

Web site: www.pflagsect.org

Central and Western Massachusetts

Williamstown Area:

When: Second Sunday of every month, 2 pm

Where: First Congregational Church, Williamstown

Contact: (413) 243-2382

Springfield Area:

Where: Agawam

Contact: (413) 732-3240 or (413) 783-7709

Greenfield, MA

Help Line: 413/625-6636

E-Mail: PFLAGPV@valinet.com

**CARING IS THE BI-MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER OF
PFLAG HARTFORD**

Editor/Circulation Manager: Jean Cormier

Caring welcomes articles, letters and other submissions for publication.

Deadline: 15th of even numbered months. Send articles to: *Jean Cormier*

*156 Randal Avenue,
West Hartford, CT 06110*



STRAIGHT SPOUSE SUPPORT NETWORK:

*In Connecticut and Western Massachusetts
Monthly Support Group, Third Sunday,
West Hartford, CT.*

Contact Jane Harris at (413) 625-6636 or
janenrosie48@yahoo.com or at
www.straightspouse.org

FOR OTHER PFLAG LOCATIONS

Contact a Hartford Chapter Board Member or call the National PFLAG office at (202)638-4200. You may also sign onto PFLAG's Home Page at www.pflag.org.