

PFLAG BUFFALO/NIAGARA

Parents, Families, Friends, And Allies United with LGBTQ+ People



March Sharing Meeting: Sunday, March 20th at 1:00-2:30

Currently, Sharing Meetings are held virtually on the third Sunday of most months. Our meeting code is 555 112 0003. The passcode is 700.

Please contact us if you need help using Zoom. You do not need an account to join.

PLFAG Buffalo/Niagara

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Helpline-883-0384

info@pflagbuffalo.org

www.pflagbuffalo.org

www.facebook.com/pflag.niagara

We meet because we have learned someone very close to us is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. We try to help one another deal with this information in a positive manner. Although we do not always agree, we try to be understanding. We offer help to those who seek it, but do not force ourselves on others. We strive to maintain anonymity while sharing on a level that is comfortable for us.

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UPDATE ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH CAMPAIGN



PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara is continuing with its goal set in 2021: to reacquaint or introduce local groups, schools, and people to PFLAG B/N and the support we offer. Thanks to a donation from The Colligan Family Fund, this effort has been made easier and has been going strong.

Our materials have been sent to over 200 schools, in Erie and neighboring counties. Public, private, and charter schools received materials; we reached out to middle and high schools. Also, the Central Library is distributing our materials to their 37 branches and bookmobile. More to come!

We are ordering more brochures and bookmarks to distribute. We are currently distributing to local LGBTQ+ organizations and local counseling agencies. If you know of a group or people who would like our materials, please contact us at info@pflagbuffalo.org.

Help us keep spreading the news!

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PFLAG BUFFALO/NIAGARA AND NIAGARA PRIDE BEGIN COLLABORATION

We at PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara are pleased to announce an official collaboration with our friend and community resource partner, Niagara Pride. We featured Niagara Pride in our last newsletter.

Niagara Pride is very active in WNY and the community, sponsoring events, both charitable and social, connecting LGBTQ+ persons with local resources, offering educational web events, and so much more. In its own words:

We are an independent 501(c)(3) organization, serving LGBTQ+ individuals and families in Niagara County, NY and the surrounding WNY area. Niagara Pride does a number of community service events, like backpack, clothing, and food drives to benefit local LGBTQ+ youth and adults. We host educational programs like health fairs, trainings, and health-based initiatives. Niagara Pride is proud of its collaborations with local healthcare, business, shelters, and religious providers who provide LGBTQ+ specific programs or affirming services. Additionally, Niagara Pride hosts and puts together community June Pride events and programming in Niagara County, as well as other cultural/social events in an effort to create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals to meet and socialize. Niagara Pride, Inc. is thrilled to serve Niagara County and WNY by representing the LGBTQ+ community.

This collaboration allows each group to inform each other's members and followers of events, opportunities, scholarships, and support offerings.

Please visit www.niagarapride.org and "like" Niagara Pride on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/377227262795957>.

You will see many events are planned. One such is an LGBTQ+ Health and Wellness Fair at Niagara Community College on March 23rd, from 10:00 to 3:00.

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Our collaboration will work as a bridge between Erie and Niagara counties. Both groups are here for all Western New Yorkers.

We look forward to this mutually beneficial connection.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED



Every June, PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara awards three \$500.00 scholarships to high school seniors who will be attending college in September.

The scholarships are The "Babs" Conant Scholarship, The Mary L. Hewitt Scholarship, and The Marvin L. Henschbarger Scholarship. These awards are named in memory and in honor of people dear to PFLAG B/N.

Applicants must be LGBTQ+ or allies who are active in supporting LGBTQ+ persons, causes, and issues.

Applications (hardcopies or e-copies) must be received by May 1st.

A completed application form, essay, and letter of reference are needed. Details and forms can be found at [pflagbuffalo.org](https://www.pflagbuffalo.org) under the "Scholarships/Grants" tab or use the link provided below.

<https://www.pflagbuffalo.org/scholarships-and-grants>

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ON LABELS

"We are many, we are diverse, yet we are one."

By Bryan Ball, President of Stonewall Democrats

An ally recently asked me for my thoughts on labels. What is right and wrong, or what is, in 2022. Labels ideally aren't always necessary, but for some people, identifying under a label is a piece of the beautiful, complex and complicated identify of who they are. When one identifies one's self, it can bring a sense of community and pride, and help connect with others. A visible community can also, in turn, lead to greater acceptance of differing gender, non-conforming and sexual identities.

When people come out, they show they have accepted themselves and are proud of who they are. There is great power in this; to educate and change the world, socially, politically and personally.

I'm often specifically asked about the word "queer". Queer is a word that has a lot of history and great power to a lot of people; and can mean so many different things. Historically, it has been used as a slur which has caused, and can continue to cause for many people, great pain.

For others, who have reclaimed the term, it is a source of great power and pride. For those of us who identify as part of the queer community, it is a source of great pride.

People who identify as queer fall on a varied scale of gender and/or sexual and non-conformity. The umbrella term of queer as a community provides great support, and a sense of pride. We are many, we are diverse, yet we are one. We have seen queer, as a term, gain acceptance in areas of academia, where queer fiction, literary theory and culture have become legitimate fields of study.

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I think leaders in the community have a duty to embrace the queer community and further them and lift us all up, together, but also realize that there may still be those in the LGBTQ+ community for who “queer” has been a word that has caused

and can trigger trauma them when abused as a slur, and those experiences shouldn't be denied or discounted. When you are unsure how someone identifies, to what extent or how they wish to be address—there is no harm in respectfully asking, when appropriate. And if a person chooses to share a part of their identity—how they may or may not identify—listen, respect them, and always, lift them up.

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PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.