



THE PFLAG NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

PFLAG pole

FALL
2015



(FOLD)

PFLAG's Values are America's Values

A VISUAL TIMELINE OF PFLAG'S PARTICIPATION
IN THE SUCCESSFUL FIGHT FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY
(P. 12-13)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- 06 New Trans Publications
- 08 PFLAG in the Media
- 14 Back to the Future
- 19 PFLAG National Board
and Regional Director Ballot
- 20 PFLAG National Partners



From Jean Hodges

President,
PFLAG National Board of Directors

Dear PFLAGers:

It was roughly one year ago today that I first had the opportunity to address you as the new president of the board of PFLAG National. One year...and how the landscape has changed!

First and foremost, ***we have marriage equality!*** “Love is love” won a victory on June 26, 2015, a date that will live in the annals of American history as a landmark day for human rights. For my own Boulder, Colorado chapter, it has been a 22-year journey for justice, which began with the agonizing disbelief of a handful of parents, allies, and people who are LGBTQ that Colorado citizens voted to make discrimination a constitutional amendment. We few were joined by many across Boulder County—and eventually across the country—in our strong belief that LGBTQ people and their families deserve full legal rights.

Beyond marriage, we’ve had other great legislative wins this year, with a push to ban so-called “reparative therapy” at the federal level and in numerous states across the country, the reintroduction of both the Student Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA) and the Every Child Deserves a Family Act (ECDF), and the introduction of new legislation such as the Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act.

Sadly, though, as we gain momentum in legal protections, we also start to see backlash. Some of the backlash is

legislative, with so-called “religious freedom” and “bathroom” bills being debated across the country, and opposition to anti-discrimination laws picking up steam. More of it, though, is social pushback. It’s understandable: as laws begin to protect us and those we love, there is more awareness of LGBTQ issues, and that awareness—which we hope will lead to understanding—also triggers resistance.

However, this is why I am more proud than ever to be a part of PFLAG. This is when some of our best work is done—in the face of adversity. It motivated our work some forty-three years ago; I have no doubt that it will fuel some of our best work, which is yet to come.

When I go into a legislator’s office, when I meet a neighbor at the market, or at church, or in the street, I have the power of PFLAG at my back. I have the power of a mission that seeks not only to educate and advocate, but also to support any and all who need it. I have the power of my local chapter, as well as more than 350 other chapters across the country, ready to offer information and help at a moment’s notice. I have the power of 200,000 members and supporters of this great organization, who with their gifts of time, talent, and treasure tell me that they are standing at my side, ready to face any and all opposition with passion, with grace, with kindness, with openness.

We stand united in the powerful history of PFLAG, in the emotions the name PFLAG evokes, in the legacy its early founders have left to us. As the current volunteer leader of this organization, I hope that each of you feels supported, feels empowered, feels the strong connective force of PFLAG to others who share a vision of a truly inclusive world where diversity is celebrated.

We know all too painfully from the ongoing struggle for racial equality that passing laws is only the beginning of erasing the prejudice that affects attitudes and behaviors. PFLAG in its 350+ chapters in all our fifty states must continue its work to change hearts and minds to make real the American Dream of equality for our LGBTQ brothers and sisters and communities of color, all who do not yet feel safe and welcome to be who they are.

I encourage you all to rely on PFLAG for the strength we will surely need to do this work, and to expand legal protections across the states, especially for our transgender and gender-expansive loved ones, to make our schools safer, our faith communities more welcoming, and to expand diversity in our ranks.

This is the power of PFLAG...it’s a power that is created by and for all of us.

Jean Hodges
President,
PFLAG National Board of Directors

From Jody Huckaby

*Executive Director,
PFLAG National*

Some words, when we hear them for the first time, stick with us and leave an indelible mark; those of us whose loved ones were bullied as kids, or were victims of bullying ourselves, know this all too well. Sometimes, though, it's the context in which a familiar word is used that has the power to create an unforgettable moment.

That was my experience back in 2005 when a new colleague, having just returned from a rare weekend away, stated, "Well, my husband might disagree with me..." I wish I could recall what followed, but my brain's focus went entirely to recalibrating what he said: "My husband." Coming from another man, with neither explanation nor apology, not even a hint of a whispered tone. Of course I'd heard the word before, but not in this way. His use of the word was so matter of fact, clearly not intended for shock value, nor did he sound as if he was trying to make a point. My need for recalibration? Well, it just sounded so...well...normal. Yes, normal.

As many more people begin to settle into this new normal—which for them began on June 26th of this year—so many memories from the last decade have come flooding back to me.

In June 2006, my brother, Jason, and his then-partner, Michael, hosted an amazing ceremony at their California home to formalize with a civil union their more-than-20 years together.

Then, less than two years later when, the CA Supreme Court ruled in favor of the freedom to marry, Jason and Michael married. The simple ceremony was beautiful, and I knew that life had changed, but I couldn't quite articulate why.

When I proposed to my now-husband Stephen—surprising him on a trip to Santa Fe for New Year's Eve—it was only after a number of years of substantive conversations and reflections on the different perspectives we each had about the meaning of the word "marriage." We wanted to honor its weight and its power before claiming it for ourselves.

Four years of wedding planning later, we eloped to our living room for a very private New Year's Day wedding on what would have been my Dad's birthday—and almost a year following my mother's death. We had rushed to get the marriage license before the holidays began, wrote the vows, put some music together, groomed the dog and the cat, invited our best friend and her daughter, Stephen's mom and sister via Skype, but I didn't give one thought to how the simple ceremony would end. So when the officiant said, "By the power vested in me by the District of Columbia, I now pronounce you husband and husband," I knew that my brain didn't require the recalibration it had needed 10 years earlier; the new normal was simply becoming normal.

And then came June 26th.



I reflected on the day: On my dad, wondering what he would have thought; on my mom and the many times she struggled with the language she used to refer to her gay sons and their "companions" (or "friends" or "partners").

I recalled one of our last conversations where she talked about me feeling like I had to leave our small town. Today I could move back to my hometown and my marriage would be legal in the state of Louisiana.

I carry the weight of words with me—the power of *husband*, the protections and obligations of *married*—and I continue to think of the many powerful words that as PFLAGers we are still working towards together: *Equality. Inclusion. Affirmation. Celebration.*

I look forward to continuing this work with all of you until all of our experiences finally reflect the society we continue to build together. Until this culture becomes everyone's new normal.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Huckaby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Jody Huckaby
*Executive Director,
PFLAG National*

2015 Special Events

Two terrific events were held in New York this year: The Seventh Annual Straight for Equality® Gala, and HOT!, an event presented by our friends at Jenn-Air, in support of PFLAG.

The Seventh Annual Straight for Equality® Gala

March 30, 2015
New York Marriott Marquis Hotel
New York, NY

▶
Marriott CEO Arne Sorenson accepts the Workplace honors on behalf of the company, taking to the stage to speak out against Indiana's "Freedom to Discriminate" bill, a powerful moment that made headlines.



▶
Entertainment honoree, *Transparent* creator/writer/producer Jill Soloway, shares heartfelt thoughts about the word "love."



▶
PFLAG National Board president Jean Hodges and gala emcee Alec Mapa hit the red carpet.



All images by Getty photographer Dia Dipasupil.

HOT!

July 29, 2015
JENN-AIR Showroom
at the Design & Decoration
Building Annex
New York, NY

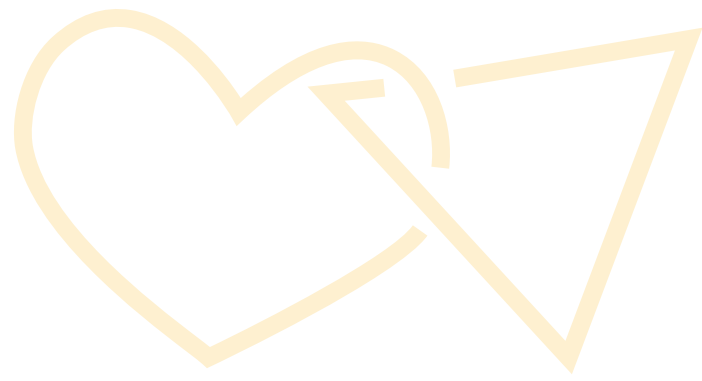
▶
Bravo TV's Andy Cohen (L), his friend (to his L) Liza Persky, and PFLAG National Executive Director Jody Huckaby (R) look on as event co-chair, Jenn-Air's Brian Maynard, captivates the crowd from the mic.



▶
Guests enjoy the beautiful NYC skyline from the Jenn-Air showroom terrace, while sipping cool cocktails from Stoli.

▶
PFLAG National's Director of Equality & Diversity Partnerships Jean-Marie Navetta (L) enjoys the evening with guests Angelique Piwinski and Ally Castillo.





Year Four: PFLAG Still Shows Care With PRIDE™

PFLAG National partnered for a fourth year with the Johnson & Johnson Family of Consumer Companies on Care with Pride™, the multi-faceted marketing and education campaign that has helped elevate the visibility of PFLAG's mission. This year's campaign message—that youth have the power to make a difference, and help to create a fresh, unbiased view of the world—was leveraged by participating chapters through pamphlets, banners, and coupon books, which also includes PFLAG's "Top Ten Ways to Create Safe Schools."

Also exciting this year is the success of the Donate A Photo component of the Care with Pride™ campaign, with more than 20,000 people sharing photos to support PFLAG's safe schools and



PFLAG Puerto Rico at Pride San Juan, a first for the Care with PRIDE™ campaign.

anti-bullying work as of this printing. Visit the Donate A Photo website at donateaphoto.com to learn how you can

support PFLAG through a simple action that most people do regularly: sharing a photo online.

A new look...and more to love!

There's no hiding it: The PFLAGPole has a brand new look, highlighting all of PFLAG's great work, and we're excited to share it with you!

Even more exciting? So much is being accomplished that we will once again bring you multiple issues each year. Three, in fact: A Winter issue in December, a Spring issue in April, and a Summer/Fall issue in August, to make sure we

give you the best of all that PFLAG offers. Coming this December, we'll take a look at our year in review, including our national convention. We will also share profiles of our 2015 scholarship recipients—a fitting way to look at the promise of a new year.

Also on its way? A brand new website, to keep you connected to PFLAG's work all year long. If you're not getting email

updates from PFLAG, now's the time to make sure we have your email address on file. Simply send your full name and email address to info@pflag.org, and you'll be assured that you're getting from us every bit of news, and all of our resources and opportunities.

We hope you enjoy the new look—and expanded content—of the all-new PFLAGPole!

Transgender Visibility Means More Support, More Education Needed

The past year has seen transgender visibility at an all-time high: from magazine covers to Emmy® awards, each has amplified the voices and stories of the transgender community, and the public is talking about gender in ways it never has before.

Each of these moments is an opportunity to provide support and education—two efforts that PFLAGers excel at—and that’s why PFLAG has introduced not

one but two new publications focused on the trans community. These publications—one focused on providing support to the parents, families, and friends of people who are trans and gender-expansive, and the other focused on educating and engaging new allies to the trans community—are crucial to fulfilling two of the three facets of PFLAG’s mission.

PFLAG’s inclusion of the transgender community dates back to 1998, when

the national organization revised the mission statement to include people who are openly transgender, becoming the first national LGBTQ organization to do so. In 2001, a person who was transgender was welcomed onto the national board, and in 2002, PFLAG issued a policy statement committing to support only legislation that is trans inclusive. Last year, PFLAG’s long, non-trans-inclusive name changed from the acronym “PFLAG,” to become just PFLAG. Each of these efforts has further reinforced the organization’s commitment to trans inclusion...and these publications are another demonstration of that commitment.

As members of the trans community continue to raise their voices and share their stories, it is critical that PFLAG offer as much support and education as possible. There is no doubt that these two publications will be essential in that effort!

Published in 2014, and created with the help of dozens of content experts, reviewers, and storytellers, this is the fourth book in PFLAG’s Straight for Equality® series! To download a copy of *guide to being a trans ally* and view the companion resource list, visit straightforequality.org/trans.



Focuses on:

- *Understanding the terms:* Learn the terminology, and how allies fit in.
- *Working through the barriers:* What are the most common challenges that allies to the trans community face? The barriers—and solutions—are here.
- *Going further on the journey:* Learn about some key issues that the trans community faces and how you can be part of working towards solutions.

To download a copy of *Our Trans Loved Ones*—published in May 2015—and find more helpful resources for family members and friends, visit pflag.org/trans.



Includes:

- *Current information and terminology:* An up-to-date approach on gender and how to best support—psychologically, medically, and socially—a loved one who is trans or gender expansive.
- *Expert voices:* Hear from leaders in the field about how to best support a loved one who is transgender or gender expansive.
- *First-person stories:* Hear stories from the loved ones of people who are trans and gender expansive, and how they have approached—and embraced—their new understanding of gender.



PFLAG Kansas City president Debi Jackson fully embraces her trans daughter Avery. Photo: Terry Newell/terrynewell.com



PFLAG's National Board of Directors and Regional Directors Council

As of September 30, 2015

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John Tantillo
Treasurer
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Susan Thronson
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Latoria J. Farmer
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Catherine Hyde
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Peggy Moore
Seattle, WA

John Oda
Oakland, CA

Joni Stacy
Omaha, NE

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Greensboro, NC

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Berkeley, CA
*Regional
Director Chair*

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Northern Plains
(MN, ND, SD, WI)

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Gulf
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Mid-Pacific
(Northern CA, NV)

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(AR, LA, OK, TX)

Dawn Holt
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Pacific Northwest
(AK, ID, MT, OR, WA)

Catherine Hyde
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Mid-Atlantic
(DC, DE, MD,
VA, WV)

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Omaha, NE
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North Atlantic
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Amy Mesirow
Marston Mills, MA
Northeast
(CT, MA, ME, NH,
RI, VT)

Barbara Pisetsky
Newport Beach, CA
Southern Pacific
(Southern CA, HI)

Linda Stroupe
Greensboro, NC
South Atlantic
(KY, NC, SC, TN)

Dan Tepfer
Beavercreek, OH
Great Lakes
(IL, IN, MI, OH)

Julie Wilson
Loveland, CO
Mountain West
(AZ, CO, NM,
UT, WY)

Leveraging PFLAG members' individual voices to get the collective PFLAG family and ally voice raised across the country is one of our priorities at PFLAG National. It was a banner year for visibility.

Vogue Magazine

CIRCULATION: 1,256,659

When *Vogue* magazine came calling for a story on trans visibility, our Director of Policy—and team leader on trans inclusion—Diego M Sanchez, APR, was ready, able, and willing to guide them.

Prancing Elites

1.13 MILLION VIEWERS FOR PREMIERE/PSA

PFLAG was proud to partner with Oxygen TV and *The Prancing Elites* to bring their shared message, “Be your authentic self in whatever you do!” to its audience, via a wonderful PSA featuring *The Elites* themselves!

J-14 Magazine

CIRCULATION: 320,000

PFLAG was pleased to work with *J-14* Magazine to tell the hopeful and triumphant story of a trans teen facing the world head-on with the support of her PFLAG mom.



Becoming Us

4.5 MILLION POTENTIAL TWITTER IMPRESSIONS FOR PREMIERE LIVE TWEETCHAT



ABC Family reached out to PFLAG to create a rich partnership around their new show, *Becoming Us*. Bonus: Jean-Marie Navetta—PFLAG’s Director of Equality & Diversity Partnerships—is one of the featured experts on the show’s website!

Royal Pains

1.32 MILLION VIEWERS FOR EPISODE AND PSA



PFLAG was excited to partner with USA Television on a special episode of *Royal Pains*, featuring trans teen—and member of the extended PFLAG family—Nicole Maines. The network released a new PFLAG PSA that aims to raise awareness about transgender issues while offering support and services for the trans community.



2015 Logo Trailblazer Awards

ONE MILLION VIEWERS

PFLAG was proud to collaborate with Logo TV on their annual Trailblazer Awards, this year honoring Trailblazing Parents. PFLAG leaders Marsha Aizumi and Sheila Lopez-Aguirre were honored alongside longtime PFLAG friends Judy and Dennis Shepard.

And Straight for Equality® was everywhere...



The Washington Post



“...seek out resources on your own. One of the best is *guide to being a trans ally*, published by PFLAG...”

—Steven Petrow, *Washington Post*

Coming Soon! PFLAG's *guide to being a straight ally*...Third Edition

At the 2007 PFLAG National Convention in Washington, D.C. a new program was introduced for the organization: Straight for Equality®.

The effort was focused on the “next generation” of people who could be engaged to support LGBT equality. These allies—unlike the more traditional PFLAG family member or close friend—might not yet have been ready for activism, but they were ready to be invited into the discussion, offered educational resources, and engaged in a variety of ways.

As part of the program launch, PFLAG released the first-ever Straight for Equality® publication, *guide to being a straight ally*. It was the initial step in developing materials that are responsive to the then four in ten people—now eight in ten—who say that they personally know someone who is LGBT-identified. Even if people didn't call themselves allies yet, this was going to be a place to start.

And what a start it was.

“So much has changed!” said Jean-Marie Navetta, Director of Equality & Diversity Partnerships and the lead architect on the project from its inception. “The first edition was written long before marriage and the volume of visibility we have today, and before many people outside the movement even recognized the word ‘trans.’ It was a great place to start, but it's time for a big update.”

So, in October, PFLAG will release the third edition of the guide. It will include several new features, including an expanded discussion of the Straight for Equality® Ally Spectrum, updates to key content and resources, and integrated references for how to learn more via the other Straight for Equality® publications (*straight for equality in healthcare*, *straight for equality in faith communities*, and *guide to being a trans ally*).

“The concept of allyship continues to change. The new edition will offer fresh resources that are responsive to the change, and an even greater focus on the role and importance of active allies,” said Jamie Henkel, Equality & Diversity Partnerships Manager. “In addition to the great content from the first edition, the additional guidance on understanding the ally journey will give people more effective ways to start new discussions about what being supportive looks like, and what it takes to get there.”

The publication will be available for download on both the PFLAG National (pflag.org) and Straight for Equality® (straightforequality.org) websites, and available for purchase starting in late October.

Did You Know...

Nearly 100,000 copies of the original *guide to being a straight ally* have been distributed

More than 14,000 people have participated in Straight for Equality® learning sessions

15 unique learning sessions have been developed

Straight for Equality® in the Workplace has worked with more than 100 corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies

Eight publications and dozens of other resources have been developed for PFLAG chapters to use in their communities

Nearly 30 chapters nationwide have hosted Straight for Equality® programs to invite, educate, and engage allies in their communities

Straight for Equality®'s social media presence is growing: 5,168 Facebook “likes” and 2,226 Twitter followers

THIRD EDITION

the incredibly detailed honest forthright fully comprehensive completely blunt shockingly simple wonderfully helpful and witty exposition on a topic that sometimes makes people blanch but really shouldn't because this compelling open and straight to the point no pun intended little publication will demystify the secret world of gay people and be your tried and trusted

**guide
to being a
straight ally***

The Year in Policy

From Congressional briefings to state hearings to local school board meetings, PFLAG voices have reached out to strengthen supportive actions and tackle terrible ones, leading to a host of positive legislative gains this year. Here are just some of PFLAG's legislative priorities for which PFLAGers passionately advocated.

The Equality Act

Introduced in both the Senate and the House this past July, this long-overdue bill is a comprehensive federal bill for LGBTQ civil rights, providing essential, critical protections and resetting the debate. Rather than creating a bill calling for new rights, The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal laws, existing solely to have LGBTQ people treated the same as every other protected class under federal law, while strengthening the law for all who are currently protected. People who are LGBTQ currently lack equal protections regarding

employment, public services and spaces, public education, fair housing, credit, and access to jury service, and it will take more than one Congress to move this legislation forward. PFLAG National and its many chapters will be at the forefront of the work to pass this critical piece of federal legislation.

Transgender Inclusion

The transgender community gained widespread federal and state-level protections, with PFLAG National and PFLAG chapters front and center getting the work done. At the

national office, we continue to work with numerous federal agencies on rules and regulations, training, and education on transgender inclusion.

Every Child Deserves a Family (ECDF)

"From over 40 years of experience supporting parents and children,

PFLAG knows that it is in the best interest of every child—and, in fact, the right of every child—to have the loving care and support of a family."

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A FAMILY.

PFLAG National co-leads a sizable coalition of organizations with our partner, the Family Equality Council, to work towards passage of Every Child Deserves a Family (ECDF)—which would prohibit any entity that receives federal funds from discriminating against prospective LGBTQ adoptive or foster parents or LGBTQ youth.

Efforts to Ban So-Called Conversion Therapy

PFLAG National actively participated in efforts to end, once and for all, so-called





conversion therapy. We have worked to create legislation, supported resolutions raising awareness to ban the practice, and submitted comment on numerous regulatory and state legislative efforts. The national office is also supporting chapters across the country to keep the pressure on to move state-level bans forward in California, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington DC, Arizona, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Minnesota, Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

Safe Schools and Anti-Bullying

Making youth safe at school and free from bullying matters to PFLAG families. PFLAG National will keep mobilizing, testifying, advocating, and sharing stories with federal legislators, until all youth are protected. The Student Non-Discrimination Act—which lost by only eight votes as an amendment in the Senate this year—and Safe Schools Improvement Act remain long-standing needed bills. The Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act is newer and for older students in colleges and universities and we will keep asking you to be part of our strategy to keep telling legislators to make our LGBTQ children safer with these laws.

Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)

PFLAG National and chapters across the states worked to beat back RFRA bills, which would allow businesses to exempt themselves from LGBTQ anti-discrimination laws for religious reasons. In addition to joining legal-group-led coalitions at state and federal levels in the 16 states with proposed bills this year, PFLAG action ranged from leading rallies to participating in legislative visits. PFLAG National Executive Director Jody Huckaby also signed on to a letter urging the president to ensure that RFRA is not misused to discriminate.

And more...

PFLAG National this year provided counsel on bill language, drafted or edited fact sheets, and helped PFLAGers across the country mobilize community calls-to-action and prepare testimony for hearings, working directly with chapters, participating in state-led coalitions and serving with national coalitions. These efforts spanned the country from Texas to Michigan, from Wyoming to Massachusetts, and even included Wyoming's first anti-discrimination law in Laramie, home of Matthew Shepard.

2015 PFLAG
NATIONAL
ADVOCACY:

Your Voice in
Washington
DC, by the
Numbers...

560 CONGRESSIONAL
VISITS

130 COALITION
MEETINGS,
ACTIONS
& SIGN-ON
LETTERS

110 WHITE HOUSE AND
ADMINISTRATION
MEETINGS

10 CONGRESSIONAL
BRIEFINGS AND
EVENTS WITH
SPEAKING ROLES

4 FEDERAL COMMENTS
FILED ON RULES
& REGULATIONS

Marriage Equality in America: A History in Pictures

Mike McConnell (left) and Jack Baker—the couple in the *Baker v. Nelson* case—attempt to get a marriage license in Minneapolis in May 1970.

Photo: R. Bertraine Heine/Minnesota Historical Society/AP



Ninia Baehr (left) and Genora Dancel.

Photo: Courtesy of Genora Dancel



President Bill Clinton signs the Defense of Marriage Act.



Tyron Garner (left) and John Lawrence were plaintiffs in the U.S. Supreme Court decision that declared the Texas sodomy law unconstitutional.

Photo: File photo/Dallas Morning News staff



1970s

The U.S. Supreme Court dismisses *Baker v. Nelson*, one of three cases brought by same-sex couples—this one from MN—challenging the denial of marriage.



Photo: PFLAG National archives

PFLAG founder Jeanne Manford marches with son, Morty, in 1972 New York pride march.

1993

The Hawaii Supreme Court rules in *Baehr v. Lewin* that denying marriage to same-sex couples violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Hawaii Constitution.

1996

Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) signed into federal law.



Photo: DC Public Television/Network Q

1996 interview with Kathy and John Tuerk, leaders of PFLAG Metro DC. From the second broadcast season of *Network Q Out Across America*, which originally aired on public television in the United States.

2000–2003

2000: Vermont becomes first state to introduce civil unions.

2003: Freedom to Marry is founded. Years later, PFLAG became an early member of their Respect for Marriage coalition, partnering to lead the charge on attaining the freedom to marry across the entire United States of America, and American territories.

2003: Ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas* strikes down sodomy laws in Texas and across the country in a lawsuit brought by Lambda Legal, one of PFLAG National's legal partners.



PFLAG Grandmother preps for the 1993 March on Washington DC.





David Wilson and Rob Compton, one of seven gay couples represented by Mary Bonauto of Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) in the case that brought marriage equality to Massachusetts, embrace after being married by a Unitarian minister at the Arlington Street Church in Boston on May 17, 2004.

Photo: AFP/Getty Images

Former PFLAG National president Sam Thoron and his wife, longtime PFLAG San Francisco leader Julia Thoron, appear in a commercial for the No on 8 campaign; it is widely considered to be one of the campaign's most successful ads.

Photo: The No on 8 Campaign

American University students Mollie Wagoner (right) and Sharon Burk react to hearing that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that part of DOMA is unconstitutional at the Supreme Court, June 26, 2013.

Photo: Mark Wilson/Getty Images

Carolyn Finken-Dove of PFLAG Kansas City celebrates the Supreme Court ruling on June 26, 2015.

Photo: KC Star/Allison Long



2004

Massachusetts is the first state to achieve marriage equality.

2008

Prop 8 passes in California, banning marriage across the state.

Thousands of marriage equality supporters carry signs during a rally against the passing of Prop. 8 in San Francisco.

Photo: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

2013

The Supreme Court strikes down Section 3 of DOMA via *Windsor v. US*, and dismisses *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, declaring that the proponents of Proposition 8 lack legal standing to appeal the lower court rulings that have already invalidated Prop. 8, making marriage legal in California.

2015

From 2013 to 2015, PFLAG works closely with coalition partners, including submitting two amicus briefs to the Supreme Court. On June 26, 2015, PFLAG's collective voices are heard, contributing to achieving the freedom to marry across the United States and all of its territories.

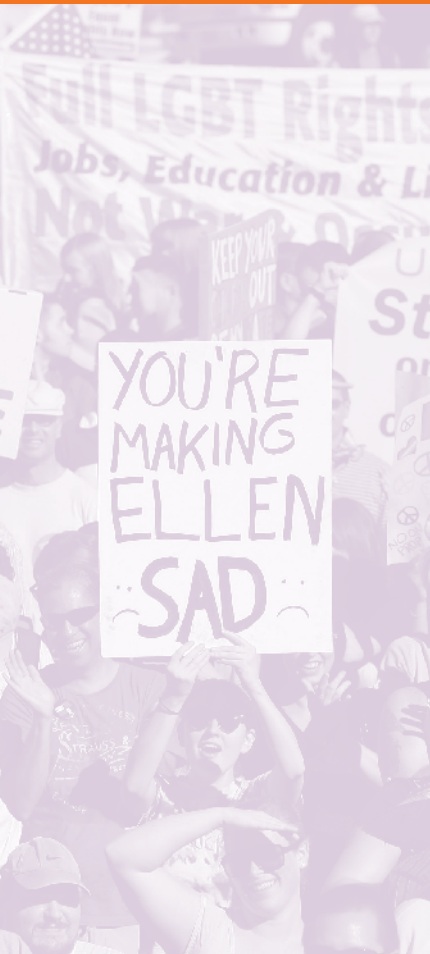


Photo: Washington Blade/Michael Key

PFLAG dad Mike Neubecker, who participated in the PFLAG amicus brief against Prop 8 in support of his son's family, speaks at a press conference prior to the ruling.



Photo: Michael Conroy/AP

PFLAG Indianapolis members Betty Lynch (left) of Indianapolis, Ind., and Annette Gross of Carmel, hug during a press conference in the Indiana Statehouse Rotunda in Indianapolis, June 26, 2015.

Back to the Future: The Power of PFLAG continues...

This has been an incredible year full of progress towards equality, yet it has also been a year of backlash and renewed visibility for many of the issues that have been a part of the past and present—and will no doubt be part of the future—of the LGBTQ movement for civil and human rights.

Right around the same time the PFLAG National Convention is wrapping up in Nashville, Tennessee there will be a rush of articles talking all about the past, present, and future...and the date October 21, 2015. Why?

It is a date of pop-culture infamy, when the young hero of the movie *Back to the Future* landed 30 years in his past and changed history. It is an interesting concept to consider, going back in time. Set your own memory clock—or flux-capacitor if you will—to 30 years ago and think about how different the times were, both for you and for the LGBTQ community as a whole.

You might not have been aware that a loved one was LGBTQ; if you were LGBTQ, you might not have been out. In fact, you might not have heard of PFLAG, and the legal protections for which PFLAGers continue to fight—and were especially successful in this historic year—were on the distant horizon.

PFLAG was in its teens then, making its way to the forefront of the equality movement. Known then as The Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc., PFLAG became a national



Placed in 2013, this historical plaque now marks the site of the first PFLAG meeting, held in New York City at the Metropolitan Duane United Methodist Church—now Church of the Village—in March 1973.

organization only four years earlier. Leaders like Adele Starr and others knew that the power of PFLAG was in its grassroots, but that it was only through connection and consistency of message that the family and ally movement could amplify its voice. Now, 30 years later, PFLAGers have changed lives, and the world, using that strategy.

This summer's win on marriage equality at the Supreme Court is a perfect example of that strategy at work. PFLAGers had a common goal: To change hearts and minds on the issue. They had a common message: that love is love, family is family, and marriage is marriage. And they wrote history with that message, demonstrating how family and ally voices united with the LGBTQ community can become the view of the majority of Americans.

The win this summer, epic in scope on its own, is a stepping stone to other needed gains, and PFLAGers remain on the frontlines pushing forward on issues that demand remedies. And yet, while

time passes and victories mount, the need for PFLAG's mission of support, education, and advocacy has never been stronger.

Support for families and people who are LGBTQ people is still very much needed. The issues of reconciling faith and culture still exist and contrary to popular reports, it is not just a Southern or rural issue, it is an issue in many places across the country. The complexity of learning how to support a transgender or gender-expansive child is crucial with different challenges for parents of younger kids. And the parent who thinks they are okay with LGBTQ issues until they find out it is their own child who is LGBTQ has need for an entirely different type of support.

The need for education grows more intense each day, with battle lines drawn that complicate efforts in so many communities. Educating people about the differences between "freedom of religion" versus "freedom to discriminate" is essential. The concept that the ability to use facilities (bathrooms, locker rooms) one feels safe in is crucial to the health and wellbeing of all people should be simple to comprehend but is often misunderstood. Educating most people regarding the reality that "marriage equality" is not full equality, and that nondiscrimination was not achieved with the Supreme Court decision, is critical. On all of these fronts, knowledge of the local community and long-standing grassroots relationships will be key to educating people in order to change hearts, minds, and attitudes.



Early PFLAG leader Paulette Goodman offers support in the form of a simple phone number.



And of course, PFLAG's advocacy work is not over; it has multiplied into a thousand important skirmishes at federal, state, and local levels, and our reputation as a good partner is more critical than ever. This has been a heartbreaking year of violence against transgender women of color which requires partnerships across many spectrums to address. Children are not just being bullied because they are LGBTQ, many are also bullied because of their disabilities. Listen closely to the raised voices of the #BlackLivesMatter movement to hear the unmet promise between laws against racial discrimination and the reality of the current lived experience for people of color. Advocacy is most effective when voices, hands, and hearts are joined in action for the shared struggle and quest for equality and safety across all marginalized communities. PFLAG's success, ultimately,



A new generation continues PFLAG's important work of moving equality forward and creating a more inclusive world.



The power of PFLAG can be felt across the country thanks to a vital grassroots chapter network, including these members of PFLAG Houston, shown on this magazine cover in 1998.

will be defined not only by the passage of laws but also by the achievement of access and inclusion for all who are diminished or dismissed.

Our culture is, in many ways, back to the future: Some people surge ahead toward equality, while others still feel left behind. But PFLAGers everywhere have an incredible opportunity and responsibility to leverage the power of their voices to contribute to a shared vision of a future where all people are respected, valued, celebrated, safe...with no one left behind.

Now is the time to leverage the power of PFLAG—the name, its history, its members and supporters—to continue

the work together. That power not only opens hearts and minds, it opens doors: School doors, to create safe spaces for LGBTQ youth; legislators' doors, to advocate for better protections and anti-discrimination laws; law enforcement officials' doors, and local community partners' doors to work together on shared issues.

The name PFLAG and all that it has been in the past, is currently, and will continue to be in the future, is a powerful force with which to be reckoned and a beacon for people around the world. The mission continues and so does PFLAG's vision for the future.

Your ballot—found on page 19 of this newsletter—must be received by October 15, 2015.

In accordance with election procedures approved by PFLAG's National Board of Directors, 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. Three seats are up for election this year, and the candidates' profiles appear on the upcoming pages. Member-elected board members are elected to serve a three-year term.

Regional Directors' seats will be elected at the same time. Six seats are up for election this year, and the candidates' profiles appear on the upcoming pages. You may only vote for the candidate 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 19 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 same household.

Results will be reported on Saturday, October 17, 2015 on the PFLAG National website—pflag.org—and at the PFLAG Annual Meeting to be held in Nashville, Tennessee, also on Saturday, October 17, 2015.

Board



Marsha Aizumi is an author, speaker, educator and advocate for the LGBT community. She serves on the National Board of Directors for PFLAG. In this role, she hopes to change school culture to be more accepting of all students, as well as bring greater resources to the Asian Pacific Islander and transgender communities. Marsha is co-founder and current President of PFLAG San Gabriel Valley Asian Pacific Islander. She is author of *Two Spirits, One Heart*, a memoir that chronicles her journey from fear, shame and sadness to unconditional love and acceptance as she navigated the transition of her son from female to male. She has spoken to over 100 schools and organizations around the country and is a consultant to a number of schools. She has received honors from Seattle JACL, Congressman Judy Chu and JACL National in 2014 and in 2015 was honored by Logo TV as a Trailblazing Parent.



Dale Bernstein is the founder of UnCommon Human Resources, a strategic HR consulting business that works with business leaders to ensure that their human capital and HR infrastructure are designed to not only support the business objectives but to drive the business to the next level. Prior to forming UnCommon Human Resources, Dale was the global head of Human Resources for NYSE Euronext. Dale has been a member of the PFLAG National Board of Directors for nine years and currently serves as Vice President and chairs PFLAG's Business Advisory Board. She serves on the Social Action/Social Justice Task Force for Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in NYC, and chaired their Marriage Equality Hevra, bringing much needed faith based voices to the marriage equality campaign. Dale is also on the Steering Committee for the President's Council of Cornell Women, serving as Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee.



Susan Thronson is a global marketing leader and strategic advisor to public companies and non-profit organizations. She has served in a member-elected seat on the PFLAG National Board since 2012, where she chairs the Communications Taskforce, and was appointed Secretary in 2014. A member of PFLAG Palm Springs/Desert Communities, she coordinates its Transgender/Gender Expansive family support initiative. Susan serves on two public company boards: Angie's List and Sonic Corporation. During her two-decades career with Marriott International, she was Senior Vice President, Global Marketing from 2005–2013, and had responsibility for the Marriott portfolio, its 17 lodging brands, and consumer engagement platforms, including Marriott Rewards. In earlier roles, Susan developed and executed integrated business strategies to generate profitable revenue and build leading brands on six continents. She is a graduate of the University of

Nevada-Reno Reynolds School of Journalism and was recently recognized as its Distinguished Alumna. Susan lives in La Quinta, California with her husband, Steve, and they have two children attending southern California universities.

Regional Directors



Kay Holladay co-founded PFLAG Norman (Oklahoma) in 1997 and has served as its president and safe schools coordinator. She has a master's degree in public health and is the former Director of Surveillance and Care Delivery in the HIV/STD Service of the Oklahoma State Department of Health, and former executive director of CarePoint, which, at the time, was Oklahoma's largest HIV/AIDS service organization. She has served as president of AIDS Walk of Oklahoma City, Inc., Oklahoma Public Health Association, the Norman Board of Education, and numerous other nonprofits. Kay is the recipient of the City of Norman Human Rights Award (2006), the Sam Matthews

Social Justice Award (2009), the Cathedral of Hope (UCC)'s Hero of Hope Award (2009, Oklahoma City) and the Richard May Award, Oklahoma AIDS Care Fund (2010). In 2011, Kay and her husband, Don, received the Cimarron Alliance's Community Ally Award. Kay and Don live in Norman and have three adult children and one grandson.



Catherine Hyde is director of Online Services for the national non-profit Enterprise Community Partners. She did not listen to her child when he, at the age of 4, told her that something had gone wrong in her belly and that he was supposed to be a she. She did not understand transgender or gender identity until NPR educated her 11 years later. Since becoming educated, Catherine has volunteered as Transgender Coordinator for PFLAG Columbia-Howard County and speaks and trains on transgender understanding and sensitivity. In 2012, Catherine was named a Hometown Hero by the Baltimore Gay and Lesbian Community Center for her

work on behalf of the transgender community. She was honored to share that inaugural award with House Leader Nancy Pelosi and Carlton R. Smith, founder of Baltimore Black Pride. Catherine also serves on PFLAG's National Board of Directors, its Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Advisory Panel, and as Mid-Atlantic Regional Director for PFLAG.



Michael Ley was asked to come to speak to PFLAG Lima in 2009 about being a gay man in the small business world. Little did he know that a few months later the chapter would first ask him to become a board member, then to become their president. Within a year, he revitalized the chapter and grew not only support and education for LGBTQ individuals, but most importantly their families and friends. Three years ago, Michael took on the role of Ohio State Coordinator, helping chapters in the state through tough times with fundraisers, IRS exemptions, finances, and board

issues. Michael is a member of the Lima Symphony Chorus, a Lima City School's Board Member, and Vice President of Ley Insurance Agency based in Lima, Ohio. Michael and his partner Kyle are in the process of adopting their first child and will soon take the next step in their lives and become a legally married couple.

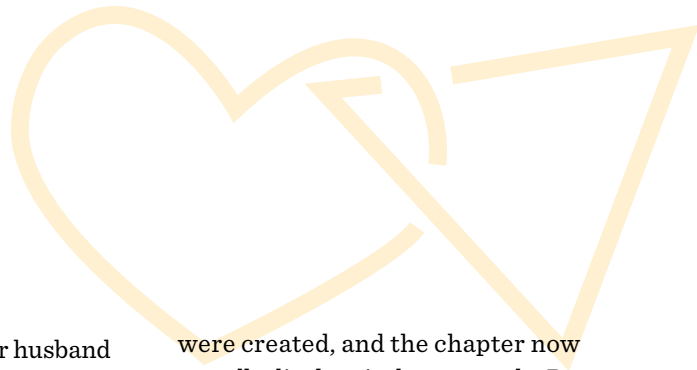


Abby Maisonave has been involved with PFLAG for 12 years. She is a staunch activist and public speaker on LGBT issues, educates medical/teaching faculty regarding the LGBT patient/student, speaks to high school and college students, facilitates meetings, and answers a helpline for those in crisis or seeking information. Since 2010, she has been the president of PFLAG Jersey Shore. In October 2012, she became the North Atlantic Regional Director for PFLAG National, covering chapters in NJ, NY, and PA. As an RD, she has been fortunate to work with some amazing PFLAGers in her region,

both on the local and national level, and is happy to provide support in whatever way she can to help a chapter thrive. Abby is the very proud mom of three phenomenal kids! She works in Pathology and as a Patient Advocate. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling/cruising, comedy, NYC, and spending time with her friends and family (including her PFLAG family!).



Amy Mesirov has been a member of PFLAG Cape Cod for seven and a half years, the chapter president for six years, and the Northeast Regional Director for three years. She has served on the board of the Cape & Islands Gay & Straight Youth Alliance and of the Gay & Lesbian Equity Fund. She also runs a mentoring program for disadvantaged children. Her work (for pay!) background is in planning, new business development, and project management. She and her husband have two children, a 20 year old straight, cisgender daughter and a 23 year old gay son.



Barbara Pisetsky and her husband Bill sought out PFLAG when their teenage son Chad came out 17 years ago; since then, she's wanted to give back to the organization that helped them all so much. Thanks to Barbara's warmth and sense of humor she became a sought-after participant of the Speaker's Bureau, was then elected vice president of her chapter, PFLAG South Orange County, and became president three years later. Under her five years of leadership, the chapter tripled both its monthly attendance and number of board members, a scholarship program and newsletter

were created, and the chapter now proudly displays its banner at the Barnes and Noble holiday gift-wrapping booth. Barbara also established an annual Toys for Tots Drive. Barbara was honored to speak on Capitol Hill as part of the Equality Caucus, and is largely responsible for making her Newport Beach temple, Temple Bat Yahm, a more open and welcoming congregation, earning her their 2011 Woman of the Year honors. Barbara and Bill have been married for 40 years, and their son Bryan and wife Kira have made them very proud grandparents of three!

OFFICIAL BALLOT



Return this ballot with the mailing panel on the reverse to:

PFLAG National
Attention:
2015 Ballot Collection
1828 L Street, NW, Ste 660
Washington, D.C. 20036

All ballots must be received by October 15, 2015.

PFLAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please vote for three by placing a check mark next to the candidate's name.

- Marsha Aizumi
- Dale Bernstein
- 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.

- Southern** (AR, LA, OK, TX): Kay Holladay
- Mid-Atlantic** (DC, DE, MD, VA, WV): Catherine Hyde
- Great Lakes** (IL, IN, MI, OH): Michael Ley
- North Atlantic** (NJ, NY, PA): Abby Maisonave
- Northeast** (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT): Amy Mesirow
- Southern Pacific** (Southern CA, HI): Barbara Pisetsky

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MORE INFO: pflag.org/annualmeeting

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