



# PFLAG Colorado Springs

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

September 2017

## September PFLAG Program Features Path2Empathy

The September PFLAG program will be presented by representatives from "Path2Empathy", a character education program



developed in 2015 by Jennica Mabe, Carrie Block and three other local counselors and teachers. They have come up with a new approach that they think really works to help students not hurt themselves or others.

The crux: Lift that childhood veil of self-centeredness to get an inkling of what it's like to be someone else, especially someone who is having a rougher go of it.

Mabe, a middle school counselor, was searching for an alternative to the anti-bullying programs brought into schools after the Columbine High School shooting that identify students as bullies and victims. "Kids get attached to a label" she said. When she did not find a curriculum that expressed what she had in mind, she decided to write a program herself, drawing on experiences in her own life.

"Respect is the starting point:  
Gratitude is the fuel for the journey."

- Jennica Mabe

Her goal is to prevent disturbing, dysfunctional behaviors, including bullying and suicide, using positive messages. Seeing the world through the eyes of others fosters personal growth because it takes the focus off one's self and contributes to a greater cause, organizers say.

"Studies show that empathy - to walk in another's shoes to experience how they live, feel and be - is a skill our students and society as a whole is lacking," she said.

The program was piloted in a local middle school in 2015 and has now expanded to elementary school students. Plans call for extending the program to high school age students by next year. Research on its effectiveness also is underway.

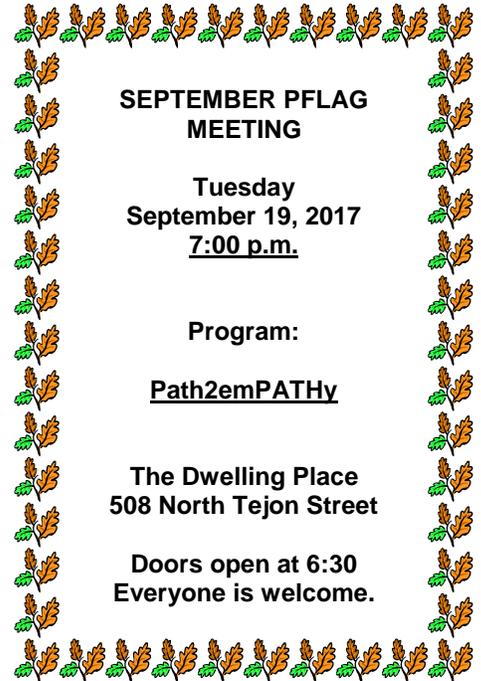
The approach fosters a sense of pride and self-worth. Educators want to empower students to move from a 'bystander' mentality to an 'upstander' mentality. The surrounding students, or witnesses, are often an important factor in the vast majority of bullying situations. Teachers can change that dynamic with this program.

The Path2Empathy team is receiving inquiries from school districts in Colorado and in other states. More information and powerful blog postings by participants can be found on the program's website:  
[www.path2empathy.com](http://www.path2empathy.com)

## It's Time to "Ally Up"! for Inside/Out - October 3rd

Call now to reserve your place at a PFLAG table for "Ally Up" the annual breakfast fundraiser for Inside/Out Youth Services.

Well-known LGBT advocate Judy Shepard of the Matthew Shepard Foundation will be the featured speaker at the 7:00 a.m. breakfast at the Doubletree Hotel, 1775 East Cheyenne Mountain Boulevard, on October 3. There will be a short program with speakers from Inside/Out. The breakfast is free, and donations to the youth group are requested.



### SEPTEMBER PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday  
September 19, 2017  
7:00 p.m.

Program:

Path2emPATHy

The Dwelling Place  
508 North Tejon Street

Doors open at 6:30  
Everyone is welcome.

### October 17th PFLAG Meeting

The October meeting will feature a panel of LGBT individuals who have experienced reparative therapy. This discredited practice, which may be performed on a religious or secular basis, has been condemned by the American Psychiatric Association. Once again this year, efforts to outlaw it in Colorado failed in the legislature.

Put your name on the list for a PFLAG table by calling Elaine Myers at 359-1462. If you can't attend, please consider sending a donation to Inside/Out, Post Office Box 606, Colorado Springs, CO 80901.

The victim of an anti-gay hate crime, Matthew Shepard was murdered in 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming. His mother subsequently embarked on a crusade to educate people and reduce the incidence of LGBT bullying and hate crimes. See the Matthew Shepard Foundation website at:  
[www.MatthewShepard.org](http://www.MatthewShepard.org)



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.

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To join the local 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)

### Mary Malia Departs Inside/Out; Mary Lou Makepeace Tapped as Interim Director

Margo Chandler, President of Inside/Out Youth Services, has announced that Executive Director Mary Malia is leaving at the end of August. Mary Lou Makepeace, a former two-term Colorado Springs Mayor who subsequently served as Executive Director of the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Colorado, will step in as Interim Director while the board searches for a replacement for Malia.

Chandler said: "Over the last year, Inside Out Youth Services has seen phenomenal growth - a nearly 300% increase in recurring donors, a doubling of our revenue stream, and a big, beautiful new long-term space for our services and programs. Mary Malia, our brilliant, exceptional Director, has led the way on these developments, and on increasing Inside Out's reach within the community."

Chandler continued "It is, therefore, with sadness and also excitement that we announce that Mary has elected to return to Maine, and her family there, at the end of Au-

gust. We thank Mary for her outstanding leadership since joining Inside Out and for working relentlessly to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) youth in the Colorado Springs area are safe, supported, and thriving. Mary is a tireless champion for our most vulnerable youth, and we will miss her."

In her announcement, Chandler concluded: "Mary Lou brings a depth of experience to the position that will support the mission of Inside Out while continuing outreach to the Colorado Springs community and assisting the Board in the search for a permanent Executive Director. The Board is thrilled to have Mary Lou joining the Inside Out family in mid-September and we look forward to the continued success of Inside Out."

*PFLAG congratulates Mary on her good work at Inside/Out. We will miss her. The following are excerpts from her interview with journalist Alissa Smith in the Independent on Aug 23.*

PFLAG meetings are safe space.

Who you meet, and what you hear ...  
must remain strictly confidential.

### Trans Youth Education and Support (TYES)

TYES is a PFLAG affiliate that offers education and support to families with gender variant children. TYES information is available at PFLAG meetings.

TYES families in the Pikes Peak region keep in touch by phone and through a private Facebook page. To contact the Colorado Springs TYES volunteers, call PFLAG at (719) 425-9567 or send an e-mail to [info@cspflag.org](mailto:info@cspflag.org).

The TYES program originated and is headquartered in Boulder, Colorado.

More information is available at the national TYES website [www.TYES-Colorado.org](http://www.TYES-Colorado.org)



### The "Gayest Generation"

A Gallup poll released in January noted that millennials are more than twice as likely as any other generation to identify as LGBTQ. Though they comprise only 32 percent of the adult population, millennials account for 58 percent of LGBTQ adults.

Mary Malia works with a lot of young people, both millennials and some of their successors from Generation Z. She believes that the biggest reason more millennials identify along the LGBTQ spectrum is that there are more options available to them now. We as a society have created language to describe those "in between" identities that never had a label before -- pansexual, nonbinary genderqueer, etc. -- and therefore widened the scope be-

*(Continued on page 3)*



"To walk in another's shoes to experience how they live, feel and be"

Jennica Mabe's Path2Empathy: 25 Years Later - April 12, 2016 From the Blog on Path2emPATHy Website

I was recently asked to talk with 5th grade students who were struggling to practice empathy, maintain healthy friendship, and show resilience. The P2E crew is committed to empathy (walking in another's shoes so to experience how they live, feel, and be) at the heart of all we do. So when I thought about being in my 5th grade shoes again, persistent memories of the past kept me awake at night. Sad memories. Eleven year-old me, ugh.



Being in the shoes of a 5th grader

Fifth grade: the worst year of my 19 years in elementary, middle, high school, 4 years of college and 2 years of getting my master's degree. Oh, there were tough times before and after 5th grade: acne, braces, studying, being benched, getting dumped, even some rebellion, but nothing compared to 5th grade in Mr. Howard's class. Vivid scenes that as a school counselor, a mother, and the P2E founder, I didn't want to replay or even admit happened. Rationalizing, I would say, "That was 25-years-ago, why would I share it?" However, one of the things that has bothered me in my research is that many, many people have reported being bullied yet very few admit to being the bully. How can we reverse these cycles if we don't own our behavior? How can we expect kids to change aggression and violence if we don't give them practical examples of those who have?

Courageous. It's the respect word (respect word= a personal quality I respect about myself and others can respect about me) I chose for myself this past January. At the time it seemed like a strong representation of me, but in light of my 5th grade story I wanted to hide.

Fact: Empathy is much harder to live out than to teach. This was an empathy opportunity for me: to bring up something painful for the benefit of another. I didn't have to tell them the details, just relay that I had personally walked in their shoes. I could show them, not only was empathy something I taught, but if I had an experience in my story that could help them I would share it. So with a tender amount of courage I decided that keeping my 5th grade shoes to myself to appear perfect would render my message of empathy ineffective.

There were no VIP's in attendance other than the gracious hearts and faces of 11-year-old boys and girls struggling to take care of one another. In my time with them, I was able to say:

"In 5th grade I was a mean girl."

"I didn't hurt my friends with my fists, I hurt them with my words."

"Because sad things were happening to me outside of school, I felt out of control in school."

"I was mean to my friends because I was hurting on the inside."

"The bully and the victim can be the same person, it just depends on the setting."

They smiled. They clapped, and together we talked about how to be a good friend, what to do if they made mistakes, and how to show resilience if others were being unkind. I probably got more out of the experience than the kids did, but that's the beauty of expressing empathy. Not only do you encourage, understand, and help others, empathy can shine light into dark places in your own life. If given the opportunity, would you let some light into a dark place for the benefit of someone else? As Martin Luther King Jr. said,

*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that."*

Telling your story to someone who needs to hear it is more tangible than giving them money, facts or flattery. But, I must warn you, this way of living can open you up to critique and judgment. However,

***I believe it's more important to appear human than perfect.***

**INSIDE OUT**  
YOUTH SERVICES

(Continued from page 2)

yond heterosexual or homosexual, man or woman.

"Language opens up doors. Language opens up minds and hearts, and language evolves," Malia says. She cites the Merriam-Webster dictionary advocating for they/them/their as acceptable for use in the singular, a move that made a lot of English teachers cringe, but ultimately allowed for those who don't fit within the gender binary to identify themselves appropriately.

Malia says, too, that young people have access to new vocabulary -- and the information to define that vocabulary -- in a way that she never did. She grew up with paper encyclopedias, as did her 35 year old son. But her 23 year old daughter had the internet.

"It's a totally different experience. And when you have more information, you have more choices."

"Choice is important in discovering identity, which is what young people do. Malia says the task of people ages 13 to 25 is to answer "Who am I?" which begins by answering "How am I different from my parents?"

"Every generation has to differentiate itself from its parents," she says. "Young people are looking around and what's coming up is that they don't need to buy into being heterosexual. They don't even need to buy into being homosexual -- lesbian or gay."

### **PFLAGPole is Now Available by E-mail**

Follow this link to see the latest edition of the PFLAGPole quarterly magazine <http://bit.ly/2x4OECZ>

It's been 45 years since Jeanne Manford marched by her gay son's side, creating an enduring legacy of love. Sign up at [www.PFLAG.org](http://www.PFLAG.org) to receive the next PFLAGPole by e-mail.

*Note: The website links in this newsletter are correct, but not clickable. We hope to resolve this with help from our tech support person by next month.*



**BULLETIN BOARD**

**September 10 — Boulder Pridefest** 10:30 am—6:30 pm. It's a full day including Big Gay 5K Run and Pride March. For information, go to: <http://www.outboulder.org/pride2017>

**October 3— Ally Up! Breakfast Fundraiser for Inside/Out Youth Services** 7:00 a.m., Doubletree Hotel, 1775 East Cheyenne Mountain Boulevard. Guest Speaker: Judy Shepard. of the Matthew Shepard Foundation. See p. 1.



Out and About Colorado is an inclusive outdoor activity group in the Pikes Peak Region, welcoming all outdoor enthusiasts -- gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgender. Out and About Colorado utilizes small group adventure experiences as a means for personal discovery, community discovery, and discovery of the colorado wilderness. We function as a unique social group for all outdoor ability levels so that everyone can have fun. See <http://www.outandaboutcolorado.com>

**Support PFLAG— Pick up a King Soopers/ City Market Gift Card at a PFLAG meeting.**



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. Now, that's an easy, effective fundraiser.

**Celebrate with Dara Hoffman-Fox**

*You and Your Gender Identity*, a book written and published by local counselor Dara Hoffman-Fox has been picked up and published by a New York publisher. Come to Dara's book signing at Barnes & Noble



**(WHERE)** on Saturday, September 16 starting at 1:00 p.m. to celebrate with them\*. Dara recently wrote on Facebook:

"I'm celebrating with an almond milk caramel macchiato the fact that the B&N next door to this Starbucks is where I worked 20 years ago, and next month I'm having a book signing there.

"I was closeted in every way possible back then. On my lunch breaks I used to sit in this Starbucks, where I'm sitting right now, and would hide copies of *Girlfriends* magazine behind issues of *Glamour*, so no one would know what I was reading. Let my story be proof to those of you who need it that you never know where life can take you if you listen to that voice inside! It will be difficult and scary at times, but 20 years later, you'll know it's worth it."

*\*Dara prefers to use the pronouns they/their/them.*

**Thank you**

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

**Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member**

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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.