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JUNE 2007 EDITION

**We've moved into our new space at 3656 N. Halsted.
Stop by and see what's going on in *your* Center on Halsted!**

For a list of events and to learn more, visit www.centeronhalsted.org

State of Illinois AIDS/HIV & STD Hotline

June is a very busy month for the counselors staffing the State of Illinois AIDS/HIV & STD Hotline because June is Pride Month and **June 27, 2007** is **National HIV Testing Day!** To mark this important day, Center on Halsted and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago are presenting a day-long speaker series titled *Preventing HIV: Ethics, Activism, and Promising New Strategies*. To learn more about this exciting event please visit the Center's Web site at www.centeronhalsted.org. To RSVP for this free event please go to www.aidschicago.org/preventingHIV. Free, confidential and rapid HIV testing will be available at the Center during this event.

There will also be free HIV testing at numerous locations around the city of Chicago during the week of June 27. Throughout Pride month Hep Team Chicago will offer free

Hepatitis A and B vaccinations at various events in Chicago throughout the summer.

Please call our highly trained and professional, English- and Spanish-speaking Hotline counselors at 800.243.2437 from 8:00am until 10:00pm every day to find an HIV/STD testing site or a Hepatitis A and B vaccination site near you, or to get accurate answers to your HIV/STD questions. Your call is free and confidential.

Jill Dispenza

*State of Illinois AIDS/HIV & STD Hotline Manager
Center on Halsted*

Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)

Today's LGBT seniors have lived through periods of wholesale rejection and condemnation from all segments of society. They have been labeled illegal **by the state**, immoral **by the religious community**, and mentally ill **by the medical establishment**. In spite of this marginalization, many of today's LGBT seniors were, **and are**, social, artistic and political pioneers-**creating** a unique and distinct LGBT "culture"-**celebrating** the LGBT identity, nontraditional family structures and more varied gender expression: **building** community based organizations; **promoting** LGBT cultural expression through writing, music, the performing and visual arts; **organizing** to reform homophobic laws, institutions and practices; and **educating** the public about our issues.

SAGE USA, affiliate partner of SAGE at Center on Halsted

It is simple to say that our elders built the house we live in. Most people would acknowledge the truth of this. However, it is important to remember the individual risks that went into creating the freer and more open society we live in today. It was our elders, who, instead of staying in the shadows and at great personal and professional risk to themselves, came out into the streets, organized, rallied, campaigned, protested and fought back. They came out to family, friends, co-workers and, of course, they formed groups. These groups eventually became organizations and some of the organizations became forces in the community. Center on Halsted is undoubtedly the direct result of those risks and sacrifices; it is a bright, shining home and right in front is the SAGE program space, the John Baran Senior Center.

With private funding, dedicated program space, and an affiliation with the national SAGE organization, SAGE at Center on Halsted is poised for tremendous growth. From 1997 to the present, the many people who have contributed to the growth of the SAGE program are very much a part of the energy and momentum of this next phase. First, there are the SAGE participants, past and present, who have advocated and agitated with passion and wisdom; second, the many volunteers and interns who contributed countless hours to the program's development; and, finally, the staff who did great research, took fabulous notes and were so careful, thoughtful and thorough, that the continuity and stability of the program are a given. Over the last month, we have seen a noticeable increase in participants and the initial steps toward greatly expanded programming and services.

Serena Worthington

*SAGE Director
Center on Halsted*

Youth Program

What a GRAND opening it has been for Center on Halsted's Youth Program! Nearly 200 youth have accessed our services since May 1, more than 100 of them new to the program. They have found a welcoming and beautiful space; assistance to find housing and employment; opportunities to play volleyball and other sports; a place to create art, practice yoga and meditate, sing, dance, perform and lead. They have learned ways to protect themselves and have met peers and adults who care about them. What a gift!

Fifty of our fabulous youth, honored guests and friends filled the Polk Bros. Foundation Youth Center with pride when we officially opened our new space in the Center. In addition to the staff and board members from the Polk Bros. Foundation, we also welcomed Commissioner Mary Ellen Caron from the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services, and individuals representing numerous partner organizations and funders. The house was packed as three of our youth inspired us by singing "A Season to Love," while ten other youth moved us with a documentary they created through *Silver Rainbows*, our After School Matters spring project. The film captures the meetings and interviews our youth conducted with six LGBT elders, who tell their stories about coming out "back in the day," living with HIV, civil rights and living as transgender individuals. The reason why we are here, why we built the Center, all came into focus. What a great way to begin Pride month!

Janine Denomme

*Youth Program Director
Center on Halsted*

Community Technology (Cyber) Center

How many times a day do you use the Internet? Did you know that there are still more than 20% of adults in the United States who don't use the Internet?

In our digital age, where anything and everything seems to be found online, there is still a large number who has *never* used the Internet. Factors such as education, race, and age all create barriers to digital access—barriers that we all must work toward breaking down.

The Dr. David J. Lochman Cyber Center's mission is to provide technology and Internet resources to help eliminate the digital divide, specifically for the LGBT populations in Chicago and surrounding communities. The Cyber Center is designed to provide a safe, accepting, and nurturing environment for LGBT clients to express their individuality,

cultivate relationships, develop their self-esteem, and connect with the LGBT community in Chicago. The Cyber Center is also available as a resource for each of the Center on Halsted programs and services.

The staff of the Dr. David J. Lochman Cyber Center work hard to increase digital access to everyone who uses the Cyber Center. With continuous one-on-one help, training classes, online instruction and structured activities, there are many avenues for computer users of all ages to increase their skill set and take pride in the positive skills they have mastered. As we continue to celebrate the diversity of the LGBT community this month, let's all work together to ensure that sexual orientation and gender identity aren't barriers to digital access.

Brian Minka

*Community Technology Center Coordinator
Center on Halsted*

Mental Health Services

As I write this, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Institute (SOGI) is just hours away from launching the first annual summit on LGBT mental health care in the Chicago Metropolitan area. SOGI is the clinical training wing of the Mental Health Program. This year's summit will focus on lifespan development, with a particular emphasis on behavioral issues in the older LGBT population.

As part of the summit, SOGI's National Advisory Council will meet at Center on Halsted for the first time. Council members are notable academics and clinicians with expertise in LGBT mental health from across the country. Here is an overview of this illustrious assembly:

Armand Cerbone, Ph.D., ABPP, was inaugurated into the City of Chicago Lesbian and Gay Hall of Fame in 2003 and in 2005 received the APA's Committee on LGB Concern's Outstanding Achievement Award. He is co-author of the *APA Guidelines on Psychotherapy with LGB Clients* and chaired the working group that developed the *APA's Resolution on Sexual Orientation and Marriage* and *Resolution on Sexual Orientation, Parents and Children*.

Isiaah Crawford, Ph.D., became dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) at Loyola University Chicago in February 2004 after serving as interim dean since January 2003. With a background in clinical psychology, Dr. Crawford's scholarship focuses on human sexuality, HIV/AIDS prevention and health promotion and professional practice issues.

Oliva M. Espin, Ph.D., is Professor Emerita of Women's Studies at San Diego State University and at the California School of Professional Psychology of Alliant International University. She has published on psychotherapy with Latinas, immigrant and refugee women, women's sexuality across cultures, and other topics relevant to the psychology of women in multicultural contexts.

Beverly Greene, Ph.D., ABPP, is a professor of psychology at St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, and a practicing clinical psychologist in independent practice in Brooklyn, New York. In 1996, she received the Outstanding Leadership Citation from the APA's Committee on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns, citing her "elegant and groundbreaking research on mental health issues of African American lesbians" and longstanding education and training that eases the burdens of stigma, stereotype and ignorance for sexual minorities and people of color.

Gilbert Herdt, Ph.D., is a cultural anthropologist, professor of Human Sexuality Studies and Anthropology, and director of the Department of Sexuality Studies at San Francisco State University in California. He is also the director of the National Sexuality Resource Center (NSRC), a long-term project of the Ford Foundation, which advances sexual literacy through the latest information and research on sexual health, education, and rights. Previously he has taught at Stanford University and the University of Chicago.

Douglas Kimmel, Ph.D., is professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology, City College, C.U.N.Y., and has a private practice in Hancock, Maine. He was chair of the Association of Gay Psychologists (1977), president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues: Division 44 of the American Psychological Association (1987-88), and served on APA's Committee on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns (1980-83), and the Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility (1983-86), focusing on ageism issues. His textbook, *Adulthood and Aging* (Wiley, 1974, 1980, 1990), included sexual orientation and an interview with a gay man.

Arlene Istar Lev LCSW, CASAC, is a social worker, family therapist, educator, and writer whose work addresses the unique therapeutic needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. She is the author of *The Complete Lesbian and Gay Parenting Guide* (Penguin Press, 2004) and *Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines for Working with Gender-Variant People and their Families* (Haworth Press, 2004).

Michael C. LaSala, PhD, LCSW, is associate professor at the School of Social Work, Rutgers University. Dr. LaSala's research and clinical interests are in the area of gay and lesbian couples and families and his most recent work has been published in the journals *Families in Society*, *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Family Studies*, *Health and Social Work*, and the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*.

Theo Pintzuk, LCSW, has been practicing psychotherapy for 20 years. A year ago, Theo and her partner Dakota Cimo, PhD, founded CoCreate, Inc. Their focus is the psychological impact of trauma and neglect; gender and gender identity; and sexual orientation. They, along with Robert Mazelle, Psy.D., are finishing work on *Transitioning Youth: Clinical Work with Transsexual Youth*, a book to be published by Haworth Press. Theo is also the author of *Identity and Cultural Narrative in a Lesbian Relationship*.

We are honored to have them join us in this capacity. Dr. Braden Berkey, SOGI's director, was instrumental in recruiting these renowned experts. Braden's vision and dedication, informed by the collective expertise of the National Advisory Council, promise to make this the premiere training institute of its kind. This is an exciting new chapter in LGBT mental health and Center on Halsted takes pride in launching SOGI's history-making activities.

Jason T. McVicker, LCSW, RDDP

*Director of Mental Health Services
Center on Halsted*

Anti-Violence Project

A hate-motivated murder of a 35-year-old gay man in rural Indiana . . . an Andersonville gay bar is targeted for hate violence by a neighborhood gang . . . a 22-year-old male was beaten and raped by three male acquaintances in Portage Park . . . two lesbian women reported separate incidents involving assault with a blunt object.

The above crimes, which all occurred in the past three months, range in severity and have impact on more than the victims and survivors. These "neighborhood" crimes can't be ignored as quick blurbs in our local press and then forgotten. As we are deep in the heart of Pride month, hate violence awareness and safety must be stressed.

On June 13 the Anti-Violence Project (AVP) hosted its Out and Open event that highlighted the local domestic and hate violence incidents reported to AVP in 2006. A synopsis included 51 reported hate violence incidents that produced 72 survivors who accessed services. AVP recognizes hate-motivated violence as a full range of behavior from intimidation and verbal harassment to murder. We do this because even as we recognize the importance of the most severe cases of hate-violence, looking at the full range of incidents enables us to monitor the atmosphere of violence experienced by the community-and that atmosphere spans a spectrum that begins with verbal harassment and desecration of property, moves through physical violence and ends with murder.

Because of thorough reporting tools, AVP is able to record offender information as well. In 2006, Chicago AVP reports 129 offenders-13 female, 94 male and 6 organizations-identified as involved in a total of 51 incidents. These results show that in 24 of the 51 incidents reported, two or more individuals are identified as offenders. With the year half over, reports of violence will continue and offenders will continue perpetrating. At the Anti-Violence Project, we work diligently to increase community awareness of anti-LGBT violence through education, crisis counseling and advocacy.

As the Center on Halsted celebrates its opening during June, it is also important to recognize that in the midst of this heightened visibility, it has lent courage to individuals who may have otherwise kept the violence in their lives "in the closet." The need for Anti-Violence Project services has increased as a direct result.

There is a true sense of pride as the Center carries out its mission to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all members of the LGBT community and its allies.

If you or someone you know is a victim of LGBT discrimination, domestic violence, hate crime, pick-up crime, police misconduct or sexual assault, please call the **AVP 24-hour crisis line at 773.871.CARE (2273)**.

Laura A. Velazquez
*AVP Manager
Center on Halsted*



"ARE YOU A PITCHER?"



HAVE YOU EVER DREAMT OF PITCHING IN THE BIG LEAGUES?
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE!

As part of Chicago Free Press' 7th Annual OUT AT THE BALLGAME,
Sunday, July 15, Cubs vs Astros, 1:20pm
a SILENT AUCTION will be held to determine who will throw out the first
pitch
during the game's opening ceremonies.

Bids can be placed at each Warm-up Party
or by sending and email to
info@chicagofreepress.com

Highest bidder will be updated weekly in the Chicago Free Press,
Rainbow E-Blast and each Warm-up Party.

The winner of the First Silent Pitch Silent Auction
will be announced Wednesday, July 11 at Sidetrack.
Winner can remain anonymous if requested.

100% of the proceeds of the Silent Auction will benefit



and



Check with the Chicago Free Press for information on
the Warm-up Parties
at

<http://chicagofreepress.com>

**So far, the high bid for the First Pitch at OATB 7 is
\$1,200!**

The Music of Mirror

Join us for pre-show cocktails, appetizers and a discussion with Michael Bodeen, music director for *Mirror of the Invisible World*. Then enjoy Mary Zimmerman's wondrous tale of love, compassion and adventure presented in her signature visual style.

Thursday, June 28
Reception: 6 - 7 pm
Performance: 7:30 pm

Tickets are only **\$45** and include the reception and performance. Call **312.443.3800!**

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