



## PFLAG Phoenix Newsletter

Events and information

December 2016

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### Greetings,

The holiday season can be a time of high anxiety, especially when things are rocky with your family. Please remember that PFLAG is here to give you support and share ideas on how to survive the holidays. Stop in to one of our support meetings. We would love to see you!

Are you having a big Christmas dinner and have room for one more at your table? Consider inviting someone, who may not have anywhere else to go, over to share in the holiday spirit.

Wondering what else is going on in December? Check out the [calendar](#) at [our new website](#). We list all our support meetings and other events that may be of interest to you there.

And remember, we love our volunteers! If you'd like to know more about ways you can help our chapter, email us at [info@pflagphoenix.org](mailto:info@pflagphoenix.org) or check out our [Volunteer page](#) on the website where you can find all kinds of great opportunities to help out.

Don't forget to "like" our [Facebook page](#) if you haven't yet! And from PFLAG Phoenix, we wish everyone Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

PFLAG Phoenix

## A Message from PFLAG about this election



This has been a difficult election for so many of us, so before we say anything else, we must say this, regardless of what has happened: **You are loved. You are valued. PFLAG is here.** The election results have us experiencing a range of emotions from anger to hurt, sadness, and fear. Pundits are talking about an electorate divided, national leaders are talking about unity, and based on the results, it's become clear: roughly half of our neighbors (and even some of our family members) do not embrace the same vision of America as we do.

The reality is that in many places, elected officials who have introduced or supported bills that oppose the very existence and presence of LGBTQ people were successful, and their success promises a new wave of ugliness. There are major battles on the horizon, and these are battles we must win. Lives are at risk. And it isn't just LGBTQ lives. It is the lives of anyone who doesn't fit in their idea of "the mainstream" -- people of different religions, races, ethnicities, levels of ability, socioeconomic groups, and genders.

PFLAGers know how to experience losses, celebrate wins with grace, and never lose sight of our vision of a world where all people are valued, respected, supported, and loved. But make no mistake: PFLAGers also know how to fight for ourselves, for our families, and for a bright future for LGBTQ youth. We have been on the frontlines, making allies out of adversaries, for over 40 years. And though we must take time to reflect, to heal, to rage, and to grieve, we cannot sit in inaction for long. The lives and rights of our LGBTQ loved ones cannot afford to wait.

The darkness has been exposed. Now, it is our job to continue to shine a light on it, and challenge it as only PFLAGers can, with education, personal stories, and the full weight of the United States Constitution, which still guarantees our PFLAG values of dignity, respect, and equal rights for all.

We've got more than 400 chapters and 200,000 members and supporters across the country ready to get this done. That's thousands of people committed to sending this message:

You are loved. You are valued. And PFLAG is here.

**P.S.** If you are struggling and need help, don't wait, and don't suffer alone: Asking for help is a sign of strength. If you or a loved one is in danger or have thought about self harm, please call **The Trevor Project** at [1-866-488-7386](tel:1-866-488-7386). Other hotlines and crisis centers can be found [here on our website](#).

## December support meetings



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Friday December 2 7:00pm-8:30pm Tempe

Saturday		<a href="#">Check their website</a>	Native American
Wednesday	December 14	2:00pm-3:30pm	Beatitudes Campus
Tuesday	December 20	7:00pm-8:30pm	Mesa
Thursday	December 8	7:00pm-8:30pm	North Scottsdale
Monday	December 19	7:00pm-9:00pm	Central Phoenix
Friday	December 23	7:00pm-9:00pm	Fountain Hills

Please note our north Scottsdale meeting has a new location, details are [here](#).  
 For more details on our new Mesa support meeting, click [here](#).  
 General information on all of our support meetings can be found [here](#).

## A note about our new home for the North Scottsdale Support Group meetings

by facilitator Joan Taylor

When our old venue for North Scottsdale support meetings, Via de Cristo, could no longer stay open, we had to look around for other places to meet. Pastor Dave Ragan at **The Beatitudes** recommended Desert Mission UMC to us along with Black Mountain UCC, two accepting churches in North Scottsdale. We were able to work out scheduling with Desert Mission.

Our first meeting was wonderful. Eileen, the caretaker for Desert Mission UMC greeted us before the meeting and couldn't have been more helpful. She fretted that we didn't have enough room where they planned to put us, so arrangements were made for a larger space next time. I couldn't ask for more.



A transgender friend and I decided we would attend a service. She's been worried about the reception she would receive and was expecting to be greeted with pitchforks and knives. Instead, we were both greeted warmly and respectfully ... and we were accepted. People of all ages and races were there.

Pastor George Cushman is truly a special person and his sermon was wonderful. His church reflects all of his kind and embracing qualities. This is clearly an active community church. If you would like to check it out, [here is their website](#) and you can find details about the North Scottsdale meeting [here](#). So many people come to our support meetings and talk about being rejected by their churches. This church is a delightful place of worship. Everyone is welcome here.

## Guest speaker at the Central Phoenix meeting on December 19th



Please join us at our main meeting on Monday, December 19th at 7:00pm, for our special guest speaker(s) from Trans Queer Pueblo, an LGBTQ+ migrant community of color that works with like-minded people, creates cycles of mutual support that cultivate leadership, which in turn generates the community power that liberates bodies and minds from systems of oppression and towards justice for all people.

Our Central Phoenix meeting is held at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1407 N. 2nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004. Meeting runs from 7pm to 9pm. Guest speaker runs from 7pm to 7:30pm.

## Membership Reminder



Just a quick note to remind everyone that NOW MORE THAN EVER is the time to join or renew your membership. We must defend all of the progress we have made and fight harder than ever to continue gaining ground in the fight towards full

ever to continue gaining ground in the fight towards full equality, respect, and dignity. And that takes volunteers and

money. So please consider becoming a member (though it is NOT necessary to be a member to attend meetings, work as a volunteer, or join in on PFLAG Phoenix activities).

Joining is easy. Just go to to [our website](#) where you will find 4 simple ways to donate or join, easy-to-follow instructions, and [lots & lots of choices](#) when it comes to picking a membership or a sponsorship to fit your budget. And of course, a big heartfelt thank you to everyone who has already joined or renewed. We could not do it without you!

## Deadline On PFLAG Phoenix Scholarships Fast Approaching

Our deadline is January 31, 2017 and we are looking for outstanding graduating high school seniors and college students. If you or someone you know meets that description and the criteria listed below, please apply or encourage that person to apply for one of the 2017 scholarships offered through PFLAG Phoenix.



All scholarships are open to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) individuals and to straight allies who have directly supported LGBT+ youth and/or the LGBT+ community and live here in Arizona. To apply for these scholarships, please [download our 2017 scholarship application packet](#) from our website - only one completed application is needed to apply for all offered PFLAG Phoenix scholarships. You will also find other scholarship opportunities there as well. So hurry and get your application in.

## Meet our 2017 PFLAG Phoenix Board of Directors

In September we began soliciting nominations for 2017 PFLAG Phoenix BOD



Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. We solicited for nominations until November 18, 2016. Though receiving nominations for these offices proved challenging, we ended up receiving one nominee for each office. Because none of the offices were contested, an election by ballot was not necessary and those nominated were accepted into office for 2017 by acclamation. President and Vice President will be filled by new individuals

**PRESIDENT -Geoffrey Dorsey**

Geoffrey has been attending PFLAG meetings since 2009 when he moved to Phoenix from Nashville. He enjoys reading, doing research, cooking, and traveling. He is also a life time student with 3 bachelor degrees and 1 associate degree. He looks forward to serving as President of the PFLAG Phoenix Chapter over the next year.

**VICE PRESIDENT - Andrew Barreras**

Andrew has been with PFLAG Phoenix for 5 years and serves on the Board of Directors. He was born and raised in a small copper mining town of Superior, Arizona. Attended Central Arizona College (School of Nursing) also attended Eastern Arizona College (IEMT - Intermediate Emergency Medical Technician) Andrew worked as Police Dispatcher for the City of Superior Police. He was the first male Police Dispatcher. Andrew also worked as a Volunteer Fire Fighter/ IEMT with the Superior Fire Department before moving to Tempe in 1986. He retired from Maricopa Medical Center as a Nurse Specialist from the Maricopa Burn Center. He also worked Pediatric Emergency Dept. and in the Operating Room and was part of the Trauma Team. Andrew was Ordained into the Priesthood in the Reformed Catholic Church 5 years ago and is a member CORA (Council of Religious Advisors) at ASU where he really enjoys working with the LGBTQ Students. He enjoys his position as a Priest with the very inclusive, all welcoming Reformed Catholic Church. He has worked very hard for Marriage Equality and for total equality and rights for the LGBTQ Community... You'll see him every 1st Saturday at Charlie's .. Working along with the Men of Charlie's Man of the Month contest.

**SECRETARY - G. Lewis Penrose**

Lewis attended PFLAG in 1991 for the first time after having come out as a gay man at 39 years old. He attended PFLAG in Tempe for a few years and received great support. In 2009 he saw the movie PRAYERS FOR BOBBY and was so moved he decided he needed give back to others what he received from PLAG in the early 90's. In 2014 he joined the Board of Directors and held the office of Secretary in 2014 - 2015. In 2016 he took over monitoring the PFLAG Info/Help-line located on the website. He looks forward to serving as Secretary for a third year in 2017.

**TREASURER - Ron Elkins**

PFLAG is very special to me. I have been a member for over 6 years and enjoy the support, friendship and most importantly helping others through their journey. I would like to give back to PFLAG and help where I can. I am a long-time Arizona resident and have my own store "Consign at Chez" in Central Phoenix. I look forward to helping the organization in the Treasurer role. Having my own business for over 6 years, I understand that the finances keep an organization strong and prosperous. Through accurate bookkeeping and accounting of funds, the organization can continue to be successful in growth and help more people. With my business experience and the drive to help the organization, it would be an honor to contribute to the organization in the role of Phoenix PFLAG Treasurer.