



# OPEN DOORS

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters

## President's Column

### Strike While the Iron is HOT!

The Palatine School District 211 media disaster affords us as members of PFLAG a fantastic opportunity to provide education and training to our local school districts. I strongly suspect that school districts want to avoid what happened in Dist. 211, so the field is ripe for harvest.

In November I was invited to speak to a gathering of Directors of Guidance for McHenry County high schools. When asked what they wanted to hear about, they responded in unison: TRANSGENDER INFORMATION! More and more students are identifying as transgender, gender non-conforming, or gender queer. In one high school alone, four students had come out the previous week. That meeting led to two additional presentations to one of the local high school districts. However, the crowning achievement will be a workshop presented on February 19 to which all middle and high school personnel in McHenry County as well as mental health providers and PFLAG/PTI members have been invited. As of today, over 150 people have registered. The Regional Office of Education and McHenry County College have joined PFLAG McHenry in sponsoring this event. We are responding to a need for education. Transgender is so new to so many people, and the schools are trying to get it right.

We are so fortunate to have resources readily available: *Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, 360 Youth Services, the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital Gender and Sex Development Program, our own staff at PFLAG National, and the members of our three PTIs (Parents of Transgender Individuals)*. Parents who have school age children are in a perfect position to approach their school administrators about having such programs available for their staffs. Bring the guidance counselors and social workers on board. Work with GSA advisers. Write letters to the editor in local newspapers. Post on Face Book. Tweet about it. Network extensively. We can do this!

PFLAG has a voice. Let's use it. The moment is now. Let's strike while the iron is hot!

Toni

PS: Happy New Year. Let's make it the best one ever for "Moving Equality Forward"!



PFLAG is a non-profit, tax-exempt, all volunteer, local community-based organization of parents, relatives and friends of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons. PFLAG is not affiliated with any ethnic, religious, economic or political group.

OPEN DOORS is a publication of the Northern Illinois PFLAG chapters. Articles that appear do not necessarily reflect the opinions of PFLAG, its Board of Directors or members. We reserve the right to edit any submissions. Priority is given to original work by the membership.

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**OPEN DOORS Council Report**

*January 2016*

Twenty-six people squeezed into a conference room at First United Church of Oak Park on January 23 for the first PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois meeting of 2016. We welcomed back PFLAG Kankakee to the table, a chapter that had been reduced to a single voice holding down the fort – Rev. Barbara Lohrbach. Now it is up and running again and is strongly focused on the parents of transgender, the area of greatest need and our fastest growing demographic.

In November our Equality Illinois liaison Patty Dillon married George Medairy, and as a council, we congratulate the new couple and wish them a long life of love together.

Representing Eqll at the council meeting was Mike Ziri who briefed us on HB 4474 introduced by Tom Morrison (R-Palatine), a bill that would require students to use the bathroom/locker room of the gender that matches their genitalia. This bill came about as a result of the controversy surrounding Palatine School District 211. As members of PFLAG we oppose this piece of legislation and ask that our members take action. (Please see the two Eqll documents elsewhere in this newsletter for more information.)

Tony Dornacher, longtime PFLAG member, treasurer, website manager, membership chair, a founder of the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois, and creative visionary, was recognized for his long years of service. Tony, who married in November, will be moving to Seattle in March with his husband, creating a whole new space in which to move equality forward.

Council treasurer Jim Levie and membership chair Don Donahue laid out some disturbing news. Memberships in PFLAG are significantly down from last year. If you haven't yet renewed your membership in PFLAG, please go to [www.pflagillinois.org](http://www.pflagillinois.org) and rectify that immediately! If you believe in the work of PFLAG, please support it by your involvement and by your dollars.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the chapters, discussing the issues and challenges being faced by each as well as a sharing of the activities and successes of each. There are now three active PTIs (Parents of Transgender Individuals) with the possibility of more forming.

A copy of the minutes is available upon request. E-mail Toni Weaver ([twweaver@earthlink.net](mailto:twweaver@earthlink.net)).



# what's happening

## in Our Chapters?

### HINSDALE CHAPTER

By Barb Medley

Happy New Year from all of us at Hinsdale PFLAG! Our December meeting was our popular holiday pot luck. We celebrate the upcoming holidays by enjoying a wonderful potluck, with unique and delicious food offerings. After enjoying our meal and each other's company, we filled holiday stockings for distribution at the Night Ministry's The Crib. The stockings were bursting with toiletries, candy and gum, playing cards, warm socks and hats, and gift cards from Target, Subway and Dunkin Donuts. It is always a warm, satisfying way to begin winter and the holiday season.

January's guests were Jamil Khoury and his husband, Malik. Jamil is the artistic director and Malik is the executive director of Silk Road Rising, a Chicago theater company dedicated to presenting plays written by individuals of Asian and Middle Eastern descent. Jamil's latest play is Mosque Alert, which tells the story of two families from Naperville, one Christian and one Muslim, who find their lives torn apart by a proposal to build a new mosque in the community. As part of their presentation, we viewed the film "The Imam and the Homosexual," which highlights a lively interchange between Imam Mustafa Khan, spiritual leader of a besieged Naperville mosque and Carl Baker, the gay son of the Imam's chief nemesis. It was a thought provoking and interesting presentation that generated a great discussion.

Our speaker for February is Salimah Turner, whose presentation "Working with African American Youth" is one she has used for Youth Outlook Training. The class focuses on difficulties talking about LGBT issues with African American families. My thanks to Eileen Matthies and Jackie Frett for their contributions to this article.



### OAK PARK CHAPTER

By Nancy Johnson

Our Fifth Sunday Potluck in November was great! Phil and Kate were our hosts. We had delicious lentil soup,

stew, pasta casserole, fresh fruit, pies, and brownies. Everything was so good, we decided we couldn't top it, so we're not having a Fifth Sunday Potluck in January! I think we'll be ready to try again in May, however.

The December 27 meeting was a good reminder why we need PFLAG. One new person came, and was able to talk to us and receive some needed support. Thanks to the few and faithful who were able to attend this meeting. January was also a good meeting. A new couple came and were interested in finding how to support their child who had recently come out.

We got an email from former members, George and Velna Kolodziej who moved last year to a retirement community where their needs for elder care can be met. They are living in Grinnell, Iowa where one of their sons teaches at Grinnell College. The photo is of George and Velna in Iowa. Velna is still active in educating about LGBT issues, and has met other retirees who have LGBT relatives. Velna has arranged for the film Trans to be shown at the community.



### PTI CHICAGO CHAPTER

By Arlene Collins

Another wonderful year in the LGBT community. So much 3 is happening, most of which is good. We've come a long

way. There are people fighting and advocating for the civil rights of our LGBT kids. When I started my advocacy career in the transgender arena, I was a novice hungry for education and as much information as I could wrap my head around. Having an affirmed trans son, who was starting his transition, was my drive to do right by him and all other LGBT people, but focus on transgender. There were books, organizations and other resources, which aided me in my quest for knowledge. I realized for me, that it was absolutely necessary to start my own Parents of Transgender Individuals (PTI). This was a sub chapter of PFLAG. I no longer had to just meet for coffee to help out a parent and let them know they were not alone. Starting PTI in Jan. 2009 was such a step forward, for me, my son Quinn and the families that have joined us through the years.

So here we are in our seventh year and going stronger than ever. Our meetings have been such a safe place for parents, families and friends who are "trying to figure it out". They need to learn all they can about trans issues so they can be there for their kids and walk with them on their journey supporting and loving them.

Our meetings are open to all and you are welcome to join us on the 2nd Thurs. of every month at 7pm at the Center on Halsted, Chicago

On January 14th PTI welcomed Lee Dewey of Man Cave which meets at the Center on Halsted. ManCave Chicago is a peer-led group for individuals Assigned/Designated female at Birth and identify as trans, i.e. as anything other than cisgender. Their focus is to provide a safe space for meeting, discussing, socializing, providing eldership and community building.

For information about their meeting times and dates, please check out <http://www.mancavechicago.org/> for more info!

Our next meeting will be Thurs. Feb 11th. We hope you join us.



**Deerfield CHAPTER**

*By Susan Ginsburg*

At our January meeting, we were honored to welcome Sarah Casper, Outreach Director of "Response", which is a part of Jewish Children and Family Services, located in Skokie, IL. For 40 years, Response has provided individual, family and group counseling to those who may be coping with a range of concerns, including LGBTQ

issues. Response has a Center for Sexual Health for teens and young adults and offers a number of outreach programs and workshops that can 'travel' to where YOU are! They have presented in schools, PTO's, youth groups, camps, churches and synagogues. Some of the workshops are directed toward parents only and some geared toward specific grades of children 4th to 6th grade and 6th to 12th grade. Response offers programs dealing with sexual orientation and gender identity along with mentoring for parents dealing with family members' coming out processes.

In addition to LGBTQ issues, Response offers guidance to help teens navigate and differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships and provides sex education in an environment where students are free to ask questions that will help them make educated decisions about safer sex. It offers tools and strategies to ease and demystify the confusing process of growing up in a sexual world.

Sarah had so much information as to the many levels of support Response provides. It's a very valuable tool we have now to help new PFLAG parents as they come with questions of support!

If you have any questions you can call Response at 847-676-0078.



**McHenry CHAPTER**

*By Toni Weaver*

December's gathering of PFLAG McHenry was a time for conversation, camaraderie, and celebrating the advances in equality in 2015, in particular the SCOTUS decision on June 26. We enjoyed watching the film clip prepared by PFLAG National showing the spread of marriage equality across the country leading up to the momentous announcement that marriage equality would be the law of the land. Another piece of entertainment was the You Tube video in which President Obama tells the story of PFLAG's founding. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xy24TplyK14>)

In January we welcomed Rev. Fran Holliday, pastor of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Crystal Lake, and her wife Eileen to our meeting and listened intently as they shared their story with us.

On February 19 there will be a workshop for school

personnel and mental health providers in McHenry County on supporting transgender students, and several of our PFLAG/PTI parents will be on a panel sharing their experiences raising and affirming their trans kids. Nothing touches the heart as much as personal stories, and who tells stories better than PFLAG parents?

We've had other outreaches to schools through presentations to the directors of guidance and two opportunities to meet with District 156 staff. PFLAG/PTI is active in McHenry County!



### Kankakee CHAPTER (BACK IN ACTION!!)

By Pamela Valentine

We're so proud to be a chapter once again! In November, several members and the minister of St. John UCC in Kankakee, held their first meeting in years, bringing together a small, but mighty group of parents, friends and allies. December, we held a cookie exchange, and discussed what direction that the PFLAG in Kankakee, Will and Iroquois counties wanted to take.

Inspired by the outcome of the Palatine District 211 School Board Meeting, and the school districts that set down policies with language specific to trans students since that meeting, our chapter plans to reach out to the districts in our three counties and to determine ways in which to improve the treatment of any trans students in attendance. We hope to encourage the districts to set policies that promote a safe and inclusive environment, and to do so before any trans students experience any discrimination.

We also elected two co-chair people; a treasurer, and a secretary to record the meetings, and will be reaching out to various sources for affordable child care during the meetings, as we have many members with little kids who love to tag along.

January 17th will bring Arlene Collins of PTI Chicago Chapter out to our neck of the woods, to offer us her very experienced advice into developing a successful PFLAG chapter. We hope to see our group continue to grow, as the community realizes we are a strong presence.

**WELCOME BACK, KANKAKEE!!!**

### Tinley Park CHAPTER

By Deborah Medina

PFLAG, Tinley Park is off to a good start. At our first meeting in October, we had a handful of participants, but our attendance is growing, with over a dozen parents and teens. The New Year is shaping up with exciting guest speakers.



### LGBTQ+ Students: Affirming Policies, Practices and Supporting Intersectionality in Schools

#### Keynote Address:

Jeremy Majeski, Principal, Komensky Elementary School, District 100  
*Implementing Policy to Support Transgender Students*

*Discover what LGBTQ+ students are experiencing and how you can support students of all ages at your school*

- > School Push Out & the Juvenile Justice System
- > Needs of Youth of Color
- > Supporting the College Search
- > Age-Appropriate Lessons for Elementary and Middle Schools

### REGISTER TODAY!

Friday, March 4, 2016 | 8:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

BMO Harris | 1200 East Warrenville Road | Naperville, Illinois 60563

Register [here](https://roe2016.eventbrite.com) or at <https://roe2016.eventbrite.com>

For more information, contact Carolyn Wahlskog  
[cwahlskog@360youthservices.org](mailto:cwahlskog@360youthservices.org) | (331) 215-7388 ext. 1168

#### Partners and Sponsors of the DuPage Community Network:

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Hope United Church of Christ | Illinois Safe Schools Alliance | Linden Oaks Behavioral Health | Lurie Children's Gender and Sex  
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Northern Illinois Council | Rosecrance | Wesley United Methodist | YWCA Metropolitan Chicago | Youth Outlook

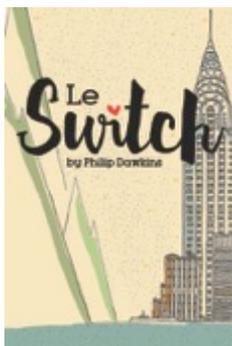
## DuPage CHAPTER

By Bernadette & Ron Whitfield

Our special guest at January's chapter meeting was Detective Lee Catavu (ca-tay'-view) of the Aurora Police Department. The title of his presentation is "Law Enforcement and the Relationship with the LGBT Community." Detective Lee is very busy in his community and is an invited speaker at police training academies in several states. Lee was quite informative and very entertaining. He came out during his police academy training and found great acceptance from his peers. Among his many memorable lines was the answer to the following question: Who started the Gay Rights movement? Answer: The New York City Police Department! He then recounted some of the key happenings of what we now call the Stonewall Riots—a series of spontaneous, violent demonstrations by members of the LGBT community against a police raid that took place in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn, located in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City. They are widely considered to constitute the single most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBT rights in the United States. For more information about Lee, see <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/m/APPreirect.php?AID=45347>



Chapter members Bart and Vickie Bosque informed us of the play "Le Switch," which began in January and continues through February at Theater Wit in Chicago. The playwright is Philip Dawkins, the boyfriend of their son Brian. In this romantic comedy, marriage equality finally reaches the U.S., and commitment-shy David finds himself unsure how to react to the nation's honeymoon phase. When his best friend's bachelor party takes him to Montreal, he is unexpectedly swept off his feet by a beautiful, young florist. In the months that follow, David and his non-traditional family (his sister, grieving activist roommate and best friend) must decide for themselves what it really means to be committed, married, and queer. For more information about "Le Switch," visit



<https://www.theaterwit.org/tickets/productions/256/performances#top>

On Sunday, January 24, some of us in the chapter attended the discussion of the movie, "Spotlight," which was sponsored by the West Suburban chapter of Call to Action. This movie, which details the uncovering and reporting of the Boston pedophile cases, is important. We watched a trailer of the movie and heard presentations from Barbara Blaine, an abuse survivor and founder of SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), and Ted Slowik, a journalist who, like the reporters in the movie, wrote articles about abuse allegations in the Joliet Diocese. To read more about Barbara Blaine and Ted Slowik, and events sponsored by WS-CTA see <http://ws-cta.org/>.

On Friday, January 29, we hosted a movie night at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wheaton at 6 p.m. We shared fellowship, a soup and salad supper, and watched the movie "Pride" (2014- R). The movie is about U.K. gay activists work to help miners during their lengthy strike of the National Union of Mineworkers in the summer of 1984. See <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3169706/>.

School Outreach — (A) Will be visiting Wheaton-Warrenville South High School on February 9th. They have a very active GSA that meets twice a month. Average participation is 30-40 students, with a max of about 70! (B) Will be visiting Glenbard West High School; date TBD. (C) Conversation with Dr. John Perdue, Superintendent of Glenbard District 89, about the transgender students at Glencrest Junior High. We provided some initial resource and contact information and met with 3 of their staff.

The DuPage County Regional Office of Education is sponsoring a professional development course entitled "LGBTQ+ Students: Affirming Policies, Practices and Supporting Intersectionality in Schools" on March 4, 2016, 8:30am - 3:00pm (Registration 8am, lunch 11:25am), at BMO Harris Bank Corporate Campus 1200 E Warrenville RdNaperville, IL 60563. Several of us will be attending.

LGBTQ+ youth, particularly transgender and gender expansive youth, are present in all schools in DuPage County, with youth coming out at younger ages every year. This day of learning and discussion led by members of the DuPage Community Network: Professionals Supporting LGBTQ+ youth will assist teachers, administrators and school support with navigating ways to provide safe and affirming services to LGBTQ+ students. The day will begin with a keynote speech from Principal Jeremy Majeski, of South Berwyn School District 6 100, who will discuss the inclusive policy supporting

transgender students that the Berwyn School District implemented in the fall of 2015 for their K-8 schools. Attendees will understand affirming policies and how to introduce similar policies into schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Additionally, the day will cover topics to help engage professionals in supporting some of the most vulnerable students including: LGBTQ+ youth and the Juvenile Justice System and the needs of LGBTQ+ youth of color. Finally, attendees will spend the afternoon in break out sessions focusing on the unique needs of the populations they serve including supporting LGBTQ+ youth in the college search process and learning how to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ identities in an age-appropriate way for elementary and middle school students. Professionals will have the opportunity to network and connect with resources in the community such as the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, PFLAG, Youth Outlook and 360 Youth Services. For information about registration visit

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lgbtq-students-affirming-policies-practices-and-supporting-intersectionality-in-schools-tickets-19844556603>



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See what PFLAG National is tweeting about: <http://twitter.com/#!/PFLAG>

Check out recent posts on PFLAG National's blog: <http://blog.pflag.org/>

Watch PFLAG national on their YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/pflagnational>

Support the PFLAG Council of Northern IL when you shop on Amazon: <http://www.smile.amazon.com>.

## LGBTQ BOOKS YOU NEED TO READ

Thank you for Jackie Frett for recommending these publications. These books are some new finds and cover broad range of LGBT topics.

**George** is the coming out story of a transgender child and is appropriate for middle school age children but it will also be helpful for their parents.

**Fairyland** took me back to the 1970's and 80's when LGBT issues were not even on my radar. Two books tackle being gay and Christian. **No House On the Couch** and **Trans Bodies, Trans Selves** give us a wealth of reader friendly information on transgender issues.

So see if you have room on your PFLAG book shelves for ...

**George** by Alex Gino ; " When people look at George ,they think they see a boy. But she knows she's a girl. George thinks she will have to keep this secret forever." Her middle school play is going to be Charlotte's Web. George really wants to play Charlotte but the teacher says no because she is a boy. Her best friend Kelly helps with a plan so everyone gets to know the real George.

**On The Couch With Dr. Angello- A Guide to Raising & Supporting Transgender Youth** by Dr. Michele Angello ; " When a single child comes out, their entire family will transition, along with the community."

**Fairyland- A Memoir of My Father** by Alysia Abbott ; " A vibrant memoir recounts growing up in the 1970's in San Francisco with Steve Abbott , a gay, single father during an era when that was rare."

**Walking the Bridgeless Canyon-Repairing the Breach Between the Church and the LGBT Community** By Kathy Baldock; " In 2001, Kathy Baldock, a straight conservative evangelical Christian, met Netto Montoya, a lesbian Native American, on the local hiking trails near her home in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Their friendship challenged Beldock's cultural and religious beliefs about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people."

**God and the Gay Christian** by Matthew Vines ; "The Landmark book exploring what the Bible actually says-and doesn't say-about same-sex relationships."

**No House To Call My Home** by Ryan Berg ; "Ryan Berg immerses readers in the gritty, dangerous, and shockingly underreported world of homeless LGBTQ teens in New York. As a caseworker in a group home for disowned LGBTQ teenagers, Berg witnessed the struggles, fears, and ambitions of these disconnected youth as they resisted the pull of the street tottering between destruction and survival."

**Trans Bodies, Trans Selves –A Resource for the Transgender Community.** Edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth; " There is no one way to be transgender. While trans people share many common experiences, there is immense diversity within trans communities. Trans Bodies, Trans Selves is a revolutionary resource-a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide for transgender people, with each chapter written by transgender or genderqueer authors."



# Thank you, Tony D.

After years of dedication, **Tony Dornacher** is stepping down from the PFLAG NI Council. He, and his spouse, Michael are moving to Seattle in March.

Tony was integral part of helping start the Council and its Treasurer for many years. He has been a constant Chicago presence for PFLAG and will be greatly missed.

Thank you, Tony for all that you have done for the LGBTQ community here in Chicago and beyond. Best of luck on the next chapter of your life!

There isn't enough paper to express our feelings:

Throughout our lives, we are given many types of gifts, yet some arrive without colorful wrapping paper or pretty ribbons. These are gifts of the heart that tell us we've done a great job as parents, son, brother, uncle and friend.

We have seen Anthony provide support and encouragement to his friends, co-workers, PFLAG and family so these people could also reach their highest potential of growth in their lives.

Anthony is the love of lives, and we were given the opportunity for the past 49 years to watch him grow into an amazing young man.

*Love mom & dad*

Many, many years ago a somewhat confused and searching John and Char Cepek came to their first PFLAG meeting in Hinsdale. They had recently learned that their son John was gay, and they needed support from a community that had "been there." Tony and his mom Jo were among the first PFLAG veterans they met, and it was surely because of their wonderful welcome and compassion that John and Char continued on their long and fulfilling PFLAG journey, with John eventually becoming national president. We thank Tony from the bottom of our hearts for all that he has done to move equality forward!

*John and Char Cepek*



## PTI McHenry YOUTH GROUP

McHenry PTI now offers  
YOUTH GROUP: PFLAG TAG  
that meets in the same location  
(different room).

Hope you can join us at  
Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
5603 W Bull Valley Rd  
McHenry, IL 60050

Questions?

Flynnmb12@gmail.com

## *Congrats!*

Patty Dillon of Equality Illinois  
is now Patty D. Medairy after tying the knot last November.

Let us all wish her and her spouse  
our heartfelt congratulations!





## Joint Statement on Stopping Discrimination Against Transgender Students

January 22, 2016

We stand with transgender and gender nonconforming students in Illinois and denounce the blatantly discriminatory bill recently introduced in the Illinois House by Rep. Tom Morrison (R-Palatine). HB-4474 would force transgender and gender nonconforming students to use separate bathrooms and locker rooms and that's plain wrong.

Not only does this bill promote fear mongering, but its sponsor appears to be out of touch with what is happening in education. More schools across Illinois, and across the nation, are adopting humane policies that respect and affirm all students, including students who are transgender and gender non-conforming. This practice has been endorsed and encouraged by noted researchers and leading authorities on education and student development, all of whom encourage the recognition and support of transgender students and how they wish to express their gender identity in a safe, responsible, and dignified manner.

HB-4474 would compel many schools who are dealing with this issue in a sensitive way, educating their schools and the public about what it means to be transgender, and fostering a sense of community and acceptance on their campuses to reverse those policies and create unnecessary division and segregation.

The Department of Education recently issued a set of very strong findings, in a complaint brought against suburban Chicago District 211, which found that denying a student who is transgender access to an appropriate restroom or changing area is in violation of federal law, specifically Title IX. Rep. Morrison's bill would force schools to operate in conflict with that finding, at the risk of losing critical federal funding. With these factors in mind, this does not result in sound and responsible public policy, especially considering the budget challenges facing the state.

The real harm is not just for transgender students but all students regardless of their gender identity. It promotes bullying, gender policing and body shaming – all practices that hurt all students and can be devastating for transgender students trying solely to get the good quality education they deserve.

This bill also feeds into the false narrative that sex and gender fit neatly into a binary model and it should not see the light of day. As organizations that work exclusively or significantly with LGBTQ communities, we encourage the State of Illinois to use its resources to advance supportive and inclusive work that moves all Illinois residents toward full equality.

### Sign-On Organizations

Affinity Community Services  
American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois  
Center on Halsted  
Chicago House and Social Service Agency  
Equality Illinois  
Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health  
La Casa Norte  
Pride Action Tank

AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Association of Latino/as Motivating Action (ALMA)  
Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus  
Chicago Youth Storage Initiative  
Howard Brown Health Center  
Illinois Safe Schools Alliance  
Lambda Legal



**Equality Illinois Denounces Discriminatory Legislation**  
*LGBT advocacy organization urges rejection of bill that  
stigmatizes transgender students*

CHICAGO (January 20, 2016) – Equality Illinois denounces legislation introduced today that would prohibit transgender youth from using school facilities with their peers and calls on the General Assembly to reject the bill.

The bill, HB 4474, would require transgender youth to use separate restrooms and locker rooms than all other students. The bill is sponsored by State Rep. Tom Morrison (R-Palatine).

"The only fair option is to ensure transgender students have access to the facilities that correspond to their gender identity. If a district chooses to add privacy areas or gender neutral bathrooms, all students should be able to decide for themselves to use them and no one should be singled out because of gender identity," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, the state's oldest and largest organization advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans.

"To do otherwise would send the message to transgender students that they are not respected and valued in their schools, the very spaces where they should be safe and affirmed. We know it is critical to the mental and physical health of a transgender person that they be able to live according to their gender identity," Cherkasov said.

"What's needed is community support of transgender students and increased education and outreach to the broader public about the lives of transgender Illinoisans. Instead of ostracizing transgender youth, institutions and citizens need to learn from them."

Instead of introducing bad policy that stigmatizes transgender and gender non-conforming students, Equality Illinois believes lawmakers should take concrete steps to prevent the violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people:

- 78% report harassment in grades K-12, while 35% report physical assault.
- 90% report discrimination, harassment, and mistreatment in the workplace.
- And a staggering 41% attempt suicide (versus less than two percent of the general population).

We call on fair-minded Illinoisans to urge their legislators to oppose this bill, which targets transgender youth. It is an attack on the well-being and dignity of transgender students and it demeans the values of fairness and respect in our schools.

This bill is one of a spate of measures introduced into state legislatures around the U.S. at the urging of right-wing organizations that are attempting to chisel away at advances in the law and broader acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans realized in recent years.

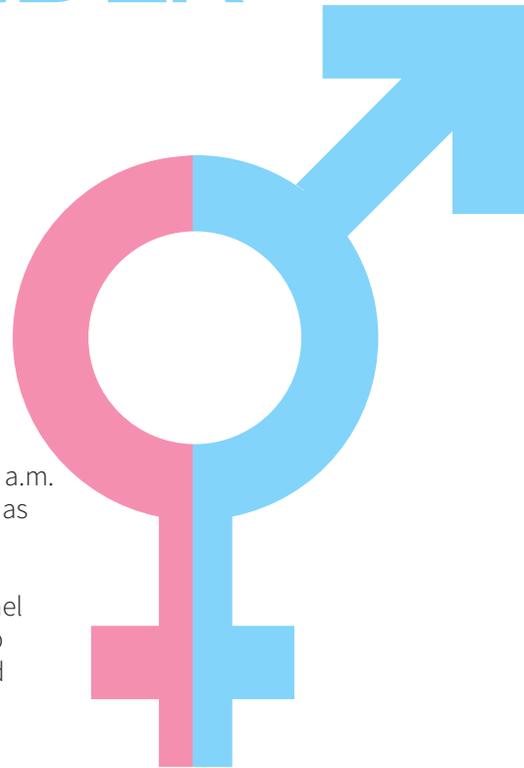
"We must draw a bright line in the sand that we will stand up against these hateful tactics that attempt to destroy the fairness and equality for LGBT Illinoisans that we are fighting for," Cherkasov said.

**SIGN THE PETITION: [tinyurl.com/HB4474-Petition](http://tinyurl.com/HB4474-Petition)**  
**CONTACT your legislator: [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov)**

# SUPPORTING OUR TRANSGENDER STUDENTS

**FEBRUARY 19, 2016**

**MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE  
8900 U.S. HIGHWAY 14  
CRYSTAL LAKE, IL 60012  
THE SCOT ROOM - B178**



- The workshop will be given twice on Feb. 19, 8–11:30 a.m. and 12:30–4 p.m. to allow as many school personnel as possible to attend.
- The 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. time slot will feature a panel of parents who have transgender children. Workshop participants who want to stay late/come early should bring a bag lunch.
- Three CEUs will be given.
- The Regional Office of Education can reimburse for substitute teacher time so that teachers can attend.

## PRESENTERS:

**Jennifer Leininger** (Lurie Children’s Hospital Gender Development Program): “Beyond the Gender Binary: Supporting Trans and Gender Nonconforming Students”

**Carolyn Wahlskog** (360 Youth Services of Naperville): “Current Trends in Supporting LGFBTQ+ Youth”

**Owen Daniel-McCarter** (Illinois Safer Schools Alliance): “Legal Protections for Trans Youth: State of the Law.”

Sponsored by:  
The Regional Office of Education  
McHenry County College  
PFLAG McHenry

Register by contacting [Laura Crain \(LLCrain@co.mchenry.il.us\)](mailto:LLCrain@co.mchenry.il.us) by February 15, 2016.

a monthly gathering for

# LGBTQ APIs & Families



Co-sponsored by Christ Church of Chicago (Tri-C) and Invisible to Invincible: Asian Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i)

We happily announce the first monthly gathering for Asian and Pacific Islanders (API) who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) and family members of API LGBTQ people. Family members include people from families of origin and chosen family. Multiracial and adoptive families welcome. We'd like to come together and create a space where people can share stories, information, resources, discuss, and provide support to one another.

Consider joining us if you or your family member:

- Is questioning about sexual orientation or gender identity, or identifies as LGBTQ
- Would like to be in community with other API LGBTQ people and their families
- Has questions about “coming out” to family, friends, or communities
- Would like to listen and share about experiences with people who may share racial, ethnic, or cultural identities with you

**WHAT: Monthly Gathering for API LGBTQ people and their families**

**WHEN: 4th Sunday each month, from 3:00-5:00p.m. (First Meeting Nov. 22nd)**

**WHERE: Christ Church of Chicago (Tri-C), 6047 N. Rockwell, Chicago, IL 60659**

**CTA: 155 Devon Bus, 84 Peterson Bus**

**For More Info: Contact i2i at [chicagoi2i@yahoo.com](mailto:chicagoi2i@yahoo.com) or Tri-C at [pastor@christchurchchicago.net](mailto:pastor@christchurchchicago.net)**

These gatherings will take place at Christ Church of Chicago, an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ that is mostly Japanese-American. However, the gathering itself will not be centered around any particular religious or ethnic group.

Gender neutral restrooms are available. The church is not wheelchair accessible. If there is any way that we can support you accessing this space, please let us know.

We aim to create an affirming space for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander LGBTQ people and their families (of origin and chosen), whether API or not. These gatherings are cosponsored by Christ Church of Chicago (Tri-C), and Invisible to Invincible: Asian Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i).

## Membership Form

By becoming a PFLAG member, you will help provide support, education and advocacy. All information we collect from you on this form will remain confidential, and we will only share it within PFLAG.

Membership runs from October 1 to September 30; no partial-year membership is available.

Please check:

New Membership  Renewal Membership  Donation



(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Address) \_\_\_\_\_

(City) (State) (ZIP) \_\_\_\_\_

(Preferred Phone \_\_\_ Home \_\_\_ Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

(E-mail Address) \_\_\_\_\_

(Notes or In Memory of \_\_\_ In Honor of) \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

PFLAG Superhero \$500+  Parents Flag Waver \$100  Household/Individual Membership \$45 \_\_\_\_\_

PFLAG Hero \$250  Supporting Membership \$60  Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### SELECT A CHAPTER:

Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Hinsdale  Aurora/Fox Valley  McHenry County  McHenry Parents of Transgendered Individuals  Deerfield  Chicago/Metro  Chicago Parents of Transgendered Individuals  Joliet  Kankakee  Palatine  Oak Park  DeKalb  DuPage  Downers Grove  Tinley Park

Check enclosed payable to PFLAG

Please charge my credit card (  Visa  MasterCard  Amex  Discover )

(Credit Card #) \_\_\_\_\_

(Exp Date DD/MM) \_\_\_\_\_ (CVV – V/MC/D 3 digits on the back – AX 4 digits on the front) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name on Card) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return form to your chapter representative or mail form and to:

**PFLAG Membership P.O. Box 734, Elmhurst, IL 60126**

**PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2 pm  
 New England Congregational Church  
 406 W Galena Blvd, Aurora 60506  
 pflagaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.com

**PFLAG Metro Chicago**

Meetings held 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 2 pm  
 Center on Halsted (Senior Room)  
 3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613  
 pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois

**PFLAG Deerfield**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday – 7:15 pm  
 Congregation BJBE  
 1201 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield 60015  
 pflagdeerfield@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG DeKalb County**

Meetings held LAST Tuesday – 7 pm  
 Federated Church of Sycamore  
 612 W State St  
 Sycamore, IL 60178  
 pflagdekalbcounty@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG DuPage**

Meetings held 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 2 pm  
 St Paul Lutheran Church  
 515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187  
 pflagdupage@yahoo.com  
 www.pflagdupage.org

**PFLAG Tinley Park - NEW**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2-4 pm  
 Zion Lutheran Church  
 17100 69<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
 Tinley Park, IL 60477

**PFLAG Downers Grove - NEW**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday – 7p.m.  
 First Congregational UCC  
 1047 Curtiss  
 Downers Grove, IL 60515

**PFLAG Hinsdale**

Meetings held 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – 2 pm  
 Unitarian Church Hinsdale  
 11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521  
 pflaghinsdale@pflagillinois

**PFLAG Joliet**

Contact Lea Anne Stoughton  
 lastoughton@gmail.com  
 815-793-5138

**PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois**

Contact Barbara Lohrbach  
 815-932-2845

**PFLAG McHenry**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 7 pm  
 Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
 5603 W Bull Valley Rd  
 McHenry 60050  
 pflagwoodstockmchenry@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG Oak Park**

Meetings held 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 3 pm  
 First United Church  
 848 Lake St, Oak Park 60304  
 pflagoakpark@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG Palatine**

Contact Deirdre O'Connell  
 herself68@yahoo.com

**Parents of Transgender (Chicago)**

Meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday – 7 pm  
 Center on Halsted  
 3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613  
 parentsoftransgender@pflagillinois.org

**Parents of Transgender (McHenry)**

Meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday – 7 p.m.  
 Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
 5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050  
 flynnmb12@gmail.com  
 marygenzler@hotmail.com

**Please join us for any chapter meeting.**

If you are not comfortable meeting in a large group,  
 arrangements can be made to meet one-on-one.

Contact any one of our chapters  
 for more information.