

Intro Letter



Message from the Chair and Executive Director To Our Contributors, Volunteers, Colleagues and Friends

On Gay Freedom Day in San Francisco in June 1978, Harvey Milk began his renowned speech with the words, "Gay brothers and sisters...You must come out." Nine years after the Stonewall uprising in New York City, he understood that in order to fully effect civil rights changes for the LGBT community, we could not be an "invisible" people.

Phoenix Pride fully embraces the message of visibility in our mission to celebrate and promote the history, diversity, and future prosperity of the metropolitan Phoenix LGBT community. We see public awareness of and education about the LGBT community as a means to combat homophobia, transphobia and discrimination. Over the past year, our long-range strategic initiative to increase LGBT community visibility is being realized through the introduction of new programs. These new annual programs, the Pride Gala and OUTdayPHX, are highly-publicized and well-received events meant to include both private and commercial community allies and leaders, government officials and politicians, as well as the LGBT community.

Perhaps the largest strategic initiative worked on over the last year was the important goal of increasing existing charitable contributions to the local LGBT community through the creation of a formal charitable arm to the organization. This arm has been established as the Phoenix Pride Community Foundation (PPCF) in conjunction with the Arizona Community Foundation. PPCF now encompasses three programs to promote prosperity for the local LGBT community: The Pride Partnership Program; The Pride Scholarship Program; and The Pride Community Program. Despite the economic downturn, we are proud to announce that charitable giving to local organizations and for scholarships reached an all-time high this year.

Despite this progress, there is much more to be done. As visible as we become and as strong as we can make the local LGBT community, there are still forces in the region, state, nation and the world who would see our community discriminated against in perpetuity in both practice and policy. Full civil rights for all cannot become a reality without non-discriminatory policy at all levels. To this end we have instituted a 501(h) election with the IRS and have established a Political Advocacy Task Force to connect with political organizations throughout our community. The ultimate goal is for Phoenix Pride to make some difference by influencing policy towards social justice and full & equal human rights.

As we begin a new year, it is important to note that none of the work we do could be done without your steadfast commitment, hard work and enormous generosity. As we look forward to the work that lies ahead, we thank you for your continued support to make us all proud to live OUT and be who we are.

Paul Carroll
Chairperson

Brandi Sokolosky
Executive Director

The Organization



THE ORGANIZATION

PHOENIX LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE
COMMITTEE, INC.

PHOENIX PRIDE

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MISSION

Phoenix Pride celebrates and promotes the history, diversity and future prosperity of the Metropolitan Phoenix LGBT community.

VISION

Increase public awareness of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender) community to eliminate homophobia, transphobia and discrimination.

Phoenix Pride is a 501(c) 3 non-profit educational organization based in metro Phoenix. Phoenix Pride is the dba for Phoenix Lesbian & Gay Pride Committee, Inc. All donations to the organization are tax deductible.

THE HISTORY OF PHOENIX PRIDE

In 1981, a group of gay & lesbian activists organized the first Pride march thru the streets of downtown Phoenix to the state Capitol building. It was a politically focused march to bring awareness to gay rights issues in Phoenix.

Nearly ten years later, a group of volunteers joined together to coordinate the annual Pride festival. This committee, best known as the Phoenix Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee, Inc. helped establish a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization known today as Phoenix Pride.

The organization was created as an educational non-profit to continue to educate and promote issues that affect the LGBT community in metro Phoenix. Under the leadership of Phoenix Pride, there has been an annual march, festival, parade or celebration in metro Phoenix for 29 consecutive years.

The organization is a leader in the metro Phoenix LGBT community. During the past several years, the organization has been able to make significant donations to other LGBT focused non-profit organizations and has awarded scholarships to deserving LGBT youth to continue their education. It is the goal of the organization to continue developing community programs to benefit the LGBT focused non-profit community and to continue to raise public awareness about the LGBT community in hopes to eliminate homophobia, transphobia and discrimination still very much prevalent some 30 years later.

In 2010, the LGBT community will celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the first LGBT march in Phoenix. Phoenix Pride will continue to honor and celebrate our community by promoting April as "Pride Month" in Phoenix, Arizona and by introducing the "10 Days of Pride". Phoenix Pride is partnering with organizations such as 1N10, ONE Community, Aunt Rita's Foundation, AZ Pride Guide, Phoenix Film Festival, ECHO Magazine, Arizona Frontrunners and SWAY Events to produce a series of events celebrating 30 years of Pride in Phoenix.