

**PFLAG is creating a caring, just,
and affirming world for LGBTQ+
people and those who love them.**



**P.O. Box 617 Buffalo 14207
www.pflagbuffalo.org
Helpline 716.883.0384**

April 2025

135358

WHY WE MEET



We meet because someone close to us has come out as LGBTQ+.

We share our feelings and experiences in a small group setting.

We meet with openness and understanding.

Though we may not always agree, we meet with support and help in mind so that families can remain close.

We strive to maintain anonymity while sharing on a comfortable level.

We encourage people to attend not just for their benefit but for the benefit of the group.

It is our hope that when people reach understanding and acceptance, they realize that is when they are needed the most.



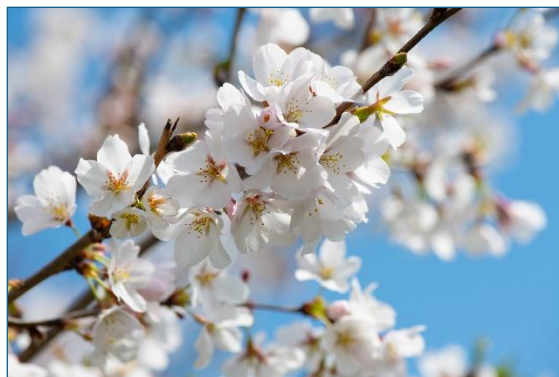
SHARING MEETING

Sunday, April 27th

1:00-2:30

We will meet virtually.

Please call the Helpline (716.883.0384) for Zoom codes. If you have joined virtually before, the same codes will give access.



HAPPY SPRING!

LEADING WITH LOVE

The window is now open for high school seniors to apply for one of our \$500.00 scholarships.

School alliance club grants up to \$500.00 are also available.

Visit:

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

An annual tradition, the Buffalo Brunch sponsored by embraceWNY will be held at the Hyatt Hotel on May 4th.

The fundraiser is a lively event celebrating people and groups who enrich Buffalo's community.

<https://embracewny.org/buffalo-brunch/>

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara April 2025

LEADING WITH LOVE

WNY Native Speaks with his 17-Year-Old Self

By Matthew McDermott

I met my 17-year-old self for coffee on our birthday yesterday morning.

He was really early and slightly anxious, and I arrived right on time.

I offered to buy his coffee and he offered to buy mine. We laughed, and then he ordered a large black coffee. Still doing the no sugar thing? I asked. He smiled. I asked the barista to leave room for lactose-free milk in mine. We smirked at each other, both very aware of why I ordered that very specific dairy.

He immediately started firing off a million questions a minute. Were we the valedictorian? How was college? Are we a CEO yet, or did we become a surgeon?

We were the salutatorian, I said, and I saw him make a face, but that's ok, I emphasized. We decided against med school, and we're not a CEO. College was so incredible and that's where we met most of our forever friends. We learned that life isn't a race to the top and it's OK to slow down and appreciate what's around us while we still have it. We're climbing at work, but it's been kind of non-linear at times and we're learning so much along the way and having a lot more fun in the process, I finished.

Are we...who are we...did we... I sensed his hesitation.

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara April 2025



Matt, we came out to our family and friends in 2015 – 10 years ago! And we're engaged! It's been so much easier than we thought it would be. Nothing bad happened like we were picturing and worrying about. Life is so good, you wouldn't believe the close friends we've made and the places we've traveled. I'll save all the wild stories for another time, haha. We live in Philly now, btw!

He smiled big, and I finally noticed his tense shoulders relax as he sat back and asked if I had any advice I could share.

Yes, I said. Don't shy away from tough conversations. More often than not, those are the ones that are going to make your life immeasurably better. And if you have to choose between doing what's hard versus doing what's easy, always choose to do what's hard. You'll realize later on that always doing the hard thing actually makes your life much, much easier.

That, and make the switch to the lactose free milk ASAP.

The author was raised in Kenmore and has given permission for this article to be shared.



PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara April 2025



Here are some titles for spring reading!

To celebrate diverse storytelling, as well as keeping these stories accessible to all, consider purchasing, reading, and donating LGBTQIA+ titles to your local school or library! Let's Read with Love:

- “The Price of Salt” by Patricia Highsmith
- “Queer Ducks (and Other Animals): The Natural World of Animal Sexuality” by Eliot Schrefer
- “Most Ardently: A Pride & Prejudice Remix” by Gabe Cole Novoa
- “I Am Ace: Advice on Living Your Best Asexual Life” by Cody Daigle-Orians
- “Can't Spell Treason Without Tea” by Rebecca Thorne
- “Light From Uncommon Stars” by Ryka Aoki
- “Never a Girl, Always a Boy: A Family Memoir of a Transgender Journey” by Jo Ivester
- “Yesterday Is History” by Kosoko Jackson
- “The Girl from the Sea” by Molly Knox Ostertag
- “Bi: Notes for a Bisexual Revolution” by Shiri Eisner
- “All Boys Aren't Blue” by George M. Johnson

Find these titles and more at the PFLAG National Read With Love Bookshelf:

Visit bookshop.org/shop/pflag

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara April 2025

Tragedies Stun Local Community



From left, Jordan Celotto and Mickey Harmon

On March 4th, Jordan Celotto (37) and partner Michael (Mickey) Harmon, 40, well-loved and well-known Buffalonians integral to the queer community, were murdered in their home, stunning the community and region. Both men were omnipresent in the LGBTQ+ community; countless hearts broke with the shocking news. These men lived and worked to make Buffalo strong, beautiful, and fun. Mixed in with the words of shock and loss, were promises to remember Mickey and Jordan by how they lived and not let their tragic deaths take away from their joyous, productive, and purposeful lives.

The earthquake loss of these two beloved men has brought the need to gather to the front. The community has been giving needed support. An arrest was made and charges filed.



Vigil for Sam Nordquist

In February, in the Finger Lakes region, Sam Nordquist was murdered after being kidnapped and tortured for over a month. This heinous and shocking crime took the life of 24 year-old Sam, a trans young man who had moved to the area months before.

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara April 2025

A vigil was held in downtown Buffalo. PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara members gathered in Niagara Square with others to grieve and support one another. This shocking crime brought people together; though Sam was not known personally, his death touched all who gathered to honor his life and say his name and promise to work for justice. Seven people have been arrested and charged.

PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara holds close all family and friends of Jordan, Mickey, and Sam. We mourn the loss of these three young lives and all they brought to lighting the world. We vow to fight the darkness that causes hate to destroy.

PFLAG NATIONAL HOTLINES FOR CRISIS AND SUPPORT

<https://pflag.org/resource/support-hotlines/>



PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara Board of Directors

President - Julie Christiano

Director - Sharon Barrett

Secretary - Lisbeth Ball

Director - Jeanne Mullen

Treasurer - David Barrett

Director - Mary Van Volkenburg

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