

LGBTQ+ WORK GROUP AT FRIENDSHIP PLACE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



MAKING AN IMPACT

It's been a busy year as our LGBTQ+ Work Group collaborated to produce and present a new webinar series which is now available online to view when it's convenient for you. We also continued to expand our partnerships with new allies in the community.

At our meeting in September we began speaking with The Colin Project which we hope will result in our **second** grant offer in 2021!

As always please know that all are welcome to attend our work group meetings. Inclusion and diversity is what we champion and we welcome your ideas and input.

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THE POWER OF ALLIES

Amy Russell-Wolf

The Colin Project and The Colin Wolf Foundation

At our September 9th work group meeting we were pleased to welcome and meet Amy Russell-Wolf. Amy is the mother of Colin Wolf and contacted the work group about how the foundation named in his honor can partner with Friendship Place in our efforts to be of service to the LGBTQIA community.

On the afternoon of Thursday, Feb. 18, Colin Wolf, a young man and student at Virginia Wesleyan University, took his own life. Wolf was a senior studying psychology aspiring to enter the mental health field.

The Colin Wolf Foundation was established in his memory to continue Colin's passionate focus on LGBTQ rights, equality, suicide prevention, easy access to counseling and compassionate care, and education access for all. The foundation seeks to collaborate with, invest in, and provide much-needed services alongside like-minded community organizations.

The foundation has the following approach to ending the crisis of homelessness in the youth LGBTQ+ community:



PREVENT. PROVIDE. PREPARE.

Prevent this crisis before it happens through awareness, primary research, and counseling services to stop homelessness before it happens

Provide compassionate care the LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness.

Prepare those currently struggling with this crisis to re-enter our communities through training, counseling, and employment support.

thecolinproject.org
THE COLIN WOLF
 FOUNDATION
 ★ ★ ★

WORKGROUP WEBINAR SERIES

Recorded Sessions Now Available Online



Members of the LGBTQ+ Workgroup worked very hard over the summer to produce a five-part webinar series which was presented to attendees online. Our cultural competency webinar series ultimately seeks to better understand how we can create environments that are welcoming and can help minimize the existing disparities experienced by the LGBTQ+ population.

The series is now available for online viewing whenever you'd like to watch it. The links are listed at friendshipplace.org/lgbtq

- Session 1: June 2nd LGBTQ+ 101: Welcoming & Inclusion
- Session 2: June 16th History & Culture
- Session 3: June 30th Transgender Experiences
- Session 4: July 14th Systems of Inequity & Disparities
- Session 5: July 28th Advocacy & Resistance

OUR WEBINAR SERIES

Orelia Lesh - Co Chair LGBTQ+ Work Group

This summer, Friendship Place's LGBTQ+ Work Group kicked off Pride Month in June by rolling out our first Webinar series to provide training, perspectives, and opportunities to take action in support of LGBTQ+ communities in the DMV area and beyond. Attended by a total of 112 participants, the series received wonderful feedback from participants and presenters. It will hopefully serve as a starting point for further education and exploration for Friendship Place staff and the wider community that participated.

The first session, LGBTQ 101, was facilitated by Friendship Place LGBTQ+ Work Group members Max Durbin and Orelia Lesh. Topics covered included basic definitions and terms, best practices (and things to avoid) when getting to know or providing support to LGBTQ+ identified clients, confronting bias, and intersectionality. The second session provided an in-depth look into some of the less publicized histories and cultural impacts of LGBTQ+ communities with Professor Marnie Twigg from American University. We were lucky to have our very own Sarah Simone share her story and the stories of other trans folks she has worked with for the third session. Sarah expertly highlighted ways that everyone can join in support of transgender family, friends, and community members.



The fourth and fifth sessions in the series were presented in panel format with the goal of sharing a range of experiences and viewpoints within two key areas, systems of inequity affecting LGBTQ+ communities and the ongoing resistance against such systemic oppressions. In the fourth session, panelists Ramina Davidson of Community Solutions, and Francis Morgan and Christopher Andrews from the Howard University School of Dentistry LGBTQ group, "Out in Denistry," presented on systemic inequities in the areas of housing, healthcare, and employment and their effects on individuals and communities.

The fifth and final webinar featured panelists LeAndrea Gilliam a longtime advocate and expert in the area of LGBTQ+ youth homelessness who serves as the Program Analyst and Housing Specialist at the DC Mayor's Office of LGBTQ Affairs; Samantha Jones, a Montgomery County elected official and past president of the LGBTQ Democrats of Montgomery County; and John Riley of Metro Weekly Magazine. This panel focused on efforts for advocacy, resistance, and organizing for supports, rights and freedoms for LGBTQ+ individuals and communities.

The entire series provided a wealth of knowledge and a call to action to participants to delve deeper into resources provided and to find their own authentic ways to contribute to the support and liberation of LGBTQ+ individuals and communities. If you missed the sessions when they were presented live, you can still learn and be inspired by the talented presenters. All five sessions are available on the Friendship Place YouTube channel. Please watch them and share widely!

We look forward to ongoing training and discussion with staff and community members about how Friendship Place can keep growing and deepening our welcome and support of LGBTQ+ youth, individuals, families, and staff members. We are preparing another webinar series for next year, and we can't wait for you to join us!

FRIENDSHIP PLACE

1991 - 2021
CELEBRATING 30
YEARS OF ENDING
HOMELESSNESS AND
REBUILDING LIVES

EVERYONE DESERVES A
PLACE TO CALL HOME

FRIENDSHIP PLACE IS THE PREMIER PROVIDER OF HOUSING SERVICES FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN THE WASHINGTON DC REGION. FRIENDSHIP PLACE IS A COLLECTIVE OF STAFF, PARTICIPANTS, BOARD, AND VOLUNTEERS COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT ALL PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND EXPRESSIONS OF FRIENDSHIP PLACE ARE CONSIDERED WELCOMING, AFFIRMING, INCLUSIVE, AND SAFER FOR LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO MAY REQUIRE ARE SERVICES.

THE OUTRAGE

Female-founded activist apparel company donates to Friendship Place

The Outrage recently contacted Friendship Place to offer us 250 copies of a free book "Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story" written by Julie Rodgers. Outlove is a memoir about Julie's experience growing up at the center of the battle between Evangelicals and the LGBTQ community. It's about love and losses, political and religious power-plays, and the cost to those who sought to stay in a faith community that wouldn't accept them. Shedding light on the debate between Evangelical Christians and the LGBTQ community—a battle that continues to rage on in the national news and in courtrooms across the country—Outlove ultimately casts a hopeful vision for how we can heal. The Outrage is a hub for activism leveraging the power of community and fashion to mobilize their growing network of activists to shift the political landscape of our country and change the world we live in.



Their website describes their mission: "We're on the ground and at the tables planning marches, protests, and campaigns all while opening community spaces across the country equipped with amenities to fuel the resistance. We're curating an amazing line-up of programming that pushes our community to take their activism to the next level, while offering a choose what you can pay membership model rooted in relationship building.

We're donating with every single purchase to progressive orgs, registering customers to vote at checkout and teaching people how to contact their reps. We partner directly with non-profits and social movements to outfit the resistance while leveraging fundraising potential for their work."

For more information, please visit their website: the-outrage.com



Work group member Anne snapped a pic of this Pride Pooch and wanted to share with everyone!



Ending homelessness
Rebuilding lives

THE LGBTQ+ WORK GROUP AT FRIENDSHIP PLACE

Co Chairs

Christopher Cannedy
(he, his, him)
Newsletter Editor
Community Engagement Manager

Orelia Lesh, LICSW
(she/her/hers)
Social Worker - The Brooks



Committee Members

Jean-Michel Giraud
(he, his, him)
President/CEO

Sean D. Read
(he/him/his)
Chief Community Solutions Officer

Maxwell Durbin
(he/him/his)
Case Manager - Veteran Services

Kara Green
(she/her/hers)
Housing Specialist - Veterans First

Bruce Grimes
(he/him/his)
Secretary, Board of Directors

Rebekah Koen
(she/they)
Case Manager - Veterans First

Anne Morrison
(she/her/hers)
Board Member

Lynne Tag
(she/her/hers)
Volunteer, Former Board Member



OUR MISSION

The LGBTQ+ Workgroup of Friendship Place is a collective of Staff, Participants, Board, and Volunteers committed to ensuring that all programs, services, and expressions of Friendship Place are considered welcoming, affirming, inclusive, and safer for LGBTQ+ community members and allies.

We seek to continuously expand our awareness, competency, and sensitivity through action and advocacy throughout the broader Friendship Place community and community at-large.