



PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

April 2014

Civil Rights Director to Speak at PFLAG

Steven Chavez, Director of the Colorado Civil Rights Division (CCRD) will come from Denver to speak at our April 15th PFLAG meeting.

The CCRD works to protect individuals from discrimination in employment, housing and at places of public accommodation through enforcement of Colorado civil rights laws.

In a June 2013 ruling celebrated as “a high water mark for transgender students” the CCRD acted to protect the rights of a transgender kindergarten student, Coy Mathis, after the Fountain/ Ft. Carson School District’s good intentions fell short of fair treatment.

A Colorado native, Steven Chavez attended West High School in Denver, he received his undergraduate degree



Steven Chavez

from Colorado State University and his Juris Doctor from the University of Colorado. He believes that education and outreach are vital to CCRD’s mission, and he has partnered with numerous community organizations.

Mr. Chavez assists civic and governmental leaders in the civic rights issues and continues to teach in legal and civic educational programs. He is also a trans rights advocate.

Out Loud Spring Concert “Our Stories and Broadway Legends” May 2-3

Out Loud, The Colorado Springs Men’s Chorus, will present its spring concert, “Two Portraits: Our Stories and Broadway Legends” on May 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. at The Broadmoor Community Church, 315 Lake Avenue. Chorus members will weave their personal stories with the music into a powerful story as they share their inner and outward journey for equality, liberty and social justice.

Tickets for the concerts can be purchased at www.rmarts.org.

PFLAG ushers are needed for both concerts. If you would like to usher, please call Karen at 634-4433. PFLAG has been ushering at Out Loud concerts since the chorus was founded in 2005.

Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles Reacts to Anti-GLBT Bigotry in Russia

Check out this 3 min video that was just published on January 31, 2014 by GMCLA in response to Russia's current intolerance of the GLBT Movement.

One of the largest gatherings of LGBT people in Russian history occurred when the Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles performed in Moscow in 1999. Here’s the climax of that landmark event in

APRIL PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday
April 15, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Guest:
Steven Chavez
Director of Colorado Civil Rights Division (CCRD)

The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street

Everyone is welcome.

Social time begins at 6:30 p.m.

SO.... Still getting your newsletter by snail mail? Join our e-mail newsletter group and get your newsletter in COLOR each month, by e-mail. Website links in stories actually work! And we save postage costs. Send your e-mail address to info@cspflag.org and Jerry will put you on our confidential e-mail list.

Tchaikovsky Hall, where tears flowed on both sides of the footlights.

Watch the LGBT communities from Russia and the US unite for the first time, holding hands without fear of oppression or reprisal.

Our message to the world: We Shall Overcome. Watch it!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLzXIIyqtB0>



Voices of TYES: Life stories from parents of transgender youth.

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

PFLAG Mission Statement:

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) persons, their families and friends through:

- √ **support**, to cope with an adverse society,
- √ **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and
- √ **advocacy**, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

PFLAG IS FOR EVERYONE

If you've never been to one of our meetings, we feel you will find it rewarding and may find it leads to a new sense of family.
Membership is not required.
All are welcome.

To join the chapter and receive the newsletter regularly, complete and mail the membership form on page four. To receive complimentary copies of the newsletter, please contact us.

E-mail address: info@cspflag.org

Support Line: (719) 425-9567

P.O. Box 49131
Colorado Springs, CO 80949

PFLAG Colorado Springs website:
www.cspflag.org

PFLAG National Office website:
www.pflag.org

Newsletter Editor: Karen Flitton Stith
E-mail: karenfstith@gmail.com

To receive your newsletter by e-mail, send a request to info@cspflag.org

Trans Youth Education and Support (TYES) is a satellite support group of PFLAG Boulder County which has formed a network of Colorado families with transgender children. The following story was written by a TYES parent, Hallie.

A little girl*!! My husband and I so wanted this girl. We had a son, all our siblings had sons, so when we prepared to adopt our second child we wanted a girl. All her aunts bought her the cutest of girlie clothes, and I loved to dress her in them. But as soon as our daughter was 3 and could tell us what she preferred, she wore her brother's hand me downs, boys boxers and bathing suit. She hated wearing dresses. She even asked me one day "When do I grow up to be a boy, Mom?"

Much to my surprise during a routine follow-up at the end of my 6 year-old child's therapy appointment, which she attended to deal with attachment issues, the therapist mentioned that she suspected that my child was transgender. We did not treat our daughter any differently after the mention of this from the therapist but began to educate ourselves.

A few months later, I was in the kitchen when my child marched in and declared she had something to tell me. With all ears I listened. "I would like to be a boy," he declared. "Not just dress as one, but really be one." (During this past year of first grade, he encouraged all his best buddies to pick a new name so he could try out being called "Ryan".)

Because my husband and I had read and discussed enough to understand where our child was coming from, I was able to look him in the eye and tell him that this was fine. We could find a new name and make the transition. I hugged him and held him, but as a parent, what I really wanted to do was cry (which I did privately often) and tell him how difficult this would be; how I would always worry about him being socially accepted... but of course, this was not something I shared with my 7 year old.

Our family and others like ours have been accused of encouraging our child's transgender identity. Some believe that therapists are pressuring families to socially transition their child. Why would a parent choose such a difficult path? Not just for that child, but for the whole family. Transitioning our child resulted in difficult decisions, awkward conversations with parents on a little league field, challenging explanations to our child's older sibling, helping him face his 10 year-old friends with this news. Life was pretty rough for a while, for all of us. We even had our older son go to therapy to understand how to vent his frustration and anger and eventually learn to accept his brother's transition.

We face strife often....each time we travel or walk into a doctor's office, we worry they will call him the wrong name. My husband and I have spent considerable time and energy learning about medications and hormone treatments. It stresses out our marriage and our finances! We have both had to have considerable talks with our family members to help them understand. It is a huge burden and some days I want to cry and say "It isn't fair!!! Why me! Why do I have to deal with this!!?"

Since my son's transition he has been much happier and much more confident in himself. We have also learned the alternative to not letting our child transition can be devastating and even fatal. In the end, we love our child and want him to be happy. If transition means he will be able to live a happy, fulfilled life, why wouldn't we permit him a life- saving transition? For now, this means he will live in the world as a boy with his chosen name. All of his options are still open to him. We will support him and allow the use of hormone blockers to prolong the time until a more permanent decision has to be made. Our child will know there are options, and we will continue to talk openly and work through any issues that come up. In the end, if he chooses to be a boy, we will love him the same as the girl we adopted.

*For clarity, I am using the female identity and pronouns up until the point where my child transitioned to male. - Hallie



What's Coming Up— In Nearby Denver

Queer Seder — Join LGBTQI and allied Jews, our families and friends as we gather to celebrate Passover at Colorado's 6th annual Queer Seder on April 17 at Temple Emanuel, 51 Grape Street in Denver. Doors open at 5:30, Seder starts at 6:00. Cost is \$15 - \$25. Contact Rafi Daugherty at rafi@kesheton-line.org or 303-691-3562.

SAGE Tea Dance— A fundraiser for SAGE of the Rockies will take place on April 19 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Charlie's Denver on East Colfax Avenue. SAGE is an affiliate member of the nationwide SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) network. For more information, please visit www.glbtcOLORADO.org or call 303-733-7743.

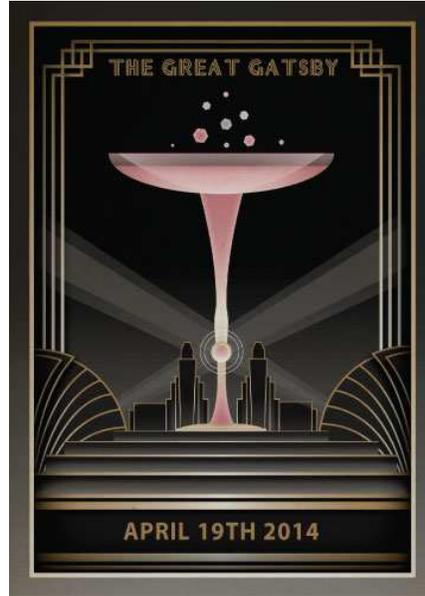
Transgender Job Fair— This event will take place from 12 noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 19 at UMB Bank, 1635 East Colfax Avenue, Denver. The Transgender Job Fair will feature transgender-inclusive employers from the metro-Denver area. Past participants have included: Starbucks, Chase, City & County of Denver, Jefferson Center for Mental Health, and Ball Aerospace. For additional details, please visit our website: www.glbtcOLORADO.org or call 303-733-7743.

Rainbow Alley — is sponsoring **Queer Prom 2014** (ages 12-21), to be held on Saturday, April 5, from 7-11 p.m. at the Tivoli on Auraria Campus, with an After Party from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m. at Rainbow Alley.

The theme is "Tim Burton presents: The Nightmare Before Queermas." Tickets (available online at www.glbtcOLORADO.org or call 303-733-7743) are \$20 per person in advance, \$25 at the door.

The Center — To see the astonishing array of support activities and programs offered by The Center (Pride Center) in Denver, go to www.glbtcOLORADO.org

"The Great Gatsby" - S-CAP's Red Ribbon Ball—April 19th



The 22nd Annual Red Ribbon Ball to raise money for HIV/AIDS education and support in Southern Colorado is set for April 19th at the Antlers Hilton.

The Ball features glamorous fun, dinner, dancing, and a silent auction. It's a chance to dress up and support a fine organization. Register by April 8th at www.s-cap.org

The Southern Colorado Aids Project is the only AIDS service organization in southern Colorado providing HIV/AIDS education, support and prevention services. With offices in Colorado Springs and Pueblo, it is part of the Colorado AIDS Project.

Straight for Equality Gala—April 10th

PFLAG will celebrate the straight allies who support the LGBT community at its Sixth Annual Straight for Equality Gala at the New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square

PFLAG National's Straight for Equality Gala honors and celebrates some of the most powerful straight allies who are generating life-changing change through their work. The awards each year focus on areas key to moving equality forward, including the workplace, faith communities, entertainment, literature, sports, education, and more.

Honorees are:

Straight for Equality in Entertainment: - Ally Sheedy

Straight for Equality in Faith Communities—Ruth Messinger

Straight for Equality in the Workplace—Johnson & Johnson.

Read more about the Gala and the Straight for Equality campaign, see www.straightforequality.org

Diva Ball at The Brown Palace — April 26th

The Rocky Mountain Arts Association will stage a fundraiser at the Brown Palace Hotel on April 26th to benefit all four Front Range choruses:

Out Loud, the Colorado Springs Men's Chorus;
The Denver Gay Men's Chorus;
The Denver Women's chorus; and
Mosaic Youth Chorus (Denver)

The special guest is Anne Hampton Callaway. For more information and to make a reservation, see www.rmarts.org (Editor's note: These choruses do wonderful outreach work. Watch the YouTube video of the GMCLA chorus on page 1 and even if you don't attend the Diva Ball, please donate to Out Loud.)



BULLETIN BOARD

April 4—Denver Women’s Chorus 30th Anniversary Concert -- Honoring founder Carol White. Gates Concert Hall, University of Denver 7:30 p.m. More information and tickets at www.rmarts.org

April 5— PFLAG Conference and Coalition Meeting - at Cairn Christian Church, Lafayette, CO. Dr. Robert Minor will lead sessions on helping LGBT individuals and advocacy groups find better ways to communicate and cooperate with faith communities. For more information contact PFLAG chapter president Doug Kirkpatrick at 598-6509.

April 10—Sixth Annual PFLAG Straight For Equality Gala—New York. See article, p. 3.

April 19—”The Great Gatsby” 22nd Annual Red Ribbon Ball - Antlers Hilton, Colorado Springs. See article, p. 3. Register by April 8th at www.s-cap.org

April 26—The Diva Ball— The Brown Palace Hotel, Denver. Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Arts Association See article p. 3. and www.rmarts.org

May 2-3—Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus— Spring Concert “Two Portraits—Our Stories and Broadway Legends”. [Broadmoor Community Church](http://BroadmoorCommunityChurch.com), 315 Lake Avenue, 7:30 p.m. See p. 1. Tickets at www.rmarts.org

June 21-22- PrideFest Denver. Parade Sunday 9:30 am

July 19-20 - Colorado Springs PrideFest 24—America the Beautiful Park.—Plan to help staff the PFLAG booth.

Confidentiality.

The PFLAG meeting is a safe space for people to share their stories and their feelings. Please remember that who you met and what was said is to be kept completely confidential. Thank you.

Short Takes—India Retreats. Methodists Advance

India: You're Criminal If Gay

My name is Leila Seth. I am eighty-three years old. I have been in a long and happy marriage of more than sixty years with my husband Premo, and am the mother of three children. The eldest, Vikram, is a writer. The second, Shantum, is a Buddhist teacher. The third, Aradhana, is an artist and filmmaker. I love them all.

But our eldest, Vikram, is now a criminal, an unapprehended felon. This is because, like many millions of other Indians, he is gay; and last month, two judges of the Supreme Court overturned the judgment of two judges of the Delhi High Court that, four years ago, decriminalized homosexuality. Now, once again, if Vikram falls in love with another man, he will be committing a crime punishable by imprisonment for life if he expresses his love physically. The Supreme Court judgment means that he would have to be celibate for the rest of his life or else leave the country where he was born, to which he belongs, and which he loves more than any other...

Leila is a retired judge. Read the rest of her article, originally published in The Times of India, at:

<http://www.nybooks.com/shared/6307e634707387900ffc18c3bd8ddf0>

Methodist Bishop to End Trials for Ministers Who Perform Gay Weddings

The leader of the United Methodist Church in New York essentially freed ministers to conduct the still-prohibited ceremony and dropped charges in one case. Read *New York Times* article at <http://nyti.ms/1fQX4zV>

PFLAG Thanks The Saponas Foundation and First Congregational United Church of Christ for their significant, ongoing support of the Colorado Springs PFLAG Chapter.

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014.

Name: _____

____ New member ____ Renewing member

Address: _____

- ____ Regular Membership \$ 30
- ____ Supporting Member—Silver 40
- ____ Supporting Member—Gold 60
- ____ Supporting Member—Platinum 100

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail _____

Check here if you wish to receive the newsletter by e-mail _____

Each year our chapter must contribute \$15.00 for each paid membership to the PFLAG national office to support its mission.

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 49131, Colorado Springs, CO 80949. Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.