



THE PFLAG NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

PFLAG pole

WINTER
2016



The Threads That Unite Us

A LOOK BACK AT PFLAG 2015 (P. 2-5)

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A Look Back at PFLAG 2015

2015 was a watershed year for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ), and for their families, friends, and allies. Marriage equality became the law of the land, and a spate of administrative and legislative wins at federal, state, and local levels offered our trans loved ones more protections than ever before. And PFLAG was there every step of the way, weaving the unique family and ally voice into the equality narrative as we engaged in advocacy for ourselves and our loved ones; PFLAG's values truly proved to be America's values. But as we celebrated the wins from the frontlines in communities large and small, we could, as always, forecast the next trend.

Because even as we gained the freedom to marry and created safer spaces for ourselves and those we loved, we could see the implications of these wins almost instantly. Claims of political correctness became an excuse for inaction when we brought up issues around bullying and gender identity rights in schools, the backlash of so-called "religious freedom" laws introduced widely across the country were used to attempt to gain the freedom to discriminate, and in cities and towns everywhere, we saw the repeal of already-existing nondiscrimination ordinances.

The conversation has turned to what's next for 2016 and beyond, and PFLAG is an active part of that dialogue. Our network of passionate volunteers—400 chapters strong—is ready to provide support where needed, to offer opportunities for education whenever and wherever necessary, and to advocate for laws at every level of society so that we and those we love can work, play, pray, and live safely and happily. As the extended family of the LGBTQ community—people who are LGBTQ, family members, friends, and allies united in love—we know that our voices and our experiences are stronger when woven together into a tapestry that tells the collective PFLAG story. Now, more than ever, LGBTQ people need their PFLAG heroes.

Let's take a look back at our work in 2015—a truly milestone year if ever there was one!

CREATING THRIVING CHAPTERS



100+
chapters participating
in PFLAG Academy Online

SESSIONS INCLUDED:

- Building Coalitions that Work for Everyone
- But We're on the Same Side: Conflict Resolution
- Engaging Your Chapter for Trans Inclusion
- Facilitation Skills for PFLAG Leaders
- Finding a Cure for LGBT Healthcare Disparities
- Fundraising 101
- Powerful Partnerships: Making Cultural Diversity Successful
- Working with Stakeholders for Safer Schools

22 new chapters
in communities
across the
country

400 chapters
in total

EXPANDING EQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

straight
FOR
equalitySM

Our Straight for Equality® project reached more people than ever before, bringing new allies into workplaces, faith communities, and cities and towns across the country.

71 workplace-based trainings

15 unique learning sessions

PFLAG released the third edition of the *guide to being a straight ally*. It includes several new features, like an expanded version of the Straight for Equality® Ally Spectrum, updated key content and resources, and integrated references for how to learn more via the other Straight for Equality® publications.

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***



10K

copies of the *guide to being a trans ally* have been distributed

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

8 publications and dozens of resources developed for PFLAG chapters

worked with more than 100 corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies

PFLAG ON SOCIAL MEDIA



>47.6K
Twitter
followers



>61K
Facebook
likes

The 2015 PFLAG National Convention: We Are The Change

When more than 350 PFLAGers gather in one location, the passion to affect change is palpable. And nowhere was this passion more evident than in Nashville, Tennessee this past October. PFLAG members and leaders converged on Music City for two days of learning, listening, celebrating, and service giving to local organizations, and two nights full of fun with friends from across the country. Enjoy this look at the 2015 PFLAG National Convention: We Are The Change.



A plenary panel on the intersection of faith and LGBTQ acceptance featured prominent voices on the subject, including (L) HRC Arkansas faith organizer Rev. Dr. Denise Donnell; Mark E. Fowler of the Tannenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding; The Gay Christian Network's Justin Lee; Lisbeth Melendez Rivera, Director of Latino and Catholic Initiatives in HRC's Religion and Faith Program; Rev. Stan Mitchell of GracePointe Church in Franklin, Tennessee; and Eshel's Reuven Moshe Grant.

Keynote speaker author/journalist Michelangelo Signorile is flanked by (L) PFLAG mom Betty DeGeneres, National board president Jean Hodges, and PFLAG National Executive Director Jody M. Huckaby.



The youngest PFLAGer in attendance was Justice Hendrix, age two, who attended with her moms Jo (pictured) and Angie Hendrix. Angie serves as the leader of the speakers bureau for both PFLAG Long Beach and PFLAG South Orange County.

This year's National Convention had:

40 states plus Mexico and Turkey represented

363 attendees from 103 chapters and 27 partner organizations

44 workshops presented over two days



▲ PFLAG National ED Jody Huckaby speaks with longtime PFLAG leaders Sam and Julia Thoron.



▲ The exhibition hall was a great place for attendees to meet, greet, and get information on everything from chapter best practices to new books available for reading and learning.



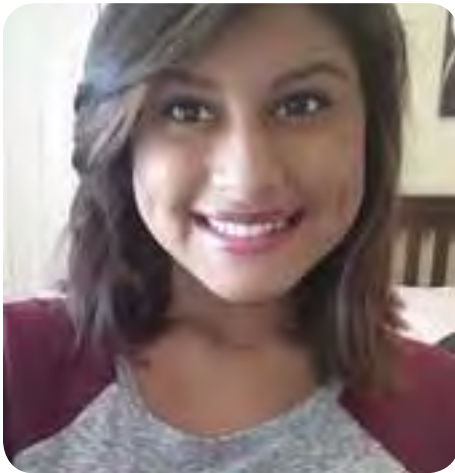
▲ Betty DeGeneres presents the eponymous Betty DeGeneres Advocate Award to Pam Mettler, who accepted on behalf of honoree Esther Jenner Avry, mother of both Mettler and Caitlyn Jenner.

2015 PFLAG National Scholarships

PFLAG National is proud to profile some of our 2015 scholarship winners. More than \$75,000 will go to these young advocates, who have worked tirelessly on numerous programs, projects, and activities aimed at making schools and communities safe and welcoming for all. This marks the 14th year of PFLAG National's scholarship program, which supports the next generation of leaders and provides opportunities for secondary learning through generous funding by private donors, including Gays, Lesbians and Allies at Dow (GLAD) Employee Network, Lockheed Martin, and Walmart Foundation. We look forward to featuring additional profiles of these young scholars in our other publications, including *The PFLAG Voice*, throughout 2016.

WALMART FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

Paola Correa
UNION CITY, NJ



Paola is a Marking Period honor student at her school, and is attending the University of Tampa, majoring in education. Growing up in a religious household—her parents were practicing Catholics who converted to the Latter Day Saints faith—she has been unable to come out to her family as bisexual. She takes refuge in and finds great support from her school's GSA club, advocating for the club to other

students and participating in the Day of Silence. She also volunteers her time in her local community, including helping neighbors clean their homes after the devastation of Hurricane Irene.

Emanuel Cruz
SANFORD, NC

Miguel Posada
CHICAGO, IL

Evelyn Ramirez
SAN GABRIEL, CA

Angel Leija
LONG BEACH, CA

LOCKHEED MARTIN SCHOLARSHIP

Lockheed Martin is committed to developing STEM programs that educate and inspire tomorrow's scientists, engineers and mathematicians by providing generous funding to STEM education outreach activities, including scholarships, for students.

Marissa Bennett
JACKSONVILLE, FL



Marissa is an honor roll student who served four times as a Model UN delegate. As an out lesbian, Marissa faced significant challenges as a member of a Roman Catholic, military family, surrounded by staunchly conservative family and friends, immersed in a Don't Ask, Don't Tell society, attending a Department of Defense high school overseas. Marissa feels lucky to have such supportive parents to help her overcome these challenges. Marissa now attends Wellesley College.



PFLAG NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Lisa Chen

SPRINGFIELD, VA



Lisa is president of the National Honor Society, an honor student, and an AP scholar who plans to attend the University of Virginia to major in biochemistry. She is the president of her school's GSA and strives to be a role model to younger LGBTQ youth, participating in advocacy events, Pride, and also volunteering in support of homeless LGBTQ youth. She also proudly accepted a nomination to her school's Homecoming Court, tuxedoed and wearing her signature bowtie! Sadly, Lisa is not out at home to her parents, who are of Chinese descent, making her attendance at a college away from home that much more significant and important.

Mackenzie Godinez

LANCASTER, PA

Mackenzie has a strong interest in justice of all kinds, aiming to improve the world through school clubs that she runs, including the Ecology Club, Gay-Straight Alliance, and Model United Nations. Mackenzie has hosted various food drives and even started a community garden to provide local homeless shelters and food banks with organic, nutritional food. Outside of school, this young activist is involved with the Pennsylvania Student Equality Coalition and GMO Free Lancaster County, and has planned and hosted an LGBTQ Safe Space Prom to empower local LGBTQ youth and their allies. Mackenzie attends Smith College.

JEANNE MANFORD SCHOLARSHIP

Bria Wade

FLEMINGTON, NJ

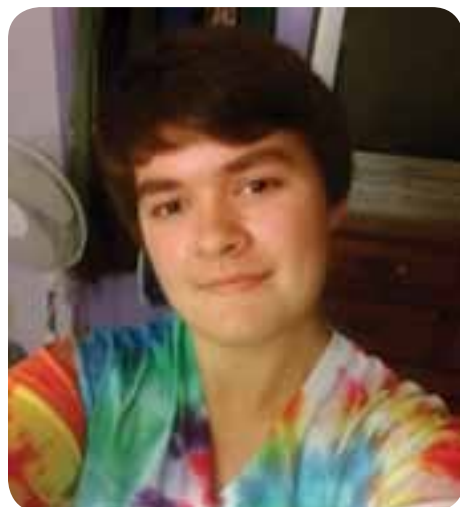


Bria is a high-achieving high school student who identifies as a cisgender lesbian. Inspired by Janet Mock's book *Redefining Realness...*, she is a double major in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies and African American Studies at Georgetown, using her knowledge of intersectionality both to heighten awareness around LGBTQ individuals of color, and to broaden society's understanding of gender binaries. Bria's goal is to become a civil rights attorney so that she can bring justice to the LGBTQ community, especially transgender individuals.

ADAM AND BURKS SCHOLARSHIP

Casey Melton

ELON, NC



Casey has overcome significant challenges on her path to graduate from high school. With a mother who is legally blind and a father who is not supportive of the LGBTQ community (and to whom she cannot be out as asexual), she worked tirelessly in her small, conservative school to create a GSA. Their fundraiser for the Trevor Project was a major effort, raising \$100 even after all of their posters, hand made by the group, were cruelly torn down a day after they were hung. Casey will attend Wellesley College as an astrophysics major, and strives to be the first in her family to earn a four-year degree.

DOW-GLAD SCHOLARSHIP

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.

Patrick Azzari

BARRINGTON, NJ



Patrick is an openly gay honors student, who attends The Ohio State University on a pre-med track, majoring in Microbiology and Global Public Health. He has served his community as a junior volunteer firefighter, EMS cadet, and crisis hotline counselor, and has also participated in numerous school activities, including tennis, student government, theatre, and the GSA club. He has also spent summers as a Research Intern at Nationwide Children's Hospital. After school rumors pushed his coming-out process, he affected serious positive change at the firehouse where he volunteers, and eventually turned to PFLAG to help heal his relationship with his now-supportive parents.

Cara Mitrano

MIDLAND, MI

Cara is an honor roll student who will graduate high school Magna Cum Laude. A commended National Merit Scholar, she plans to study biology and chemistry in college, a pre-med track. She is the leader of her school's GSA and has led activities such as Asexual Awareness Week, Ally Week, and Transgender Day of Remembrance, often using PFLAG resources. She also brought in speakers from outside her school including employees from Gays, Lesbians, and Allies at Dow (GLAD) to inspire students. Cara plans to continue to be a voice for LGBTQ people as she continues her path toward becoming a physician.

Greer Klepacki

BEAVERTON, OR

Greer, a gender-expansive student from Oregon, is a GSA leader. In that role, Greer has organized Day of Silence for numerous years, planned weekly meetings, created visual art pieces to spread awareness of Black History Month, and has helped to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Greer also participates in the Principal's Advisory Committee on Equity, a group of students from all backgrounds which meets once a month to discuss the school-wide issue of inclusiveness. Greer plans to attend college and study biology, with the goal of becoming a geneticist to help families prevent the spread of genetic diseases.



RATNER FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Anja Swoap

EDNA, MN



Anja is an AP scholar, a National Merit Scholar, and a Yale Book award honoree. She will attend Macalester University with a double major in Linguistics and Computer Science. While in high school she also served as a Sunday school teacher and student leader at her church. Her active role in her school's GSA has kept her connected to, and supported by, the LGBTQ community, and she now enjoys creating a safe space for other newer attendees. She has extended her connection to the community through political advocacy work, which she plans to continue as she embarks on her college career and beyond.

Andres Riveria-Vazquez

KATY, TX

Andres is an honors student who plans to attend University of Texas @ Austin to study Chemistry. He has volunteered at Pride festivals and Creating Change, as well as participated in local Alzheimers fundraising walks. After first coming out to his best friend as a freshman in high school, he came out to his family in the summer between sophomore and junior years. He was surprised and relieved to learn that his family was supportive; they now attend PFLAG meetings together, and even participated together in Pride. He is now working to found a GSA at his school prior to graduating, in order to help other students.

Support PFLAG in 2016!

While 2015 was a year of great victories, like winning the freedom to marry, we also suffered some heart-breaking setbacks, including Houston's Prop 1 repeal and the numerous "freedom to discriminate" bills currently being considered in state legislatures across the country. Big challenges are on the horizon this year and we stand ready to continue changing hearts and minds so that the entire LGBTQ community is safe from violence and discrimination. **We need your support now more than ever.** Please support PFLAG now to ensure that our voice—your voice!—is heard loud and clear.

pflag.org/donate

or, to join the Jeanne Manford Legacy Circle with a planned gift from your will or trust, contact Amy Sauerwalt at 202-683-9308 or asauerwalt@pflag.org

Thank you to our partners for their generous support.

DIAMOND PARTNERS



PLATINUM PARTNERS



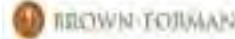
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SILVER PARTNERS



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