

# STARR NEWSLETTER

PARENTS, FAMILIES &amp; FRIENDS ALLIED WITH THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

www.pflagLA.org

## President's Message



## WHAT'S NEW?

### NEW VIDEO WELCOMES THE LATINO COMMUNITY

Thanks largely to the dedicated work of our wonderful board member Gizella Czene, we have three thriving support groups offered in Spanish. PFLAG National has taken notice. As part of its increased outreach to communities of color, National is making a Spanish language video starring our own Boyle Heights meeting that was also attended for this occasion by our members from East Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. Please take a moment to view this [inspiring video](#).

In addition, PFLAG Los Angeles has been lobbying the National organization to revise its "Find a Chapter" feature to include a list of Spanish language meetings throughout the country. Again, we'll keep you posted.

Finally, we are getting a request for a fourth Spanish language meeting, this one in conjunction with St. John's Well Child and Family Center. Our board will be meeting with representatives from the health center and evaluating their request at its next meeting.

Much praise goes to the many Spanish speaking parents who have joined our Speakers Bureau, participate in meetings, and bravely bring the message of support, education and advocacy to their community.

### MODELS OF PRIDE on October 19 MOVES TO A NEW LOCATION

It's the same great conference in a new location: Los Angeles City College. The schedule is packed with exciting and informative workshops for youth, including a very popular session, "Coming Out in Families of Color," organized by PFLAG Los Angeles Program Chair Stuart Huggins.

At the Parents and Professionals Institute (PPI), there will be several workshops designed by PFLAG members including one on the parents' journey (Liz Mullen organizer), one on spirituality (Mariette Sawchuk organizer), and one for moderators of GSA groups with exciting suggestions for meaningful activities (Doug Pollock).

Registration is FREE!! Sign up your children or students on the Youth page and register yourself and other adults on the PPI page at [modelsofpride.org](http://modelsofpride.org). Lunch and dinner will be provided free to registrants.

LACC is easy to find. Use 4133 Marathon St, Los Angeles, CA 90029, on your phone or mapping website to get directions to Parking Lot 1 and Parking Structure 2, where all-day parking is available for FREE. After parking, cross Vermont Ave to the check-in area. Many bus services stop at LACC, and the Vermont/Santa Monica rail station (Metro Red Line) is located next to the campus.

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# SUPPORT EDUCATION ADVOCACY

## President's Message

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### **"MEET AND GREET"** on November 9

PFLAG Los Angeles members are an active bunch. In addition to our five monthly meetings, our Speakers Bureau averages about 35 engagements a year; one-on-one support takes place through our helplines and [info@pflagla.org](mailto:info@pflagla.org); and our websites are visited by hundreds of people annually. Right now, we are trying to establish a more robust social media presence.

All this plus the administrative tasks to keep everything running takes a lot of person hours. So we are holding a "meet and greet" party on November 9th to encourage people with talent and a respect for PFLAG's mission to contribute some of their energy and expertise to our cause.

We are looking for volunteers to invigorate our social media committee, train as facilitators, work on the newsletter, plan our contingent for PRIDE, and participate in Models of Pride, among other things.

The event is by invitation only, so if you or anyone you know would like to become more involved with our chapter, send an email with name and contact information to [president@pflagla.org](mailto:president@pflagla.org).

### **A NEW WEBSITE**

Our webmaster, York Knowlton, is busy designing a new website. The program used to format our current website will no longer be supported by Adobe in 2020. We are transitioning to a new product. It will have the advantage of being easily readable on mobile devices. We are aiming to create a site that is sleek, modern, easy to navigate and still provides the same reliable information and PFLAG warmth. Look for it in late January of 2020. - **END**

## From the Editor

— Chris Haiss

**Hard to believe – we're celebrating the 50th anniversary of Stonewall this year! Hardly will you find anyone these days who has not heard of Stonewall and the beginning of the LGBTQ movement. But back then? – I asked this question Peggy Olson who shared her family's story in this newsletter. Trust me, you want to read what she has to share!**

Now, was Stonewall really the beginning? Maybe you've never heard of Magnus Hirschfeld, a German sexologist, who founded the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee in 1897 to advocate for sexual minorities. His Committee was based in Berlin until it was destroyed by Nazis in 1933. And even here in California it is said that several events preceded the Stonewall Riots.

Let's take a quick sentimental journey together and look at some of the historical events that have taken place here in California.

In 1950, the Mattachine Society was founded by Harry Hay in Los Angeles. The purpose of the group was to protect and improve the rights of gay men. In 1952, ONE Inc.'s Articles of Incorporation were signed, and four years later the ONE Institute was created and with it the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at the University of Southern California. It has the largest repository of LGBT materials in the world with over two million items including periodicals; books; film, video and audio recordings; photographs; artworks; clothing, costumes, and buttons; organizational records; and personal papers. And in 1955, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon formed the lesbian civil and political rights group Daughters of Bilitis in San Francisco.

In the summer of 1966, San Francisco's Compton's Cafeteria riot was one of the first LGBT riots in US history in response to harassment and denial of service. And Stonewall West occurred on January 1, 1967, when LAPD raided the Black Cat and New Faces bars in the Silver Lake District and many patrons and employees were injured. Two years later, Morris Kight founded the Los Angeles LGBT Center and since its founding in 1969, the Los Angeles LGBT Center has become the largest facility in the world providing services to LGBT people. *(continued on next page)*

The first pride parade in Los Angeles was on June 28, 1970. And something that started on the East Coast in 1973 had a major impact here in Los Angeles in 1976 and 1981: The founding of PFLAG. The first formal meeting organized by Jeanne Manford and held at the Metropolitan-Duane Methodist Church in Greenwich Village in March of 1973 attracted about 20 people. Three years later, in March 1976, Adele Starr was the driving force in the founding of PFLAG Los Angeles. In 1981, members decided to launch a national organization and the first PFLAG National office was established in Los Angeles under founding president and PFLAG

first woman in California history to be named Speaker pro tempore of the California State Assembly.

In 1999, California adopted a domestic partnership law. And one year later, the state passed Proposition 22 which restricted state recognition of marriage to opposite-sex couples.

The Transgender Law Center (TLC) was founded in 2002. They started as a fiscally sponsored project of NCLR and are now the largest transgender-led civil rights organization in the United States.

"... in March 1976, Adele Starr was the driving force in the founding of PFLAG Los Angeles."

Los Angeles founder Adele Starr, after whom our newsletter is named. Since then, PFLAG has become the nation's largest family and ally organization with over 400 chapters and 200,000 members and supporters crossing multiple generations of families in major urban centers, small cities, and rural areas across America.

Founded in 1977, the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) was the first national LGBTQ legal organization founded by women, and has been on the forefront of advancing the civil and human rights of the LGBTQ community and their families through impact litigation, public policy, and public education. That same year, Harvey Milk was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, becoming the city's first openly gay officer as well as one of the first openly gay individuals to be elected to office in the United States. [On November 27, 1978 he was killed in City Hall by Dan White who also killed San Francisco mayor George Moscone. In a surprising move, a jury convicted White of voluntary manslaughter rather than murder, and White served just six years in prison.]

In 1983, the Oakland City Council passed a Gay Rights Ordinance prohibiting discrimination. And in 1984, Berkeley, California became the first city in the U.S. to adopt a program of domestic partnership health benefits for city employees. 1984 was also the year West Hollywood was founded. It became the first known city to elect a city council where a majority of the members were openly gay or lesbian.

In 1994, Sheila James Kuehl became the first openly gay California legislator. Three years later, she became the

In 2003, Theresa Sparks became the first transgender woman ever named "Woman of the Year" by the California State Assembly.

And then we had a big movie in 2005 that took the whole country by storm. Remember Brokeback Mountain, directed by Ang Lee and starring Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal? The film was nominated for eight Academy Awards, the most nominations at the 78th Academy Awards, where it won three.

In 2011, the California State Legislature passed the FAIR Education Act making California the first state in the Union to enforce the teaching of LGBT history and social sciences in the public school curriculum and prohibits educational discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Now, most of us may have missed Sacramento's Rainbow Festival in September that drew thousands of people, but there is still time to make it to Palm Springs Pride which will be held November 1-3, with a parade on Sunday from 10am to noon.

There are many more historical events, too many to list. There are positive ones and negative ones and they go far beyond our state border. Remember, we're all connected and impacted by what's happening around us. Inclusion is a choice. Will we choose to make this world better and safer for all, and stand by our LGBTQ family members and friends and neighbors, especially if nobody else stands with them? It's up to each one of us. - END

## Our Stories

— Peggy Olsen, Loving Mom

First, I want to make clear that the story I will share is also the story of my late husband Marty. He was fantastic. As a husband, a father, the father of a gay son, a PFLAG speaker – he was a great human being. We were so blessed that he was able to attend our gay son's wedding a few months prior to his passing.

The Stonewall riots in 1969? Our family knew absolutely nothing. I didn't know anything about gay people. Nothing at all. Peter was born in 1966 and his brother in 1964, and my husband Marty and I were focused on our two boys. At that time, people were not out. Certainly in our environment. I still know people in our environment who are not out. This is still going on today.

Our son Peter came out when he was 20. Marty and I visited him up north where he studied. And when we asked how things were going, we found out that he was gay. I was really stunned because I didn't expect that. I couldn't think of anything else for 2, 3 months.

Back then there was no Internet. So I went to the library in search of positive titles. There were not many titles at all about this, let alone positive ones. I found one and I think the title was "The Homosexual, My Neighbor". Marty and I only wanted to find something good. And so we asked Peter questions. He was so patient. He was really wonderful. And very helpful.

I was very religious. I was baptized Presbyterian. So I went to the Presbyterian church in West Hollywood where all the gay people were, I thought. And I was right. Because I walked up and down the sidewalk and finally this very

nice guy came out and said, "would you like to come in?". And I said yes. So I went into this West Hollywood Presbyterian Church and they were all gay guys. And maybe a couple of lesbians in the back. And me. It was so funny. But then I went to the Episcopal church because they were more accepting than most. Then I found Metropolitan Community Church which was wonderful. It was all gay and lesbian. See, we weren't using the words bisexual and transgender at that time. That did not come to be used until later. And then – this is hilarious – I went to the grocery store in West Hollywood just to see what normal life was for these gay people. And I walked around and saw this great floral section, lots of flowers, that made me really happy. These gay guys walking around, they were just normal people. To observe them was really, really good for me. And then I learned about PFLAG.

I think I read about PFLAG in one of the library books. And when I went to PFLAG, that was fabulous. It was an hour away but I was willing to drive at night an hour each way to find out what this was all about. Adele Starr who was the founder was unbelievably fabulous. We met in her home and she was so helpful. I cannot tell you how helpful she was. She was on a total mission.

Back then, none of us knew much about the subject, but we all wanted to understand and learn. One of the first meetings in Adele's home was attended by six or eight parents. Adele shared that her gay son's name was Philip. Three of the other people in the room's gay child was also named Philip and they thought maybe that's why they turned gay! That's how little they knew about the subject. Seriously. This is no joke. This is really what was going on.

It's been a beautiful thing, meeting all these parents throughout these years who've also gone on missions. I've gotten so close to other parents and some of us get together to this day. I've gone [\(continued on next page\)](#)

## PFLAG Volunteers Spread the Word

with education, activism

& advocacy through our

Speakers Bureau engagements

### A Place Called Home:

Christie Carney, Ana Castro,  
Rudy Perez, and Chris Tompkins

### Pacific Unitarian Church:

Mike/Michelle Dennis

### Cleveland Humanities

Magnet High School: Gizella Czene,  
Steve Krantz, Liz Mullen,  
and Sylvia Weisenberg

Bureau of Safety & Environmental  
Enforcement (BSEE) and the Bureau of  
Ocean Energy Mgmt. (BOEM), an  
organization with the Dept. of Interior:  
Christie Carney, Steve Krantz,  
and Mel Schwartz

## Our Stories

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on a mission too when Adele asked me to be president of PFLAG Los Angeles so that she could retire.

Many times, Marty and I went out to speak and educate the public. Marty was fantastic. He was this six foot Mr. Macho. So we would go into high schools and speak. And of course everybody thought that he was going to be really, really tough on Peter. But Marty had no problem when Peter told him. Isn't that interesting? Even Peter was shocked at our response, because he thought I was going to be very easy. But I was just...for two or three months I couldn't think of anything else.

When we first started speaking to these high school students we would ask the kids, how many of you have ever met a gay person? Raise your hand. And at first when we started speaking they'd be very sheepish. Maybe there was one who wouldn't want anyone to see that they were raising their hand. After 8 or 10 years, when we asked the same question, many hands went up. It was huge, the change. It was so exciting to see such a change in that short period of time.

It was such a short period of time to learn about all this. And the biggest help was Peter. Peter answering my questions and being so honest and patient with me. And then meeting his wonderful friends, and these wonderful parents at PFLAG was a huge help. Because you've got these parents who have normal kids. And after that it's been just glorious. All the gay people I've met. And transgender people. It's been quite a ride.

Now, if you're raised with just one thinking, one culture, and that's all you know, what do you know? You don't know. And that's why it's so important for us to come out

as much as we can. In my mind it's much easier for a heterosexual parent to come out than it is for the gay person to come out. So I enjoy coming out. I feel very strongly about it now. If we want to be happy we need to find our place. And PFLAG was where I needed to be and there I found what I needed. Because all these parents loved their kids just like I did. And we knew our kids were normal. So we could talk about our kids all we wanted. And it made us happy. We wanted to talk about our great kids. We didn't want to keep it a secret and wanted to be able to enjoy our lives. But it was a slow process.

Every human being has a different experience of life. A lot of people are learning and a lot of people have graduated and now they're going to help and be teachers. It just keeps going. There's no doubt about it. Things are better. Just keep on keeping on. Keep loving your child. That will keep the connection there.

Adele hoped PFLAG could be out of business within 10 years. And here we are. More than 40 years later. We're online now. The PFLAG newsletter is doing a great service. People can find us and come to our meetings. They will see progress. If you keep loving your child, eventually you will see progress. There's no question in my mind. - END

Your everyday purchases or gifts  
can help PFLAG Los Angeles  
expand its mission of support,  
education, and advocacy.

Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon  
donates to PFLAG Los Angeles

**amazon**smile

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-3707419>

**PLEASE  
SUPPORT  
OUR  
WORK!**

**As an all-volunteer organization, our work is made possible only with the generous contributions of our donors. Your contributions support our monthly meetings, website, helplines, Speakers Bureau, and outreach to ethnic and faith communities. PFLAG Los Angeles is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and 100% of your donation supports our programs.** When you make a donation of \$35 or more to PFLAG Los Angeles, \$15 of your donation goes to PFLAG National and makes you a member of PFLAG National as well.

Donate online at: [www.pflagLA.org/join-donate](http://www.pflagLA.org/join-donate)

# TransAction

## Laverne Cox Nominated For Emmy

Nominated in 2014 and 2017, Laverne Cox did it again. She is nominated for an Emmy Award in the category Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama Series for her role as Sophia Burset in *Orange Is the New Black*. The last episode of this Netflix series aired in July which means this is her last chance to win for this particular role. But even if she doesn't win, she won hearts and minds of viewers by humanizing trans folks and will always be the first transgender person to be nominated for a primetime acting Emmy.

## Spark! 2019

At this year's Spark! event, the Transgender Law Center honors Mattee Jim with the Claire Skiffington Vanguard Award. This award recognizes those community members who have been working for transgender equality for 10 years or more. Mattee Jim is of the Zuni People Clan and born for the Towering House People Clan; this is how she identifies as a Dineh (Navajo). A transgender advocate, trainer, consultant, and extraordinary person, Mattee has been a leader in HIV prevention and trans advocacy for 20 years on national, state, and local levels.

[\[transgenderlawcenter.org/spark\]](http://transgenderlawcenter.org/spark)

## 18th Transgender Person Killed in 2019

Bee Love Slater, 23, was brutally murdered and found burned in a vehicle in Clewiston, Fla. on Wednesday, September 4. According to reports that circulated in the hours following her death, the victim was tied up and shot before she was incinerated. Slater's death marks the 18th murder of a transgender person so far in 2019, just two days after 17-year-old Bailey Reeves was gunned down on Parkwood Avenue in Baltimore, Md. while leaving a party at 8 p.m. The deaths of Slater and Reeves continues what trans activists like Laverne Cox have called a "state of emergency" for black transgender women. There are currently no hate crime laws in Florida for transgender individuals, and although Maryland laws prohibit hate crimes on the basis of gender identity, there are no protections on the federal level. [\[Excerpt from out.com\]](#)

## Indya Moore's Red Carpet Look Honoring Murdered Black Trans Women

On September 5, Indya Moore [gender pronoun they/their] made one of the most important fashion statements of the year, using accessories to highlight a national crisis: the rampant killing of black trans women. The Pose star was receiving a Magazine Cover of the Year award for their gorgeous, history-making *Elle* cover, and showed up to the ceremony in "Keepsake" earrings composed of photos of 16 trans women who've been murdered in 2019. They also carried a framed photograph of Bailey Reeves, because the 17-year-old was killed three days before the event and after the earrings had been made.

"On this day that I'm celebrated and awarded for being visible, I decided to bring them with me," Indya said in their acceptance speech. "Just like me, these women dared to exhaust their freedom to exist by being visible. However, instead of being celebrated, they're punished for it."

Indya also thanked their parents for "being an incredible example to parents everywhere that it's possible to learn and adjust your parenting in the best interests of your child's existence." [\[Excerpt from buzzfeed.com\]](#)

## Bravo, Cindy Barshop!

In response to Mario Lopez' remarks on transgender kids on *The Candace Owens Show*, Cindy, former *Real Housewives* of New York City star and single mom to 9-year-old twins, daughter Zoe and transgender son Jesse, jumped on the opportunity to set the record straight and shared the following on [people.com](http://people.com): "When a child feels comfortable and open, identity issues are able to be discussed in the family environment. I believe living in creating an open and positive home so they are able to express themselves. I'm hoping that the more awareness that we bring that people understand that trans is an identity and has absolutely nothing to do with sexuality." Jesse's suggestion: To tell Lopez that kids learn about this in 5th grade and that Lopez needs to go back to 5th grade. **END**

## Quote - Unquote

"It's easy to forget now, when we've come so far... just how much courage was required for Ellen to come out on the most public of stages almost 20 years ago."

— Barack Obama, 44th president of the United States

PFLAG Los Angeles is an all volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization run by parents, family members, LGBTQ persons and their friends. Each of us came for help, found support, and joined the organization to assist others on their journey to acceptance. Our chapter, together with a group in New York City, founded the national PFLAG organization, which provides assistance to over 350 independent chapters nationwide.

**OUR VISION:** PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

**OUR MISSION:** By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through:

**Support** for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ;

**Education** for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ;

**Advocacy** in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.



P.O. Box 24565, Los Angeles, CA 90024  
[info@pflagLA.org](mailto:info@pflagLA.org) 888.735.2488

### **PFLAG LOS ANGELES BOARD**

Adele Starr, *Founder*

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**Newsletter Editor:** Chris Haiss

Graphic Design: York Knowlton, [imagine-Y.com](http://imagine-Y.com)

# RESOURCES

## Support Meetings

sponsored by PFLAG Los Angeles

### Westwood\*

Westwood United Methodist Church  
10497 Wilshire Bl. LA 90024  
3rd Wednesday of each month  
7:30 - 10:00 pm / Free Parking

\*Visit our website for upcoming speakers [www.pflagLA.org](http://www.pflagLA.org)

### Gender Focus

Bienestar in Hollywood  
4955 W. Sunset Blvd., LA 90027  
2nd Thursday of each month  
7:30 - 9:30 pm / Free Parking

### South LA

Meetings suspended until further notice

### Boyle Heights (Sólo Español)

Mi Centro - Boletín  
553 S. Clarence St., Los Angeles, CA 90033  
2nd Wednesday of each month  
7:00 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

### East LA (Sólo Español)

Bienestar East LA  
5326 East Beverly Blvd, Los Angeles 90022  
3rd Thursday of each month  
7:00 - 9:00 pm / Street Parking

### San Fernando Valley (Sólo Español)

Bienestar Centro del Valle de San Fernando  
8134 Van Nuys Blvd., #200, Panorama City 91402  
4th Friday of each month  
7:00 - 9:00 pm / Free Parking

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### SPEAKERS BUREAU

Contact Melanie Woloz at  
[SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org](mailto:SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org)

### NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

PFLAG National  
202.467.8180  
[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

**PFLAG Los Angeles** - English and Spanish  
1.888.PFLAG 88 (1.888.735.2488)

### The Trevor Project

24-hour suicide prevention line  
866.488.7386  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

REMEMBER

When you no longer need PFLAG, that's when PFLAG NEEDS YOU!

[www.pflagLA.org](http://www.pflagLA.org)