

FALL/WINTER 2012

PFLAGPOLE

THE PFLAG NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

PFLAG Advocacy – Then and Now

No voice is more powerful, or persuasive, than that of a PFLAG member. The stories of the pain that prejudice inflicts upon PFLAG families are enormously important in changing hearts, minds, and the law. Fortunately, PFLAG members have raised these powerful voices for over 40 years,



up publicly and said, 'Yes, I have a homosexual son and I love him,' recalls Manford. Much like seeing PFLAG marchers in modern-day pride parades, the crowd in 1972 screamed, yelled, and cried as Manford approached. Initially, she thought they were cheering for

Dr. Benjamin Spock, who walked behind the Manfords, but as people began to crowd around her, she realized they were reacting to this simple act of public support. The statement was



making space for families who need support, educating communities to dispel misinformation, and advocating for full equality under the law.

Raising these voices all started with one mother from Queens, NY, Jeanne Manford, who marched alongside her gay son, Morty, in New York's Christopher Street Liberation Day Parade after her gay son, Morty, had been badly beaten at a protest while police stood by and did nothing. She



marched while carrying a sign which read, 'Parents of Gays Unite in Support for Our Children.'

"I didn't think anything of it, but I guess it was the first time a mother ever stood



"I didn't think anything of it, but I guess it was the first time a mother ever stood up publicly and said, 'Yes, I have a homosexual son and I love him.'" - Jeanne Manford

the first of its kind and sparked an avalanche of public support, national attention, and a movement of family and

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40 years ago—in 1972—I was a young boy, living in Louisiana with my parents and many siblings, watching closely as slow change was starting to take hold in the south with the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The new law didn't change things overnight, but with time came transformation; conversations were started, hearts and minds began to shift, adapt, and ever so slowly change. I didn't know it then but, at the same time, a new movement for civil rights was happening, a movement that would eventually lead me to a job I love for a cause that is personally and undeniably close to my heart.

40 years ago, a watershed moment in that new movement started with our founder, Jeanne Manford. She was just a school-teacher, devoted to her husband, her children, her students. The family lived in Queens, they were not rich, they did not come from a long line of outspoken activists. But as any mother will tell you, when she sees one of her own attacked, she steps up. And that's exactly what Jeanne Manford did on that fateful day in 1972. She stood up for her own – her gay son – and that small step ignited parents, families, friends and straight allies who now, 40 years later, are still standing up in support of equality for their LGBT loved ones.

I find it nothing short of miraculous that Jeanne, the Mother of the Straight Ally movement, was able to accomplish what she did in so short a time, and without the technology we have access to today. And yet, without benefit of fax machines or mobile phones—let alone email, the Internet, Facebook—she worked with other parents and allies, connected them coast-to-coast, and together they created PFLAG, an organization that now, 40 years later, stands nearly quarter of a million members and supporters strong, united in a mission of support, education, and advocacy.

One of my favorite things about my work with PFLAG is to be able to see that mission at work, up close and in person, in communities all over the country. This summer as we launched our Care with PRIDE campaign, I made my way to a few cities where our chapters were participating. The energy and the enthusiasm they have for the work they do is infectious, and perhaps at its most

visible when a PFLAG chapter marches in their local pride parade. I remember meeting a young mother in Illinois who marched proudly with her young gay son, a junior in high school. I asked her why she is involved with PFLAG, and she responded that for her, PFLAG is a place where she initially went to get support to better understand the issues and now, it's a place where she is getting involved in her local community and doing speaking programs in local schools to help make her community a better place for her son and others like him to live. I was really touched when she told me that she

We have so much to celebrate as PFLAG turns 40, and our work today is just as important as it was at that first gathering in 1973.

doesn't want her son to feel like he needs to move away to a big city just so that he can feel accepted for who he is.

While I was in Denver, I met a man who had been with a PFLAG chapter in Colorado for over seven years. He was 79 years old, and he came out when he was 72. Two of his three children and some of his grandchildren rejected him. He said that he found PFLAG because he knew that he needed to understand from other parents, family members and other LGBT people how he could talk to his family and not lose relationships that are so important for him. He told me that his journey has not been easy, but that one of his children who had rejected him has become very accepting of him and that most of his grandchildren now do as well. The light in his eyes and the smile on his face as he talked about their transformation reminded me of the power of PFLAG and why we need strong PFLAG chapters across the country.

When I was in San Diego, I met a PFLAG Mom who told me it was her first Pride celebration. Her daughter had come out to her a year earlier. She told me that she really wasn't too surprised by the news, and that her reason for going to PFLAG was to help her deal with her own mother. She told me that she is from a very religious family and that while most of the family accepted the news about her daughter

being gay, some were very adamant that she should not be supportive of the "sinful lifestyle" her daughter was living. She told me that PFLAG helped her understand how to begin to talk with those family members, including her own mother. She told me that things are improving with some family members but that she has a long way to go with them. She's even learning how to talk about it with her friends at her church. I told her about our recently published booklet on faith issues, *be not afraid...*, and how it was written for people just like her to help her understand other people's journey and to talk with others about it. She gave me a big hug and thanked me for PFLAG. I told her that in that very moment, I felt like I must have the best job in the whole world.

There are countless other stories, each with their own unique perspective. All of them remind me of just how important Jeanne Manford's legacy is. We have so much to celebrate as PFLAG turns 40, and our work today is just as important as it was at that first PFLAG gathering in 1973.

Over the next 12 months—on our website, via email, on Facebook, on Twitter, and in the press—we will celebrate this milestone anniversary with *PFLAG Then and Now...40 Years of Family and Ally Voices*. We invite you to join us monthly as we look at different issues that affect the LGBT people in our lives—including equality in the workplace, faith communities, safe schools, and more.

Much has changed in the last 40 years: more parents are learning more quickly to be supportive of their LGBT children, laws and policies are changing nationwide, and a cultural shift is happening, at the epicenter of which is PFLAG, engaging its unique family and ally voice to change hearts and minds. That voice is YOUR voice, and we thank you for lifting it up in support of those you know and love.

Yours in PFLAG Solidarity,

Jody

Jody

Care With PRIDE™

A National Partnership Elevates PFLAG's Safe Schools Work... and Reaps Rewards for Chapters Across the Country

This year, PFLAG took another step forward in its forty year history of changing hearts and minds, by reaching out to a whole new group of allies. Working with two Fortune 500 corporations, PFLAG created a first-of-its-kind initiative around a common goal—safe schools—to make a strong statement about shared values of diversity and inclusion.

Care with PRIDE™, an educational, awareness, and media campaign on the harm of bullying, violence, and discrimination for all youth, LGBT and otherwise, was launched in association with the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies and Walgreens Family of Companies. Designed to promote the important work that PFLAG National and its hundreds of chapters are doing in communities all over the country, and to raise awareness about bullying and how to help stop it, PFLAG formed these alliances to expand the circle of support to make schools safe for all children.

Research from our featured partner for the campaign, GLSEN, shows that roughly 90 percent of LGBT youth are harassed because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. PFLAG's own anti-bullying program, *Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for All*, aims to change these



educational and awareness opportunity that would be beneficial to everyone.”

Care with PRIDE™ promised unprecedented visibility through media, as well as the opportunity to reach millions of new potential allies...with chapter engagement key to its success.

“There was a lot of back and forth discussion about what program design would work for chapters who chose to participate” said Beth Kohm, PFLAG National Deputy Executive Director. “Our biggest concern was that the unique place of PFLAG in the LGBT community and the role that PFLAG chapters have in Pride

parades and in their communities only be elevated through a corporate partnership”.

After a jam-packed summer of Pride activities, farmers markets, and back-to-school events, the campaign has proven to be a success. To date, more than 65 chapters have participated in the program, and they continue to leverage Care with PRIDE™ to spread awareness in their communities. Countless “Safe Schools Action Packs,” containing anti-bullying tips and savings up to \$65 in coupons, have been distributed. *Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for*

All posters and banners reinforced the message, and a video by PFLAG Mom Betty DeGeneres has been shared across digital and social media and promoted in different media stories and chapter websites. Five hundred Walgreens stores promoted the campaign and millions of individuals have been educated about bullying and the disproportionate impact of bullying for LGBT youth, both through media stories and

advertising in high visibility outlets including Ladies Home Journal and Family Circle. New local relationships with Walgreens and Johnson & Johnson volunteers continue, and financial support was provided for PFLAG, at a minimum of \$200,000, with a majority of that funding being distributed to chapters.

Most important, feedback from PFLAGers everywhere has been overwhelmingly positive and thousands of new conversations and partnerships have started around the issues of anti-bullying and how we all must work together to end it.

To find out more about the Care with Pride™ campaign, visit www.pflag.org/safeschools or www.carewithpride.com.

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statistics by providing members with strategies to educate and train school professionals and stakeholders, teaching members how to advocate for policy changes, and empowering them to give talks at schools around the country.

PFLAG National, through the Straight For Equality project, has been working with Johnson & Johnson since 2008. Recognizing that bullying is an issue for all parents, the Company's GLOBAL Employee Resource Group (ERG) leadership had been working with PFLAG on internal education around this issue. Jean-Marie Navetta, PFLAG's Director of Equality and Diversity Partnerships, credits ERG leaders for “taking that internal conversation about bullying and identifying an external

2011 PFLAG National Convention:

Bringing the Message Home, From Our House to the White House

In November, 275 PFLAG members from across the country came together in Washington, DC to participate in the 2011 PFLAG National Convention, *Bringing the Message Home: From Our House to the White House*. With a variety of opportunities to learn new skills, build relationships, and celebrate their work, attendees participated in workshops and plenaries on topics including safe schools and youth, faith, policy, and chapter development. It was thrilling to see many familiar faces from conventions combined with so many first-time attendees. There was a lot to learn and something for everyone.

The nation's capital provided an inspiring and energizing backdrop for the Convention kickoff event, a Capitol Hill Safe Schools Lobby Day. Starting with a breakfast meeting, Senators Al Franken and Jeff Merkley and Congressmen Jared Polis spoke about their support for safe schools legislation and the important role that PFLAG plays in advocacy on the issue. Then it was on to one-on-one meetings with senators and representatives which, for both seasoned and new lobbyists, provided an opportunity for PFLAGers' to use their greatest skill: sharing personal stories. The results were incredible: more than 15 elected officials joined as sponsors within the week of the event.

Post-Lobby Day, the convention kicked in with plenary sessions from national law enforcement agencies on how to work

together to avoid hate crimes; inspiring speeches from congressional heroes; a discussion of important research from the Family Acceptance Project™; and a thought-provoking round table on the intersection of faith and LGBT issues. Workshop highlights included topics for chapters from major urban centers to small rural areas, chapter leaders to new members, and more.

Among so many standout moments, a highlight was a keynote speech by Dr. Jill Biden. A lifelong educator, the Vice

awards and share more about their chapters' accomplishments.

PFLAG also celebrated former National President Nancy McDonald by awarding her the Starr Award, named in honor of another former National President, Adele Starr. Heartland Clergy for Inclusion was recognized for its work, receiving the Flag Bearer award. And this year saw the introduction of a new award from PFLAG National: *The Betty DeGeneres Advocate Award*. Ms. DeGeneres was present to accept, sharing her story as a PFLAG



Dr. Jill Biden



Betty DeGeneres and Jody Huckaby



Congressman Barney Frank

President's wife discussed bullying prevention, safe schools, and PFLAG's important role in that work. Her speech and the obvious passion she has on the issues provided inspiration for attendees to continue the work for new success in the face of continued challenges.

PFLAGers took time to celebrate their accomplishments at the National Convention Awards Dinner. Chapter awards were handed out for exemplary work in the areas of support (PFLAG Naples), education (PFLAG Omaha; PFLAG Columbia/Howard County), and advocacy (PFLAG Salisbury/Rowan County). PFLAG Boulder was also recognized for their outstanding contributions. Representatives from all of the chapters were on hand to accept the

supporter and a PFLAG mom herself. Also recognized with special awards were Sam and Julia Thoron, for their many years of distinguished service and commitment to the advancement of equality for LGBT people. In their honor, a new fund was established this year—eponymously named—which will go to support PFLAG's advocacy work at the state level.

Inspired by the National Convention, many PFLAGers returned home ready to share what they had learned at their own state and regional conferences—14 scheduled in 2012 alone!

Plans are now under way for the 2013 PFLAG National Convention. Stay tuned for details...we look forward to seeing you there!

The LA EVENT



Jody Huckaby with Planning Committee members Maurie Davidson, Philip Krol, Helena Krol, Ray Jennings-Roberson

(Right)
Adam and
Leila
Lambert
with their
awards.



(Left) Adam Lambert with PFLAG National President Rabbi David M. Horowitz

The 2011 LA Event

Beverly Hills, CA—September 25, 2011

Photos by Amy Graves

The 2011 LA Event was a huge success! An intimate gathering of supporters from the Los Angeles area came together at the beautiful home of Helena and Stanley Krol for an evening of food and fun, all in honor of proud PFLAG mom Leila Lambert and her bold and talented son, singer Adam Lambert. The event, co-chaired by Philip Krol and Ray Jennings-Roberson, was a success due in large part to the hard work of the host committee, the graciousness of our hostess, and of course the worthy honorees. Guests mixed and mingled, enjoyed fantastic food and, most important, heard Leila and Adam speak eloquently about why the PFLAG mission of support, education and advocacy is so important to them personally. Each was presented with an award—and inverted triangle for Adam, a heart for Leila—which each make up a part of the PFLAG logo representing parental and familial love and support for LGBT people.

straight FOR equality™ GALA



Awardees KPMG CEO John Veihmeyer, Pastor Jay Bakker, Audra McDonald and Will Swenson



Tony Award Nominees Gavin Creel and Rory O'Malley entertaining the guests.

The Fourth Annual Straight for Equality Gala

New York, NY—April 2, 2012

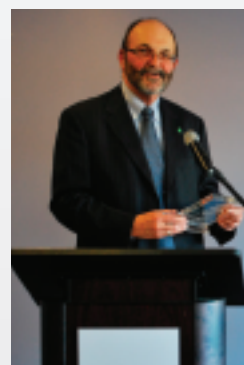
Photos by D. Dipasupil

PFLAG National's Fourth Annual Straight for Equality Awards Gala was a rousing success. Guests paid tribute to honorees Audra McDonald and fiancée Will Swenson, Pastor Jay Bakker, and KPMG LLP, represented at the event by CEO John Veihmeyer. Chris Hayes hosted and was joined on stage by multi-talented Tony Award nominee Gavin Creel, who not only provided the evening's entertainment, but also stepped up—along with his Broadway Impact co-founder, Tony Award nominee Rory O'Malley to handle a lively auction of packages donated by Marriott and Whirlpool. Others appearing on stage included New York City Deputy Mayor for Government Affairs and Communications, Howard Wolfson, and Metropolitan Community Church Founder Rev. Troy Perry.

PFLAG NATIONAL CELEBRATES the Heartland CHICAGO



Toni Weaver presents a special tribute to Barbara Schon-Lundberg's husband Larry.



PFLAG board member
Chuck Middleton



Awardee, Tico Valle

PFLAG National Celebrates the Heartland

Chicago, IL—June 6, 2012

Photos by Tasos Katopodis

In June we saluted Illinois leaders in the movement for LGBT equality at our second annual PFLAG National Celebrates the Heartland...Chicago event, held at the Center on Halsted. We so enjoyed toasting our honorees: CEO of the Center on Halsted Modesto Tico Valle, About Face Theatre, and WPRIDE & Allies. And we were so glad to pay special tribute to Barbara Schon-Lundberg, former President of the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois. Their work has inspired all of us to continue our efforts to move equality forward, at home in the heartland and beyond.



Marsha Aizumi is an educator and advocate for the LGBT community, a cause she embraced due, in large part, to the harassment and bullying her transgender son experienced throughout high school. As a loving parent, along with her husband Tad, to two sons, Aiden and Stefen, her vision is to change school cultures to be more accepting of all students, as well as bring greater resources to the Asian Pacific Islander and transgender community.

Of Japanese descent, Marsha talks often about how her background affected her understanding of her son and family's process when Aiden came out as transgender. She says, "As a Japanese American, I was keenly aware not only of my immediate family, but of generations of family and ancestors that came before me, and how they might react to Aiden. It was important that I work through those feelings and in doing so I realized that I must not be the only one needing this kind of very specific support."

After attending a diversity workshop at the PFLAG National Convention, Marsha began researching and reaching out to local API LGBT leaders and groups like API Equality LA. Together, they developed goals to address not only the language barrier that often exists in the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community but how to find more private ways to meet the cultural needs of this diverse group of people.

In April 2012, the API LGBT community in the San Gabriel Valley began to hold monthly support group meetings in addition to PFLAG Pasadena's general support group. Attempting to create a format that would meet API cultural needs, the group supplements their monthly meetings with bi-monthly afternoon teas. They also offer family circles where parents who have made it through their coming out process work with families just beginning the journey. When language is a concern, interpreters are provided. "Both settings recognize that Asian people like to talk one-on-one so their discussions are

more private," said Marsha.

Interpreters when needed and identifying or translating LGBT resource materials are also efforts underway.

Marsha is also working to creating a network of API parents across the nation that can help LGBT families struggling with both the language barrier and the news of their child's sexual orientation or gender identity. As a result of this local work, the Nominating Committee of the National Board took notice, and Marsha became a National Board member last year so her leadership around community diversity now continues on a national scale.

Marsha's unique understanding of and approach to the API community—one that recognizes cultural sensitivities to help these families move through their uncertainty on their acceptance journey—elevates her work as a PFLAG member, and we are so proud to work with and learn from her leadership.

PFLAG Advocacy, continued from page 1

ally voices joining in solidarity to support their LGBT loved ones.

These events convinced Jeanne Manford and her husband Dr. Jules Manford that a support group for parents of LGBT children was desperately needed and, in March 1973, the first official meeting of PFLAG took place in the basement of a church in New York City's Greenwich Village. In the years following, more groups started to spring up, including one in Los Angeles in 1976, started by Larry and Adele Starr. The Starrs took things a step further, applying for formal non-profit status. As groups continued blossoming across the country, this family and ally network began communicating and organizing collectively to build greater awareness and support for LGBT people. One of the more visible advocacy efforts the network engaged in early on was when a contingent of parents traveled to Washington, DC to participate in the first-ever National March for

Lesbian and Gay Rights in 1979. In conjunction with the march, a number of parents hosted a press conference sharing a message of unconditional love and support for their LGBT children.

In the 1980s, these chapters focused on fighting discrimination against LGBT people in employment and housing. Over time, however, leaders within the network understood that fighting for LGBT rights extended far beyond addressing these forms of discrimination. Members began advocating for equal treatment in education, healthcare, taxation, and public accommodations at all levels of government. They accomplished this work by holding space for parents to get the support they needed for themselves and their families first. They also offered information to help educate their communities about the realities of who LGBT people are, and they engaged in new forms of advocacy in solidarity with similarly aligned equality organizations.

As the broader LGBT movement began maturing in its advocacy efforts, so too did the PFLAG chapter network.

To better leverage the organization's thriving chapter network, board leadership centralized operations by establishing a national office in Washington, DC in 1988. Throughout much of the 1990s, the organization spent time restructuring to accommodate its growing national profile, and officially changed its name to PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). A significant amount of work and community building was done to ensure that all members and their families of LGBT communities nationwide felt welcomed at local PFLAG chapters. This important education work led to the board unanimously agreeing to add bisexual people to the mission in 1993 and transgender people to the mission in 1998. In fact, PFLAG was the first national organization to take these

be not afraid—help is on the way! *straight for equality in faith communities* (And What It Means for Your PFLAG Chapter)

Talk to a handful of PFLAG chapters about what work they would like to be doing more of, or doing more effectively, and chances are good that, “Do more when it comes to faith issues!” will be among the responses from nearly every chapter. 40 years into PFLAG’s work, there have been lots of changes in the world around us, but the challenges around working with people of faith and faith communities themselves often remain unsettled.

But, as the title of Straight for Equality’s newest publication suggests, help is on the way.

In July, PFLAG National’s Straight for Equality project launched its third publication, *be not afraid—help is on the way! straight for equality in faith communities*. This new book aims to bring to faith communities the Straight for Equality mission of inviting, educating, and engaging new straight allies in innovative and often nontraditional ways.

The publication was several years in the works, starting with assessing the themes heard from PFLAG chapters when it comes to doing work on faith issues, evaluating what resources were being used, identifying gaps in the resources available, and working with religious leaders (including PFLAG National President Rabbi David Horowitz and National Board member Rev. Julie Nemecek) to develop a publication, resources, and trainings to meet the unaddressed needs.

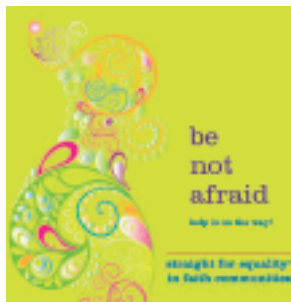
“After all of the assessment, of course, we stepped back, made a plan, and applied the unique Straight for Equality voice and approach to engagement,” says Jody M. Huckaby, PFLAG National’s Executive Director. “That meant focusing on the journey of the straight ally as an individual with real challenges, supporting them without being aggressive, and opening up places to have new dialogues about what it means to be an individual of faith who is supportive of equality.”

The end result of the collected work is a resource that offers PFLAG chapters a new way of approaching support for people of faith trying to find resolution between what their religion teaches and their personal connection to LGBT people. The book moves away from the “either/or” approach to this journey (“either you are faithful to your religion or you are supportive of equality”) and focuses on the personal narratives of those who have broken out of the dichotomy through reflection, prayer, and defining what “support” means on their own terms.

“The focus is on the individual journey, not institutional change,” said Huckaby. “We know that resources to create accepting faith communities exist, and there’s much that has been written about religious interpretation for specific faith communities, so this book doesn’t reiterate those efforts. This provides people seeking to understand how to start this personal process, get resources along the way, and find specific things they can do to express their support in progressively bigger steps. This is about the PFLAG mission of changing hearts and minds, one person at a time.”

The possibilities of this new book and resources for PFLAG chapters wanting to reshape their faith outreach are endless (see sidebar for some first steps). And this publication coupled with PFLAG’s other faith resources including the *Faith Field Guide and Toolkit* and *Faith in our Families* provide chapters with new tools for positive engagement in local faith communities.

Looking to get started? Download the guide by visiting www.straightforequality.org/faith.



Using *be not afraid* to Compliment Your Chapter’s Faith Outreach

Putting the new Straight for Equality publication into practice is just a few quick clicks away! Here are a few ways for you to use *be not afraid* as part of your chapter’s faith outreach and engagement efforts.

- **Get the Book—And Share It!** You can download *be not afraid* from the Straight for Equality website for free by visiting www.straightforequality.org/faith or purchase copies through the PFLAG Bookstore. After you’ve read the publication, commit to sharing it with someone new by passing along a copy, forwarding the PDF, or including the link on your Facebook page. Change starts when we bring new people into the discussion, and this is a simple way to start.
- **Get More Resources:** The *be not afraid* publication offers the groundwork for rethinking what it means to be an ally of faith. Often people will look for community-specific resources that help them continue on their journey. When you visit the Straight for Equality website, you’ll also find dozens of great “next step” resources for new allies in a plethora of faith communities. Help your new allies connect with the resources that speak to them. The website makes it easy to do.
- **Get the Chapter Program—and Do It!** Does your chapter want to start speaking to new and potential allies in faith communities where you live? The Straight for Equality team developed a program for PFLAG chapters to use that enables them to speak to allies of faith. Webinars were offered in July to train chapters. Missed it? Let us know by e-mailing info@straightforequality.org and we’ll help get you into the next online training program.
- **Share Your Story:** Did you get the guide, share it, and find a new ally? Did your chapter host a program to engage new allies using the guide? Still feeling that there are more challenges to overcome? Let us know so we can help. Additional resources and trainings for this publication are being planned, but we need your help to make them great. E-mail us at info@straightforequality.org to share your story.

actions, and demonstrated committed leadership, support, and resources to families of bisexual and transgender people.

Over the past decade, PFLAG has played a central role in engaging in community advocacy that has advanced important policy efforts at all levels of government. In 2001 PFLAG National launched its *Safe Schools Project* (now called *Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for All*). The idea was to share information and build relationships with school administrators to bring visibility and awareness to the challenges that far too many LGBT students—and students perceived to be LGBT—endure. Since that time, the PFLAG National office has

of employment, housing, education, credit, and public accommodations. National staffers offer resources and support to help connect chapters with these advocates. When these efforts began to intensify in 2002, less than 5% of the

Discrimination Act that will ensure non-discrimination protections for LGBT employees nationwide. Currently LGB people can be fired because of who they love in 29 states and transgender and gender non-conforming people can be fired because of who they are in 34 states.



The accomplishments of this strong and expansive network provide a solid foundation upon which to build, and that building continues today. With four marriage equality and relationship recognition ballot measures scheduled to be voted on by the electorate in November, now more than ever, the PFLAG network is ignited to share its personal stories and stand up for loved ones to help move equality forward. Chapter leaders in Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and Washington are contin-

PFLAG has so much to be proud of and so much to look forward to as members across the country continue to embrace the basic principles of love and family acceptance for all.

leveraged the tremendous work chapters have accomplished to make the case for passage of the Student Non-Discrimination and the Safe Schools Improvement Acts, as well as clarifying how existing federal protections like Title IX apply to LGBT students. These combined efforts place pressure on policymakers to continue offering concrete remedies to more fully address the nationwide epidemic of bullying, harassment, and discrimination of young people.



country offered some level of protections for LGBT individuals whether at the local or state level. Since that time, and after many public hearings where PFLAG members have testified on behalf of their families, 45% of the country is now protected. Efforts are still underway to pass a comprehensive Employment Non-



uing the work that Jeanne Manford started 40 years ago. So many dedicated and committed members have taken a stand to support our



LGBT loved ones, working in solidarity with local and state coalition partners to make equality a reality. PFLAG leadership continues to examine the successful advocacy efforts accomplished in the past, and build upon the vision and leadership of past chapter leaders so that we can ensure a successful season at the ballot box and beyond. PFLAG has so much to be proud of and so much to look forward to as members across the country continue to

While engaging in this work, many chapters have also stood shoulder-to-shoulder with committed advocates working to pass human rights ordinances at the local and state level, offering protections to LGBT individuals in places

embrace the basic principles of love and family acceptance for all.

PFLAG National Partners with Powerful Documentary on the Consequences Of Bullying

Long before the headlines and the controversy, PFLAG National was a proud partner of the powerful documentary BULLY, a film created and directed by Sundance- and Emmy-award winning filmmaker Lee Hirsch. The screening of the film on one of the movie nights at the 2011 PFLAG National Convention demonstrated the impact this powerful tool has to help people realize the devastating impact of bullying on kids, their families, and communities.

The film provides an intimate glimpse into homes, classrooms, bus rides, and principals' offices, showing teachers, administrators, kids, and parents struggling to find answers. Some of the most eye-opening moments come as we watch parents, school administrators, and teachers attempting to do the right thing, but often failing to know what to do, how to act, or how to proceed to protect the children they care about and have promised to keep safe. This is why PFLAG National was proud to partner in promoting the film, and its anti-bullying movement, The Bully Project.

PFLAG members know that bullying affects the entire family and that kids who are or perceived to be LGBT suffer disproportionately. PFLAGers also know how critical it is to set a policy and tone for a safe educational environment so that all students can learn; PFLAGers around the country are on the frontlines providing education and tools for teachers and administrators to do just that. In watching the film, it is clear that PFLAG's work is still critically needed in communities all over the country.

The film shows clearly, too, that the need for safe schools is not just an LGBT issue but a common value shared by all people. PFLAG recently hosted David and Tina Long, profiled in the film after their son Tyler, long harassed and bullied due to his Asperger Syndrome, died by suicide. In sharing their story—

much like PFLAGers do—these brave parents remind us that we are all in this together.

On the heels of the release of the film, PFLAG National's Executive Director, Jody Huckaby, moderated a panel dealing with bullying behavior and power dynamics at the launch event of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus. Included on the panels were David and Tina Long, as well as director Lee Hirsch. With our Bully partners, and alongside the other leaders in safe schools/ anti-bullying advocacy, PFLAG was honored to play a leading role in this important forum for discussion and change.

PFLAG is committed to creating a world in which our young people may grow up and be educated with freedom from fear of violence, bullying and other forms of discrimination, regardless of their perceived or actual gender identity or sexual orientation or that of their families. BULLY examines the dire consequences of this violence and bullying, through the testimony of strong and courageous youth. Through the power of their stories, the film is a catalyst for change in the way we deal with bullying as parents, teachers, children, and society as a whole.



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Keene, NH

Pete Bonneau, Jr.
Charlotte, NC

Paula Brill
New York, NY

Rev. Gilbert Caldwell
Asbury, New Jersey

Gordon Campbell
New York, NY

Kay Heggstad
Madison, WI

Steve Krantz
West Hills, CA

Patricia Lewis
Chevy Chase, MD

Robert Marchman
Maplewood, NJ

Charles Middleton
Chicago, IL

Alain Montour
New York, NY

Rev. Julie Nemecek
Spring Arbor, MI

Mike Neubecker
Brownstown, MI

Rebecca Schiffr
Brighton, MA

Daniel Tepfer
Beavercreek, OH

John R. Cepek, Ex-Officio
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Pittsford, NY

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Regional Directors
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Southern CA, HI
Steve Krantz

Mid-Pacific Region
Northern CA, NV
Pam Whiteley

Great Lakes Region
IL, IN, MI, OH
Dan Tepfer

PFLAG National is proud to announce its 2012 scholarship winners. More than \$43,000 will go to students across the country who have made strides in moving equality forward in their schools and communities. These young activists have worked tirelessly on numerous programs, projects, and activities aimed at making schools safe and welcoming for all. This marks the eleventh year of PFLAG's scholarship program which is generously funded by the Palmer B. Carson Trust and private donors, including the Ratner Family Scholarship and Gays, Lesbians and Allies at Dow (GLAD) Employee Network.

PFLAG National

Sarah Barry

Award: *Straight for Equality*

Hometown: Jasper, IN

School: New York University



Sarah's work as a straight ally was not met with open arms in her small and very conservative community. Seeing firsthand the challenges and obstacles many LGBT friends

faced, Sarah knew something had to be done at her school, which led her to start a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). Although she knew that her attempts would be met with great resistance, she did not realize how much until she was actively involved in the planning of the GSA. The resistance from the administration and community led to the forming of Raise Up a group that educates the public about the LGBT community and to promote acceptance and equality. In this role, she led numerous events aimed at educating the community about LGBT bullying, religion, transgender health, and parenting. Raise Up also worked on Nix Six, a program of Indiana Equality which is pushing for marriage equality. These events led to more community dialogue regarding LGBT issues and more support for the GSA. After months of hard work and community support, Sarah won over the resistant administration and a GSA

was formed at her high school. As president of the GSA, Sarah found strength and encouragement knowing that she was supporting LGBT people and working towards justice. In the fall, Sarah plans to study theater and philosophy at New York University.

Isaac Gomez

Award: *Jeanne Manford*

Hometown: San Diego, CA

School: Stanford University



As a transgender youth of color activist and leader, Isaac worked on numerous projects aimed at supporting the needs of other transgender youth

of color. Isaac's initial advocacy started at speaking engagements sharing his story and experiences. As he gained confidence, Isaac's advocacy work deepened. His family was invited to participate in the *IV Convencion Internacional De Familias por la Universidad Sexual* (IV International Conference of Families for Sexual Diversity) in Santiago, Chile. At the conference, participants were able to engage in meaningful conversation regarding LGBT issues throughout Latin America. Isaac's numerous awards for his anti-bullying work include the Emergent Leader of the Year presented at the HONOR Fund Luminaria Awards, as well as the Heroes, Pioneers and Trailblazer

Award and a Senate Certificate of Recognition presented by the Lambda Archives. Isaac was featured on the Dr. Oz Show to discuss his experiences as a transgender youth. In the fall, he will study political science or public policy at Stanford University.

Eric Eichelberger

Award: *Carson B. Palmer*

Hometown: Atlanta, GA

College: Stanford University



Eric faced many challenges trying to educate his conservative Catholic school community on LGBT issues. Despite a ban on forming a GSA

club, Eric continued his efforts to support LGBT students by collaborating with his school's diversity Mosaic club and hosted a series of discussions on LGBT issues. The discussions attracted supporters, opponents, administrators, and interested community members which eventually led to a shift in understanding and further dialogue. Eric also acted in a school production of *The Laramie Project*, as a way to bring awareness and understanding. Eric received numerous accolades during his high school tenure, including the UPenn Award, and making both the National Honor Society and the Dean's List. In the fall, Eric plans to study film studies and comparative literature at Stanford University.

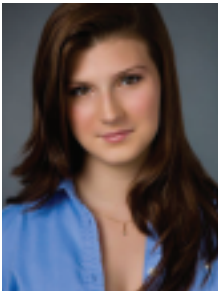
INTRODUCING THE 2012 PFLAG NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Alexis Bartholomew

Award: PFLAG National

Hometown: Binghamton, NY

College: Cornell University



Alexis attributes her work ethic and self-discipline in part to her beliefs and moral, but mostly to her family. During a school activity, Alexis was asked to

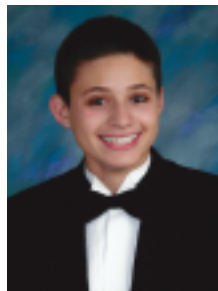
draw a picture of the family structure her teacher described, and she was torn because her family was not an option. Alexis' two loving mothers were not part of her teacher's ideal of a family. Outraged by the teacher's suggestion that she draw two single moms, Alexis decided to draw a picture of the family she knew and loved; that moment shaped her as a person and helped her find the confidence she needed to educate people about her family, and set the stage for her own personal growth. Alexis used her experiences as a catalyst to educate and advocate for equality, fairness, and acceptance. In an effort to find support, Alexis and her moms joined Pride and Joy, a group aimed at supporting the need of LGBT families. During her high school career, she was accomplished in indoor and outdoor track and gymnastics. Alexis was also very active in Binghamton Students for International Service (BSIS), traveling to Guatemala to construct homes, distribute clothes, serve meals and raise money to help support the malnutrition center with necessary supplies. In the fall, she will attend Cornell University where she plans to study nutritional science.

Ilana Kapit

Award: PFLAG National

Hometown: Rockville, MD

School: Barnard College



Ilana's work in the LGBT community was prompted by her own acceptance of who she was and a new found confidence emerging as a result. While

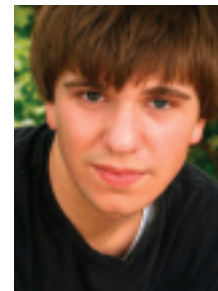
serving as her school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) president, Ilana helped plan activities which offered education to her school community and support for her peers. As president, she hosted her GSA's first fundraiser and planned numerous educational activities. Ilana also created the Montgomery County Gay Straight Alliance, designed to build relationships with other GSA's in the county in order to share similar experiences and knowledge. Ilana has been featured in *Washington Jewish Week* and *The Gazette* sharing her personal experience and involvement in the LGBT community. Along with the GSA, Ilana was also actively involved in her community as an Inclusion Counselor at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington where she assisted students with special needs with social and personal development. She also spent years as a counselor at Celebrate Ability where she worked with students with autism in the areas of music, dance, art, cooking and sports. Ilana plans to major in psychology and double minor in education and Spanish at Barnard College.

Kyle Brown

Award: PFLAG National

Hometown: Greenville, WI

School: University of Wisconsin-Madison



During Kyle's sophomore year in high school he assisted in the development of his school's first Gay Straight Alliance (GSA). Although there

was some resistance from the school's administration, Kyle and his supporters continued to push and the club was fully recognized. Along with being an active member of the GSA, Kyle was also a member of his school's Diversity Club. Through his involvement with both clubs, Kyle assisted in the creation of a "Words Hurt" Week, for which he served as the "face" of the event, speaking to teachers, releasing promotional videos, and attending town board meetings educating the community about the prevalence of bullying. In addition to his advocacy work, Kyle also volunteered at the St. Joseph Food Pantry where he distributed food and organized donations. In the fall, Eric plans to study human resource management at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Caitlin O'Connor

Award: PFLAG National

Hometown: Arlington, VA

College: Virginia Commonwealth University

At the encouragement of her friends, Caitlin decided to join her school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) her freshman



year of high school, which started her on a path of LGBT activism. Serving as co-president and secretary of her GSA, she assisted in

numerous activities such as a dinner for Transgender Day of Remembrance, a GSA-sponsored prom, a potluck for Ally Week, and an event aimed at bringing together LGBT youth and allies throughout Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia. In addition to her work with the GSA, Caitlin also volunteered with Stop Child Abuse Now (S.C.A.N.) of Northern Virginia as a child supervisor, providing support for children who are victims of abuse and neglect. In the fall, she plans to study social work at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The Ratner Family Scholarship

Benji Delgadillo

Award: *The Ratner Family Scholarship*

Hometown: Ladera Ranch, CA

School: University of California, Berkeley



As a transgender, low-income youth of color, Benji was no stranger to feeling marginalized in both the straight and LGBT communities. In an effort to

support other LGBT youth of color and raise awareness of LGBT issues, Benji was involved in numerous groups and activities. As the president and founder of his school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Benji worked hard to change and adopt

school policies that affected transgender and gender non-conforming students. Along with his work with the GSA, Benji worked tirelessly with the Gay-Straight Alliance Network regarding the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act and testified at the California Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on the legislation. Benji also educated other schools and GSA leaders across California on how they can implement curriculum inclusive in their schools. Benji plans to student political science with a minor in queer or cultural studies at University of California, Berkeley.

Megan Green (LGBT)

Award: *The Ratner Family Scholarship*

Hometown: Walnut Creek, CA

School: Macalester College



During her freshman year, Megan shared her personal experiences as part of the LGBT community by presenting numerous anti-

homophobia workshops which educated the school community about the challenges of LGBT youth. In her role as president of her school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Megan used her leadership skills to plan and conduct two-day training sessions for LGBT student leaders to assist them in crafting their personal stories into messages of awareness and acceptance for their communities. Megan's hard work and dedication was recognized when her school's history department adopted a policy which made the anti-homophobia workshops mandatory for all freshman students. In addition to her many accomplishments with the GSA, Megan

was actively involved her school's Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) program where she coordinated bi-monthly meetings to discuss ways to make her high school safe for all students. In the fall, Megan will attend Macalester College.

Dow-GLAD

Gays, Lesbians, and Allies at Dow (GLAD) supports students who demonstrate a particular interest and expertise in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math and is supported by donations from employees of the Dow Chemical Company.

Molly Endries

Award: *Dow-GLAD*

Hometown: Santa Rosa, CA

College: University of California, Berkeley



Molly had mixed experiences when she came out to her parents and friends. She realized that ignorance, misunderstandings, and myths

were common among her community, but she eventually received the support she needed to become comfortable in her own skin. As president of her school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), Molly brought in speakers to help educate the school community on the experiences of LGBT people, and she was also actively involved in Positive Images, a non-profit organization that holds support groups for LGBTQ youth. As a part of her work, she co-facilitated meetings and was part of the leadership team. In addition to her LGBT advocacy, Molly was part of

INTRODUCING THE 2012 PFLAG NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

the Green Team, which aimed to increase environmental awareness in her school. As co-president, Molly educated students about recycling, and started both a garden and a composting program. In the fall, Molly will attend the University of California, Berkeley where she plans to study chemistry.

Francesco Sergi

Award: Dow-GLAD

Hometown: Danville, CA

College: University of California-Berkeley



Francesco joined his school's Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) to create unity and tolerance for all students at his high school. As an active member of

the GSA, Francesco worked on numerous school events such as Ally Week, Day of Silence, and other projects aimed at raising awareness of LGBT issues. His GSA also sponsored a safe-zone program aimed at securing support for LGBT and ally students throughout the school. Aside from his many accomplishments with the GSA, Francesco found time to volunteer at a local medical center. Through his church, he also participated in the "30 Hour Famine," a program that encourages teens to raise money for communities in poverty while refraining from eating for 30 consecutive hours. This fall, Francesco will study at the University of California, Berkeley.

Christoph Colon

Award: Dow-GLAD

Hometown: South Salem, NY

College: Clark University

Christoph made a conscious decision to utilize his maturity, talent, and leadership skills to become actively involved in the LGBT community. He was chosen to represent his state at GLSEN's Safe Schools Advocacy Summit in Washington, DC where he gained knowledge and understanding of the experiences of LGBT youth across the county. After making the trip to Washington, DC, he was eager to become more involved in his community and as a result efforts, Christoph became the GLSEN Hudson Valley Jump Start leader. He was also chosen to attend Youth to Youth Leadership & Drug/Alcohol Conference at Bryant College in Smithfield, RI. Among his accomplishments as an Eagle Scout, Christoph also made a documentary on homophobia which screened three times. Christoph plans to study computer and informational sciences at Clark University.

PFLAG Bergen County

This year, PFLAG Bergen County has asked PFLAG National to present a special scholarship on behalf of their chapter's "Founding Mother," Lillian Epstein. From the chapter:

"Lillian is a person overflowing with enthusiasm, intelligence, kindness and empathy, who saw a need for parents of our children to have a place to talk and seek

support. Lillian started our chapter 18 years ago, with a first meeting that included 18 people. She inspired all newcomers with her smile and made all feel welcome. Slowly, Lillian added education and advocacy to our mission statement: we bought books and started a library, ran articles in newspapers, started a Safe School Committee, and even raised funds to put up billboards. PFLAG of Bergen County is Lillian's gift to all of us; she is an extraordinary and wonderful woman."

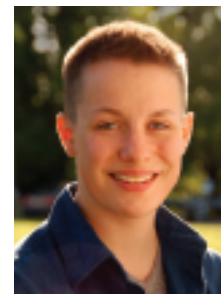
Emmett Patterson

Award: PFLAG Bergen County on behalf of Lillian Epstein

Hometown:

Washington, PA

College: American University



As an active member of the Washington County Gay-Straight Alliance,

Emmett used his leadership skills to educate his small town on the challenges facing LGBT and ally youth. After being invited to the White House, along with the Washington County GSA as part of an LGBT open house, Emmett had an opportunity to meet other youth his age dealing with the struggles of being LGBT in high school. As a result of the power of advocacy, Emmett then co-founded a Gay Straight Alliance at his school. Emmett was also the recipient of GLSEN's Student Advocate of the Year Award for his work. In the fall, Emmett plans to study women's and gender studies at American University.

Ballots Must Be Received by October 15, 2012.

In accordance with election procedures approved by PFLAG's National Board of Directors, these board nominees were screened and recommended by PFLAG's Nominating Committee, pursuant to the organization's bylaws.

Seven Board members are elected by the membership. Two seats are up for election this year, and the candidates' profiles appear on the upcoming pages. Board members are elected to serve a three-year term.

Regional Directors' seats will be elected at the same time. One seat is up for election this year, and the candidate's profile appears on the upcoming pages. You may only vote for the Regional Director who represents the area in which you live. Regional Directors are elected to serve a two-year term.

To cast a vote, check your choice of candidates and return the ballot on page 15 to PFLAG National. Your ballot must include the mailing panel (located on the reverse side of the ballot) to verify eligibility. Ballots which cannot be identified as being cast by a member in good standing will be disqualified. Members in good standing include all individuals of a household whose dues are current. All members may use the same membership number for voting. Please photocopy the ballot and the mailing panel for multiple members of the household. Results will be reported on October 27th on the PFLAG National website—www.pflag.org—and at the PFLAG Annual Meeting to be held in Washington, DC on October 26, 2012.

All ballots must be received no later than October 15th and returned to the address on the ballot.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please vote for *three* candidates below.



Marsha Aizumi is an educational consultant, author, and passionate advocate for the LGBT community, which comes from being the mother

of a transgender son. She helped to open up a high school satellite location with the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center's LifeWorks program, assisting LGBT and LGBT friendly students obtain their diploma. She is also working to create safer schools, by going into districts and providing resources to increase awareness and knowledge. And through her memoir, *Two Spirits, One Heart*, she chronicles her journey with her son, who transitioned from female to male in 2009. She hopes her book will provide insight into a journey that may begin in fear, sadness and uncertainty, and become one filled with acceptance, love and unforgettable moments of joy.

Marsha is currently serving on the PFLAG National Board, where she hopes to bring her voice to serve the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community, the transgender community and the educational community. She has opened up an API PFLAG in Southern California and is in the process of helping to open an API PFLAG in New York City, as well as bringing together resources both in English and native languages for the API community.

Gordon J. Campbell is the President and Chief Executive Officer of United Way of New York City, which creates, leads and supports strategic initiatives that have a measurable and lasting impact in improving education, income

stability, and health throughout the five boroughs. Throughout its work, United Way partners with neighborhood agencies, government, businesses, academia, foundations, volunteers and others in order to achieve much more than any one organization working alone.

Gordon was Chief Executive Officer of Safe Horizon, the nation's leading victim assistance organization, from 1998 to 2007. During his tenure, Safe Horizon was widely recognized for its compassionate and effective emergency response to the 9/11 attacks. Working with The September 11th Fund, jointly created by United Way of New York City and The



New York Community Trust, Safe Horizon disbursed \$114 million to 50,000 victims, family members and others impacted by the tragedy.

During this nine year period, Safe Horizon's budget rose from \$30.8 to \$55.8 million.

He received his JD from the University of Washington Law School, his MPA from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and his BA from Pacific Lutheran University. Gordon served as an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Public Administration at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service from 1996-2003.



Susan Thronson is Senior Vice President, Global Marketing for Marriott International, Inc. based in Bethesda, Maryland. She

leads the company's worldwide integrated marketing strategy and execution for the company and its 16 lodging brands including advertising, social media,

2012 PFLAG NATIONAL ELECTIONS:

BOARD & REGIONAL DIRECTORS BALLOT

strategic alliances, customer relationship management, customer segment marketing including LGBT and multi-cultural, and the Marriott Rewards/The Ritz-Carlton Rewards platforms.

Susan joined Marriott in 1989. Her past assignments include Senior Vice President, International Marketing with responsibility for developing emerging markets' brand and marketing strategy. During her tenure in International Lodging from 1989-2005, Marriott grew its annual revenue from \$300M to over \$5B from hotels located in 64 countries excluding the U.S. and Canada.

Early in her career, she served in account management roles at McCann-Erickson Worldwide. Susan serves at the immediate past chair of the Board of Trustees for the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International

Foundation. She received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Nevada-Reno.

Susan is a member of the Washington DC metro chapter of PFLAG and active in its T-Families support group. She and her husband, Steve, and two children live in Potomac, Maryland.



found the perfect opportunity to follow her heart when elected Regional Director for the Pacific Northwest in 2008. It has been a family affair as her

husband, daughter and daughter-in-law and all the dogs have visited chapters in the beautiful communities of this region. She is looking forward to her final two years in this role and is working to leave a strong communication system with opportunities for leadership development and support. PFLAG is a unique organization providing beacons of hope in cities and small towns and its presence is growing in the region.

She lives with her family in the country 90 miles north of Seattle.

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Please vote only for the candidate
representing the state in which you reside.

Kathy Reim

*Re-election Pacific Northwest Region
(AK, ID, MT, OR, WA)*

After a 30-year career as a teacher and an encore career in mediation, Kathy Reim,

OFFICIAL BALLOT



*Return this ballot with
the mailing panel on the
reverse to PFLAG
National, Attention:
2012 Ballot Collection,
1828 L Street, NW, Suite
660, Washington, DC
20036*

All ballots must be received by October 15, 2012.

PFLAG Board of Directors:

Please vote for three candidates by placing a checkmark next to the candidate's name.

- ☐ Marsha Aizumi
- ☐ Gordon J. Campbell
- ☐ Susan Thronson

PFLAG Regional Directors:

Please vote for the candidate representing the region *in which you currently reside* by placing a checkmark next to the candidate's name.

- ☐ Pacific Northwest Region (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA): Kathy Reim

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ANNUAL MEETING NOTIFICATION: October 26, 2012
Washington DC 5:00-6:00 PM More info @pflag.org/annualmeeting



THE PFLAG NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

PFLAGPOLE

FALL/WINTER 2011

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