



PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United
With LGBT People to Move Equality Forward

2019 is Our 25th Anniversary Year!

January 2019

Exploring Trans Voices—January Program

We all know someone for whom singing in a chorus or choir is a passionate, essential part of their life and their identity. Singing nurtures their spirit, makes their emotions soar, and provides access to a vital music community. The LGTQ+ singers of Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus and One Voice Mixed Chorus in Minneapolis-St. Paul know the joys of music well.

So, what happens when a devoted singer reaches a point where gender transition becomes an imperative in their life? What will happen to their voice when they begin taking hormones during transition? Do they need special vocal coaching? Will there still be a place for them in the chorus?

Do you know a singer or a choir/ chorus director who would be interested in learning more about supporting transgender and gender nonconforming (GNC) voices?

Please share this newsletter.

At the January PFLAG meeting we will show several short videos from the 2018 Trans Voices Festival in St. Paul, organized under the guidance of Jane Ramseyer Miller.

Miller has been the Artistic Director of One Voice for 24 years and is also the Artistic Director of the Gay and Lesbian Chorus Association (GALA).



When she was approached by a singer who was struggling with vocal changes during transition 15 years ago, she researched the issue and found that there was not much information available to help directors and singers.

She organized a Transgender Voices Festival in St. Paul in 2004 to reach out to others who were encountering these challenges. Out of this event "Trans Voices", a new Minnesota transgender chorus, was formed.

Last year, in cooperation with GALA Choruses, Unity Church, Macalister College and others, One Voice singers and their allies organized a Trans Voices Festival in St. Paul in April.

(Continued on page 3)

GSA Leadership Summit February 2 at UCCS—Sign Up Now



The 2019 Southern Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance Leadership Summit will be held at UCCS on Saturday, February 2nd from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in

Berger Hall, 1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway, Colorado Springs. This annual event provides workshops and networking opportunities for students who are, or would like to be, involved with a Gay-Straight Alliance at their school. The event is hosted by UCCS and One Colorado, through its Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance.

The Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance trains LGBT+Q (lesbian, gay, *(Continued on page 3)*

JANUARY PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday
January 15, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Trans Voices Festival 2018

Short videos about helping Singers undergoing Gender Transition

Small group discussion

The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street

Light refreshments

Social time starts at 6:30 p.m.
Everyone is welcome.

An Invitation to Join Out Loud

Singers take note! Auditions for the Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus will take place in January.

This message is from singer Richard Ortiz:

"If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus, please let me know. We have an amazing Fun Time! Our Spring concert's theme is "50 Shades of Gay" to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the NYC Stonewall Uprising!

"We start vocal placements and first rehearsal on Monday evening, January 14th. We have two more Mondays (21st and 28th) to still join. I can set up a vocal placement time and also give additional information about our singing group. You can contact me by sending a message to my email: ortizrich@hotmail.com "

The website for the chorus is: www.outloudcsmc.com



Mom Steps In When Parents Refuse to Attend Same-Sex Wedding

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG.

PFLAG Vision Statement. 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.

PFLAG Mission Statement: 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.

To join the local chapter and receive this 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

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CNN) - Four years ago, when Sara Cunningham came home from a pride festival in Oklahoma City, she was covered head to toe in glitter. She had spent the day offering free mom hugs or high-fives ("Not everybody's a hugger," she says) to passersby, and the love and joy she felt was palpable.

Unfortunately, so was something else.

"That day, I went home with real horror stories," she says. "I was broken from hearing from the community -- kids who had been living out of their cars, kids who had been kicked out of their churches or homes for just for identifying as LGBT."

Cunningham's son is gay, and her experience at that festival led her and other ally mothers to form what is now "Free Mom Hugs," a nonprofit organization that offers mother-like support to LGBT youth.

In July 2018, that spark of support and celebration became a flame. Cunningham, frustrated with continued stories of parents rejecting their gay children, sometimes during the most important times in their lives, wrote a simple Facebook post.

"PSA. If you need a mom to attend your same sex wedding because your biological mom won't." Call me. I'm there. I'll be your biggest fan. I'll even bring the bubbles."

TransParent Group

The TransParent group at Inside/Out for parents of gender variant and transgender youth usually meets on the third Thursday of the month from 6:00—7:30 p.m. The next meeting is on January 17 at Inside/Out, 223 North Wahsatch Ave. For more information, call I/o at 328-1056.

TYES

Transgender Youth Education and Support (TYES) is a Boulder-based parent group that provides information and a community of support for parents of gender dysphoric and gender variant young children.

PFLAG collaborates with TYES to provide support to parents in the Pikes Peak region. For more information, call (719) 425-9567 or send an e-mail to info@cspflag.org. The national TYES website is: www.TYES-Colorado.org.

In a matter of days, the post went wildly viral. Cunningham knows why.

"When people ask us about Free Mom Hugs, they usually say, 'How can I join,' 'What can I do,' Cunningham says. "That's what made the post go viral. It was people all over the world saying, I want to do that, I can do that, I've *been* doing that,"

"Everyone needs acceptance," she says. "And when we fall in love, it's a profound, sacred special time of our lives. To not have the validation for recognition from your parents, from people who are so important to you, You may think you can handle it."

"But when it comes to the final blow," she continues, "To them saying, 'I'm not coming to your wedding, it's just devastating. And I can't imagine hearing those words out of a mother's mouth."

Cunningham knows what kind of pain can come from not being accepted by your own family, because initially, she and her family struggled to come to terms with her own son's sexuality.

It's a pain Cunningham is trying to relieve from other children, and their parents.

"We must learn to celebrate our LGBTQ children, or we will suffer with them," she says.

She says the key for parents who are struggling is education -- and an open heart.

"There is so much information out there, so many ways to get educated, so many ways to learn [about LGBTQ issues]. To be honest, the only other choice is to remain in fear and ignorance. And I use those words respectfully, because I was there once."

Honestly, Cunningham wishes Free Mom Hugs didn't exist. She wishes her presence at weddings, either as a stand-in mom or an officiant (she got ordained in 2016 to officiate the same-sex wedding of two friends), wasn't necessary.

To all of those people who commented or shared her viral post, she has two words of advice: Show up.

"That's the key," she says. "Just show up. And when I say showing up, I mean we as parents, as friends or allies. I'm not the first mom to offer free mom hugs or attend weddings as a stand-in. But when we show up for any group that's marginalized, that's how we can make sure they really know they are loved and celebrated."

Thank you to Carol Oberg for this story



Making History at the January 8, 2018 Inauguration

Following the historic election of Jared Polis as Colo-

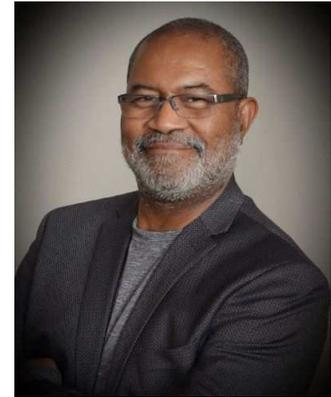


rado's first openly gay Governor, the Rocky Mountain Arts Association has announced that the Denver Gay Men's Chorus has been invited to sing at the Governor's inauguration ceremony on January 8, 2019 at the State Capitol building.

The Denver Gay Men's Chorus has also invited Take Note, the 16-person a capella group from the Denver Women's Chorus, to participate in the performance.

The public viewing area is standing room only located on Lincoln Street between Colfax and 14th Avenues chorus performances at 9:30 and 10:10 a.m. The swearing-in is at 11 a.m.

Educating Children of Color



Ron Stallworth, speaker and author of book *Black Klansman*

The Educating Children of Color Summit to be held at Colorado College on January 19th is an annual one-day event for high school students, teachers, counselors and parents to enable the students to find a route to higher education.

Ron Stallworth, who was the first black detective in the Colorado Springs Police Department, will speak to the youth at the Summit. During the 1970's Ron and a Jewish police officer infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in Colorado Springs. His 2015 book, *Black Klansman*, was the basis for Spike Lee's new film *BlackKkKlansman*, currently in local theaters. The film won the Grand Prix award at the Cannes Film Festival on May 14, 2018.

The ECOC Summit provides opportunities for students to apply for scholarships for higher education. Educators may apply for scholarships for professional development or classroom enhancement. Since 2008, ECOC has given away \$156,000 in scholarships and 158 laptop computers.

Students and parents attend free. For professionals, admission is \$35.

Online registration is now closed, but participants may register at the event. Students can register at the El Pomar Sports Great Hall starting at 7:30 a.m. Adults can register at Armstrong Hall starting at 7:30 a.m.

PFLAG will have an information table all day at this event. If you would like to help, call Elaine at 359-1462.

For more information go to: <https://educatingchildrenofcolor.org>

GSA Leadership Summit

(Continued from page 1)

bisexual, transgender, and queer) youth and their allies to advocate for safe school policies and practices and encourages youth to establish and develop Gay-Straight Alliances in their schools.

At the Summit, LGBT+Q youth and their allies will come together to learn actionable skills to be a force for change in their community. Attendees will have the chance to gain know-how on how to take the work of their GSAs and other support organizations to the next level.

This FREE Summit welcomes students (middle school, high school, and college), educators, and parents who are committed to creating safe, inclusive learning environments for all students.

Colorado Springs PFLAG will have an information table all day at this event.

For more information about the Summit, and to register to attend, see its Facebook page:

<https://bit.ly/2VAIYvn>
(This is a short link to <https://www.facebook.com/events/1008132089371915/>)

Please email the One Colorado Youth Coordinator, Jordan Anthony, at jordana@one-colorado.org with any questions, if you need a travel scholarship, or if any other accommodations are needed.

PFLAG meetings are always a safe space.

Who you meet, and what you hear

Must remain strictly confidential.

- Thank you.

Exploring Trans Voices

(Continued from page 1)

The Festival offered a space for transgender and gender nonconforming (GNC) singers across musical genres and cultures to explore their voices and identities, grow as artists, and learn techniques for voice care.

The Festival was a joyful event which drew over 200 transgender, gender non-binary and allied singers, voice teachers and music educators from all over the country.

We will see short videos from the Festival, including a "The Reason for the Festival", a conductor and singer's journey to learn about trans voices and the birth of the Trans Festival; "A Place in the Choir" and "Exploring Trans Voice".

For more information, see:

"Creating Choirs that Welcome Transgender Singers", an article by Jane Ramsey Miller in the *ACDA Choral Journal* November 2016 <https://bit.ly/2Rzyks9> and

"Trans Voices Festival 2018 – Resources" <https://bit.ly/2CWCEGf>

What's Bitly?

We use www.bitly.com, a free online program that shortens an internet addresses, providing an alternative route to that site.

Thank You

To the Saponas Foundation, First Congregational United Church of Christ and the Ruskey/Bianchi Family for their significant, ongoing support of Colorado Springs PFLAG.



BULLETIN BOARD

California Legislation is the First to Support Intersex Rights - By Hans Lindahl in *Them.U.s*

In August, 2018, California passed SCR-110, the nation's first legislation acknowledging that non-consensual intersex medical interventions are an abuse of human rights. The resolution officially recognizes that the medical paradigm of intersex "treatment" — the surgical and hormonal alteration of any sex characteristics doctors deem "atypical" — has harmed the intersex community.

After over 25 years of dismissal from doctors seeking to "correct" intersex people's bodies, the intersex community is celebrating a win that represents a historic first step toward our bodily autonomy.

The non-binding resolution affirms intersex people's naturally diverse sex characteristics and calls on the medical industry to delay all non-consensual sex "normalizing" procedures, such as clitoral reductions, vaginoplasties, and orchiectomies — typically advocated for and performed by surgeons in order to assign a binary sex to intersex children under age two — until individuals are old enough to make their own informed decisions. These surgeries have been likened to a physical form of conversion therapy. SCR-110 signifies a first step in pivoting from this history.

SCR-110 is the first legislation regarding intersex surgeries to pass in the U.S., but it is by no means the first effort. In 2016 and 2017, Advocates initiated bills in Indiana, Texas and Nevada that were unsuccessful but greatly influential in the intersex rights movement's momentum. The bills started necessary conversations among legislators and created a record of discussions at the state level.

While SCR-110 adds to growing calls to end a practice that subjects infants to cosmetic genital surgery, it is not a change of statute and does not ban the practice.

Amazon Smile Program Supports PFLAG

Colorado Springs PFLAG participates in the Amazon Smile program. When making purchases on Amazon, please always enter the site through our portal: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-1281187>

When you do this, Amazon will send 0.5% of the value of your purchase to our chapter. You can pick up a flyer on this program at PFLAG meetings.

Jan 14— Out Loud Auditions Begin. See article, p. 1.

Jan 17 — TransParent Group at Inside/Out. See p. 2.

Jan 19 — Educating Children of Color Summit at Colorado College. Students and parents attend free. For professionals, admission is \$35. For more information see article p. 3.

Jan 19 — "HOME—Street Requiem" - Northern Colorado Premiere. Join the Denver Gay Men's Chorus along with Treble voices from multiple choruses in the Denver area as they bring the profound piece "Street Requiem" to Fort Collins to benefit three charities in the area that help support the challenge of homelessness. The Street Requiem was presented in Colorado Springs last fall. First United Methodist Church in Ft. Collins, 7:30 p.m. Purchase tickets at: www.rmarts.org/events/

Feb 2 — 2019 Southern Colorado Gay-Straight Alliance Leadership Summit - Berger Hall, UCCS, 9 a.m.—4 p.m. This event is free. See article p. 1.

Please Bring to PFLAG Meetings for Inside/Out Pantry:

- Tuna/cracker packets;
- Individual size ravioli, chili, noodles, ramen, or any kind of comfort food that can be microwaved;
- Canned meat or tuna;
- Small containers of peanut butter;
- Nutrition bars; trail mix; cookies;
- Gatorade and bottled water.

Using a King Soopers Gift Card to Support PFLAG

The free card is already loaded with \$2.50 for groceries. You add money to the card using your credit card, and use the gift card to pay for purchases. King Soopers will donate 5% of your grocery, gas and pharmacy purchases to our local chapter of PFLAG. This is an easy, powerful fundraiser! To receive a card by mail, call Cindy Waldmann at (719) 488-9887.

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019.

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: _____

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

E-mail _____

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

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