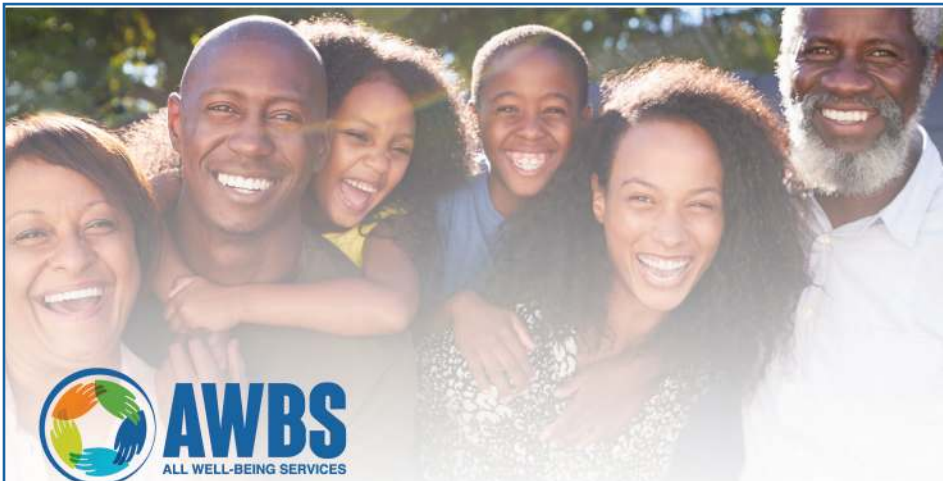


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# Jey'nce Poindexter:

*'I Know the Power  
of My Voice'*



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Elliot Page (Photo via Page's Facebook page)

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By Chris Johnson

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By Parker Purifoy

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# Settlement Reached in Historic Aimee Stephens Case

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Aimee Stephens, who died in May at 59 from kidney disease, did not live to see the Supreme Court rule in her favor and

decide that she and other LGBTQ people were protected from discrimination under federal employment law. But now U.S. District Judge Sean Cox has signed off on a \$130,000 settlement, which includes \$63,724 in back pay with interest and \$66,276 in damages. The R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Home in Garden City, where Stephens worked for six years, also has to pay \$120,000 in legal fees to the ACLU.

Aimee Stephens sued the funeral home she worked for after being fired for being transgender and wanting to present as her authentic female self on the job. The case made it all the way to U.S. Supreme court who handed down a landmark ruling in favor of LGBTQ rights in June. The case was then handed back to the U.S. District Court to award damages.

“She always knew that she may not live to hear the decision from the Supreme Court,” Jay Kaplan, staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan’s LGBT Project, told *Between The Lines* for an earlier story on the case. “The day before the Supreme Court hearing, she had back-to-back interviews all day long. She kept going until she literally could not stand up anymore.”

The fact that Stephens did not live to see her victory – or her money – is ‘bittersweet’ Kaplan said in a statement on the settlement.

“We are pleased that all sides were able to come to an agreement regarding damages and attorney fees,” he said. “The settlement of this case is bittersweet in that Aimee passed away before matters could be resolved.”

But, in a way, Stephens will live on as her case positively impacts LGBTQs across the country for years to come.

“This settlement marks a closing chapter in Aimee Stephens’ remarkable fight for justice,” said Chase Strangio, deputy director for the ACLU’s LGBT & HIV Project. “We are sad that Aimee is not here to experience this moment with her wife Donna and grateful for all that Aimee, Donna, and the many trans fighters for justice and their families have done to bring us to this place. As Aimee always said, this fight is about more than just her and it will stretch far beyond this case.”

In Stephens’ memory, Strangio said he is hoping the new presidential administration will work to further her cause.

“The Biden administration must make it clear that across all areas of federal law sex discrimination protections apply to LGBTQ people and Congress must pass the Equality Act to close critical gaps in our civil rights laws that leave so many LGBTQ people, women and many people of color vulnerable to discrimination,” Strangio continued. “We will honor Aimee’s legacy by continuing her fight for a country where all trans and non-binary people belong and feel safe.”

Under terms of the settlement, the Harris Funeral Home is now required to pay its female employees the same clothing allowance given to men and this will be backdated to September 2012. The funeral home is also required to provide sex discrimination training and to come up with written policies in relation to sex discrimination as well as file reports regularly to the EEOC for the next three years.



Aimee Stephens, Photo by Andrew Potter.

# Affirmations Updates Public on Programs, Finances and the Future

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

FERNDALE — When Dave Garcia came back to the Affirmations community center after five years running the nation’s largest LGBTQ community center in the nation, his return was lauded as a lifeline for an organization that had lost money and quality staff in his absence.

And in spite of government mandates, shutdowns and myriad economic challenges relating to the novel coronavirus pandemic, Executive Director Garcia and his team have had many successes. He and members of the board of directors held a community update meeting Thursday via Zoom to share these points of pride, as well as what’s on the horizon for the coming year.

## Finances

While Affirmations is known for its support services provided to the LGBTQ and ally community, those services are not sustainable without funding.

When Garcia left his position in 2014 to work for the Los Angeles LGBT Center, Affirmations was in solid financial shape and was on the way to paying off its mortgage on their Downtown Ferndale building. The momentum didn’t continue in his absence, however, and a string of new directors ran the budget down, leaving in their wake cutbacks of hours, staff and services.

The immediate task upon his return was to tackle the economic health of the organization. Affirmations had less than \$68,000 in its bank account in April of 2019. Today, it’s up to over \$400,000.

There’s also a \$65,000 Fidelity account and over \$100,000 in the Building for the Future Fund, which has restricted uses and is not part of cash flow.

“You’re all development now,” Garcia told the staff, meaning that every team member would need to be mindful of ways to attract revenue, particularly with grant funding, donations and monetizing some services.

For example, Affirmations has long been a place for counseling, which is done on a sliding-scale basis and includes patrons who do not need to pay. Uplifting the program to begin

accepting insurance and increasing the number of counselors is one way the LGBTQ center is bringing in more revenue without limiting access for the low-income folks who need help.

Moving forward, health care will be a key focus, Garcia said.

“I have always wanted Affirmations to grow in health and human services,” he said. “Not only because it’s the right thing to do for our community when we’re under the threat of religious exemption, not only because it’s the right thing to do for our community when you’re just talking about scientifically accurate culturally competent care for our trans community and our seniors for example, but because when I’m long gone I think it is financially stable for the organization to have primary care for people to be seeing their doctor there, [and] for people to be seeing their therapist there. ... It would be nice to be generating our own income off the building that you – the community – owns.”

In Los Angeles, 80% of the organization’s efforts stemmed from health and human services programs. Not only are such programs critical for individuals, they bring in money from fees, grants and partnerships. A “Health for All” program is expected to be rolled out in the first quarter of 2021.

“We have created a community consortium of care that has many partners,” Garcia said.

Negotiations are still in the works with some providers and the details will be announced early next year. The emphasis on health will not harm other services or programs, Garcia assured.

“When I say shift [to a health focus], I don’t mean we’re going to lose anything, I just mean we’re going to grow in this area,” he said. “It will open revenue streams from local, state, and county revenue dollars.”

In addition to monetizing services and aiming for health-related revenue, Affirmations has had a strong focus on fundraising, which is no easy task in a year when gatherings are banned.

“We lost the Black Tie event — that’s \$100,000 right there,” Garcia said.

However the loss of events also helped spur more online giving, and after hosting several online programs including an online gala, a virtual bike ride and a nine-hour telethon.

For now, it seems the organization is starting 2021 in a good place. Recently, the board passed the annual budget of \$800,000. Garcia called it “conservative” and “responsible,” as it is just \$50,000 more than last year, because Affirmations is assuming that COVID-19-related closures will continue through the year. However, if in-person gatherings resume, event revenue can be added to that total.

Garcia said the most common question he faces is, “When will the building be open?” His response is simple: “When it is safe to do so.”

However, Garcia said that the \$400,000 Affirmations has in terms of cash flow represents six months of operating expenses and called it a “very healthy position to be in.”

“This has been one of the most challenging years ... but we are doing our best and we are more than keeping our head above water and that is because of your support,” he said. “But we need a strong financial push for the end of the year campaign to solidify the financial strength of our organization.”

## Services

Like many gathering spaces, Affirmations closed its doors in the spring to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It switched from in-person groups like AA, Senior Coffee Klatch, transgender support, and teen groups to online ones. And while meeting virtually cannot replace the in-person comfort and support provided by those events, going virtual has had some promising effects.

“Having to go online was not easy. It was rough. Remember, in the beginning, when people were Zoombombing ... with a bunch of anti-LGBT language and we had to initiate passwords and phone calls and staffing so they could get in the rooms? It was a learning curve for us,” Garcia said. “But you know what? It’s kind of a silver lining.”

He cited that youth- and trans-focused groups have now begun to reach people in more rural areas of Michigan. In fact, he thinks that Zoom will be around to stay.

“And, frankly, when we get back to normal — whatever normal’s gonna

See **Affirmations**, continued on p. 9

# Obituary: Pioneering Lesbian Journalist Deb Price Wrote Column on Gay Issues for Mainstream Media

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Feb. 27, 1958 – Nov. 20, 2020

Deb Price, who in 1992 began writing a groundbreaking column on gay issues for The Detroit News that would go on to be syndicated nationally, died Nov. 20 following a nine-year battle with an autoimmune lung disease. She was 62.

Price was born and raised in Bethesda, Maryland. She attended the National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C. before moving to Ann Arbor to attend the University of Michigan. But Price soon transferred to Stanford University where she earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in literature.

Early jobs included working at the States News Service and the Northern Virginia Sun. Her big breakthrough was landing a job at the Washington Post as an assistant editor on the national, news and financial desks. Price left the Post for the Detroit News in 1989 where she was a deputy bureau chief and a Washington correspondent.

In 1992, five years before Ellen DeGeneres came out as a lesbian – both personally and

as her character Ellen on her popular sitcom – Price had the idea to write a column for the News on gay issues. Price brought the idea to Bob Giles, editor and publisher of the News, and he gave her the green light.

“It’s hard to overestimate how significant this was,” said Joshua Benton, founder of the Nieman Journalism Lab at Harvard University, in a Twitter post. “This was long before the Internet gave Americans a window into any topic or community they wanted. Most people got a huge share of their information about the world from the local daily and local TV news. Most Americans in 1992 said they didn’t know a single gay person. Then suddenly there was Deb, on the breakfast table next to the sports section.”

The column quickly grew in popularity and began running in papers across the country. But it wasn’t always met with a positive response. Letters poured in calling the column



Deb Price, shown in 2003 in the Detroit News’ Washington bureau. Photo: Courtesy Joyce Murdoch

“abominable” and worse. Other letters, however, praised Price for giving a voice to the voiceless. In short, the column stirred up emotion on both sides and that only lent to its success.

“I think it’s really important for me to remember [and] for other people to remember that if there weren’t hostility and if there weren’t misunderstandings about gay people, there would be no point in doing this column,” Price told the Associated Press.

Price would go on to write the column for 18 years. During that time she would co-

author two books with her wife, journalist Joyce Murdoch, including “And Say Hi to Joyce: America’s First Gay Column Comes Out” and the Lambda Literary Award-winning “Courting Justice: Gay Men and Lesbians v. The Supreme Court”.

Price and Murdoch married on June 27, 2003, in Toronto, shortly after same-sex marriage became legal in Canada. In 1993, the couple had become the first registered domestic partners in Takoma Park, Maryland. The couple also had a civil union in Vermont in 2000.

After leaving the News, Price took part in a journalism fellowship through the Nieman Foundation. Price covered politics in New England for Agence France-Presse from 2011-2012. From there Price switched to the Wall Street Journal where she was the Southeast Asia editor. Most recently, she was a senior business editor for the South China Morning Post.

“She was the center of my universe,” said Murdoch in a Facebook post. “So much of what I’ve achieved personally and professionally was possible because Deb believed in me, encouraged me, loved me. For 35 years we were a helluva team. She will live on in my heart forevermore.”

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# Jey'nce Poindexter: 'I Know the Power of My Voice'

## Cover Story

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

### Not a Statistic

Jey'nce Poindexter is a woman with a mission. No stranger to the LGBTQ community in Michigan and beyond, the sought-after speaker is not only vice president of the Trans Sistas of Color Project and a co-chair of the Fair and Equal initiative, she recently joined the staff of the Ruth Ellis Center as a case manager. Between The Lines checked in with Poindexter to learn what drives her passion for social justice: as Poindexter explains, she's found the ability to turn her own trials into the foundation for empathizing with, and uplifting of, others.

At a time when trans women of color are victimized and murdered at an alarming rate, Poindexter said she knows what it's like to be written off as a statistic.

"I've been through a lot," she confessed. "And I've witnessed a lot. So I know how it feels to be disenfranchised, disconnected, ostracized. I know what it feels like. That directly shapes and forms how I show up: how I speak, how I handle myself, how I carry myself. Because I now know that all of the things I was told, like being worthless and amounting to nothing, the religious persecution that you can hear from within the church — particularly the Black church — all of those things that I heard, I pushed the mute button on all of that. And I really owned into my purpose."

Clearly, her faith is what informs and guides all that Poindexter does.

"I'm just literally walking into assignment by God," she said.

She added she is not just able to speak to people, but also for people. In her words, she is referring to the people who are "thrown away," dismissed or otherwise perceived to be unworthy. She said she hopes, too, that those who have been hurt by their treatment in the Church will come to understand that God's mercies are extended to everyone, anew each day.

### Reaching Out

With natural skills for reaching out to the marginalized and for bridging divides, Poindexter is uniquely equipped to fulfill her role as a co-chair of Fair and Equal Michigan, the citizens' initiative that aims to amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include protections for LGBTQ people.

Poindexter said the significance of a Black trans woman being appointed to that position is not lost on her. With that in mind, she seeks not only to educate the LGBTQ community on the importance of the initiative but also to include non-LGBTQ people in her outreach

*"I'm appreciative for the position I hold in this community and the power in my voice," Poindexter acknowledged. "You may hear some people who don't know [their power]. I know the power of my voice. And I use it. And I don't just use it for myself. I use it for the person that has also been locked out and shunned and pushed aside. I'm aware of my power. But the way people receive me and respect me and look to me as a leader, that is not lost on me."*

with the message.

"This is something we need for our society to make sure the hate is properly addressed, acknowledged and handled," she said.

Before her work with TSOCP, REC and Fair and Equal Michigan, Poindexter served in various capacities in the LGBTQ community in Metro Detroit. As she explained, she helped create spaces for people like her where none previously existed.

"Let's be clear," Poindexter said. "There was no direct programming for trans women. Not only did we have to enter LGBTQ spaces that were not willing to acknowledge us and accept us and welcome us in but we were also restricted from health care spaces. Education spaces. Housing spaces. Public accommodation spaces. The list goes on and on and on for someone like me.

"And so, knowing that, and knowing the inside scoop on ... how legislation impacts our everyday life — that's what sparks my interest and keeps me going in these kinds of multiple realms," she continued. "They're all working toward a purpose. They're all pushing for a better quality of life for people."

### Endings and Beginnings

Many know Poindexter through her previous



position as the Transgender Specialist/Victim Advocate for Equality Michigan. She described the many responsibilities that the position entailed: accompanying clients to court, handling crisis calls, engaging in conflict resolution, helping with safety planning, dealing with partner-on-partner violence situations and assisting immigrant members of the LGBTQ community.

Poindexter is proud of the work she's done for EQMI, and, according to the feedback she shared from her supervisor, she served the agency well.

"On one of my evaluations, my supervisor, she literally wrote, 'Jey'nce has surpassed any and all expectations that we had, bringing her on as a part of the team,'" Poindexter recalled. "When I read that, it just made me really feel overjoyed because I knew that it was purposeful work."

Though Poindexter said she knew she would not be there forever, she said she wanted to use her time to be a "good steward" over resources.

"I was to be responsible and accountable to the community ... I was to make sure I rendered services with a level of integrity and dignity not only for myself but also for my survivors and my clients, to make sure that by the time they stopped working with me, not only were they out of the situation they found themselves in, they were empowered to a degree that they no longer needed me for that."

While the work was satisfying, two weeks

out of each month spent traveling to EQMI's offices across the state took its toll. Yet, said Poindexter, "It's really enriched me so. It's a blessing. I'm ever so grateful for the people, for the spaces, for the opportunities. I'm really, extremely blessed.

"The Lord brought me to it," she continued. "And when I fulfilled my assignment and it was time for me to move on, I knew it. I felt it. I shared it with my coworkers and my supervisor. It was something I knew it was time for. I had done all that I could do."

When Poindexter learned of the case management position at REC, she realized it was all she had found so fulfilling at EQMI — in one space.

"Life is changing for us all," she said, referring to the effects of the novel coronavirus pandemic. "I can't be out here traveling and doing like I usually do. So that definitely shaped my [interest] in a new position as well, because I need something more concrete."

Case management through REC might involve assistance with housing, secondary care or trauma-informed care, among other services and resources. Poindexter said she's grateful to be responsible for building and maintaining a program that was named for Kelly Stough.

"That was our sister who was shot and killed at the end of 2018 by a Black pastor

See **Poindexter**, continued on p. 8

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► **Poindexter**

Continued from p. 8

of ... warmth in her absence.”

While she can't make up for their loss, Poindexter pointed out it's especially important to remember the survivors when it's not Transgender Day of Remembrance, where the names of those they've lost are read publicly.

“All of that's fine,” Poindexter allowed. “But when the dust settles, who calls? Who reaches out? Who says, ‘You know what? We're still thinking about you even though it's not on the news ... but I still remember you and I still care.’”

**Mother to Many**

Poindexter, who was born and raised in Detroit and who currently resides in Southfield, had what she described as “some really tumultuous times” growing up. But then, as now, her faith was unshakable.

“I left home when I was 14,” Poindexter said. “I've been homeless. I've slept outside and I've had some rough nights and had some nights that I didn't have food, and I had some nights where I did not know what I was gonna do. But through it all, I never lost my faith.

“I always play my gospel music,” she

continued. “Karen Clark is one of my favorites. Those songs, those messages, they help give me strength. ... I also pass those things on to my kids, to people I've grown up with or [people who] didn't believe in faith, didn't believe in God. They'll call me right now today and realize ‘Ma' or ‘Sis, you know, I just remember riding in the car with you and you playing Karen Clark. ... This song helped me through.’ And to me, that's the most rewarding thing that someone can say because I think that's the greatest gift of all. I don't know a greater gift than God, than salvation.”

Just as Poindexter finds strength in her faith and the gospel music that celebrates it, many look to her for strength and guidance as well. She's well aware of that and the responsibility that accompanies it.

“I'm appreciative for the position I hold in this community and the power in my voice,” Poindexter acknowledged. “You may hear some people who don't know [their power]. I know the power of my voice. And I use it. And I don't just use it for myself. I use it for the person that has also been locked out and shunned and pushed aside. I'm aware of my power. But the way people receive me and respect me and look to me as a leader, that is not lost on me.”

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## ► Affirmations

Continued from p. 4

look like — I think we will have some type of hybrid moving forward with this Zoom technology allowing us to reach seniors all over the state and Great Lakes region and further,” he said.

Another Affirmations service that has taken off during the pandemic is providing food to those in need. Each week, people of any orientation, income or background may pull up to the back of the community center to receive a box of food.

“We’ve served 3,800 meals to our community since COVID,” Garcia said.

The center also partnered with Ferndale-based business LIV to give away 20 turkeys for Thanksgiving. As the need continues through the winter, donations of canned and boxed items are welcomed. Affirmations is also continuing with its free HIV testing and counseling programs, which are available by appointment.

## LGBTQ Advocacy

Advocating for LGBT equality continues to be a priority for Affirmations. While there have been great strides in social acceptance, marriage equality and some non-discrimination advances, the biggest threat according to Garcia is the “religious exemption,” which means that businesses can refuse service to someone who is LGBTQ because of their religious beliefs.

An oft-cited example is a baker refusing to make a cake for a same-sex couple because homosexuality is against their religion. However, there are also cases where discrimination based on religious exemptions can mean life or death — such as a doctor refusing to see a child because their parents are gay, or those who deny basic food and shelter to other human beings simply because of who they love.

Garcia explained that with a conservative-led Supreme Court, religious exemption cases could help carve out a path for continued institutionalized discrimination. Keeping patrons informed of issues like religious exemptions, and abreast of the latest developments, is also part of the work that

organizations like Affirmations take on.

Working with other LGBTQ community centers is also a priority, especially in light of such organized political forces against them. Garcia is on the board of CenterLink, which connects centers across the county. And, last year, he helped form the Community Center Network for organizations statewide such as the Jim Toy Center in Ann Arbor and Pride Center in Grand Rapids. This makes Michigan only the second state, following Pennsylvania, to have a statewide organization for their centers.

“We need to continue to work closely with our sister orgs,” Garcia emphasized.

Collaborations can help centers save money through collective purchases and research, aid foster education and strength by sharing ideas and increases political power by having more citizens connected.

## People Power

Affirmations is starting 2021 with a small but determined staff. There are team members focusing on youth, communications, operations, finance and development. There is also to be a new program director hired early next year. Add this to increased numbers of interns — many working from home — and, of course, the donors and slew of people who volunteer to run the support groups and activities, and Garcia is optimistic about the future.

“I remember when we got that first audit back and we were back in the black and we were all excited, and then COVID hit,” he said. “We closed the doors and myself and community centers around the country were worried.”

But as Affirmations continues to adapt and thrive, both he and the board continue to share a passion and enthusiasm that is contagious in all the areas where the center continues to grow.

“I’m proud of that,” he said. “That is the staff, the board and all of you and the donors making sure that Affirmations succeeds.”

*Affirmations is located at 290 W. 9 Mile Road in Downtown Ferndale. Those who would like to donate or learn more about Affirmations’ programs and services can go online to [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org).*



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Rhonda L. Kobold, DO, FACOG





## Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

*Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in an earlier version of BTL.*

### Christmas with Liberace

**M**y grandmother Lottie Lee Alexander lived with my parents and me from the time I was five until she died in 1954 when I was 18 and had just finished Cass Technical High School where I was a commercial art major.

My grandmother did much to encourage my interest in the visual arts, church music and — I kid you not — her TV idol and friend each week: Wladziu Valentino. LIBERACE!

Granny was herself born in 1880 in Fort Payne, Alabama, a distant cousin removed from Robert E. Lee. In her mid-30s she was a Methodist Church organist and a dabbler in watercolors. She was an excellent cook, and her down-home corn bread and sweet potato pies highlighted many of our family chats in our small 444 Peterboro apartment kitchen. Just barely room for four and the small stove on which she performed her mealtime miracles.

In the late 1950s we owned a small 13" black and white RCA Victor TV. (I remember when I was 15 watching "The Howdy Doody Show," "The Auntie Dee Show" and the weekly big-name Paul Whiteman Band program. I had my first crush on a teenage guy on Whiteman's program.)

Liberace was a big star in the late '50s, '60s and '70s and my grandmother was a devoted fan — in spite of the fact that my dad had questionable comments and dinnertime remarks about the smiling, winking, waving, fluttering, kiss-blowing, all-showbiz keyboard wizard.

"No wonder that British journalist called Maestro Libby a 'fruitcake!'" said my dad, helping himself, no doubt, as a subliminal commentary item a similar fruit Christmas treat that Granny had just baked. (The journalist, by the way, was sued for his slandering and Liberace won a few thousand British pounds for the remark.)

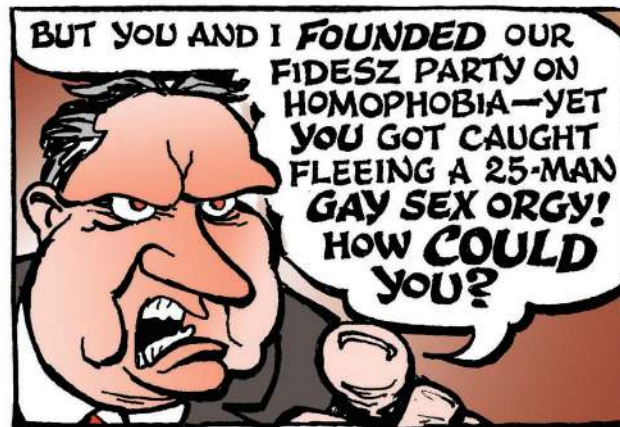
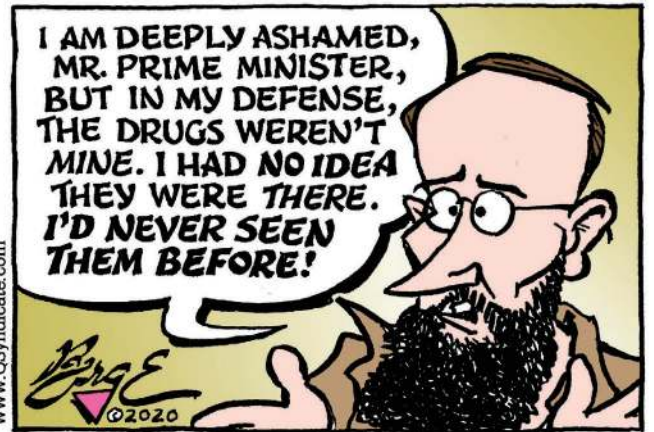
For my grandmother Liberace's nationally viewed, weekly TV performance was the highlight of her week. My mother, dad and I knew Granny was getting ready for the weekly event by her behavior early in the day on Fridays.

"Here we go again," my dad would signal mom and me. "Granny's humming to herself, and moving her own music performing 10 fingers."

As TV time drew closer, Granny would retreat to the bathroom to comb her hair, put on fresh makeup, and make sure her lipstick and dentures were secure. She'd then carefully pick one of her many, newly ironed dresses to wear. And, of course, smile, smile, a lot. Her usually uneventful old age was about to be given a touch of piano spark and pizzazz!

Granny decided that the Christmas Liberace TV Show — unbeknownst to us all, it would be her life's closure event — needed a special touch. To her tailored red-and-green outfit she added a Santa fan to wave and to keep beat to the Holiday music, and promptly one half hour before Liberace was to appear, she sat herself squarely, comfortably, belongingly, adoringly, in front of our family TV.

See next page



BY GWEN SMITH

### One Joke Too Many

**I**n the early 1980s, a friend of mine let me borrow a vinyl record of theirs: the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack for Monty Python's "Life of Brian." While it featured but two songs, it largely consisted of recordings of most of the major skits in the film, stitched together with some witty banter from an announcer more or less filling in the bits between them.

While most people became Monty Python fans from the movie "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," or from various sketches on the old "Monty Python Flying Circus" episodes — where a generation of nerds like me learned about the Spanish Inquisition, dead parrots and silly walks — it was the "Life of Brian" soundtrack that kicked off a multiple-decade fandom.

I've watched all the films, of course, and started my own small collection of Monty Python albums. The "Flying Circus" episodes were long-since viewed, and led me to branch into other properties, like the "Fawlty Towers" TV series featuring ex-Python member John Cleese. Monty Python's decidedly offbeat brand of comedy has been something more than a fandom, being part of the basis of my own sense of humor.

I'm hardly alone in my interest. Monty Python has been deeply influential, with many of their skits being quoted regularly today. Some, I might argue, are a sort of currency, serving as the passcodes into a nerdy in-group. Monty Python.

## Transmissions

The members of Monty Python, in the decades since the group was formed, have been outspoken, turning their satiric comedy against political figures and movements. Not every time have the targets been ones I agree with — such as Python cartoonist and, later, successful independent director Terry Gilliam, who opted to stand against the #MeToo movement, arguing in the Independent that "white males" are being blamed for everything.

It is John Cleese, however, who has taken a stand of sorts against transgender people. Siding with author J.K. Rowling in an open letter, Cleese later argued against transgender people having the right to self-identify by saying, "Deep down, I want to be a Cambodian police woman. Is that allowed, or am I being unrealistic?"

As the first of explaining a joke, the above is called, in some trans circles, "the one joke." It's a reference to the fact that people who try to make a joke at transgender people's expense tend to make some claim of identifying as something potentially outlandish as a way of mocking transgender people's gender identity. It's also usually accompanied with a feigned

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## ► Transmissions

Continued from p. 10

shock for “assuming their gender” or what not.

I should add that Gilliam also made that one joke during his aforementioned rants about #MeToo, saying he identifies as, “a melanin-light male.”

In the furor that followed Cleese’s comments, he sort of backtracked, saying on Twitter that he is “not that interested” in transgender people and that he hopes we’re happy and that we are treated kindly.

Initially, I was a bit surprised to hear of Cleese’s views. Typically, it seemed that Monty Python and later projects were well-aimed, skewering many who frankly may have deserved to be lambasted. Then I thought back to that album — and the movie — that started me into Monty Python fandom.

On it is a sketch called “Stan Called Loretta,” whose titular character is part of an anti-Roman movement known as the People’s Front of Judea. The group, which bumbles its way through a number of typical revolutionary tropes, ends up championing Loretta’s “right to have babies” as part of its grievances against Rome. Of note, it is the group’s leader, Reg — played by Cleese — who argues against Loretta’s choice to self-identify as a woman, claiming it is part of Loretta’s “struggle against reality.”

The movie was released in 1979 with writing starting three years prior, and one may be tempted to argue that it is simply a product of its time. Yet two years before the movie hit theaters, Renée Richards made

worldwide headlines after a judge declared her female in a ruling against the United States Tennis Association. Likewise, Jan Morris’ autobiography, “Conundrum,” was still fresh on UK minds, and trans issues were making more than a few headlines at the time the movie premiered.

So, it would seem that Cleese is — decades later — a parody of one of his Python-era characters when it comes to trans issues, the same way his xenophobia around Brexit sounds much the rantings of his Basil Fawlty character. Perhaps his “straight man” of all those years ago was simply Cleese being Cleese, and not the broad, comedic character we thought it was.

Further, perhaps Monty Python, for me, is yet another fandom that I must find myself setting aside, much like many others are reconsidering their “Harry Potter” novels and DVDs, or the dilemma many of my friends are facing over “The Mandalorian” employing three actors for its second season with a history of transphobic actions.

In a world where transgender people merely exist, how do we navigate a world where pop-culture can be set against us? Can we attempt to separate the art from the artist when the artist is, at best, dismissive of transgender people and, at worst, deeply trans-hostile?

I am not sure there is a good answer but right now I feel as if there is no more fandom for me that feels like home. That parrot is may well be dead, and there won’t be any more silly walks for a while.

*Gwen Smith prefers Michael Palin, who spoke fondly of Jan Morris. You can find her at [gwen-smith.com](http://gwen-smith.com)*

## ► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 10

Then the Christmas magic began for Granny! And for us! The cameras lit, the keyboard music cascaded forth! Liberace smiled, dazzled, performed and — the moment our beloved Granny had been waiting for — ‘waved’ to Granny.

And Granny, once more bonded with her musical paramour, waved back, smiled and heartily rhythm’d her Santa fan at Libby! It was a true moment of bonding for Granny at 85.

Later, my father tried to enlighten Granny. “Mom, come on now! No way Liberace can see into our tiny apartment. He can’t see you, me, mom or Buzz. But, dear heart, if this Christmas make believe makes you happy that’s really all that matters. Merry Christmas mom. Merry Christmas Liberace!”

Many years into the mid-Detroit ’60s I was partying with friends at the history, long-vanished Diplomat Drag Bar on Second

Boulevard, a few blocks north of the famous Fisher Theater. Among the visiting guests that holiday night were show business entertainers, including an unexpected drop-in: Liberace! (Ethel Merman also once performed at the Dip on a drop-in visit.)

I observed him intently, and — as did everyone else I’m sure that special night — Liberace wasn’t flamboyant, wasn’t a tad queeny, not one iota, Certainly no Christmas time ‘fruit cake’ in his actions. In fact, I was downright disappointed. He was just Wladziu Valentino.

Nonetheless, I smiled and waved to Liberace mentally. Granny would have wanted me to do so. Mary Christmas.

*Charles Alexander is prolific both as a BTL columnist (700-plus columns) and as a well-known LGBT community artist (1000 Facebook images). He is a Spirit of Detroit Award recipient and an Affirmations LGBT CENTER Jan Stevenson awardee. Connect with him at [Charles@pridesource.com](mailto:Charles@pridesource.com).*

# Creep Of The Week

## Franklin Graham

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

In case you haven’t heard, Donald Trump lost the 2020 presidential election. It’s over. Joe Biden will be the next Commander in Chief and not a second too soon.

In fact, it’s scary that Trump has a lame duck session to sit around and stew about his loss, and we’ve seen that he’s spending it in ways that reflect his maturity and character. In other words, he’s obsessed with and repeating baseless conspiracy theories about how the election was stolen and basically showing himself to be the unhinged lunatic narcissist the majority of Americans can plainly see.

Sadly for 73,943,097 — that’s way too many — American voters, Trump is their deity and they will worship at the Church of the Gold Hamberder until they die. But as of this writing Joe Biden has 80,181,857 votes. That’s a lot of votes! And it could be even more by the time you read this, what with Trump paying for recounts that have actually netted Biden more votes.

Make no mistake, I am very happy that Biden won. Because OF COURSE I am. It’s all part of the radical homosexual agenda I’ve been keeping in my Google Calendar. The plan is coming together beautifully.

Not that I need to tell YOU this, but on Nov. 11 the Human Rights Campaign released the Blueprint for Positive Change 2020, which they describe as “a critical roadmap of 85 individual policy recommendations that should be the priority of the incoming administration.” Best of all, these recommendations don’t require Congress, which means Mitch McConnell can’t do shit to stop them. It’s a literal LGBTQ agenda to help us move past the most anti-LGBTQ administration in history!

“The momentous election of pro-equality champions Joe Biden and Kamala Harris puts us on a path to move equality forward by advancing policies to improve the lives of millions of LGBTQ people,” Human Rights Campaign President Alphonso David said in a statement.

Sounds good to me, let’s party! Unfortunately, somebody accidentally invited Franklin Graham to the soirée and he is pissed!

Responding on Facebook to a Christian Post story titled, “LGBT group urges Biden to strip accreditation of Christian schools with biblical beliefs,” Graham wrote, “This article reports how LGBTQ activists within the Democratic Party are pushing their godless, secular agenda with a potential Biden Administration. If you don’t conform to their ideology, agree with their sinful beliefs, teach

what they say is right, they want to close you down.”

If by “close you down” he means “preventing religious schools from discriminating against LGBTQ people,” then yes! We are on the same page. Spoiler alert: that is not what Graham means.

More specifically, HRC’s blueprint wants the federal government to prevent religious schools from claiming religious exemptions to nondiscrimination policies and science curriculum. This is a radical concept for Franklin who calls it “extremely dangerous.”

“If they are allowed free reign, they will go after the accreditation of Christian colleges, then Christian ministries and churches next, to strip them of tax-exempt status and try to force them to operate under policies that go against biblical teaching,” Graham wrote. “This is not only an attack on free speech and expression, but also an attack on our religious liberty.”

In other words, Graham literally believes he has the God-given right to discriminate against LGBTQ people and to claim that science is witchcraft. No one is infringing on religious liberties by mandating that you not only acknowledge that LGBTQ students are human, but that you also track things like bullying against them. I mean, I know the Bible is basically just Jesus whining about how he never gets good press coverage and that Democrats stole his resurrection, but... Wait, I’m sorry. That’s Trump’s Twitter feed.

Apparently nobody has told Graham that yet, however, as he wrote in his Nov. 28 Twitter rant, “The presidential election isn’t finalized yet, but this shows why who we vote for is so important. We’ve had four years of an administration under President Donald J. Trump that staunchly defends religious freedom, freedom of speech, and the church.”

Sure, you could point out that technically the election isn’t finalized. I mean, Biden hasn’t been inaugurated yet for one thing. But make no mistake that Franklin isn’t being technical here. He is holding out hope that Presidential Lord and Savior Donald J. Trump will rise from the electoral dead and smite the Godless homo Democrats.

With apparently no irony at all, Graham finished his post with, “We can see that the one who holds the office of President of the United States has tremendous ramifications on our day-to-day lives and for the future of this nation.”

To which I say, respectfully, “Noooooooooooo shiiiiiiiiiiiiit.”

# Anti-LGBTQ Hate Crimes Mostly Unchanged in 2019: FBI

BY LOU CHIBBARO JR.

The number of hate crime incidents targeting gays, lesbians and bisexuals in the U.S. decreased slightly from 17.0 percent of the total number of hate crime incidents reported to the FBI in 2018 to 16.7 percent of the total number reported in 2019, according to the FBI's annual Hate Crimes Statistics Report released Nov. 16.

The report shows that the number of hate crime incidents targeting victims because of their gender identity, listed as either transgender or gender nonconforming, increased slightly from 2.4 percent in 2018 to 2.7 percent in 2019.

According to the report, the total number of hate crimes reported to the FBI by law enforcement agencies throughout the country also decreased slightly from 7,120 in 2018 to 7,103 in 2019.

Similar to 2018, the 2019 report shows that hate crimes targeting victims because of their race, ethnicity or ancestry accounted for 57.6 percent of the total number of hate crime incidents – by far the largest victim category.

The 2019 report shows that victims targeted for hate crimes because of their religion were the second highest victim category at 20.1 percent. Victims targeted for their sexual orientation – listed as gay, lesbian or bisexual – comprise the third largest victim category at 16.7 percent, the report shows.

The other victim categories in order of the percentage of incidents against them are gender identity, which includes transgender and gender nonconforming people, at 2.7 percent; people with disabilities, 2.0 percent; and victims targeted solely for their gender, at 0.9 percent.

The FBI report says there were a total of 1,195 hate crime incidents targeting victims because of their sexual orientation. Out of that figure, 746 are listed as anti-gay male, 115 as anti-lesbian, 17 listed as anti-heterosexual and 26 listed as anti-bisexual.

The report says there were 198 hate crime



incidents reported by law enforcement agencies targeting victims for their gender identity. Out of that number, 151 are listed as anti-transgender and 47 are listed as anti-gender non-conforming.

The report says that in 2019, 15,588 law enforcement agencies participated in the FBI's Hate Crime Statistics program. Of these agencies, the report says, 2,172 reported 7,314 hate crimes incidents involving 8,559 offenses.

It says the law enforcement agencies reported 7,103 "single-bias incidents" that involved 8,302 offenses, 8,552 victims and 6,268 known offenders. In this separate category of single-bias incidents, the report shows that sexual orientation bias comprised 16.8 percent of the single-bias incidents and gender identity bias made up 2.8 percent of the single-bias incidents. Each of those two categories had a 1/10 of a percent higher figure than in the category of regular incidents, which could include more than one type of bias.

In a statement responding to the 2019 FBI report the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest LGBTQ civil rights organization,

said the number of anti-LGBTQ hate crimes remains unacceptably high.

"Yet another year with alarming levels of bias-motivated crimes underscores just how urgent it is to address this hate crimes epidemic," said HRC President Alphonso David in the statement. "This year, we saw a tragic new record of fatal violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people in this country, particularly against Black and brown transgender women," David said.

"Because reporting hate crimes to the FBI is not mandatory, these alarming statistics likely represent only a fraction of such violence," he said. "The number of law enforcement agencies reporting hate crimes data decreased by 451 from 2018 to 2019."

In a section of the report that breaks down the number of hate crime incidents reported to the FBI in 2019 by all 50 states and D.C., the report shows that Maryland law enforcement agencies reported only 19 hate crime incidents for the entire state. Seven of the incidents targeted the victim because of their race/ethnicity/ancestry, four were targeted for their

religion, seven for their sexual orientation, one for disability and none for either their gender or gender identity, according to the FBI report.

The report's data for Maryland shows that no hate crimes were reported in 2019 for the city of Baltimore and that the Baltimore Police Department did not participate in the submission of data.

However, a separate State of Maryland 2019 Hate Bias Report prepared by the Maryland Department of State Police, for which reporting of hate crimes is mandatory under Maryland law, a total of 408 hate crime incidents were reported in 2019 for the state of Maryland. Of that total, 84 were listed hate crimes targeting victims because of their sexual orientation and nine were for hate crimes targeting someone for their gender identity, the Maryland report shows.

A spokesperson for the Baltimore Police Department didn't respond to a message from the Washington Blade asking why the department did not submit hate crimes data for the FBI report.

The FBI report shows that D.C. police and other D.C. law enforcement agencies reported a total of 222 hate crime incidents in D.C. in 2019, with 65 targeting victims because of their sexual orientation and 27 targeting victims for their gender identity.

The report says law enforcement agencies in Virginia reported a total of 163 hate crime incidents in Virginia in 2019, with 27 targeting victims for their sexual orientation and three targeting victims for their gender identity.

The FBI report shows that a total of 22 hate crime incidents were reported in 2019 by Delaware law enforcement agencies, with seven said to have targeted victims because of their sexual orientation and one for the victim's gender identity.

*This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.*

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# 2021 Kresge Artist Fellowship Application is Open to Metro Detroit Artists

BY BTL STAFF

DETROIT — Metro Detroit artists are invited to apply for a 2021 Kresge Artist Fellowship. Fellowships are funded by The Kresge Foundation and administered by Kresge Arts in Detroit at the College for Creative Studies.

Now in its 13th year, Kresge Arts in Detroit will award 20 fellowships — 10 in Literary Arts and 10 in Visual Arts — to artists of all career stages living and working in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties. Kresge Artist Fellowships are \$25,000 no-strings-attached awards, plus professional development support and the creation of a short film highlighting the artist's work. Kresge Artist Fellowships are awarded to both emerging and established artists whose commitment to artistic achievement, in contemporary or traditional forms, is evident in the quality of their work.



In addition, 10 Gilda Awards, \$5,000 no strings attached prizes solely for emerging artists, will also be awarded in Literary Arts and Visual Arts. Gilda Awards recognize artists who are early in their careers, are gaining momentum and who demonstrate exceptional potential through creative risk-taking and pushing the boundaries of their chosen art form. The awards are named in honor of Gilda Snowden (1954–2014), who was one of the 18 inaugural artists to receive a Kresge Artist Fellowship in 2009, and who taught painting at CCS for more than 30 years. Gilda Awards are chosen from the pool of Kresge Artist Fellows applicants. There is no separate application for the Gilda Awards.

Artists working in the following disciplines are eligible to apply:

## Literary Arts

Arts Criticism, Creative Nonfiction, Fiction, Graphic Novels, Playwriting, Poetry, Spoken Word, Zines, Interdisciplinary Work

## Visual Arts

Book Art, Ceramics, Collage, Drawing, Fiber, Glass, Installation, Metalwork, New Media, Painting, Photography, Performance Art, Printmaking, Sculpture, Video Art, Interdisciplinary Work

An informational video pertaining to the application is available on the Kresge Arts in

Detroit website. While not required, applicants are encouraged to view the video, which is designed to support artists in creating their most

authentic and compelling application for a Kresge Artist Fellowship. Additionally, Kresge Arts in Detroit staff will hold an online question and answer session in January.

## Application Informational Session

Available now is an online instructional video to be featured on Thursday, Jan. 7, 2021, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. called Application Questions and Answers.

Since 2008, Kresge Arts in Detroit has awarded more than \$6 million through 12 Kresge Eminent Artist Awards, \$50,000 each; 218 Kresge Artist fellowships, \$25,000 each; and 22 Gilda Awards, \$5,000 each.

In each category, fellows and Gilda Award recipients are selected by independent panels of distinguished local and national artists and arts professionals. New panels are convened each year, bringing fresh perspectives to the review process. Previous applicants are strongly encouraged to re-apply.

*The online Fellowship application, guidelines, and additional resources are available now at [kresgeartsindetroit.org](http://kresgeartsindetroit.org). Applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM EST on Thursday, January 14, 2021. Direct questions about application requirements to Kresge Arts in Detroit: [admin@kresgeartsindetroit.org](mailto:admin@kresgeartsindetroit.org). The Kresge Arts in Detroit office is currently operating remotely, so email is the best way for applicants to contact us at this time.*

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# Lady Ace Boogie isn't Quitting Music, She's Taking Things to the 'Next Level'

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Lady Ace Boogie has been a fixture in Michigan's hip-hop scene for years now, but for the longtime musician, 2020 has been a year of significant change. In addition to the unprecedented novel coronavirus pandemic that impacted the world, Lady Ace Boogie — also known as Linda Tellis-Aguilar — began to come to terms with the fact that her relationship with creating music wasn't lining up with her goals. She took some time to evaluate “what's working and what's not working” and out of it came her latest musical project: “That's All for Now.” Soon afterward, she held a farewell concert in Grand Rapids.

However, Tellis-Aguilar was clear: “I am not retired.” In fact, she said she's sick of hearing people repeat that rumor. But, it is true that she's taking a step back to promote current work, like “That's All for Now,” and focus on promoting other Michigan artists by giving them help and resources she didn't have access to when she started out. Between The Lines reached out to Tellis-Aguilar via phone to learn more about the decision to take a step back from live performances and new music projects, the ways in which she's helping new artists, how the song “Free” resonates with her pansexual identity, and why exploring the rock genre might be on the table.

**Could you tell me about “That's all for now”? It's filled with artist collaborations. Why did you collaborate with them and what inspired this album?**

I think that my past projects have always been planned projects. I've always thought of the name and then kind of went from there and tried to keep it in a theme, but with this project, I started writing and production right around the time that the pandemic hit — and it wasn't really planned unless it was me going into the studio recording songs. It got to the point where I was like, “You know what? I'm going to make this a project” (laughs). Some of the collaborations like on my song “Eyes Wide Open,” the artists who were featured in that, we were actually just in the studio playing the beat and collaborating in the studio with that, and then we all just kind of started nodding our heads. And the crazy thing is that all of us felt the exact same way about the track and the content and everything. The other features, specifically Steven Malcolm and Lola Blanco, we recorded the song first and I just felt like I just heard them on both of those songs. Not only that, they've both been really great artists and grinding. They've been doing their thing, and I've been proud to have both of them on the project.



Photo: Courtesy Photo

**You come off very authentic in the song “Free.” Why did that feel like the right time to release the video and the song?**

On “Free,” even when I went to the studio to record that song, it was mad aggressive. And I didn't plan that; I usually hold back a little bit. I don't want to be overly aggressive on a track, but for that song, I had to let loose. I just had to with the content that I wrote, the beat and everything about it. It just felt like it was time, because we're in a time right now where we're not so free. Being a part of the LGBTQIA community, being African American, just being a woman, there's just so many things that limit us. And as a people right now with the quarantine, and it just felt like the right song to push and to get out. And then even with Steven Malcolm being a Christian hip-hop artist and me being a part of the LGBTQIA community, you don't really see that. I think that in itself shows unity and it's important to push unity right now.

**Within “Free” the message rejects limiting societal expectation—**

Yeah, because I've lived a lot of my life thinking the opposite of that. I consider myself very emotionally intelligent on purpose. I also care about what people think of me, I do. But until I became super self-aware and super OK with who I am, I would allow that to change me in ways that I didn't recognize, so now I just think that it's really important — because I know I'm a good person and I know I strive to be a good person, a kind person, a loving person — I don't need to be fit into these social constructs. I know the difference between right and wrong and I'm also very open to change, but not to a point where I allow someone to change me where I can't recognize myself. And I almost got to that point at one point in my life.

**What was it that prompted the shift in your life to inspired you to be more forthcoming about how you felt or identify?**

For the longest time, growing up, I didn't even know what pansexual was — I identify

as pansexual. Quite frankly, I would rather not identify as anything (laughs), because I don't like to be labeled. But I understand the importance of labels, and I also understand the restrictions of labels. For me, growing up and not being very feminine — I played concrete football, I played basketball. I spent 10 years of my youth in Dayton, Ohio. And in Dayton, there is a culture, within the LGBTQIA community, that you're either a stud or a femme. There was never anything outside of that, and so I was generally put in the stud box, and with that came these restrictions: “You can't dress a certain way. You can't talk a certain way. You can't like a certain person.” I always knew that I had this love for all people, and it didn't have anything to do with their sexuality, but I didn't know what that meant. I guess you could really thank social media for [my self-acceptance] — because, really, seeing all of these beautiful people all over the world who aren't afraid to say, “This is who I am,” it gives people like me the opportunity to say, “That's who I am, and I'm OK with that.”

**You've mentioned that "That's All for Now" will be your last album for the foreseeable future and you've even had a farewell concert. What was your thought process as you were creating this album? Did you want to leave listeners on a specific note?**

No, actually. The album content has nothing to do with the title (laughs). The title came later, because I didn't decide that this was going to be my last full body of work until, honestly, my dad passed Aug. 2, and I want to say maybe a week after that. That was like, two or three weeks before the album dropped, so I didn't decide it was going to be "That's All for Now" until much later than the music was recorded. And it's because, honestly, the pandemic has given me the opportunity to — even though it's been a negative impact on my financial and mental health — slow down and realize what's working and what's not working and giving me the opportunity to say, "OK, what do I truly want to do?" I have released projects in the past for so much money and spent so much time and not given it the proper push that it deserves online, pushing it to the masses. So, deciding to make this my last full body project isn't to say that I'm not going to be recording music, I'm just not going to be spending thousands of dollars and spending a year creating a project that doesn't get pushed to the masses.

**Now that time has passed since your final show, will you remove yourself entirely from performing?**

I miss it. I am a performing artist. I would rather be on the stage than in the studio, actually. I've been able to get all of the opportunities that I've been able to get — I've opened up for Lizzo, I've opened up for Nas, I've opened up for Bone Thugs-n-Harmony, and I got paid to do that. I had fans show up and fill the arena and it's been great. That's because of my good work ethic and that's because I put on a hell of a show. All of my opportunities have been because of my performance, so it has been hard to step back from the stage, but I think that now that I'm realigning my priorities and now that I'm getting my message out to more people, hopefully, I can begin to get opportunities outside of Michigan. And so, for me, if I'm able to work with an artist and truly have something come out of getting on the stage and not just being paid for it, then yes, I would like to step back on the stage.

**I've read that you're interested in doing something called Lady Ace Boogie Presents, which is helping other artists. Could you explain**

**what that is?**

So, what I want to do is help other artists gain some of the opportunities that I've been able to gain through my connections and through my resources and through my passions to help them get the help that I didn't get. So, basically, be the solution to the problem that I see. That's one part. The other part of Lady Ace Boogie Presents is I have a series called Lady Ace Boogie Presents: A Dope Ass Lineup! And, ultimately, it serves to connect musicians from multiple genres, different parts of the city and the region, to create a synergy and expose them to each others' fanbases. Specifically, you'll have rock 'n' roll shows, hip-hop shows and folk shows, and you never see that come together. All of the shows that I curate and put together have several different genres that come together in one space. It has to make sense sonically, but it always does. They always sell out — I've never not had a sold out Dope Ass Lineup! and that's because we have the right artists and I put in the work to make it happen. So, I'm going to be focusing on that series as well.

**Would you ever consider pushing artists in genres like metal or rock that you haven't explored before? And would you consider making a metal song?**

Oh, 100 percent. I never thought about representing artists outside of hip-hop and it's just one of those things boxing myself in probably. But that's a cool idea, because I have a lot of rock bands, a lot of heavy metal bands, a lot of country, funk — you name it. I'm pretty connected with a lot of different artists. So, yeah, I would love to do that. I actually just collaborated with a rock band by the name of Lokella, we just did a live studio video recording of my song "Stand Alone," but it's in collaboration with them. We turned it into a Linkin Park-meets-Jay-Z style that's really, really dope. We talked about doing something further with that, but me tapping into the rock side. Again, I would be head-over-heels if I could join a rock band. That would be dope.

**Is there anything you want fans to know as you take this next step in your musical career?**

Just that I didn't retire (laughs). I'm so sick of hearing and seeing that. I'm trying to change the narrative, and no, I am not retired. I'm just aligning my priorities and being efficient and effective. I need to do things smarter that will let me take things to the next level.

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Photo: Hulu

# Queering Christmas

## Kristen Stewart on How Playing Queer in Her Gay Holiday Rom-Com Is Personal

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Kristen Stewart is waving around what appears to be a joint. Even her “Happiest Season” co-star Mackenzie Davis, who’s seen on Zoom with Stewart, doesn’t quite know exactly what Stewart has lit. “Oh my god,” Davis says. “I thought that was a blunt.”

It is actually Palo Santo, a South American tree that translates to “holy wood.” But for a moment, Stewart gets silly and pretends her soothing wood stick is an actual joint, moving it toward her mouth as if she’s going to smoke

it. They both crack up at the thought of Stewart maybe getting blazed during our interview. “Just cleansing the energy!” Stewart assures.

After her “Twilight” years, a “Charlie’s Angels” reboot and a range of indies, Stewart’s latest movie, “Happiest Season,” feels a lot like taking a whiff of some Palo Santo – an energy-cleanser. For 102 festive minutes, it restores some of the downer pandemic energy of 2020 with comfort, joy and the promise of a yuletide so gay it makes sense that Clea DuVall, the openly lesbian actress who starred in the 1999 queer camp classic “But I’m a Cheerleader,” directed and co-wrote it.

The film is the first of its kind: a major studio-backed holiday rom-com with a queer love story at its center. In the movie, Stewart stars as Abby, whose girlfriend, Harper (Davis, who is straight and adored by the LGBTQ community for playing queer in the “San Junipero” episode of “Black Mirror”), invites her home for Christmas. At first, she’s not sure about meeting Harper’s family, but then decides she’s all in. Abby even plans to propose to her (with guidance from BFF John, played by Dan Levy). But what Abby doesn’t know until they’re en route: Harper hasn’t come out to her family.

Shot in February just before the film industry

was forced to shut down due to the coronavirus pandemic, the movie was originally slated for a wide theatrical release backed by Sony’s TriStar Pictures. But with many theaters still shuttered, “Happiest Season” has found a new (streaming) home for the holidays on Hulu.

During our recent Zoom call, Stewart and Davis talked about moving beyond the fetishizing of lesbian relationships, why they love gay bars and how Stewart plans to continue to use her A-list power to radicalize conventional genres with queerness.



**As a kid, could you have imagined a world in which a movie like this existed?**

**Kristen Stewart:** Yeah! That's kind of why it seems a little bit overdue now. But we have a bunch of really rad stories, like fringy independent films that I grew up with that didn't lack in joy or sort of splendor, even Clea's movie that I love so much, "But I'm a Cheerleader." They're very much together and happy and run off into the sunset. But that's a tiny, little movie and not everyone has seen it, and it's so nice to think that you don't have to go out and search for this movie. It's inviting, it's warm, it's open. And yeah, helpful!

I was into strange movies when I was little; that's not the most normal thing, do you know what I mean? "But I'm a Cheerleader" is seminal and it's iconic, but I wish it was bigger and this is, so that's rad.

**This is a big year. You're part of a queer Christmas movie movement. Lifetime, Hulu, Hallmark are all doing them.**

**Mackenzie Davis:** Hallmark's doing a (queer) Christmas movie?

**Stewart:** Ohh... really? But we want to be the only one!

**Davis:** No, no, no. We're the first. No. I'm just shocked that Hallmark is doing that. They are historically not progressive, to say the least. Ha! That's so cool.

**Stewart:** You know what's cool? Now they have to be, or else they get left behind! Ha!

**Kristen, this movie is a big deal to a lot of LGBTQ people. But for you, what is the significance that you are an openly queer A-lister playing a queer character in a major studio queer Christmas movie?**

**Stewart:** It's really fun. I love playing characters that feel sort of further away from my natural wheelhouse because I like to expand my horizon, and also kind of deeply explore uncharted territory within myself that exists but might not be the most obvious.

But what feels great is leaning fully into what's easy and obvious and comfortable when it is supported and recognized and loved. I've never had that on such a big movie that people were willing to put so much money into. Because that is a huge risk! And, like, the fact that people are taking risks for, well... look, it's not a huge risk. It's that the time calls for it. And there's a huge gaping desire for it. And that is something I feel because I live in this world.

So the fact that I got to play this part after being in so many big movies where I never feel like I'm not being myself or trying to pass or anything like that, but I do feel like I'm ambitious about hitting marks that people don't think I can hit. So this one was not that,

this was the opposite of that. It was, no, no, no; I get to be the star of a big movie, and also get to be *this* person? It felt great.

**With "Runaways," I remember a lot of talk about your kiss with Dakota Fanning. It seems dated to be talking about a girl-on-girl kiss at this point. Obviously you two kiss in this movie, but with "Happiest Season," do you get the impression that people and the press are less like, "A gay kiss! What was that like?" and is that a relief?**

**Stewart:** Yeah, nobody's asked that.

**Davis:** Oh, god. It hasn't been brought up. Culture's moved so fast after not moving (laughs) at all for a very long time. But in the last 10 years it feels like so much has changed.

**Stewart:** No, nobody has fetishized it in (that) way. I have experience with that being, like, "So tell me about the ...," especially depending on who it's coming from. You sit down with some news outlet man who's been a news outlet man for, like, 50 years...

**Davis:** Ha!

**Stewart:** ... and you're like, "Don't ask me that." Wow, that's so weird. Makes me feel really weird. Yeah, we haven't had that.

**Davis:** I just wanted to change the subject so badly when Matt Lauer (asked) Anne Hathaway about when she was not wearing any underwear. It's like the absolute worst moment I've ever witnessed.

**Even though this is based on Clea's story, it will be relatable to a lot of queer people, like myself. What parts of this Abby-Harper dynamic of coming out and self-acceptance did you identify with the most?**

**Stewart:** Look, doing things that are really normal and natural to you physically and then having to sort of curb those instincts around people because you don't want to make other people uncomfortable so you are willing to make yourself so uncomfortable for other people's benefit is something that I have done (and) probably *still* (do).

I tried to go on a houseboat trip recently and it was in northern California, like around Tahoe. It's a really Trumpian area up there, and I was like, "We gotta get the fuck outta here." I was holding my girlfriend's hand, just walking around. I'm not saying every single person... I don't even know what I'm saying. But I didn't feel safe. I don't mean to imply that I know where that would've gone, but even just emotionally, it was a violent experience.

In the movie, it's really nice to be able to laugh at certain feelings that are more heavy because when you repossess and then sort of

See **Kristen Stewart**, continued on p. 18

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**Puzzle p. 21**

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Photo: Hulu

► **Kristen Stewart**

Continued from p. 17

release a feeling, it feels cool and triumphant and like I've won something back. There were things in the movie – just little moments – where we have to drop each other's hands or, even though we know we're lying for just a brief period, the lie hurts and, yeah, I've never gone home with someone and had to lie.


I've never specifically had to keep myself in a closet with a person, but all of that, as somebody who's grown up queer – not to put any limits on my own sexuality – I've dealt with that forever. And that's triggering. But, specifically, just the general experience of being gay and thinking that maybe people think you're gross or weird is something that is nice to laugh at in this environment.

**In the film, you're at a gay bar and "RuPaul's Drag Race" contestants BenDeLaCreme and Jinx Monsoon are performing.**

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**What's the best time you've had at a gay bar?**

**Stewart:** Even before I knew I was gay – even *before* I had a girlfriend! – I was like, “Oh my god, this is the most fun I've ever had at a bar ever! Why are you all the best people?!”

**Davis:** Yeah, being a female and experiencing men at bars and being in a space where you can...

**Stewart:** Dance!

**Davis:** ... be completely unleashed and not fucking worry about anybody touching you or approaching you or coming up behind you is especially – when I was younger it was just such a safe, incredible feeling. It felt very great. And also not worrying about how you looked because nobody wanted to fuck you.

**Stewart:** Ha! I know! You never want to take up space where you don't belong, but it's typically not an alienating group, not to generalize, and it's such a nice feeling to go into a queer bar and be like, “Doesn't matter, whatever, no one's coming for you.”

**Kristen, after playing queer in “Charlie's Angels” and now in “Happiest Season,” do you plan to continue radicalizing conventional genres with queerness? Basically, will you continue trying to actively make Hollywood gayer?**

**Stewart:** Yeah! Yeah, naturally. But, like, it's funny when you start just applying restrictive rules on who is allowed to have what perspectives. I still want to play straight sometimes, if that's OK! Ha! But I will say that, primarily, it's really important for me to really pick and choose those opportunities and not have it be the default-given setting that someone is straight in a movie when maybe it's not a romantic movie.

If it's not about the romance, then why am I playing straight? Because it's normal? Well, that's a ridiculous idea. Because in “Charlie's” I didn't have any romantic (interest). I had no one in the movie. But I just thought it was important to drop an Easter egg and be like, “No, that doesn't mean you can have me, boys.”

*This interview has been lightly edited and condensed for clarity.*

*As editor of Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ wire service, Chris Azzopardi has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.*

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## Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Neil Patrick Harris meets Nicolas Cage's 'Massive Talent'

There are only so many loony B-movies an Academy Award-winning actor can willingly be in before the idea of satire raises its sarcastic little head. And so it has, in the form of the upcoming Lionsgate action-comedy "The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent," starring the Ghost Rider\* himself, Nicolas Cage, and Neil Patrick Harris. Cage will play a fictionalized version of himself, and Harris his agent, in a story involving the actor facing financial trouble and taking a million-dollar payday to attend a fan's birthday party, only to find himself in the center of a ridiculous world-saving action scenario, the kind that tends to spring up in Cage films like "Con Air." Tiffany Haddish co-stars, as does Pedro Pascal ("The Mandalorian") and Sharon Horgan ("Catastrophe"). We are expecting a lot of fan service from this one, aka Cage needs to switch faces with someone and turn into a motorcycle riding skeleton who is also on fire. It's not too much to ask.



Neil Patrick Harris. Photo: KathClick

### Billy Porter in the director's chair

He's one of the stars of "Pose," he's a recording artist and musical-theater veteran and exuberant fashion titan, and now Billy Porter will add filmmaker to his resume. He'll be directing the upcoming high school coming-of-age feature called "What If?" The rom-com involves a teenager named Khal who posts about his crush on a transgender classmate named Kelsa, and with the internet cheering them on, the pair embark on a senior year romance. Lesbian super-producer Christine Vachon is behind the project in a new deal her Killer Films struck with MGM. There's no cast yet, but you'll know more when we do. For now it's pleasing enough that this project is moving forward and pushing open the boundaries of mainstream film, addressing the historical imbalance with more trans/POC stories.

### Jake Choi joins 'American Housewife'

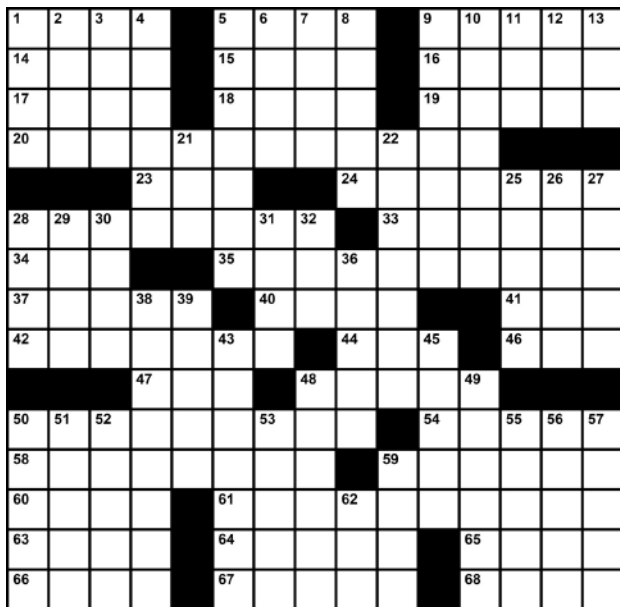
Up-and-comer Jake Choi might not be a household name yet, but the young queer actor and activist (he received a Human Rights Campaign Visibility Award in 2019) co-starred in the film "The Sun Is Also a Star" and the sitcom "Single Parents." And now he'll be joining the cast of the ABC sitcom "American Housewife." He'll play a recently divorced man who becomes friends with main character Katie (Katy Mixon) and another new character played by Holly Robinson Peete. Now, "Housewife" has had queer characters as a matter of course – notably a lesbian character played by former show regular Carly Hughes, who left recently after alleging a toxic, discriminatory set environment – but we don't know the orientation of Choi's character at the moment, so that will be a surprise when the show returns in January from a brief winter hiatus.

### 'Tampon Rock' wants to be your favorite scripted lesbian musical comedy podcast

The internet built celebrities out of YouTube content creators, and it has also begun doing the same with podcasters. As the idea of scripted podcasts continues to evolve – kids, they used to call them "radio shows" and there were characters and stories and your great grandparents loved them – more and more queer content is coming out of that movement, too. Witness "Tampon Rock," an LGBTQ musical-comedy podcast rolling out as we speak. Created by comedy writers Alysia Brown, Sarah Aument and Sophie Dinicol, "TR" follows two lesbian characters on their respective romantic and musical adventures in Oakland (they're in a band called G.O.A.L., or The Greatest of All Lesbians, which is a perfect band name you must admit). The serialized story chronicles the rise of the band as the members fall in and out of love, and will feature original music throughout. Yes, it's ambitious, and that's nothing less than what we should expect from goal-oriented queers, so break out the headphones and listen.

Romeo San Vicente congratulates Elliot Page for being awesome.

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 49 Queen's counties  
 50 Emulates Harper Lee's bird  
 51 Alaskan language  
 52 Erection of antiquity  
 53 "I Dreamed a Dream" singer Susan  
 55 Force along  
 56 Frida of self-portraits  
 57 "Family Ties" mother  
 59 Schoolyard retort  
 62 Rimbaud's refusal

### Eat, Pray, Love, Q Puzzle Direct

#### Across

- 1 Klinger portrayal on "M\*A\*S\*H"  
 5 Roman deity related to Diana  
 9 Watts in King Kong's hand  
 14 R.E.M.'s "The \_\_\_\_ Love"  
 15 Genesis man  
 16 Conversation filler  
 17 Relief of Lincoln  
 18 Pt. of PGA

- 19 Jocks' antitheses  
 20 Start of a quote by 61-Across about creative risk  
 23 From \_\_\_\_ Z (the whole shebang)  
 24 LGBT Money advises about this  
 28 Has a bottom line of  
 33 React to gay bashing, perhaps  
 34 William Tell's canton  
 35 More of the quote  
 37 Walks unevenly

#### Down

- 1 Ellipse's pair  
 2 From the top  
 3 City near Tahoe  
 4 Circumcision, e.g.  
 5 Bat first, to Glenn Burke  
 6 USA's Cold War rival  
 7 It sends no one to Uranus  
 8 Em and Mame  
 9 Assyrian capital  
 10 Ferrera of "Ugly Betty"  
 11 On top of, to Byron

Solution p. 18

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# Find over 300 Non-Profit Listings Serving Michigan's LGBTQ Online @ pridesource.com

## AIDS/HIV

There are dozens of AIDS/HIV organizations and resources listed at [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com). Here are just some of them:

### Metro Care Coordination Network

Free, comprehensive services for those living with HIV/AIDS.  
877-931-3248  
248-266-5545  
[Metrocarenetwork.org](http://Metrocarenetwork.org)

### UNIFIED - HIV Health & Beyond

3968 Mt. Elliott St.  
Detroit MI 48207-1841  
313-446-9800  
[www.miunified.org](http://www.miunified.org)  
Michigan HIV/STED Hotline  
800-872-2437

### Matrix MAC Health

429 Livernois St.  
Ferndale, MI 48220  
888-226-6366  
248-545-1435  
<http://www.matrixhumanservices.org/programs/matrix-mac-health/>

### Macomb County STD Clinic

27690 Van Dyke  
Warren, MI 48093  
586-465-8440  
<http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-HPDC-HIVAIDSCounselingTesting>

### Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLSHA)

196 Cesar E. Chavez Ave.  
Pontiac, MI 48343  
248-209-2647  
[www.olhsa.org](http://www.olhsa.org)

### Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Service (ACCESS)

Sterling Heights Center  
4301 East 14 Mile Rd.  
Sterling Hts., MI 48310  
586-722-6036  
[www.accesscommunity.org](http://www.accesscommunity.org)

## Advocacy

### Equality Michigan

19641 W. 7 Mile, Detroit, MI  
313-537-7000  
[equalitymi.org](http://equalitymi.org)  
[Facebook.com/equalitymichigan](https://www.facebook.com/equalitymichigan)

## Campus

Currently there are 19 organizations listed as active online at [www.pridesource.com/](http://www.pridesource.com/) yellow pages. The following are some in the southeast Michigan area:

### U-M Ann Arbor

Spectrum Center  
[Spectrumcenter@umich.edu](mailto:Spectrumcenter@umich.edu)  
<http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu>  
734-763-4186

### Oakland University Gender & Sexuality Center

[gsc@oakland.edu](mailto:gsc@oakland.edu)  
[www.oakland.edu/gsc](http://www.oakland.edu/gsc)  
248-370-4336

### Eastern Michigan University

LGBT Resource Center  
[emich.edu/lgbtrc](mailto:emich.edu/lgbtrc)  
734-487-4149

### The Lawrence Tech LGBT Resource Center

[ltu.edu/student\\_affairs/lgbt.asp](http://ltu.edu/student_affairs/lgbt.asp)

### Wayne State JIGSAW

[Facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW](https://www.facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW)  
[wsujigsaw@gmail.com](mailto:wsujigsaw@gmail.com)

## Community Centers

Michigan has eleven active LGBTQ community centers, with a tenth planned in Lansing. Here are three of them.

### Jim Toy Community Center

Ann Arbor  
[www.jimtoycenter.org](http://www.jimtoycenter.org)  
[www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter](https://www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter)  
or follow them on Twitter @JimToyCenter.  
319 Braun Court  
Ann Arbor, MI  
734-995-9867

### LGBT Detroit

Detroit  
[www.lgbtdetroit.org](http://www.lgbtdetroit.org)  
[@LGBTDetroit](https://www.facebook.com/lgbtdetroit)  
20025 Greenfield Road  
Detroit, MI  
Phone: 313-397-2127

### Affirmations

Ferndale  
<http://goaffirmations.org>  
[www.facebook.com/Affirmations/](https://www.facebook.com/Affirmations/)  
or follow them on Twitter @GoAffirmations.  
290 W. Nine Mile Road  
Ferndale, MI  
248-398-7105

## Legal

### American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney, LGBT Project  
2966 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI  
[www.aclumich.org](http://www.aclumich.org)  
313-578-6800

### Fair Michigan

PO Box 6136  
Plymouth, MI 48170  
877-432-4764, 313-556-2300  
[fairmichigan.org](http://fairmichigan.org)  
[Facebook.com/fairmichigan2016](https://www.facebook.com/fairmichigan2016)

### Know Your Rights Project

Outlaws U-M student group  
[outlawslegal@gmail.com](mailto:outlawslegal@gmail.com)  
734-995-9867

## Older Adults

### SAGE Metro Detroit

290 W. Nine Mile Rd. Ferndale, MI  
313-578-6812  
[sagemetrodetroit.org](http://sagemetrodetroit.org)  
Facebook: SAGE Metro Detroit

## Political

### The LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party

[Facebook.com/TheLGBTACaucusoftheMDP](https://www.facebook.com/TheLGBTACaucusoftheMDP)  
CaucusoftheMDP  
Stonewall for Revolution  
[www.facebook.com/stonewall4reolution](https://www.facebook.com/stonewall4reolution)

## Professional Groups

### Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 32446  
Detroit, MI 48232  
[detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://detroitlgbtchamber.com)  
1-800-DET-LGBT

### Ties Like Me

Professional networking events  
third Weds. 5:30 - 8 p.m.  
[TiesLikeMe.org](http://TiesLikeMe.org)  
Suits And The City  
Lansing, MI  
[suitsandthecity@gmail.com](mailto:suitsandthecity@gmail.com)  
[www.suitsandthecity.org](http://www.suitsandthecity.org)

## Transgender

### FtM Detroit

<https://www.facebook.com/FtMDetroit/>  
[ftmdetroit@gmail.com](mailto:ftmdetroit@gmail.com)

## Get Listed, Promote Your Events

You can add or update any listing by going to [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com) and clicking on Yellow Pages. Once you submit your listing, our staff will contact you to confirm your information. You can add your event to the Pride Source Calendar online and in print by going to [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com) and clicking on Calendar, then "Add Event." Send any press releases and announcements to [editor@pridesource.com](mailto:editor@pridesource.com)



## Find a digital version of PrideSource Magazine online under Our LGBT Yellow Pages

### FtM A2 Ypsi

[ftmannarborypsilanti@gmail.com](mailto:ftmannarborypsilanti@gmail.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/ftma2ypsi/>

### Transgender Michigan

23211 Woodward Ave.  
Ferndale, MI  
[info@transgendermichigan.org](mailto:info@transgendermichigan.org)  
[www.transgendermichigan.org](http://www.transgendermichigan.org)  
800-842-2954

### Trans Sistas of Color Project

19641 W. 7 Mile Rd. in Detroit  
313-537-7000 Ext 107  
[info@tscopdetroit.org](mailto:info@tscopdetroit.org)  
[www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/](https://www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/)

## Youth

### Ruth Ellis Center

77 Victor Street, Highland Park, MI  
48203  
[info@ruthelliscenter.org](mailto:info@ruthelliscenter.org)  
Facebook: Ruth Ellis Center  
313-252-1950

### Ozone House

102 N. Hamilton Street  
Ypsilanti, MI  
734-662-2265  
734-662-2222

### Stand With Trans

Farmington, MI  
[www.standwithtrans.org](http://www.standwithtrans.org)  
248-739-9254

## Find these resources online

Adoption Services  
AIDS/HIV Hotlines  
AIDS/HIV Organizations  
Alzheimer's Association  
Animal Shelter  
Anti-Violence  
Archives/Collections  
Campus; Student and Alumni Groups  
Cancer Support Groups  
Choruses  
Community Centers  
Employee Resource Groups  
Families and Parents  
Foster Care  
Foundations and Funders  
Hotlines & Switchboards  
Labor Union  
Legal Organizations  
Museums  
Music Groups  
National Organizations  
Political Organizations  
Professional Organizations  
Religious & Spiritual  
Senior Living  
Seniors  
Social/Community Organizations  
Sports  
Substance Abuse  
Transgender Groups/Services  
Women's Health  
Youth Services

# PrEP Clinic

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**313-446-9800**

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For more information about PrEP and prevention services please contact our Lead Prevention Specialist Keith Hughes at khughes@miunified.org

[WWW.MIUNIFIED.ORG](http://WWW.MIUNIFIED.ORG)



Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a way to help prevent HIV by taking a pill every day. PrEP must be taken every day to be most effective.

- ✓ HIV Testing
- ✓ PrEP Assessment
- ✓ Insurance & Payment Guidance.
- ✓ PrEP Education



When taken consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection in people who are at high risk by more than 90%.

Your risk of getting HIV from sex can be even lower if you combine PrEP with condoms and other prevention methods.



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[www.corktownhealth.org](http://www.corktownhealth.org)

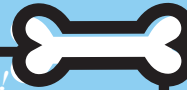


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- PrEP Referrals



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- Trichomoniasis
- Non-Gonococcal Urethritis (NGU)
- Pubic Lice
- Scabies
- Rapid HIV Testing
- Hepatitis C Testing

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# On the Edge of Primary Care PODCASTS with Dr. Paul Benson



**Dr. Benson is launching a new podcast series for 2020!**

Use your cell phone to capture the QR code above, or visit our website, Spotify, Apple, or Google for access.

Since 1980, our medical team has been committed to providing compassionate, sensitive care for all lifestyles. The topics and specialists featured on the podcast will help you keep pace with the most up-to-date info to improve your health!



**1 Why We Sleep?** (Dr. Benson) Release: **1/2/2020**

Sleep is one of the most important, but least understood aspects of our lives and wellness.

**2 Living with HIV in the 21st Century** (Dr. Benson & Caleb Youngblood) Release: **1/16/2020**

HIV is a chronic manageable disorder, perhaps easier to live with than Heart Disease or Diabetes. Learn the latest about the HIV virus, new therapies, and the lessons learned from our history of dealing with HIV and its social stigma.

**3 On the Edge: Transcending the Standard of Care**

(Dr. Paul Benson, Dorea Shoemaker & Gretchen Haughton) Release: **1/30/2020**

Take matters into your own hands and become an active participant in your health. We'll discuss Cannabidiol (CBD) and its properties to improve and manage health with an expert, Dorea Shoemaker. CBD may be a new and safer alternative for pain instead of Tylenol or ibuprofen. We'll also discover benefits of whole food supplements to keep us healthy.

**4 The Transgender Population – Understanding and Embracing this Population** (Leon Bullough) Release: **2/13/2020**

A report from the World Professional Association on Transgender Health's (WPATH) Annual Conference. Hormone Replacement therapy is only a part of the transitioning process. Community and mental health support is essential for success. Individualized care plans based on evidence based

medicine and created to match each individual's desires and pace is essential to make the transition process a safe and healthy journey.

**5 Sexual Health and HIV Prevention**

(Dr. Paul Benson & Mark Rosen) Release: **2/27/2020**

We'll discuss sexually transmitted infections and their prevention. Many healthcare providers sweep this topic under the rug, but outcomes improve when we talk about how to stay healthy and infection free. Sexual health is not simply the absence of disease. It's living comfortably without fear or stigma; and embracing your sexuality while living day to day in your comfort zone.

**6 Living Well Over the Age of 50**

(Dr. Benson and Colin Colter) Release: **3/12/2020**

We'll discuss simple steps you, with the assistance of your doctor, can implement to live longer and healthier. Proper health maintenance makes a big difference at any age, but becomes even more important as the decades pass. We'll talk about prevention and aggressive strategies to manage co-morbidities sometimes encountered as we age. We can't turn back the clock, but you *can* improve your heart, liver, brain function, kidneys, and virtually every organ system.



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