



**TRUE COLORS XX ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
CELEBRATING OUR HEROES**  
*Friday, March 22 & Saturday, March 23, 2013*  
*University of Connecticut – Storrs, CT*



## ***The Voice of PFLAG Hartford***



# ***Caring***

**Volume 22, No. 2**

**March/April 2013**

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

**PFLAG HARTFORD & TRUE COLORS WILL AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS** to LGBTI students or allies who have helped move equality forward in their schools or communities. 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 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> as well as on our PFLAG Hartford website ([www.PFLAGHartford.org](http://www.PFLAGHartford.org)). Just click on the Brill Scholarship link. **True Colors must have the application, and the letters of recommendation, no later than April 20, 2013.**

**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 20 – Krista
- April 17 – Eric & Jason
- May 15 – Bev & Bob
- June 19 – Scholarship Presentation & Reception

**MEMBERSHIP DUES:**

- Student/Limited Income: \$10
- Household Membership: \$40
- Individual Membership: \$25



*(Paid membership includes a one-year subscription to **Caring & the National PFLAG newsletter.**)*

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

**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 every Sunday from 2-5 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](mailto:lizy@hglhc.org) or call 860/278-4163.
- **STONEWALL SPEAKERS** is an all volunteer speakers' bureau composed of LGBT people and allies dedicated to reducing violence and bias while promoting equality for all. We speak to thousands of Connecticut students and adults annually. Listeners will meet LGBT people and their allies in person; hear candid accounts of their lives; and receive honest, informed answers to any questions they have. Let your high school, college, business, religious group or community group know we are available. For more information please contact [coordinator@stonewallspeakers.org](mailto:coordinator@stonewallspeakers.org).
- **XX CLUB "Twenty Club"** – The Transsexual Support Group of New England meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month from 2-5 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT [www.twentyclub.net](http://www.twentyclub.net).
- **LIVING SOULFULLY** (Men Loving Men In Community) meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163.
- **MPower CT** – Social gathering for gay and bisexual men ages 18-35 meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163.
- o **TRANSGENDER LIVES: THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND LAW CONFERENCE** will be held April 27, 2013 at the UConn Health Center in Farmington, Ct. If you have questions, please email us at: [conference2013@transadvocacy.org](mailto:conference2013@transadvocacy.org)

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## **FROM THE NATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN TASK FORCE:**

At this year's 25th *Creating Change* conference in Atlanta, we came together, celebrated the successes of this past year and said enough. Enough with being marginalized. Enough with being ignored. Enough with our lives being used as political fodder.

In 2012 the country reelected the most LGBT-supportive president in our nation's history and sent a record seven "out" members to Congress. After losing 31 times at the ballot box, we won big on marriage, beating back marriage opponents in Minnesota and winning marriage equality in Maine, Maryland and Washington State.

And what makes our movement's success this last year even more powerful, more meaningful and more lasting is that it was not just LGBT people who worked for and celebrated these wins. In fact, some of the first calls and emails I got when the president came out for marriage and when marriage equality won in state after state, were from leaders of civil rights, labor, women's and other non-LGBT organizations.

**If there is just one message to take away from Election Night 2012, it is that we are not alone. We are not alone as a movement, as a people, and we need to make sure no one else is alone either.**

As a movement, as activists, as human beings, we are called upon in the very midst of our joy to say, "It is not enough until and unless all of us can experience full freedom, equality and justice." We will never be whole, we will never be free, until every single one of us feels safe to express ourselves sexually, intellectually and spiritually. We are fighting for change so we can all find support in our homes, places of worship, schools, workplaces and other public spaces.

I know that our movement can do something extraordinary if we set our intentions behind it. We just did. We will not leave any one of us behind even as the pressures to do so grow. We must not leave those behind, who just because they don't live in a big, coastal city, can't kiss their lover on the street. We must not leave behind the transgender immigrant whose true self is not honored as she is detained in the men's facility.

Yes, this is our moment to savor – an LGBT movement moment. But, if we are to be truly transformational as a movement, we must use this moment to not only benefit LGBT people but the country as a whole. That is our leadership challenge as a movement.

We are family, and we will not leave any of you behind!

Sincerely,

Rea Carey, Executive Director

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

**EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF RAISING LGBT CHILDREN** *By Heidi Stevens, Tribune Newspapers 12/19/12*

Rare is the study that explores the positive aspects of growing up gay in America.

This has everything to do with our conflicted notions about homosexuality and nothing to do with a lack of positive aspects, says psychologist Anne Dohrenwend, who contends that gay youth who enjoy a loving, safe embrace from their family have an equal - and maybe greater - shot at genuine happiness than some of their straight counterparts.

"People grow when they are challenged," Dohrenwend writes in her new book, "Coming Around: Parenting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Kids" (New Horizon Press). "Some of life's greatest lessons strain body and soul with their demands. Without a doubt, it is a hardship to suffer discrimination and yet, if one is open to it, there is much to be learned from oppression and overcoming it."

Dohrenwend, an associate professor at Michigan State University, wants her book to help parents understand the coming-out process and the full range of emotions it is likely to unleash — for their children and themselves.

"When parents accept their kids' sexual orientation, it reduces the risk for just about everything: depression, suicide, anxiety, the impact of bullying, the likelihood to smoke, the likelihood of dropping out of school," she says. "In just about every way, parental support is the key factor."

All of which paves the way for a child's sexual orientation to simply be one part of his or her identity — and a positive part, at that. Dohrenwend talks here about her book and her experience counseling families coping with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues. The following conversation is an edited transcript.

**Q: Do you hear a lot of parents say, "I just don't want my child to struggle"?**

A: That's often the reaction. I try to remind them if your child has your support and you teach them to be proud and assertive they can have every chance at happiness. This isn't the world (the parents) grew up in. The world is changing and these are different waters your kid is stepping into. Your child can have everything a straight child can have.

**Q: Including happiness...**

A: Gay people who go through the coming-out process often land on the other side with a lot of shared strengths. They tend to be resilient against negative opinions, resilient against peer pressure, have integrity and a strong sense of self, are able to be intimate and define relationships in ways that are creative and authentic. They've broken through a lot.

**Q: You advise parents not to say "I love you anyway" when their child comes out. Is that a common response?**

A: It's the most common response. It's a second-best comment. It's like telling your child, "Your hair is blond, but I love you anyway." Your child hears, "I'd love you better if you were brunette." It's a subtle way of communicating that the child is inferior, that this is a disappointment, that even though you're gay, you can be OK. It's better to say, "I love you and I'm glad you told me." It signifies to the person, "I didn't want you to stay in the closet."

**Q: You write that some parents wish their kids did stay in the closet. Why?**

A: Pretty much every gay person has heard that: "Why did you need to tell me?" There are people who deal with dissonance by blocking out that which is dissonant to the picture of what they want a relationship to be. They compartmentalize. "I don't want to know that part of you. Now I have these two things: I don't agree with homosexuality, but I love you." There are people who are not good at holding things that force them to view life as full of ambiguity and conflict and values that crash into each other. Those things cause us to grow and sometimes people resist that growth.

**Q: Do you see those parents come around?**

A: Some do, some don't. It's amazing to me how people you never think are going to, come around. People should have hope. Kids need to have hope about people coming around, and at the same time they need to learn how to move forward and grieve losses and be happy.

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### **FROM GLSEN: PROM IS FOR EVERYONE**

**"We don't agree with it and it's offensive to us."**

That's what Diana Medley, a special education teacher in Indiana, said about Sullivan High School's decision to allow LGBT students to bring dates of their choosing, regardless of gender, to prom.

In response, she and other members of the community are trying to organize a separate prom where LGBT students will not be allowed. Prom is a rite of passage for many students, and undermining that tradition in the name of prejudice sends a soul-crushing message to LGBT students in that community.

Thankfully, the school is standing by its decision to allow students to bring dates of their choosing, regardless of gender, to prom.

**JEANNE MANFORD: A MOTHER FIRST, GAY RIGHTS ACTIVIST SECOND**

PFLAG National

*Published: January 12, 2013, by Lily Percy*

President Obama spoke about Jeanne Manford in a speech he gave at the annual Human Rights Campaign National Dinner in 2009. Her son, Morty, was an important figure in New York City's gay community during the turbulent 1970s. "Soon after the protests at Stonewall 40 years ago, the phone rang in the home of a soft-spoken elementary school teacher named Jeanne Manford," he said. A police officer told her Morty had been arrested. "And then the officer added one more thing," the president continued. "'And you know he's homosexual?' Well, that police officer sure was surprised when Jeanne responded, 'Yes, I know. Why are you bothering him?'"

The shy, petite woman from Flushing, Queens, N.Y., would become an activist for gay rights. She founded the national support group Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, better known as PFLAG.

Manford died Tuesday at 92. Suzanne Manford remembers her mother's unyielding support. "When my brother needed her, she just dropped everything for him. She was like a mother bear," she says. Suzanne was 21 when Morty came out as gay. A few years earlier, Manford's oldest son, Charles, had died from an accidental drug overdose. So when Morty ended up in the hospital in 1972 after being brutally beaten at a protest rally, Suzanne says her mother knew she had to act. "My mother was beside herself with rage that anybody could hurt her child. She'd already lost one, and the fact that she could have lost another," Suzanne says, "She was seething."

After the attack, Manford wrote a letter to the editor of The New York Post, criticizing the police for not protecting him. "I have a homosexual son and I love him," she said. Two months later, she marched alongside Morty in what would eventually become New York City's gay pride march. Eric Marcus, the author of a history on the gay rights movement in the U.S., says that move was unprecedented. "It's a little hard to imagine now what that period was like, how revolutionary it was for a parent to walk in the gay pride march in New York City carrying a sign that said, 'Parents unite in support of our gay children,'" he says. "The timing was right, the time really called for someone like Jeanne, and Jeanne was there."

Then, in 1973, Manford organized the first formal meeting of PFLAG. She and 20 others gathered at a church in Greenwich Village. Soon after that initial meeting, she began to receive calls from other parents across the country wanting to start groups in their own communities. The organization has swelled to more than 350 groups nationwide with thousands of members. One of those members is former National Football League Commissioner Paul Tagliabue, whose son is gay. As a parent, he says, the support group just makes sense. "She thought it was just a normal thing to do as a mother," he says, "and that's true of most all the parents that get involved." He and his wife joined PFLAG, seeking support and guidance from parents in similar situations. "They don't think they're going out there to become politicians or advocates in a unique way. They're doing what parents should do, which is care for their kids and keep their family together," he says.

Writer Dan Savage says his mother found solace in the group because it helped her understand what it means to be gay and to be the parent of a gay child. "What Jeanne Manford did was she put it in people's heads that gay and lesbian people had parents," he says, "that we were somebody's children, and that was the first real big step in the movement toward full acceptance of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people."

Morty Manford passed away in 1992 of complications from AIDS. When he heard the news, New York City Council Member Daniel Dromm reached out to Manford. Dromm's mother was a PFLAG member and he was friends with Morty. He says he and Manford became fast friends the moment he set foot in her house. "I walked in and Jeanne had pictures of Morty on the mantelpiece and she took them down, and she showed them to me," he says. "As a matter of fact, there was a famous photo of Jeanne marching in that first pride parade, and she was so proud of having that photo, that that moment was recorded in history." Dromm says Manford received letters from gay people from all over the world, thanking her for standing up for them and for loving them unconditionally. It's that love, he says, he'll remember about her the most.

***We at PFLAG National are thrilled and humbled to share the news that our founder, Jeanne Manford, will be posthumously awarded the 2012 Presidential Citizens Medal by President Obama at a White House ceremony on Friday, February 15. The Presidential Citizens Medal recognizes Americans who have "performed exemplary deeds of service for their country or their fellow citizens." It is the second-highest civilian award in the United States, second only to the Presidential Medal of Freedom.***

**HOW WE'RE WINNING RESPECT IN SPORTS**

By Eliza Byard, GLSEN Executive Director, January 2013

If you heard about San Francisco 49ers player Chris Culliver's Super Bowl press conference today, you learned that he was "just kidding around" earlier this week when he made shocking homophobic comments.

The 49ers were quick to repudiate Culliver's earlier remarks and Culliver did apologize, but perhaps the most important thing about Culliver's story is how seriously out of step he is with current momentum in the world of sports. Consider the other following developments from only the past two weeks:

GLSEN supporter and star NBA player Kenneth Faried of the Denver Nuggets appeared alongside his two moms in a [video](#) supporting marriage equality;

AOL recently [released a video](#) with US international soccer star Megan Rapinoe in support of GLSEN, No Name-Calling Week and [Changing the Game: The GLSEN Sports Project](#);

Vancouver Canucks' goaltender Cory Schneider shared the ice with 16-year-old transman and fellow goaltender Cory Oksam for a birthday celebration the young man is unlikely to ever forget. The story was featured in the team's fan newsletter the very next day.

Years of brave and trailblazing advocacy of athletes from Billy Jean King, Greg Louganis and Billy Bean to Faried, Schneider and Rapinoe means that players like Culliver no longer have license to spout hateful thoughts at will and without comment.

Now, we're witnessing this inclusive message of sportsmanship transform school gyms and athletic fields. School coaches in places like Bethesda, Maryland are leading student-athletes to take the GLSEN's [Team Respect Challenge](#). And Washington's Interscholastic Activities Association has adopted trans-inclusive policies to guide high school interscholastic sports in the entire state

GLSEN is proud to have had the support of so many of the individuals who helped bring this change about, most recently on the incredible Advisory Board for Changing the Game. And while incidents like Culliver's hurtful remarks continue to surface, we are grateful to count upon your support to affect change from the football field to the school gym.

Our work remains largely undone, especially in school-based sports and physical education, but together, we can keep up the momentum to ensure schools are safe and healthy places for our youth.



January 24, 2013

**We're almost six for six!**

**Today, Rhode Island's House of Representatives voted 51-19 in favor of joining the other five New England states in enabling same-sex couples to marry!**

The next step is the state Senate. If the bill passes there, Governor Lincoln Chafee has said he will sign it into law.

Couples everywhere decide to marry for the same reason - to celebrate their love and commitment to one another. More and more Americans understand that, and we're seeing the results in votes like the one in Rhode Island today.

We knew with our landmark *Goodridge* victory in 2003 that Massachusetts wouldn't be the only state where same-sex couples had the freedom to marry for long. It's been thrilling to be a part of securing that right for loving couples in Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine over the past few years. And now we're proud to be a part of the Rhode Islanders United for Marriage campaign that is poised to make that a universal right across the region.

...

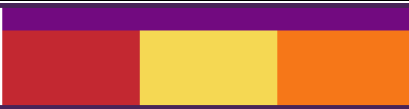
... let's hope that soon we'll be celebrating six for six!

Lee Swislow, Executive Director

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**THANK-YOU** to our wonderful February meeting speaker, the Rev. Aaron Miller. Rev. Miller received his Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School and is ordained clergy in the Metropolitan Community Churches. In addition to serving as the Interim Pastor at MCC Hartford, he is also a chaplain at Yale New Haven Hospital, a member of Connecticut Clergy for Full Equality, a founder and leadership team member of the True Color's *Spiritual Institute*, facilitates training around Gender Identity and Gender Expression in/outside the faith communities, and is a political activist on issues that promote LGBTQ justice and equality.





2/1/13

Earlier this week, the BSA shared that they were considering a policy change. What seemed like a sea change made barely a ripple in the waters of equality for young LGBT youth, however, as the current “No Gays” national policy would instead be a “Gays, But Only If You Want Them In Your Troop.” policy.

Of course, it didn’t take long for the people who hate our kids simply for being who they are to weigh in. The Family Research Council says that “...homosexual activists will not be satisfied until religion and morality are bygone of the Scouting era...” while Americans for Truth About Homosexuality says “...parents do NOT want sexually-confused (openly ‘gay’) boys spreading the message of “out and proud” homosexuality in their son’s troop.” And American Family Association’s Buster Wilson attempted to disguise his two cents as genuine concern, wondering, “...what could happen when you place a gay kid in a group of straight kids in a closed environment such as Scouting: is there not an increased worry of bullying and rejection?” Buster, if you’re that concerned, how about sending a message to the bullies that their behavior won’t be tolerated?

**It is easy to dismiss the absurdity of these statements, but we must counter them and have the PFLAG voice heard!**

If this policy change goes forward, there will be Boy Scout troops all over the country whose leaders will adopt inclusive nondiscrimination measurements, living up to the BSA values of loyalty, helpfulness, friendliness, courteousness, and kindness; we commend those leaders.

Sadly, however, there will also be troop that will decide to keep this discriminatory and hurtful policy in place...which means that countless boys—not to mention gay parents—will not have the opportunity to participate in the scouts. These kids and their parents will be told once again that they are still not welcome – **but this time it will be worse**, because rather than that decision coming down from a faceless, nameless Board of Directors, it will come from the people in their own communities: their schools, their churches, their sports clubs; yes, this will be a community affirmation that who they are is not good enough. And not welcome.

So contact the Boy Scouts of America now and tell them that our kids uphold the same values that every scout pledges to uphold – don’t exclude children from a valuable experience because of who they are; it goes against everything scouting is supposed to stand for.

Make your voice heard! Because here at PFLAG, we look out for all kids, not just our own...

**Contact The Boy Scouts of America:**

**Online:** [www.scouting.org/ContactUs](http://www.scouting.org/ContactUs)

**By Email:** [Feedback@Scouting.org](mailto:Feedback@Scouting.org)

**By Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/BoyScoutsofAmerica>

**By Phone:** (972) 580-2000

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**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.***

**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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Helpline: (860) 633-7184

Phone: (860) 633-5111

Transgender Issues: (860) 231-8582

**PFLAG SOUTHWESTERN CT**

When: 7:30 pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday (bi-monthly)

Jan./Mar./May/July/Sept./Nov.

Where: Triangle Community Center

16 River Street (lower level) Norwalk

Help Line: (203) 226-0257 - Westport

(203) 322-5380 – Stamford

(203) 925-0445- Shelton

(203) 847-9183 - Norwalk

Email: [PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com](mailto:PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com)

**PFLAG SECT (SOUTHEASTERN CT)**

When: Second Monday of every month,

Potluck at 6:00 pm; Meeting at 7:00 pm

Where: Noank Baptist Church,

18 Cathedral Heights, Noank (Groton)

Helpline: (860) 447-0884

Email: [bjalthen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bjalthen@sbcglobal.net)

Web site: [www.pflagsect.org](http://www.pflagsect.org)

**PFLAG GREATER NEW HAVEN**

166 Lovers Lane, Guilford, CT 06437

Meeting: 3rd Tuesday of the Month, 7:30 pm

Church of the Redeemer

185 Cold Spring Street, New Haven

(Corner of Whitney Avenue)

Phone/Help Line (203) 458-0493

Email: [greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com](mailto:greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com)

**Central and Western Massachusetts**

**PFLAG FRANKLIN-HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER**

**Northhampton**

When: Second Tuesday of every month

Where: Highland Valley Elder Services,

Cutlery Building, 320 Riverside Drive

Helpline: 413/625-6636

Email: [jcmalinski48@gmail.com](mailto:jcmalinski48@gmail.com)

**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](mailto: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:** 15<sup>th</sup> 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 [jcmalinski48@gmail.com](mailto:jcmalinski48@gmail.com) or at [www.straightspouse.org](http://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](http://www.pflag.org).