Education and OUTReach

The Education and OUTReach Program of the Gay Alliance strives to touch the hearts and the minds of citizens in the Rochester region and to break the silence on LGBT issues. The goal is to create an environment where LGBT and allied people can be fully integrated into all aspects of society by educating on and about all things LGBT. Our professional trainers, as well as the volunteers, provide training, consultation and education for area schools, social services and businesses, reaching thousands of people each year. The Education Program maintains the on-line Gay Alliance Resource Directory (GARD), acting as a liaison with other LGBTA community groups as well as coordinating agency volunteers.

2009 HIGHLIGHTS

▼ 80 educational presentations and workshops were provided by 26 Volunteer Speakers Bureau Educators and 8 staff, on a wide range of topics including: Introduction to LGBT Issues, Creating a SafeZone, Workplace Gender Transitions, Health Care Provider LGBT Inclusiveness, Safe Schools and How To Be a Straight Ally.

▼ Over 2500 people learned LGBTA information from the Gay Alliance Education and OUTReach efforts.

▼ Gay Alliance was paid over $7,000 for Speaking Events.

▼ Partnership with Rochester PFLAG helped expand education into local communities.

▼ Provided information tables at a variety of Health Fairs, including the Family Health and Fitness Fair sponsored by Jim Alesi at the Expo Center.

▼ Coordinated the volunteers for Pride 2009 and connected with over 160 volunteers.

▼ Hosted two SpeakOUT Trainings, January and October of 2009, and provided LGBT educational skills to 50 new LGBT community members and allies.

▼ Online version of GARD was updated and expanded.

▼ Added 15 new active volunteer speakers to the Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau.

▼ InQueery adult learning classes were launched! First class taking place in Jan. 2010.

2010 GOALS

▼ Host spring and fall SpeakOUT Trainings.

▼ Create a “Volunteer” section of the Gay Alliance web site, where volunteers can register, fill out an application and find on-going opportunities.

▼ Establish sponsorships with local colleges to increase educational opportunities and provide safe campuses for all students.

▼ Provide on-going practice sessions, training opportunities and educational sessions for Speakers Bureau members.

▼ Upgrade web site and launch new online resource system with simplified categories, making it more aesthetically pleasing and easier for customers to use.

▼ Visit 4 different LGBT community groups and follow up with an informational article in The Empty Closet.

▼ Establish an annual “Thank You” event for Gay Alliance volunteers.

▼ Create a new and updated Gay Alliance brochure.
Community Safety Program and Anti-Violence Project

The ultimate goal of the Community Safety Program is to decrease victimization in the LGBT communities through proactive approaches that strengthen individuals and the LGBT community. We employ a three-pronged approach by providing: victim support and advocacy, community education and systems change/capacity building to service providers.

2009 Highlights:

▼ 55 incidents reported in 2009, 36 of them between July and Dec. We believe this increase is due to the new AVP “Report It” campaign and intentional education of other service providers in our area.

▼ Conducted 11 trainings on working with LGBT victims of violence for area agencies including Rochester Police Dept., Finger Lakes Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and the Western New York Coalition for Crime Victims.

▼ Launched “Report It” campaign with new brochure, poster, fridge magnet and safety whistles during the summer months.

▼ Recruited AVP Street Team volunteers to do street outreach to the community. Volunteers tabled at the Rochester Public Market, local bars, the Pride Parade and other Pride events.

▼ Conducted an LGBT Safety Needs Assessment in conjunction with the RIT Center for Public Safety Initiatives.

2010 Goals

▼ Increase the number of referrals made to the AVP by area service providers.

▼ Increase the number of consultations requested by area service providers.

▼ Develop youth “report it” campaign

▼ Develop new parks outreach campaign aimed at men who seek sex in local parks, hope to partner with Monroe County Sheriff’s department.

▼ Develop new AVP for Safe Zone training to offer to organizations that have had the basic Safe Zone workshop. This would assist participants in supporting victims of anti-LGBT harassment and bullying.

▼ Full launch of “It’s Not Just Drama” domestic violence awareness campaign.

▼ Launch domestic violence support page on the Gay Alliance website.
The Empty Closet

Beginning publication in 1973, The Empty Closet is New York State’s oldest LGBTI Publication. The Empty Closet newspaper and The Empty Closet blog hosted on the Gay Alliance website continue to be the primary source of information for the LGBT community in the Rochester and Western NY region. Locally and nationally there remains strong support from advertisers and readers for community-based, community-serving publications like the Empty Closet.

**2009 Accomplishments**

▼ Produced June and July ’09 Pride Guides, much larger than in the past and distributed more widely, in collaboration with Pride organizers.

▼ Added four color pages to both sections of the paper as there is an increasing demand for color advertisements from our clients.

▼ Added two volunteer staff reporters. Developed features like “Dining” (restaurant reviews) and the comic strip “Kyle’s B&B”.

▼ Streamlined paper and reduced expense by cutting Section C.

▼ Hired Northstar Distribution to ensure more reliable distribution of paper. Added 12 new distribution points. A list of all distribution points was added to the Empty Closet online version.

▼ Added Photo Galleries to Empty Closet News online.

**Goals for 2010**

▼ Increase distribution sites

▼ Increase advertising and develop online advertising.

▼ Survey readership with electronic survey tool

▼ In most months continue to add another four pages of color to include more color ads.

▼ Continue to seek reporters and photographers to cover local events and news.

▼ Add new features such as “remembering Rochester”

▼ Publish the 2010 Pride Guide supplement
Youth and Young Adult Services

The Gay Alliance Youth Program provides comprehensive advocacy and support services to LGBTI and questioning youth and their families in the Rochester region. The Youth Program also provides consultation, intervention and education to other youth service providers in the area, to ensure appropriate LGBTI inclusion and safety. The 3,500 sq. ft. Youth and Community Center is solely dedicated to providing a safe and supportive place for youth ages 13-23 to discuss issues, make friends, and get support. Services include weekly support groups, drop-in hours, evening and after-school specialty groups, social activities, leadership opportunities, crisis intervention, and short-term counseling.

2009 HIGHLIGHTS

▼ Provided on-site Masters of Social Work student intern to support youth and community services.
▼ Improved volunteer opportunities and communication with a full-time AmeriCorps staff member
▼ Established partnership with SUNY Brockport to assess and assist evaluating program goals and needs, and to prepare for future restructuring.
▼ Over 250 youth attended the Day of Silence Rally from over 40 different schools.
▼ More than 40 middle and high-school students participated in Equality and Justice Day in Albany.
▼ Two staff, two youth and one parent attended the National Equality March in Washington D.C. Met with the National Executive Director of GLSEN, marched with students from GLSEN chapters around the country.
▼ Attendance at the Big Gay Prom increased to all-time high of 250 students.
▼ First, All-Night After Prom Party held in the Youth Center in a safe, drug/alcohol/sex-free zone for students to continue celebrating.
▼ Youth raised money by selling hand-crafted beaded jewelry and holiday ornaments at Equal-Grounds.
▼ Three young adults attended a week of Queer Spirit Camp in July.
▼ One high school student participated in the leadership of “Camp GLSEN” in Briarcliff, NY.
▼ Received new furniture in Youth Center from Sue Cowell and AIDS Rochester, Inc.
▼ Established the OUTeach network with GLSEN Rochester to support LGBTQA teachers and Gay-Straight Alliance Club advisors.

2010 GOALS

▼ Provide new programming to youth participants focusing on leadership and prevention services, including queer-friendly tours of local colleges.
▼ Increase volunteer opportunities for youth, drawing on asset-based programming related to youth leadership and empowerment.
▼ Increase direct services to gay-straight alliance clubs through partnership with CampusOut program and the Community Foundation’s Civic Engagement Grant.
▼ Establish COLAGE group (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)
▼ Increase direct services and support to suburban and rural youth through “Satellite Sunday” program, which will bring Youth Group to outlying communities.
▼ Provide two stipend-based job opportunities for youth, including management of the Snack Shop and peer leadership coordination.
▼ Develop and distribute comprehensive policies and guidelines for adult volunteers working with youth.
Gay Alliance Library and Archives

The Gay Alliance Library is a circulating and reference collection of nearly 5000 fiction and non-fiction books, and 900 magazine and journal titles, as well as video and audio recordings related to LGBTI issues. The Library also houses two desktop computers with Internet access that are part of the David Bohnett Cyber Center. The Archives house a historic collection of copies of The Empty Closet newspaper, as well as vital paper records and ephemera of the events, organizations, and people important to the Rochester LGBTI community.

2009 Highlights

- Library moved into larger location and hosted an open house: over 100 attended
- Purchased 4 new 84-inch tall bookcases through donor support and book sales.
- Moved rare and unique books into secure location in the Library.
- Increased volunteer staff and Gay Alliance AmeriCorps Member coordinates volunteers.
- Provided an information table at the Rochester Pride Festival.
- Partnered with ImageOUT LGBTI film festival – sponsored feature film “An Englishman in New York: Quentin Crisp” – Librarian Gerry Szymanski spoke before the screening and answered questions and distributed brochures.
- Participated in a Rochester Regional Library Council survey on library catalogs.
- Librarian Gerry Szymanski continued work with the “Shoulders to Stand On” video history project.
- Indexed and sorted duplicate Empty Closet newspapers
- Created new library brochure
- Received and processed over 1500 gifts in 2009.
- De-accessioned thousands of copies of duplicate books from collection, as well as duplicate gifts.
- Held two large books sales, selling over 600 books
- 2009 Library holdings - 4723 items (up from: 3806 items in 2006)

2010 Goals

- Process and catalog new gift materials. Organize magazines, journals and newspapers in archive room.
- Organize and classify all non-fiction books using www.LibraryThing.
- Continue sorting and indexing Empty Closet newspapers.
- Continue community outreach to build name recognition and to publicize the collection for academic and historical research.
- Obtain membership in the Society for American Archivists’ Lesbian and Gay Archives Roundtable.
- Fully integrate GAGV membership with library borrowing privileges.
- Explore and select an integrated library system / online catalog.
- More closely coordinate fundraising with agency goals and mission, and solicit funds targeted for Library and Archive acquisitions.
Campus Out

CampusOut is a student run coalition that utilizes the knowledge and experience of activists in the adult queer community. By bringing student leaders together, CampusOut is able to enhance the efforts for LGBT equality at all of the local campuses. CampusOut celebrates the important role of student movements to fight for the equality of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Intersexed (LGBTI) people.

2009 Accomplishments

▼ Collaborated with Metro Justice to educate students about the reality of income taxes and the financial impact on the New York State budget and what cuts could mean to healthcare, social services and higher education.

▼ Hosted the CampusOUT 2009 Conference: a social justice skills conference attended by 150 queer and ally students

▼ Partnered with Empire State Pride Agenda for their Equality and Justice Day: registered over 50 students to attend the event in Albany.

▼ CampusOUT coffee night: social networking nights expanded from once a month to every Sunday night while maintaining attendance

2010 Goals

▼ Northeast LGBT Conference (NELGBT)-work with SUNY Buffalo to support a conference that empowers students to become advocates and activists at their institutions

▼ Organize a local campaign in lieu of Equality and Justice Day- work with other area organizations in order to do so (CRF, ESPA, Metro Justice)- Possibly Harvey Milk Day

▼ Support advocacy and education campaigns initiated by students at member institutions (ex: the UnBlood drive at RIT, resource center at U of R, Coming Out Spiritually at Nazareth, etc.)

▼ Facilitate the development of student-led activism training workshops

▼ Work with the Youth Program to develop outreach to high school Gay-Straight Alliances

▼ Maintain active membership at area colleges (University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, Nazareth College, SUNY Brockport, SUNY Geneseo, Monroe Community College)

▼ Engage students to become active CampusOUT members at St. John Fischer
Shoulders to Stand On

The Gay Alliance Shoulders To Stand On Program focuses on documenting and preserving the history of the GLBT Community in the Rochester region and its impact on New York State and the nation. This Program seeks to claim our place in local, state and national history, and will be available to teach and inspire future generations. Today, we stand on the shoulders of many heroes who made Rochester a city that celebrates diversity and has set the benchmarks for civil liberties throughout the nation. The Shoulders To Stand On Program has 4 initiatives:

Roots Chronology

▼ The digitization of the Empty Closet newspaper, the oldest gay newspaper in New York State, the second oldest continuously published monthly gay newspaper in the country, and the official paper of record which documents the Rochester gay community’s struggle for full civil rights.

▼ To identify headlines, people, groups, events and gay friendly establishments.

▼ Index and chronicle the New Women’s Times newspaper, 1978 – 1984, which focused on the Lesbian Community and the women’s peace movement in opposition to nuclear weapons storage in Upstate New York, and the struggle for women’s equality.

NYS Archives Documentation

▼ This Project will document the GLBT community in Rochester.

▼ The Project will identify, survey and make recommendations for the care, custody, and control of the records of 10–20 of the over 250 gay organizations, agencies, groups and individuals who made history from 1969–2009 in Rochester.

▼ Writing and Publishing the History of the Rochester LGBT Community.

▼ The completion of the Roots Chronology and the Documentation Project will allow for the publishing of the history of the Rochester GLBT Community in an organized and efficient way.

Documentary Film

▼ Rochester’s LGBT community has long been making history – championing the cause of equality and freedom for all. The documentary, Shoulders To Stand On, will capture the stories, struggles and achievements of our LGBT pioneers, highlight events that put Rochester in the spotlight, and celebrate the spirit of a community that is bound together with a steadfast sense of pride.

2009 Highlights

▼ Master Grant Proposal written

▼ Shoulders To Stand On Program article and History Corner in the EC monthly.

▼ GAGV awarded Documentation Grant by NYS Archives DHP Program

▼ Completed chronicling the Empty Closet through 1998.

2010 Goals

▼ Finish chronicling the Empty Closet through 2002.

▼ Digitize the Empty Closet into a searchable document

▼ Be awarded Phase II Documentation Grant from NYS Archives DHP Program

▼ Begin research and find funding for the Documentary Film
Rochester Pride

In January 2009, the Gay Alliance was approached by members from the Community Business Forum, who explained that their Board had voted to close the organization, and they were concerned about the plans for Rochester Pride. With six months to plan, the Board and Staff of the Gay Alliance made a commitment to produce the 2009 Rochester Pride Festival and Parade along with their annual Gay Pride Picnic Fund-raiser; in addition they would assume all the financial risks that went with such an undertaking. Almost two hundred community volunteers worked with the Gay Alliance to produce the many events, and in the end, Rochester Pride had found a new permanent home within the community building efforts of the Gay Alliance.

2009 Highlights

▼ Created a new look and unified brand recognition for Rochester Pride.
▼ Had the musical group BETTY and the performer Pepper Mashay headline at an outdoor Festival.
▼ Expanded the Festival venue and included additional beverage choices.
▼ Produced two Pride Guides as inserts into The Empty Closet, also Pride Posters and Post Cards.
▼ Had a record number of units march in the Pride Parade.
▼ Coordinated ASL interpreting through the Deaf Access program, increased participation of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Pride activities.
▼ Picnic had new activities and expanded vendor space.

2010 Goals

▼ A wider variety of Pride “week” activities, including family-friendly activities and events.
▼ Headline entertainment at Festival and Picnic.
▼ Further expand the festival site.
▼ Increased signage at all events to make it easier to find gates, information etc.
▼ Enhanced Pride Guides providing more specific event information.
▼ Increased ease of advanced ticket purchasing online.
▼ Expand physical access at Pride Picnic.

**Throughout this document LGBT is used as an umbrella term to refer to a large number of individual identities. This is done not to dismiss or exclude an identity, or to imply a hierarchy of identities, but for sheer simplicity. Some of the communities that we commonly work with include individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed, queer, questioning, MTF, MTF, trans-sexual, heterosexual and androgynous.
ROCHESTER 2010

PRIDE

21 YEARS OF HISTORY
JULY 10-18, 2010

PRIDE EVENTS
THURS-SAT, JUNE 24-26
THE LARAMIE PROJECT:
TEN YEARS LATER
SAT, JULY 10
PRIDE DAY AT SEABREEZE
SUN, JULY 11
RAINBOW FLAG RAISING
AND TEA DANCE
MON, JULY 12
PRIDE YOUTH DANCE
AND PAGEANT (13-23 YRS)
FRI, JULY 16
PRIDE WEEKEND KICKOFF PARTY
SAT, JULY 17
PRIDE FAMILY DAY AT THE MAG
SAT, JULY 17
PRIDE PARADE
SAT, JULY 17
PRIDE FESTIVAL
HEADLINER: AMBER
SUN, JULY 18
PRIDE PICNIC
WED, JULY 21
BOYS IN THE BAND

PRIDE SPONSORS
140 ALEX BAR & GRILL
ABSOLUT
AUDITORIUM CENTER
BACARDI
BACHELOR FORUM
BREAD AND WATER THEATRE
CENTER FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS
EQUAL=GROUNDS
IMAGEOUT
JOHN BOREK PRESENTS BOYS IN THE BAND
OUTLANDISH VIDEOS & GIFTS
PROFESSIONAL TUTORING SERVICE
RIT GUST CENTER
ROCHESTER VICTORY ALLIANCE
STRATHALLAN HOTEL
THREE OLIVES

Gay Alliance of the genesee valley