



PFLAG Phoenix Newsletter

Events and information

December 2017

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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](#) on [our 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 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



This time last year many of us were in a complete state of shock over the election results - with good reason. For a considerable number of our PFLAG Phoenix community, the fear was overwhelming. We know, we saw it and felt it in our support meetings. And though we could not assure people that their fears were unfounded, we could assure them that they were loved, valued, and not alone. And that is still the case. Please know PFLAG will always be there for you.

Even though it's been a year since the election, many of us continue to experience a wide range of emotions, from anger to hurt, sadness, and fear - again, with good reason. But now, we see that we are not alone, we see the power of resistance, the numbers of truly good people who are as horrified as we are, and the activism of so many who were once complacent. We are starting to see some hope. Pundits continue to talk about an electorate divided, and with a sad realization we see that a good number of our neighbors (and even some of our family members) do not embrace the same vision of America as we do. But we are seeing those numbers shrink too. Changing hearts and minds is a slow and painstaking process.

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 are facing big fights and losing. Just look at the recent VA elections. We resist and fight with all of our might because we know their success promises a new wave of ugliness. Thankfully, we are starting to see some victories, but we **cannot** rest. 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. We must stay strong. We cannot give up.

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 with your help PFLAG will always be here for you.

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



Friday	December 1	7:00pm-8:30pm	Tempe
Saturday		Check their website	Native American
Wednesday	December 13	2:00pm-3:30pm	Beatitudes Campus
Tuesday	December 19	7:00pm-8:30pm	Mesa
Thursday	December 14	7:00pm-8:30pm	North Scottsdale
Monday	December 18	7:00pm-9:00pm	Central Phoenix

General information on all of our support meetings can be found [here](#).

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 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!

Calling all LGBTQ+ students



Point Foundation is now accepting applications to become a Point Scholar! Apply for a Point Foundation scholarship today! Deadline is Jan 29th, 2018. Check out their [website](#) for more information.

Our 2018 PFLAG Phoenix BOD Officers

It is with gratitude and pride that we announce our 2018 Board of Director officers. There were no additional nominations from the floor for any of the offices, so our 2017 officers were all elected by acclamation for 2018. For those who are not familiar with our President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, we offer a brief bio on each officer below:



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 this 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 7 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 7 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.