I am very excited about this fall’s PCNI Conference. Mark your calendar for November 10th. It promises to be a day filled with inspiring speakers and fun networking that you won’t want to miss.

Here are the highlights... We kick off with inspiration by nationally renowned speaker, Gearah Goldstein (https://gendercool.org/behind-the-scenes/gearah-goldstein/) founder of The Gender Cool Project (https://gendercool.org) and will provide our keynote:

“LGBTQIA+ Positivity - Moving beyond the ‘surviving to thriving’ narrative” - Uplifting stories abound in our community but we have been very slow to lead with this narrative. Too often, the stories we convey about people and families that embrace a LGBTQIA+ reality are filled with topics surrounding obstacles and struggles. Daily news about restrictions, government aggression, and social negativity make it difficult to focus on anything else. We are the people that must change this narrative and teach that living and supporting those within our community are not only positive, but also incredibly beautiful and important. Time to thrive!

Next, we will hear from Mike Ziri (https://www.equalityillinois.us/about-us/equality-illinois-staff/mike-ziri/) Director of Policy at Equality Illinois, who will guide us through:

“Advocacy & Policy: How to Create Change” - LGBTQ-affirming laws are key to building a better Illinois. Mike will talk about issues in focus now and provide insights on useful tools to advocate for policy change as well as how to have an effective meeting with your legislator.

Because our strength is in our story telling, Gearah is also providing a workshop on:

“Impactful Public Speaking” - Now more than ever LGBTQIA+ visibility is important. Our community must promote our own narrative. By improving the skills to communicate publicly, our community will continue to positively advocate for itself. Confidence, vocalization, persona, and presentation tools will all be discussed. Regardless of skill level this workshop will help you focus on positive, uplifting, and impactful public speaking.

What’s more important than creating positive, affirming learning environments for our children? Our panel discussion explores:

“Creating Inclusive Middle Schools” – A panel discussion featuring folks who successfully implemented LGBTQI+/Ally Organizations in their Middle Schools will explore the motivations and importance of their work, the process of establishing the organization providing insights into their challenges and successes and how we might engage in our communities to create more inclusive middle schools.

Last, but not lease, we have Jamie Curtis (https://www.pflag.org/bio/jamiecurtis) Director of Chapter Engagement from PFLAG National. Jamie will help better understand how to:

“Create Thriving Chapters” - PFLAG chapters that thrive have some common characteristics and this session is an opportunity to share some of those with you. Join us to learn more about how the most successful chapters reach new members and keep current members active and engaged.

As you can see we have a full day of exciting and engaging activities. Continental breakfast and lunch are provided. Stay tuned for information on registration in early September. Registration is an unbelievable value at just $5 for PFLAG members.

In Love and Solidarity,

John
New PFLAG Chapters!

We have had a great year in Northern Illinois so far with new chapters in Ottawa, Oak Lawn and Grayslake/Round Lake.

PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley is looking for folks who want to help strengthen the chapter and build on their proud legacy of support for the LGBTQ community and allies in Aurora / Fox Valley. If you are interested in helping make a difference please contact John Hickey at info@pflagillinois.org or Carmi Frankovich at regionaldiva1@yahoo.com. A special thanks to Carmi for leading the charge.

PFLAG Chicago Español - There is preliminary discussion about interest in starting a PFLAG Chapter to primarily support Spanish speaking members. If you have interest in helping form this chapter in Chicago, please contact John Hickey at info@pflagillinois.org.

PFLAG Romeoville - Kris and Peter Shulman are looking for interested parties to help start a new in Romeoville to help serve Will County. If you are interested in helping out please send an email to PFLAGRomeoville@pflagillinois.org.

It is really great to see PFLAG chapters becoming accessible to more families. We would love to see PFLAG more accessible to ALL families. If there is not a PFLAG chapter near you, and you are interested in forming a chapter in your community, please contact John Hickey at info@PFLAGilinois.com

Stay Informed and Take Action / Be Heard

Below are links to great advocacy organizations that can help you stay informed and take action to help support equality. If you pick just one link click the Eq IL Take Action Link and help make a difference!

- **PFLAG** http://www.pflag.org/
  - Where we stand: http://www.pflag.org/wherewestand
  - Sign up for Action Alerts: http://www.pflag.org/stay-informed
- **Equality Illinois** https://www.equalityillinois.us/
  - Sign up to stay informed about issues and special events https://act.myngp.com/Forms/1071801728988547840
  - Take Action: This page makes it simple to send your elected officials your feedback https://www.equalityillinois.us/category/get-involved/take-action/
  - Follow this link and be heard! Thank you Mike Ziri and Eq IL
- **HRC** http://www.hrc.org/
  - Local Issues-Illinois http://www.hrc.org/local-issues/illinois
  - Take Action Page https://takeaction.hrc.org/?_ga=2.21348027.1892320809.1530155937-1225694022.1529549016
- **ACLU** https://www.aclu.org/
  - LGBTQ+ Rights https://www.aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights (enter your email address to stay informed and join their newsletter)
DUPAGE CHAPTER
By Ron & Bernadette Whitfield

Six new people attended our August meeting. We began with a memorial of Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul, who inspired the Civil Rights movement and spoke out against all injustice. PFLAG DuPage member Julie Dennis’ presentation on “Faith and Sexuality: the Bible and LGBTQ Inclusion” was thoughtful, challenging, and well received. Julie is working to form a Chicago Chapter of The Reformation Project.

We recounted outreach events: the Youth Outlook Family Picnic, Fellowship on the Lawn at St. Paul Lutheran Church to thank them for allowing us to use their space every month, and a visit to the Social Security Administration Office in Aurora (“PFLAG 101 presentation”).

DEERFIELD CHAPTER
By Sue Ginsburg & Janet Svatos

We welcomed three new families in August!!! Since we had little occasion for small group discussion last month, we spent our entire meeting in two small groups, using that time to connect and support one another.

I talked about PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois (PCNI), since many of the people attending were relatively new to PFLAG. I explained the importance of its existence in hopes that some would be interested in attending. One of the things that PCNI plans is our once/year fundraiser on Mothers’ Day. However, this year, we’re trying another fundraiser! On October 11, if you go to any one of the California Pizza Kitchens, when you go to pay, tell them you are from PFLAG and a portion of your meal will go to PCNI, and then to the chapters!

For those of you who are not aware of Youth Services in Glenview, they are forming a new group for trans and expanding gender children, ages 4-8, and their siblings. The first meeting will be on September 9, from 1-3 pm for a 2-hour playgroup with concurrent support group for caregivers. The clinical staff will facilitate this.

If interested, contact Lizzy Appleby (Lizzy.Appleby@YSGN.org) 847-724-2620.

OAKLAWN CHAPTER
By Chris Raap (President)

GUEST SPEAKER CARI STEVENSON

The next meeting of PFLAG Oak Lawn is Sept. 16th, 2:00 pm at Pilgrim Faith UCC in the church lounge. The church is located at 9411 S. 51st Ave., Oak Lawn, IL. Dr. Cari Stevenson will be talking about the differences between gender identity and sexuality. She will also discuss what language is appropriate or offensive when talking about LGBT issues. Everyone is welcome to learn more about these subjects. Many of us, including me, know little about these issues and I welcome the opportunity to learn more.

MCHENRY CHAPTER
By Toni Weaver

August has been a quiet month out here in McHenry County. Parade season is over, and school involvement has not yet begun.

The August program featured our very own Tom Weaver who developed a humorous and extremely informative Power Point presentation on the LGBTQIA2S+ alphabet soup.

Mike Ziri from Equality Illinois will be our guest in September. Mike’s focus will be the Inclusive Curriculum Bill (SB 3249) that has already passed the IL Senate but not yet the House. For this presentation we have extended an invitation to area GSA advisers to attend and get brought up to date on this pending piece of legislation that will be so meaningful to their club students.

Can you believe that October marks twenty years since the murder of Matthew Shepard? We’ve made so much progress, and yet we stand to lose so much if the current administration has its way. We must stand together and arm ourselves for the fight ahead. The lives and happiness of our LGBTQ+ loved ones stands in the balance.
DOWNERS GROVE CHAPTER
By Gloria

In August we welcomed Lois Graham, advisor for Downers Grove North HS Prism, the school’s gay straight alliance. She gave an informative history of the group and discussed the activities they do to advocate for the LGBTQ community.

- **EqualityCon 2018** is being **postponed until the spring of 2019**. The event was planned for September 28-29 in Springfield. Stay tuned for details for the Spring Conference.

- **October 11th, National Coming Out Day- PFLAG Fundraiser** at local California Pizza Kitchen Locations throughout the area. Mention you came to support the PFLAG Fundraiser and a portion of the proceeds will go to support your local PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Chapters.

- The AIDS Foundation of Chicago hosts the **Chicago AIDS Walk** on **September 23rd**. While we do not have an official PFLAG entry, we want to encourage PFALG participation. Please, consider joining in with a local community partner or sign up your chapter as a sponsor group. We have some great community partners including: Team Open Door, Youth Outlook, Team Howard Brown Health, Center on Halsted, and Chicago House to name a few. Register here: [http://events.aidschicago.org/site/TR?fr_id=1480&pg=entry](http://events.aidschicago.org/site/TR?fr_id=1480&pg=entry)

- The **Fall PFLAG Conference** date is Saturday **November 10**. Mark your calendar to participate in our PFLAG Workshop Day.

- Sep 8 at the Batavia Public Library at Rte 31 and Wilson St. The doors open at 12:30 and the panel will begin at 1. Questions from the audience are welcome.

...Look for opportunities to join in a community outreach activity...
PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
New England Congregational Church
406 W Galena Blvd, Aurora 60506
pflagaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.com

PFLAG Metro Chicago
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
Center on Halsted (Senior Room)
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

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

PFLAG DuPage
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
St Paul Lutheran Church
515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187
pflagdupage@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Tinley Park
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2-4 pm
Zion Lutheran Church
17100 69th Ave.
Tinley Park, IL 60477
pflagtinleypark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Downers Grove
Meetings held 2nd Wednesday – 7 p.m.
First Congregational UCC
1047 Curtiss
Downers Grove, IL 60515
pflagdownersgrove@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Lawn (NEW)
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 p.m.
Pilgrim Faith UCC
9411 S 52nd Ave
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
pflagoaklawn@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake (NEW)
Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday – 7 p.m.
Grayslake Teen Center
151 Hawley Street
Grayslake, IL 60053
pflaggrayslake@pflagillinois.org
630/415-0622

PFLAG Hinsdale
Meetings held 1st Sunday – 2 pm
Unitarian Church Hinsdale
11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521
pflaghinsdale@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Romeoville
Contact Kris and Peter Shulman
pflagromeoville@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois
Contact Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
revlohrbach@gmail.com
pflagkankakee@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG McHenry
Meetings held 2nd Tuesday – 7 pm
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd
McHenry 60050
pflagmchenry@pflagillinois.org

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

Parents of Transgender (Chicago)
Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagptichicago@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (McHenry)
Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday – 7 pm.
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050
pflagptimchenry@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (North Shore)
Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday – 6 p.m.
Winnetka Presbyterian Church
1255 Willow Rd, Winnetka, IL
pflagptinorthshore@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Rockford (updated info)
Meetings are held the 1st Monday – 6:00 pm
East Branch Public Library
Friends Community Meeting Room
6685 East State St, Rockford, IL 61108
pflagrockford@pflagillinois.org