

# Pacific Currents



A publication of the Pacific Center for Human Growth Fall 2006

## An Outpouring of Support!

A RECENT ARTICLE in the October 5 edition of the Bay Area Reporter highlighted the wonderful outpouring of support for the Pacific Center in light of unanticipated, short-term funding shortfalls, as well as the need for continued increases in unrestricted giving.

As with most not-for-profit organizations of our size serving the constituencies we do, the Pacific Center periodically faces cash crunches. This is common for many non-profit organizations as well as businesses, which frequently do not see their revenue coming in a steady stream throughout the year. Organizations handle this situation in different ways. The Center's board and executive director decided to reach out to our top donors for extra support. And, some of these donors decided to reach out to their networks for additional support. Fortunately, they responded quickly, donating more than \$18,000 in just a few weeks!

This past year, the Center grappled with reduced government funding, the ending of two significant foundation grants, and a reduction in our mental health counseling client fees (based on a sliding scale according to income) even though we saw the same number of clients as in previous years. We also saw our Spring Appeal raise nearly \$25,000, our most successful appeal ever. 2005-2006 saw individual giving to the Pacific Center increase by a whopping 40%.

The Pacific Center board of directors, fundraising committee, and executive director have put together an annual fundraising plan, which we are actively implementing this year. Over the next year, we are looking at how best to sustain and maximize our strengths, engage our diverse LGBT community, and learn from the best practices for both not-for-profit and for-profit entities.



Executive Director, Juan Barajas, thanks our Diversity Works youth intern and staff for their contributions to Pacific Center this summer.

Dear Friends of Pacific Center,

For the past several months, Pacific Center has been creating an exciting, new public image for itself. Our efforts successfully culminated in the June 2006 launch of our new logo, revamped website, and glossy new brochure. We couldn't have made it happen without the creative efforts of our volunteer graphic designer, Kevin Hoelscher. His commitment and contribution to the Center delivered outreach and marketing tools, which will benefit us for years to come. And with the generous financial support of the Alameda County Office of AIDS, we were able to make this vision a reality. Along with the logo, website, and brochure, we also developed a focused marketing and communications plan to significantly increase our visibility and reach unserved parts of our LGBT community here in the East Bay. Through increased media relations, wider service distribution, and more frequent electronic and print newsletters, we will be keeping you informed and up-to-date on Pacific Center's programs and activities. Be sure to visit our website at [www.pacificcenter.org](http://www.pacificcenter.org) to sign up for our email list.

Along with our new marketing materials, we were excited to renovate our facility this summer and bring out its natural Victorian beauty. Thanks to the amazing generosity of Deloitte Consulting in San Francisco who sent 52 employees and supplies to our site on June 9th, we repainted the interior of our building in calming earth tones inspired by feng shui concepts. Deloitte also generously replaced much of our old furniture with new, lighter furniture to make our rooms more flexible and multi-purpose. With all of this activity, the owner of our building agreed to re-carpet and refinish our hardwood floors, which significantly improved both the appearance and the safety of our Center. Having a beautiful and functional building prepares us to better meet the needs of our community and expresses our pride.

With a beautifully, renovated building and sophisticated, new marketing materials, we can do an even better job of strengthening and developing our programs, increasing funding, attracting and retaining high quality volunteers, and better serving our participants and clients. Needless to say, tens of thousands of dollars worth of services and products were donated to bring our Center into the 21st century and reflect our pride as a LGBT community. We are well on our way to making Pacific Center the recognized leader in building a vibrant, healthy, and safe LGBT community for the East Bay.

Sincerely,  
Juan Barajas, Executive Director

### **Win a Mercedes Benz!**

Pacific Center is pleased to announce that we have been selected as a beneficiary of this year's Academy of Friends annual Academy Awards night charity gala. By raising more than \$500,000 for HIV/AIDS agencies in the Bay Area, the Academy of Friends is committed to fighting HIV/AIDS. Join us in the battle by purchasing a Mercedes Benz raffle ticket or a Gala event ticket. Call or email our Executive Director, Juan Barajas, at (510) 548-8283 x 213 or [juan@pacificcenter.org](mailto:juan@pacificcenter.org).



## Progress In The Fight Against Tobacco

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FOR DECADES, the American Cancer Society has made eliminating death and disease caused by tobacco one of our biggest priorities. Our efforts in California include educating communities on the dangers of smoking; funding research that helps identify the reasons people start smoking and how they can successfully quit; and advocating for a new tobacco tax that will prevent children from starting to smoke, help those who want to quit, and provide funding for critical health care priorities.

Due to the hard work of community organizers across California, the state has enjoyed more than a decade of smoke-free workplaces. California is the model for many cities, states and even countries that are crafting their own smoke-free laws and policies. The overall smoking rate in California has dropped to just 15 percent, and tobacco-related cancers in California have declined sharply, including cancers of the lung and bronchus, larynx, oral cavity, pancreas, stomach and bladder, in large part due to the success of California's tobacco control initiatives.

However, we can do better, particularly when it comes to tobacco use in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) communities. Recent studies show that smoking rates among lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in California are nearly 51 percent higher than that of the general population. Nationally, 59 percent of LGBT youth use tobacco, compared to 35 percent of non-LGBT teens.

For more information about tobacco initiatives or any other cancer-related subject, call the American Cancer Society toll free at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

### New Workshop

#### LOVE | LIFE

Workshops for gay/bi men about finding love and building a life in the process

Tuesday, Nov. 21, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Ready for a relationship or Not? Key issues and a self-evaluation.

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Single during the holidays? How to enjoy the holidays as a single person.

Tuesday, Dec. 19, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Reading the signs: Noticing patterns that trip you up when dating.

Tuesday, January 9, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

A view into the dating maze and the 3 types of dating. Learn the dating style for you.

Tuesday, January 23, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

Dating venues: How to meet men you'd actually want to date.

Workshops are led by Ralph Thomas, Life Coach, and co-sponsored by the Pacific Center. \$10 donation to Pacific Center requested. More info: [ralph@coachralph.com](mailto:ralph@coachralph.com) or [www.coachralph.com](http://www.coachralph.com).

Workshops are drop-in at the Pacific Center.

## Center Announcements

- We are proud to offer TRANSLATION SERVICES in over 150 languages through a partnership with the Alameda County Office of AIDS. By contracting with Language Line services, we will be able to help nearly anyone walking through our doors find the information they need on the LGBT community.
- A NEW HIV POSITIVE THERAPY GROUP will be offered in Spanish starting in November. Intakes will be completed until the group is full. Please contact Peter Carnini, HIV Services Coordinator, at 510-548-8283 x 240 for more information.
- Our MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING CLINIC is proud to announce our new 24 hour response to all requests on our Counseling Request Line. Our goal is to make sure you receive adequate and timely support in meeting your mental and emotional health needs. To request counseling, please call 510-548-8283 x 250.
- A NEW THERAPY GROUP FOR LGBT PARENTS starts Tuesday, December 5th. Please contact Shawna Sodersten at 510-548-8283 x 537 or Humberto Retana at x 532 for more information.

### Board Elects New Officers

The Pacific Center board elected its officers for the 2006-2007:

Scott Vachon	President
Alexandra Howells, LCSW	Vice President
Brian Johnson	Treasurer
John Boyce	Secretary

## Staff Transitions

BRIDGETTE BISSONNETTE resigned as Youth Program Director in October 2006. Although we are sad to see her go, she will be attending City University New York Law School in New York City, working towards her goal of serving the needs of queer youth through the justice system. Bridgette provided outstanding service and leadership for LGBTQIQ youth in our community. She will be missed!

### The Center needs your help

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY & ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

#### AMOUNTS:

- \_\_\_ Friend of the Center (up to \$99)
- \_\_\_ Contributor (\$100 – \$249)
- \_\_\_ Associate (\$250 – \$499)
- \_\_\_ Benefactor (\$500 – \$999)
- \_\_\_ President's Circle (\$1000 and above)
- \_\_\_ Board Circle (\$2500 and above)

Make checks payable to Pacific Center and mail to:

Pacific Center,  
2712 Telegraph Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94705.

**Credit card donations** are accepted on our secure website at [www.pacificcenter.org](http://www.pacificcenter.org). If your employer participates in payroll deduction donations to the **United Way**, use Code 3473 to designate that your personal donations go to The Pacific Center.

Thank you for your generosity!