COMMUNITY BUILDING JUSTICE

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LGBT Center of Central PA STRATEGIC DLAN 2019-2021



ACCESS TO HOUSING





The LGBT Center of Central PA serves over 2,000 people each year across Dauphin, Cumberland, York, and Lancaster counties, and seeks to be responsive to the changing needs of our LGBTQ+ communities in our programming and our strategic priorities.

The establishment of the Center in 2006 was driven by the vision of a strategic planning group that had begun to explore the concept of a regional LGBTQ+ community center starting in 2004. They brought key stakeholders together and gathered input from community members with the support of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC). Based on this community needs assessment, the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA (now called the LGBT Center of Central PA) was formed, and has been serving our LGBTQ+ communities ever since.

Continuing in this tradition of gathering community input to assess needs, in 2018 the LGBT Center of Central PA commenced a new visioning and strategic planning process under the leadership of Board President Heidi Notario and Executive Director Amanda Arbour. Community feedback was collected through multiple focus groups and an online survey that was disseminated widely. We wanted to know what our LGBTQ+ communities' needs were so that we could identify priorities for the Center going forward.

We were pleased with the amount of feedback that we received, and the data was compiled and analyzed for themes. Both the staff and Board reviewed the data, and came together for an all-day strategic planning session facilitated by Monica Gould on March 24, 2018. An ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee of the Board worked for several months following that to finalize the new Vision, Mission, and Values and the new Strategic Plan for 2019-2021 — which were approved by the Board of Directors on July 23, 2018.

We believe that our new Vision, Mission, and Values provide a clear statement on who we are as an organization and what we value, and our new Strategic Plan establishes priorities and sets out a trajectory to direct our work over the next three years.

We are excited to share it with you.

VISION MISSION and-VALUES

VISION

To inspire LGBTQ+ people across identities for collective liberation.

MISSION

To foster inclusive communities and holistic well-being for LGBTQ+ people through social, educational, and cultural engagement.

VALUES IN ACTION

We recognize how interconnected our work in the LGBTQ+ movement must be with other social justice movements, and we unapologetically support movements seeking justice and inclusion for people of color, documented and undocumented immigrants, refugees, people of all faiths or no faith, women, people living with disabilities, older adults, youth, and people who are low-income. We know that each of these struggles, although unique, are interconnected — and we support justice for all people who are oppressed and marginalized.

Safety: We seek to prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional safety of LGBTO+ people. We believe survivors of violence and seek to support their safety and agency.

Respect & Dignity: We value the humanity in each person, and seek to ground our interactions in respect and dignity for people of all identities and experiences.

Intersectionality & Inclusion: We recognize the complex ways that our multiple identities intersect, and the layers of societal privilege and oppression that we experience on an individual, communal, organizational, and systemic level as a result. We seek to understand and challenge our privileges and actively work towards solidarity. We strive to center the voices of and prioritize programs and services for LGBTQ+ people who are most marginalized, committing to be representative of and accountable to those communities.

Collaboration: We seek to work, internally and externally, in a collaborative manner that values feedback, builds partnerships, and operates from a framework of mutuality rather than competition.

1) Provide regular programming for specific age groups and identities within our LGBTQ+ communities to build community, connection, and support.

- a) Provide LGBTQ+ youth and young adults opportunities to connect with peers, receive support from staff, and be educated on topics relevant to them through Common Roads.
- b) Provide LGBTO+ older adults opportunities to connect with peers and stay informed of topics relevant to them through the Aging with Pride program.
- c) Provide transgender and non-binary people opportunities to connect with peers and stay informed of topics relevant to them through the Passageways program.
- d) Provide queer and trans people of color (QTPOC) opportunities to connect with peers and stay informed of topics relevant to them through the QTPOC Group.

2) Provide regular programming across and between different identities and ages to foster greater understanding and solidarity among our LGBTQ+ communities.

- a) Provide regular social, educational, and cultural programs to foster community, connection, and support across ages and identities.
- b) Serve as the glue to bring communities together in solidarity during trying times and in celebration during times of community advancement.

3) Provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ people and our allies to work with the Center to support LGBTQ+ people and enhance understanding of LGBTQ+ realities in Central PA.

- a) Cultivate a strong volunteer base and offer meaningful opportunities for volunteers to be engaged in the Center's work.
- b) Create a speaker's bureau of community members who are qualified and available to co-facilitate trainings, serve on panels, or speak at community events.
- c) Offer quarterly educational opportunities on topics relevant to LGBTO+ communities.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA #1 COMMUNITY BUILDING

GOAL:

Build connected, engaged, and resilient communities amongst LGBTQ+ people in Central PA.

OBJECTIVES

4) Foster authentic community engagement by both providing resources and seeking community expertise to foster active and mutually beneficial partnerships.

a) Build and enhance connections with K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and other youth- and young adult-serving agencies.

- b) Build connections with local Area Agencies on Aging and other older adult-serving agencies.
- c) Build and enhance connections with other social justice organizations.
- d) Establish meaningful mechanisms for seeking feedback from community members on programming, strategic planning, and organizational priorities.



COMMUNITY BUILDING

1) Expand programming by and for QTPOC.

- a) Offer monthly QTPOC-centered social and educational programming led by the QTPOC Advisory Group.
- b) Offer QTPOC-centered programming outside of Midtown, as determined by and led by the QTPOC Advisory Group.
- c) Collaborate with organizations of color to partner on and support their programs.

2) Increase representation of and leadership development opportunities for QTPOC at all levels.

- a) Prioritize QTPOC serving on the Board of Directors during annual recruitment and nominations process, in addition to the QTPOC Advisory Group Liaison.
- b) Prioritize QTPOC applicants for staff, intern, facilitator, and volunteer positions, and implement the Rooney Rule to require QTPOC candidates at the interview level.
- c) Provide leadership development opportunities for OTPOC, including through mentoring and attendance at conferences and other professional development opportunities.

3) Leverage funds to support QTPOC-centered programs and people.

- a) Create list of local OTPOC businesses and vendors, and share with them all opportunities to do business with the Center in an open and transparent bidding process.
- b) Create dedicated class code in the budget for OTPOC programs, and allocate funding for QTPOC programs each year in consultation with the OTPOC Advisory Group.
- c) Allocate funds throughout the budget to be able to pay QTPOC as facilitators, presenters, and speakers at LGBT Center programs and events.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA #2 RACIALJUSTICE

GOAL:

Move towards being an anti-racist organization that prioritizes the needs of queer and trans people of color (QTPOC) in all aspects of the organization, and is representative of, informed by, and accountable to QTPOC.

OBJECTIVES

4) Structure input from and accountability to QTPOC in all aspects of the Center's work.

- a) Ensure that the QTPOC Advisory Group continues to function as an advisory body to the Board of Directors, and sends a liaison with voting privileges to Board meetings.
- b) Ensure that the QTPOC Advisory Group is involved in the development of all major documents, including the Center's strategic plan, policies, and procedures.
- c) During all decision-making processes, particularly regarding pursuing new opportunities for the Center, ask "how does this further racial justice?"

5) Shift the culture of the Center to be more intentionally inclusive of QTPOC.

- a) Develop and display an organizational statement of commitment to racial justice and intersectionality in a visible place at the Center, on digital platforms, and in literature.
- b) Conduct a racial equity audit of the LGBT Center to determine where we are and where we need to be in terms of advancing racial justice as an organization.
- c) Ensure that items in the Center's physical space reflects QTPOC, including art exhibits, decorations, library items, etc.
- d) Ensure that award recipients and people selected to speak at events include QTPOC.
- e) Provide racial justice training on a regular basis to educate white LGBTQ+ people.



STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA #3 MENTAL HEALTH

GOAL:

Enhance the availability and quality of mental health resources for LGBTQ+ people in Central PA.

OBJECTIVES

1) Foster connection and community through all LGBT Center regular programming.

- a) Prevent suicide and facilitate identity development, social support, and resilience with developmentally-appropriate youth and young adult programs through Common Roads.
- b) Facilitate community and connection for LGBTQ+ adults through other regular programs.
- c) Combat loneliness and isolation among older LGBTQ+ adults by enhancing social support and meaningful connections with others through the Aging with Pride program.

2) Increase capacity of mental health providers to provide LGBTQ-affirming care.

- a) Partner with local colleges and universities to provide education on LGBTQ+ identities, experiences, and realities in courses for social workers, counselors, therapists, etc.
- b) Provide introductory training and education on LGBTQ+ identities, experiences, and realities to local mental health care providers for continuing education credits (CEU's).
- c) Provide intensive training and education on best practices for providing mental health services to LGBTQ+ people, and upon completion list them as resources for referrals.

3) Develop capacity of the LGBT Center to provide LGBTQ-affirming mental health services.

- a) Offer therapeutic support groups for LGBTQ+ people with mental health needs.
- b) Offer individual therapy for LGBTQ+ people at low or no cost.
- c) Explore partnerships with foundations and institutions of higher education to create scholarship opportunities for LGBTQ+ people to become mental health professionals.





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA #4 ACCESS TO HOUSING

GOAL:

Improve the availability and quality of housing resources for LGBTQ+ people in Central PA.

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OBJECTIVES

1) Improve access to and quality of existing housing systems for LGBTQ+ people who are unstably housed.

- a) Develop a comprehensive referral list of housing resources in Dauphin, Cumberland, York, and Lancaster counties.
- b) Receive training in the Capital Area Coalition Against Homelessness (CACH) coordinated entry process for referrals.
- c) Develop ongoing education and training relationships with the continuum of care (if present) in Dauphin, Cumberland, York, and Lancaster counties.

2) Create new systems for providing LGBTQ-specific housing services.

- a) Identify and share local LGBTQ-specific housing resources.
- b) Develop a "host home" program to match unstably housed LGBTQ+ youth (up to age 18) with safe and affirming homes in our community.
- c) Develop capacity and partnerships to provide housing services for LGBTQ+ people.

3) Identify, equip, and highlight older adult housing providers that are LGBTQ-affirming.

- a) Identify providers of older adult housing across Dauphin, Cumberland, Lancaster, and York counties that aspire to be affirming of LGBTQ+ older adults.
- b) Develop ongoing education and training relationships with older adult housing providers in the region.
- c) Become a SAGE affiliate and develop a plan to bring SAGE CARE to local older adult housing providers.





THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO LEARN ABOUT THE LGBT CENTER OF CENTRAL PA'S NEW VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES AND NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2019-2021.

We cannot do this alone, so if you are interested in helping us to realize these goals please join us! There are lots of opportunities to be involved as volunteers, donors, sponsors, and partners.

If you are interested in getting involved, please reach out to Executive Director Amanda Arbour at aarbour@centralpalgbtcenter.org or 717-920-9534. For more information about the Center, visit us at www.centralpalgbtcenter.org or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @LGBTcentralPA.

We hope to have the opportunity to work with you as we move forward in this new direction! Please don't hesitate to reach out to us along the way — we always welcome your feedback.

THANK YOU!



LGBT / center

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In recognition of the positive force the LGBT Center is throughout our community, PPO&S Integrated Marketing Communications has provided the design concept for these materials pro bono.

