

CHAMPION FOR A CAUSE



Please join us for our General Meeting on **Monday, January 27** at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 2111 Camino del Rio South in Mission

Valley. The building where we meet is The United Methodist Center, in The Cove Room. Doors open at 6:45 pm.

Please join us as our guest speaker, Sean Sala, shares his story about surviving Ex-Gay therapy. Sean is a

nationally known Marriage, Military and Faith Reconciliation activist and has been featured on CNN, NBC, FOX News, Politico, The New York Times, The Associated Press, OWN, MTV and Reuters. He was featured on "God and Gays" with Lisa Ling where he confronted Exodus President Alan Chambers - the show eventually pressured the organization to fold. He tells a compelling story.

Please join us for our support groups, then our cookie social, followed by the presentation.

"Why is it that, as a culture, we are more comfortable seeing two men holding guns than holding hands?" --Ernest Gaines

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL!

Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership for 2014. It's appreciated, but we have a long way to go. Dues are used to provide support, education, and advocacy on behalf of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender community and their families. They enable us to provide monthly meetings, an info line, newsletters, educational brochures, etc.

Your membership is important to us as it strengthens our presence in the community and gives us many opportunities to have our voices heard. We also help support National PFLAG by sending \$15 of your dues to them which provides you with membership

in the national organization. Please don't renew directly with National, as no part of that benefits our San Diego chapter.

The membership application is on our web site (www.pflag.com) and will also be in the February newsletter; however, you can pay at any of the meetings or mail a check made payable to: PFLAG San Diego, P.O. Box 82762, San Diego, CA 92138. Types of memberships available are: Individual, \$30; Household, \$40; Business, \$50; Supporting, \$60; Contributing, \$125; Lifetime: \$1000. All donations are welcomed.

PROUD OF KEVIN



We are always proud when a member of the LGBT community is thrust into the spotlight (in a good way!!). The San Diego Unified School District's Board of Education elected Kevin Beiser as its new president in December. Kevin was elected to the five-member board in 2010 as a representative for District B. As long as we're bragging, he was board vice president for a year leading up to his new position, and, for the school year 2008-2009, he earned "San Diego Math Teacher of the Year" honors.

"I look forward to working together to continue improving public education with quality schools in every neighborhood," Beiser said after the meeting. "My experience in the classroom, working side by side with school administrators and parents alike has given me a unique insight as to how the policies that are developed by the Board and the Superintendent's office affect those of us on the front lines."

FACILITATOR TRAINING

For your convenience, any member in good standing who is interested in becoming a support group facilitator, we are offering a two hour training prior to our general meeting at the church: **January 27 from 5:00-7:00 pm**. You will gain information on how to direct a support group, as well as group rules, challenges, and opportunities. Diverse and comfortable facilitators are an integral component for a successful PFLAG chapter. We will have printed materials for you to share and take home, discussions, and role playing opportunities. Please RSVP to Terrie Vorono, tvorono@pflag.com.

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MISSION STATEMENT

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through Support, to cope with an adverse society; Education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and Advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 27, February 3, 10:
Mi Familia Support Group
Carolina: 619-692-2077, ext. 116

February 3:
North County Coastal Support Group
Larry: 760-224-2178

February 10:
East County Support Group
Bob: 619-334-8214

PFLAG THANKS YOU FOR YOUR EXTRA HELP

Contributing Memberships

Jim and Regina Bohorquez
Beth & Aaron Duggan
Jan Garbosky
Arlene Prater
Eva Stjernfeldt
& Alec Babiarz

Marilyn Grossman
Diane & Eugene Kaelin
Richard Kelley
Bill Patten
Charlotte Pichney
L & S Rosenberg
Family Foundation
(Leon & Sonia Rosenberg)

Supporting Memberships

Doris Faulkner
Sue Randerson
Anthony & Lilia Villasenor

Mistress of Games

Kim Martinez, once again,
dazzled us with ice-breaker
activities at our December
23rd meeting

General Fund Donations

Sharon Bloomenthal
Belinda & Richard Flynn

LAILA AL-SHAMMA NAMED GLSEN'S STUDENT ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network named Laila Al-Shamma of Carlsbad as the 2013 GLSEN Student Advocate of the Year. It's exciting for PFLAG that Laila's family are PFLAG members. She was honored alongside leading global, award-winning entertainment company Lionsgate; Emmy/Golden Globe award-winning producer Linda Bloodworth Thomason; and Emmy/Golden Globe award-winning actor Jim Parsons and partner Todd Spiewak at GLSEN's ninth annual Respect Awards.

GLSEN's Student Advocate of the Year honors an outstanding young person whose efforts have helped ensure a safe learning environment for all students -- and have served as a voice of change in their school and community.

Laila became active in the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) at La Costa Canyon High School when she was a freshman. She quickly became a part of the student club's leadership resulting in her successful coordination of GLSEN's Day of Silence and Transgender Day of Remembrance.

With help from her GSA, Laila later went on to spearhead a Safe Space Campaign designed to engage school personnel about the importance of safe spaces for LGBT students at school. Educators were offered a packet of information and asked to display a Safe Space sticker in their classroom. Laila will soon begin making presentations about the campaign to both middle schools in her school district. In addition, she created two public education campaigns about LGBT issues for her high

school campus, including the online "Care Campaign" focused on crisis prevention and the "Words Hurt" initiative challenging students to pledge not to use homophobic language.



Laila is a well-rounded student. She sings in two choirs, serves as drum major of her school's marching band and has a job tutoring other high school students. She also wrote two op-eds for her school's newspaper about LGBT, issues with one editorial winning her the newspaper's Press Freedom Award.

UTAH MARRIAGE INEQUALITY IN A NUTSHELL

U.S. District Judge Robert Shelby struck down Utah's same-sex marriage ban in a December 20, 2013, 53 page ruling saying that, "current laws deny its gay and lesbian citizens their fundamental right to marry and, in so doing, demean the dignity of these same-sex couples for no rational reason. Accordingly, the court finds that these laws are unconstitutional." Instant, presto, same-sex marriages could be performed immediately. As unhappy as the Governor and other lawmakers were, the State of Utah had no choice but to comply (and they did), but wasted no time in asking the U.S. Supreme Court to issue a stay (a halt) so that no more same-sex marriages could be performed. The stay was issued on January 6, 2014.

Here's the kicker, the office of Utah Governor Gary Herbert said same-sex couples who were married after the state's ban on gay marriage was

struck down, but before the Supreme Court halted same-sex marriages, will not be recognized as legally married. Surely, you jest!

Cabinet members were told that since same-sex marriages are not recognized as legal, no one in the state can recognize them as legally married even though they were legally married with directives from the governor's office to perform the marriages. Their view (and one must question the legality of their stance), is such that the couples may not avail themselves to laws that would pertain to married couples. This would be like saying all same-sex couples who were legally married in California between the State Supreme Court's decision to allow same-sex marriage and the victory of Yes on Proposition in 2008 aren't married anymore. Legal is legal; you can't undo legal. Just like the wait for the Supreme Court to

weigh in on Proposition 8, same-sex couples in Utah must wait their turn and stand in limbo.

THE TIME IS APPROACHING

Before you know it, the deadline for the PFLAG scholarships will be upon us. The deadline is **March 15, 2014** and the scholarship program is **May 19, 2014**. Please spread the word. Visit www.pflag.com/scholarships/ for the scholarship application and details of each scholarship. The scholarships are open to LGBT high school seniors who will continue their education, undergraduate, and graduate students who are attending college full-time.



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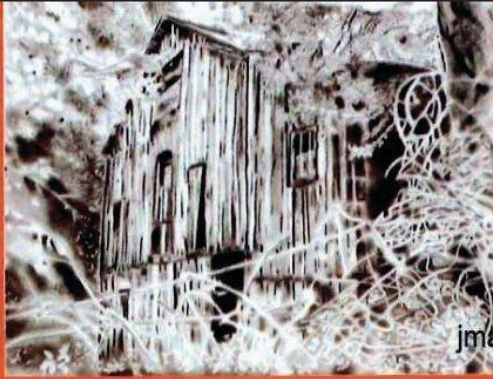
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