

GSA Newsarama
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This newsletter is created by Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools to keep students, school professionals and other community members up to date on the issues, events and news items that may be of interest to those working within Wisconsin schools, communities, Gay-Straight Alliances and similar clubs. If you are no longer interested in receiving this update, simply reply to this email requesting that your name be removed from the list. Please include your current school, or previous school if you have graduated or are no longer in school.

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Feature

OutReach Announces 2008 Award Winners

OutReach is Madison and South Central Wisconsin's LGBT community center, working to promote equality and quality of life for LGBT people. On Friday, July 18th, OutReach will be celebrating their 35th anniversary at the 16th Annual OutReach Awards Banquet at the Monona Terrace in Madison.

The Awards Banquet will honor the work and achievements of seven individuals and one organization in expanding OutReach's vision of welcoming and inclusive communities for LGBT people and their allies.

Here are the recipients of this year's awards:

Courage Award: Felicia Melton-Smyth. Felicia is being honored posthumously for her bravery and her commitment to LGBT activism. Felicia was a dedicated volunteer with OutReach, the Madison Area Transgender Association (MATA), and numerous HIV/AIDS organizations in Wisconsin.

- Man of the Year: Brian Wild. Brian is being honored for the important role he plays as Artistic Director for Proud Theater, Madison's LGBTQ youth theater troupe. In addition to his incredible work with Proud Theater, Brian has also been involved with the Broom Street Theater for 16 years.

- Woman of the Year: Bonnie Augusta. Bonnie is being honored for her tireless commitment to the safety and well-being of LGBT youth. As GLBTQ Resource Teacher for the Madison Metropolitan School District, Bonnie provides critical support for young people, their families and their allies on a daily basis. Bonnie is also very active with GSA for Safe Schools and at her church, Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ.

- Allies of the Year: Bill and Linda Keys. Bill and Linda are being honored for the significant commitment they have shown to LGBT equality, both as individuals and as a couple. Linda served two full terms on the GSA for Safe Schools board and has been involved with countless community organizations, and Bill was a member of the Madison School Board and president of Madison Teachers, Inc., where he successfully fought for domestic partner benefits for teachers.

- Organization of the Year: Diverse and Resilient (D&R). D&R is being honored for its commitment to building up the capacity of LGBT youth and LGBT organizations in Wisconsin. Their focus on healthy lives and leadership development has made them a major catalyst for significant positive change.

- OutReach Volunteer of the Year: Wayne Gathright. Wayne is being honored for his long-term commitment to OutReach's many programs, including their Speaker's Bureau, their extensive library and their programming on trans issues, just to name a few. Without volunteers like Wayne, OutReach would not be able to do the fantastic work that they do.

- Special Recognition Award: Jasmine Christian. Jasmine is being honored for her enthusiastic commitment to OutReach, particularly in developing programming for LGBT youth ages 18 to 24. Jasmine began volunteering with OutReach after graduating from high school over a year ago, where she was very involved with GSA for Safe Schools and Briarpatch.

This year's keynote speaker will be Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, and the event will once again be emceed by Susan Siman of WISC-TV 3. If you are interested in attending OutReach's Awards Banquet on July 18th, visit www.outreachinc.com or call 608.255.8582 for details. Reduced rates for students are available.

Headlines

1. Call for Wisconsin LGBT History

As we've mentioned, GSA for Safe Schools will be bringing a traveling exhibition from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to Madison in the fall, entitled "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals: 1933-1945". This exhibition will serve as an opportunity to take a closer look at LGBT history, both locally and on a larger scale.

On that note, GSA for Safe Schools would like to create a resource for teaching lessons on Wisconsin LGBT history and make it available for school professionals and students across the state. Perhaps you can help!

Dick Wagner, local historian with an expertise on LGBT history, has generously agreed to take the lead using research he has done on Wisconsin LGBT history to work with GSAFE in creating this resource. He is currently putting together a timeline of Wisconsin LGBT history and suggested that we cast our net wide to seek more information to enrich that timeline and to fill in gaps.

If you have information about people, issues, and/or events related to our state's LGBT history that you think should go on the timeline, and you would like to assist in making Wisconsin LGBT history more visible, please email us what you have. If in doubt about whether your information is relevant, don't worry: It's better to err on the side of sending us too much. Please email your information to Brian J. at brianj@gsaforsafeschools.org or Tim at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org and we will pass your information along to Cindy Crane (GSAFE Executive Director), who will be working closely with Dick Wagner to put this resource together.

2. GSA for Safe Schools Walk/Run/Eat

On Saturday, October 11th, GSA for Safe Schools will be holding their 2nd Annual Walk/Run/Eat in Warner Park on Madison's north side. Details are starting to come together about the route and the event program, and right now we are beginning our search for volunteers.

On the day of the event, we will need willing volunteers to play the role of course marshals, to help out with registration in the morning, and to assist with set-up and clean-up. If you're interested in volunteering that day, email Tim at timm@gsaforsafeschools.org to learn more.

Of course, we also want people to just come and enjoy the event, participating in either the 5K walk, the 5K run or the 10K run. All participants will be treated to a picnic-style lunch after the walk/run, graciously donated by Queen Anne's Catering. Help spread the word, and start thinking about who you might want to join you that day. Walkers and runners of all abilities and ages are welcome!

Later this summer, we will have more details about registration and pricing. Keep an eye on Newsarama and on the GSA for Safe Schools website (www.gsaforsafeschools.org) for updates.

Related Readings: Events and Opportunities

GSA Newsarama is a publication of GSA for Safe Schools (GSAFE). Events, resources, and news items listed under the "Related Readings" sections of GSA Newsarama are not sponsored by GSAFE and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of GSAFE.

3. Get Involved with "Speak Out Sister" in Madison

Over the summer, Speak Out Sister (SOS) will be working with a group of high school-aged girls to create a platform for action on key issues affecting the lives of teenage girls in the Madison area.

Madison SOS is interested in meeting with a group of female-identified youth who are concerned about LGBT issues to discuss the current challenges they face in making Madison a better city for LGBT teens. They are looking for ways to connect teens through action on LGBT issues and recommendations for policymakers and adults who work with youth on what they can do to improve services and opportunities for LGBT teens.

Madison SOS will be using the feedback from these meetings to inform the platform for action, which will be a girl-written document discussing the current status of six key issues, as well as girls' visions, ideas, and recommendations for community change. In the fall, they'll use the platform for action as the basis of their advocacy efforts (ex: meetings with elected officials and community stakeholders) and leadership development programs. They hope it will give youth groups throughout Madison an opportunity to collaborate in city-wide action.

If you are interested in taking part in this discussion or being a part of this project, email Tim at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org and let him know.

4. Register for the Young Men's Health Summit

The Young Men's Health Summit, better known as the Summit, is a Project Q sponsored weekend retreat for young gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and allied young men ages 24 and under. The Summit is Saturday, July 26th to Sunday, 27th; registration is \$20 and is open until Thursday, July 10th. There are a limited number of scholarships available.

To learn more about this great opportunity, or to register, send an email to Warren Scherer at wscherer@mkelgbt.org.

Project Q is also looking for Summit Guides (Youth Leaders) and Adult Advisors for the weekend to make the Summit unforgettable! If you are interested, let Warren know.

5. Pride Festivals in Wisconsin

It's summer, which means that Pride festivals will be held in various cities across the country. Here in Wisconsin, there are a number of Pride festivals being organized. Here are just a few:

GREEN BAY: "Pride Alive" will be taking place in Joannes Park (1430 Walnut St.) on July 12th from 11AM to 9PM. This FREE event will feature live entertainment, raffles and giveaways, guest speakers and tons of fun activities for all ages. Check out www.newpride.org to find out more.

MADISON: Madison Pride will be scaled back quite a bit this year. There will still be a rally and a march on Sunday, July 20th, which begins at 11:00AM on the Capitol steps. Teens Like Us (TLU) will be once again hosting a youth BBQ, which will go from noon until 2PM in Brittingham Park, off of West Washington

Avenue. If you have any questions about the TLU BBQ, send an email to tlupride@yahoo.com

STEVENS POINT: Central Wisconsin Pride will be on Saturday, August 2nd in Amherst, Wisconsin, on the Portage County Fairgrounds. Details are still coming together, so keep an eye on www.centralwisconsinpride.com to find out more.

LA CROSSE: La Crosse Pride will be taking place on Saturday, August 23rd on the South Side Oktoberfest Grounds in downtown La Crosse. The fest will run from 11AM to 12AM, and will include family activities, informational sessions and quality entertainment. For more information about La Crosse Pride, send an email to pride@7riverslgbt.org.

When attending Pride events, it's important to keep the following things in mind:

1. Have fun, but be safe!
2. Stay hydrated, drink lots of water, and protect yourself from the elements.
3. If protestors show up, IGNORE them. Don't give them what they want by getting into debates or shouting matches.

6. LGBT Youth and Cyberbullying

A research team in Iowa is conducting a study on the effects of face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying. They are asking any LGBT-identified youth who have had experiences with bullying to fill out the following online survey:

<http://tinyurl.com/5ab55w>

The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete, and all answers will remain confidential. Results of this study will be used to examine current anti-bullying policies, and to see how they can be improved to decrease the incidence of face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying.

Related Readings: News and Publications

7. New Issue of "Our Lives" Magazine on the Shelves Now

"Our Lives" is Madison's very own LGBTQA magazine, committed to clearly, candidly and openly reflecting the diversity and optimism in the queer and allied community. "Our Lives" is dedicated to improving their readers' quality of life by celebrating the people, establishments and events that encourage us to embrace our identities as individuals and as an LGBTQA community.

The newest issue of “Our Lives” is entitled “The Status of HIV”, and can be picked up (for free!) at numerous locations in Madison. To find a location where you can snag a copy of the newest “Our Lives”, visit www.ourlivesmadison.com. For those of you who are not in the Madison area, you can also read many of the magazine’s featured stories online at that same website.

8. ACLU.org - Settlement With Lake County School District Calls For Comprehensive Approach To Protecting Students From Anti-Gay Harassment

A school district in Northern California has agreed to implement a training program on addressing anti-LGBT harassment and bullying after a student and his family complained that the school did nothing to stop the relentless teasing and harassment the student had been facing.

To read more about this case, follow this link: <http://tinyurl.com/62f7hj>

9. Channel3000.com – Attorney Wants Supreme Court Justice Disqualified

A month ago, we reported on a Wisconsin Supreme Court decision that threw out a lawsuit brought by Rev. Grant Storms against Action Wisconsin (now Fair Wisconsin). Storms claimed that Action Wisconsin had defamed him by saying that he had advocated for the murder of gay people in a speech he made in Milwaukee. The Supreme Court declared that his lawsuit was “frivolous” in a 4-3 decision and ordered his lawyer to pay \$87,000 in penalties. Now Storms’ lawyer, James Donohoo, would like the court to rehear his case because the deciding vote was made by Justice Butler, who has received campaign contributions from Fair Wisconsin.

To read more, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/5zjqr3>

10. WCNC.com – S.C. District OK’s Clubs Instead of Banning Gay Group

Instead of trying to ban a Gay-Straight Alliance, knowing that that action would probably lead to a lawsuit, a school board in South Carolina agreed to allow the club, but imposed new rules on all clubs: Parents have to sign permission slips for students to attend any club, and no club can discuss sexually explicit material, keeping in accordance with the district’s abstinence-based curriculum.

To read the full story, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/4fycx2>
