



# PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

May 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 the May PFLAG meeting at the Metropolitan Community Church. A family emergency prevented Mr. Chavez from speaking in April, as previously scheduled.

The meeting is co-sponsored by Citizens Project, COS Pride, Peak Area Gender Expressions (PAGE), Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community Church (PPMC) Pikes Peak Equality Coalition and Urban Peak COS. It has been moved to the Metropolitan Community Church to accommodate a larger audience than The Dwelling Place can.

*Did you know that Colorado law protects LGBT persons from discrimination in employment, housing and at places of public accommodation?*

*What is meant by places of public accommodation?*

*If I feel I've been discriminated against, what can I do about it?*

*How much time do I have to seek redress?*



Steven Chavez

Hear answers to these and other questions from the audience.

The CCRD works to protect individuals from discrimination through enforcement of Colorado civil rights laws.

Mr. Chavez believes that education and outreach are vital to CCRD's mission, and he has partnered with numerous community organizations.

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## Transgender Support Group Becomes a Satellite Chapter of PFLAG

Boulder PFLAG and TYES (Trans-Youth Education and Support) announced in March that TYES has become a satellite chapter of PFLAG. A similar affiliation is being set up between the TYES group in the Pikes Peak Region and Colorado Springs PFLAG.

TYES is a group of 45 families living in urban, suburban and rural areas across Colorado. These families un-

conditionally support all families in Colorado who, like them, have transgender or gender-variant children.

TYES was started in Boulder by Karen Adams, the mother of a gender-variant child. The affiliation between TYES and PFLAG in Boulder is becoming a model for the formation of TYES groups across Colo-

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### MAY PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday  
May 20, 2014

7:00 p.m.

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

#### Different Location:

Metropolitan Community Church  
1102 South 21st Street

Everyone is welcome.

Coffee, cookies  
Social time begins at  
6:30 p.m.

## Panel of Pastors Set for June PFLAG Meeting

PFLAG vice president Jackie Thompson will bring together a panel of pastors at the June PFLAG meeting.

They will discuss the LGBT issues that arise in the work they do with their varied congregations. Many religious communities are gradually moving toward a more open and affirming approach to the LGBT community, but complex conversations arise, and many denominations are divided.

June 17th— at PFLAG's usual meeting location—The Dwelling Place



**Voices of TYES: Becoming an Ally for Gender Nonconforming 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.

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**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.

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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](mailto:info@cspflag.org)

Support Line: (719) 425-9567

P.O. Box 49131  
Colorado Springs, CO 80949

PFLAG Colorado Springs website:  
[www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org)

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

Newsletter Editor: Karen Flitton Stith  
E-mail: [karenfstith@gmail.com](mailto:karenfstith@gmail.com)

To receive your newsletter by e-mail, send a request to [info@cspflag.org](mailto:info@cspflag.org)

*By Alisha Foxwell, TYES Parent & Board Member, and Karen Adams, TYES Founder*

Many people want to help support gender nonconforming youth but aren't sure where to start. Why is being an ally important? How does one become an ally? What do I do?

Becoming an ally is important because, simply put, the kids need us! According to the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN), 89% of gender nonconforming youth are bullied at school, every year, and LGBT youth are four times more likely than their peers to attempt suicide. These are staggering statistics!

In addition, recent laws that have been enacted to protect transgender and gender nonconforming students in Colorado, California and elsewhere have caught the attention of organizations like the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) and the Pacific Justice Institute (PJI). As they have lost battles in the marriage fight, they have chosen to work towards challenging these protections. In a recent Colorado case, an innocent transgender student was targeted by PJI, resulting in vitriol and hateful messages being sent, from around the nation, to school personnel. The impact to the student, family, school and community was enormous. There really is no better time than the present to begin stepping up our ally-ship for transgender youth. As an ally, your actions will help shape our conversations and culture, making society a safer and more accepting place, not only for LGBT youth but for others perceived as "different".

The following three steps are key in becoming an ally for gender nonconforming youth. We hope this will help provide a starting point and make becoming an ally a bit easier.

**Accept another person's reality** - Accept what this person is telling you about their gender identity as truth. If this person identifies as fe-

male, she is female. Respect a person's wishes for what name they would like to be called, what pronouns they would like used, and what terminology they choose to describe themselves with. Understand there is no right or wrong way to transition. Be patient and flexible with those exploring or questioning their gender identity. Each person's situation is unique.

**Educate yourself** - Being an ally means being informed. Ask questions when appropriate but take advantage of the wealth of information available on gender identity. Consider these reputable resources:

· *Transgender Law Center* - [www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org) Here, you can keep up to date on the attempt by conservative groups to repeal the California School Success and Opportunity Act (AB1266). If they succeed in getting a repeal of the law on the ballot, the public conversation prior to the election will impact the feelings of safety for transgender students nationwide.

· *TransAdvocate* - <http://www.transadvocate.com>. This organization produces opinions on a wide variety of issues and has done an excellent job of reporting the facts and providing updates in the case of the Colorado student targeted by PJI. They have also well written opinion articles that expand on the issues at the heart of the repeal attempts, such as a trans woman's perspective on the restroom issues. (<http://www.transadvocate.com/transgender-women-in-womens-restrooms-a-purely-imagined-harm.htm>)

· Follow Trans Youth Education and Support (TYES) on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/TYES-group>

· *Gender Spectrum* - [www.genderspectrum.org](http://www.genderspectrum.org)

· *Trans Youth Family Allies* - <http://www.imatyfa.org/>

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## Voices of TYES

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**Speak up** - Speak to friends and relatives about what you've learned about gender differences. Challenge transphobic comments heard in public spaces. Consider the "T" in LGBT when discussing issues with others.

Add your voice on social media or in the comment sections of news items related to transgender student rights. New families of gender nonconforming kids too often read these comment sections and hear negativity from people who are misinformed.

Voices of PFLAG members can help them know they are supported. Support and thank businesses who provide gender-neutral public restrooms.

Transgender and gender nonconforming youth need allies in all corners of their lives. Being an ally for gender non-conforming youth ends up shaping our communities in ways that benefit all of us. Following the above tips will help you start on your way to becoming an ally. Don't delay! The gender nonconforming kids of our nation need you!

## PFLAG—TYES Affiliation

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rado in collaboration with the seven Colorado chapters of PFLAG. The national office of PFLAG has embraced the TYES relationship and is starting to assist PFLAG chapters across the country as they work with newly formed TYES groups, using the Colorado model.

Local PFLAG president Doug Kirkpatrick and secretary Karen Stith have been meeting with a local TYES parent to explore and establish ways the two groups will work together.

Contact TYES in Colorado Springs through PFLAG at (719) 425-9567 or [info@cspsflag.org](mailto:info@cspsflag.org). Contact TYES in Boulder at (720) 443-7708 or [tyes.group@gmail.com](mailto:tyes.group@gmail.com). The TYES website is [www.tyes-colorado.org](http://www.tyes-colorado.org)

## North Carolina's Gay-Marriage Ban Is Challenged by UCC Church

By Michael Paulson, *The New York Times* April 28, 2014 (excerpt)

In a novel legal attack on a state's same-sex marriage ban, a liberal Protestant denomination filed a lawsuit on April 28th arguing that North Carolina is unconstitutionally restricting religious freedom by barring clergy members from blessing gay and lesbian couples.

The lawsuit, filed in a Federal District Court by The United Church of Christ (UCC), is the first such case brought by a national religious denomination challenging a state's marriage laws. The denomination, which claims nearly one million members nationwide, has supported same-sex marriage since 2005.

"We didn't bring this lawsuit to make others conform to our beliefs, but to vindicate the right of all faiths to freely exercise their religious practices," said Donald C. Clark Jr., general counsel of the UCC.

The denomination argues that a North Carolina law criminalizing the religious solemnization of weddings without a state-issued marriage license violates the First Amendment. Mr. Clark said that North Carolina allows clergy members to bless same-sex couples married in other states, but otherwise bars them from performing "religious blessings and marriage rites" for same-sex couples, and that "if they perform a religious blessing ceremony of a same-sex couple in their church, they are subject to prosecution and civil judgments."

The UCC is joined in the case by a Lutheran priest, a rabbi, two Unitarian Universalist ministers, a Baptist pastor and several same-sex couples. They said the state's marriage law "represents an unlawful government intervention into the internal structure and practices of plaintiffs' religions."

The defendant in the case, North

Carolina's attorney general, Roy Cooper, has said he believes his state's ban on same-sex marriage should be lifted, but has also pledged to defend the state's laws "when legal arguments exist." On Monday, his spokeswoman, Noelle Talley, said her office had no comment on the UCC case.

The case is one of nearly 70 around the country challenging same-sex marriage bans, according to Evan Wolfson, founder and president of Freedom to Marry, an organization that supports same-sex marriage. Mr. Wolfson said that many religious leaders had supported same-sex marriage, but that the UCC litigation was unusual.

"In their zeal to pile on to denying the freedom to marry, North Carolina officials also put in place a measure that assaulted the religious freedom that they profess to support by penalizing and seeking to chill clergy that have different views," Mr. Wolfson said. "The extent to which North Carolina went to deny the freedom to marry wound up additionally discriminating on the basis of religion by restricting speech and the ability of clergy to do their jobs."

## Cooking for Urban Peak

PFLAG board member Jerry Albrent and his (gourmet cook) husband, Chris Garvin, hosted a meal at their home in April during "Building Futures Weekend", an innovative fundraiser for Urban Peak. Jerry and Chris raised \$1,800 in one afternoon and were featured in a story in the *Gazette*. On that weekend, over 200 people attended dinners which were hosted by supporters all over town.

Executive Director Shawna Kempainen and several Urban Peak youth went from home to home, talking about Urban Peak's programs and sharing the stories of the youth. Urban Peak provides homeless youth with a place to live and with help getting their lives back on track..



**BULLETIN BOARD**

**Short Takes—Provided by Bill and Carol Oberg**

**May 2-3—Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus—** Spring Concert “Two Portraits—Our Stories and Broadway Legends”. Broadmoor Community Church, 315 Lake Avenue May 2 - 7:30 pm May 3- 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm

**May 10— Harmony Chorale Concerts** 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.. The theme is “Emagine—Songs of Hope and Change” Messiah Community Church, 1750 Colorado Blvd., Denver. Concert repeated Sunday, May 4th at 3:00 p.m. at Foothills Unitarian Church, 1815 Yorktown Ave., Ft. Collins. Adults \$20, Student/senior \$15

**June 21-22- PrideFest Denver.** See [www.glbtcOLORADO.org](http://www.glbtcOLORADO.org). Parade Sunday 9:30 am

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

**Chavez (cont.)**

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Mr. Chavez received his undergraduate degree from Colorado State University and his law degree from the University of Colorado. He 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.

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

**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.

**Gay Rights Push Shifts Its Focus South and West.** *NY Times* In a drive to win more rights and protections, gay advocates are setting their sights on Southern and Western states, where the movement’s rapid progress has largely eluded gay men and lesbians.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/28/us/politics/gay-rights-push-shifts-its-focus-south-and-west.html?smid=nytnow-share&smprod=nytnow>

**How the President Got to “I Do” on Same-sex Marriage.** *NY Times* The real story of Obama’s tentative, anxious, heavily scripted and occasionally blundering “evolution.”

<http://nyti.ms/1gyX8zS>

**For Antigay Church, Losing Its Cause Before Its Founder** *NY Times* Members of the Westboro Baptist Church plan to keep spreading their antigay message after the death of Fred Phelps, but many of the church’s closest observers say it has lost the cultural battle. <http://nyti.ms/1nNIY7J>

**The Scientific Quest to Prove Bisexuality Exists** *NY Times* <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/23/magazine/the-scientific-quest-to-prove-bisexuality-exists.html?src=me&module=Ribbon&version=origin&region=Header&action=click&contentCollection=Most%20Emailed&pgtype=article>

**Ruling On Gay Juror May Cause Ripples In Same-Sex Marriage Cases** by Richard Gonzales—*NPR* There was a small development in a case before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals this month that could have a major impact on the legal battle over same-sex marriage. The case involves a dispute between two pharmaceutical companies, a gay juror and the level of legal scrutiny directed by the appellate court.

<http://www.npr.org/2014/03/12/289594988/ruling-on-gay-juror-may-cause-ripples-in-same-sex-marriage-cases?sc=17&f=1001>

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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 contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.