



THE PRIDE CENTER VOICE

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Wicked Manors PG. 8

Take You To Rio

Evening in Paradise – Carnival! Sambas Into Wilton Manors in February

Pull out your feathers, practice your best dance moves, and prepare to experience a sultry Brazilian evening.

On Saturday, February 22, 2014 at 7:00pm, The Pride Center will collaborate with the City of Wilton Manors to present *Evening in Paradise – Carnival!* Proceeds benefit The Pride Center’s vital programs and services along with Wilton Manor’s Island City Foundation. *Evening in Paradise*, now in its third year, has grown to represent the signature Spring fundraising

and entertainment event for The Center and the community.

“What started out as an idea for a house party just two short years ago has exploded into the fun event of the season,” says Jim Walker, one of the four co-chairs. “The whole community can come together for a fun ‘*Evening in Paradise*’ to celebrate our community and support those who rely on the Pride Center throughout the year.”

During the evening, guests will be entertained and delighted by a little bit +continued on page 4



Last Year’s Evening in Paradise provided over the top delights



LGBT Senior Health Expo PG. 10

Vital Signs

New 7K Grant from Aqua Foundation will help Center provide women’s holistic health series

Coming soon to The Pride Center: Single in the Age of Marriage Equality: A Healthy Exploration of the Pressures, Stigma and Joys of Singlehood. Stoned: Weed and Its Impact on the LGBTQ Community. The Skin I’m In: Health Concerns for Essential Skin Care in South Florida. And Race Around the Rainbow: Dialogue about Race and Its Impact on the LGBTQ Community.

The Pride Center recently received a \$7000 grant from

Aqua Foundation to provide Vital Signs, a holistic health seminar series for women and their allies. The Center will partner with Women in Network to offer these interactive health events featuring engaging activities, panels of appropriate community “experts” and question-and-answers.

“We’re excited to be partnering with The Pride Center for the Vital Signs series,” says WIN President Denise Spivak. “Women’s health, on all levels, is an +continued on page 4



Smart Ride 10 PG. 11



Founders Circle Reception and Toy Drive Launch PG. 17



Center Grows As My Waistline Shrinks

A letter from Robert Boo, C.E.O. of The Pride Center at Equality Park

A year ago, I was eating a bag of chips and very happily dipping them heavily into French Onion dip, but now I am eating carrot chips and dipping them into healthy hummus.

As we wind down 2013, attend holiday celebrations and fundraisers and prepare for 2014, we take a moment to reflect on the past 12 months. While The Center has continued to grow over this past year, I have surprisingly gotten smaller! The Pride Center at Equality Park is a haven for people to seek help, make changes in their lives and have fun. I can honestly say that I am not only the CEO of The Pride Center, I am also a client. My life has been transformed over the past year. I owe it all to a couple of people. After crewing on SMART Ride 9 last year I felt a new energy from the whole experience. Chris Caputo, SMART Ride aficionado and tri-athlete extraordinaire, seized upon my moment of euphoria and convinced me to buy a bike and train for the SMART Ride 10. Eight months later and 75 pounds lighter, my life has been definitely changed. The second person to whom I attribute the new and healthier me? Glen Weinzimer. If it wasn't for Glen's dream and The Pride Center's participation in The SMART Ride, every waiter with passed hors d'oeuvres at the fundraising events I attend would still be my best friend.

This past year we were fortunate enough to receive several new grants that directly fuel our continued growth. We were awarded funding from SMART Ride 9 which fully funds our Healthcare Navigator and Couples Speak programs and helped us expand our HIV Testing Program. Funding from the Howard Greenfield Trust allowed us to create a full time Senior Services Coordinator. A grant from the Department of Health further expanded our HIV testing and Outreach programs. Funding from Aqua Foundation (article included in this issue of The Voice) allows us to create a new holistic health seminar series for women and their allies called Vital Signs. A grant from the John C. Graves Charitable Trust at The Community Foundation of Broward allows us to implement phase 1



of our Courtyard project along the south side of the Alan Edward Schubert Building. The courtyard project opens up new revenue streams for The Center with naming opportunities (article included in this issue) and new income for outdoor event rental space.

All of these funding sources are new to us this year and each helps improve the lives of people in our community. Our current programs and services continue to grow. This year we have provided more than 5,000 HIV tests compared to 3,500 in 2012. We distributed 200,000 condoms compared to 180,000 in 2012. (That's a lot of safe sex going on!) Our senior exercise program expanded to five days a week for most of 2013. More than 10,000 people used The Pride Center's computer center compared to 4,000 in 2012. We hosted more than 2,500 group meetings this year compared to 2,100 last year.

We are YOUR community Center. For over 20 years, we have provided a safe and welcoming space – an inclusive home that celebrates, nurtures and empowers the LGBTQ communities and our friends and neighbors in South Florida. It's very easy for me to say our mission statement because that is what we strive everyday to do.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and the 150 weekly volunteers who dedicate their time, talent and treasure to the community, here's to a happy and prosperous 2014!

About The Pride Center

The Pride Center celebrated 20 years of service in 2013. Our mission is: "We provide a welcoming, safe space--an inclusive home--that celebrates, nurtures and empowers the LGBTQ communities and our friends and neighbors in South Florida." The Center's program and services meet the distinct cultural, health, educational, economic, social and safety needs of the LGBT community. More than 20,000 adult and youth attended activities at the Center over the past year. We host more than 60 regularly-meeting groups each month. Support, social and educational groups focus on women, seniors, youth, men, transgender, recovery, health, the arts, athletics, spirituality, games and more. Outreach activities

over the past year directly impacted over 30,000 residents and visitors to South Florida. The Pride Center is a major site for HIV testing, prevention, education, support, holistic health and counseling. Stop in and learn about all we do: a community Flea Market; women's health initiatives; family outreach days; Bingo; unique exercise classes; financial investment series; art gallery openings; adult educational opportunities through Pride University; Bingo; education for prospective and current parents; weekly "Coffee and Conversation" gatherings for seniors; music, movies and live theater presentations; a variety of health fairs; and a spectrum of creative symposiums, speakers, forums and events for the entire community. We own five-and-a-half acres of property with 30,000 square feet of office space that provide homes for programs and services, as well as synergy among organizations. Our Vision is to be the premier point of connection for our community.

The Pride Center

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Sign Your Name

Naming Opportunities Available in New Courtyard

Would you like to memorialize a loved one? Are you looking for an opportunity to etch your name in history? The Pride Center's website now has a page outlining naming opportunities within The Pride Center's new Courtyard. Naming opportunities exist for benches, light fixtures, trees, palms and a pavilion. You also can now directly purchase personalized pavers.

The first phase of The Pride Center's Courtyard Improvement Project is nearing completion. A new pavilion has been installed to host outdoor events including Commitment Ceremonies, Celebrations of Life, entertainment and cultural events. Prepare to stroll along beautiful walkways through topical foliage, comfortable benches and fresh spaces to gather, rest, exercise and entertain!

"Our community deserves beautiful, safe, affirming, outdoor venues," says CEO Robert Boo. "This project now has opened up new revenue streams through both naming and rental opportunities. These funds not only will sustain the project for years to come but will enable future projects and services on the Equality Park campus."

Personalized pavers are available starting at \$100 each. A 16 inch by 16 inch brick can be yours for \$1,000. Name a bench for \$5000. You can name trees or palms for \$800. Shrubs and ground cover are available for \$4,000. For \$6,000, affix your name to a light fixture. A generous donor can name the giant pavilion for \$75,000.

Visit www.PrideCenterFlorida.org to choose your naming opportunity today!



World AIDS Day Candlelight Vigil

A passionate crowd gathered despite the rain for the annual candlelight vigil in Wilton Manors to honor World AIDS Day. CEO Robert Boo was among the speakers at this year's vigil, organized by Broward House.



3rd Annual Pride Center Cruise
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THE PRIDE CENTER OF EQUALITY PARK
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

+continued from page 1

Take You To Rio

of Rio de Janeiro at the Richardson House in Wilton Manors. Samba dancers, food, music and decorations will tantalize the senses. Be a part of this exciting party and celebrate *Carnaval!* created by Bobby Kyser of Panache Style!

“We are so excited to work together with the City of Wilton Manors and return to the wonderful venue of the Richardson House”, says Robert Boo, CEO of The Pride Center. “Bobby Kyser and his team are truly amazing. His visions always make a ‘WOW’ statement, and this year he has promised not to disappoint you.”

“If you’ve ever experienced the parade in Rio, you feel like the star of the show as you walk along,” says Kyser. “For *Evening in Paradise*, we want people to step into the Rio genre. We want guests to feel immersed in that true *Carnaval* experience. We’re going to provide scantily-clad, smoking-hot boys and girls to help us share the real Brazilian flavor in the way only we can. Everyone can be part of the decor by wearing their own feathered accessories. We want a parade of costumes. I don’t want to give too much away, but the design is going to be over the top. We promise to surpass even last year’s amazing decor.”

Over 500 people have attended *Evening in Paradise* over the last two years, raising more than \$100,000. Returning as co-chairs of the annual, successful event are Walker (Center Board Vice President), Lee Rubin, Joe Guerrero and Irwin Drucker.

“Jim, Lee, Joe and Irwin once again are using their ample talents, vision, dedication and energy to organize this massive undertaking,” says Director of Development Roger Roa. “They work hard to ensure guests are entertained, delighted and excited to support our vital services financially.”

Several other Center Board members head various committees. Leslie Leip serves as Host Committee Chair, Brenda Hartley serves as Sponsorship Chair and Ilene Berliner (Board President) serves as Silent Auction Chair.

“This is The Center’s largest fundraiser of the year,” says Berliner. “I tell people that it’s the greatest event in our community. You can have fun, eat delicious food, meet wonderful people and

see old friends. Plus your ticket supports important services and programs to our community.”

To learn more about the event or to purchase \$125 tickets, visit www.EveningInParadise.org or contact Roger Roa, Director of Development at RRoa@PrideCenterFlorida.org, for exciting sponsorship opportunities.



Co-chairs Irwin Drucker, Jim Walker, Joe Guerrero and Lee Rubin return to spearhead this year’s event

Vital Signs

+continued from page 1



important focus for WIN, and we hope that through this series more LBT women in the community will also make it a focus and a priority.”

The Pride Center’s current Women with Pride Empowerment series laid the foundation for the success of Vital Signs. Throughout the past two years, The Center has engaged the women’s community to assess what subjects will enhance their mental, emotional and physical health. Hundreds of LBTQ women attended the successful Women with Pride Empowerment Series and Women’s Feedback Forum.

“Aqua Foundation for Women is proud to fund The Pride Center to continue to provide programming for women,” says Aqua Executive Director Robin Schwartz. “In particular we are excited about Vital Signs as there is nothing more important than our health.”

Other topics in the series may include: Shame: How Internalized

Stigma Can Limit a Woman’s Potential; Gender Outlaws: The Emotional Impact of Gender Nonconformity; and Fit and Fabulous: Exploring Practical Exercise Options for the Busy LBTQ Woman.

“I’m so excited to learn during these unique workshops,” says Kristofer Fegenbush, Pride Center COO. “This creative project will help The Center provide local LBTQ women with the holistic health information, support and resources they deserve. In our expanding role as the hub of our LGBTQI community, we remain committed to improving the lives of women in South Florida. We’re working hard to support the physical, emotional and mental health of those we love.”

For regular information about the series and women’s programs, subscribe to The Pride Center’s weekly electronic eVoice newsletter at www.PrideCenterFlorida.org

Women with Pride *Center strives to raise \$10,000 for women's programming before 2014*

Pride Center staff and volunteers are working feverishly to raise \$10,000 for women's programming by the end of 2013.

The Pride Center has received a grant from Our Fund for Women with Pride. This award will provide continued funding for a part-time Women's Coordinator to provide education, outreach and linkage services as well as organize requested activities, events and groups.

As part of the funding requirements, The Pride Center must obtain matching gifts by December 31, 2013. The award encompasses a \$20,000 budget for Women with Pride. Basically, The Center raises \$10,000 and Our Fund will match that amount. The Center needs to identify new donors or increased gifts from existing donors who want to support needed women's services for our community.

Dr. Heidi Schaeffer just donated the first \$3000 toward the funding. She hopes her investment will spur others to act.

"It is important to support women in the community," says Schaeffer. "Having resources available for lesbian women or questioning teens offers them a lifeline and sense of belonging. Pride Center's women-oriented outreach and activity hub will become a reality if we all contribute what we can."

A year and a half ago, The Center launched Women with Pride as a campaign to ensure capacity and sustainability for LBT women's services, resources, activities, events and programs in South Florida. With initial funds, The Center opened a fully-equipped, staffed office where women can receive needed support, referrals, services and resources.

"The Pride Center's Women with Pride campaign

was created to provide LBT women with a centralized place where they can be connected to services and resources within our community," says Julia Landis, an initial donor to the program. "It's very important that women have not just a space but a Coordinator dedicated to providing them with navigation and linkage to the specific services and resources that will meet their needs. That's why my wife and I gave."

How can you help?

1. Will you consider giving towards this goal?
2. Can you identify a friend or family member who would be an excellent candidate for donating to life-changing women's services and programs? Would you connect this new potential donor with The Pride Center?

Women with Pride will impact lives in our community, helping provide LBT women with the information, connection, resources, health linkage and support they deserve. Your friends and neighbors will benefit from vital social, educational and emotional support in a safe, welcoming space. They will experience increased access to creative, affirming, enjoyable events with respect and sensitivity. You can help make this a reality.

For Our Fund purposes, a "New Donor" is defined as a donor who hasn't contributed to The Pride Center within the past 18 months. An "Increased Gift" is any new amount over and above the amount an existing donor has given in the past twelve months.

If you're interested, please contact CEO Robert Boo at RBoo@PrideCenterFlorida.org or visit www.ourfund.org/matchit for more information! In addition to this funding opportunity, donors always can designate specific funds toward Women with Pride at any time during the year.



Senior Thanksgiving Potluck

Over 200 LGBT Seniors attended The Pride Center's annual Seniors Thanksgiving Potluck lunch the week before Thanksgiving, organized and hosted by our Senior Advisory Council. This is a record-setting attendance for the holiday event.



Did you know?

+The Pride Center provided more than 5,000 HIV Tests in 2013

+We hosted more than 2,500 group meetings at The Pride Center in 2013

+The Pride Center is the largest site for Enhanced Fitness classes for Seniors offered in the U.S.

+The Pride Center distributes more than 200,000 condoms annually. That's a lot of safer sex!

Girl Talk

Women Cyclists Help SMART Ride Raise Over One Million Dollars

By SJ Strock

It was the summer of my tenth year that my best girlfriend and I sang Seasons in the Sun with transistor radios that miraculously bounced around—but never fell out of—our bicycle baskets (yes, clad with plastic daisies) attached to the handlebars.

Back then, I got my first big-girl bike. She was a real beauty. Purple, with a sparkly banana seat, stingray handlebars, spokes that whooshed with movement, and worth mentioning again, a daisy embellished basket on the front that held everything I would ever need. Day in and day out, I would lace up my converse and meet my crew of girlfriends to “ride bikes”... we owned the streets.

Nearly forty years later, as The Pride Center’s Pride Pack bike team slowly made our way down Duval Street in the SMART Ride 10 parade, we bellowed Seasons of Love with someone’s smartphone (yes, equipped with speakers) attached to their top-of-the-line road bike.

This writer and rider (SMART Rider, that is) was not the only woman whose experience with The Center’s Pride Pack brought great personal accomplishment and community connectivity. The 10th Anniversary Ride raised \$1,047,514. The Center’s Pride Pack team raised more than \$96,000.

Silvana Erstein shares, “I remember my Dad telling me ‘Baby, ride your bike as much as you can; it will give you the best moments of your life.’ And he was right! This, my fourth SMART Ride and first with team Pride Pack gave me unforgettable memories, great friends, a deeper sense of community connection and a lot of love. For the record, I met Ed, my husband, during the 2008 SMART Ride. As a woman, a mom and a wife, I feel proud and honored to be one of SMART Ride’s ladies.”

Cheryl Bennett, new to South Florida blogs on her Pooks Pantry site about her Pride Pack family. “We spend hours upon hours on the road together, training, changing flats, laughing, teasing each other, sharing our nutrition bars, hanging out together after rides and I absolutely adore these people. Training for this event hasn’t always been easy, sometimes it’s been downright brutal, but as one of my teammates said, ‘I think of the person who would gladly trade my pain to be able to do this,’ and that is why I am beyond proud to be a part of it and a part of my team.”

The bonds we, as women, made during training truly overflowed into SMART Ride 10, as Pastor Leslie Rutland-Tipton explains, “As a second-year rider with The Pride Center, I felt much more comfortable about

the experience. I trained harder and longer this year, but made a serious commitment to stick with two (girl) friends. That commitment turned out to be a life-changing decision. As women, we connected on a deeper level as we suffered for the sake of those who will benefit from the money we raised. The more I give of myself, the more I get back in return.”

Don’t be fooled, the women pedaling from Miami to Key West were not the only thrilled participants. Deidra Doc B, chimed in, “As part of the Motorcycle Safety Escort Crew, it was one of the best weekends of my life. As I rode the motorcycle back and forth, seeing all the cyclists really made me proud of our community. I saw pride, tears, pain and determination, and it was a wonderful feel-good event.”

SMART Ride may seem to some like a predominantly White, Gay, Male event, but like HIV and AIDS, it does not discriminate. Glenn Weinzimer, Founder of The SMART Ride, was excited to share, “There were actually 42% female riders this year, and the straight community is getting more and more involved every year as well, because there is ultimately a personal component.”

The SMART Ride benefits seven agencies across Florida, including The Pride Center and Children’s Diagnostic & Treatment Center locally. Marie Hayes from CDTC expresses gratitude for a community embracing HIV positive women, encouraged by SMART Ride support which enables assistance to women and children for basic needs.

Second-year Pride Packer Kristin Farrell says, “I love our team and don’t feel that the gender discrepancy made any impact whatsoever. The SMART Ride keeps me coming back because it’s such a cohesive event. I think our team contributes largely to that feel, but overall anyone that I meet and speak to on the ride is looking out for each other. It’s a cause that gives back to our community in such a direct way, and that is truly the energy you feel throughout the event.”

Margie Longstreth adds, “Riding with Pride Pack represents a microcosm of what our world should be: men, women, black, white, straight, gay – all working together, supporting each other and having a great time while we’re at it.”

So Ladies (and Gents), get online now and sign up for SmartRide11! I can assure you friends will be made, vital Pride Center programs will be funded, and you will have an experience of a lifetime. Pssst, I may just dig up some purple plastic daisies to “pimp our ride”.



Did you know?

+More than 10,000 people used The Pride Center’s computer center in 2013

+The Pride Center’s Healthcare Navigator links people daily to vital medical care

+The Pride Center provides regular workshops for prospective and current LGBT parents

— EVENING IN —
PARADISE
CARNAVAL!

— 02.22.2014 —

www.EveningInParadise.org



\$125
 TICKET PRICE

THE **PRIDE CENTER**

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS!



EVENT CO-CHAIRS:

Jim Walker Joe Guerrero
 Lee Rubin Irwin Drucker

DATE:

Saturday, February 22, 2014

LOCATION:

Richardson Historic Park Manor House, Wilton Manors

TIME:

7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

BENEFITS:

The Pride Center & City of Wilton Manors' Island City Foundation

LEAD
 SPONSOR:



BRONZE
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H&R BLOCK

MEDIA
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Sponsorship opportunities are available by contacting Roger Roa, Director of Development, RRoa@PrideCenterFlorida.org, 954-463-9005

Spotlight:

Getting to Know A Pride Center HIV Testing Counselor

by Listron "Blue" Mannix



William "Billy" Gall

Occupation: HIV Testing Counselor and Student of Skin Care (Esthetician License)

Born: October 9th 1983 in Berea (a suburb of Cleveland) Ohio

Hobbies:

- Traveling- visited 47 out of 50 states
- Dancing- "Who knows, maybe someday I will be on Dancing with The Stars *wink*."

Being an HIV testing counselor is not as easy as Pride Center staff and volunteers make it appear. They bring their own personalities, skills and desires to help their community. One tester continues to raise the bar and keeps his colleagues in check with his sassy wit and undeniable street smarts.

William "Billy" Gall has been with the Pride Center for over a year. Initially, he expressed his desire to volunteer. When he first met staff, he shared a little about himself.

"I was told I was HIV Positive in September of 2011," Billy shared with staff last year. "The person who tested me (not at The Pride Center) was someone who I knew worked in the HIV/AIDS field for many years. And yet, he was completely insensitive and demoralizing in telling me the news. I was crushed. I was made to feel like a second class citizen, filled with such shame, I decided I could never go back there. Therefore I went untreated and did nothing about my pending health situation for almost an entire year."

Billy reviewed this memory with his fists clenched tightly on the desk. He then signed deeply and continued: "I feel I am in a better place now with my health and my surroundings. I decided I wanted to become a volunteer HIV tester so I can

provide comfort, be that non judgmental and empowering person to someone who may test positive with me".

A big smile broke across his face, he crossed his legs and shook his shoulders as if he was dancing to maracas and said, "If a testing position opens, I wouldn't mind jumping in."

After a few weeks of volunteering, Billy had shown such devotion that when a part-time position opened, The Center offered it to him. He has been a great addition to The Pride Center Testing Team.

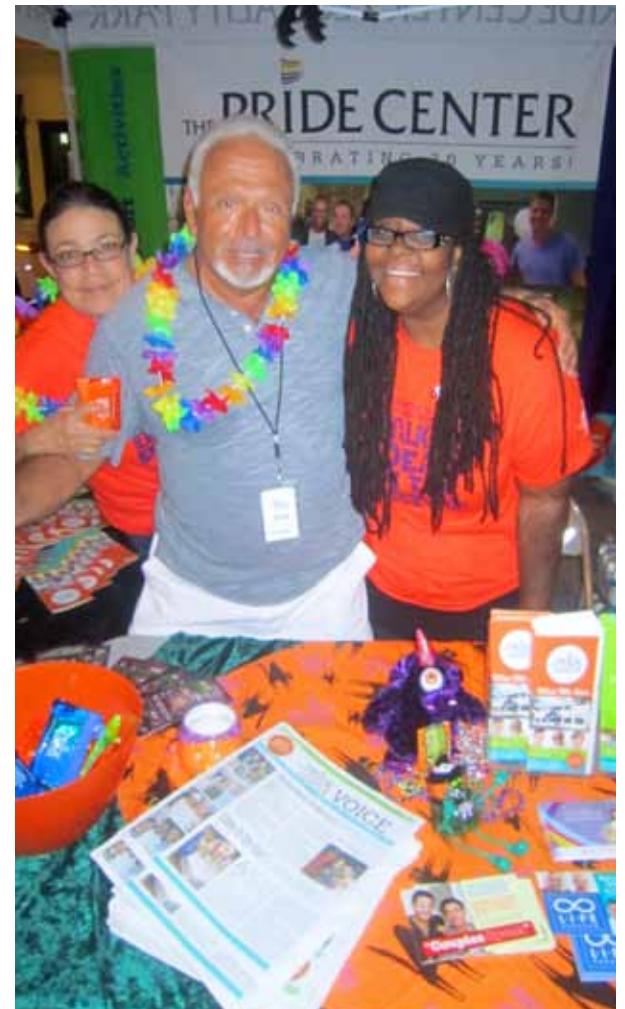
"The opportunity to become a staff member this past year has been such a blessing in my life," says Billy. "I began a new chapter. This has helped me grow in so many ways, and for that I am grateful. The Pride Center is home for me."

When Billy was asked why he enjoys being a tester, he responded that "the best part of being a testing counselor is to be able to arm people with the tools they need to protect themselves in a sex-positive world we live in."

Although Billy has found his passion in HIV Testing, he daily expresses his passion for life. "I am grateful for life, and I am LIVING with HIV. Today, for the first time ever, I can say I LOVE the man I am becoming."

Wicked Manors

Wicked Manors, the original Halloween Block Party Celebration, returned to Wilton Drive. The Pride Center at Equality Park in collaboration with The City of Wilton Manors presented this year's event.





Anti HIV-Stigma Campaigns

The Pride Center has prepared various creative HIV Anti-Stigma Campaigns that will begin to run on Broward County public buses by Christmas. One round features great works of art. The other features portraits by Dennis Dean of local residents with signs proclaiming "HIV Impacts Us All." The Center has partnered with the Department of Health to confront prejudice, discrimination and ignorance related to HIV. We hope the public will be challenged and inspired to engage in courageous conversations about HIV education, testing and treatment.



Did you know?

+The Pride Center spearheaded a local initiative to create a tri-county LBT Women's Health Directory with over 300 culturally-competent healthcare providers

+Over 100 people play Bingo at The Pride Center on the second Saturday evening of every month.

+The Pride Center provided individual HIV prevention outreach to more than 6,000 people in 2013

+The CouplesSpeak program builds relationship skills, improves communication, lowers risks, and enhances sex

GET A ROOM!

The Pride Center has space rental opportunities for your every need

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www.PrideCenterFlorida.org/rentals



LGBT Senior Health Expo

Over 410 people attended our fourth annual LGBT Senior Health Expo. The Expo provides seniors with a unique, comprehensive overview of available healthcare services. Over sixty LGBT-friendly medical, senior living, social service, insurance, financial, legal and home health providers showcased their services and products through this trade show. Major sponsors included Broward Health Imperial Point, AHF, Holy Cross Hospital, Park Summit, Five Star Premier Residences, Vitas Innovative Healthcare and Assisted Living Lifestyles. (Photos by Steve Shires)

Third Annual Community Day

The Pride Center organized and hosted this popular community and family outreach day. Activities included a Kids' Costume Contest indoors with South Florida Family Pride. Broward Sheriff's Office provided K9 demonstrations, fire trucks, police vehicles and more. (Photos by Steve Shires)



SMART Ride 10

The Pride Center's Pride Pack team for the 10th Anniversary SMART Ride raised over \$96,000 for HIV/AIDS services in Florida. The SMART Ride itself raised over \$1,047,514. Every cent raised by this 165 mile bike ride from Miami to Key West directly benefits vital HIV/AIDS services at seven agencies across Florida, including those at The Pride Center and Children's Diagnostic and Treatment Center locally.



Founders Circle Reception at Mayor's

Mayor's hosted a recent Founders Circle Reception.

Atlantic Surf Club co-sponsored the evening.

Founders provide at least \$100 monthly to support the programs and services of The Pride Center.

(Photos by Stephen Lang)



Transgender Day of Remembrance

The Pride Center organized and hosted Transgender Day of Remembrance. This well-received annual observance highlights those we've lost to hate crimes. Community collaborators included Human Rights Campaign, Broward County Department of Health, Women in Network and SunServe.



Are you a woman looking for a healthcare provider sensitive to your **LBT needs?**

www.lbtthealth.org

- Are you a Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender woman in Broward, Miami-Dade or Palm Beach counties searching for an LBT friendly and competent healthcare provider?

- Does finding a Medical, Dental, Mental Health or Alternative Care professional who is sensitive to your needs cause you anxiety?

WE CAN HELP!

The LBT Women's Health Directory is a user friendly, online database of providers in South Florida. This resource can help alleviate the fear of choosing a practitioner who is friendly, welcoming and culturally competent.

Visit www.lbtthealth.org to start your search!

Membership with Benefits

I AM PRIDE card offers benefits, and really, who doesn't like "a sure thing"?



By S.J. Strock

Pride Center paid members and participating business partners are thrilled with the roll out of the I AM PRIDE cards. For the last few weeks this sought after card, which tucks neatly in your credit card wallet, has been the talk of the town. At first, some were not quite sure exactly what were its benefits or how it would be used. Now, both businesses and members alike tout the sheer exhilaration of flashing I AM PRIDE around town.

With more than thirty businesses including retail stores, medical practices, legal and accounting firms, eateries, service establishments and fun hot spots – there is no doubt, you too will have good reason to keep your I AM PRIDE card handy. The list of participating business partners seems to increase daily, with members organically promoting traffic and sales, as well as advertising through card usage.

Victor Flores, owner of Fast Printz, says he is pleased to be in a position to support local non-profits and groups such as The Pride Center. Flores adds, "It is through programs and services that the Pride Center provides to small businesses such as Fast Printz, which affords us opportunity to grow and expand. By placing the I AM PRIDE plaque on our counter, our customer base opens up further; providing exposure to both GLBT and non-GLBT individuals on a consistent basis."

Another Pride Center member who also happens to accept the I AM PRIDE card by offering a 10% discount on all services says, "It's a win-win program for everyone!"

When asked about his usage of the coveted membership card, Bryon Bowlby, enthusiastically chimed in, "I love my I AM PRIDE card! I use it whenever possible. I think it is great that businesses I frequent give me a discount for being a member of The Pride Center."

Perhaps there have been much tongue-in-cheek, even snarky remarks comparing Membership with Benefits to Friends with Benefits, but there truly is a serious side to this very unique Pride Center member card. Karen Prescod, explains, "I carry I AM PRIDE, because each time I use this card, I am not thinking solely of getting a discount, but also giving back to an organization which contributes so much to the gay community."

So, whether you are a long-time member of the Pride Center or a local (or not-so local) business, YOU are in for a sure thing when you use and accept I AM PRIDE! Basic memberships start at \$40 annually for individuals, \$30 for students and seniors. Sign-up at www.PrideCenterFlorida.org Find out how to become a participating business partner by calling Director of Development Roger Roa at 954-463-9005 ext.105

From the Front Lines

Gurucharri Leads PALS as Community's Needs Evolve

By Bill Geiger, MA

PALS Project Manager Frank Gurucharri, having spent more than four decades in various behavioral health projects in Florida and California, has seen from the front lines many changes in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Since joining The Pride Center's PALS Project in 2009 as a part-time behavioral health consultant training PALS volunteer peer facilitators, Frank has gone on to become project manager overseeing a department that has grown from three to 13 programs.

While many of the challenges Frank sees in his day-to-day work haven't changed --including funding, linking people with HIV to healthcare and helping people get tested to know their status -- Frank and the PALS staff also address the ongoing relationship between drug use and HIV transmission among gay and bi men.

"The PALS Project just finished a study of over 200 recent participants living with HIV," says Frank. "We found that over 80% use multiple drugs and over 40% of the time they have sex under the influence of those substances. The drug/sex connection is alive and well, but the HIV and substance abuse services systems have traditionally been siloed," meaning that the team's efforts to better understand risk behavior must deal with both.

Two disturbing trends that PALS faces include an HIV transmission rate in South Florida that's higher than most other parts of the U.S. and an uptick in transmission rates in men over 50. Frank nicknames the latter the "Papi Factor".

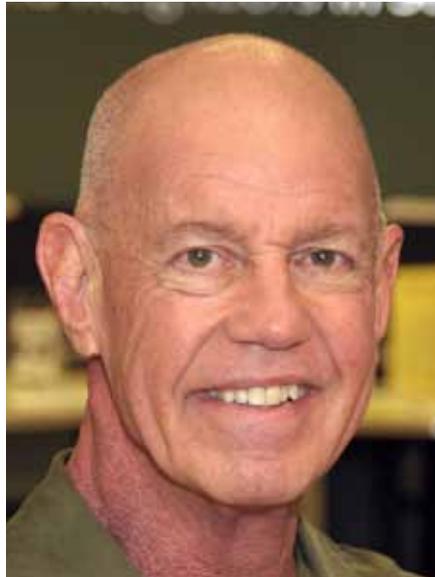
"Sadly, much is from false beliefs the men have constructed to cope with so-called 'battle fatigue,'" says Frank. "Men will claim they are tired of having 'unnatural', 'rubber-covered' sex (tired of using condoms) and not experiencing 'skin-to-skin' sex. They have lived many years so 'what's a few more with HIV?' Others falsely rationalize 'the HIV look is gone'; 'men with HIV can put on extra muscle with steroids and the gym' and 'all I see is bareback porn now, so I guess everyone else is doing it' (i.e., a peer norm)."

Moreover, with an aging gay population such as one sees here in the Fort Lauderdale area, it's easy for an older man to feel discarded, says Frank, himself 72.

A veteran in the fight, Frank has seen how the message has evolved over the years. "We've gone from the 'Just say no' to 'Put on a condom' to today's, 'Get tested', see your doctor, take your meds and lower your viral load'."

Ultimately, he says, no program can be successful without addressing social contributing factors, including high community HIV viral loads, stigma and shame. "Sadly, we also have no programs for a generation of peri-natal babies born in the '90s with HIV and now adults feeling betrayed and abandoned -- some at high risk for spreading the virus."

Frank adds: "Information is necessary, but not sufficient. Health requires skills and skills require more than information; they require practice. You can't learn to ride a bike attending a lecture or reading a billboard; you have to practice. This requires more money for longer programs, but it's an essential part of prevention--of all health promotion. And the PALS Project at The Pride Center does this."



SMART Ride Spaghetti Dinner

The Pride Center hosted a pasta dinner for local riders, teams, crew and volunteers as a thank you before The SMART Ride. Additional sponsors included CDTC and Stork's Cafe. Attendees heard from staff and clients of CDTC and The Pride Center about the impact of their life-saving HIV programs.

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Connect with Your Community

“More Than I Could Have Imagined”

Grigsby's work with LIFE Program impacts participants and himself

By Frank Gurucharri

Few South Floridians enjoy a daily commute on I-95. Could long-time Pride Center staff member Jeff Grigsby be one?

“Not many people can look forward each day to going to work,” says Jeff. “I never know what the day will bring, but can’t wait to get to the office to find out.”

Jeff coordinates the 18-week, health-enhancing LIFE Program for people living with HIV/AIDS as part of The Center’s PALS Project.

“When I joined the PALS Project staff to lead the LIFE Program, I expected to assist individuals living with HIV to learn to strengthen their immune system and meet their personal health goals,” says Jeff. “By the time we had finished half of the first cycle of the LIFE Program, I had gained so much more. Seeing the changes in the lives of the men who attend is more than I could have imagined.”

Jeff and his beautiful wife and Life Partner of 35 years, Cindy, raised two wonderful sons in Seattle, the land of rain, breathtaking natural scenery, earthquakes and active volcanoes. After visiting Florida in 2001, they decided they loved the beach and the weather. They made South Florida their home in 2003. They spend their free time entertaining friends, enjoying the beach and swimming in the ocean.

Jeff spent 14 years working as a Disease Intervention Specialist at Seattle’s Harborview Hospital’s STI Clinic. He counseled individuals who had been exposed to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and HIV. Because Harborview is a teaching hospital, Jeff also trained nurses, medical students and doctors visiting from around the world in the intricacies of STI counseling and outreach to all impacted communities. He located individuals who didn’t have a permanent address other than a park, favorite bar or street corner and linked them to needed services.

“Today working with the LIFE program continues to have a powerful effect on my own life,” says Jeff. “What an unexpected benefit from working with a group of amazing men who come together each week to improve their health and daily lives. I count myself very lucky.”

The Pride Center has provided the 18 week LIFE program since Spring 2006. Twenty participants joined the first cycle. Those graduates referred their friends and associates. Jeff and his volunteer peer facilitators have made LIFE so successful that 40-45 participants enroll in every cycle. The Center’s PALS Project now offers the largest, most successful LIFE Program in the country. Shanti, the San Francisco-based parent organization for the LIFE Program, regularly consults

with PALS staff to enrich the programs offered by other organizations across 11 states.

“I love working with every person in the PALS Project at the Pride Center—every participant, every volunteer and my colleagues,” says Jeff. “We truly are family and I’m proud to be a part of it.”

Jeff’s colleagues are amazed at how safe and comfortable he makes people feel, even those with the most personal, sensitive and difficult challenges.

“You can talk to Jeff about anything and feel welcomed, understood and supported,” says coworker Shanna Ratliff.

The Center’s PALS Project offers the 18-week LIFE Program twice a year. If you or a friend would like to



participate, contact Jeff today to ensure space is still available. Learn to improve and enrich your physical, emotional and social life while you have fun and make new friends. Please call: 954-463-9011 ext. 302 or email jgrigsby@pridecenterflorida.org Jeff would love to chat with you.

Groups at the Pride Center

WEEKLY RECURRING MEETINGS

AA – Attitude Adjustment Group, Recovery, Mon-Fri, 7-8a
AA – Each Day a New Beginning, Recovery, Daily, 9-10a
AA – Northeast Group, Recovery, Mon, 8:30-9:30p
AA – Sober, Proud and Gay, Recovery, Fri, 8:30-10p
AA – Pride 5:45 Meeting, Recovery, Daily, 5:45-6:45p
BrothasspeakFTL-Social, Wed, 7:00p-9:00p
Coffee and Conversation – SAC, Social/Seniors, Tues, 10:30a-12noon
Crystal Meth Anonymous, Recovery Mon 6p-7p
Games Day, Social, 2nd & 4th Tues, 1-4p
Gay Bridge Club, Fun, Mon & Fri, 1-4p
Gay Hearts, Social, Sun, 1-3:30p
Gay Men’s Empowerment Group, Thurs 7p-8:30p
Imagine Meditation in Your Life, Social, Tues 7:30p - 9p
Island City Al-anon-Support, Thur, 7-8p
Mahjong, Social, Wed, 1-5:00p
Man2Man Talk, Social, Mon, 7-8:30p
Monday Night Women’s Group, Social, Mon, 7:30-9p
Narcotics Anonymous Rainbow Group, Recovery, Wed, 8-9p
New Path Narcotics Anonymous Group, Mon/Tue/Thu, 7-8p
New Path Narcotics Anonymous Group, Recovery, Sat/Sun, 4-5p
Overeaters Anonymous, Recovery, Sun, 12n-1:30p
Overeaters Anonymous, Recovery, Fri, 7:30-9p
POZ Attitudes Here and Now, HIV Support, Wed, 7-9p,
Quit Smoking Now, Tues 7p-8:30p
SAGE Men’s Social, Social/Seniors, Wed, 1-3p
SAGE Computer Club, Wed 4p-5p
Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA), Recovery, Fri, 7-8p
Senior Exercise Class, Mon-Fri, 10:10a-11:10a, 11:15-12:15p, 1:30-2:30p
Senior Gay Men’s Support Group, Support, Mon, 11a-12n
Smart Recovery, Recovery, Mon, 7:30-8:30p/Thur, 6:30-8p
The Healing Project Meeting, Tues 7:30p-9p
Toastmasters, Educational, Mon, 7:15-9:15p
Women’s Non-Competitive Basketball, Social, Mon, Thur 5:30p, Sat 3p
Pride Center Young Adult Group, (23-35 yoa), Support, 7:30 p - 9:30p
Yoga with Drew Miller, Social, Wed 6 p - 7 p, Sat 12:30p - 1:30p

BI-WEEKLY RECURRING MEETINGS

Ballet & Opera Group, Educational, 2nd & 4th Sunday, 1-4p
Bereavement Group, Support, 2nd & 4th Sunday, 2-4p
POZ Long-Term Survivor, Gay Men/HIV Support, 1st & 3rd Thur, 6:30-8p
Senior Games Day, Social, 2nd & 4th Tue, 1-4p

MONTHLY RECURRING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Big Men’s Club: Chubbies & Chasers, Social, 3rd Sat, 1-4p
Pride Center BINGO, Open to Public, 2nd Sat, 7-10p
Dolphin Democrats, Mthly Meeting, 2nd Wed, 7:30-9:30p
Lavender Speaks, Social, 3rd Thurs, 7:30-10p
Pride Center Memorial Garden Club, Educational, 3rd Wed, 7-9p
Pride Center Flea Market, Open to Public, 1st Sat, 8a-2p
Primetimers, Open to Public, 1st Sun, 2-4:30p
Quit Smoking Now, Mthly Support, Tues 6 week, 6-7p
SAGE Computer Club, Educational, 2nd Wed, 4-6p
SAGE Movie, 3rd Mon, 4-6p
S. F. Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf, Support, 1st Sun, 2:30-3:30p
Transgender Support Group, Support, 3rd Fri, 7-8:30p
Women in Network, Social, 1st Wed, 7-9p4

For further information or to rent a room for your event call: Samantha McCoy at 954-463-9005. Visit www.pridecenterflorida.org Calendar of Events for meeting room assignments. Room days/times subject to change.

Happy Kwanzaa

Center Hosts Celebration and Leadership Awards Ceremony

Black Gay Pride South Florida and The Pride Center at Equality Park are pleased to present The Kwanzaa Celebration/Leadership Awards Ceremony. The celebration honors Paul M. Smith, Dr. Naomi R. Parker, Jowharah Sanders, Craig “The Happy Guru” Stafford, Samantha McCoy, Kim J, and The Reverend Ronald Pearson. The Karamu (community feast) will feature a “Taste of Kwanzaa” provided by community Chefs and organizations.

This gathering of people of color, their allies, and friends celebrates cultural diversity and unity. Kwanzaa is: “A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture.”

Paul Smith, one 2013 Leadership Award Recipient, facilitates BrothaSpeak an organizational collective of same-gender-loving men of African descent. “How fortunate we are here in South Florida to have such an affirming community,” says Smith. “As we approach the holidays which include the celebration of Kwanzaa and Christmas, we come with grateful hearts and outstretched arms to embrace the fruits of the season here at The Pride Center. Kwanzaa is a special time for brothers, sisters, families and

friends to come together to celebrate our African roots with pride and solidarity. There are seven principles associated with the days of Kwanzaa: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith. I am very proud to stand with Bishop S.F. Makalani -MaHee, Saalik Cuevas and the BPSF Planning Committee in observing Kwanzaa here at The Pride Center.”

Fellow honoree Samantha McCoy adds: “I am so honored to have been selected as one of the recipients of the Black Gay Pride South Florida Leadership Awards. To be recognized for simply coming to work, lending my hand to help, my heart to love and a healthy little smidgen of my diva , ‘Oh, no you didn’t!’ is just so very humbling. To the Black Gay Pride South Florida board, leadership, supporters and anyone that has ever had the pleasure of just being present at an event or a meeting... THANK YOU! This award has certainly motivated me as a human being. Happy Kwanzaa!”

The Pride Center will host the Kwanzaa Celebration on Thursday, December 26th 7-9pm at 2040 N. Dixie Hwy. in the heart of Wilton Manors.



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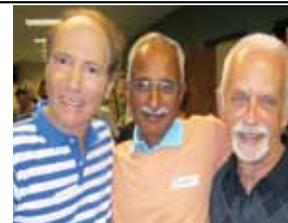
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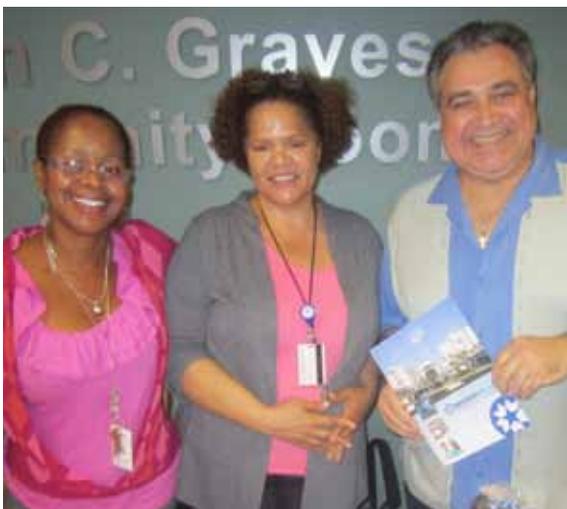
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Third Annual Breast Fest

A packed house enjoyed speakers, entertainment, informational booths, testimonials and bra decorating contest as part of an educational and entertaining evening for Breast Cancer Awareness. The Pride Center and WIN organized the evening, with sponsorship by Aqua Foundation for Women.



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Founders Circle Reception and Toy Drive Launch at Gallery One

Gallery One hosted and sponsored a recent Founders Reception under the stars and along the waterfront.

The evening also served as the successful launch party for the eighth annual Judy Shepherd Toy Drive. Funds donated by Founders Circle underwrite life-enhancing programs and services to the community. Hundreds of toys were collected that night.

(Photos by Steve Shires)



Did you know?

+Over 1000 visitors and 80 vendors attend The Pride Center's Flea Market on the first Saturday of every month

+Hundreds of thousands local children and families benefit from The Pride Center's annual school supplies drive, food drive and holiday toy drive

+The Pride Center provides community members more than 2,000 hours of individual health counseling annually

+The Pride Center hosts monthly Transgender Educational Series collaborative community workshops

Living with HIV?

Are dating, sex, relationships or disclosure stressful?

JOIN a free program to help you make smart **CHOICES**.



CHOICES is a five-week program that teaches you skills to handle challenges you may face.

We meet in small groups to discuss how to:

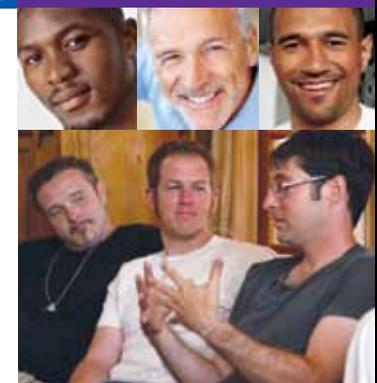
- Build healthier relationships and lower stress
- Make better decisions and improve health
- Disclose HIV-status wisely

Fun, interactive sessions include:

- Video clips for discussion
- Thought-provoking activities
- Small group discussion and role play

CHOICES can help you...

- Meet new HIV+ friends
- Share different experiences without judgment
- Improve problem-solving & communication skills
- Learn more health supporting behaviors



The PALS Project offers gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men living with HIV social support, accurate HIV information and skills to lead safer, richer lives.



CHOICES is FREE. Se Habla Espanol.
If interested, contact Magno Morales
at 954.463.9011 ext. 303 or
email mmorales@PrideCenterFlorida.org

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These businesses represent some of our valuable supporters. To become a Business Founder, please contact Roger Roa: RRoa@pridecenteflorida.org 954.463.9005

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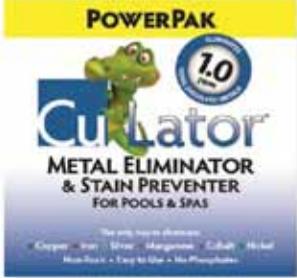
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LIFE Program Graduation

Over 100 people attended the graduation celebration for the most recent cycle of the 18-week LIFE Program with The Pride Center's PALS Project. Attendees heard inspiring, emotional stories of the changes made in the lives of participants. AHF helped sponsor the evening's dinner.

Why You Should Feel Good Supporting The Pride Center



By Robert Boo, C.E.O.

“My life was like a fabric. When I became HIV positive I felt a tear in the fabric. The Pride Center was like a thread that repaired that fabric.”

Sam, one of our recent LIFE Program graduates, has experienced firsthand the impact of the services we provide at The Pride Center at Equality Park. So have tens of thousands of others. Only through contributions from donors in our community can The Pride Center continue to enhance and improve the lives of the people that come through our doors every day. Your contributions make a difference.



I can hardly believe that it has been almost two years since I returned to The Pride Center; what a powerful season of growth we've experienced together. The diversity, reach, depth and impact of the programs we offer have expanded exponentially. I'm amazed and encouraged by the services we've launched and improved--from LGBT family planning to programming for seniors; women's health to transgender education; couples counseling to healthcare navigation; financial planning to art galleries; exercise to plant fairs; social media outreach to topical community dialogues.



We need your help to fulfill our mission to provide a safe, welcoming, inclusive home that nurtures, celebrates and enhances the LGBTQ communities and our friends and neighbors in South Florida. Your donations are vital, significant, strategic and impactful.



As our community grows, so too, do the needs of those who seek and use our help. Please consider providing an extra gift to the Center to help us meet our goals. Whether you send \$20...\$50...\$100 or more, please know that someone in our family will be helped thanks to you. Please send your gift--large or small--today.

My best wishes to you and your loved ones for a very happy, healthy New Year.



The Hispanic HIV Leadership Awards

The annual event at The Pride Center recognizes the efforts of outstanding individuals or groups who raise HIV/AIDS awareness in the Latino communities of Broward County.



Join The Pride Center as a Member Today!

Types of Membership:

- Individual \$40 per year
- Household \$70 per year
- Student (under 25) \$30 per year
- Senior (over 65) \$30 per year
- Friends \$200 per year
- Best Friends \$500 per year
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