



PFLAG Colorado Springs

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

September 2021

PFLAG Members Enjoy August BBQ Picnic

Thirty-one members of Colorado Springs PFLAG gathered on Sunday, August 29th, at the Community Room at Gold Hill Mesa for a Barbeque-Picnic organized by Wes and Cheryl Prichard. Danette Tritch hosted the event on behalf of the Gold Hill Mesa community.

On a sunny, cool afternoon the participants, some of whom had only previously met virtually on Zoom, were able to eat outside and enjoy getting acquainted.

PFLAG Zoom meetings over the past year have enabled individuals who live outside of Colorado Springs to join in the discussions, and we were particularly pleased to have with us Marci Harrison of the Quilt Bag group in Canon City, representing those in her area.



After so many months on Zoom, it was a real joy to be able to get together in person. During the pandemic, the PFLAG volunteers have not been able to do outreach to schools, distribute literature at events, provide speakers for community groups, usher at Out Loud concerts, or march in the Pride Parade.

Nonetheless, our support efforts remain strong. We mounted two large billboards on Colorado Avenue this summer, one promoting transgender awareness and one highlighting the importance of preventing suicide. Online and on the phone, we have provided encouragement and PFLAG literature to those who have contacted the chapter for help. Tell your friends about Colorado Springs PFLAG!



Josh & John's ice cream was on the menu at the picnic.

Out Loud Names New Artistic Director—Victoria Lipscomb



Victoria Lipscomb is the new Artistic Director of the Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus.

She is also a co-founder and co-director of Unity Pro-

ject, a Colorado Springs-based community choir that is equal parts singing and service. Unity Project's mission is to reimagine choral arts in order to inspire human acceptance and love by discovering and dissolving subconscious biases through music and action.

Victoria is also co-founder and instructor at PRISMM (People Rising In Service through Music and Multimedia) Arts Center, a social justice-based arts education initiative that fosters artistic expression through a curriculum centered in equity and integrity in the arts. In addition, she is the Director of Choral Studies at Fountain Valley School.

We're looking forward to meeting her at the next Out Loud concert.

September PFLAG Meeting Zoom Online

Tuesday, September 21
7:00 p.m.

Conversation and Support

To attend the meeting, please send an email message to:
virtualmeeting@cspflag.org

You will receive an email with information about how to join the upcoming meeting. If you don't get this email within 30 minutes, please send an email to:

information@cspflag.org

Please note: The link for the meeting changes every month, so don't use last month's link!

Everyone is welcome—in town, out of town, out of state.

September is Renewal Month

PFLAG's membership year runs from October 1 to September 30.

Join PFLAG or renew your membership online at our website: www.cspflag.org or by mailing us the membership form on page 3 of this newsletter.

When someone becomes a member of our chapter, they also become a member and supporter of National PFLAG because a small portion of the dues are sent on to the national organization.

PFLAG's national office provides a website, newsletters, conferences, great online learning opportunities with PFLAG Academy Online, and many publications. Most important, the National PFLAG office does significant, ongoing advocacy work on behalf of the LGBTQ+ community.

Be a member and join our PFLAG members at the Second Annual PFLAG Members Picnic next year!



From the Colorado Springs PFLAG Facebook Page



PFLAG National tagged a product in its shop on August 27.

It was a tough week for trans youth, <https://bit.ly/3t5hCOF> especially in Texas. As we head into the weekend, shout it with us: Trans kids deserve all the rights and privileges to live authentically as all other people. PERIOD. <https://bit.ly/3t4BCAy> <https://bit.ly/3jAQZgK>



This Utah mom built an LGBT youth center across from a Mormon church for teens to "Feel Loved" Read the story on People.com at: <https://bit.ly/3h8RSfd>

Colorado Springs PFLAG

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG. PFLAG provides support, education and advocacy for people who are LGBTQ+, their families, and allies.

To receive this newsletter regularly, sign up on the website: www.cspflag.org.

To contact Colorado Springs PFLAG, send email to: information@cspflag.org.

Colorado Springs PFLAG Support Line: (719) 425-9567

Facebook: PFLAG—Colorado Springs <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAGCS/>

PFLAG National Office website: www.pflag.org

Pray Away - A New Netflix Film

From National Public Radio Morning Edition, August 2, 2021

Pray Away, a new documentary on Netflix in which former ex-gay leaders denounce conversion therapy, premiered at New York's Tribeca Film Festival in June. (Watch the film trailer at <https://bit.ly/3yBXi88>)

When director Kristine Stolakis went to film school, she knew precisely what her first documentary would be about. It's a movement that ac-

ording to one estimate has affected the lives of nearly 700,000 in the United States with disastrous results.

"Conversion therapy" is a discredited practice that aims to convert a person's sexual orientation or gender identity to heterosexual or cisgender. It is often religious in nature, with groups claiming that sexual orientation and gender identity can be changed through prayer. Leaders of the sessions are often individuals who proclaim that they are "ex-gay", after having completed the conversion therapy process.

Major U.S. medical groups have condemned the practice. More than 20 states, including Colorado, have banned it from being done on minors.

For Stolakis, this subject was personal.

"My uncle, who was very dear to me, went through conversion therapy when he came out as trans as a child," Stolakis told NPR's Sarah McCammon on *Morning Edition*. "He never fully accepted himself. He was celibate his entire life. He also suffered from tremendous mental health challenges, from depression, anxiety, addiction, to obsessive-compulsive disorder, to suicidal ideations."

And while doing research, she realized that many of the negative effects that her uncle experienced also happened to others who went through the conversion therapy process.

Researchers at San Francisco State University found in 2018 that rates of attempted suicide among LGBTQ youth more than double when parents try to change their sexual orientation, and increase even more when therapists and religious leaders attempt to change young people's sexual orientation. <https://bit.ly/3t6seMI>

So for her Netflix documentary, *Pray Away*, Stolakis interviewed some of the biggest faces in the conversion therapy movement, which she says has been led primarily by LGBTQ+ Christians.

"I really expected to be furious at people who had led this movement," Stolakis said. "But the overwhelming feeling that I had was actually sadness. I think it was because of most of the people's good intentions. I don't think this is a movement of a few bad apples. It's a movement that's born out of a larger culture of homophobia and transphobia that still persists in the majority of Christian churches today."



Trans Empowerment Month

This is a reminder that throughout the month of October, *Stand with Trans* is hosting a variety of virtual presentations, panels and performances as well as some in-person events for trans youth, caregivers and anyone who works with transgender youth.

Last year this event hosted over 700 registrants from all over the US and throughout the world. The month of virtual workshops and presentations is free for trans and non-binary youth 24 and under. Others pay a registration fee. The link for more information and registration is: <https://bit.ly/37xXcTO>

Stand With Trans is a well-known national nonprofit group of parents supporting the transgender community. Its website is at : www.standwithtrans.org

TransParent Group

The TransParent group for parents of gender variant, non binary and transgender youth is meeting virtually on Zoom on the third Thursday of the month from 6:00—7:30 p.m. The confidential conversation among parents is led by volunteer Danette Tritch

For more information, and to receive the Zoom meeting link, email transparenting@insideoutys.org or call Inside/Out at (719) 328-1056.



BULLETIN BOARD

Sep. 8 — Back to School Open House, 4-6 p.m. at Inside/Out Youth Services, 223 N. Wahsatch Avenue. Have you heard the buzz about the Safe at Schools Coalition's 10th anniversary?

Did you know that the Coalition works with school districts throughout the region to make spaces safer for LGBTQ+ youth? Come and meet us and learn more! More details here: <https://bit.ly/3CAqQpR>

Sep 21—Colorado Springs PFLAG Annual Meeting

The annual meeting, including board elections and reports, will take place at the September chapter meeting.

Oct 6 — Ally Up! 7-8 p.m. This annual fundraising event for Inside Out Youth Services will be streamed on its website <https://insideoutys.org/allyup/>. The event includes testimonials from youth, a keynote address by a youth leader, and a special celebration of the Pikes Peak Safe at Schools Coalition's 10th anniversary.

Oct 22-24 — PFLAG Convention—"We Are the Change"

Plan to participate in three days of listening, learning and connecting, PFLAG-style. This is a virtual (online) conference. Cost: \$25 for PFLAG members and \$50 for non-members. For more information, and to register, go to: <https://bit.ly/2YIhleR>

PFLAG Meetings

You don't always know where other people are on their journeys. Therefore, PFLAG meetings, both in-person and virtual, must always be a safe space.

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

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.

When a Loved One Comes Out, As Much As You Can, Lead With Love

When a loved one comes out, as much as you can, lead with love.

For some, this will be the natural response. For others, long-held beliefs may get in the way of being able to respond positively and supportively.

As best as you can, however, remember this: no matter how easy or difficult learning about your child's sexual orientation is for you, it probably was extremely difficult for them to come out to you.

Read more in our PFLAG publication "Our Children: Questions and Answers for Families of LGBTQ Youth and Adults" at <https://bit.ly/38A1bjj>

Ford Rolls Out "Very Gay" Truck in Response to Homophobic Troll –*The Advocate*



When Ford Germany recently unveiled its new blue Ford Ranger Raptor, it got plenty of praise, but there was one piece of feedback the company said "stopped us in our tracks." A commenter on social media wasn't a fan of the blue color choice, saying, "Well, that's a cool car! — But that blue color is very Gay!! Hey Ford! Paint it in BlackNGold or camo!"

What happened next was a masterclass in shutting down homophobic trolls.

In a video released on Twitter by Ford Europe, the automaker revealed its new and improved "Very Gay Raptor" decked out in rainbows and gold glitter. In a statement, the company said it wanted to make its position as an LGBTQ+ ally that stands up to discriminatory speech "very clear." *Ed. Be sure to watch the video. Here's a link to it:* <https://bit.ly/3yEtO9E>

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022.

Name: _____

___ New member ___ Renewing member

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail _____

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

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

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Each year our chapter contributes \$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 additional donations are tax deductible. Or pay by credit card online at website: www.cspflag.org PFLAG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.