



News & Views

*Parents, Families, Friends, Allies & Members of the
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Gender
Non-conforming Community*

Volume 16, Number 4

July/August 2015

VICTORY!

What many of us had once thought a distant dream, became a hard-won reality for all when the United States Supreme court decided in favor of same-sex unions on Friday, June 26, 2015.

The major networks, cable news and social media sites were bursting with stories of celebrations and rejoicing as the news broke. Young and old alike made plans to obtain their marriage licenses from Town Clerks across the country in the states where they had previously been denied a right that so many U.S. citizens enjoy. Those of us living in states with marriage equality laws in place also celebrated. We celebrated because we believe that the "All" in "All men (and women) are created equal" does mean EVERYONE and we were not going to stop fighting for those rights until EVERYONE across the country had the right to marry the person they loved, regardless of gender. We celebrated because we spent many hours, days, weeks, months and years telling our stories to our families, friends, clergy, local, state and federal legislators—everyone who would listen as to why marriage equality mattered to us and our families—and they FINALLY heard us. We also celebrated because even though we had the right to marriage in our states, we knew that if our gay or lesbian family members and their spouse travelled to a state without marriage equality, they may be denied the privileges to which heterosexual couples are entitled and which now can no longer be denied to same-sex couples.

Winning on marriage equality was a huge win for all of us; however, it is not the end of our struggle for fighting for equality for the LGBTQ community. We still have a lot of work to do in preventing discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing, reducing poverty and homelessness in the LGBTQ community, especially with youth, the elderly, those who are HIV+, transgender people and communities of color.



EQUALITY ACT

On July 23, 2015, the Equality Act was introduced in Congress. This bill will strengthen anti-discrimination protections not just for the LGBTQ community but for everyone, including women and com-

munities of color. This is a vital piece of legislation for ourselves and our loved ones: Everyday, across the country, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender have the risk of or are losing their jobs and homes and are being denied access to public education and to federally-funded programs. No one should have to live with that reality because of who they are.

PFLAG's values are America's values and we want to send a strong message to every member of Congress why the Equality Act is important in communities that they represent in Congress. PFLAG National is already on record as supporting but we would like to tell Congress that every chapter in our country also supports the passage of this legislation. Please contact your Representative to show your support for this Bill! (See *related article on Page 5*.)

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Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBT People to Move Equality Forward

Our Mission

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and their families and friends through:

SUPPORT: To support parents on their journey to understand and accept their gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children; and to help children, of whatever age, to understand and come out into loving relationships with their families;

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.

PFLAG is a volunteer grass-roots, tax-exempt, non-profit organization, not affiliated with any political or religious institution.

PFLAG is a welcoming place for parents and friends of all members of the LGBTQ community, but we are much more than that. Those who identify as gay, lesbian bisexual, transgender, or gender non-conforming are also encouraged to attend our meetings, with or without their family members. Parents and friends may come with or without their loved ones who are members of the LGBTQ community.

Confidentiality is assured.

PFLAG/Greater Providence

President: Sandra Richard

Vice-President: Jane Eastman

Treasurer: James Rotondo

Secretary: Denise Messier Reynolds

Members-at-Large: Jill Duff, Roy Eastman, Barbara Metz, Scott Mirani, Christine Noel, Dianne & Joe Ordog

Ex-Officio Past President: Myra Shays

Newsletter Editor: Sandra Richard

**WE'RE
HERE
FOR YOU!**



news from our chapter



PFLAG volunteers staffing our booth at the 2015 Pride Fest, (l-r) Joan Bloom, Taylor Andrews, Jill Duff, Nate Zane and Ron Richard.

PFLAG at PRIDE Fest 2015 and the Illuminated Night Parade

Many thanks to Jill Duff and her team, Jim Rotondo, Jane Eastman, and Joan Bloom who planned and organized our participation in both Pride Fest and the Illuminated Night parade! Also kudos to all of our volunteers who helped



Board Member Jill Duff with PFLAG Chapter Founder Myra Shays waving to the parade crowd.

staff our 2015 RI Pride Fest booth and distribute our now famous rainbow ribbon pins and provided information about PFLAG to Pride Fest attendees! We had a wonderful turnout and we are so happy that we were able to get the word out about who we are and how we can help families learn to love, appreciate and accept their LGBTQ loved ones for the special gifts in their lives that they are.

This year PFLAG marched for the first time in the Illuminated Night Parade and we had a blast!! Board member Jim Rotondo generously offered up his pick-up truck to be decked out in twinkling lights and rainbow banners and bunting! It looked awesome! Our group of marchers was also joined by a contingent from the Cape Cod PFLAG chapter who drove down just to be in the parade with us. (The only downside of marching in the parade is that we



PFLAG Board Member Jim Rotondo's truck all decked out for the Pride Parade.

didn't get to see all the other fabulous groups marching!)

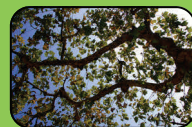
We took lots of photos during the day and a few more of our decorated truck and marchers before the parade started. The photos are posted on our website under the Pride Fest tab at www.pflagprovidence.org. (If you see yourself in the slide show and want a copy of the photo, just email us at pflagprovidence@gmail.com with a description of the photo and we will email a copy to you.)



PFLAG GP to Hold Support Meeting 8/20 at St. Therese Old Catholic Church in West Warwick in Partnership with Damascus Ministries

If you can't make it to our regular PFLAG meeting in Providence the first Wednesday of the month, you now have another opportunity to attend a support meeting! On Thursday, August 20th, we will be partnering with St. Therese Old Catholic Church and Damascus Ministries LGBTQ Support Services to provide a PFLAG support meeting at St. Therese Old Catholic Church, 1500 Main Street in West Warwick, RI from 7:00—9:00 p.m. where we will also hold a screening of *TransJourney*, the short documentary about our Chapter President Sandra Richard, her transgender daughter Annabelle and their mutual friend Shannon, an older transgender woman.

If we generate enough interest, we plan to hold these meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month over the next several months. You can find out more about St. Therese Old Catholic Church and Damascus Ministries on their website: <http://www.go1500.org/>



Email Sandie at svrichard0104@gmail.com to sign up to receive the PFLAG newsletter by email only and help us save a tree (and postage too!)

Providence LGBTQ Film Festival Kicks Off 2015 Season

The popular **Providence LGBTQ Film Festival (August 4–9)**, a cinematic sidebar of the **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)** once again kicks off at the **Bell Street Chapel**, a Unitarian Universalist congregation in Providence, R.I. and other Festival locations in the capital city including **RISD Museum**, the **Paff Theatre** at URI-CCE and **The Vets** 6th Floor Ballroom and the **Greenwich Odeum** in East Greenwich.

Now in its 16th year, the **Providence LGBTQ Film Festival** brings Rhode Island filmgoers a diverse sampling of over 40 international and domestic films made by and for members of the LGBTQ community. Ranging from romantic comedies, journeys of discover, to concerns of aging and those affecting the trans community, the Providence LGBTQ Film Festival has been curated to complement the greater-LGBTQ Experience. This year, programming will also include an expanded focus on growing social and political issues for LGBTQ youth, the transgender community, specifically targeting bullying and its societal impact.

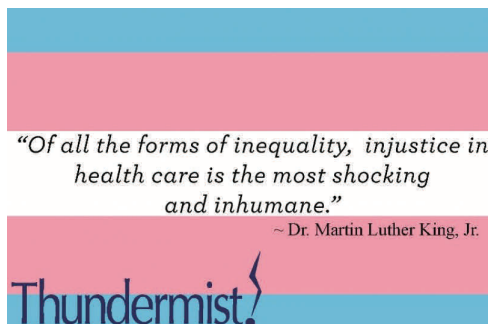
Flickers' programming and community outreach is supported by the Rhode Island Foundation's Equity Action; a field of interest fund at the Foundation that advances equitable treatment that improves the quality of life for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Rhode Islanders.

The festival kicks off this year on Wednesday, **August 5th**, at the Bell Street Chapel, 5 Bell Street, Providence. The event starts at 7:30 p.m., and consists of an exciting roster of premiere films in a Shorts Program called "Breaking OUT: LGBTQ Films on the Edge," which includes: "Pink Boy," "Golden Clan," "Stealth," "Hole," and "Setting Them Straight." (Full descriptions of the films can be found at <http://riiff2015.sched.org/>)

The 19th annual Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival kicks off this year on Tuesday, August 4th, at the **Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC)**. The event starts at **7:00 p.m.** with a selection of short films from around the world. Tickets are \$15 for the screening and can be purchased on

at www.RIFilmFest.org. After the screening, viewers and sponsors are invited for a taste of Rhode Island reception in the restored lobby of the Providence Performing Arts Center where there will be a spread of decadent desserts open to attendees. Tickets for entree to the opening night screening can be purchased for \$15.00.

The Festival has an engaging lineup for opening night with the screening of ten great short films, including the Premiere of the LGBTQ film, "D.Asian" directed by Sarah Smith from the United States.



Thundermist Health Center Establishes A Trans* Health Access Team

You know that one of the most important things we can do in this life is reach out a hand to those who come after us to help their journey as well. Here's a way you can help make the path easier.

Thundermist Health Center (a federally qualified community health center serving Rhode Island for 45 years i.e. non-profit, good guys) has created Trans* Health Access Team to improve access to quality care with people who actually "get it" for the entire trans community (however you identify) even to those without insurance and regardless of ability to pay.

Please spread the word about this great program! It's not just health care, it's life care — self-advocacy training, healthy living skills, education — more details can be found here: <http://www.gofundme.com/ImproveTransHealth>.

It doesn't take much to make a real difference — and your donation to Thundermist's Trans* Health Access Team can be that difference:

- \$25 provides a self-advocacy session to help a consumer change their name and/or gender markers on their birth certificate or ID
- \$50 provides a one-on-one education session with a nurse, so consumers can learn to inject hormones at home

- \$75 provides a group session for those in need of support
- \$125 provides a group class on healthy living skills — exercise, nutrition, etc.
- \$250 provides training for clinical staff to improve clinical and cultural competency

Help support this great work. Donate and share this link with someone you know. Go to: <http://www.gofundme.com/ImproveTransHealth>.

Together, we can climb any mountain!



Become a PFLAG Volunteer!

"We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give."—Winston Churchill

Our PFLAG chapter operates with an all-volunteer Board of Directors who are dedicated to fulfilling the mission of PFLAG for its members.

We hope to grow and expand our outreach in Rhode Island, but we need your help to do so. Some forms of help are short and simple—like signing up to bring refreshments to one of our support meetings, picking up some of our new brochures to distribute in businesses and doctors' offices you frequent, or helping us plan for Pride Fest and the Pride parade in June.

Other types of volunteering may involve a longer commitment, such as serving on a committee or serve as a speaker as part of our education and outreach efforts.

We are also looking for someone to take over the design and production of this newsletter. Right now we publish every other month. If anyone is interested in taking on this task or volunteering for any of the above needs, please contact us at pflagprovidence@gmail.com.

Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook www.Facebook.com/PFLAGGreaterProvidence,RI and "Follow" us on Twitter [@PFLAGProvRI](https://twitter.com/PFLAGProvRI).





Youth Pride Inc. and Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Ocean State Jointly Establish LGBTQ Youth Mentoring Program

Youth Pride Inc. is partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Ocean State for a LGBTQ Youth Mentoring program that will match youth between the ages of 11 and 21 in long-term, one-on-one mentoring relationships with adult volunteer mentors (who are at least 19 years old).

A prospective mentor participates in a thorough interview so that the Program Coordinator can get to know them. The goal is to make the best match possible--pairing a youth sharing similar interests with the volunteer, or whose needs match with the mentor's skills and experience. Volunteers also provide references, and the agency orders a criminal background check. The initial commitment for a mentor is for one year. Visits with a youth will be bi-weekly at Youth Pride Inc. under the guidance of BBBSOS and YPI staff. The program will be curriculum-focused on topics such as LGBTQ history, gender identity, and safer sex.

To Sign Up to be an LGBTQ mentor visit www.YouthPrideRI.org and click Get Involved and then [Volunteer Opportunities](#)



RHODE ISLAND FOUNDATION

Rhode Island Foundation Awards \$57,500 in Grants for Services to LGBTQ Communities

Eight nonprofits will receive funding for services including transgender care and intimate partner violence prevention.

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Foundation announced on July 29th that eight nonprofit organizations serving the state's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities will receive more than \$57,000 in grants through its [Equity Action Fund](#).

"Our grantees engage in efforts to ensure the health, safety and fair treatment for all LGBTQ Rhode Islanders," said Adrian Bonéy, who oversees Equity Action at the Foundation. "Much of this important work is accomplished by strengthening alliances among organizations working to address the most critical needs of the LGBTQ community across the state including investments in health, education and the arts, as well as issues critical to youth and elderly members of the community."

[Seniors and Advocates for GLBT Elders](#) received \$10,000 to assist in hiring a permanent director, increase the number of monthly programs, conduct a needs assessment of the community, collect and analyze data, develop and implement marketing strategies,

increase membership, create a formal fundraising plan and provide outreach to the GLBT community.

[Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders](#) was awarded \$9,000 to work with the state Department of Children, Youth and Families and the Ocean State Network to implement safe and affirming guidance for state-involved LGBTQ youth.

[New Urban Arts](#) was awarded \$3,000 to enable 10-15 low-income youth to use writing and art to explore issues of identity, including sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

[Youth Pride](#) received \$10,000 to increase outreach to local gay/straight alliances, to convene monthly Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Coalition meetings and the annual Rhode Island GSA conference, increase outreach to all local gay-straight alliances and to offer programming for regional GSA meetings and GSA advisor training.

[Thundermist Health Center](#) was awarded \$10,000 to develop a culturally and clinically competent continuum of care for transgender Rhode Islanders. In partnership with The Providence Center, Thundermist will train staff, improve electronic record keeping and scheduling, and promote information about access to care to transgendered Rhode Islanders and their advocates.

[Sojourner House](#) received \$9,000 to increase the number of LGBTQ+ individuals it serves and expand same-sex intimate partner violence education in schools in partnership with youth organizations.

[Family Services of Rhode Island](#) received \$2,500 to increase testing for HIV, sexually transmitted infections and Hepatitis C, particularly of men under the age of 29 who have sex with men, by expanding the network of community-based testing sites and increasing community-based speaking engagements at colleges, universities and other relevant locations.

[Flickers - Newport Film/Video Society & Arts Collaborative](#) received \$4,000 to for the Providence LGBTQ Film/Arts Community Outreach Program, which will include an LGBTQ Expo promoting Rhode Island-based non-profit support organizations, screenings of more than 50 niche films, the Flickers' Youth Film Jury Outreach Mentorship and Media Literacy program and a symposium on the treatment of LGBTQ characters in film.

There were two categories of grants: Projects that meet the community's priority needs through the empowerment of under-represented individuals in LGBTQ communities and capacity-building grants for board development, strategic planning, program development, fundraising or other activities that build the capacity of organizations that play a vital and unique role in the LGBTQ communities. Equity Action is guided by a volunteer advisory committee comprised of community leaders including committee Chair Michael Grabo and Vice-Chair Jean Burke. While this year's deadline to apply for major grants has passed, the Foundation is still accepting proposals for amounts under \$2,500.

Established in 2002, Equity Action is committed to enacting social change by championing initiatives and organizations that encourage justice for, support and improve the quality of life of LGBTQ Rhode Islanders. Over the years, Equity Action has awarded more than \$700,000 in grants to dozens of organizations.

(Continued on Page 5.)

news from all over

Rhode Island Foundation *(Continued from Page 4.)*

The Rhode Island Foundation is the largest and most comprehensive funder of nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island. In 2014, the Foundation awarded \$34.8 million in grants to organizations addressing the state's most pressing issues and needs of diverse communities. Through leadership, fundraising and grant making activities, often in partnership with individuals and organizations, the Foundation is helping Rhode Island reach its true potential. The public can donate to Equity Action or any of the Foundation's 1,400 funds at www.rifoundation.org.



Employment discrimination: The next frontier for LGBT community

Hundreds of advocates for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights gathered on the steps of the Supreme Court on June 26 to celebrate a historic decision to legalize same-sex marriage. After years of legal battles, the higher court put the issue to rest.

But LGBT leaders say that's not all that needs to be done to achieve equality. In 28 states, it is legal to fire someone based on his or her sexual orientation or gender identity. While there is some federal recourse through civil rights and equal employment claims, there's no national anti-discrimination law to protect LGBT workers from state whims. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits job discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion and nation of origin, but does not extend those protections to LGBT people.

Rep. David Cicilline, a Rhode Island democrat, and Sen. Jeff Merkley, an Oregon democrat, introduced comprehensive legislation on July 23 to address the issue. The bill, called the Equality Act, has 168 co-sponsors in the House, including House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, 39 co-sponsors in the Senate and encompasses issues of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, education and jury service.



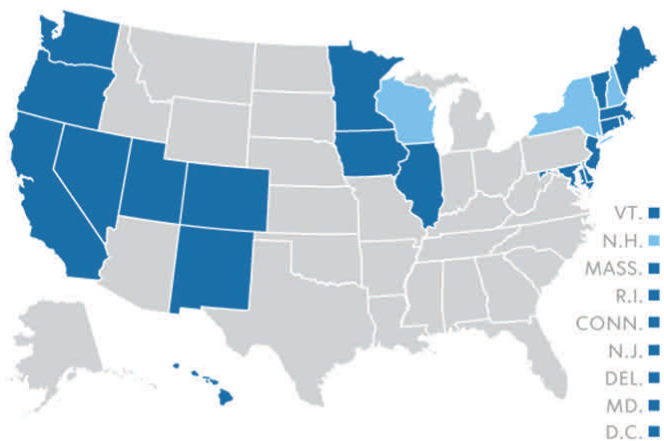
Rep. David Cicilline, D-RI with PFLAG chapter founder Myra Shays at the 2015 Pride Fest.

"Although you can be married Saturday, post your pictures on

LGBT WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia have bans on employee discrimination based on sexual orientation. For all but three of these states, laws extend to protect gender identity as well. Where statewide employment non-discrimination laws are in place:

- Law covers sexual orientation and gender identity
- Law covers only sexual orientation



SOURCE: ACLU

Jennifer Calfas and Frank Pempa, USA TODAY



Facebook on Sunday, you could then be fired Monday," Cicilline told USA TODAY.

Workplace gay rights are likely to take more of the national spotlight in the wake of the Supreme Court's 5-4 decision on June 26 to legalize same-sex marriage. For many people, the Supreme Court decision was just the beginning. Advocates for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community now seek to conquer another frontier: ending workplace discrimination.

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia have laws prohibiting employers from firing employees due to just their sexual orientation or gender identity. In 2014, President Obama signed an executive order to protect LGBT federal employees.

The Rhode Island representative, who also sits on the congressional LGBT equality caucus, said he hopes the bill will find support in both the House and the Senate and among Democrats and Republicans, as it addresses what he says are basic human rights. "This is an issue about a core American value: the idea of treatment and fairness under the law," Cicilline said.

(Continued on Page 6.)

Equality Act *(Continued from Page 5.)*

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), an agency that enforces federal laws for employees, has interpreted Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include LGBT individuals under its protections.

In 2012, the EEOC found discrimination against an employee due to his or her gender identity falls under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in a case revolving around a transgender woman who said she was fired from a new job because she was undergoing her transition at the time.

More recently, the EEOC ruled on July 17 that Title VII policies include protections for gay, lesbian and bisexual employees as well. The decision came from a case involving an air traffic control specialist from the Federal Aviation Administration in Miami who said he was not promoted due to his sexual orientation as a gay man.

On the same day the EEOC released the decision, Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, a Republican presidential candidate, said he believes LGBT anti-discrimination laws should be left up to the states to decide.

And some states are torn on the issue. In Feb. 2015, Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback issued an executive order to remove an existing law that barred workplace discrimination for LGBT individuals in the state. The decision rescinded a 2007 executive order from former Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius that established an anti-discrimination law.

In a statement in February, Brownback said his new executive order ensures Kansas employees to enjoy civil rights "without creating additional 'protected classes' as the previous order did."

And other states grapple with the issue as well. A state LGBT anti-discrimination law is pending in South Carolina. Advocates of the bill include Crystal Moore, the town's police chief, who says she was fired due to her sexual orientation and later returned to her post after the community rallied behind her.

Leaders in the gay rights movement support a national LGBT anti-discrimination law. The Human Rights Campaign, a national organization that advocates for LGBT rights that fought on the front lines for same-sex marriage, supports the newly introduced Equal Act and have worked with businesses around the country to implement anti-discrimination policies.



According to an HRC report, the majority of Fortune 500 companies have already established workplace protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The percentage of these companies with protection policies for sexual identity jumped from 61% in 2002 to 91% in 2014.

"Just because the law doesn't mandate it, it doesn't mean as a business you can't go ahead and implement these protections," said Deena Fidas, director of the workplace equality program at HRC.

The National LGBTQ Task Force, an organization which promotes civil rights for this community, supports the newly proposed bill as well. But, overall, the goal extends beyond legislation as the fight for rights will always be socially contentious.

"The vision for society, in addition to legal equality, is lived free-

dom," said Rea Carey, the executive director of the organization. "You should not be fired from your job just because of who you are or who you love, but you should also be able to feel safe in any community that you live in."

Both Fidas and Carey noted the complexity of the issue for LGBT individuals who work at religious institutions. LGBT workplace discrimination is more nuanced when it comes to religious freedom, exhibited in the case of Kristen Ostendorf. The former English and religion teacher was fired from her job at Totino-Grace High School, a Catholic school in Fridley, Minnesota, in 2013.

In front of fellow faculty members, Ostendorf announced her identity as a lesbian, which resulted in her termination. But she knew she would be fired. Ostendorf's contract included a signed copy of the Justice in Employment policy, which stipulates that employees at Archdiocesan institutions may be dismissed from their roles if they openly defy the teachings of the Catholic Church.

If a federal law were enacted to protect LGBT individuals, this would not extend to religious organizations or religiously affiliated schools. "Freedom of religion is protected by the Constitution," said Catherine Conway, a partner who specializes in employment law at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP. "Therefore there is a necessary caveat. You can't tell a religious group – even if you disagree with it – to change its beliefs."

Ostendorf said she can't imagine living in a society where the same exemption would be true for individuals with other minority statuses. "We're not OK with that, but when we discuss sexuality, sexual identity or sexual orientation, it's suddenly OK to discriminate against that," Ostendorf said. "That makes me nervous for society."

For LGBT civil rights leaders, legislation and Supreme Court rulings are baby steps for the community at large. Though some lawmakers may be on their side legally, public attitude may be more difficult to improve.

"Policies and laws are necessary for LGBT equality, but they're not sufficient," said Fidas, director of the workplace equality program at HRC. "That doesn't necessarily mean the water cooler conversation is inclusive."

Credit: Jennifer Calfas, USA TODAY, August 1, 2015



Boy Scouts End Ban On Gay Adults

Vote allows religiously affiliated scout groups to set their own LGBT policies. The Boy Scouts of America voted Monday to lift a long-established ban on gay adults as employees and volunteers within the organization.

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Boy Scouts End Ban On Gay Adults

(Continued from Page 2.)

The BSA's full executive board voted 45 to 12 in favor of the change, effective immediately. The vote came after the National Executive Committee unanimously approved a resolution earlier this month stating that "no adult applicant for registration as an employee or non-unit-serving volunteer, who otherwise meets the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, may be denied registration on the basis of sexual orientation."

BSA President Robert Gates, the former secretary of defense, had called for an end to the ban.

"For far too long, this issue has divided and distracted us," Gates said in a video released Monday. "Now it's time to unite behind our shared belief in the extraordinary power of scouting to be a force for good in the community and in the lives of its youth members."

The resolution, which allows previously removed leaders to reapply for their positions, lifts the BSA's across-the-board ban on gay leaders, but allows religiously affiliated troops to determine their own policies regarding LGBT adults, as scout units are chartered by other non-profits to which the BSA licenses its intellectual property.

"Finally, hardworking and devoted gay adult leaders can serve openly and honestly in Scouting without fear of rejection or retribution," said Sarah Kate Ellis, president and CEO of the advocacy group GLAAD. "Today's historic vote will strengthen Scouting and sends a message of acceptance that will resonate for years to come, as future Scout leaders are judged by their ability to lead and not their sexual orientation."

Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said the vote "is a welcome step toward erasing a stain on this important organization." He added: "Including an exemption for troops sponsored by religious organizations undermines and diminishes the historic nature of today's decision. Discrimination should have no place in the Boy Scouts, period."

"There are differences of opinion, and we need to be respectful of them," Michael Harrison, a businessman who led the Boy Scouts in Orange County, California, who supported the resolution, told The New York Times this week. "It doesn't mean the Mormons have to pick a gay scoutmaster, but please don't tell the Unitarians they can't."

The Mormon church quickly issued a statement saying that it was "deeply troubled" by the vote and that its "century-long association with Scouting will need to be examined."

"The Church has always welcomed all boys to its Scouting units regardless of sexual orientation," the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints statement said. "However, the admission of openly gay leaders is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Church and what have traditionally been the values of the Boy Scouts of America."

Zach Wahls, an Eagle scout and executive director of Scouts for Equality, told The Huffington Post earlier this month that the resolution was imperfect, but a major step.

"It's better than it was," Wahls said, adding, "I honestly thought we were in for a 10-year wait."

*Credit: Lydia O'Connor, Associate News Editor
The Huffington Post, 07/28/2015*



Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter, left. On Monday, July 13, 2015, he announced a plan to change rules he called "outdated." Credit: Zach Gibson/The New York Times

Pentagon Moves to Allow Transgender People to Serve Openly in the Military

The Pentagon is moving to allow transgender people to serve openly in the military by early next year and end an "outdated" regulation that harms the armed forces, Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter said on Monday, July 13th.

Pentagon officials are to spend the coming months working out the administrative and legal changes needed to remove one of the final barriers to all Americans serving in the military.

If realized, the plan would end what is seen as one of the last discriminatory rules about who can enlist or be commissioned in the American military. It would also be a tacit recognition that thousands of transgender people are already in uniform.

Mr. Carter acknowledged as much in a statement announcing the plan. "We have transgender soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines — real, patriotic Americans — who I know are being hurt by an outdated, confusing, inconsistent approach that's contrary to our value of service and individual merit," he said. "The Defense Department's current

regulations regarding transgender service members are outdated and are causing uncertainty that distracts commanders from our core missions."

Some estimates put the number of transgender people in the military at more than 15,000. Much like the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, which applied to gay men, lesbians and bisexuals until it was lifted in 2011, the current rules have done little to keep transgender people out of the military.

Instead it has forced them into a precarious existence in the ranks. The lucky ones have superiors who are content to look the other way, but the less fortunate must keep their transgender status a secret, leaving themselves open to expulsion if their colleagues were to learn the truth.

Mr. Carter said in his statement on Monday that he was creating a working group that would have six months to assess what impact ending the ban would have on the military. The group will also help come up with ways to train troops to ensure a smooth transition, a senior defense official said.

Despite the formation of the working group, Mr. Carter left little doubt that the decision had been all but formally made to lift the ban.

"At my direction, the working group will start with the presumption that transgender persons can serve openly without adverse impact on military effectiveness and readiness, unless and except where objective, practical impediments are identified," Mr. Carter said.

The timeline for lifting the ban over several months, allowing for reviews and changes to rules, is similar to the timeline the Pentagon followed after Congress in 2010 repealed the legislation that forced gay men, lesbians and bisexuals in the military to keep their sexual orientation secret. It was not until 2011 that the military put the change into practice and let gay, lesbian and bisexual troops serve openly. "We saw that a gradual approach is what worked," the defense official said.

"We are thrilled the Department of Defense will finally be taking the necessary steps to allow our transgender service members to serve openly and honestly," said Ashley Broadway-Mack, president of the American Military Partner Association, an organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender military families. "We look forward in anticipation to the announcement this week and being able to review the process and implementation."

*Credit: Matthew Rosenberg, The New York Times,
JULY 13, 2015*

Chapter Meetings

PFLAG/Greater Providence meets the first Wednesday of each month from 6:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.:

The MET School (Unity Building)
325 Public Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Upcoming Meetings

August 5, 2015
September 2, 2015
October 7, 2015
November 4, 2015
December 2, 2015

Also: August 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
St. Therese Old Catholic Church,
1500 Main Street, West Warwick, RI

Contact Us

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pflagprovidence@gmail.com



Ideas for Topics/Speakers?

Do you have a specific topic you would like to have addressed by a speaker or know of anyone whom you would like to recommend as a speaker for our Chapter? If so, please contact **Scott** at scmpmr33@gmail.com.

Member Resources

Rhode Island Bi Resource Network

<http://www.ribinetwork.org>
<http://www.facebook.com/TheOtherBWord>

SAGE Rhode Island

235 Promenade Street, Suite 500, Box 18
Providence, RI 02908
401-528-3259
sageriinfo@gmail.com

TGI Network of Rhode Island

PO Box 40365, Providence, RI 02940
info@tginetwork.org
(401) 441-5058 (voicemail)
Family Support Group meets 2nd Monday each month from 6:30-8:30 pm at Bell Street Parish House, Bell Street, Providence

Youth Pride, Inc.

743 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 421-5626
info@youthprideri.org
<http://www.youthprideri.org>

LGBT Caregiver Support Group

Child & Family Elder Care
Calvary United Methodist Church
200 Turner Road, Middletown, RI 02842
jgrapentine@childandfamilyri.com
(401) 848-4119
1st & 3rd Tuesdays each month from 10:00—11:00 a.m.

Blogs of Interest

Faith Topics

Susan Cottrell

<http://www.FreedHearts.org>

Kathy Baldock

<http://www.canyonwalkerconnections.com>

LGBTQ Issues

Think Progress

<http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/issue/>

The Huffington Post

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tag/lgbt-blogs>

Parenting a Transgender Child **Gender Mom**

<http://gendermom.wordpress.com/>

Raising My Rainbow

<http://raisingmyrainbow.com/>

Facebook Groups of Interest

Interweave Channing

Parents of Transgender Children
(Closed Support Group)

The Facebook Transgender Alliance
(Closed Support Group)

The Rhode Island LGBT Center



Check us out on Facebook at
www.Facebook.com/PFLAG
Greater Providence, RI



**Greater
Providence
Chapter**

Membership Application

Yes! I want to be a supporting member of PFLAG.

Please provide the information requested below and make your check payable to: **PFLAG/Greater Providence**. You may bring this form with your payment to the next chapter meeting or mail to: **PFLAG, P. O. Box 41344, Providence, RI 02940**. You can also join or donate on-line by visiting our website at www.pflagprovidence.org.

☐

Household \$36

☐

Individual \$24

☐

Student/Limited Income \$16

☐

Additional Contribution \$ _____ in ☐ Honor or ☐ Memory of: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____ E-mail _____

☐

I'll do my part to help save a tree. Please send me the newsletter via email only (.pdf format).



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