

our lives

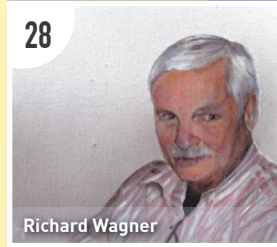


Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

**ANNIVERSARY ISSUE:** Celebrating 12 Years



Randi Hagen



Richard Wagner



Rep. Mark Pocan

# PRIDE GUIDE

**SPECIAL INSERT:** Details on OutReach's Magic Festival

# 2020 VISION

**Chris Walton**

Milwaukee County's Democratic Party Chair on his personal path and the upcoming political convention.

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## QTPOC PRIDE

Our annual list celebrating LGBTQ leaders of color.

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## HISTORY OF MADISON PRIDE

A look back on the many iterations of Madison's LGBTQ Pride festivities and protests over the decades.

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July/August 2019





“The land is our lifeline”



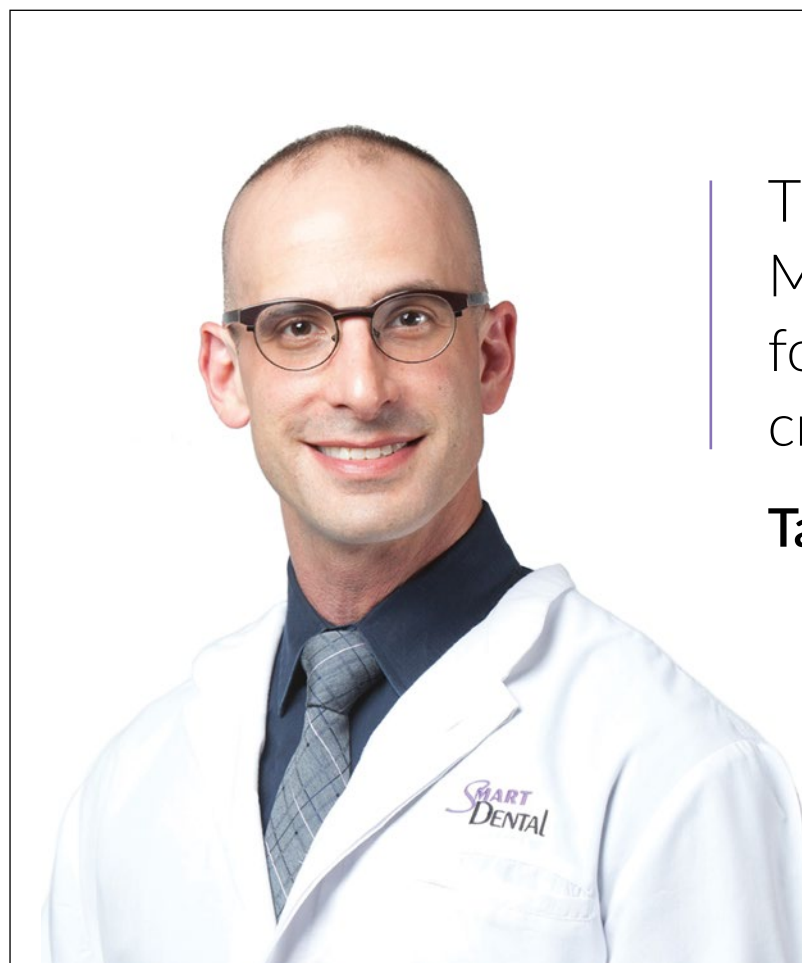
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“Publicly displaying the Rainbow Pride Flag sends a clear and unequivocal message that Wisconsin is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone can live without fear of persecution, judgment, or discrimination.”

- Governor Tony Evers

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our lives



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400+ Wisconsin  
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July / August 2019, Volume 13, Issue 1  
Life in the Middle Publishing, LLC  
Patrick Farabaugh, Publisher.  
PO Box 1202, Madison, WI 53703

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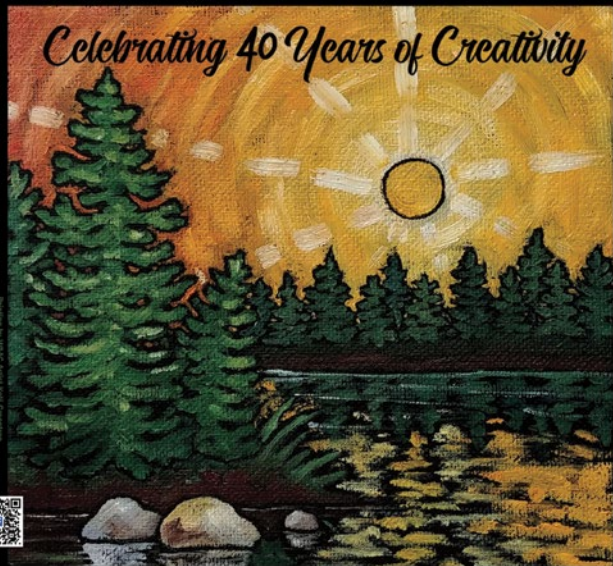
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**EDITOR'S NOTE** EMILY MILLS

**PROUD HEARTS  
REST EASY**

**AS WE HEAD INTO MADISON'S** (and other communities') Pride month, I can't help but both celebrate and feel a bit tired out by the way that our state likes to spread its LGBTQ celebrations throughout the summer. I love that we don't limit our festivities to one month but, especially as a reporter/editor, I admit that I'm also a bit exhausted. Can there be an official Pride Nap day?

We do know how to make the most of what precious few days of nice weather we get 'round these parts, that's for sure. I'm glad to see that OutReach is paying homage to the MAGIC Picnics of not-all-that-yore with their festival. I'm even more heartened by the number of small towns and cities getting into and/or continuing the spirit of the season with fests of their own: Viroqua, Mineral Point, Appleton, Kenosha, etc.

I'm also thrilled to present *Our Lives'* third-annual QTPOC Pride List. We couldn't do this without our QTPOC Pride Planning Committee, the growing support of which has helped ensure a platform that centers the voices, experiences, and leadership of queer and trans people of color in Madison. The list has become a sort of yearbook and networking feature, and I know I'm personally inspired by being introduced to these amazing people doing all kinds of great work, activism, and artistry in the community. There's so much more to be done, too.

There's yet more collaboration on display: The good people at Freedom, Inc. helped us put together the timeline of LGBTQ milestones since Stonewall, and we continue to learn more generally from the group's grassroots organization, education, and agitation for a more just society.

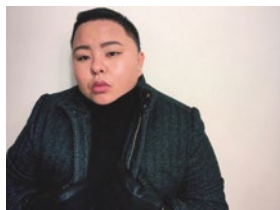
I'd also like to give thanks to Scott Seyforth, who wrote a comprehensive piece on the colorful and sometimes tumultuous history of Pride-related events in Madison. There's so much history, much of it still living, to understand and learn from right here in our own backyard.

I hope the summer is kind to you and that you are able to take some time to relax and enjoy. Take Pride in what you've already accomplished just by being true to who you are. And take that nap. We've earned it. ■

**CONTRIBUTORS**



**IAN DEGRAFF** is an editorial photographer based in Madison, Wisconsin specializing in lifestyle, travel, and agricultural story telling. He travels everywhere with a camera and light stand so he is always able to create his signature soulful moody lighting. After studying photojournalism at Western Kentucky University he moved back to Madison and lives with his macaw, beehive and partner. Follow his work at iansteven.com.



**KAYLEB HAWJ** is Queer, Trans, and Hmong. They were born and raised in Madison, where their parents settled after their second migration in the United States as refugees. Kaleb is the Queer Justice Coordinator at Freedom, Inc. They provide direct, culturally specific services to people who identify as LGBTQ+. They are a two-time PFund Foundation Scholar and were a part of organizing a queer contingency to attend the first-ever Hmong Women's Global Summit in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Kaleb uses digital art and photography to bring visibility to Queer issues that are often ignored. When Kaleb is not working, they enjoy bike riding, fishing, and being outdoors.



**LETTERS**

**Write to Us!**

Do you have an opinion about something we've published, or news/events happening in the community? We're happy to consider publishing your letter to the editor! Email your inquiry to [contact@ourlivesmadison.com](mailto:contact@ourlivesmadison.com). Views expressed in letter to the editor are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent those of *Our Lives* or its staff.

Dear *Our Lives*,

I am a member of the LGBTQ community and have been living in Madison for the past couple years. Since I moved here, I was very proud to call Madison my home because I felt our community was very developed, active, and mature. However, this past weekend (April) I found myself greatly disappointed in the LGBTQ and Madison communities.

I work for the local Barnes & Noble that hosted a Local Author's Day which included one author in particular who received backlash because her book uses the Bible to explain why she thinks Christians cannot support homosexuality. This letter is not to justify why she was present nor to express whether I or any other member of our community agree or disagree with her opinion. No, this letter is to address the responses I read on social media that showed members of the LGBTQ community are just as guilty of spreading hate and bigotry as the people who persecute us.

I can say, this author was very respectful, she engaged customers, they engaged her, and she did not proselytize her views. Instead, many members of the LGBTQ community descended on social media to express their own form of hate and bigotry.

The LGBTQ community has always used love, activism, and above all, education to make its stand and fight for who we are. Sadly, this weekend did not demonstrate these principles.

Our opponents may always believe what they believe, but they are people and citizens who do not deserve the disrespect we showed to this guest. If the LGBTQ community is truly pro-love, then I encourage members to educate themselves and not hide behind social media when they could engage their opponents in person. We didn't get this far by hating our enemies; we engaged them, learned what they stood for, and DID BETTER.

Eric Crow (Madison)

**ED. NOTE:** The book and author referenced here are Elreta Dodds and *The Right to Be Christian in a Gay Rights America: A Biblical and Constitutional Defense against the Persecution of Christians who do not Support Homosexuality* (Press Toward The Mark Publications, 2018).

**Q T P O C P R I D E**

**Join Us at Madison Pride on August 18!**

The QTPOC Pride Committee will be hosting a QTPOC tent at this year's **OutReach Magic Festival** in Warner Park. Come share space with us, connect, and be in community with others like you!



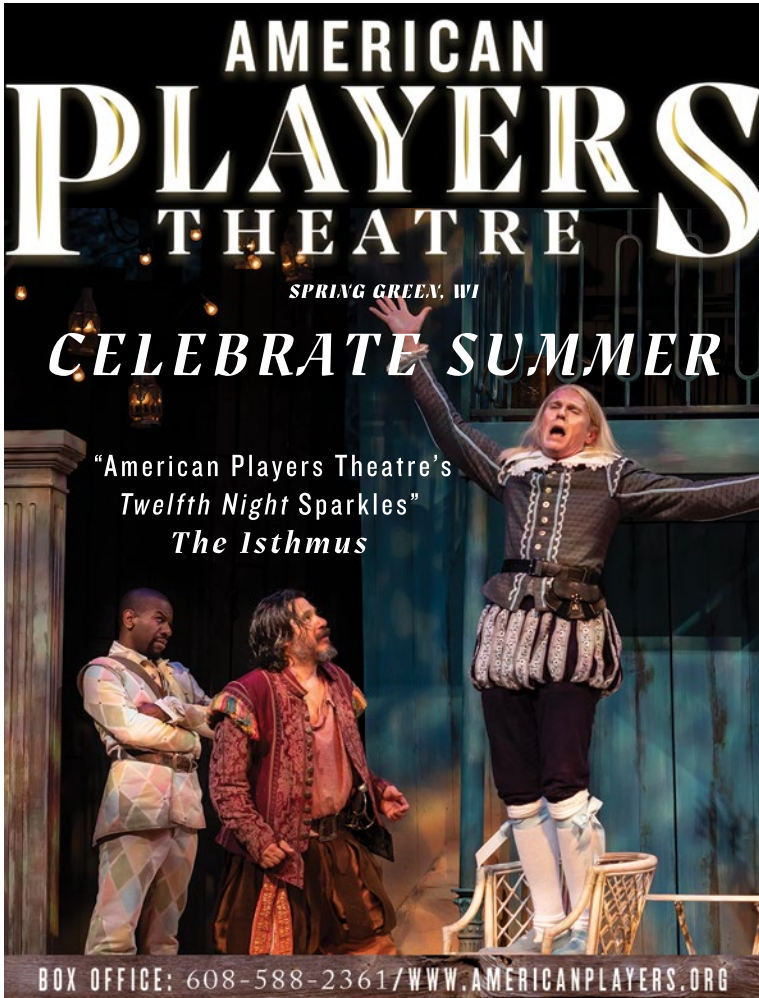
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## Bursting with Pride

More officials and businesses than ever have recognized LGBTQ Pride, with rainbow flags flying across the state and efforts underway to expand rights and support at both the public and private level.

LOCAL NEWS PRIDE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**ON A WARM, SUNNY MONDAY IN JUNE**, Gov. Tony Evers delivered the first-ever official LGBTQ Pride Month proclamation at the Wisconsin State Capitol. He was joined by members of the LGBT Caucus and prominent LGBTQ advocates who helped make sure the occasion was properly marked.

With the rainbow flag overhead, Evers read the statement to an enthusiastic crowd and local media.

"There's still much to be done to make sure LGBTQ people and families are treated equitably and with respect," he said. "The flag represents that Wisconsin is, unequivocally, a place that is and should be welcoming to all."

**Left to Right:** Sergio Dominguez, State Rep. Mark Spreitzer, Elle Halo, Gov. Tony Evers, State Senator Tim Carpenter, Ronnie Grace, State Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa attending the official LGBTQ Pride proclamation at the State Capitol.

State Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa opened the event with a heartfelt statement about her own journey to Pride. The first bisexual person of color elected to the state legislature, she noted that being her full authentic self in public wasn't something she initially ever thought would be possible for her.

"I am not afraid to be out and proud anymore," Zamarripa said.

Milwaukee-based LGBTQ health activist Elle Halo gave a moving speech that centered the need for continued action—political and personal—to stop the epidemic of violence faced particularly by transgender women of color.



## LGBT Rights Milestones in the U.S.

We take a look back at some of the milestones in LGBTQ history, activism, rights, and people that came after the uprising at Stonewall.

Thanks to/compiled by  
M Adams and Kayleb Hawj  
of Freedom, Inc.

1969

**The Stonewall Rebellion** | On June 28th a rebellion broke out in the Greenwich Village Neighborhood of New York City. The city refused to grant liquor licenses to bars that served the LGBTQ+ community. Police were granted warrants to enter these venues and frequently raided them to harass and arrest the patrons. It was especially unsafe for people who were gender non-conforming. Tired of the constant policing and violence, they fought back. **Marsha P. Johnson** and **Sylvia Rivera**, transgender women of color, were the vanguards of the rebellion,



Johnson

Rivera

DeLarverie

which lasted for two nights. A bouncer at the bar and a butch lesbian of color, **Stormé DeLarverie**, is also credited for the scuffle with police that sparked the riot. The incidents would go on to give rise to the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

1969

### Gay Liberation Front

A collection of gay rights groups band together in the wake of Stonewall to begin officially agitating for LGBT civil rights. It would go on to tackle issues of racism, militarism, and sexism, but disbanded in 1973 due to internal rivalries.

1970

**Christopher St. Liberation Day** | On June 28, the first anniversary of the Stonewall uprisings, gay rights activists organize a march from the bar in Greenwich Village to Central Park. It is the first such gay Pride march in the U.S.



1970

**The birth of STAR** | Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) was founded by Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera when they realized that though there were many LGBTQ+ groups at the time, there was no organization that supported gay and trans youth who lived on the streets. STAR was the first organization lead by transgender women of color in America and the first shelter for LGBTQ+ youth.



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NIGHTLIFE GAY BAR CONSENT HARASSMENT

## Prism Dance Club reckons with the shadow of Plan B

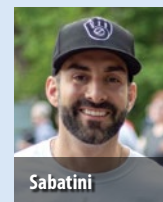
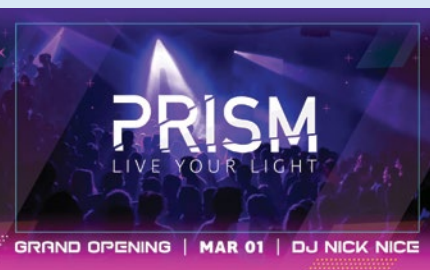
The new club works to prove that it can provide a better space for the queer community, as it deals with the past and a new incident of harassment.

(A version of this article originally appeared on ToneMadison.com and is reprinted with permission.)

**WALKING INTO THE NEW WILLY STREET CLUB** Prism during its opening celebration on March 1, one could've been forgiven for having déjà vu.

That first night, the new management of Rico Sabatini, Lili Luxe, and Apollo Marquez, introduced some changes that made it clear they wanted to leave behind the club's previous incarnation as Plan B. The drinks were cheaper, the paint was fresh, and anything with "Plan B" on it was gone.

But in other ways, it still felt like the old Plan B. The familiar Top 40 remixes spun by DJ Nick Nice radiated across the dance floor and throughout the club. Endlessly entertaining drag queens and burlesque dancers performed their equally hilarious and sexy numbers. The euphoric laughs and dancing from patrons echoed through the night.



Sabatini

had been preparing that story for a year before the dressing-room issue had even happened.

In January, Sabatini, who co-founded Plan B but sold his stake in 2014, announced that he would buy it back, and formed a partnership with Marquez, best known as owner of the now-closed north-side club Inferno. They renamed the club Prism, promised a fresh start, and brought on Luxe as events coordinator. Luxe has a long track record of booking music, burlesque, and fetish events at venues including the Inferno, Tavernakaya, North Street Cabaret, and Nomad World Pub, and is an outspoken advocate for inclusivity, accountability, and consent in the arts community. The team at Prism has promised and implemented sweeping changes, ranging from the club's added emphasis on dancing to a staff-wide training in June with the Rape Crisis Center on consent and club culture.

"I know what the steps are, at least in my mind, as a queer woman, of what → Continued on Page 12

"We've lost five women in June alone," she noted. "Every one of them was someone's rock, someone's star... We must uplift trans women. Read their stories. Put a face with the name."

She then led a call-and-response recitation of the names of every known trans woman of color killed so far in 2019—a list that now stands at at least 10.

"Pride isn't just about happiness and celebrating," said Sergio Dominguez, also speaking at the event. "It's about sadness, grief, and anger—and standing up to say enough is enough. We need allies from all walks of life to take a stand."

State Rep. Mark Spreitzer related his own personal history of coming out and being amazed by the progress that's been made in such a short time frame.

"If you had told me 14 years ago that I would be standing here, next to the governor, under the Pride flag flying at the Capitol, I would have never believed you," he said.

Spreitzer is the lead sponsor on a slate of bills called the Equality Agenda, now introduced in the Legislature with bi-partisan support for the first time. It includes six bills that will ban conversion therapy, prohibit discrimination on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression, eliminate the gay and trans "panic" defense, create a transgender equality task force, and update Wisconsin's statutes and constitution to recognize marriage equality.

"We've made incredible progress for LGBTQ people in just the five years I've been in the Assembly," said Spreitzer. "But for all the progress we've made, and for every lucky person like me, there's a kid out there who doesn't have that support. There are adults who grew up in a less accepting time or place, or who still lack access to the support they need."

### RAINBOWS EVERYWHERE

Flagpoles across Madison were extra fabulous for the month of June, with several area

companies joining the City of Madison and the Wisconsin State Capitol in raising the rainbow Pride flag to show support for LGBTQ rights.

Gov. Tony Evers on June 7 ordered the Pride flag flown on one of the capitol flagpoles. "Publicly displaying the Rainbow Pride Flag sends a clear and unequivocal message that Wisconsin is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone can live without fear of persecution, judgment, or discrimination," Evers said in an executive order.

Meanwhile, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and other city leaders celebrated Pride month by having the rainbow flag raised in front of both the City-County and Municipal Buildings, the latter of which was also lit in rainbow colors for the month. "We still have work to do, and that's why it is so important to send

a visible signal that Madison is a welcoming community, and the city is an inclusive employer," Rhodes-Conway said. The Wisconsin State Office Building in Madison and the Dept. of Children and Families also raised the Pride flag outside their respective offices in mid-June.

Many area businesses also joined in the Pride month celebrations with flag-raising and, in some cases, company-wide commemoration events. American Family Insurance raised the rainbow flag at their corporate headquarters in Madison and featured speeches from Rhodes-Conway as well as the head of the LGBT Business Resource Group and the VP of Human Relations. Other local businesses to hoist the Pride flag in June included UW Health, Meriter, Summit Credit Union, and CUNA Mutual Group. ■



## LGBTQ Organizations Update

News | Awards | Staff & Board Changes  
Calls to Action | Events

Reported by Emily Mills

Stay up-to-date with area LGBTQ+ and allied organizations and non-profits, be informed, and get involved.

### NEWS

Important notes about area LGBTQ groups.

### MADISON GAY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

New and exciting changes are coming down the pipeline for the 2019/2020 season. Two skill levels of play (L1 and L2) will offer returning players and new hockey recruits opportunities for learning and challenges alike. Visit [www.madisongayhockey.org/joining](http://www.madisongayhockey.org/joining) and fill out a player application form if you are new to the MGHA and interested in playing; the earlier the better!

In other good news, MGHA will be changing rink locations from Hartmeyer to Bob Suter's Capitol Ice Arena. Two sheets of ice will now

be available to the league! Members can look forward to a season of evolution, along with the traditional mission of fair and inclusive play, not to mention tons of fun to be had by all!

### OUTREACH LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER

Willma's Fund, Outreach's program offering small grants to LGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness, has received a \$15,000 grant from UW Health, UnityPoint Health-Meriter & Quartz to assist in its efforts.

### PERFECT HARMONY MEN'S CHORUS

The chorus had a successful spring concert, "Love & Stonewall," with attendance up 22% over spring of 2018, which was the first year the

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1970

**Free Angela Davis** | Angela Davis was a black educator and civil rights activist. At the 28 she became the third woman on the FBI's most wanted list. Davis was arrested on October 13 and charged with helping the attempted escape of a black prisoner. She served 18 months in prison until charges were dropped in 1972. Davis came out as a lesbian in 1997, in an interview with *Out* magazine.



1971

**Black Gay Marriage in Milwaukee** | On October 1, Donna Burkett and Manonia Evans, a Black lesbian couple, filed for a marriage license in Milwaukee. They were denied by the County Clerk. Burkett and Evans filed a lawsuit and argued that, "The law should protect us and help us the way it does any two straight people who love each other and want to live together." Though their lawsuit was dismissed in 1972, Burkett and Evans still got married in a ceremony officiated by Rev. Joseph Feldhausen.



1973

**No longer a mental illness**

On December 15, the board of the American Psychiatric Association votes to remove homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

1974

**First openly gay elected public official** | Kathy Kozachenko becomes the first openly gay American elected to public office when, in January, she wins a seat on the Ann Arbor, Michigan City Council.



1974

**The Combahee River Collective** | The black feminist lesbian organization forms in Boston (active until 1980). The Collective was instrumental in highlighting that the white feminist movement was not addressing their particular needs, and focused on creating an intersectional understanding of the struggle against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression. The group is perhaps most famous for "The Combahee River Collective Statement," released in 1977, that has since become a fundamental piece of understanding the radical legacy of both identity politics and intersectionality.

1977

**Harvey Milk elected** | On November 8, Harvey Milk wins a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and is responsible for introducing a gay rights ordinance protecting gays and lesbians from being fired from their jobs. Milk also leads a successful campaign against Proposition 6, an initiative forbidding homosexual teachers. A year later, on November 27, 1978, former city supervisor Dan White assassinates Milk.



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I would like to see the space do to be better," Luxe says. "[It needs] having the support of actually active management with Rico and Apollo, working with the staff and honestly supporting them through talking about safe spaces, harassment, and how we deal with things when an issue arises—how we have standards and want you to do XYZ when this happens.

"There's always going to be that risk when you open the door," Luxe adds, "but it's about how you deal with the situations when they arise and how you're proactive versus just being reactive."

ATTEMPTING TO MOVE FORWARD

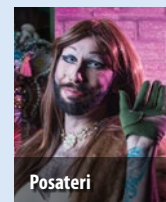
When Sabatini bought out Plan B's owners—one of whom, Albert Borokhim, had been accused of sexual misconduct—many patrons were enthused at the potential of a return to the club's better days.

Others, like Jake Posateri, who performs under the drag name Baby Bear, remained skeptical. In a January Facebook post, he expressed concern that though Sabatini had addressed issues like access to dressing rooms and adequate payment for performers, larger issues could still loom over the club

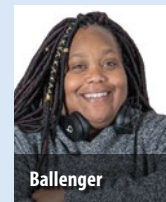
and prevent the space from being safe—especially if staff mishandled problems with sexual misconduct, or if security officers engaged in racist behavior. (One Plan B patron told *Our Lives* that security guards punched him, arbitrarily threw him out of the club, and used a racial slur.)

But on Saturday, March 30, Posateri performed at Prism. He attributes his change of heart to Sabatini's decision to bring Marquez and Luxe aboard.

"That is really what gave me faith," Posateri says. "Right now the model is you have [Sabatini], who was an owner of Plan B when it first opened, and was an owner when it was the heyday of Plan B. You have [Marquez] who I've known since 2012. I used to perform at the Inferno regularly. They curated this wonderful environment for a very diverse crowd. And there's [Luxe], who is this powerhouse businessperson that is an advocate for consent, for diversity, for equality."



Posateri



Ballenger

Luxe, who now helms Prism's programming, has changed things on many levels. The performances are now more interspersed throughout the evening and dancing is the priority. Luxe has also sought to diversify the programming, in terms of both the types of art represented and the people who are performing.

Mills added that this kind of representation, in addition to staff and security, can help people whose identities are being reflected feel more welcome in any given space.

One recent residency addition to Prism is Tempestt Ballenger, who spins under the name DJ Femme Noir every Thursday for the club's 18+ nights.

"I think representation is important. It's one thing to be willing to say, 'Oh yeah we're here for everybody' or, 'Oh, we represent everyone,' but it's another to actually be it," Ballenger says. "There are different performers of all genders, sexual orientations, and races."

OLD PROBLEMS DIE HARD

Many of the performers who spoke with *Tone Madison* for this piece say the club's atmosphere has changed for the better, and had no qualms about the progress made by Prism's new management team. One had an experience that indicates Prism still has work to do.

When Micah Dombroe (stage name DJ Kalycho) DJed at Prism on March 22, they experienced harassment that would've seemed right at home at Plan B. During their set, → Continued on Page 14

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concert was held on two dates. Speakers from the community read texts that accompanied the music that set the atmosphere leading up to the Stonewall Uprising and its aftermath.

A special concert guest, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, announced and read a proclamation that June 2, 2019, was "Perfect Harmony Men's Chorus Day" in Madison.

PHMC and its outreach ensemble Common Chords continued to have a busy June, singing at various events including a pop-up street performance at Fruit Fest; Madison Public Library pride events; PHMC donor dinner; Forward Madison Soccer; and Make Music Madison.

AWARDS / RECOGNITION / GRANTS

*Special thanks for those who do good.*

COMMUNITY SHARES OF WISCONSIN

Ginger Baier, OutReach's Transgender Health Advocate, received a 2019 Changemaker Award from Community Shares of Wisconsin. Baier was awarded with the Liesl Blockstein Community Leadership Award.

CREAM CITY FOUNDATION

Two grants, totalling \$30,000, have been awarded to support partnerships between Diverse & Resilient and Holton Street Clinic, and between Pathfinders and the Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

The awards were made through the foundation's LGBTQ+ Impact-Grant Program, a competitive grant program that funds collaborative partnerships between LGBTQ+-exclusive service organizations and allied or LGBTQ+-inclusive partner organizations. This year's awards focus on access to HIV/STI testing, prevention, and treatment services and on job readiness and goal development for youth who face housing insecurities.

MILWAUKEE PRIDE

This year's winners were recognized at PrideFest in Milwaukee in June, and include:

DRAG QUEEN STORY TIME IN ROCKFORD IS DEFIANT IN THE FACE OF PROTESTS



**Cass Downing**, aka Cass Marie, was the main attraction at the latest edition of the popular Drag Queen Story Time at a public library in Rockford, Illinois.

The Madison favorite volunteered her time to read at the event for children, only to face opposition from some of the local community. About a hundred protesters gathered outside the building to decry what many of them claimed amounts to "child abuse." The group was largely organized by a local anti-LGBTQ church, Rockford Faith Center.

"We stand for the biblical truth of who God created man and woman to be and that's what we're protecting is those rights for those children to make their own choices as an adult, just like they'll have to make a choice as to whether they'll accept Christ or not someday," Pastor Pamela Harding claimed.

Inside at the reading, however, the mood was festive and supportive. **Andy Schueler**, a 13-year-old budding drag performer, was especially grateful for the event and Cass Marie's work.

"It's really helpful to see someone who is similar to me and how she can connect with people who are just like me and make me feel more accepted and welcome and just lets me be me without getting judged, which is rare," Schueler said. "I can walk down the hall and I can list 30 comments I'll get about me and none of it bothers me... I developed a very thick skin and that's from Cass."

For her part, Cass Marie stresses how important events like DQST are for children just beginning to think about their identities and how the world will see them.

"I get really emotional because I think it's a really great thing that they get to have this at any age that I didn't have it and I needed it so much to know that I was okay being who I am," she said. "I think my life would have been a lot different at a younger age if I would have met somebody like myself."

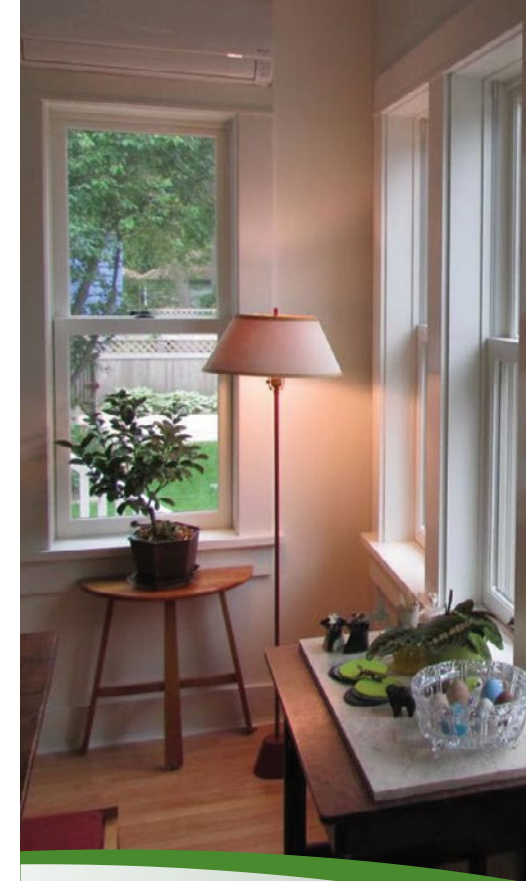
- **Individual: Elle Halo**, award-winning community health champion, activist, navigator, writer, and performer, whose relentless fight for local transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people invokes the revolutionary spirit of Stonewall itself;
- **Ally: Karen Dettmer of the City of Milwaukee**, who advocated for the Rainbow Crosswalks Initiative, overcame bureaucratic red tape and roadblocks, and ultimately implemented the city's first permanent, visible monument for LGBTQ people;
- **Organization: Bi+ Pride Milwaukee**, for restoring the

long-silent "B" to the local LGBTQ community through online awareness campaigns, outreach events, and social outings that support bisexual identity;

- **Valor: Nat Werth of Sheboygan**, whose high school silenced his valedictorian graduation speech for containing LGBTQ content;
- **Legacy: Mark Mariucci**, 25-year publisher of QUEST magazine and former owner of ZA's Videobar in Green Bay, for his lifetime commitment to the Wisconsin LGBTQ community.



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1979

**National March on Washington for Gay & Lesbian Rights** | On October 14 the first such LGBT rights-focused march on Washington drew between 75,000 and 125,000 gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people, and straight allies to demand equal civil rights and urge the passage of protective civil rights legislation.



1979

**Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence** | The Sisters first emerged when four gay men, bored with the sameness of San Francisco's Castro district, put on retired nuns' habits. Realizing their presence could bring joy and initiate social change, they formed an order of queer nuns dedicated to promoting safer sex practices, fighting against discrimination of queer folks and religious hypocrisy, and education around the dangers of drug use. To this day, the Sisters do all this while raising money for AIDS, LGBTQ+, and community-related causes. Chapters have since expanded across the globe.

1980

**Homosexual Rights Platform** | The Democratic Rules Committee states that it will not discriminate against homosexuals. At their National Convention, the Democrats become the first major party to endorse a homosexual rights platform.

1981

**AIDS makes its first headlines** | The *New York Times* prints the story of a rare pneumonia and skin cancer found in 41 gay men in New York and California. The CDC refers to it as GRID, Gay Related Immune Deficiency Disorder. When symptoms are found outside the gay community, Bruce Voeller successfully lobbies to change the name of the disease to AIDS.

1982

**Wisconsin passes sexual orientation protections** | After tireless lobbying by local LGBT activists, Wisconsin becomes the first state to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, education, credit, and all public accommodations. The bill is signed into law by Republican Governor Lee S. Dreyfus.



1983

**Wisconsin decriminalizes homosexual sex** | The Wisconsin Legislature legalizes private, non-commercial acts of sodomy between consenting adults. In order to obtain sufficient votes among legislators, the bill stated that Wisconsin did not approve of "any sexual conduct outside of the institution of marriage."

1987

**ACT UP** | Formed in the throes of the AIDS crisis, ACT UP still operates to this day. The international, grassroots political group seeks to end the AIDS pandemic, and often used direct action and in-your-face tactics to shed light on efforts by politicians and others to ignore or denigrate the LGBT community and others suffering from the disease.

SILENCE=DEATH

1987

**The Great March** | On October 11 organizers pulled off a second—and much larger—march on Washington to push for LGBT civil rights and governmental action on the AIDS epidemic. Its success, size, scope, and historical importance have led to it being called, "The Great March." It marked the first national coverage of ACT UP, as well as making headlines during mass civil disobedience actions at the Supreme Court Building.

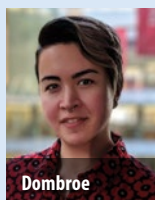


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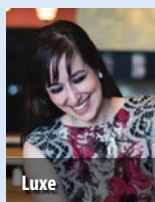
a presumably cisgender male began to repeatedly harass Dombroe to play music they didn't have, and used targeted slurs.

Throughout this, Dombroe says, none of Prism's security staff did anything to intervene. After their performance, Dombroe yelled at the harasser within earshot of at least one security officer. In response, the security officer briefly made his presence known, but took no further action against the harasser.

Later, while packing up, Dombroe was stared down by the harasser and then asked a security officer to accompany them to their car. Dombroe also noted that all of what happened that night was completely unexpected, due to the promises they felt had been made about how different Prism was supposed to be.



Dombroe



Luxe

A week later, Dombroe reported the incident to Prism through the club's Facebook page. Luxe responded with concern and implemented changes to the club's DJ booth, adding a door, a flashlight and a radio, and updated security policies so that staff checks in with artists more frequently.

"I think all of those are great ideas for protecting performers, but it's one thing to protect your performers when on any given night your performers are a few individuals in what could be a room of hundreds," Dombroe says. "My concern is not just for performers, not just for myself, not just for whoever is on stage or who is in the DJ booth. Certainly, those people deserve to be protected or treated well just like anybody else, but if you're not fundamentally changing the culture that allows harassment to occur to anyone—performer or patron—then you're not actually improving the venue itself."

Luxe says this is the first and only such incident she's heard of since Prism opened, and shared with *Tone Madison* the same list of measures about the DJ booth that she shared with Dombroe. Luxe also says that she took the initiative to contact 30 other queer, femme, and trans customers and, aside from a few issues with people having their pictures taken without consent, received glowing reviews. If incidents do happen again, she hopes that people will give feedback so that she, Sabatini, and Marquez can continue to make changes.

Luxe also said that the staff had an all-staff training recently where she led a lengthy discussion on harassment policies, understanding privilege and microaggressions, and she went through some role-play scenarios of how to recognize and deal with situations. She is still planning a training session with the Rape Crisis Center in Madison for all staff and anyone else who is interested.

#### THE ROOT OF THE ISSUE

Mills says that to create a safer space, Prism needs to not just get rid of the problem patrons from the Plan B days, but also empower patrons to look after each other and hold others accountable. She says Marquez succeeded in doing that during the Inferno years.

Sabatini also says he doesn't want to discount Dombroe's experience, but insists that it was just one incident in what he sees as an otherwise successful turnaround. He argues that people who were previously turned off by their experiences at Plan B have started coming back in the Prism era. He adds that Prism has taken steps to improve security and educate staff, and to have owners be an active presence in the club's day-to-day operations. But he acknowledges that there's still work to be done.

"I know that it's going to take time to regain trust," Sabatini says. —Henry Solo & Hunter Reed

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**PERFECT HARMONY MEN'S CHORUS** | The group held its major donor appreciation dinner on June 8, featuring amazing Italian cuisine, thanks to Dino Maniaci and Jason Hoke. Guests received a preview of what to expect at their new establishment, D'Vino, in late summer/early fall. PHMC would also like to thank special guests Congressman Mark Pocan and his husband Phil Frank for attending. Thanks also to Jason Crawford, PHMC Development Chair, for organizing the event.

**SHEPHERD EXPRESS** | For the fifth year, the paper's LGBTQ Progress Awards honors people and organizations that have worked and taken risks to improve conditions for LGBTQ people in Wisconsin. This year's annual Progress Awards dinner and ceremony will be held on Thursday, August 8, at Renaissance Place, 1451 N. Prospect Ave. in Milwaukee.

Winners Are:

- **Activism:** Bill Meunier, PrideFest Founder
- **Philanthropy:** Cream City Foundation
- **Arts and Culture:** MRS. FUN
- **Health and HIV Awareness:** Christopher Fons, ACT UP Activist
- **Business:** This Is It!
- **Equality (Organization):** The Holiday Invitational Tournament
- **Youth Activism:** Pedro Perez Valdez
- **Equality (Individuals):** Brenda Coley & Sandra Jones

#### STAFF / BOARD CHANGES

*Who's moving on or moving into org leadership.*

**DIVERSE & RESILIENT** | Elle Halo has been elected to the board of directors. She is a long-time member of the SHEBA program (Sisters Helping Each Other Battle Adversity) and is currently a member of Public Allies Milwaukee. Elle has been actively involved with the Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission, the Community Advisory Board of the WI Department of Health Services (DHS), the ACLU, UMO

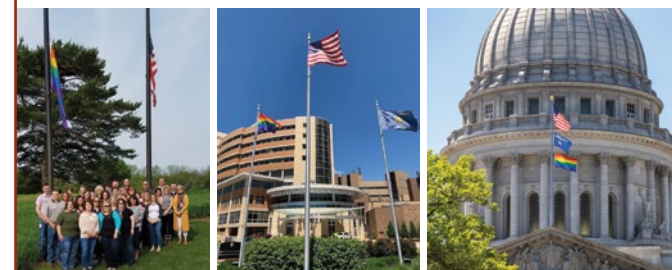
#### STATE REP. JOCASTA ZAMARRIPA TO RUN FOR MILWAUKEE ALDER



**State Representative JoCasta Zamarripa** announced in March that she will run for Milwaukee's 8th Aldermanic District seat in 2020 instead of seeking reelection to the state legislature. Zamarripa became the first bisexual Latinx woman to serve in the Legislature when she won the 8th District seat in 2010.

She decided to run for the new seat when longtime alderman Bob Donovan announced that he would not run again. Since then, Zamarripa has garnered endorsements from at least six sitting alders, as well as **Sen. Tammy Baldwin**, **Rep. Gwen Moore**, a host of state senators and representatives, as well as community leaders.

Born and raised in the near south side neighborhood that she now represents at the state level, Zamarripa intends to bring the same focus on immigrant rights, public school support, LGBTQ rights, and fighting for more affordable and quality health care to a more local level.



#### STATE, CITY, AND COMPANIES SHOW THEIR COLORS FOR PRIDE MONTH

Flag poles across Madison were extra fabulous for the month of June, with several area companies joining the City of Madison and—for the first time ever, the Wisconsin State Capitol—in raising the rainbow Pride flag to show support for LGBTQ rights.

**Gov. Tony Evers** on June 7 ordered the Pride flag flown on one of the capitol flagpoles, the first time ever in state history. "Publicly displaying the Rainbow Pride Flag sends a clear and unequivocal message that Wisconsin is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone can live without fear of persecution, judgment, or discrimination," Evers said in an executive order.

Meanwhile, **Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway** and other city leaders celebrated Pride month by having the rainbow flag raised out front of both the City-County and Municipal Buildings, the latter of which was also lit in rainbow colors for the month. "We still have work to do, and that's why it is so important to send a visible signal that Madison is a welcoming community, and the city is an inclusive employer," Rhodes-Conway said. The Wisconsin State Office Building in Madison and the Dept. of Children and Families also raised the Pride flag outside their respective offices in mid-June.

Many area businesses also joined in the Pride month celebrations with flag-raising and, in some cases, company-wide commemoration events. **American Family Insurance** raised the rainbow flag at their corporate headquarters in Madison and featured speeches from Rhodes-Conway as well as the head of the LGBT Business Resource Group and the VP of Human Relations. Other local businesses to hoist the Pride flag in June included **UW Health**, **Meriter**, **Summit Credit Union**, and **CUNA Mutual Group**.

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## Save the Date

Mark your calendar for other upcoming events in Madison area

Madison Area Coffee Connection

July 10 - 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.  
MPD's Midtown Police District  
Free to attend. All welcome. Details on website

2019 Business Equality Summit

September 4 - 1:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.  
American Family Insurance  
Tickets available online at Chamber website.

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1989

**Women with a Vision in New Orleans** | Women with a Vision Inc. was founded in 1989 as a nonprofit community organization in response to the spread of AIDs and HIV in communities of color. For the past 25 years they have been tireless advocates for women's health in marginalized communities.

1990

**Paris Is Burning** | The film "Paris is Burning" is released on September 13. It focuses on a community of drag queens and trans women (of color) in New York City and depicts the vibrant ball culture of the time.



1991

**Audre Lorde named State Poet of New York** | Audre Lorde, a queer novelist, poet, and writer who is active in social justice movements and cofounder of the kitchen table women of color press is named State Poet of New York.



1996

**Supreme Court supports anti-discrimination** | In the case of *Romer v. Evans*, the United States Supreme Court decides that Colorado's second amendment, denying gays and lesbians protections against discrimination, is unconstitutional, calling them "special rights."

1997

**Critical Resistance** | Critical Resistance is formed by activists who challenged the idea that imprisonment and policies are the answers to social, political, and economic problems. They go on to organize a conference to challenge the prison industrial complex, which brought in activists, academics, former and current prisoners, labor leaders, feminists, and the LGBTQ+ community.

1999

**Rep. Tammy Baldwin** | After serving in various state and local elected offices, Tammy Baldwin makes



history by becoming the first lesbian elected to Congress by any state in the U.S.

2000

**Civil Unions in Vermont**

On April 26 Vermont becomes the first state in the U.S. to legalize civil unions and registered partnerships between same-sex couples.

2002

**Queers for Economic Justice**

Queers for Economic Justice is founded in New York City, with a focus on challenging systems that caused poverty and economic injustice in our communities. QEJ's work focused around poor queer and trans folks who had been ignored by mainstream gay rights efforts.



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### MADISON MALLARDS CUTS TIES WITH CHICK-FIL-A OVER COMPANY'S ANTI-LGBTQ GIVING

Madison's summer collegiate baseball team has officially severed ties with the Chick-fil-A restaurant chain, citing the company's record of donating to anti-LGBTQ organizations.

In a Facebook post on May 21, the Madison Mallards made the announcement, writing, "For nineteen years, the Mallards have prided ourselves on building an experience focused on fun and inclusion while working hard to stay away from the sometimes negative energy that can surround day-to-day life around us. In that spirit, today we are announcing that we are ending our relationship with Chick-fil-A."

The post went on to explain that, "What was intended as a simple promotion has evolved to associate us with something that we don't stand for: the support of anti-LGBTQ organizations. Simply put, our corporate values do not align. We made a mistake not realizing the negative impact of our decision and the people this would offend and for that, we sincerely apologize."

The Mallards had been promoting an event at a local Chick-fil-A location when members of OPEN, Madison's LGBTQ professional engagement network, reached out to express concern. OPEN has a planned outing to a Mallards game on July 11 and was considering cancelling it in light of the apparent co-promotion between the team and the restaurant. A meeting with Mallards representatives followed, and OPEN's leadership cheered the resulting decision.

"OPEN is very proud of the Mallards' decision to stand up for equality and lean into their values, and we are honored to consider the Madison Mallards a valued partner," the group wrote in a press release.

Chick-fil-A has come under fire in recent years for charitable giving by its foundation to various organizations that openly discriminate against LGBTQ people and/or campaign against LGBTQ rights. After airports in several cities opted to remove the chain from their facilities, Chick-fil-A Foundation leader Rodney Bullard doubled down and told Business Insider that millions of dollars in donations to groups like the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Paul Anderson Youth Home were part of a "higher calling." Bullard also claimed that campaigns for LGBTQ rights were "political and cultural war."

The Mallards went on to reiterate their support for the LGBTQ community, noting, "We firmly believe in equality for all people regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or otherwise and we authentically look forward to seeing all of you at the ballpark this summer."



**METHODOLOGY** | *Our Lives* reaches out to area LGBTQ+ organizations to seek information for inclusion in this section. We also gather information from newsletters and social media put out by the various organizations. If your LGBTQ+ organization would like to be included in these updates, please reach out to us directly at [contact@ourlivesmadison.com](mailto:contact@ourlivesmadison.com).

(United Migrant Opportunity Services), HRC, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, and the Black AIDS Institute. Elle fights for equity for all trans/GNC people and for LGBTQ inclusivity, visibility, and sexual health education. Elle recently received a Black Trans Advocacy Conference Rising Star Award.

D&R continues to grow and welcomes April Rammer as the Healthy Youth Program Coordinator, Jamal Perry and Stacy Clark as Intersectionality Among Men Program Coordinators, Osha Towers as the Youth Program Manager, and Jasmine Lahori as the Youth Program Intern.

**OUTREACH LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER** BOARD RECRUITMENT: Outreach is looking for passionate, energetic, hardworking people to

grow the organization. LGBTQ people of color, people who are disabled, women, people who are transgender and/or gender non-conforming, people of varying faiths and backgrounds are especially welcomed and encouraged to apply. Outreach is focusing on anti-racism and racial justice issues, so we welcome folks who have experience, passion, and drive in that work. Anyone who is interested should reach out to Steve Starkey at [steves@lgbtoutreach.org](mailto:steves@lgbtoutreach.org).

**PERFECT HARMONY MEN'S CHORUS** | At its June 8 annual meeting, PHMC re-elected board members Marge Sutinen, Burt Tower, and Mark Oldenburg, and elected new board member Chris Delamarter. Continuing members are Michael Keller, Charlie Squires, and Matt Lenburg.



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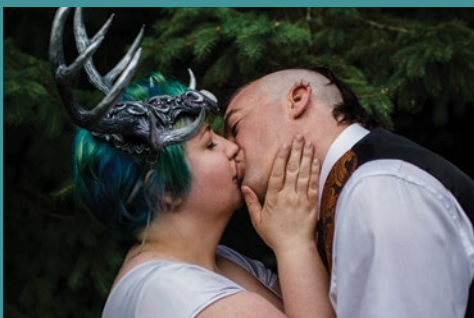
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2003

### Sodomy laws struck down nationally

On June 26 in *Lawrence v. Texas* the U.S. Supreme Court rules that sodomy laws in the U.S. are unconstitutional.

2003

**National Black Justice Coalition** | The National Black Justice Coalition is formed to empower people of color, the LGBTQ+ community, and people living with HIV/STI. Their mission is to end homophobia and racism by strengthening the relationship between racism and LGBTQ equality. They also provide leadership skills in national civil rights group.

2003

**NCTE** | National Center for Trans Equality is founded. Their mission is to change policies that harm the trans community and instead to uplift the trans community.

2004

**Gay Marriage in Massachusetts** | Massachusetts becomes the first state to legalize gay marriage. The court finds the prohibition of gay marriage unconstitutional because it denies dignity and equality of all individuals. In the following six years, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Iowa, and D.C. will follow suit.

2006

**Shades of Yellow (SOY)** | SOY becomes the first only LGBTQ Hmong organization in the world during that time.

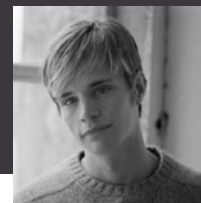
2006

**TGI JUSTICE** | TGI Justice project is founded, lead by black transgender, gender variant, and intersex people in and out of prisons, etc., creating a family to struggle for survival and freedom.



2009

**Expansion of Federal Hate Crimes Law** | The Matthew Shepard Act is passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama on October 28. The measure expands the 1969 U.S. Federal Hate Crime Law to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. Matthew Shepard was tortured and murdered near Laramie, Wyoming on October 7, 1998 because of his sexual orientation.



2010

**Don't Ask, Don't Tell repealed** | On December 18 the U.S. Senate votes 65-31 to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. Military.

2010

**Brown Boi Project** | The Brown Boi Project is launched with a mission to end sexism, homophobia, and transphobia through a healthy masculinity framework.



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### MILWAUKEE COMMON COUNCIL ENDORSES EQUALITY ACT, WHILE SHOREWOOD BANS CONVERSION THERAPY

The Milwaukee Common Council voted Tuesday to officially endorse and urge the U.S. Senate to pass the Equality Act, a bill that would amend the Civil Rights Act to include federal protections for LGBTQ people.

Over 200 major businesses nationwide have also voiced their support for passage of the bill, and similar LGBTQ protections enjoy broad 70% support from Americans polled in a recent Public Religion Research Institute study.

In May, the House of Representatives passed the Equality Act, but it faces an uphill battle in the Republican-controlled Senate.

Meanwhile, the Village of Shorewood, just north of Milwaukee, has passed a ban on so-called conversion therapy aimed at LGBTQ people. The practice has long been discredited by all major medical and psychological organizations as being harmful and not based on any sound evidence or practice.

Shorewood joins an ever-growing list of towns, cities, and states that have banned the practice, including Milwaukee, Madison, Eau Claire, and Cudahy.

New committee chairs include Bryan Schenker, Membership; and Lucca Hermes, Marketing.

**PFLAG MADISON** | At the annual meeting of PFLAG-Madison in May, no changes were made to the Board or officers: Jeanne Williams (President), Lora Schmid-Dolan (Secretary/Treasurer), and board members Sandy Feria, Ken Jones, Nancy Jones, Joanne Lee, Jackie Wealti, and Paul Wertsch.

**WISCONSIN LGBT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE** | Jack Feria has been hired as the Chamber's newest

employee and will be serving as Membership & Events Coordinator, a new part-time role that brings the Chamber to three staff members.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Plan ahead to join in.

**FAIR WISCONSIN** | Celebrating Dick Wagner and *We've Been Here All Along: Wisconsin's Early Gay History*, a groundbreaking volume on gay history in Wisconsin. The event honors historian and activist Dick Wagner, and supports the work of Fair Wisconsin to advocate for LGBTQ rights in the state: Thursday, July 11 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the home of Paula Bonner and Ann Schaffer, 2812 Oxford Road, Madison. There is a suggested contribution of \$50 to support the Fair Wisconsin Education Fund; a \$75 Contribution includes a copy of the book (\$29 value). RSVP at fairwisconsin.com.

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, September 8: Garden Party for Equality, Milwaukee.

**LGBT CENTER OF SE WISCONSIN** | The center will have a table at Kenosha Pride on July 17

### NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION TO CELEBRATE 35 YEARS OF LGBTQ-FOCUSED PHILANTHROPIC GIVING WITH GALA EVENT

On August 16 the New Harvest Foundation (NHF) will be celebrating its 35th anniversary, an exciting milestone for a fledgling organization that started as a grand idea among visionary folks around **Dick Wagner's** kitchen table.

Today, the mission statement of NHF speaks to the funding and empowering of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex communities by providing funding for projects which nurture our communities' strengths, pride, diversity, and positive character for all to see. At the Gala event at the Edgewater Hotel, NHF will recognize and honor those in Wisconsin leadership roles and others whose dedicated work has supported the LGBTQ community.

Founded in 1984 by a core group of inspired, passionate individuals, NHF has since provided more than 300 grants to myriad non-profit organizations. Through fundraising and very generous legacy gifts, NHF has been able to support LGBTQ projects focused toward community development, health care, public education, social services, and the arts. In 35 years, greater than \$400,000 has been channeled from NHF donors into grants.

The Gala will highlight past grant recipients and the positive results of those projects. From Briarpatch's **Teens Like Us** program, to the **Rodney Scheel House food pantry**, to the **Madison Queer History project** now archived at Steenbock Library, NHF has been instrumental in supporting the community. The 272 youth from 21 schools' GSAFE programs that attended an NHF-supported matinee of *Fun Home* last November at Forward Theater can attest to the impact of these grants. With a renewed focus on outreach to underserved areas of our state and to the most at-risk groups, NHF looks forward to expanding its reach and influence.

New Harvest Foundation has an all-volunteer board made up of individuals that bring a variety of talents and insights that foster its mission. This anniversary celebration will recognize the 164 committed individuals that have led and nurtured the foundation to make a meaningful and valued impact within the LGBTQ community. The Gala will dazzle as old friends reminisce and our LGBTQ community and allies come together to celebrate how far we've come and the exciting things we have yet to do!

For more information on the 35th Gala, visit [newharvestfoundation.org](http://newharvestfoundation.org).

in Veterans Memorial Park, 625 52nd Street in Kenosha. They will also have a booth at the Walworth Pride Fair in Walworth, Wisconsin on August 17 from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Veterans' Park.

The center's annual summer picnic will be held on Saturday, August 10 at Saunders Park in Mount Pleasant. Celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin, October 19 at the Racine Masonic Mansion. Tickets available soon.

**OPEN** | Join fellow LGBTQ professionals, entrepreneurs, and up-and-comers for an evening

at the Duck Pond with the Madison Mallards, July 11. The organization will also host a cruise on Lake Monona on a Party Pontoon on July 24. A free, low-key networking event will be held at Tangent on August 8 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., and on August 28 the group heads to Forward Pitch for an event from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. Details, registration, and more at [openmadison.org](http://openmadison.org).

**PERFECT HARMONY MEN'S CHORUS** | Open rehearsals for potential new members for the fall semester will be held on September 8 and 15, 2019, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. For more information email [membership@perfectharmonychorus.org](mailto:membership@perfectharmonychorus.org).

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2010

### National Queer Southeast Asian Conference

In 2010, the first National Queer Southeast Asian Conference brings together more than 100 people and five organizations to the Twin Cities, Minnesota.

2010

### A Census of Our Own: The State of Queer Southeast Asian America

A queer census of Southeast Asian American is created that details the issues they experience.

2011

**CeCe McDonald** | CeCe McDonald catches the world's attention after surviving a transphobic attack by a white supremacist, and later serving 19 months in prison



for second-degree manslaughter for defending herself.

2011

**National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging (ZAMI NOBLA)** | ZAMI NOBLA is incorporated in Atlanta, Georgia. They center advocacy, service, and research for black lesbians over the age of 40 with the aim to improve their quality of life overall.

2012

**Senator Tammy Baldwin** | Baldwin becomes the first openly gay person to be elected to the U.S. Senate, representing Wisconsin.



2014

**Black Lives Matter & Ferguson** Mike Brown, an unarmed, young black man is killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri. The incident sparks an urban rebellion. Strong leadership from black queer women lead the charge, taking up Black Lives Matter, a hashtag formerly developed by black queer women, as a mantra that spread across the nation.



2014

**Movement for Black Lives** | Lead by mostly queer black leaders, the Movement for Black Lives forms as a coalition and in response to violence against black communities, and in order to increase awareness of and responses to that violence.

2014

**Young Gifted & Black Coalition** | The YGB Coalition is created during the Ferguson uprising in Missouri. Black queer leaders in Madison see the need for furthering the liberation of black people in the city and county. With the leadership of queer black folks, they fight against state violence and demanded the city build the people and not a new jail.

2015

**Marriage Equality** | On June 26 the U.S. Supreme Court strikes down all state bans on same-sex marriage, legalizing it in all 50 states, and requiring states to honor out-of-state same-sex marriage licenses in Obergefell v. Hodges.



2015

**Free Lisa Mitchell Campaign** Lisa Mitchell is a black trans woman who was locked up in Dane County Jail and was held in solitary. She was released with the help of black queer organizers in Madison.



2019

**Lesbian Mayor of Madison** | Former alder Satya Rhodes-Conway defeats incumbent Paul Soglin to become the first queer/lesbian elected as Mayor of Madison.



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## DANA JOE CRUMPTON (LEE), 52 OF MADISON, PASSED AWAY THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019 AT AGRACE HOSPICE IN FITCHBURG



He was born June 9, 1966 in Jacksonville, FL., the son of Billy Joe Crumpton and Peggy Ann Barnes. He was united in marriage to his husband Ronald Lee on May 1, 2016. Dana was proud to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree from Globe University and was employed by American Family Insurance. His greatest joy came from his work with the McFarland United Church of Christ youth ministry. He also dedicated himself to helping others by being involved in numerous charities including The Felicia Melton-Smyth Gift Drive for ARCW and the Wisconsin AIDS Ride. Dana served on the board of directors for the Hypoparathyroidism Association and as their Director of Patient Education.

Survivors include his husband; daughter Sophia Lee; grandmother Helen Barnes; brother Alan (Ann) Barnes; sister Dawn Barnes; uncle Kenny (Connie) Jones; aunts Terry (Jerry) Clark, and Barbara Dicks; niece Alexis (Adam) Crabtree; cousins Michele Sumrell and

Lupe Reyes and son Sergio. He is further survived by Wayne and Barb Meyer, Kimberly Meyer Kessler (Tom Canetta), Leah Michelle Kessler and son Axel, Ryan Kessler, and numerous other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents; former partner John Meyer; Nana Marilyn Hodges Moseley; uncle Bobby Jones, Sr.; and aunt Linda Meeks.

Memorials may be made to the Hypoparathyroidism Association, the McFarland United Church of Christ Youth, the UW Carbone Cancer Center, or the Felicia Melton-Smyth Gift Drive. The family would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. LoConte, Dana's palliative care team at UW Carbone Cancer Center, the staff of the UW Hospital Infusion Center, the staff on B6/6, and the staff at Agrace Hospice in Fitchburg. Also, thank you to Dana's cousins Michele, Lupe, and Sergio for opening their home to care for Dana, and to Mel Thompson and Lisa Hart for their care and compassion.

## DANIELLE WASKO, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS DANIELLE AVALON, OF MADISON PASSED AWAY JUNE 10



Danielle Wasko, otherwise known as Danielle Avalon, didn't want to be made an icon or legendary figure to look up to. She had her own thoughts of who she thought she was but rarely allowed people to give her the compliments she deserved. She was legendary even if she didn't feel she was: her kindness was that of a mother's love, her spirit was strong and wild but tempered with wisdom, and her giving nature knew no bounds.

Danielle, as a queen, won and competed for several titles, and each one was celebrated as a victory over her own inner thoughts. She gave her time to AIDS Network/ARCW, Willma's Fund, Outreach LGBT Community Center and much more—not just fundraising and performing but volunteering, working volunteer desks/food pantry/bike

ride fundraising/support, and so much more. She mentored and mothered several local entertainers as the Matriarch of the House of Avalon—all went on to do bigger things in their entertainment careers or personal lives.

She was a long time staff member at the Shamrock Bar & Grille and delighted the customers with her no nonsense approach and served each person just a little bit of love every time. She was member of different sports leagues and proved she was a force to be reckoned with on the field and putting on each event with her indomitable will.

As Danielle Avalon she graced the stages across the country and locally at FIVE Nightclub, SOTTO, and Plan B (now Prism), among others. Her Bette Midler impersonations were of the highest caliber, and she gave a piece of herself each time she hit the stage

Everyone who knew Danielle knew a part of her differently than the next person. She had many layers to her personal being that so many may have missed if they were just looking at her from one perspective. She was a crown jewel with many facets, each one a complement to the next one.

Whatever she may have felt of herself, she will be missed by so many, and her stories will last for all our lifetimes.

Goodbye, our Bette. We love you.

## LOCAL ANGLER LANDS PRESTIGIOUS PLACE AT ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S OPENER FISHING TOURNAMENT

**Barb Carey** says she was lucky to get the invitation to fish at the Governor's Fishing Opener this year, held in May at the Dairyland Flowage in Rusk County.

Along with her friend and co-angler **Jane McMahon**, Carey also ended up getting the nod to have **Gov. Tony Evers** join them in their boat (a new Crestliner Raptor, part of the deal for her being Crestliner Pro Staff). Carey notes that she and Evers knew each other from when both worked in education.

"It was truly an honor," Carey says. "Not only did we get to fish with the governor, but Jane took first in the bass category. I do believe it was the first time the governor has ever fished with an all-woman crew, and also the first time a woman won a category at the tournament. What a great weekend."

Carey began producing fishing events for women in 2005, which eventually turned into an official group called Wisconsin Fish. Since then, she says, the group of 23 has grown into a group with women from 14 states and three Canadian provinces.

"The fishing industry has changed considerably since that time," Carey notes. "Women's license sales are skyrocketing and men's are declining. The industry has realized how important the female angler is as a consumer and for the growth of the sport."

Although Carey says there's still a long way to go, there is good progress. Women's groups and events are happening everywhere.

"Women are being empowered through outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing," she adds. "Looking back over my careers—which included nursing, policing, and now fishing—I can honestly say I have changed more lives through fishing than either of the other two helping professions."

Currently, Carey also co-hosts a popular podcast, "The Woman Angler and Adventurer," where she shares stories about women from all over the country. Keep up with her at [thewomanangler.com](http://thewomanangler.com).



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HOCKEY TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

# A Story Worth Telling

**Randi Hagen** nearly quit hockey before she'd even started, but the community and support she found with the **Madison Gay Hockey Association** helped her through her darkest days.



My quest was still underway, and I'd made no progress. On a Friday in late June of 2015, I had an email from Patrick Farabaugh: "Are you still interested?"

Well, I haven't had any luck elsewhere, so sure, why not, I'm still interested. Let's do this. How scary can it be? Turns out, REALLY SCARY. Do you have an anti-competitive streak a mile wide, a deep aversion to being aggressive, a crippling fear of being read as masculine, and haven't exercised in years? When you do, team sports are utterly terrifying. A month before the season started, I nearly quit. What had I gotten myself into? I needed a community, but did I really need it this badly? What if I didn't get along with anybody, or I was awful at it, or if it was like all team sports I had tried in the past, and I would end up going home crying each night?

FACING FEARS

Spoiler alert: I didn't quit. I convinced myself that I should try it for a little bit, and that I could bail if it turned out to be awful. And, further spoiler alert: it wasn't awful. In fact, it was wonderful. The league was a place where community came first and hockey came second. I met so many wonderful, amazing, loving human beings. I couldn't fathom how there were so many fantastic humans living in Madison right under my nose. It was unbelievable.

Over the course of the next few years, I fell in love with the league. Each year, I was placed on a new team which allowed me to make friends with a whole new group of humans. My circle of friends grew, and the people who are closest to me in my life right now are people I met through playing hockey. I joined the board as a way to give back. I have a lot of skills that come in handy when running a hockey league, apparently. I was helping make the MGHA a better place.

As things with hockey continued to get better, things in the rest of my life continued to get worse. It was a litany of disasters with no end in sight. It culminated with the death

**I'VE BEEN WITH THE LEAGUE** for several years, and I've had the option to write a "What Gay Hockey Means to Me" essay a few times now. Each time, I declined—this community means the world to me, but I didn't have a story that fit into a nicely packaged narrative.

I am thoroughly hooked on hockey now and play in two leagues (thanks to the MGHA), and I served on the board for two years as a way to give back to the community that has given so much to me... but it still wasn't quite enough to coax a story out of me. I didn't have any life-altering experiences that were worth writing about—that is, until this last season.

I joined the MGHA several years ago. It wasn't very dramatic, but it was actually an act of desperation. I had no queer community. I had lived in Madison for upwards of 10 years, and I knew virtually no one like me. I looked in all of the circles I walked in—namely school, work, and gaming. I was still in the process of questioning my gender when I tried to find like-minded groups in college, but I didn't feel "queer enough" or that I fit in.

I had no luck at work. There was a fledgling queer community, but the power dynamics of the workplace made it uncomfortable enough that I couldn't rely on it for support. The gaming community was out of the question. I am sure there were queers there, but I didn't click well enough with the group as a whole to find anybody.

HESITANT FIRST STEPS

At one of the LGBTQIA+ meetings at work, my coworker Andrew Cox mentioned the MGHA. I was not athletic, and I was not into sports or hockey, but I needed a community. I was desperate. So I went to the website and filled out an application.

I didn't get in.

That is to say, my application got lost. Or something. Nobody reached out to me, and by the time I followed up with Andrew (who pointed me to the right people), it was too late. The league was full, and they didn't have space for me. Shit. I mean, I wasn't heartbroken: "This is not the queer community you're looking for" had become sort of a recurring theme by this point, so I figured I just needed to look elsewhere.

Fast forward a year, and little had changed.

**ED. NOTE:** We are happy to publish the Madison Gay Hockey Association's selected essay each year for their league-run essay contest. Any other LGBTQ sports organization (or similar) that wishes to publish essays or testimonials from their league members should contact *Our Lives* at [contact@ourlivesmadison.com](mailto:contact@ourlivesmadison.com)



of my son in March of 2018. I was absolutely devastated. There's no way to sugarcoat it—Einar's death broke me. My grief led me to some very dark places, and as a result, at the beginning of this last season, I left my wife. I put some clothes in my backpack, hopped on my motorcycle, and rode off into the wind.

COMMUNITY HEALING

I couch-surfed for a month-and-a-half. At times it was 7:00 p.m., and I didn't know where I was going to be sleeping that night. I rode my motorcycle through the sunshine and through the rain. And when I crashed on couches, exhausted, with wet motorcycle gear, it was largely with people from the MGHA. I had built this community for several years, and when I needed them the most, the people in this league Showed Up

for me. They fed me, held me, kept me safe, and listened to me cry. They took me out dancing for my birthday and defended my honor when it was impugned. They had long conversations with me about what healthy relationships look like and what you need to do to build and maintain them. They talked with me on the phone as I sat on sidewalks in Madison, sobbing and broken. The people in this league stood by me as everything in my life fell apart.

After I settled into my own apartment and my mental health started to stabilize, I realized that my choice three years prior to join the MGHA—and my choice not to quit before it started—had been life-altering. Without the emotional support my friends in the league gave me, I may have never realized I was unhappy in my marriage. The MGHA gave me the structure and support to build up the courage I needed to completely upend my life and leave a relationship that wasn't working for me. It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do, and I didn't have to do it alone. This league is my chosen family, and they were there for me.

In the aftermath of my breakup, as the season began progressing last fall, I already knew—I was going to write an essay this year. I finally had something worth saying. ■

2019 ESSAY WRITERS ON WHAT THE MADISON GAY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION MEANS TO THEM



- 1 RYAN PAKULA** "We begin with knowing we fit and fill all the beautiful parts of queer (and allies), and we accept each other."
- 2 REILY KIRSCH-LOREDO** "For the first time, I found a safe place I could be myself."
- 3 ALISHA MCGUIRE** "MGHA has become the family I didn't know I was missing, that I didn't know I needed."
- 4 GRETA LANDIS** "It means patience and progress, falling down (a lot), and getting stronger. It also means, it turns out, that I finally feel like an athlete."



## The NHL features Madison Gay Hockey Association during Pride Month.

As a part of their **#HockeyIsForEveryone** campaign, the **National Hockey League** produced and released a video feature and article recognizing the efforts of the Madison Gay Hockey Association for their national leadership in creating a space that celebrates inclusion in the sport of ice hockey. The NHL hired local LGBTQ & woman-owned **Hinckley Productions** to produce the video. You can view the video either on the NHL's socials, or at [NHL.com/Pride](http://NHL.com/Pride).



ROBIN BERGDOLL

Operations Manager at UW Health, songstress, storyteller and coffee drinker

*"I will admit to a small obsession with eyewear. My favorites are these Mykita in what I call 'Bucky Red.' I love that I can find my eyewear locally and that Ulla offers me frames that are as individual as I am. Every time I enter the doors of Ulla, I have a very personalized experience!"*



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QTPOC LATINX COMMUNITY

# Para la Gente

**Orgullo Latinx LGBT+** looks to revitalize itself in 2019, with renewed focus on support, resources for queer Latinx people in Madison.

**JORGE ZUNIGA IS EXCITED** about where Orgullo has been, and where it's going next. The organization, founded in 2016 by Baltazar de Anda, Christian Alejandro Real Merino, and Diego Campoverde Cisneros, began with the mission to create a place for the Latinx LGBT+ community in Dane County to thrive.

The group met regularly, marched in the annual Pride parade, and held other events to bring together queer Latinx people from the area. Last year, however, things fell mostly idle as people transitioned out of leadership and a regular meeting space couldn't be found.

Happily, Zuniga says, that's all changing. "Orgullo was sleeping for a year. Now that Baltazar has been director of the Latino Academy, though, we hold meetings there. That's pretty amazing."

Currently, Orgullo is actively recruiting volunteers and members to help with its social media presence to help better spread the word and reach more people. They're especially looking for help translating LGBTQ materials from English to Spanish. "Not too much exists right now that's in Spanish," Zuniga notes. That needs to change if the Latinx community, which is steadily growing in Dane County

and elsewhere, is to be properly included in the movement to expand civil rights and equality.

Orgullo is working to create short videos that feature the experiences and testimony of Latinx LGBTQ people. Zuniga says they hope this will help dispel stigma within the Latinx community itself, and help people generally connect with the issues and needs of Latinx folks.

They also hold bi-monthly service provider trainings in the area, aimed at helping people in health care and community nonprofits serve LGBTQ clients and patients more effectively. In particular, Orgullo works to provide cultural competency to those in professional and nonprofit services, and within the Latinx community itself.

Currently, Orgullo is actively recruiting volunteers and members to help with its social media presence to help better spread the word and reach more people. They're especially looking for help translating LGBTQ materials from English to Spanish.



Orgullo will be participating in the OutReach Magic Pride Festival this August with a booth and some influence over making sure Latinx performers are represented on the stage.

"I really want this to take off and thrive in the community. I think it would be really impactful," Zuniga says of Orgullo and its work.

"For me particularly, I self-identify as a gay Latinx first generation—both my parents are from Mexico. Most of my life I grew up in a fairly Catholic home where those values are heavily held... this culture of machismo is very rampant within the Latinx community," he goes on. "Now in my adult life I realize there's a lot of work yet to be done.

Especially with Latinx people, I feel like there's this saying that whatever happens behind closed doors stays behind closed doors. That's so closed off from society and the acceptance of the other that's happening elsewhere. Within our own community we could do more work on self-love and empowerment of being your true authentic self outside of the doors! Not just in the home."

Zuniga and all those involved in Orgullo want it to be a place that creates community and provides a resource base for Latinx people, both those struggling with their identities and those who've already stepped out from behind those closed doors.

"Having a place where our complex identities are accepted and validated is so important," Zuniga says.

The group meets monthly at the Latino Academy (1917 Lake Point Dr.) on the third Thursday of every month, at 6 p.m. Find out more by contacting them at [orgullolatinx@gmail.com](mailto:orgullolatinx@gmail.com).

"Every meeting has a different topic covered," Zuniga says, "all sorts of things. They are fairly informal meetings, and are a great place to meet people and create community." —Emily Mills

QTPOC PRIDE

Join Us at Madison Pride on August 18!

The QTPOC Pride Committee will be hosting a QTPOC tent at this year's OutReach Magic Festival in Warner Park. Come share space with us, connect, and be in community with others like you!

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STREET ART GRAFFITI MURALS

## Taking art to the streets

**Karin Wolf** surveys the past and current climate of street art in Madison, including some promising momentum toward more inclusive representation and access to the form.

**MADISON AND STREET ARTS** have a long-complicated relationship. City policies strictly regulate art in the public realm. Historically, unsanctioned images, words, and objects—such as the decorated piano deposited at the top of State Street a few summers ago—are promptly eliminated, usually at the property owner’s expense. This has created hard feelings between street artists and those who have been slapped with the bill for removal.

Because I work as the City’s arts administrator, in the very department that is responsible for enforcing Madison’s zoning codes, sign ordinances, and urban design guidelines, I am often a first responder when City policies clash with independently produced artistic expressions. It can be painful to witness the confrontations. Fear, naïveté, and anger often operate in ways that squelch my personal ideals of what an equitable participatory democracy looks like.

Two years ago, into the fray of opinions between the genteel aesthetic that has long-dominated Madison’s regulatory policies and supporters of the underground arts movement, entered James Gibbons and his street art business on Madison’s east side. Opened in 2017, Momentum Art Tech, at 195 Cottage Grove Road, is a store where people can pick up paint, brushes, clothing, or a lesson in graffiti.

For the last two years, Gibbons and artists connected with Momentum Art Tech Madison, have been demonstrating how street arts can beautify a neighborhood, transforming Monona Drive’s previously unnoticed spaces into a corridor of vibrant color.

Gibbons, a former marine and father of three, believes that Madison could benefit from a cohort of artists trained in a medium conducive to producing work that is easily understandable to many, quickly created—between a few hours and a few days, and are intentionally impermanent. Over the last couple of years, Momentum Art Tech has gradually adopted walls belonging to Monona businesses and demonstrated that street artists are not the enemy. Instead, they can be some of the public’s best allies in placemaking, a trend in community building that uses the tagline: “lighter, quicker, cheaper.”

In the past, when people asked me where they could see graffiti art in Madison or why Madison does not have more street art, my tongue tripped over what sounded like an embarrassing bureaucratic excuse for institutionalized systems that privilege some people’s aesthetics over others. Tolerated, as long as they were relegated to spaces outside of public view, and not within more mainstream environments, street art was hidden in places like behind the former iteration of the Garver Feed Mill. On the one hand, it was an expansive gallery that showcased some of the area’s best talent, but on the other hand, it was sort of a visual don’t ask, don’t tell graffiti closet where artists shared their work. In order to practice, they also risked getting caught breaking the law.

There were some legitimate efforts to celebrate street art, such as the well-loved permission wall at Mother Fool’s which has showcased rotating, temporary murals since 2001. And about a decade ago, Kimberley Coonts created “Kilroy’s Art in the Park” with and for local graffiti artists, but frustrating hurdles caused them to stop producing the event in 2010.

Of course, Madison also boasts of being the hometown of Solve (Brendan Scanlon), a legend in the street arts community whose life was taken in 2008, when he was only 24. He left a lasting legacy that inspired new generations of artists. The You Are Beautiful mural on the side of Art In for example, created by teens in 2016 through The ArtWrite Collective, is a tribute to Solve, whose Chicago crew put up many similar murals.

For the last two years, Gibbons and artists connected with Momentum Art Tech Madison, have been demonstrating how street arts can beautify a neighborhood, transforming Monona Drive’s previously unnoticed spaces into a corridor of vibrant color. This year, Momentum Arts is collaborating with the Monona East Side Business Alliance to create Momentum Urban Arts Fest, an all-day live street art event. More than 50 artists from all over the country will participate in creating street art on buildings up and down Monona Drive and on Madison’s east side. Viewers will be able to watch live production, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. on August 24.

You could say Momentum has created its own momentum for street art in our region. Initiatives, such as Wisconsin Institute for Discovery’s new “Science to Street Art” project, directed by Ginger Ann Contreras, will pair local and internationally known street artists with scientists to create science-themed installations throughout Madison.

Contreras aims to simultaneously address the lack culturally relevant public art and attract youth to the sciences. Stefan Matioc’s signature cubist line art has appeared all over Madison in locations such as Lucille, Banzo Shuk, Next Door Brewing, Good Style Shop, and The Sylvee. And this August artists Goldie Bennett and Henrique Nardi are teaming up to create a wheat paste mural for the side of North Street Cabaret called War of the Worlds. Their work will be up in time for the August 17 Eken Park Festival.

Madison is shifting demographically. As we become a more diverse region, we need to correct the ways racism, classism, and other prejudices have contributed to policies that exclude the aesthetics of hip hop, youth, queer, and other cultural expressions previously treated as insignificant or unwanted.

For Madison to thrive as a healthy and vibrant city, we need to encourage all to participate in shaping our environment and making our community a more welcoming and beautiful place.

**DISCLAIMER:** In my work for the City of Madison I connect artists and non-profit organizations with opportunities and resources, and support diverse forms of artistic expression. My thoughts about street art do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the City of Madison or the Madison Arts Commission (MAC). However, MAC does support graffiti arts and has provided grant funding to organizations advancing the street art aesthetic and individual street artists and is providing grant funding for Science to Street Art and the North Street Cabaret Wheat Paste mural.



**KARIN WOLF** is the Arts Program Administrator for the City of Madison Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development and the Madison Arts Commission. She manages the City’s public art program, arts grants, and helps facilitate community cultural planning. She has a M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction from UW-Madison and undergraduate degrees in History, History of Cultures, and Afro-American History.



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## We've Been Here All Along

Dick Wagner's new two-volume book chronicles early LGBT life in Wisconsin and provides an invaluable resource to future generations.

**GAY PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED**, but our stories and our pasts are often obscured by bias, ignorance, and the passage of time. What we do have is largely focused on coastal cities and people—New York and San Francisco, maybe a little from Chicago. But LGBTQ history is, of course, everywhere, and historian Dick Wagner is out to set the record... well, not straight, exactly. Fuller. Richer. More Midwestern.

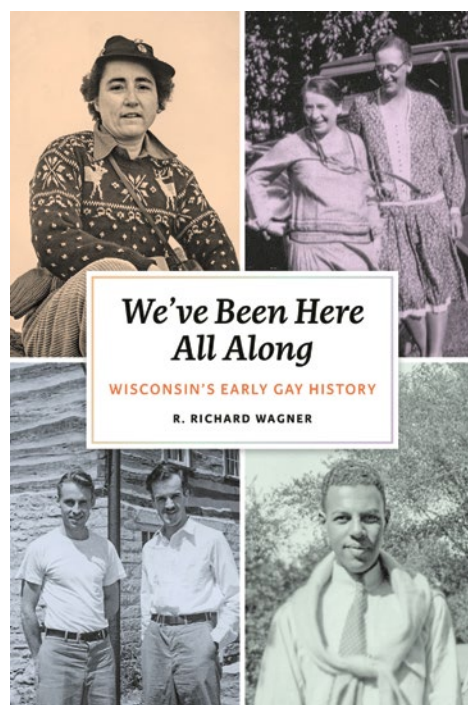
The longtime *Our Lives* contributor has penned a two-volume history of gay life in Wisconsin, the first of which—*We've Been Here All Along: Wisconsin's Early Gay History*—is out now. The volume focuses predominantly on gay and lesbian people in the state from the late 1800s through the Stonewall Riots of 1969. The second volume, due out next year, will cover 1970 to the present. Wagner celebrated with a book release party and reading, sponsored by the Wisconsin Book Festival, in late June at the Madison Public Library.

Prior to that, I sat down with him to chat about what finally pushed him to dive in and write a full-length work. Wagner has been researching and sharing stories of local gay

history with our readers since the early days of this magazine. It was that experience, plus some strong encouragement from friends, that pushed him to collect it all in one place.

"I have to give credit to Patrick for encouraging me to write for *Our Lives* because that sort of proved to me that one guy could write up this stuff and make it interesting, and that there was some kind of market for it, that people were interested," Wagner says.

It all started with an estate sale down the block from Wagner's home on Madison's near east side. It was the 1970s, and a friend tipped him off to the presence of a veritable treasure trove of vintage gay erotica ("phys-



In '39 the police chief reported an 'unusual case' that involved two women who were arrested," he says. "It was especially unusual because the sodomy statutes—which came straight out of Tudor England—said there had to be a 'male organ' involved in order for it to be sodomy.

ical culture") in a trunk in a widow's attic. The purchase of the collection began his own quest to archive LGBTQ ephemera, something that eventually filled his basement with boxes of items that included everything from early gay newsletters to photographs, show programs, and more. He's since passed off much of it to the LGBT Archives at the UW for safekeeping.

Wagner had long been interested in history. He moved to Madison in 1965 to pursue his Masters and eventually PhD in U.S. History at the UW. It was there, too, that he got involved researching and writing his dissertation on a group of progressive reformers who were working to get rid of all the red-light districts in the U.S.—something that tended to directly target what few establishments and services catered to gay people.

Bit by bit, Wagner's own awareness of gay life and activism began to grow. What had been research on so-called sexual deviance in the stacks at UW's libraries eventually lead him to hidden works about homosexuality. Up to that point, given the era, he was "in total ignorance" of anything to do with gay community.

Of course, as it turned out, it was flourishing—just hidden. Wagner's new book sheds a bright new light on what what was once obscured, providing a long-overdue and much-needed understanding of early gay life in Wisconsin.

### LIGHTING A LITERARY FIRE

In 2016, Wagner invited his neighbors over for a get together and discovered that one was an editor with the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. He urged Wagner to put together a proposal for the book, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Stonewall.

"That lit a fire," he notes. "I was amazed at the amount of pre-Stonewall material I found."

Drawing from past *Our Lives* columns and extensive research, Wagner has put together a compelling look at the thriving communities created, under the radar, during the early part of the twentieth century.

That includes, of course, the famous Pendarvis House and restaurant in Mineral Point, run by life partners Robert Neal and Edgar Hellum from 1935 to 1970. It also includes the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee, founded in 1920 by couple Charlotte Partridge and Miriam Frink, who lived together—remarkably openly—for much of their lives.

Perhaps most fascinating are the records from Waupaun Prison, which provide a decidedly slanted but important view of homosexuality in more rural parts of the state. Wagner



Wagner reading from *We've Been Here All Along* during the 2019 Wisconsin Book Festival at the Madison Central Library.

says digging through the highly detailed accounts of men convicted of "sodomy" shows an extensive network of gay men living in places like Oshkosh and Rhinelander. Thanks to the efforts of a researcher at the time, many of the records are the personal, first-person narratives written by the men themselves, providing a rare glimpse of gay life at the time.

"So much of our life and history has been erased, to actually find it and hear their voices and their words, is to me just really exciting," Wagner notes.

The material skews heavily toward gay men, but there are records of the lives lived by same-sex-loving women, too.

"In '39 the police chief reported an 'unusual case' that involved two women who were arrested," he says. "It was especially unusual because the sodomy statutes—which came straight out of Tudor England—said there had to be a 'male organ' involved in order for it to be sodomy. So there was some oppression against lesbians but it's less documented."

Though much of our LGBTQ history is lost to time and oppression, it's heartening to read even a piece of our rich history, carved out tooth-and-nail by those who came before, and compiled and preserved for future generations by dedicated historians like Wagner.

—Emily Mills

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# July & August

Get out and enjoy summertime with these awesome events—including more festivals than you can shake a stick at, and other opportunities to connect with old friends and make new acquaintances.

For more LGBTQ-specific events, see our Organization Events on page 18.

JULY

11-14

LA FETE DE MARQUETTE

McPike Park (formerly Central Park)

Located in the heart of the isthmus, Fete offers a little something for everyone: dozens of performances on three stages, games, and activities for families, local restaurants offering delicious food, an eclectic array of arts and crafts vendors, and plenty of great local beer and wine. Free admission, and donations benefit the Wil-Mar Community Center.

wil-mar.org/fete



JULY

11

OPEN AT MADISON MALLARDS

Warner Park

Enjoy a night at the ballpark with the Out Professional Engagement Network. Hang out in the Duck Blind, where your ticket price includes unlimited ballpark food, soda, and/or alcoholic drinks through the 7th inning.

openmadison.org



20

OPERA IN THE PARK

Garner Park

Enjoy a day at the park and a (no-cost) chance to enjoy world-class opera courtesy of Madison Opera. BYO blankets, chairs, and picnics!

madisonopera.org

24

LAKE MONONA CRUISE WITH OPEN

Law Park

Join fellow OPEN members (and friends) for a cruise around the lake on the famous

AUGUST

18

EKEN PARK FESTIVAL

700 block of Meyer Ave.

The friendly northside neighborhood hosts its community celebration, featuring music by Something to Do, Tani Diakite and the Afrofunkstars, Cris Plata Trio, and Rain Stern. Plenty of delicious local food and drink, plus raffle prizes, will be on offer as well.

ekenpark.org

22-25

ORTON PARK FESTIVAL

Orton Park

One of Madison's most beloved (free) neighborhood festivals fills the green space on the city's east side with three days of stellar live music from local and touring acts, plenty of food and drink, and the signature performance-in-a-tree by Cycropia Aerial Dance.

wil-mar.org/festivals

Party Pontoon, complete with appetizers and drinks and plenty of time to socialize and network.

openmadison.org

26-28

WISCONSIN AIDS RIDE

Southcentral Wisconsin

The annual peddle through Wisconsin's scenic backroads and rolling hills, all to benefit the word of ARCW, rolls along with multiple options for beginner bikers and hardcore roadies alike.

arcw.convio.net

31

(THROUGH AUGUST 4)

REEBOK CROSSFIT GAMES

Alliant Energy Center

The largest gathering and competition for the popular fitness regime returns to Madison for another five days of events, demonstrations, vendors, and more.

games.crossfit.com/games

# HOT SUMMER GAYS

June 14

PRIDE ROOFTOP PARTY & DRAG:  
Clint Taurus & Cyrus K Stratton  
Music by Saint Saunter

Camp Tripalindae

July 19

PANTS OFF DANCE OFF  
Saint Saunter, DJ Millbot, Kalycho,  
DJ Claire Dactyl, DJ Daossier

Robinia Courtyard

July 20

Gender Confetti!!! [album release]  
90's Dreamboy, Natanyael, SYM1,  
AMY HZL, Cal Smith [comedy]

The Wisco

August 16

DRAG QUEER  
open amateur hour  
& queer dance party

Robinia Courtyard

August 17

QUEER ALL YEAR with God-Des,  
Saint Saunter, DJ Keezy [impls],  
Dequadray, Kilo Skitzl, Kalycho

The Majestic

Presented by Dyke Dive, Saint Saunter, & queer.IRL

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# PRIDE CALENDAR

June may be the official Pride month, but here in Wisconsin, we like to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community all summer long. From small towns to mid-sized cities, here are the fabulous events to help you build connections and have some fun—wherever you may be in the Badger State.

**AUGUST 18** OutReach's Magic Festival | Warner Park, Madison

**JULY 19** Hot Summer Gays: Pants Off Dance Off | Robinia Courtyard

Part of a summer-long series of HSG events, this special underwear dance party features DJs from Madison and Milwaukee playing various musical genres for an evening of revelry. Sponsored by A Room of One's Own Bookstore. [hotsummergays.com](http://hotsummergays.com)

**JULY 20** Hot Summer Gays: Live | The Wisco

The HSG series continues with an evening filled with live music by local and regional queer-identified musicians, including Gender Confetti, Natanyael (Minneapolis), AMY HZL (Duluth), 90s Dream Boy, Cal Smith, and Saint Saunter. [hotsummergays.com](http://hotsummergays.com)

**AUGUST 2** OutWOD's Big Gay Happy Hour | Prism Dance Club

The CrossFit Games return to Madison! Join fellow LGBTQ CrossFit enthusiasts for a happy hour social opportunity, regardless of whether you're a casual gym-goer or a dedicated gym rat. [iamout.org/outwod](http://iamout.org/outwod)

**AUGUST 16** Hot Summer Gays: Drag Queen | Robinia Courtyard

Local and regional drag stars and amateurs alike take over the courtyard for a Pride-themed edition of performances. [hotsummergays.com](http://hotsummergays.com)

**AUGUST 17** WOOF's Pride King Street Block Party | 100 Block of King Street

The yearly Pride block party takes over the street outside of WOOF's bar with an afternoon and evening filled with live music, DJs, booths, and local vendors. Donations to benefit GSAFE. [madwoofs.com](http://madwoofs.com)

**AUGUST 17** Hot Summer Gays: Drag Queen | The Majestic

The 3rd annual HSG blowout, co-presented by Dyke Dive, features an all-star line-up of performances, including headliner God-des (of God-des and She), along with DJ Keezy, Dequadrax, Killo, and Saint Saunter. [hotsummergays.com](http://hotsummergays.com)

## Across Wisconsin:

**JULY 14** Kenosha Pride | Veterans Memorial Park, Kenosha

Southeast Wisconsin celebrates its Pride with a march at Noon followed by a day-long festival featuring plenty of live music, performances, food, vendors, and more. [kenoshapride.org](http://kenoshapride.org)

**JULY 20** N.E.W. Pride Alive: Appleton | Brown County Fairgrounds

The 12th annual festival features a family-friendly day of live music, performances, games, food, and more—all in the heart of Wisconsin. [newpridealive.org](http://newpridealive.org)

**AUGUST 10** Mineral Point Pride

Celebrate LGBTQ community in historic downtown Mineral Point at this cozy and lively party, hosted by the gay-owned Tequila Point bar. [mineralpoint.com](http://mineralpoint.com)

**AUGUST 24** Viroqua Pride | Eckhart Park

The small, artsy town nestled in the heart of the Driftless region celebrates its first-ever official Pride day with family fun and activities, followed by an evening of live entertainment and a dance party. Plans are still coming together, so stay tuned for more. [facebook.com/events/1422242744594067/](https://facebook.com/events/1422242744594067/)

**JUNE 1** FruitFest on the 900 block of Williamson Street



PHOTOS BY PATRICK FARABAUGH.

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# It's Official

In an official proclamation, Newly-elected **Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway** and city officials declared June as **Pride Month in Madison**, marking the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising and Wisconsin's history of LGBTQ activism.

**WHEREAS**, 2019 is the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising of 1969; and,

**WHEREAS**, just months after Stonewall, the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality was founded as Wisconsin's first gay rights organization; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 1973 Judy Greenspan was the first out lesbian in the nation to run for the Madison School Board after she and others had been denied the right to speak in Madison high schools; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Madison in 1975 became the first place in Wisconsin and one of the earliest in the country to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by amending its Equal Opportunities Ordinance; and,

**WHEREAS**, Alder Jim Yeadon was appointed to the City Council in fall of 1976 and elected in the spring of 1977 and was the first openly gay man elected to a City Council in the United States; and,

**WHEREAS**, when the Madison equal rights ordinance came under attack from an anti-gay movement motivated by activist Anita Bryant's in 1978, Madison successfully defended its ordinance even though similar anti-discrimination ordinances were repealed in state capitols like St. Paul, MN and Eugene, OR; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 1982, Madison State Representative David Clarenbach skillfully led the fight to pass a first-in-the-nation state gay rights law, which was signed by Republican Governor Lee Sherman Dreyfus; and,

**WHEREAS**, the fifth annual conference of gay and lesbian officials was hosted in Madison in 1989 at the State Capitol with a local host committee chaired by Dane County Supervisors Dick Wagner and Tammy Baldwin; and,

**WHEREAS**, Ricardo Gonzalez was the first openly gay Latino official elected to public office in the United States when he was elected to Madison City Council in 1989; and,

**WHEREAS**, Alder Jim McFarland created the State's first domestic partnership registry in 1990 by ordinance, affording limited rights to same sex couples; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 2000 the City became the first place in Wisconsin to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity by amending the Equal Opportunities Ordinance; and,

**WHEREAS**, this year is the fifth anniversary of the June 6, 2014 ruling by U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb that the state's constitutional and legislative restrictions on same-sex marriage violated the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution; and,

**WHEREAS**, Dane County Supervisor Tammy Baldwin became the first openly LGBTQ member of the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1993, and then the first openly LGBTQ nonincumbent elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1998 and became the first out LGBTQ U.S. Senator in our nation's history in 2013; and,

**WHEREAS**, Dane County Supervisor Mark Pocan became the first openly gay man to be elected to the State Assembly in 1998 and became the first openly-gay non-incumbent, married man to be elected to United States Congress in 2012; and,

**WHEREAS**, Satya Rhodes-Conway was elected the City of Madison's first openly lesbian Mayor on April 2, 2019; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Madison has a proud history of protecting LGBTQ rights and advancing LGBTQ equality; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Madison recognizes the LGBTQ community as an important part of the diversity of the greater Madison community, and appreciates their contributions to our economy, culture, neighborhoods and city,

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Madison salutes the trailblazers at Stonewall and in Wisconsin's history and declares June 2019 as Pride Month in the City of Madison.







Photographed by **Ian DeGraff** for *Our Lives* magazine.

# Trailblazer

**Christopher Walton's** path to becoming the first gay black man to head the Milwaukee County Democratic Party started early, and shows no signs of stopping.

QTPOC | POLITICS | MILWAUKEE | GAY

**ALL IN FAVOR, SAY AYE.** Aye! All opposed....

Congratulations! With that vote in November 2017, I became Chair-man-Elect of the Democratic Party of Milwaukee County. I realized then that my life's trajectory had finally begun what I hoped would be a continuous incline toward my dreams.

I gave my partner a look—the “Oh God it happened” look—with a burst of excitement and nervousness in my heart. He returned it with a “you got this, and I got you” look of his own, and with that, I felt ready to walk the room. It was the beginning of one of my main roles as County Party Chair, which is talking to and meeting with people.

I was thrilled. I was officially a politician.

I am the first African-American man to hold the County Chair position since Ronald Reagan was in the White House. I am the youngest person ever (#Millennial) and the first openly gay man. Not only that, but according to the Chair of the Democratic National Committee's LGBT Caucus, I am the only openly gay, male, African-American county party chair in the nation. That's a lot, right?

## THE BLACK AMERICAN DREAM

I was born and raised on the northside of Milwaukee, the greatest city along one of the world's greatest lakes. My story begins like a lot of African Americans in the city, or the Upper Midwest in general: My grandmothers and grandfathers migrated north during the late 1950s, attempting to escape the segregation and strife of the Jim Crow-era South.

This is going to be such an amazing event for the entire city as we bring over 50,000 people into our city and show them why Milwaukee is America's rising Midwestern Phoenix.

My maternal grandparents came from Baldwin, Mississippi and Halls, Tennessee. My paternal grandparents were from Kosciusko, Mississippi and Monroe, Louisiana. They came to Milwaukee hoping to find greater opportunities for themselves and their families, in a place where they'd have a fighting chance to better themselves beyond their current circumstances. They lived what was the fairly standard working-middle-class African-American life of the time. That meant working in factories for the men, and for the women, work as a seamstress and a homemaker.

It's hard for me to imagine, but they were the age I am now when they were able to make major life decisions about marriage, children, home purchases, and such a big move. After my parents were born, both of their families moved north of Capitol Drive. At that point in time the neighborhood was mostly a mix of German and Jewish families. Of course, as more of the African-American community moved in, “white flight” rapidly caused the hyper-segregated dynamics that now exist in

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After being selected as the next County Party Chair.



With Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett.



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places like Northern Milwaukee County and Waukesha County.

My parents were neighborhood sweethearts, the athlete and the pretty girl. I always laugh and say that it took two Mississippis, one Tennessee, and one Louisiana—then freeze it in Wisconsin for about 20 years—and you get the combination an outgoing, vocal, ambitious, extrovert that is me. My parents gave me everything they had to give. They were both outgoing and feisty, as well as kind-hearted and good. I like to thank I got a lot of my personality and charisma from the two of them. They certainly gave it to my little sister, Charisma, who made our family the perfect little nuclear quartet of modern American families.

My childhood was simple. Everyone had a job on Monday morning. After my father returned from service with the Army, both of my parents went to work; dad in a factory and mom as an employee of Milwaukee County Transit. I went to school. That was a deal. We went on vacations all over the country. The bills were paid, food was on the table, everyone was seemingly happy, and I was a straight-A student. I thought we were rich. Little did I know we were the Walton's that shopped at Walmart, not the Walton's that owned Walmart.

The deal was sweetened because I was lucky to be surrounded but a supportive, loving neighborhood community. Annual block parties were held where I had family surrounding me in every direction. In my eyes, my family was larger than life. I had 15 cousins to play with just around the corner at any given time. I also had the full range of adult supervision and encouragement as my parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and neighbors provided that village to raise a kid and make sure that he stays on the right track.

I was also given a great start through attendance at fantastic public schools like Garden Homes Elementary and Samuel Morse for the Gifted and Talented Middle School. From my earliest educational years, I had opportunities to explore my imagination and to meet amazing public servants who all fed my curious mind.

#### AMBITIOUS CHILD

Picture it: Milwaukee, autumn of 1997. A young boy picks up a book at his local school library and gets completely sucked into the idea that one day he could become President of the United States of America. Sounds like a scene from the West Wing, right? That's actually how it happened for me. There I was, at the ripe age of nine, when I decided to make the change in career from being the Red Power Ranger and an astronaut to becoming President. As you can see, I was a very unambitious kid.

Mrs. Seibel gave me the book, a children's biography of John F. Kennedy, which honestly touched something in my soul. Maybe I connected with the story of another young boy. I like to think it was the storyline

of helping people and working for them that struck a chord with me. Whatever the reason, that book was the spark that set my life on fire.

As the ball dropped into a new millennium and my early childhood came to a close, I had built up a good head of steam. It was the beginning of some interesting years. The teenage uncertainty and budding self-awareness, and the independence and almost loneliness of knowing that one chapter was coming to a close and a new one was about to begin, made for a heavy mix.

For me, 2001 was quite the year. Coming off the Bush/Gore presidential election (one for which I'd pushed my father to get out and vote), and then the September 11 terrorist attacks, I noticed that I was beginning to, in the words of Luther Vandross, "look at love in a different way." Puberty hits differently when it lets you know that you're gay. I had questions that I wanted to ask but, for me, it felt like bad timing. My parents were in the early stages of a divorce and I didn't want to insert myself into the already dramatic storyline. I made a very conscious decision to hide myself and "protect" my parents from what was happening with me.

I wanted a love life that didn't involve me being around for a few weeks and then shipping out across the continent. I was lucky to find him. Perfect we weren't, but we complemented each other. He taught me more about myself in two years than I learned in the previous 28.

Once my parents started the process of divorcing, I began to withdraw. I've come to realize that it is my default security system. As I look back now, I see it as the weight of my secret falling onto me as well.

Fortunately, I had my grandmother. I feel like she saw the real me. She had a keen eye for helping develop one's inner core. When she found out I liked politics she gave me a Wisconsin Blue Book and somehow put me on a field trip to Washington D.C. with a school I didn't even attend. It was my first time in the District. It most certainly would not be the last.

She saw that I was becoming withdrawn and alerted my mom to my increasing sleep patterns and less-than-sunny demeanor. We started talking more and my mood began to change, but she helped me focus on more productive things like school. Throughout it all, I noticed that she'd begun to slow a bit. Still, I never could have imagined that she might not always be around—until it happened. I'd never felt so alone in my life. I often imagine what she'd think of me now. I believe she would be proud of me, and that I'm still as persistent as she taught me to be.



With his Diverse & Resilient coworkers.

#### TEACHERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

High school came and went by so fast. Messmer was not my first choice, but after picking my middle school and struggling academically, my mother made the call, and she and my aunt Kellie made it happen. Good thing, too, because I met friends and teachers that honestly became like family. I wasn't the most popular kid by any stretch of the imagination. I had glasses like Mr. Peanut. Even so, I was Class President all four years and even Prom King. High School goals met and exceeded.

By senior year, I felt like I had mostly come into my own. My grades picked up and I had a little sureness in myself. I'd be headed off to Mississippi State University, after solid advice from my great aunt Virginia that, if I was demanding to go out-of-state for college that I might as well skip going East to pay twice the price for the same degree, and in-

stead come get the same distance for half the cost. She was right. She'd later get elected as the first African-American City Councilwoman in my family's hometown.

I had the opportunity while in high school to take part in the Student Congressional Debate. My teacher, Ms. Burkel, made me an offer I couldn't refuse: you do all the work and she'd drive. I took the deal not knowing that, later on, I'd be chosen to serve as her assistant coach. It brought me to something that I'd always envisioned myself being involved in: arguing issues of the day among a group of smart people. From the first day I walked in until the last Congressional session meet I was pushed, pulled, and intrigued, arguing about legislation and making friends who, like me, were political nerds. It was nice to be accepted for who I was—even though I was still working on that for myself.

#### LEAVING HOME, FINDING MYSELF

During my senior year of high school, I told one of my best friends that I thought I was gay. He gave me an answer that stuck with me forever: "Ok, well, honestly, who cares? You're still my friend, and I don't care." That brilliant response made me so much more comfortable. It also launched a process of coming out to friends and family that started in 2007 and eventually worked its way up the ladder. Responses ranged from "Oh OK cool, what we doing tonight?" to "We were just waiting on you to tell us," to "WAIT, YOU'RE GAY?"

Even the girl down the street, who liked me from back when we were kids, tried to argue me down about it. I finally asked her, how many straight guys would tell you they're gay? That finally got through to her. Family was the scariest. I was afraid that they'd reject me, as I'd seen happen to too many people before. In the end, thankfully, they more or less just listened carefully and said, "OK."

College was wild. So wild that you'll just have to wait for the book



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to drop on that one. I was blessed even more with the love of an ever-growing family reconnected to my Southern roots. I got elected President of the Mississippi State College Democrats. I also began to expand my social and political networks.

Working as a staff assistant during the summer for Governor Doyle’s administration, I did the much-needed soul searching to answer questions that no one else could answer for me. I honestly believe leaving home to find myself made me more self-confident. It showed me strengths and weaknesses I needed to know in order for my life to reach its next chapter. I graduated with more than just a degree in Political Science. I double majored in me, I got a much needed minor in life, and I concentrated on becoming the man I wanted to be. Going to college isn’t just about the grades. Being a college student is about learning who you are and what you want to do with your life—because it’s your life.

ON THE TRAIL

Turn the page, and the next chapter began one of the roughest journeys yet: being a single man on the campaign trail. I became a national political operative. Over the course of four years, I traveled the nation meeting my fellow Americans at their homes, door-to-door, advocating for Democratic candidates running for everyone from President to City Council. Seven days a week, 10–14-hour days.

I have stories that can go on for days and collected laughs and memories that I will cherish forever. It’s something distinctly inspiring hearing the President of the United States fight for his job in a park in New Hampshire. To sit in the living room of a state house candidate in Clarksdale, Mississippi helping to create ideas he hoped would make life a little better for his kids and the community’s kids.

Still, after four years and a 10–6 record on the trail, plus the fiasco of 2016, I was completely spent.

I decided I wanted a new start. As my living political hero was exiting the arena, I wanted to find my own normal. I wanted to have a “real job,” as my mom had argued. I wanted a love life that didn’t involve me being around for a few weeks and then shipping out across the continent.

I was lucky to find him. Perfect we weren’t, but we complemented each other. He taught me more about myself in two years than I learned in the previous 28. I also learned that it is hard to balance a relationship with things like work, family, friends, your own personal moment to just silently read a book and decompress. Add to that my politics, pride, and ego, and you have the makings of a beautiful relationship supernova. Although that awesome explosion might destroy a lot, it also makes way for the creation of something new.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

So what’s next for me? I have had many rivers to cross in my life and I still have many left to travel. I look forward to remaining a leader within my community. I want to make sure that people that look like me, that love like me, that grew up in my circumstances or not, all get to be privileged with the opportunities that have been given to me. It has already been a great honor helping with the upcoming Democratic



Picture it: Milwaukee, autumn of 1997. A young boy picks up a book at his local school library and gets completely sucked into the idea that one day he could become President of the United States of America.

National Convention. Working with the Milwaukee 2020 convention team and being in the space to be a friendly face for the city I love along with people like Martha Love, Alex Lasry and Thad Nation to make one of my most political nerdy dreams come alive in my hometown is just amazing. This is going to be such an amazing event for the entire city as we bring over 50,000 people into our city and show them why Milwaukee is America’s rising Midwestern Phoenix.

If I can offer any particular words for readers other than thank you for reading, I offer these: Hope, Persistence, and Audacity. You have to have hope that things will get better and that, no matter how dark things might seem, this is not the end of history. Be persistent and play the game all the way out. Finish the book. If it’s something worth fighting for you never surrender, even if you have to retreat from the battle to regroup and come back stronger next time. That way, if things don’t work out, at least you can sleep peacefully at night knowing you gave it everything you had. Do not let someone divert you from your plotted course because they don’t believe you or in you. Have the audacity to be different in a world full of too many people who try not to be.

I know the question in your head now is, when will he run for office? I sincerely believe it is my duty as an American to offer my hands to help steer the ship of democracy. I am also a believer in when the moment comes, you will know. I still have some “adulting” to complete before I’m ready. Which is fine. I’m something like a young man, and this isn’t nearly the end of the story. ■

Q T P O C P R I D E

Join Us at Madison Pride on August 18! The QTPoC Pride Committee will be hosting a QTPoC tent at this year’s OutReach Magic Festival in Warner Park. Come share space with us, connect, and be in community with others like you!

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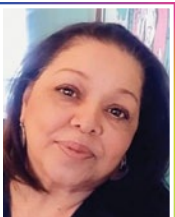



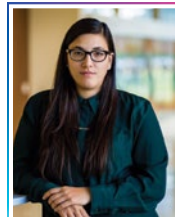



# QTPOC PRIDE







On this, the **50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots** and the explosion of the modern LGBTQ rights movement, it's as good a time as any to remind ourselves why and how we got here—to learn about and lift up the elder saints of our communities who gave so much to blaze a trail for those of us who came after.

It's absolutely crucial to remember that many of them were the folks living at the most extreme margins of society. Trans folks, especially those of color, sex workers, drag queens, butch lesbians, and other gender non-conforming people were the most targeted, and most often on the front lines of the resistance.


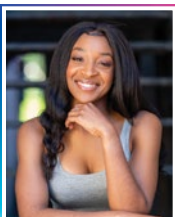




While it's important to learn a more holistic and inclusive history, it's also essential to recognize and lift up the leadership of the present. That's where the QTPOC Pride List comes in. It is the intention of *Our Lives* and the **QTPOC Pride Committee** to shed more light on and lift up the thriving and robust community of resilient, creative, and diverse people of color who are and have always been leaders within the LGBTQ spectrum, particularly here in Wisconsin. (As always, this is by no means meant as an exhaustive list, and our doors are always open to further entries, suggestions, and feedback.)


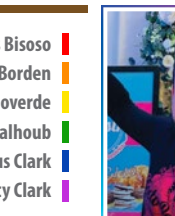




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M Adams  
Shyra Adams  
Theo Agbi  
Sarah Akawa  
Angie Alcorta







Akiya Alexander  
Lex Allen  
Alnisa Allgood  
L. Malik Anderson  
Vaunce Ashby  
Davette Baker

Ida Balderrama-Trudell  
TeKema Balentine  
Tempestt Ballenger  
Rick Banks  
Dereck Barr-Pulliam  
Wynter Bates

Jesus Bisoso  
Keith Borden  
Diego Campoverde  
Jo Chalhoub  
DeMarcus Clark  
Stacy Clark



## The Reformer

Madison School Board member **Ananda Mirilli** has worked her way from single immigrant mother to education and social justice advocate for children across Wisconsin.

I am originally from Brasil, where I grew up in a working class neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro as the oldest of three children. I never really felt I fit into my family or community, and the perpetual violence and injustice made a disturbing contrast to the beautiful landscape.

I relocated to the United States when I was 21 years old, with just two suitcases and enough money to pay for a flight back. For the first five years I lived in Michigan, but not having my official status yet, it was challenging to pursue higher education.

My daughter Breana was born in Ann Arbor in 2002, and we moved to Wisconsin shortly after. Now 16 years old, she is my world. My worry for her and longing for a better life keeps me working hard to interrupt the chains of othering and to fight for justice and a culture of belonging. I have been a proud single mother for most of her life.

I love my work to address racial disparities in special education at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Prior to that I worked for the Madison school district and as a Restorative Justice Director for the YWCA. I now hold a Master's degree in Education Leadership and Policy Analysis, with undergrad degrees in Human Services and Psychology.

In the summer of 2018, I met with Ali Muldrow at Cargo Coffee to talk about our hopes and dreams for education in Madison. Ali was determined to run again for school board. The sense of urgency and passion for educational justice was contagious, and so we came up with a plan to run collaboratively and serve on the board together. Our goal was and is to shift the Madison narrative for brown, black, LGBTQ+ youth, students with disabilities, and immigrant youth. It was there that we painted what became known as "A+ Ali & Ananda Collaborative Campaign," #United4Change.

The slogan is more than a hashtag. It's an effort to disrupt the political status quo in Madison, elevating the voices of brown and black queer moms. We ran an unapologetic, bold, united, and hopefully inspiring campaign (and won).

I also serve on the Madison College Board, as president of the Dane County Latino Education Council, and as Chair of Forward Community Investments. I love the Madison community and the opportunity to re-invent myself and co-create a vision for a city that is welcoming to all, while instilling a real sense of belonging for all residents. ■

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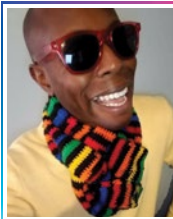
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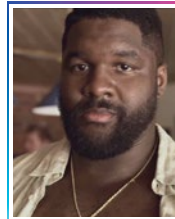
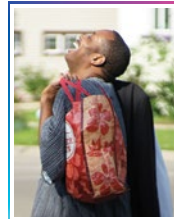
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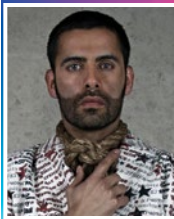




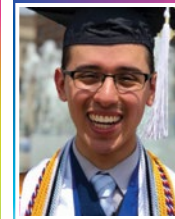
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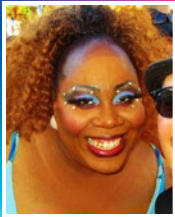


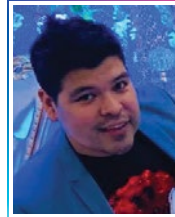









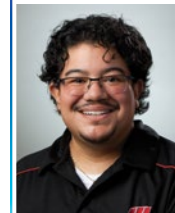

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■ Gary Cooper-Sperber  
■ Alex Corona  
■ Tyrone Creech Jr  
■ Victor Crentsil

■ Rolando Cruz  
■ Daeniel Datu  
■ Baltazar De Anda-Santana  
■ Arturo 'Tito' Diaz  
■ Micah Dombroe  
■ Sergio Domínguez Jr.

■ Gatlin Dresidan  
■ Shannon Dupree  
■ Cedric Ellis  
■ Debbie Foster  
■ Pedro Garcia-Rios  
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### The Leader

Freedom Inc's **Zon Moua** is paving a path of radical justice and healing for queer and immigrant communities of color.

Zon Moua is a queer, femme, Hmoob womxn born and raised in Wisconsin. She is the youngest of 11 children, born to refugee parents. Currently, she serves as the Director of Youth Organizing at Freedom, Inc.

Zon has worked on gender-based violence, queer, and youth justice issues since the age of 16. In 2016, she co-organized the U.S. Hmong LGBTQ delegation to the first Global Hmong Women's Summit in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where over a hundred Hmong women and allies convened to discuss what it would look like to build a future free of gender-based violence.

She introduces black and Southeast Asian youth to social justice movements through direct services, leadership development, and community organizing with innovative cultural art, music, and dance programming. Zon's passion for youth justice has led her to organize on the issue of policing in schools and the criminalization of young people of color. Through her work, she hopes to not only transform herself, but her community in raising the visibility of queer, trans, black, and Southeast Asian leadership and liberation.

Zon is instrumental in shaping the youth programs and campaigns at Freedom, Inc. As a youth, she created the organization's Hmong cultural arts program, Viv Ncaus Dance Troupe. Through the Viv Ncaus Dance Troupe program, Zon has been able to use cultural arts, music, and dance to connect Hmong girls and teens to social justice movements.

Zon motivates and inspires youth in all the programs. She helps lead the primary youth campaign for educational justice at Freedom, Inc. She has led the No Cops in School Campaign by building the capacity of Freedom Youth Squad, the black and Southeast Asian youth leaders at Freedom, Inc.

Zon not only builds power in youth but trains staff to bring elder Hmong, Khmer, and black parents to advocate for families. She gives voice to those most impacted every day through her advocacy, bravery, and leadership. Her work takes her to numerous conferences and speaking engagements throughout the nation to share best practices for working with queer Hmong youth. She was recipient of the prestigious Windcall Residency program in 2018, where she learned transformative and healing methods. ■

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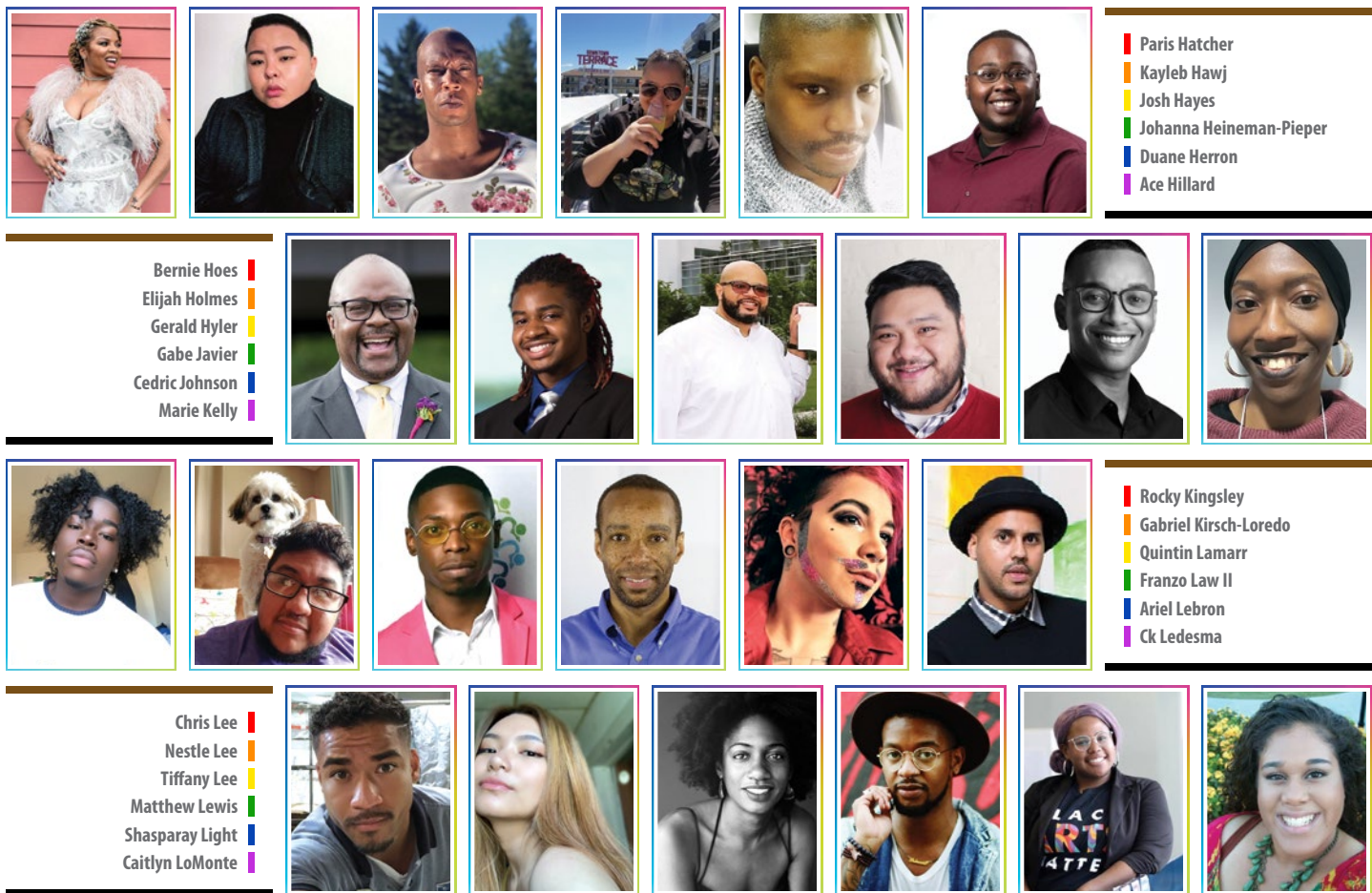
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### The Volunteer

OutReach board president **Mike Ruiz** is working to bring more diverse perspectives and services to Madison's LGBTQ community center.

Mike Ruiz, the current president of OutReach's board of directors, is optimistic following the controversy of the previous year. Shortly after stepping into the position, the debate over an official police contingent participation in the nonprofit's annual Pride parade went somewhat nuclear, putting Mike and the other board members at ground zero of long-simmering tension within the LGBTQ community.

"It was new ground for all of us," Ruiz says. "We felt really passionately about what the right thing to do was, but it wasn't always clear how to get there." He says he looked to his friends, family, and fellow board members for support and guidance. "We navigated it together and that's how we made it through."

Self-identified as a cisgender gay man of color, Ruiz also recognizes that he has his own forms of privilege. He says part of his journey has been to "ask myself what am I using that privilege for." His conclusion? "It was crystal clear: centering the multiply marginalized members of our community. Lifting up those voices is the prime directive. An idea the board stuck to is that we are charged as a community center with elevating those multiply marginalized."

Originally from Phoenix, Arizona, Ruiz has lived in Madison for five years, making the move when his partner, Eric, relocated for work. He says he fell in love with the city almost right away.

"Madison has the perfect feel of big city amenities plus small town charm and friendliness. I like that Midwest niceness, even if it took me a minute to adapt. Since then, I've embraced that charm and made it my own."

Ruiz has been heavily involved in his day jobs' Pride ERG, both when he lived in Arizona and now. He continues to be a leader of the company's virtual chapter of the LGBTQ resource group, serving as emeritus of its Americas chapter. When he moved to Madison, he encountered OutReach volunteers at an event at the now closed Cardinal Bar and decided it was an organization with which he wanted to be involved. First, however, he knew he had to learn—from the ground up—what they do and who they serve. He started as part of the speaker's bureau before finally stepping onto the board in June of 2016.

It's been a rewarding gig so far, he notes, as OutReach made a significant commitment to refocusing more of its work on anti-racist training and racial and social justice generally. The organization is currently recruiting new members to the board, too, and Ruiz notes they're especially keen to get more diverse community representation.

"If you're passionate about these issues, if you feel there's a segment of the community that's underrepresented on board, please step up and join us," he says. "We would love to have even more voices at the table as we drive the center forward. We also fully welcome the perspectives and input of the community. We want to be the community center for the entire community. It's going to take everyone to make sure that happens." ■

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## The Mentor

**TeKema Balentine** is using her platform as Miss Black Wisconsin to bring hope and guidance to the next generation of QTPOC.



Madison College student TeKema Balentine won the 2019 Miss Black Wisconsin, despite it being the first pageant she entered as an adult.

Balentine, 25, is also a proud lesbian woman of color and wants to use her platform as Miss Black Wisconsin to show all of the youth she mentors that their goals are possible. Balentine is a coach on Madison East's track and field team and said that when the girls on the team found out she had won Miss Black Wisconsin they were starstruck and swarmed her during practice after the news broke.

"My platform is to improve the education gap between students of color and white students," Balentine says. "I wanted to make sure I included the LGBTQ community as well because I identify as a lesbian. It was during high school that I began to notice that some systems were going to be more difficult for me to navigate because, not only am I a female, but a brown one—and on top of that a gay one. While I see that as a triple threat now, as a high school student those facts felt more like burdens. The confidence I have in myself now is confidence I've built over the years. I want anyone who may be exploring their sexuality to know that I've been there and that I'm a resource to them."

Balentine entered the pageant with hopes to get a scholarship to help ease the financial burdens of school as she studies to become a nurse practitioner. Her plan is to get an Associates Degree before moving on to UW-Milwaukee or the University of Wisconsin.

In August, Balentine will travel to Washington D.C. where she will compete against 49 other women to be crowned Miss Black USA. Balentine says she's feeling nervous but has been keeping in shape this spring and preparing herself for the various aspects of the national pageant.

An alum of East High School, she hope a good showing in D.C. will further her ability to inspire youth. When asked about using the pageant's platform to empower girls, she said that was the entire point.

"That's what I'd like to do. Outside of this pageant, I also model. Outside of modeling, I am a caregiver," she explains. "I want girls to understand that you can be creative and do what you want outside of your academics, but also have an academic backup plan... Strive for more than a viral opportunity."

Balentine has taken the girls she coaches and mentors to things like the Black Girl's Magic Conference in hopes that they will see themselves in the success stories around them.

"I want to be a part of something bigger and have them see that there are other successful brown women out there who are celebrating young brown women, and they seemed to be really excited about it. I'm hoping to stay connected with them and do some more things like that." —**Nicholas Garton**

PHOTO BY MELISSA AUSTIN.



## The Activist

**Mark-Anthony Whitaker** is committed to serving his community through citizen action and civic involvement.

Mark-Anthony Whitaker is a Hardware Technician at UnityPoint Health-Meriter. He recently ran for alder of District 12 in the 2019 spring elections, hoping to succeed outgoing Alder Larry Palm. Whitaker ran on a platform of racial equity and inclusion for Madison's black community.

"I ran for alder because I believe Madison can be an inclusive community if all voices are involved in decision making and everyone gets a say in their government," he says. "I believed that we needed fresh voices on our City Council to help shape the future of all our communities and all our families."

Whitaker came to Madison during the Act 10 protests of 2011 with his now fiancé John, who grew up on Madison's northside. A military veteran, Whitaker was encouraged by the citizen activism he saw in the State Capitol. However, as he learned more about the wide racial disparities in the city—ever at odds with the Madison's reputation as one of the best places to live and raise a family—he grew discouraged.

Whitaker did not win his election this past Spring, but that initial encouragement from the activism he witnessed when he moved here remains. He still believes Madison can be an inclusive space, especially for the black LGBTQ+ community. With a new City Council and mayor committed to black inclusion, Whitaker believes the city is on the right path forward. He wants to stay involved to ensure the city stays focused on racial equity and inclusion. ■

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- Cooper Talbot
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- Yante Turner
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- Oscar Villareal
- Phillip Vinson



### The Advocate

Milwaukee's **Alex Corona** is a passionate advocate for LGBTQ and sex worker's rights.

Alex Corona stays busy. In addition to working as the Transgender Resource Coordinator for the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, she's an advocate for LetsPrEPWI, which connects people all over the state to a life-saving medication that significantly eliminates the risk of contracting HIV. She's also an ambassador for the Wisconsin HIV Outreach Project's Statewide Action Planning Group and is featured on billboards and advertisements for the Health Department's "HIV In Real Life" campaign. Corona also finds time to host events regularly around the Milwaukee area, and if all of that weren't impressive enough, she's a member of the USA board of directors for the Sex Workers Outreach Project.

Corona is the child of an undocumented Mexican immigrant. She has a graduate degree in Education from UW-Milwaukee. And she is a fierce advocate for some of the most marginalized people in our society.

"People from all over the world participate in the facilitation and consumption of sex work," Corona wrote for a piece originally published in *USA Today*. "But in marginalized communities such as black and brown people, transgender people, and other groups who are denied access to the same resources, education and employment afforded to white people, for some, sex work is the only form of survival. I, myself, found sex work because my employment opportunities were limited as a transgender Latina."

Corona goes on to note that she felt a sense of empowerment doing the work because she set her own schedule, had a say in her wages, and, frankly, enjoyed it. She also recognizes that many people are driven to the work for simple survival, and fights to create a system where that work and the people who perform it are validated, regulated, and protected.

"It is important to note that sex work is not sexual assault and it is not sex trafficking. Sexual assault and sex trafficking are and should continue to be illegal and prosecuted," she wrote. "But opponents of the decriminalization of sex work often conflate sex work with assault, violence, and trafficking to stigmatize those who participate in it."

"Decriminalization empowers people like me to move up in a system set up against us without added pressures of high risk situations, lifelong repercussions of incarceration, and violence. That should be the focus of this conversation, not what happens in the bedrooms (and back seats) of consenting adults." ■

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**The Businesswoman**  
Genia Stevens started and runs Belwah Media and Strategy to help non-profits (particularly those focused on women, people of color, and the LGBTQ community) thrive.

When I was 12, I started my period. I remember my mama gave me a set of three books that all the girls in the family received when they'd started theirs. The books were supposed to tell you everything you needed to know about the phases of life. One of them mentioned that kids went through a phase where they were attracted to the same sex. I remember thinking, "Whew! It's a phase. I'll get over it."

When I was 19 and serving in the Navy, a 20-year-old sailor asked me to marry him because I was pregnant. I told him I wasn't sure if I should because I was going through a gay phase. He said, "Oh, you're bisexual. That's cool." We got married. Four years later, when I told him I was a lesbian, that wasn't so cool.

I called home to come out to my family. My youngest sister told me that two of our cousins (both sisters) had just come out as lesbians. I said, "Well, guess who else is a lesbian? Me!" She said "Well, if you like it, I love it." It was that easy. Almost too easy.

After divorcing my husband, I was a single lesbian mom in college, raising two small boys in a small town in Wisconsin. It was this phase of my life that proved the most challenging. My ex-husband, a Christian conservative white man, decided I was an acceptable mom as a bisexual, but completely unacceptable as a lesbian. We spent six years in family court fighting over custody.

Between college, court costs, feeding the kids, paying rent, and keeping the lights on, I was spending money faster than I could make it. I launched and grew a marketing business out of necessity. I took every job I could find on every website that popped up—like eBay, Craigslist, PlanetOut, and MySpace.

When I decided to take my business from the online space to the offline world, I worried that once people learned I was a lesbian they wouldn't do business with me. One of my former bosses said to me, "Genia, you're good at what you do. If people don't want to work with you, they don't deserve you."

I can still smell those books I got when I started my period. I'm 47, and I'm wondering when this "phase" will end.

*Genia Stevens is the owner of Belwah Media, an integrated marketing communications agency and founder of Belwah Strategy, a strategic planning agency that helps nonprofit organizations develop strategies that focus on success through collaborative problem-solving. Her marketing agency Belwah Media has been awarded the LGBT Business of the Year Award and is also part of the Forbes Agency Council.*

**Freedom, Inc. announces scholarship for black queer students**

Freedom Inc. in June announced their Pat Parker Scholarship, which will award one black queer student \$500 to pursue their post-secondary degree in Dane County, Wisconsin. This includes any four-year institution, community college, vocational program, or professional program.

Applicants must identify as black and queer, have a significant financial need, and be pursuing a degree in Dane County. To apply, send a 500-750 word essay or 5-7 minute video explaining how the education you plan to pursue will help you make an impact in your community. Include your name, age, educational goals, and contact information. Applications are due by July 31, and applicants will be notified of the final award decision on August 7, 2019.

Send all applications to [communityfunds@freedom-inc.org](mailto:communityfunds@freedom-inc.org) with subject line "Black Queer Scholarship."



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LGBTQ HISTORY MADISON PRIDE

# Mad Pride

Madison has celebrated LGBTQ Pride since the movement began, though it has taken many forms. **Scott Seyforth** guides us through the many iterations of the city's festivities and protests over the decades.

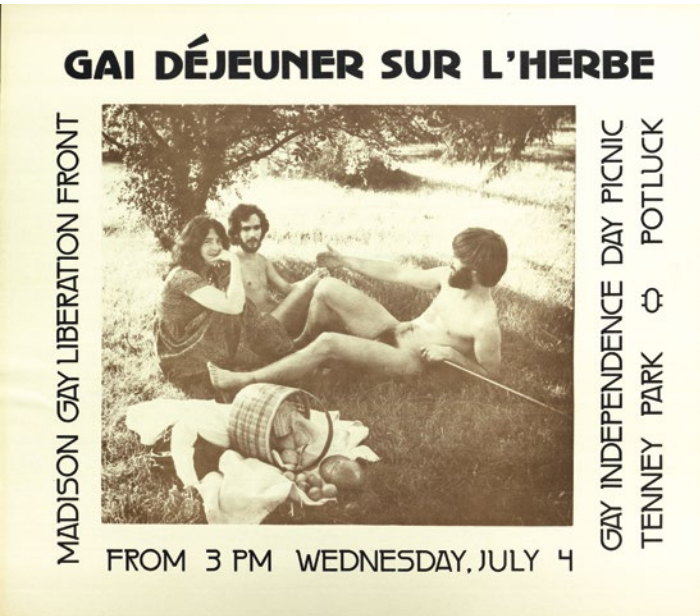
**MADISON'S HISTORY WITH LGBTQ PRIDE** is a storied and evolving series of events. As we commemorate a landmark anniversary in the LGBTQ movement, let's look back at the ways Madison has gathered together in pride during the summer months over the last five decades.

In late October 1969, just four months after the Stonewall Rebellion spurred the ongoing movement for LGBTQ rights, several men gathered at the St. Francis House (the Episcopal student center at 1000 University Avenue) to form what would become the first gay liberation organization in Wisconsin—the Madison Alliance for Homosexual Equality (MAHE). As the group continued meeting into spring 1970, members began to be more “out” in the Madison community, taking on a more educational and political agenda.



MAHE would go on to achieve many queer firsts in the state that year, including the first appearance of openly LGBTQ individuals on television and radio, the first public LGBTQ dance, and the first public LGBTQ protest.

On May 1, 1970, MAHE held a day-long teach-in at the UW Memorial Union that featured educational panels, a screening of the early classic lesbian film *Mädchen in Uniform*, and ending with a dance in the cafeteria. It was the first public educational and celebratory queer event in the state, held before even the first Christopher Street Liberation Day March in New



ABOVE: A 1973 precursor to the Magic Picnic in Tenney Park. LEFT: Program for the 1977 Gay Arts Festival.

The MAHE May Day Conference was a success. It would become an ongoing fete in Madison during the decade of the 1970s, picked up by succeeding local political groups like the Madison Gay Liberation Front, Madison Gay Activist Alliance, and the Madison Committee for Gay Rights.

York (the commemoration of the Stonewall Rebellion that would become an annual tradition celebrated internationally). The MAHE May Day Conference was a success. It would become an ongoing fete in Madison during the decade of the 1970s, picked up by succeeding local political groups like the Madison Gay Liberation Front, Madison Gay Activist Alliance, and the Madison Committee for Gay Rights.

## EARLY COMMUNITY EFFORTS

In December 1972, with the drinking age newly lowered from 21 to 18, Madison native Rodney Scheel opened the first bar owned and operated by an openly LGBTQ person in Madison's history, The Back Door, located at 46 N. Park St. Customers entered through the back door of the building, went down the stairs to the bar in the basement, and were greeted at the bottom of the stairs by a life-size mural of Dorothy and Toto with the quote, “Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.” Up a set of inner stairs was the city's first LGBTQ dance floor.

The Back Door quickly became a community institution. As a thank-you to patrons, Scheel held a community picnic on June 3, 1973 in Brittingham Park, which was walking distance from the bar.



**SCOTT SEYFORTH** holds a PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. For over a decade Seyforth has been actively involved in collecting and archiving the history of the local LGBTQ community. He is one of the founders of the Madison LGBTQ Oral History Project and the Madison LGBTQ Archive at the U.W.-Madison Archives.



The event was such a hit that the Back Door patron appreciation picnic would become an annual Madison summer community celebration for the next three decades.

During this period, the political LGBTQ organizations in town chose the July 4 holiday as a popular day to hold summer community picnics. In 1973, the Madison Gay Liberation Front sponsored a picnic in Tenney Park on July 4. Linda Newman, who graced that year's poster, remembers, “There were lots of people, lots of sunshine, and lots of good friends.” Madison Gay Activist Alliance, a successor organization, sponsored a community picnic the following July 4, 1974 at Tenney Park as well.

May Day Conferences continued with a 1977 May Day Gay Arts Festival at the Great Hall of the Memorial Union, sponsored by the Madison Committee for Gay Rights. The event began with a parade at Noon from the Capitol Square down to Library Mall, followed by exhibitions, and ending with a 600-person-strong May Day Rally against Anita Bryant and her nationwide “Save the Children” crusade against homosexuals. Both Mayor Paul Soglin and State Representative David Clarenbach addressed the crowd.

## A MAGIC ERA

The following year during the 1978 May Day conference, Madison's sexual orientation non-discrimination ordinance was under threat of repeal by a referendum urged by Reverend Wayne



Galvanize founders, Pam Jacobson, Tim O'Brien & Richard Kilmer in 1989.



Inspired by the National Gay and Lesbian March on Washington in 1987, they created The Madison Pride March Committee which named itself GALVANize. They held a Madison Gay Pride Rally and March on May 6, 1989. Over 7,500 people attended the rally.



Dillabaugh, a conservative evangelist, part of the national gay rights repeal campaign led by Bryant. At the Gay Rites of Spring Dance on May 1, 1978 in the Great Hall of the Memorial Union, Madison LGBTQ bar owners announced a group, M.A.G.I.C., Madison Area Gay Interim Committee, formed to fight the proposed referendum.

Bar owners collaborated in sponsoring the Back Door picnic, renamed M.A.G.I.C. picnic, to use the profits to fund local political action. The referendum push fizzled, and the M.A.G.I.C. picnic continued for two decades as a fundraiser for local queer causes, becoming a regional celebration, as local LGBTQ organizations



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planned events to coincide with the annual picnic.

The M.A.G.I.C. Picnic settled into being held the third Saturday of July to avoid conflicts with other regional Pride events in Chicago and Milwaukee. The picnic featured information tables from local organizations, vendor booths, dancing in the Brittingham shelter pavilion, a beer tent, performers, a Saturday night dinner, and an array of games from water-balloon tosses to the purse throw. During the “drag race” competitors outfitted themselves in drag attire throughout various stops along a course. Madison’s annual Gay Volleyball Tournament also scheduled itself in coordination with the picnic. Beginning in the 1980s, bars from Chicago and Milwaukee even sent busses in for “M.A.G.I.C. Picnic Get-Aways to Madison.”

The Back Door quickly became a community institution. As a thank-you to bar patrons, Scheel held a picnic for the LGBTQ community on June 3, 1973 in Brittingham Park, which was walking distance from the bar.

The efforts in planning the M.A.G.I.C. Picnics, which would continue for the next 20 years, were staffed and paid for by the local LGBTQ bars. Leadership, staff time, and resources in planning the event continued to be provided by Rodney Scheel and the staff at The Back Door, and later the Hotel Washington.

In 1987 a group of local activists, including Pam Jacobson, Tim O’Brien, and Richard Kilmer, began working to organize a local political march, in contrast to the community celebration that was the M.A.G.I.C. Picnic. “We need to become a more visible political force in Madison and in the state,” said O’Brien at the time. Inspired by the National Gay and Lesbian March on Washington in October 1987, they created The Madison Pride March Committee which named itself GALVANize (Gay and Lesbian Visibility Alliance). They held a Madison Gay Pride Rally and March on May 6, 1989. Over 7,500 people attended the rally. The Rally was accompanied by an ambitious and well-attended week-long series of events, including a photography exhibit, concerts, workshops, and an exhibition of panels from the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt.



Alan Strozak was emceeing the rally in Library Mall and recalls, “It was insanely exhilarating to watch a sea of people marching directly toward us!” The 1997 March occurred in the wake of the federal Defense of Marriage Act and brought 1,500 people to the Capitol who then marched to join revelers at the Magic Picnic at Brittingham Park. “This is the one day of the year we all get together and celebrate who we are,” Linda Lenzke said at the time. “This is sort of like a family reunion every year.”

#### STRUGGLES AND SUPPORT

In 1999 The Magic Picnic and GALVANize Pride March merged into one organization called Madison Pride. It was a community organization that included participation from many of the local LGBTQ bars: Ray’s, Club 5, Cheri’s Back East, and others. They held the picnic and the parade all on the same weekend from 1997 through 2008. Other local organizations went back to organizing events around the weekend: Friday nights were OutReach’s annual dinner followed by the Ten Percent Society Dances in the UW Memorial Union, the picnic on Saturday, UW–Madison GLBT Alumni breakfast on Sunday morning, and the Pride Parade early Sunday afternoon, which proceeded from the Capitol down West Washington Avenue to the festival in Brittingham Park.

In 2008 the treasurer of Madison Pride, Scott Toomey, swindled the group, leaving the group with \$4 in its checking account and over \$8,000 in unpaid bills from the previous year. The event, which had been drawing 6,000 people over the course of the weekend with the Picnic hosting 15 performers and 50 vendors, was drastically scaled back. A Sunday rally with fewer than 400 people was held at the Capitol and one musical act at Brittingham Park followed. Many

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ABOVE: FruitFest founders from left to right at the first event in 2010: Corey Gresen, Rico Sabatini, and Liz Tymus. BELOW: The WOOFs Pride Block Party in 2018.



in the community were left sad and dismayed.

Three groups stepped in to help fill a felt void created by the demise of Madison Pride: Two local bars, and one group of community volunteers. Plan B nightclub owners Rico Sabatini and Corey Gresen, decided in 2010 to offer a free LGBTQ Pride season music festival in the club's parking lot and spilling onto Willy Street. Fruit Fest featured a charity 5K run/walk, and day-long music festival with a mix of local and national LGBTQ performers. That event continues to this day, now under the auspices of the renamed Prism Dance Club (co-owned by Sabatini and Apollo Marquez). Also in 2010, WOOFs bar owners Dino Maniaci and Jason Hoke created a block party outside of the club on the 100 block of King

Street as a celebration of Madison's LGBTQ community and its supporters. This free event allowed attendees to gather in the street to enjoy music, beer, and food. It also hosts a charity component, raising funds for local, community based organizations such as StageQ, ARCW, OutReach, and most recently, GSAFE. Around the same time, a group of volunteers formed Wisconsin Capitol Pride in 2009 to plan a new Pride event for Madison. Wisconsin Capitol Pride hosted a weekend of events featuring local and national LGBTQ performers on Willow Island at the Alliant Energy Center. The venue necessitated a parking fee and a separate entrance fee to the grounds. A parade was held on Sunday around the Capitol Square, after which attendees could move to Alliant Energy Center for the remainder of the festivities. These festivals continued until 2013 when Wisconsin Capitol Pride unexpectedly cancelled Pride just two weeks before the event was to be held and disbanded. Maintaining volunteer support to produce a large-scale weekend series of events had proved difficult to sustain.

CURRENT EFFORTS, CONTINUED CHALLENGES

Following the cancellation of Pride in 2013, individuals and organizations in the LGBTQ community asked OutReach to organize the parade. OutReach agreed to work with a coalition of groups (WOOFs, Fair Wisconsin, PFLAG, *Our Lives*, and others) to host a parade, planned around a weekend of other events (which have included WOOF's Block Party, Willma's Fund Pride Show, Hot Summer Gays, and *Our Lives'* QTPoC Pride Brunch).

Following the cancellation of Pride in 2013, individuals and organizations asked OutReach to organize the parade. OutReach agreed to work with a coalition to host a parade, planned around a weekend of other events.

OutReach offered staff time and resources to handle the detail work of raising funds; negotiating with the Madison City Street Use Staff Commission for dates, routes, and required police presence; organizing the contingents for the parade; managing vendor permits and non-profit tables; coordinating the volunteers who ran the event; and bringing together the post-parade rally in collaboration with other LGBTQ organizations.

These efforts resulted in a 2014 Pride parade route that went up Williamson Street to the Capitol Square, attended by about 1500 people. Many community members were glad to have a LGBTQ parade again in Madison. The 2015, 2016, and 2017 OutReach Pride Parades grew in attendance each year. The route up State Street to the Square was popular, and a rally was held afterward at the Capitol. Many groups sponsored the event and contingents grew from 60 to 90 in number. The crowd estimate for the 2017 march was 5,000.

Partly in response to national events in 2017, a loose-knit group of activists who eventually called themselves the Community Pride Coalition engaged the community in conversations about the appropriateness of uniformed and armed police officers marching in the Pride parade. Pride parades started in 1970 as a commemoration of a rebellion against police harassment of members of the LGBTQ community. Many in our community today feel unsafe with police officers marching while armed and in uniform.

Community conversations ensued about the need to take a stance against current police mistreatment of the LGBTQ community,



particularly people of color. Community Pride Coalition worked toward ending the participation of armed, uniformed police marching in Madison Pride 2018, requesting participation unarmed and in civilian clothes. OutReach, Community Pride Coalition and the Madison Police Department met to seek a compromise, but one could not be reached. Eventually OutReach withdrew the application for the Madison Police Department to march. This proved controversial, with some in the community pleased and others very upset at the decision, which received considerable media attention. Nevertheless, the ensuing 2018 OutReach Pride Parade was a success, boasting the largest amount of contingents yet, and crowds well over 5,000.

In 2019 OutReach attempted to host a parade, but were presented with new challenges by the City of Madison Street Use Commission. After meetings regarding changes to City policies regarding events



LEFT: Attendees at the 2018 QTPoC Pride Brunch put on by the QTPoC Pride Committee & *Our Lives* magazine at Robinia Courtyard. ABOVE: The OutReach Pride Parade in 2017.

in the downtown area and police coverage requirements, OutReach decided to return this year's event to community roots—an OutReach Magic Festival. This celebration will offer an opportunity to socialize together in community at Warner Park on Sunday, August 18 from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Activities at the park will include the QTPoC Pride Social, a mainstage with live entertainment, booths from local community organizations, merchandise vendors, food vendors, a beer tent, and games. Warner Park offers free parking, no entrance fee, and attendees can bring food (but no alcohol) into the park.

In reflecting on the preparations for this year's event, Steve Starkey commented, "Pride events in Madison over the decades have helped to build connections and relationships in the LGBTQ communities. They've also increased the LGBTQ visibility to the general population. Pride events are a lot of work to organize, and are worth it because of the progress we build through them."

Thanks to Emily Mills and Ron McCrea for their editorial assistance. Thanks to Steve Starkey for providing background for this article. ■

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## No Cops In Schools

By **Zon Moua**, Director of Youth Organizing at **Freedom, Inc.**

**AS A QUEER SOUTHEAST ASIAN** woman, why do I care about getting police out of my neighborhood and out of schools? Simply put, the police cause harm to queer and trans people of color. To understand what that looks like, we need to go back and take a look at the history of policing and understand how police use their powers to enforce white heteronormative gender binaries.

A few years ago, I attended a concert with a trans fluid person who was my partner at the time. They presented a bit more masculine, but you could tell they were gender non-conforming. As we lined up to go through security I could sense my partner's body tensing up. They had previous bad encounters with security in the past and it was traumatizing for them. When it was my turn to walk in, the male security officer did a quick scan with his metal detector wand and took a quick peek into my purse.

My partner went next. Before we were even able to speak, the officer's hands went to my partner's chest, searching up and down. I was in shock. There'd been no heads up or warning about the physical search. They did not ask if it was OK to search their body. There was no explanation. It was a lose-lose situation.

That was the moment I fully realized that trans and queer people are not seen as whole beings, but rather objects that need to be corrected by any means. Trans and queer people don't fit neatly into the binaries and

Law enforcement zeros in on gender non-binary folks by using physically and sexually violent tactics, such as strip and body cavity searches. This is a dehumanizing act and is often used with trans and queer people to exert power and enforce the gender binary.

boxes set up by our society.

Law enforcement zeros in on gender non-binary folks by using physically and sexually violent tactics, such as strip and body cavity searches. This is a dehumanizing act and is often used with trans and queer people to exert power and enforce the gender binary. This in turn forces trans women into men's prisons and solitary confinement, while failing to protect queer and trans folx who are the targets of homophobic and transphobic attacks.

In 2011, CeCe McDonald, an African American trans woman, was harassed, violently attacked, and followed. She took matters into her own hands and defended herself, causing the death of her attacker. Instead of the state protecting McDonald, they decided to lock her up. Presented with no other options, McDonald plead guilty to manslaughter.

That same year Ky Peterson, a black trans man, was attacked and knocked out. When he regained consciousness, he was being raped. Peterson protected himself the best

way he knew how to in the moment and killed the perpetrator. Peterson was able to free himself from that traumatic situation but only to be met with the full force of the criminal justice system. The legal system did not see him as a victim and survivor of physical and sexual assault. Peterson was charged with manslaughter.

Throughout history there have been countless policies used to criminalize queer and trans people—and to utilize the police to enforce them. The fight for LGBTQ rights and the birth of Pride really came from the Stonewall Uprising, led by black and brown trans women and other queer activists who stood up to the constant police raids on LGBT bars during the 1960s.

Reclaiming our history, our radical roots, means understanding how the celebration of Pride is antithetical to supporting the presence of armed police in our schools, among other things. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, then, we must carry on the fight that Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera pioneered for trans and queer justice and liberation.

We need to go beyond conversations and learning. We need to go beyond monuments. Action needs to be taken. We have a responsibility to protect those most marginalized people, and I can tell you that more police is not the solution. The best thing we can do is to take the police out of our communities and places of learning. We have to empower young queer and trans people of color by shifting power to them. We have to be committed to investing in their success. We need to pour resources and money into queer and trans leadership development, health, wellness, and talents.

Join me in supporting Freedom Youth Squad, the young black and Southeast Asian leaders at Freedom, Inc. who are at the forefront of the campaign in Madison to get cops out of schools. The No Cops In School Campaign is about divesting from the police and investing in youth of color, and envisioning a new world with alternatives that are rooted in the community and not in punitive punishment.

For more information on the campaign please email Freedom, Inc. at [info@freedom-inc.org](mailto:info@freedom-inc.org). ■



**ZON MOUA** is a queer, femme, Hmoob womxn. She has worked on gender-based violence, queer, and youth justice issues since the age of 16. Currently, she serves as the Director of Youth Organizing at Freedom, Inc.



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## IMMIGRATION CITIZENSHIP SAME-SEX COUPLES

## Citizen In Limbo... Again

A recent effort by the Trump Administration to deny birthright citizenship to children of same-sex couples has many on edge. Attorneys **Michele Perreault** and **Raluca Vais-Ottosen** of DeWitt Ross & Stevens break down what's at issue and what's at stake.

**DID YOU EVER IMAGINE** that a child can be a U.S. citizen at birth, but his twin brother cannot? We asked this question last year when we analyzed the court cases of two sets of twins who were facing this very legal dilemma. Earlier this year we celebrated the victory of one of the twins when a federal judge ruled he was a U.S. citizen at birth, just like his twin brother. Unfortunately, the Trump administration appealed that decision, and the uncertainty of the children's legal status, along with the hardship their families must endure as a result, continues.

As you may recall from our original article from March 2018, Andrew Dvash-Banks, a U.S. citizen, and his husband, Elad Dvash-Banks, an Israeli citizen, were legally married in Canada in 2010. In 2015 they both used their own sperm and eggs from an anonymous donor, which led to a successful twin pregnancy carried to term by a surrogate. The twins, Ethan and Aiden, were born minutes apart in 2016, in Canada. Andrew and Elad are the only parents listed on the children's birth certificate, and they are the children's legal parents.

However, when Andrew and Elad tried to register the U.S. citizenship of the twins with the U.S. Consulate in Canada based on having a legal U.S. citizen parent, the Consulate required DNA testing to ascertain which parent donated the sperm for which twin. As a result of the testing, the

U.S. Consulate denied U.S. citizenship to Ethan because he was Elad's biological son. The Consulate granted U.S. citizenship to Aiden, Andrew's biological son.

Across the Atlantic, Alisson Blixt, a U.S. citizen, and her wife, Stefania Zaccari, an Italian citizen, were experiencing the same horror at the U.S. Consulate in London. Alisson gave birth to Massi and Stefania gave birth to Lucas. The couple was married at the time the boys were born and they are the only parents listed on the birth certificates. Massi was granted citizenship at birth, but Lucas was not.

In both cases, the U.S. Consulates based their decision on the wrong interpretation that the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) requires a blood relationship between the child and the U.S. parent for the child to derive U.S. citizenship at birth. In reality, the law requires no such thing for Ethan and Lucas. Section 301(g) of the INA states that a person born outside of the U.S. of a parent who is a U.S. citizen and one who is not, automatically derives citizenship at birth if the U.S. citizen parent was physically present in the U.S. for at least five years prior to the child's birth, at least two of which being after the parent's fourteenth birthday. It defines the term "parent" as a relationship that exists when a child is born in wedlock, among other situations.

The INA, specifically Section 309 of the Act, does require a blood relationship for children born to a U.S. citizen father out of wedlock. But both Ethan and Lucas were born in wedlock, so they fall under the purview of Section 301, not 309. Nothing in the INA requires a blood relationship for children born to a couple that is already married.

Given the blatant misinterpretation of law, both families sued the U.S. government in federal court seeking to obtain automatic

Andrew Dvash-Banks and his husband, Elad Dvash-Banks, with their twins Aiden and Ethan.



On February 21, 2019, a federal judge granted the Dvash-Banks family's Motion and agreed that Ethan was a U.S. citizen. On May 6, 2019, the Trump administration appealed in an attempt to strip Ethan of U.S. citizenship.

citizenship for Ethan and Lucas. The two cases are *Dvash-Banks v. Tillerson* in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California (Case No. 18-CV-523), and *Blixt v. Tillerson* in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (Case No. 18-CV-124). Ethan's case in California was decided first.

On February 21, 2019, a federal judge granted the Dvash-Banks family's Motion and agreed that Ethan was a U.S. citizen at birth under INA Section 301, which only requires a legal relationship to the U.S. citizen parent, not a biological one. The judge agreed that, had Congress intended to require a blood relationship for children born to married couples, it would have spelled that out in Section 301, just like it did in Section 309 for children born out of wedlock. The court entered judgment in Ethan's favor on March 6, 2019.

Unfortunately, the Dvash-Banks family's journey did not end here. On May 6, 2019, the Trump administration appealed in an attempt to strip Ethan of U.S. citizenship. The parties will next submit their respective legal briefs, and months will go by before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals will decide this matter.

There is no way to predict with absolute certainty how the Court will decide this case, but legal precedent from the Ninth Circuit seems to be on Ethan's side. That

court analyzed INA Section 301 twice before, albeit not in the context of same-sex couples or births stemming from assisted reproductive treatment, and found both times that Section 301 does not require a biological relationship to the legal U.S. parent in *Scales v. INS*, (9th Cir. 2000), and *Solis-Espinosa v. Gonzales*, (9th Cir. 2005). We will now wait to see if the Ninth Circuit remains true to its own legal precedent.

In the meantime in D.C., the Blixt-Zaccari family continues to fight their battle in district court, as a final judgment has not yet been entered for Lucas. In that case, the government filed a Motion to Dismiss the case in September 2018. If granted, that would mean that Lucas is not a U.S. citizen. Remarkably, the government spent very little time addressing the actual law in its motion. Instead, it relied almost exclusively on language from the Foreign Affairs Manual, the agency's practice manual, which would require a blood relationship for Lucas. However, the Foreign Affairs Manual is not law and, most importantly, is not above the law.

While the government's Motion to Dismiss was still pending in the Blixt-Zaccari case, a federal judge in California ruled in Ethan's favor in the Dvash-Banks case. As a result, the judge in the Blixt-Zaccari case requested supplemental legal briefs to address the effects of the Dvash-Banks case. On May 15, 2019, the D.C. federal judge denied the government's motion to dismiss, meaning that Lucas can proceed with his federal case, in hopes that he will obtain the same result as Ethan did in California.

We will continue to keep track of these important cases and continue to fight for equality. If you have any questions about immigration or family law, please feel free to contact us. ■



**MICHELE PERREAULT** is a shareholder and Chair of the Family Law department of DeWitt Ross & Stevens, SC. Her statewide practice includes representing families and individuals in all family matters ranging from adoption, to prenuptial agreements, divorce, and estate planning. She is also a former Board member of Fair Wisconsin.



**RALUCA (LUCA) VAIS-OTTOSEN** is an attorney at DeWitt Ross & Stevens S.C. Her nationwide practice includes U.S. citizenship, permanent residence, and other family and employment-based immigration matters, representing individuals and employers before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Department of State through its Consulates abroad, and the U.S. Department of Justice.

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QTPOC SOCIAL SPACES

# Taking Up Space

In this installment of the Dear Queer White People advice column, **Dr. Sami Schalk** looks at how white folks take up space in social settings, and QTPOC-specific spaces in particular.

This edition of DQWP responds to two questions submitted anonymously at a Queer Pressure event a few months ago.

*Can you please address how white queer people take up space at queer events?*  
-Trying to Dance Unbothered

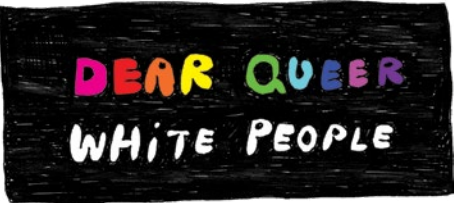
*Should white queers be present in QTPOC spaces?*  
-Trying Not to Intrude

## DEAR QUEER WHITE PEOPLE,

Let's talk about space—queer space, that is. It's incredibly important for marginalized people to have access to spaces where their identities, values, and ways of being in the world are centered and affirmed, and where they know they can be themselves, safely, in community with others like them.

Spaces for marginalized people can be permanent like community centers and dance clubs or temporary like the Lesbian Pop-up Bars or the (now dissolved, but forever beloved) Queer Pressure dance events. As this column has repeatedly emphasized, however, even within marginalized communities there are folks who have more social power and privilege than others.

When you have privilege you tend to be allotted more space and this impacts your awareness of how much space you take up. If you've typically been given as much space as you want, you tend to behave as if it's always OK for you to take up as much space as you want. There is a reason people have coined terms like



If you've typically been given as much space as you want, you tend to behave as if it's always OK for you to take up as much space as you want. There is a reason people have coined terms like "manspreading" and "manslamming."

"manspreading" (when men take up as much space as possible with their bodies on public transit) and "manslamming" (a term developed by Anna Breslaw after she decided not to move out of the way of men on the sidewalk and was repeatedly run into by them). In the Jim Crow era, black people were often expected to move into the gutters when passing white people and black men were expected to avert their eyes or cross the street when passing white women. In my time here I've repeatedly had white people cut in front of me in line at restaurants and bars as if they didn't see me at all.

As these examples show, some people get to move around and take up space without consequence—and some of us don't. This is why queer spaces matter and is also why, as a white queer person, you need to be aware of how you are taking up space in our shared safe spaces: physically, energetically, temporally, and so on.

When in queer space as a white person, look around: Who is there and who isn't? Who is speaking or performing? Who is dancing, particularly in the middle of the dance floor? Who is taking up the most space? If the people of color in a queer space are mostly on the edges, if we are mostly invisible on stage and off, the space may not be inviting or safe for us. When in queer space, as a white person, especially as a white man, be aware of how much physical space you're taking up, particularly on the dance floor. If you are speaking in a group, be aware of how much you are speaking as

opposed to the people of color or women in the space. When you go to order a drink or get in line for the bathrooms or food, look around to ensure there isn't someone else waiting—sometimes bartenders overlook people of color and women waiting to be served as well.

If you mess up, if you realize you've invaded the space of someone else or forced them out of a space, own it and apologize. Queer space is your space. You have a right to be there. But so do we, and your behavior in queer space impacts our experience and our choice of whether or not to enter or stay in these spaces.

That brings us to the question of white queers in QTPOC space. First, find out from organizers what kind of space it is—even if your QTPOC friend or partner invited you. Just because your friend/partner thinks it's OK or considers you an exception to the rule, that doesn't mean the organizers or other people in the space want white people there. It never hurts to ask.

If organizers say it's a QTPOC-only or QTPOC safe space then you should not be there, period. If organizers say it's a QTPOC-centered space, then that typically means white allies are welcome so long as they are aware of how they take up space as discussed above. In these QTPOC spaces, you should be even more aware of how you take up space. If you don't have a lot of friends in the space, pay attention to how people are responding to you, listen to the folks around you and don't take it personally if some QTPOC don't want to talk to or dance with you when you are in spaces intended for us. When in doubt, act like you are a guest in someone else's home.

This year *Our Lives* is sponsoring a QTPOC tent at Madison's OutReach Magic Festival, organized by a committee of local QTPOCs, including yours truly. At the time of press we have not yet decided if the tent will be a QTPOC-only or a QTPOC-centered space, but once that decision has been made, we will have that information clearly available on the (to-be-created) Facebook event page and on the signage at the tent during the festival itself. I encourage all QTPOCs to come visit the tent for community, games, and food and ask that all white queer people respect whatever decision the committee comes to about your presence in our space.

Of course, I encourage all of us to be aware of the way we take up space and how our presence and behavior in safe spaces impact those more marginalized than us. Happy Pride, y'all. ■



**DR. SAMI SCHALK** is an Assistant Professor of Gender & Women's Studies at UW-Madison. Her research focuses on disability, race, and gender in contemporary American literature and culture, especially African American literature, speculative fiction, and feminist literature.

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POLITICS CLINTON WHITE HOUSE LGBT HISTORY HIV/AIDS

## The Untouchables

**U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan** relates a story that highlights just how much progress the LGBTQ community has made in so little time—and the fight that remains.

**AS WE COME TOGETHER** for Pride, it's an opportunity to celebrate the diversity within the LGBTQ community; reflect upon the struggles and achievements we've experienced in the fight for equality; and resolve to continue working to ensure that everyone can live openly and freely.

Over the last several years, we have made remarkable progress in the fight for equality—from repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” to achieving full marriage equality across the country. These changes are the result of decades of efforts by members of the LGBTQ community, and it’s important to reflect on just how far we’ve come.

One story to this point, for example, is from 1995, when I was serving on the Dane County Board of Supervisors along with Scott McCormick, another openly gay elected official, and Tammy Baldwin had just recently been elected to the state legislature. In May of that year, the White House invited the three of us to Washington as part of a group of LGBT elected officials to mark Pride Month and meet with Administration officials.

When we started the briefing inside, we learned that the security guards were wearing the blue gloves because they thought they would get AIDS by coming into contact with gays and lesbians.

When we arrived at the White House ahead of our scheduled meetings for a tour, there was a long wait where we spent 15 to 20 minutes outside passing the time. As the Secret Service let us into the building for the security screening, all the agents were wearing bright blue gloves, which we assumed were due to the heightened radiation that they must be using during the screening process. When we started the briefing inside, we learned that the security guards were wearing the blue gloves because they thought they would get AIDS by coming into contact with gays and lesbians.

The White House immediately felt embarrassed by their actions and during a reception that evening, Vice President Al Gore stopped by the event and made a point to shake every person’s hand so that we would know that it

wasn’t the position of the Administration and that it was just the security staff at the time. Several weeks later, I received a letter from the White House signed by President Bill Clinton that said, “Thank you for coming to the White House...I want to apologize for the inappropriate and insensitive treatment several of the participants were subjected to at the entrance gate of the White House. It was wrong.”

Though President Clinton made it clear that we as LGBTQ Americans were welcome to visit the White House, it is important to note that in both the original invitation and the apology letter, the words “gay” and “lesbian” were not included. Just 25 years ago, we were still at a time when the White House would not mention these terms in official correspondence and people still had a great deal of ignorance about the LGBTQ community and HIV/AIDS.

Today, the White House’s invitation and apology letter—along with a pair of blue gloves that look just like those that officials wore in 1995—hang framed in my Washington office. The gloves serve as a reminder of the discrimination and challenges LGBTQ Americans faced in the not-too-distant past, as well as an encouragement to fight for a better future.

When I visited the White House in 1995—a year after the enactment of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” and a year before the signing of the Defense of Marriage Act—I would have never imagined that we would be where we are today. In just 20 years, we went from Americans wearing gloves because they thought they would get HIV and AIDS from casual contact with LGBTQ Americans to the White House being lit in the colors of the pride flag to celebrate marriage equality.

Today, the LGBTQ community is on the cusp of achieving full equality and we cannot take our eyes off the future. Just last month, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on—for the first time—the Equality Act, which would explicitly bar discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity for every American. No matter who you are or whom you love, you should have the right to live your full life openly and authentically, and until that happens, we will continue the fight for full equality. ■



**CONGRESSMAN MARK POCAN** is the U.S. Representative for Wisconsin’s second district, which includes Dane, Green, Iowa, LaFayette, Sauk, and portions of Rock and Richland counties.



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